

**Viewing Power, Politics, and Loss:
A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Mass Media's Representations
of Teacher Unions in the United States and the Consequences
Concerning Policy**

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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December 2016

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This dissertation is dedicated to all those who asked me ‘Why?’ Expressly, my loving and often frustrated husband, Adam.

‘Why are you doing this?’

‘Why are you not doing that?’

‘Why would you even think about having done those?’

The one ‘Why’ for you—

‘Why do you still love me so much?’

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first personally like to thank Dr. Barbara Thayer-Bacon for her tireless efforts in helping push me to the finish line. I have known Dr. Thayer-Bacon for many years and she has offered me support, encouragement, understanding, and more knowledge than I will ever know what to do with. Her often brutal honesty has helped me more than she will ever know. So, thank you Dr. Barb.

I would also like to thank others in my department, including, Dr. Lisa Yamagata-Lynch, who has lent me both an ear and advice when I most needed it. Also, I would like to thank Beverley Cate, Christine Tidwell and April Phillips of which without your help and support I would not have been able to survive many times over.

I have made many life-long friends while working on this degree and I would like to say thank you to each and every one of them. Sultana, Amanda, Anne, Brittney, Sherrie, Sheryse, Brian, Jaewoo, Brenda, and Su, you all have kept me sane, made me laugh, and been a wonderful support system that has helped keep me together through my degree: So, thank you all.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for supporting and helping me through this long and stressful process of endless writing, and worrying if I am indeed good enough to be earning this degree. Thank you, Dennis and Carol Sieberg, for helping with familial obligations both financially and emotionally. You two have been a part of this since the beginning and without your support, none of it would have been possible. Thank you, Bailey Castille, for putting up with my endless prattle about neoliberalism and social capital, and being the most responsible big brother anyone could ever hope for. Thank you, Samuel Harness, for giving me lots of hugs and love, and no matter how frustrated I became with what I was doing, always caring enough to get me through it. And thank you Adam Harness for always loving me no matter how crazy I got. Your support and help means more to me than the words I am writing here can ever express. Thank you and I will forever be grateful.

And I thank God most of all, for all that He has given me and continues to. Without Him, I would have never met any of these people or written this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

From 2011 to 2012, in Wisconsin, Governor Scott Walker and legislative republicans passed ACT-10, a law severely limiting public sector/teachers union's collective bargaining rights. This legislative effort shocked the nation with the bold move toward stricter regulations concerning the public sector, as Wisconsin is historically one of the most progressive states concerning labor within the United States. Teachers unions within the state took ACT-10 as an assault on their very profession. Shortly before the passing of the act, sit-ins and protests abounded within the capital of Madison that caught attention from both the local and national media.

To answer questions pertaining to the media, policy, government, and public sector unions, this dissertation analyzes articles from three major newspaper sources (*The New York Times*, *The Wisconsin State Journal*, and *The Capital Times*) from 2011-2015, utilizing both critical discourse analysis and philosophy, to examine the media's framing of the issues pertaining to public sector/teacher unions within Wisconsin. By analyzing these media sources, three data strands emerged: The Language of Battle, Neoliberalistic Discourses, and Teacher as a Defunct Agent. The three strands reveal a picture that illuminates the unions and the teacher members as the 'enemy' that is destroying the education system within the United States. All the while, the government is portrayed as the savior of the education system by passing policies that restrict the unions, eliminating their "corruption," and giving control of the education system seemingly back to the teachers and administrators. However, at the same time, the teachers' accountability and professionalism were found to also be called into question within this media framework. By portraying such a politically motivated agenda, fueled by ideas surrounding neoliberalism, the media creates social justice issues, such as hegemony, whereby they call into question the need and abilities of such organizations as unions within a highly globalized society. Per the findings of this research: what is at stake is the future of what working in America will look like with portrayals such as what can be found within the discourse presented to the public through the media.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Trade Unions have been an essential force for social change without which a semblance of a decent and humane society is impossible under capitalism, which leads to unfair economic structures that create huge inequalities. ~Pope Francis speaking with President Barack Obama in a Recorded Meeting

What started my predilection and desire to begin researching the complex and highly convoluted contexts and subtexts of teacher unions in the United States of America (U.S.A.) began in 2011, when I was writing my thesis for my master's degree. I ventured slightly into the teacher union arena as I was writing about how teaching in the U.S. is not treated as a 'true profession'¹ (M. A. Harness, 2011). It was at the beginning of that year, in February, that media outlets around the U.S. began to report heavily on the strikes that were taking place throughout the state of Wisconsin, but particularly centered on the capital of the state, Madison. These strikes, which were caused by a bill (ACT 10)² introduced by the then six week veteran to the governorship, Scott Walker, included weakening most "public-sector unions by sharply curtailing their collective bargaining rights, [and] limiting talks to subjects of basic wages" (Davey, 2011, para. 3). When angry protestors confronted Governor Walker, he claimed that he was going after the public sector

¹ In my thesis, the main claim is that public school teaching in the United States has not, nor will ever be treated as what our society refers to as a 'true profession.' In regards to 'true professions,' the argument is made that when one in U.S. society speaks of a 'true profession,' most regard medicine, law, and clergy as those that belong to the relegated understanding of what it means to belong to a specialized group of individuals, with specialized skills, and barred membership to only certain individuals. The work analyzes these perceptions and makes the case through them why teaching never can nor will be allowed to belong to the 'true professions.' Further, teacher unions are examined momentarily as a 'perceived' counter-example of how individuals in the field of teaching can still hold a dichotomous positionality within society, as both blue collar (belonging to teacher unions), and 'professionals' (white collar). It is not my intention nor my desire in this endeavor to argue whether teaching because of the unions is blue or white collared, or whether it makes teaching more or less professional. I am hoping to show how and why the unions are and continue to be an important part of education in the U.S.

² The ACT 10 bill is also known as the Wisconsin Budget Repair Bill, was passed to tackle the 2011 projected \$3.6 billion budget deficit in the state of Wisconsin. ACT 10 was legislation that impacted public sector unions by severely limiting collective bargaining rights, compensation for health and retirement benefits, and curtailing sick leave and overtime pay ("Wisconsin ACT 10," 2011).

unions because of their budget shortfall in the state that was averaging almost \$150 million a year, seemingly to increase to 2 billion dollars in the projected two years that were to follow (para 4). With the use of the mass media and anti-labor advocates which included organizations and individuals in and outside the government, including, government officials both elected and appointed, political parties, and various corporations, Governor Walker began to create a picture of public sector union members as lazy, money hungry, non-committed, uncaring individuals. Thus, Governor Walker's answer to the budget shortfall became easy, his endeavor was to put an end to negotiations for public sector unions to effectively bargain for higher wages and extended health and pension benefits. After months, and recall elections of state senators in 2011, and the failed recall of Governor Walker in 2012, ACT 10 was eventually passed and signed into law. ACT 10 severely limits and in many cases outlaws public-sector unions' (which includes teachers, fire fighters, and police officer unions) historical rights concerning collective bargaining. Many of these rights, such as the ability to strike and negotiate for pay, were fought over and won by these unions just a century ago. Unfortunately, they are now being stripped away in Wisconsin and other states throughout the U.S.

For months, after the strikes in Wisconsin died down, the mass media continued to seemingly develop both textually and visually a disparaging story of public sector unions and their members that were fighting against a burgeoning anti-labor union movement being played out. Where did this anti-labor stance come from? The answer may lay within the mass media in the U.S. It must be interjected at this point what is meant by the mass media³ within this body of research. The term mass media will refer to a means of communication, as both national broadcasts

³ From this point forward in this body of research the term mass media will be denoted simply with the term 'media.' The term 'media' denotes the ideas surrounding the definition of mass media that is provided within the research that follows, and does not represent just one particular genre of media unless specified otherwise, as will be the case with the analysis of the research material which includes newspaper articles.

and cable television, or newspapers and magazines that a ‘mass’ of individuals view or read on a routine basis. Jan Leighley (2004) writes that the mass media “create and distribute news to a mass audience and engage in overtly political communication. One of their key characteristics is that their messages are directed toward a large and relatively undifferentiated audience” (p. 45). The question above as to where the anti-labor stance may be coming from, can observationally be answered as it seemed to be a consequence of the episodic news coverage by the media from 2011 to 2015, in places like Wisconsin where protests and demonstrations were held.

According to Shanto Ivengar, a professor and author of political issues through media coverage, episodic media coverage refers to how the mass media covers political issues “as seemingly unrelated, discrete events” (Shanto Ivengar, 1996; Leighley, 2004a, p. 187). This is in contradiction to thematic media coverage where a ‘theme’ is covered over a long period of time, or is a frequently reoccurring issue reported. A small majority of the media may only cover thematic episodes, many times centered on heated discussions and analysis; whereas, episodic news coverage is generally covered by a larger amount of the media and includes relatively benign conversation (Leighley, 2004a; Ringel, 2009). An example of episodic media coverage in education can be witnessed in the strikes in Wisconsin mentioned above or the Sandy Hook elementary school shootings in Connecticut (Deloney, 2012). In these examples, it was an ‘episode’ that happened, that is devastating to witness, and whether legislation or changes are made based on these ‘episode(s)’ is not necessarily important to those that are stakeholders in the media outlet. Conversely, an example of thematic media coverage can be found in the continuous exemplification of ‘bad teachers’ in the public education system, a topic that is continuously an ongoing mass media theme. We saw a major push for reform because of ‘bad teachers’ exemplified in the mass media in the early 1980’s after the report *A Nation at Risk* was released (U. S.

Department of Education, 1983); and again, some of the same negative coverage of teachers was done prior to the release of the *No Child Left Behind* law ("No Child Left Behind Elementary and Secondary Education Act," 2001) and *Race to the Top* ("No Child Left Behind Race to the Top Fund," 2011) policy. Many researchers claim that both thematic and episodic news are always run in conjunction with one another, in one format or another (Leighley, 2004a); others claim that the news uses only one at a time (S. Ivengar, 1991). Either way it is important to understand the ideas behind these concepts of the media.

Specifically, an example of the mass media's episodic coverage of teacher unions that would later lead to state legislatures creating policies that were detrimental to teacher unions could be found in Chicago, where the mass media's coverage of teachers in the area was unfavorable. Reporters from television and newspapers conveyed that public school (K-12th grade) teachers in Chicago did not really care about their students, but were simply trying to look out for their best interests by demanding smaller class sizes and a "staggering" amount of additional income (Pearson, 2012). As a consequence of such coverage and damaging remarks concerning teacher unions, sixteen states, including Tennessee, Ohio, Florida, and California, began to see protests and strikes by their citizenry opposed to legislation that was being introduced that restricted, or in some cases outlawed, collective bargaining rights. Other states, including New Jersey, Michigan, Indiana, Kansas and Iowa, passed legislation and policies that severely crippled most of the capabilities of the public-sector labor unions within them (J. Edwards & Brennan, 2011).

The story above illustrates a very poignant point concerning the ever-evolving domains of both public education and educational policy development within the U.S., and how the reporting done by the media is changing the power dynamics within U.S. society. Simply put, educational policy making in the U.S. has changed drastically over the last several decades especially for once

very powerful groups such as teacher unions. As Peter Piazza (2014), a professor of educational policy, wrote concerning the shift in policy and political groups:

A diverse array of policy proposals is now debated and developed by an increasingly diverse array of high-powered, high-level political actors. New to state-level policy making, a loosely –federated group of non-profit advocacy organizations have enjoyed remarkable success in recent years. Meanwhile, for better or worse, entrenched political actors, like teachers’ unions, now face credible threats to their longstanding hold on political power. (p. 3)

As the political subtleties have been changing, the policies behind the politics have also changed. These changes have been fueled by various entities within U.S. society, including in the realm of education, the report *A Nation at Risk* and reforms such as *No Child Left Behind* and *Race to the Top*. These reports and programs, especially, most recently, President Barack Obama’s competitive reform program *Race To The Top*, a program that incentivizes schools to compete for extra money from the federal government based on performance given on standardized testing, have caused states throughout the country to embrace a more neoliberal approach to their education systems (Piazza, 2014b, pp. 3-4).

The understanding of neoliberalism is important where education, teacher unions, and policy are concerned. As such, neoliberalism is a political-economic movement that endorses economic and political liberty, and is a derivative of classical liberalism. Within neoliberalistic understandings public schooling’s aim should be in terms of helping the U.S. compete in the global economy. Fueled by the reporting of the mass media, public education has begun in many places to be run as though it is part of a private business (a tenet of neoliberalism is to treat all government entities more like businesses; open to the marketplace’s mechanisms and desires). Although this

tendency for schools to be run more like businesses has been around for decades in varying ways, in more recent years the line between what is acceptable and what is not within schools concerning business-like maneuvers is being more blurred. For instance, in many states in the U.S. charter schools are largely funded and run by corporate sponsors and boards. The students are viewed as ‘customers,’ where teachers are responsible for good ‘customer service’ (Wohlstetter, Nayfack, & Mora-Flores, 2008). Further, there are companies, such as, Education Funding Partners, who will locate and secure funding for public school districts, for a commission. The funding comes at a price, including: allowing advertising and commercial usage of approved property on or around school campuses.

To adequately understand and begin to dissect the discussion above and the research that will follow, the theories behind policy dynamics, power relationships, and the ideas of the mass media need to be examined more closely. It becomes imperative that a critical engagement take place in regards to researching how the media is framing teacher unions because “how the legislation and those people and issues connected to it) is presented ... may shape how people interpret its purpose and efficacy” (Goldstein, 2010, p. 7). This purpose of the media in its reporting needs to be further examined as to what is being reported (and what is not being reported) and for what purposes.

The central claim within my research is that the media within the U.S., by virtue of their political and neoliberal agendas, are framing teacher unions in a very unfavorable way thereby creating a possible social justice issue regarding the policies that affect teacher unions. This will culminate as a project by utilizing both a philosophical and critical discourse analysis as methods to examine common themes in the mass media’s discussions around the issues concerning teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin from 2011-2015. Three reputable newspapers, one from the

national level (The New York Times), one from the state level (The Wisconsin State Journal), and one from the local level (The Capital Times) will be used as representatives of the media coverage under analysis. What follows will begin to answer questions regarding many different avenues relating to the media, policy, public education, and social justice within the United States including: Is the anti-labor/anti-public sector union's stance being perpetuated by the media in particular papers? Is there a clear agenda or theme that the media is trying to press onto the larger public in regards to education and teacher unions? Are there issues of social consciousness and knowledge concerning mass society where the media is concerned? Could these questions lead us to answers regarding power issues and equity with what is being introduced to the mass public in regards to public sector unions? Could a critical study of the media's work lead to more responsibility where their reporting is concerned, especially in regards to unionization within the U.S.?

Arbitrating Media and Policy Dynamics

According to Stephen Ball (2008), 'policy' "is one of those obvious terms we all use but use differently and often loosely" (p. 6). Formerly, Black Law's Dictionary defines 'policy' as "a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual; versus a law that is the system of rules or policies that a particular country or community negotiates as regulating the actions of its members and may enforce by the imposition of penalties" (Gamer, 2009). Educational researchers have become enamored with analyzing educational 'policy,' and because of the varied and undefined uses of the term within the educational research field, an array of both contested and accepted understandings have emerged (Gillborn, 2014, p. 27). There are researchers who still focus largely on the texts and legislative policies and laws themselves that are produced in the formal sense, while others "have broadened the concept of policy to include

the wider debates and controversies that surround the process by which formal policies are shaped” (Gillborn, 2014, p. 27; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Ball (2008) expands the concept of researching policy to include important avenues to study ‘policy’ such as where ‘policy’ is produced, “contested, or reshaped and forms of discourse, including texts and ways of speaking about particular issues and possibilities for action” (p. 12). Using Ball’s perspective of policy, the array of possibilities widens considerably and then can include what Ball (2008) refers to as “little-p policies.” By “little-p policies” Ball means the things that are not formally part of a law or policy, but are discussed, researched, and analyzed as part of a formal regulation. These “little-p policies” influence beliefs and practices just as much as, and in some cases more than, the ‘official’ laws and policies themselves. According to Ball (2008), this view of policy is a new dynamic understanding of what it means to research educational policy. He reminds us as researchers that

...we need to remain aware that policies are made and remade in many sites, and there are many little-p policies that are formed and enacted within localities and institutions...policy that is “announced” through legislation is also reproduced and reworded over time through reports, speeches, “moves,” “agendas” and so on. ... Policies are contested, interpreted and enacted in a variety of arenas of practice and the rhetoric’s, texts and meanings of policy makers do not always translate directly and obviously into institutional practices. (p. 7)

Further, policy has become a major research focus within educational academia within the last 20-30 years because of intrigue and desire to study these “little-p policies.” This focus is on how they shape the social context, understanding, and knowledge of the public. In turn, the research on the “little p-policies” create, retract, or further equity and equality within society (Skyrme, 2014). These “little-p policies,” and in the case of Wisconsin’s ACT 10 laws, are where my intentions lie for this research study. I want to examine the mixing of social consciousness of both literal and

figurative policy discourse within the media's presentation to the public in Wisconsin concerning teacher unions.

However, within the understanding of the 'little-p policies,' much of the emphasis by the media has been on the politics and the political actors behind the policies being introduced and not on the process behind the push for change within public education. This is due in large part to media's placement within the larger social context of our world. Although the process of idea consideration and implementation of 'policy' needs and desires in education should be understood as socially constructed ideology, it is seemingly largely being generated and disseminated by the media without much regard to research in the field. The need to understand that social knowledge is essentially a responsibility of those in powerful positions is important as the powerful entities such as the media are helping to create the building blocks of U.S. society, one block being that of public education. Interpreting and presenting such knowledge is an immensely important part of the fabric of society. There is a need to study such things to bring both knowledge and awareness to the institutional issues of power and influence.

Increasingly, the players within the media are taking on a globalized quality. We live in a world where news is available instantly. Policies are no longer just about what is taking place in the U.S., but what is happening across the globe. This makes the notion of responsibility even more important. As Arnove (2013) argues, the increased globalization (defined as the "process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology") of events around the world, including those relating to policy issues in education are spurred on in great part by the neoliberal aims of the media, especially in regards to the U.S. since the report of *A Nation at Risk* was released in 1981 (Arnove, Torres, & Franz, 2013; Wilfred & Slabbert, 2009,

p. 37). The *Report* emphasized and exaggerated the problems in the public education system that led to a hysterical response by many in the government. The *Report* took liberties, or in other words, strayed from the facts of the overall economic development of the country and the abilities and decisions made for and by the education system. A stress was put onto the fact that a ‘good education’ equates to economic prosperity; another one of the key principles of neoliberalism in industrialized countries. As Piazza (2014, p. 5) writes, neoliberalism

aims to apply market principles, such as competition, choice, [and globalization], to ensure [in the case of] the educational system [that it] more efficiently provide social “goods,” such as high quality teachers, to its “consumers,” America’s public school students. (Piazza, 2014b, p. 5)

The neoliberal agenda, encouraged by the media’s coverage of both disparaging episodic and thematic coverage of educational issues, calls repeatedly for mass educational reforms. For example, new legislation and policies throughout many states in the U.S. began to occur shortly after the *Race to the Top* program was introduced by President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan. With this program, allotment for charter schools and “alternative” education venues were made more readily available, seemingly to help improve “failing” or low performing schools throughout the country. However, the motive in the new laws and policies throughout most states was to win ‘The Race’ and in turn receive a substantial monetary reward from the federal government, money that was much needed in the states to adequately fund their public school systems.

Viewing neoliberalism through the example of teacher unions and the media, we can see the same types of neoliberalistic policies being formulated through the issues that largely affect teacher unions. As such, issues such as tenure for teachers play right into the neoliberal agenda,

which often calls for creating legislation and policies for removing job protections and seniority rights among teachers (Friedman, 1995).

Tenure rights, as interpreted by neoliberalism, are claimed to keep under-performing teachers in the profession with no way to remove them. Since 2010, nearly two-thirds of U.S. states have changed their tenure and dismissal laws and policies to “align with so-called business models for public education, where employees’ job security is linked more closely to job performance” (Piazza, 2014b). Tenure allows for the freedom of teaching and inquiry without the fear of reprisal from overhanded authorities. It also minimizes favoritism concerning positionality within school systems and universities. Tenure also allows a “sufficient degree of economic security,” (Tierney, 1997, p. 18) as well as making the position of teaching more attractive; “hence tenure, [is] indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society” (Finklestein, 1940, p. 143).

Whether or not teacher unions are in the right or wrong concerning the topic of tenure and its reform, the claims of the media against tenure rights can be found in articles all across the U.S., and include titles such as; “Protecting Bad Teachers,” “Is teacher tenure still necessary?,” and “Rotten Apples” (Center for Union Facts, 2015; Greenblatt, 2010; Sweetland, 2014). According to Michael Parenti (2009) in *Inventing Reality: The Politics of News Media*, most media outlets

lack contact with working-class people, have a low opinion of labor unions, and know very little about people outside their own social class. ... In regard to economic and class issues, most [individuals] are educated into a world view that supports rather than opposes the existing corporate or [neoliberal] system. (p. 170)

Parenti (2009) contends that the neoliberal ideology has a significant impact on how and what the media does with particular stories, in particular contexts, and in particular with those dealing with policy making.

In this capacity, the media outlets frame stories that are presented to the mass public, but “framing” is particularly important to stories concerning politics, legislation, and education. The concept of framing “refers to the effects of presentation on judgment and choice” (Shanto Ivengar, 1996, p. 61). Frames form ideas and the language to fit those ideas. However, it is more than just a language; it quite literally becomes the idea itself. In psychological research on media framing, it was found that “individuals’ choices vary dramatically depending upon whether the options are presented as potential gains or losses” (p. 61). Thus, if teacher unions are shown in the media as losing the battle for tenure in the newest policies being introduced into legislation, and the media outlets frame their loss as a gain for students, then the mass public will more times than not consider tenure from then on out as an outdated part of the teaching field. The reverse of this would also be true.

Since most individuals in U.S. society confront and approach the world around them, specifically their political understandings, through the language of news either in textual format, such as newspapers or magazines, and more increasingly television and internet news programs, the frames that are being produced and introduced to the mass public need to be examined for their validity. The literature suggests that what the media promulgates is what significantly contributes to the “socially constructed discourses” in specific regards to “teachers, teaching, and public education” (Goldstein, 2010, p. 7). Because the public’s perception about responsibility is prone to the effects of framing as previously suggested, , it is hard to overlook the resources that framing creates for those in power within society (Shanto Ivengar, 1996).

It is often difficult to understand when something in the media is based on real research and facts, and when it is not. Andrew Rotherman (2008) explains it well by acknowledging that the

public gathers much of its knowledge about education policy and research from the media, journalists in fact have little experience in knowing how to judge the validity of the policies and research about which they report. In addition, media outlets often fail to critically engage with the sources of their information so that the partisan research groups [et. al] are considered as credible as research guided by a blind peer-review and professional research standards. (*Goldstein, 2010, p. 7*)

It is because individuals are confronted with the understandings of the world around them by the media, that it is important that a critical engagement with what is being reported take place, especially in regards to issues pertaining to education.

Equality, Equity, and Social Justice: Examining Issues of Power

The knowledge of issues surrounding the use and abuse of power, must be examined, particularly when dealing with an institution such as the media, where oversight is largely self-regulated and democratic ideals may be completely dismissed as unnecessary. Comprehending the ideas surrounding power help individuals critique and develop ideas about what is going on in the world around them. Power can be regarded as “pervading every level of social relationships. It is not simply the glue that holds the social together, or the coercive force which subordinates one set of people to another,” but is something that must be understood as a necessary component of everyday life whilst living within a particular society at a particular time within history (Barker, 2012, p. 10).

As such, hegemony, a term credited to Antonio Gramsci (1971), which deals with issues of power on a mass cultural and societal scale, can be defined as a situation which is characterized by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed, the attempt is always to ensure that force would appear to be based on the consent of the majority expressed by the so-called organs of public opinion—newspapers and association. (Gramsci, 1971, p. 80)

However, it is Michael Foucault (1980) who claims that through social institutions, such as the media, society can be controlled through powerful structures, almost like a form of governmentality, essentially used to create docile citizens, which is done regularly through the education system. To Foucault (1980), ‘power’ such that can be found within the media “reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives” (p. 30). Additionally, Michael Apple and Antonio Gramsci, both help to further the discussion of power by contending that it is so engrained and so embedded in society, and the individuals within that society, that the ability to see beyond it is almost impossible; the ability to see it becomes neutralized, an ‘ideological hegemony’ (Apple, 1995, pp. 14-15; Gramsci, 1971). The media is remarkably good at producing news that becomes part of the ‘ideological hegemony’ of our society, especially in regards to education. For example, the media may represent tenure as a means for ‘bad teachers’ to keep their jobs instead of a means of protection for their employment. This attitude and understanding of tenure, then becomes the ideology that is created for it and consequently when the teacher unions try to fight for tenure rights for teachers they in turn appear to be the [bad guys] problem in the situation.

As such, critical discourse analysis (CDA), will be employed as a means in this project to analyze and critique the issues of power concerning the media and their reporting of educational issues surrounding teacher unions. Further, critical discourse analysis utilizes the stance of critical theory in examining how instances of discourse reflect power dynamics in society (R. Wodak & M. Meyer, 2009). Critical theory is a philosophical approach to culture in which social theory is created and oriented toward critiquing and changing society for the better. This contrasts with other philosophical theories that seek to just explain or understand phenomenon that are occurring. Critical theories also generally “have in common an overriding concern with oppression and domination in modern advanced societies and a commitment to radically participatory nonhierarchical forms of political, economic, and social interaction” (Scneider & Ingram, 1997, p. 57). Critical theory helps the researcher and reader dig beneath the surface of issues in society and uncover unquestioned assumptions and long standing institutional affordances that keep individuals from full and true understanding of how the world around us works; it is essentially wanting to produce social change that “will empower, enlighten, and emancipate all people” (p. 51). As such, the heuristic understanding of the media’s perspectives about teacher unions using CDA will become apparent in examining their discourses.

Further, the concept ‘discourse’ can be defined using various terms. One of the main ways that this project will be defining ‘discourse’ is by the theoretical perspectives given by Norman Fairclough. Fairclough’s use of CDA reflects an emphasis on the role of language in shaping social practices, perpetuating particular ideologies, and establishing power relations (Norman Fairclough, 1992).

Unlike other strands of discourse analysis, CDA does not just focus on the linguistics of textual or visual representation aspects of the researched material, but also on broader structural

features of society. Wodak and Meyer (R. Wodak & M. Meyer, 2009) describe CDA as a methodology that has many approaches, all of which can be characterized as applying a critique to discourse, examining the role of ideology, and scrutinizing power relationships. The critique that Foucault calls for can be produced by CDA as it unveils how texts reproduce ideologies, or shared social representations of a group and its members (van Dijk, 1998). It is believed that various ideologies are ‘hidden’ in texts and that the role of analyzing brings them forth to expose them. According to Wodak and Meyer (2009), “texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance” (p. 10).

One of the most important concepts in CDA is the ability to identify the different discourses that are in the text by problematizing existing power relationships in society that are reflected in those discourses, or arguments, like those seen within the media’s presentation of news, and provide information for those that may be oppressed by what is being presented, as could be the case concerning teacher unions (Norman Fairclough, 1992). In the case of this project and teacher unions, the justification for the use of CDA as a methodology lies in the ability to demonstrate that the discourse being offered by the media seems to be creating an issue in which U.S. society is receiving a misconstrued picture of the current status and role of teacher unions in educational systems.

Guided by CDA and analyzed philosophically, I offer this project to demonstrate how the media coverage legitimizes certain perspectives about teacher unions and influences educational policies and laws, while marginalizing other perspectives. My argument will be that the media is creating an inequitable situation in which the voices of teachers and professional educators through teacher union barraging are being stifled to progress a hidden political agenda and ideology. I will

use their portrayal of teacher unions and the union's role in the U.S. public education system as my case to explore.

Further, it is well known both in and out of academic research that these media outlets have political agendas that foster and promote their own desired outcomes, much of the time in-line with more neoliberalistic policies discussed previously (Anderson, 2007; Goldstein, 2010; Leighley, 2004a; Ringel, 2009). The media outlets are businesses. Business is power within U.S. society. Because of their resources and resulting influence; they are not always fair or just. Thus, what the public is often exposed to in regards to policy within the media is based on the "interests of those who have the power to control the message and its interpretation;" such as, anti-labor union advocates and political pendants. Those that hold the power within the media outlets are the ones able to control the messages and interpretation being presented and represented, even within the "little p-policies" (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Garret & Bell, 1998; Goldstein, 2010, p. 3; Wallace, 1997). Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky (1988) write about issues of power in this context:

In countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite. It is much more difficult to see a propaganda system at work where the media are private and formal censorship is absent. This is especially true where the media actively compete, periodically attack and expose corporate and governmental malfeasance, and aggressively portray themselves as spokesmen for free speech and the general community interest. (Edward S. Herman & Noam Chomsky, 1988, p. 2)

Herman and Chomsky (1988) build on to what they refer to as the “manufacture of consent;” referring to how the media serves to not only entertain and inform the mass population, but also to manipulate and shape them to the values and beliefs of the ‘invisible’ elites.

Rebecca Goldstein (2010) explains that “all media stories elicit socially constructed meanings between text and reader/viewer,” and as such understanding how the process is happening within contexts that are surrounding us every day is crucial for both educational researchers and the public if we are to understand the power issues that are at play (pp. 3-4). To further the need to examine power issues pertaining to mass media and education such as teacher unions, Gary Anderson (2007), who has written extensively on these issues, writes that

Educators and the general public need to better understand not only the extent to which the “reality” of educational reform and policy decisions is constructed with the help of the media but also the sophisticated and subtle mechanisms that make it possible. (p. 106)

Simply put, if researchers are unwilling or unmotivated to examine and critique beyond what we see at the surface pertaining to issues in public education, then we are missing very important parts of understanding of the world around us.

In the End. . .

In as much as we would like to believe that society is always progressing forward in a trajectory that tends to imagine the history and future of both education and policy as a series of incremental strides toward “improved attainments and ever greater degrees of equity and social inclusion,” the fact of the matter is that policies and laws that are put into place are often times a huge step backwards, especially when confronting issues around education and teacher unions in the last decade (Gillborn, 2014, p. 28). Using the example of teacher unions in the media through

the use of philosophy and CDA will be a perfect lens to exemplify the entangled complexities that occur within the media arena.

Thus, to explore this topic and perform the research that is needed for teacher unions within Wisconsin, the following chapters are included in this work. To help set a background and to begin to understand some of the issues that are being discussed within the state of Wisconsin concerning teacher unions, chapter two relays the history of the two major teacher unions in the U.S. (NEA and the AFT), and some direct history relating to the state of Wisconsin, which includes the state's history with public sector unions. Chapter three introduces and develops the methodologies that are employed for researching the newspaper articles that have been chosen. Then, in chapter four, the analysis of the research is presented. Concluding this work is chapter five, where implications and recommendations for the work that has been completed are given.

As will be witnessed in the research that will follow in these subsequent chapters, many of the historical wins pertaining to issues such as tenure, seniority rights, collective bargaining and employee benefits (health and retirement) over the last century within the U.S. have been largely sliced by new laws and policies enacted by powerful anti-union labor organizers, such as the example of Wisconsin that will be used. Many of these anti-labor union organizations have been aided in their desired outcomes, funneled through various media outlets as discussed previously (Leighley, 2004a).

In conclusion, this research is important in understanding the media's power over public perception concerning teacher unions, and how they are helping to shape the "little p-policies" being introduced to U.S. society, and the consequences of these actions. My intention in what follows is to try and analyze the very messy world that we live in, in regards to teacher unions and the media.

CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORY OF PUBLIC SECTOR AND TEACHER UNIONS

Solidarity is what we want. We do not want to find fault with each other, but to solidify our forces and say to each other: We must be together; our masters are joined together and we must do the same. ~Mary Harris “Mother” Jones, Irish-American schoolteacher, labor and community organizer (Early 20th century)

Throughout the history of the United States, public sector employees, which includes police, fire fighters, postal workers and public school teachers, have had a long, hard struggle to gain the rights to bargain and organize collectively. It took nearly 200 years for those rights to be won within the U.S. Union organizers throughout this period often times met with brutal oppression and neighborhood conflict from both police and those within their own communities, leading to both the verbal and physical bloodiness over the embattlement for unionization (Kearney & Mareschal, 2014). Public sector unions did eventually succeed making them triumphant for a large part within the 20th century, garnering for their union members both occupational rights, such as higher salaries and better working conditions, as well as larger society’s acceptance. However, within the U.S. today, a new set of trials and growing problems against public sector unions have been challenging their very existence.

In this chapter, the history and development of public school teacher unions within the context of public sector unions will be discussed and examined. Today, every state and most larger cities have various forms of teacher unions, for example PAGE (Professional Association of Georgia Educators) in Atlanta, Georgia. This chapter will largely focus on the development and histories of the two oldest, largest, and most influential unions: the *National Education Association* (NEA) and the *American Federation of Teachers* (AFT) (American Federation of Teachers, 2015b; National Education Association, 2014). These two unions comprise more than 90% of all teacher

union memberships and account for more than 4 million members currently (American Federation of Teachers, 2015b; National Education Association, 2014). As stated previously, teacher unions were not developed in isolation within American society, but as part of a larger labor public sector movement that took place. The following details those events beginning in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Give Us Something Worthy to Stand Upon

During the late 1800's and throughout the first half of the 20th century, public sector workers had the same basic concerns as workers in the private sector; they wanted their voices heard and their concerns answered regarding secure employment, better working conditions, and better wages and benefits. Since the industrial economy of the 19th century, private sector workers could form labor unions. Despite many historical inaccuracies that have been written concerning early private sector unions, U.S. courts seldom regarded private labor unions as inherently conspiratorial endeavors (Moreno, 2011). In fact, unions could strike and 'bargain' for certain advantages within the industry of which they protected. Allowing private sector unions initially to be permitted to informally take place within the U.S. was based on the notion that there was very little chance that unorganized individuals could take-on huge corporations concerning labor disputes, such as the billion-dollar U.S. Steel Corporation (Moreno, 2011). Thus, societally it was viewed that these unions were "necessary to redress the unequal bargaining power of unorganized workers," and in turn do away with the "old employment-at-will doctrine" which was at fault for many of the issues that troubled labor in early American history—child labor, low minimum wages, etc. (Levy & Temin, 2007; Moreno, 2011, p. 3). The *Wagner Act* (officially the National Labor Relations Act) of 1935 stated that:

employees shall have the right of self-organization, to form, join or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, ("Wagner Act of 1935," 2015 para. 1)

With the inclusion of section seven of the Wagner Act, the states became more pro-union than ever before, especially in regards to private sector unionization. It would not be until the *Taft-Hartley Act* of 1947 (officially known as the *Labor Management Relations Act*) that provisions were made that allowed states to incorporate some right-to-work laws effectively curtailing private sector union's bargaining abilities (Smith, 1948).

However, public sector unions would not enjoy the same kinds of protection and enthusiasm that the private sector unions enjoyed from the *Wagner Act*. Under section 2, public employees were exempted from the coverage under the *Wagner Act* ("*Wagner Act of 1935*," 1935). Congress essentially decreed that states and government entities were not 'employers,' and thus unions could not be formed within the public domain (Moreno, 2011; "Wagner Act of 1935," 1935). President Franklin Roosevelt in 1937 wrote the following to the Federation of Federal Employees:

All government employees should realize that the process of collective bargaining as usually understood, cannot be transplanted into the public service. It has its distinct and insurmountable limitations when applied to public personnel management. The very nature and purpose of government make it impossible for administrative officials to represent fully or to bind the employer in mutual discussions with government employee organizations. The employer is the whole people, who speak by means of laws enacted by their representatives in Congress. Accordingly, administrative officials and employees

alike are governed and guided, and in many instances restricted by laws which establish policies, procedures, or rule in personal matters. (Peters & Wooley, 1999-2016 para 3-4)

One of the most important phrases stated by Roosevelt in his letter to the Federation of Public Employees is the definition of a public employer as “the whole of people, who speak by means of laws” (Peters & Wooley, 1999-2016 para 4). Essentially Roosevelt’s major claim was that the government is sovereign, and thus, one cannot force them to bargain collectively because “whoever can compel the sovereign must perforce become the sovereign power” (Moreno, 2011, p. 4; J. E. Slater, 2004; Wellington & Winter Jr., 1969). Many other anti-public union advocates agreed with Roosevelt. This was a paradoxical quandary that had no viable solution that would be able to be solved in any capacity within the current U.S. bureaucratic system. The ideas surrounding sovereign authority was the rationale that reflected prevailing power structures within this system (West, 2008).

There were other arguments that could be made that demonstrated concern about having public sector workers able to unionize within the U.S., some of which came to fruition. One argument made against public sector unionization was that labor disputes could cause disruptions in the issuance of necessary public goods, such as putting out fires, keeping the peace, teaching the young, and delivering the mail. A long-time *New York Times* reporter, A.H. Raskin (1968) wrote that “the community cannot tolerate the notion that it is defenseless at the hands of organized workers to whom it has entrusted responsibility for essential services.” (Levin & Clyne, 2012, p. 312).

Another objection to public sector unions that commonly was voiced was that the decision-making authority was taken away from the representatives that had been put into office and instead given to union leaders. To this argument it was concluded that democracy was compromised when

the elected officials had to ‘bargain’ with union leaders over wages, benefits, and working conditions. This was something that politicians and other elected officials were not very fond of, which led to issues concerning power within communities, and in turn led to many cases of ‘bullying’ and ‘thuggery’ as described earlier.

Because of the push-back from politicians and other entities within society, public sector unions began simply as voluntary associations that were ‘craft’⁴ oriented and that tried to improve working conditions for their union members without too much attention drawn to themselves (Moreno, 2011). Concern by Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft led them to admonish public sector unions, many considering their admonishments akin to ‘gag orders’ (Moreno, 2011). In response to laws in Massachusetts that prohibited police officers from obtaining contributions for politicized organizations, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes went as far to write that “the petitioner may have a constitutional right to talk politics, but he has no constitutional right to be a policeman,” firefighter, teacher, or postal worker (Cole, 1992, p. 676). However, in 1912, the *Lloyd-La Follette Act* overturned any executive orders pertaining to the abuse of public sector unions, giving rights to petition Congress to public sector unions, except in the case of striking which was strictly prohibited (Becker, 1982). [Ironically,] The *Lloyd-La Follette Act* was named after Senator Robert La Follette of Wisconsin where progressives laid the charge for union empowerment (Moreno, 2011). The WEAC can trace its roots as far back as 1853, just five years after joining the Union. And as early as the 1950’s Governor Gaylord Nelson with fellow Wisconsin legislators pioneered the way for public sector unions through the introduction of the

⁴ The word ‘craft’ in this body of research is derived from “the Teutonic origin, where its original meaning had to do with strength, force, power, virtue” (Risatti, 2007, p. 16). In this same sense, it has come to mean a skilled occupation where an emphasis on planning and performing technical knowledge and technical skill are required “to make an object come into being” (p. 17). An example of a ‘craft’ profession could be someone who blows glass or does carpentry.

Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act in 1959. This was the first state laws giving teachers and other government workers the rights under state law for collective bargaining. Ironically, as noted in chapter one, Wisconsin has led the way in most recent years for disbanding and disempowering public sector unions, a significant shift in less than a 100-year time span.

According to Paul Moreno (2011), the “decisive episode in public sector unionism was the 1919 Boston police strike” of which “no public service better underscored the sovereign nature of government than the police” (p. 5). The Boston police strike of 1919 began over issues concerning pay, working conditions, and time on duty (some officers worked seven days a week, with one day off every two to three weeks) (Farmer, 2011). Chaos ensued all over the city, with no police to answer calls for help. The Boston strike was reported all over the country as essentially a warning of what could happen when public servants were allowed to strike (Farmer, 2011). Hence, what followed was the outcry from the public over the strike which severely damaged public sector unionization efforts, leading many to ask if allowing the Army and Navy to unionize might be next and what that would then lead to.

Because of this Boston strike of 1919, there would be no significant extension to federal employees the possibility of unionization until well into the 1960’s (Moreno, 2011). By the mid-1950’s, private sector unions were on the decrease as well, largely from business expansions into the right-to-work states throughout the Southern and Western states of the U.S., which were mostly hostile toward unions. The decline of private sector unions may also have been affected by the winding down of wartime efforts, as businesses became less likely to negotiate with workers outside of wartime need because of the availability of more workers who came back from the war, and the less wartime goods that needed to be manufactured.

On the other hand, several factors more than likely led to the resurgence of public sector unions beginning in the 1960's through the 1970's. First, the *Taft-Hartley Act* weakened private sector unions; however, it strengthened public sector unions by “dispelling arguments favoring a literal definition of [union] membership” in all industries ("Section 14 (b) of Taft-Hartley Act Held to Authorize State Court Enforcement of State Agency Shop Prohibition," 1962). This act essentially opened the door for public sector unions to be protected as real entities within the U.S. bureaucratic system. Another factor in the resurgence of public sector unions may have come about due in part to the Supreme Court decisions in the early 1960's that ordered states to reapportion help to more liberal parts of the states; parts that favored union activity over the more conservative ones (Moreno, 2011).

However, most important to public sector union growth is the growth rate of public sector workers themselves. In 1962 one out of every eight workers was employed within the public sector. By 1970 that number was one in five (C. Edwards, 2010). As of 2009, public sector union membership across the board accounts for approximately 50% of public workers with a total of two-thirds of firefighters and educators belonging to unions (C. Edwards, 2010).

Further, in 1962, President Robert Kennedy signed Executive Order 10988 which officially allowed public sector unions to be organized and even bargain collectively but did not grant them the right to bargain over wages which was still under Congress's control (Woolley & Peters, 1962). The inability to bargain over wages would be especially troublesome to teacher unions going forward. This order would be later strengthened by President Richard Nixon as a statute in the *Civil Service Reform Act* of 1978 (Woolley & Peters, 1962). The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 created three new organizations within the federal government that deals with public sector employees: The Office of Personal Management (OPM), The Merit Systems

Protection Board (MSPB), and The Federal Labor Regulations Authority (FLRA). These three organizations in conjunction with the laws and policies set forth by the Act itself created a more equitable system for public employees. Some of the most significant contributions include: increases in public employee salaries, bringing back the merit system for government positions, making it possible for federal employees to report legislative abuse of politics or inefficiency in governmental bodies with no repercussions to the person ‘whistleblowing,’ and finally it provides collective bargaining protection for public employees. However, there were several bumps in the way for public sector unions.

The *Wagner Act*, which had largely protected private sector unions throughout the 1930’s with the hope of creating peaceful coexistence for employees and employers in the U.S., had the opposite effect, causing more strikes than were ever seen before in the private sector (Klare, 1977-1978). The public sector would be no different, especially throughout the greater part of the 1970’s. Unprecedented strikes by “teachers, garbage collectors, postal workers and others became common in the late 1960’s and 1970’s, despite the fact that every state prohibited strikes by *public* employees” (Moreno, 2011, p. 6). It was during the late 1970’s that the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, (AFSCME) pushed for greater control for public sector unions/employees through the *National Public Employment Relations Law* (a *Wager Act* for public employee’s) (McCartin, 2008). The AFSCME knew that the Supreme Court was willing to extend the Commerce Clause of the U.S.⁵ to issues that seemed to stand outside the normal conventions

⁵ The Commerce Clause of the U.S. according to Farlex Legal Dictionary (2003-2016) refers to the exclusive power given to Congress “over trade activities among the states and with foreign countries and Indian tribes” (para. 1). *Whether any transaction constitutes interstate or intrastate commerce depends on the essential character of what is done and the surrounding circumstances. The courts take a commonsense approach in examining the established course of business in order to distinguish where interstate commerce ends and local commerce begins. If activities that are intrastate in character have such a substantial effect on interstate commerce that their control is essential to protect commerce from being burdened, Congress may not be denied the power to exercise that control (Farlex, 2003-2016 para. 14).*

of its power discretion, such as the *Civil Rights Act* of 1965 or the *Fair Labor Standards Act* of 1968; public sector unionization would be no different (Lawnix, 2008-2015). Further, the *Watergate Crisis*⁶ under President Richard Nixon helped by pushing a flood of Democrats into office; Democrats are generally sympathetic to most unionization within the labor force, at least during most the 20th century.

While it seemed that public sector unions had finally hit a bright spot in U.S. history, issues began to arise. First, conflicts within public sector unions themselves began to occur as more militant members tried to persuade more non-aggressive members to revolt against forces that were hampering bargaining ability for the unions, such as administrators, politicians, etc. For instance, Jerry Wurf, who was the AFSCME's union President in 1974 and very much respected, was quoted as saying during Boston strikes of the police and firefighters unions, to "Let our cities burn" if the unions did not get what they demanded from city officials (de Toledano, 1975). Like other more aggressive union members, Wurf was trying to garner support from not only government officials, but the larger society—this was an issue of power tug-o-war between workers, government, and society at large. However, heavy handed tactics by unions leaders backfired as public opinion began to strain against public sector unions, and in 1976, the Supreme Court decided in *National League of Cities v. Usery* that Congress could not "extend the *Fair Labor Standards Act* to state employee's" (Moreno, 2011, p. 7). The basis for the Court's decision was the fact that "the States as states stand on a quite different footing from an individual or a

⁶ The *Watergate Crisis* took place in 1972 when "several burglars were arrested inside the office of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), located in the Watergate building in Washington D.C." (The History Channel, 2016 para. 1). The burglars were found trying to "wiretap phones and steal secret documents" (The History Channel, 2016 para. 1). It is still not clear whether President Richard Nixon (Republican) who was president at the time, knew about the break in, but he did try to make it go away by bribing government officials and raising 'hush money' for the burglars. Nixon resigned in 1974 after it became clear after investigations that he had 'paid-off' people to make the incident go away. Later President Gerald Ford would pardon him for any involvement in the incident. Although Nixon was never tried for the crimes, the *Watergate Crisis* "changed American politics forever," and pushed a flood of Democrats into office, the opposite party of Nixon. People thought they could not trust the Republicans after the *Watergate Crisis*.

corporation” (Tierney, 1997). Although the case would be overruled by *Garcia v. San Antonio Metropolitan Transit Authority* in 1985, the societal damage to public sector unions had occurred, especially in the reporting by the mass media (Chickering, 1976).

Additionally, public sector unions began bargaining in earnest for far better wages, which did drive the overall budget up for many governmental agencies. Of course, with the increase in spending, conservatives and those overtly concerned with fiscal leniency were revived to stop what they considered “frivolous spending.” This more conservative perspective within society would help to eventually get President Ronald Reagan elected in 1980 (Troy, 2009). Then in 1981, there became an issue with the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), who had endorsed Reagan, but were not having their demands met “for pay raises, a shorter workweek, and better working conditions” (Desvarieus, 2014 para. 1). It was when President Reagan ended up firing over 11,000 air traffic controllers because PATCO declared a strike that many historians claim the “groundwork for today’s assault on labor” was set (para. 1). President Reagan wanted to “reorgani[ze] the relationship between government and the labor movement,” and for some, by firing the striking employee’s and permanently replacing them, “he sent a powerful message that many employers even in the private sector acted upon;” a period “of getting tough with the union movement, that really marked a profoundly important turning point” (para. 7). The issues of the dispute in the media were “either not treated or were expressed from an employer’s perspective so that the dispute appeared senseless to the general public, and the union was made to appear outdated and irrelevant in a contemporary labor relations environment” (Puette, 1992, p. 119). However, according to William Puette (1992):

[b]etween 1980 and 1988 appointments of conservatives to the National Labor Relations Board and the Supreme Court by President Ronald Reagan had so altered the balance of

power between labor and many that the straightforward and fundamental rights of the labor since the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935, were one by one being revoked or so convoluted by the courts that a union steward would need a law degree to know what to do. (p. 118)

Ironically, President Reagan had been a member and leader of the Screen Actors Guild; a union for actors and others dealing within the TV and film industry. His response to the air traffic controllers seemed overwhelmingly negative, especially with his union membership background.

Over the next several decades, public sector union membership would continue to grow; however, striking and other more aggressive stances that once were deemed appropriate responses to government entities that are unwilling to bargain with public employees, seems to be more unaccepted by both union members and society at large. For instance, one columnist wrote during the mid-1990's that labor has "never been weaker in its 113-year-old-history" (Penagopoulos & Francia, 2008, p. 134). The 2000's didn't change this outlook for labor within the U.S. In fact, since the 2000 US presidential election "organized labor has had to deal with a hostile U.S. Congress and the presidency of George W. Bush, who has presided over what many view as one of the most anti-union administrations in recent history" (p. 134). President Obama has been more favorable to public sector unions, but has largely kept quiet on issues that have arisen such as the destructive protests and demonstrations that took place all over Wisconsin. Besides hostile governmental attention concerning public sector unions, there has been some in-fighting within the unions themselves, often lamented within the mass media, which then leads to issues of acceptability for unions within society.

Teacher unions, in particular, that have tried to strike over the last 20 to 30 years have been met with staunch resistance from the larger society because of some of the issues that we have

seen above, and as we shall see later. Unfortunately, it would seem that at least some of the resistance seems to be fueled by what the mass media has been reporting about teacher unions.

The Stage is Set: Teacher Unions in Context⁷

Much like most other public sector unions, teacher unions began simply as craft oriented associations trying to improve conditions for its members. The *National Educators Association* (NEA), one of the largest and most influential teacher unions in the nation, was founded officially in name in 1870 with the joining of the *National Teachers Association* (NTA) and two other teacher associations (Kearney & Mareschal, 2014; National Education Association, 2014). The early NEA was established as a professional association of educators, whereby only “gentlemen” were able to join, mostly this consisted of administrators and other school authorities “to advance the interests of the teaching occupation and to provide mutual aid programs” (Kearney & Mareschal, 2014, p. 15). The individuals who formed the association were also anti-union administrators; this added to the discriminatory issues within the early NEA as well (Moreno, 2011). Hence, throughout much of the early 20th century, the NEA continued to be mostly geared toward only certain members of the educational force, excluding large numbers of both teachers and minorities.

The NEA also tended to disregard certain issues that pertained to only teachers. The trend of largely excluding issues around teachers themselves would extend well into the mid 1900’s (Murphy, 1990; National Education Association, 2014). For instance, in many places state laws and local ordinances prohibited teachers from smoking, restricted dress attire, regulated leisure time activities, and even in many instances gave curfews and bedtimes for teachers (Kearney &

⁷ Some material in the following section comes directly from my book *Pretending Teaching is a Profession: Why Public School Teaching Will Never Be Considered a True Profession*. Quotation marks nor italicized writing will be used in these sections.

Mareschal, 2014; Spero, 1948). In one north Carolina location teachers were told they must “sleep at least 8 hour a night, to eat carefully, and to take every precaution to keep in the best of health and spirits” (Spero, 1948, pp. 298-300). In certain areas of New York, curfews or bedtimes of 10:00 were mandated by ordinances (Kearney & Mareschal, 2014). And in many places in the U.S., marriage bans were enacted for teachers, especially women (Quantz, 1985). Female teachers often were secretly married and lived separately just so they could continue teaching.

In response to these rules and regulations confronted by many teachers throughout the nation, considered outlandish by today’s standards, the Chicago, Illinois and San Antonio, Texas, *Teachers Federation* (TF) responded by affiliating with the *American Federation of Labor* (AFL). Other teacher organizations began to come together and in 1916 the *American Federation of Teachers* (AFT) was founded. The AFT member numbers have grown over the decades, however by the early 1960’s, only 5% of teacher union members belonged to the AFT, mostly consisting in large urban areas, such as Chicago, New York, and Atlanta (Moe, 2011).

Unlike the NEA, the AFT began with concerns for human rights; allowing and encouraging all members of the educational community to join (Murphy, 1990; National Education Association, 2014). Hence, the AFT was the first trade union to allow minorities to join (American Federation of Teachers, 2015a). Further, the AFT has come under some scrutiny because, unlike the NEA, the AFT allows non-public sector workers and non-education specialists to join their union because of their affiliation with the more generic *American Federation of Labor*. In fact, a large segment of their union workforce comes from the medical field—nurses—which some concede should fall into other labor unions domain (Jamieson, 2013). Opponents of the intersectionality of the AFT claim that the two entities, public and private unions, have different

apparatus and needs for their members. Nonetheless, the AFT has a strong affiliation specifically with educators throughout the U.S.

The early years of both the NEA and the AFT were rocky at best, as was seen by most public sector unions throughout the U.S. However, by the 1960's, public service activism opened countless opportunities for change, and teacher unions would be no different. A pivotal moment in teacher union history for these two unions came in 1961, when "the AFT won a representation election in New York City, giving it the right to represent that city's teachers in collective bargaining negotiations" (Moe, 2011, p. 153). Then, in 1962, the leader of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), Al Shanker, a member of the AFT union in New York, in conjunction with David Seldon, the president of the AFT at the time, staged a teacher strike in New York City (Woodring & Scaslos, 1962). Over 20,000 teachers walked off the job, even though striking was illegal according to New York state law (Woodring & Scaslos, 1962). The results of the strike were a successful negotiation of teacher demands on the New York education system, most notably done by the AFT. This win for the AFT set in motion the aggressive campaigning throughout the nation for membership, creating some inter-rivalry between the NEA and the AFT, but showing that when the teacher unions were willing to organize and fight, a common good could be accomplished.

Continually throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the two unions went head to head for membership numbers. The NEA used its already nationwide presence, a presence the AFT did not have, to secure large union membership, especially outside of large urban areas (Moe, 2011). The NEA would be triumphant throughout this period as the leading force in the educational arena within the U.S. Nevertheless, after this point, the NEA would look very different than it had the

past 100 years of its existence, changing in membership composition and stances to include minorities and issues pertaining to the teachers themselves (Moe, 2011).

Sometimes hostile organization by the NEA and the AFT, along with numerous teacher strikes, brought about the knowledge of teacher unions to most school districts within the U.S. by the early 1980's. Much like other public sector unions by this time, member numbers within the teacher unions, especially within the AFT, had begun to level off as the transformation of public sector unionization became entrenched where "unionization and collective bargaining had become the norm" outside of the Southern U.S. (Moe, 2011, p. 154).

In 1961 the NEA had approximately 800,000 members, and by 2000 had a yearly membership of 3 million. However, by 2014, their numbers dropped by around 4% to 2.6 million, and have continued to do so for the last several years even though they are in fifty U.S. states (Moe, 2011; Sawchuk, 2013). The AFT has fared roughly the same, with a membership count of around 71,000 in 1961, to approximately 874,000 in 2012 as reported to the Department of Labor and Statistics; this is a drop from 2000 when the approximate number of members was sitting at around 1.3 million (Ed Notes Online, 2012; Moe, 2011). Only 50% of the AFT's numbers account for teachers within their membership ranks; and the AFT only has affiliates in 40 states in the U.S. (Moe, 2011). The only states that the AFT dominates teacher union membership over the NEA is in New York and Rhode Island (Moe, 2011). These numbers are statistically similar to data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in early 2016, whereby they report that the public sector union membership rate is currently at 35.2 %, or five times higher than private sector unionization at 6.7% (U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). They further reported that union membership was highest in public sector unionization at the local level, especially for teachers (35.5%) (U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). These statistics

are important to demonstrate and give a sense of how public sector unionization have taken hold within the education field over the past one hundred plus years, and how the NEA and AFT compare in size and structure in the U.S.

Because of the sheer size of the teacher workforce and the subsequent size of the teacher unions within the U.S., these two unions are what comprise some of the most powerful voices in education and politics within the U.S. They play a central role in the

way schools work; decision-making process; hiring, evaluation, and firing criteria, including grievance procedure; resource allocation (pay, benefits, promotion, increases, and supplements); teaching methods; career ladders and on-the-job training programs; and getting educational goals and standards and ways to evaluate them. (Torres et al., 2000, p. 9)

Hence, throughout the 20th and continuing into the 21st century, teacher unions have been concerned with “improving employment rights, wages, and working conditions, and on pressuring the government to increase education budgets” of which they were highly effective up until the early 1980’s (Torres et al., 2000).

As was previously described, the election of President Reagan changed the landscape for public service unions. After two decades of legislation allowing and protecting the rights of public service workers through the allotment of labor unions, republicans suddenly began tightening control over what they considered inflammatory public spending, of which public education fell victim the hardest. Collective bargaining began to be put under scrutiny by conservative politicians, as were conditions of teachers pay and benefits (Baltodaro, 2012). Not coincidentally, much of these restrictive measures were on the heels of the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983), written by President Ronald Reagan’s National Commission on Excellence in Education

highlighted the seemingly ineffective way teachers were instructing U.S. students. Teacher unions went on the defensive, trying to defend teachers against allegations of poor performance, all the while trying to salvage what gains they had made during the last thirty years for teachers and the educational systems throughout the U.S. (Torres et al., 2000). The government during the 1980's and continuing on into the 21st century has followed the:

[d]iscourse on education [that focuses] on concepts such as restructuring, excellence, decentralization, managerialism, and accountability. Moreover, to increase control over unions, governments now use the very concepts of responsibility, service, expertise, and autonomy that were advanced by unions in the past to increase their power and prestige. (p. 11)

Besides public schooling, teacher unions have also been concerned about other societal issues. The NEA has adopted resolutions on many different issues, including: nuclear testing, universal health care, women's rights, abortion, environmental regulation, and Native American and minority rights (Moe, 2011; National Education Association, 2014). The AFT itself has taken stances on child labor in foreign nations, wars in various places such as Kosovo, Ireland, and Syria, and concerned itself with issues of democracy and power in places like Argentina and Northern Korea (American Federation of Teachers, 2015b; Moe, 2011). However, historically, teachers working conditions and the U.S. education system is their top priority that consumes the union's agenda.

Teacher unions throughout their histories have helped to shape the political discourse on issues concerning education in the U.S. This is an important aspect of teacher unions that is largely overlooked within their histories. Essentially, they were created to help teachers in the workplace, so that teachers could concentrate on what is important-- the students. However, teacher unions

have always been situated politically and have had some influence over state and federal policy making. The NEA and AFT have “acted aggressively on incentives, and they have emerged as extraordinarily powerful players in both state and national politics” (Moe, 2011, p. 171). According to Moe, experts were asked to rank interest groups according to influence on public policy, and teacher unions came out as number one on the list. Teacher unions influence was “regarded as high, moreover, in virtually every single state outside the South; a measure of the remarkable breadth and uniformity of their political power” (p. 171). The vast issues that teacher unions face today seem to be related to their histories and issues of social justice, all of which culminate into the need to organize into a single united body, much like the Mother Jones’ comment at the beginning of the chapter. However, teacher’s unions sit a bit uneasy within U.S. society. The unsteady line teacher union’s face seems to be playing out within the media in current times.

History Culmination

There seems to lie within U.S. society a discontent with public sector unions, including public school teacher unions, which largely began within the early 1980’s and continues today, although we have seen from my description above public sector unions were not perceived favorably in the first half of the 20th century as well. Today’s disfavor seems to be due in large part because of the garnered power and influence they received within society over the first half of the 20th century, even if it was bumpy. There is an uneasy acceptance of public sector unions within the U.S., even in places like Wisconsin where public sector unionization was garnered and continued to flourish even before laws were officially put into place within the federal government. However, some polls would suggest that Americans, even those within right-to-work states, might not want to see public sector unions disbanded or stripped of abilities, such as collective

bargaining, and rights that were fought over and hard won. A 2012 *Wall Street Journal*/NBC poll revealed that while “Americans want public employees to pay more for retirement benefits and health care, 77 % said unionized state and municipal employees should have the same rights as union members who work in the private sector” (Kohlenberg & Greene, 2012 para. 3). This would stand to reason since free societies all over the world, from Finland to Japan, allow teachers and other public sector workers the right to unionize and engage in activities such as collective bargaining and discretionary input (Kohlenberg & Greene, 2012). Have teacher unions, more than any other public union (police, fire-fighters, postal workers, etc.) been more publicly ridiculed or picked apart in the 21st century? Has the media helped promulgate this belief if this is in fact the case?

Much of the literature on teacher unions has been “macro-level and institutional in focus, written from the perspectives of administrators, policy analysts, and organizational theorists” (Bascia, 1990, p. 302). Unions in recent years have been held responsible for everything from “increased bureaucratization,” to “ineffective implementation of reform policies,” to the “simplification of conceptions of teaching from professional to labor models” (p. 302). Wisconsin is no different in the blame game. Unlike what the 2011 Gallop Poll demonstrated above, teacher unions’ actions have been viewed most recently by society as “unprofessional, irrelevant, or harmful” (p. 302). So, why the change in U.S. society concerning teacher unions? Are the media outlets adding or even intensifying the negative impact to teacher unions and policy? Is history bound to reverse itself in terms of public sector unions, especially in regards to teacher unions who seem to be on the sharp edge of the media’s attempts at curtailing public sector unionization? Even if public service unions have had a contentious history, it would seem they should be given some credit for what they have accomplished within U.S. educational systems. However, we shall begin

to unravel the assault on teacher unions as to see if the media's overtness, history's influence, and a possibility of other factor's lead to present day criticisms of teacher unions.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

We live in an age of great change and instability in which the forms of power and domination are being radically reshaped. ~ Norman Fairclough from *The Critical Study of Language* (1995)

Undergirding much public opinion within the United States in regard to public sector unions, specifically teacher unions, lies in the power of the media through the use of ‘elite discourse’⁸ (Norman Fairclough, 1992; Simon & Xenos, 2000). Scholars argue that “elite discourse represents a powerful hegemonic force for indoctrinating the masses with the ideas of the ruling class” (Simon & Xenos, 2000, p. 364). In this claim, it is maintained that what is discussed within the media responds to, and conditions itself to the material world leading to the precipitation of the ideas themselves coming to fruition. According to Norman Fairclough (1992) “the power of the media to shape governments and parties, to transform suffering . . . to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations [and] social identities” is significant to understanding the impact the media has within the U.S. (p. 2). However, more importantly, the media is a “signifying power (the power to represent things in particular ways) which is largely a matter of how language is used,” but also the purposes it goes to serve—the domination⁹ and inequality it may or may not create (p. 3). In this capacity, given the prominent position of the media within U.S. social systems, there can be little argument that they can indeed foster sociocultural change within the mass population. The question becomes in this research whether the media is doing this where teacher unions are concerned?

⁸ Elite discourse refers to individuals (politicians, government officials, interest groups, and journalists) whose primary activities involve politics or public affairs and “whom we depend, directly or indirectly, for information about the world” (Zaller, 1992, p. 6).

⁹ Domination is defined here “as the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups, that result in social inequality, including political, cultural class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality” (van Dijk, 1993, pp. 249-250).

I will be advancing the multifaceted dimensions of the media by concentrating on the way in which discourse reproduces and confronts the role of dominance by the media over teacher unions within Wisconsin. The best avenue for doing so can be found within the methodological framework of critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1993, p. 249). Critical discourse analysis helps with description of language variations within certain social institutions. It also engages understanding of semiotic modalities that run through interdiscursivity that can be couched in ideological discourse. It is also a way to speak to recognizing focal themes of social institutions, such as, the media. What follows in this chapter is a framework to set up systematically researching the way language is viewed as social practice concerning teacher unions through communication via the media and critical discourse analysis (CDA).

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Brief History

To understand what critical discourse analysis is and how to use it as a working theoretical and methodological framework for researching the media's reporting of teacher unions, it is important to first briefly explain the origins of CDA and a little of the history behind it. CDA can be considered a heterogeneous movement of sorts, with differing schools oriented toward different epistemologies (Forchtner, 2010). Therefore, depending on the discipline and hypothesis used to trace CDA, at least some of the lines of development can be sketched back to philosophers such as Marx, and then to the Frankfurt School where theorists such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse first developed the preliminary forms of what we now call CDA. Further, Jurgen Habermas' work which encompasses discussions of rationalization and his

embrace of critical theory,¹⁰ seems to play a key role in the further development of CDA after the 1960's (Geuss, 1981; P. Slater, 1977).

A different theoretical line that is decidedly more neo-Marxist¹¹ in its foundation is that coming from France and the United Kingdom and includes work from Stuart Hall and other members of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (S. Hall, 1981; van Dijk, 1993). Interestingly enough, cultural studies also has roots in generalized theoretical research concerning the media which will be developed further in this chapter. However, this second line was influenced by scholars such as Antonio Gramsci and his work on hegemony¹² and domination. After the 1960's, these varying lines of influence converged into efforts that have since surrounded CDA, which includes work from noted scholars of social justice such as Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Michel Pecheux.

It was in the 1990's that CDA became the theoretical and methodological tool that it is today, and the one that I will be using within my research concerning the media. Through support from the University of Amsterdam, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van

¹⁰ Critical theory is a sociological theory that seeks to explain and critique issues pertaining to power, which leads to various forms of oppression, hierarchy, subordination and domination; and other social justice issues like racism, classism, democracy and other highly debatable issues within modern societies. Critical theory is also concerned with the ways that social and cultural institutions interact to construct socially and politically the world around us. Schneider and Ingram (1997) write that critical theory has "in common an overriding concern with oppression and domination in modern advanced societies and a commitment to radically participatory nonhierarchical forms of political, economic, and social interaction" (p. 51). Critical theory helps the researcher and reader to dig beneath the surface of issues in society and uncover unquestioned assumptions and long standing institutional affordances that keep individuals from full and true understanding of how the world around us is working; it is essentially wanting to produce social change that "will empower, enlighten, and emancipate all people" (p. 51). According to Wodak (1993) the core concepts of critical theory are two-fold: 1. *Critical Theory should be directed at the totality of society in its historical specificity; and 2. Critical theory should improve the understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences, including economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology and psychology*

¹¹ Neo-Marxist refers to "forms of political philosophy which arise from adaptation of Marxist thought to accommodate or confront modern issues such as the global economy, the capitalist welfare state, and the stability of liberal democracies" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016).

¹² Hegemony is simply "the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominate group" (Merriam-Webster, 2015). Referring specifically to Antonio Gramsci, he refers to hegemony when describing how states use certain cultural institutions to preserve, legitimate, and normalize authority in capitalist societies (Gramsci, 1971).

Leeuwen, and Ruth Wodak came together to help solidify the theories and methods now associated with CDA (Ruth Wodak & Michael Meyer, 2009). In 1990, Van Dijk began the journal *Discourse and Society*, which has significantly helped to propel the further research endeavors of those who wish to use CDA in their own work. In the years since a theoretical and methodological framework has been set out that distinguishes CDA from other frameworks; however, newer approaches to the use of CDA are continually being introduced and used within scholarly research. In sum, CDA has been established as a reputable and reliable research method across many departments and disciplines for exploring social issues that are impacting the world around us, such as those of public school teacher unions (Ruth Wodak & Michael Meyer, 2009).

The Undergirding of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is derived from two fields, discourse analysis (DA) and critical theory (CT) whereby exploration of written language or discourse is researched with an eye toward the critical aspects of the social. However, it is essential to note up front that CDA is not a “critical perspective in the study of language, discourse [or] communication,” rather the importance is in the issues found within such discourse that matters (van Dijk, 1993, p. 253). Essentially what CDA is interested in is “de-mystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and reproducible investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)” (Ruth Wodak & Michael Meyer, 2009, p. 3). The terms ‘discourse’ and ‘critical’ then are all important aspects of the widely used, but often confusing aspect of using DA, especially since differing fields use it in various contexts, with varying definitions (Norman Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1985). However, it is important to note that both DA and CDA are multidisciplinary research theories and methodologies, both originating from the same background of language and discourse research, just with varying characteristics.

First, we can turn to the notion of ‘discourse’ within CDA. Fairclough (1995) has distinguished two main senses of discourse related to analysis of written information that can transpose varying disciplines un-problematically. The first is in language studies: essentially discourse acts as “social action and interaction, [and] people acting together in real social situations” (p. 18). And the second takes precedence predominantly in social theory through post-structuralist¹³ models where “a discourse [is] a social construction of reality, [and] a form of knowledge” (p. 18). Discourse in this sense, and for all intents and purposes throughout the rest of this research, will rely heavily on the assumption that within CDA, discourse subsumes both of these components.

The second part of CDA, the ‘critical’ has been central to further developing the theory and methodology surrounding CDA. David Machin and Andrea Mayr (2012) state that “CDA points to a departure from the more descriptive goals of linguistics and discourse analysis, where the focus has been more on describing and detailing linguistic features than about why and how these features are produced and what possible ideological goals they might serve” (p. 5). CDA in this sense analyzes text such as newspapers, books, political speeches and the like that appear to be neutral on the surface, but in fact contain ideological premises that seek to influence people and certain events for meticulous ends. Machin and Mayr (2012) go on to explain that the “term ‘critical’ therefore means ‘denaturalising’ the language to reveal the kinds of ideas, absences, and taken-for-granted assumption in texts” we come to see often through lofty research (p.5). The idea

¹³ Post-structuralism first emerged from France, and according to the *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology* is a term that at its “broadest level can be defined as a theoretical approach that seeks to push the focus of inquiry beyond knowable structures in the study of social behavior...Rather than drawing causal links between structures (be they economic, social, linguistic, or otherwise) and human behavior, post-structuralism seeks to interrogate the forms of knowledge, the logics, and the assumptions that underlie our actions and our interventions on the social” (Macleod & Palmer, 2014).

of the ‘critical’ within CDA is that the action being researched is ongoing and reflective of an intellectual relationship to the world, essentially taking on a critical orientation.

Understanding how ‘discourse’ and ‘critical’ come together to contribute to CDA is important; however, there are other characteristics of CDA that are apart of these terms that are also important to recognize. Most notably, CDA deals with the discourse dimension of social justice issues that surface surrounding questions of power exploitation and the social inequalities that may arise from it (van Dijk, 1993). This focus on injustice and inequality implies that although other approaches in DA may seemingly have the same characteristics, those who research using CDA are interested in researching topics that take on social justice issues, hence the critical component of CDA. The ‘critical’ part of CDA comes largely from the Frankfurt School and the scholars working with the ideas surrounding power, domination, and hegemony.

Once we recognize what is meant by social power and dominance, it is easier ‘to verbalize the influences that contribute to their reproduction’ (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). With the use of CDA, the analyst deals with relations between social groups. In this sense, the idea of elite discourse once again becomes important as the researcher begins to focus on social power, not on personal power. The idea of social power and the elite discourse that comes from it is based on favored access to valuable resources found within certain societal positions, such as those found with the gaining of education, wealth, position, etc. Van Dijk (1995) writes best about this view of power within CDA:

Power involves control namely by (members of) one group over (those of) other groups. Such control may pertain to action and cognition: that is, a powerful group may limit the freedom of action of others, but also influence their minds. Besides the elementary recourse to force to directly control action (as in police violence against demonstrators, or male

violence against women), ‘modern’ and often more effective power is mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation, among other strategic ways to change the mind of others in one’s own interests. It is at this crucial point where discourse and critical discourse analysis come in: managing the mind of others is essentially a function of text and talk. Note, though that such mind management is not always bluntly manipulative. On the contrary, dominance may be enacted and reproduced by subtle, routine, everyday forms of text and talk that appear ‘natural’ and quite ‘acceptable.’ Hence, CDA also needs to focus on the discursive strategies that legitimate control, or otherwise ‘naturalize’ the social order, and especially in relation of inequality (p. 254).

Although not all power can be denounced as negative whether meaning social or personal power; however, CDA is interested in issues of abuse of such power, such that if there are disruptions in laws, rules concerning the principles of democracy, equality, or justice by those who brandish power, then CDA is interested in uncovering and researching such issues (Norman Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1993). Further issues of hegemony will be discussed concerning the media in the section that follows as it pertains directly to the institution itself.

As with power, issues pertaining to domination are also topics of interest to those who do CDA research and analysis. Domination, like issues of power, are never totalitarian in nature, but rather are seen as naturalized, unless they begin to become questioned or challenged, as in such cases as white over black, rich over poor, or in the case of this research, anti-union (possible neoliberal/corporatist/ultra-conservative models) over union. Further, if the minds of the dominated can be persuaded or manipulated in such a way that they more or less blindly accept the dominance being given to them, the term hegemony can be used to describe what is transpiring

(Gramsci, 1971). Dominant discourse then produces acceptance and legitimacy of dominance (E.S. Herman & N. Chomsky, 1988; van Dijk, 1993).

In concern with the ideas behind CDA and power, domination and hegemony, all of which are in regards to the ‘critical’ part concerning CDA, these ideas are not always so clear cut and easy to define and determine. According to Van Dijk (1995),

The concept of hegemony, and its associated concepts of consensus, acceptance and the management of the mind, also suggest that a critical analysis of discourse and dominance is far from straightforward, and does not always imply a clear picture of villains and victims. Indeed, we have already suggested that many forms of dominance appear to be ‘jointly produced’ through intricate forms of social interaction, communication and discourse. [The hope is that] critical discourse analysis will be able to contribute to [the] understanding of such intricacies (p. 255).

As stated above, dominance and power are generally thought of as being organized and institutionalized (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). According to CDA, social domination of groups are not just a manufactured existence by individual group members necessarily, although this can sometimes be the case, but rather, they are supported and/or condoned by many group members, “sanctioned by the courts, legitimated by laws, enforced by the police, and ideologically sustained and reproduced by the media” in which they are often times a part of (van Dijk, 1993). It is through these means that certain individuals within these ‘elite’ groups have special access to the discourse that is disseminated unto the larger society—they are literally the ones who have the say in what becomes part of the ideology. This ‘symbolic power’ is what measures the extent of “their discursive and communicative scope and resources” (p. 255).

For scholars such as Norman Fairclough (1995), his emphasis is on how these power relations and issues of domination are exchanged in the discourse. It is assumed that relations of power are discursive, and therefore, are transmitted and practiced through discourse (Norman Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). CDA analysis in this sense can demonstrate how the forms of power relations involved in various social issues are maintained through various communication means, such as newspaper stories and television broadcasts, among other things such as, political speeches, advertising, etc. (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Analysis on text and talk can demonstrate how entities such as newspapers seek to promote certain ideologies such as, ‘anti-unionism’ to distract society from the real forces that are underpinning greater inequality and poor life experiences for those that are most greatly affected by the removal of the unions within American society. I have used anti-unionism as the example here because this work deals with teacher unions, but this notion of distraction away from important social justice issues can be spread to many different facets in our society including racism, gender discrimination issues, etc.

Critical discourse analysis then must take an overt sociopolitical stance. According to Van Dijk (1995), CDA analysts must “spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large” (p. 252). The work that a researcher using CDA does is ultimately political. The hope is that change may become possible. The problems that CDA deal with are real and are often serious societal problems, faced by real people.

Although the basis for CDA’s theoretical and methodological foundational applications across a wide range of contexts and disciplines have many admirable points, as with most theoretical and methodological frameworks, CDA has its share of criticisms including the following:

1. CDA is not the only critical approach and how ‘critical’ is it

2. CDA is an exercise in interpretation, not analysis
3. CDA for the most part ignores real readers and listeners
4. CDA does not pay enough attention to text production
5. CDA is not cognitive enough
6. CDA is too easy, selective, partial and qualitative
7. CDA is too ambitious in its quest for social change
8. CDA relies on a negative definition of power

(Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 208). While all these criticisms are important in one aspect or another concerning the use of CDA research, I will address a few of the ones I feel are most important concerning the research that will follow in regards to teacher unions since this work's intentions are not to fully critique CDA, but merely use it as a tool of analysis.

First, in regards to addressing the issues with CDA and the ideas surrounding ideas of 'criticality,' Michael Billig (2002) "us[es] the argu[ment] that by using the term 'critical,' a dichotomy is set up whereby CDA is constructed as positive, whereas all other perspectives are thistly fashioned to be the contrary" (p. 37). Thereby, Billig argues that many "appraise CDA critically, we should therefore be aware that the use of the term 'critical' is itself significant as what has been termed 'a rhetoric of self-praise'" (p. 37). Because of the issues brought up by scholars such as Billig with the 'critical' part of CDA, it is important to understand that CDA, if not used properly as a methodological tool, can take on a 'better than other' persona. Proponents of CDA will ask the question: "What then is the role of critical discourse analysis if it seems to become positivist in nature as it purports to help solve social justice issues?"

Although these are valid points when contending with the critical aspects of CDA, they can be addressed by understanding that what is being researched using CDA is generally

sociopolitical in nature, and by its very nature is chaotic and complicated, and needs to be examined critically by the researcher involved. Understanding that the researcher must be up front with their own self-identity and inoculation into a certain social situation and culture at a particular place and time, can help the reader and researcher understand the dimensionality of the material being researched, and therefore, the ‘critical’ components of the material are by their very definition appropriately critical for that span of space and time. If used properly and responsibly, CDA can be both critical and thorough in the research being conducted. Just because CDA is said to be critical, does not necessarily condone that it is the only analysis method that by its nature is critical. However, among the DA types, it is one that has a ‘critical’ component.

Further, along the lines of the ‘critical’ critique vein of CDA, many researchers question the genuine social effects of CDA research and whether or not the desire to see change is too ambitious (Chilton, 2005; Waugh, Catalano, Masaeed, Do, & Renigar, 2015). Authors such as Paul Chilton (2005) and Henry Widdowson (1998) are reluctant to believe that CDA offers any broader genuine emancipatory choices, while Van Dijk (2009) claims that CDA results often times in a ‘blame-game’ concerning oppressors and the oppressed, which in the end leads to no real solutions or resistance for those being oppressed. Regarding this critique of CDA, I find that the scholar’s job when doing research with any type of social justice issues is to firstly make sure that they are doing the best job possible to report truly what they are finding within the research they are performing. Their second job is to always give some advice or foresight into what can or should be done to make the situation in which they researched better, or at the very least, what could be done in the future concerning the issues that were found. Many researchers that do this type of work often go on to take their findings and begin social movements within both academic avenues and general society (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

It can be troublesome to some scholars that the work that they are doing is not meaningful and has no implications unto the larger society. For myself as researcher, this is one of the more important critiques that I am looking at within my own research on teacher unions. I do not consider that it will benefit anyone if my research on the seemingly detrimental effects of the media on public sector unions/teacher unions were to end with this research, especially if the results of this research were to significantly show a bias that is unwarranted by the media I examine. What would be the worth of this work? What would be the reason to write it in the first place? However, whether a researcher actively takes the material out to the larger society, does not automatically exempt its usefulness or purpose for the greater good. Further, my credence is that overtly and utterly ambitious scholarship is much more important than to have no ambition at all. CDA allows the researcher to have hope to bring to light and make change for the better in concern for issues that may be neglected, go unnoticed, or become naturalized within our societies.

Another critique that should be addressed within this work pertains to the simplicity of work that the scholar is researching (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Some scholars contend that the material CDA scholars research is easy in the fact that the material being analyzed is “fairly obvious in terms of what [it] communicates even without in-depth analysis” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 211). For instance, if a newspaper ran a headline titled, “School board seeks to replace long term appointee,” the question then becomes do we need to necessarily use linguistic and critical methodologies to understand what is going on? However, to refute this criticism, Machin and Mayr (2012) give an excellent counter-example for this argument:

Anyone reading, for example, Kress’s (1985) analysis of school books would find it difficult to claim that the less than obvious deletion of agents and presentation of power relations through modals is not particularly revealing in terms of the way the world and

certain actions and events are portrayed to children (p. 211). (In regards to the work Changing Text: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Textbooks)

The reason for researching using CDA is because to many, the talk and text of seemingly simplistic discourses in this world seem easy even to seasoned researchers, but in fact have become so naturalized and ostensibly neutral that those who should know better than to dismiss something at the first or even second look, do so because they cannot see beyond their own entrenched ideologies.

The final criticism of CDA that I would like to address is whether it is successful as a methodology. Most scholars that know CDA and the work that is done using it, would agree that CDA is theoretically a very sound research tool, one that originates from the much-grounded scholarship of DA and linguistics. However, many scholars question whether or not the theoretical can be adequately transcribed into the methodological realm (Machin & Mayr, 2012; Waugh et al., 2015). Martyn Hammersley (1996) and Peter Jones (2007) argue that CDA may be too determined with trying to create social change with terms such as ‘discourse,’ ‘social justice,’ and the like which are only vaguely defined within the research. It is because of this reason then that they further claim that researchers may overly construe the data, “whereby ideological evaluation becomes part and parcel of textual analysis” and methodological rigor is sidelined (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 214). In conjunction with this, Widdowson (1998) claims that CDA is “ideologically committed to a specific form of interpretation of texts,” and the discourse within those “may not be helpful in [breaking down,] understanding and criticizing real-life communicative processes” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 214). The clear issue with these critics is that CDA is less methodologically driven than other forms of textual analysis. One answer to this critique can be found in the “representativeness of the samples of language analyzed against

empirically verifiable data, chosen on the basis of explicit and objective criteria and collected” using acceptable qualitative and/or quantitative methods and procedures such as thematic and patterning procedures, as well as, coding and labeling (p. 216).

In response to these critiques, those who use CDA must be rigorous in their analysis and particular about the questions they are seeking to answer with the discourse that they are choosing to research. The creation of a new journal in 2004, *Critical Discourse Studies*, founded by Van Dijk is helping in the growth of this relatively new field which includes specialized functions on discourse. This is attracting scholars from different disciplines, which in turn, is creating new fusions between discourse analysis and differing theoretical and methodological viewpoints (N. Fairclough, Graham, Lemke, & Wodak, 2004) Within the research that follows I hope to demonstrate the ability of CDA as a research analysis tool through newspapers and the topic of teacher unions within Wisconsin, but we must first look to understanding the importance of the media itself.

The Importance of the Mass Media

A significant contribution to the overall research in this analysis of teacher unions is that dealing with the media itself. It is important to not only understand some of the special properties such as mediums¹⁴ and techniques,¹⁵ but also other properties; such as, the “economics and politics of the mass media, the nature of the market which the mass media are operating within, and their relationship to the state” (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 36). These are all important aspects of the

¹⁴ A medium within media studies is a particular means of production, i.e. television, newspaper, or magazine (Leighley, 2004b).

¹⁵ Techniques of media can vary by genre. However, for newspapers, the techniques are defined as a way that their paper is executed daily, this includes everything from the headlines to the layout and font size. The techniques for newspapers also regularly include the following: special consideration of language: word choice, the use of similes, humor, and captions, a difference in a point of view, adjectives, and questions, the type of tense or statistics used, and sentence structure (Molina, 1997). This is not a wholly comprehensive list, but some of the things that can be defined within newspapers technique usage.

media that help to contribute to the overall picture of what is going on concerning teacher unions within U.S. society and how accurate research through CDA can take place within this subject matter.

First, as a practice, media discourse, and in the case of this research, newspaper discourse must be in a context, or in other words, some type of social setting (Richardson, 2007). Media discourse is active—it is focused on doing something. In this media ‘activity’ that is reported, the social context is never wholly neutral. According to John Richardson (2007), there are “certain ways of acting [that] are considered more appropriate and ways of speaking or writing have become entrenched into styles¹⁶ and genres¹⁷” (p. 220). Therefore, as we will see within the research, the social setting controls the language used, and what is understood within what is being presented, allowing some individuals and situations to be represented and not others. Essentially, the language and presentation of what is reported in the media has an effect on shaping how consumers of the newspapers and other media outlets perceive the world around them, including themselves and others, and most significantly, how they view the information being presented to them, especially in regards to issues surrounding and pertaining to both social and political awareness (Richardson, 2007, p. 220).

It is important to look at how the media can negotiate between the private and public domain efficiently and without overstepping boundaries, creating a space that is outwardly neutral

¹⁶ Styles within the mass media refers to the distinct appearance of typical media making activities. For instance, newspapers throughout the U.S. have a broad set-up for how their pages look. The newspapers are generally broken down into columns headed by a title and author of the story. Pictures are often above or to the direct right of the written column. The papers various sections are broken down into sub-sections like ‘Business,’ ‘Community,’ and ‘Money.’ Each section is then given a page number and most often sub-sectioned in categories such as, ‘a,’ ‘b,’ ‘c,’ etc. Most papers are cap-stoned by ‘Headlines’ on the front page, and ‘Classifieds’ being the last section of the paper.

¹⁷ Genres within the mass media refers to a medium such as newspapers, television, etc. A genre is “recognized by its common set of disguising features,” such as “a particular setting, character types, [or] technical codes” (Ministry of Education Te Tahuhu O Te Matauranga, 2015 para. 2). The recognition for audiences within the media is very important when it comes to genres; the audience expects certain styles within certain genres. In effect, producers market the genre to the audience that is most likely to be in favor of consumption of said genre.

and unbiased. The boundaries of what is decent and obscene have become blurred within media outlets as they try to bridge the gap between the public “conditions of media production and the private conditions of consumption by evolving a ‘communicative ethos’ and a ‘communicative style’ which adjust towards the priorities, values and practices of private life” of their anticipated audiences (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 38).

Because of the balancing act between the private and public domains, different types of interaction require different types of audiences. For newspapers, on which this research on teacher unions is focused, the categories of participants are those who read the paper daily, but also other third party groups of individuals, such as, political scientists, politicians, trade unionists, anti-unionists, etc. (Ellis, 1982). Within these readers, the media creates for its users a ‘colloquial language’ that changes when necessary for the ease of understanding depending on the diversity of the audience targeted (Norman Fairclough, 1995). The theory is that the bigger the audience for any particular media outlet, the more interest the state and other non-governmental agencies (i.e. political parties, corporatizations, etc.) have in controlling what is put into the reporting (Cook, 1998). However, even without the understanding that the other entities might somehow be involved within the media’s reporting, producers within the various media outlets still must “postulate and construct ‘ideal’ audience response” to what they want to disseminate to the public at large (p. 40). There is debate according to Fairclough (1995) about the connection to “manipulation, cultural domination and imperialism and ideology” (p. 40).

It is important to note that there is nothing stopping ordinary citizens, the intended audiences (trade unions, inner-city housing developments, students, politicians) from creating their own media and disseminating it; however, this is highly unlikely because of the cost and time involved. Media production is very much under institutional control and for those who have certain

political, economic, social, and cultural power and control, the access is greatly available to them (Norman Fairclough, 1995). This represents a major power differential within the media, lending itself to examination of issues that are reported within it.

Furthermore, a communicative event, which is essentially a way that individuals exchange information about events that happen around them, is a form of social practice which is then reporting other social practices, lending ways to another communicative event, such as the case with newspaper articles (Norman Fairclough, 1995; Norman Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Fowler, 1991). One can then question which communicative events get to be represented and presented to the public at large, and what impact their social practices have on their audiences. Those who study the media and CDA contend that

communicative events and social practices are recontextualized differently depending upon the goals, values and priorities of communication in which they are recontextualized. This raises questions of truth, bias and manipulation which have been a major preoccupation [et. al] in the media...such differences of representation can be specified in terms of the use of different ‘discourses’ (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 41).

Accordingly, even the most innocuous seemingly neutral endeavors, such as newspapers claim to report just the ‘facts’ of any given social situation, seem to be subject to highly elaborate economic and political pressures, as well as cultural ones.

The economics of the media are also an important aspect to delve into. Media outlets are profit-making organizations that are selling their ‘product’ to their audiences and advertisers alike. Even organizations that are ‘publicly’ funded, such as the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) or the British Broadcasting Channel (BBC), have to ‘sell’ themselves through their viewership to both advertisers and the government agencies that they answer respectively to for continued

funding (Robbins, 2013). According to Fairclough (1995), textual media are “cultural commodities,” produced in a certain culture, for a certain audience (p. 43). These texts are made for profit with all the effects that particularities like commercialization causes and that the market bears on them. This emphasis on the market makes the stories found in the media more about entertainment than having an emphasis on real information or educational knowledge.

In this way, the media is responding correspondingly to the pull of neoliberalism within U.S. society, instead of simply presenting a factual, largely un-biased as possible representation of events that are taking place. This overarching, neoliberal pull affects both content and communicative style in what is presented within the discourse (Hesmondhalgh, 2006). However, to seemingly combat these more neoliberalistic undertones within the media, what is presented to society seems to go against the ideals under such a corporatist structure, being more personal and intimate in nature. Stories are seemingly framed by the media to help the audience understand the ‘facts’ that are being presented about what is taking place at that given point in time. However, Adam Simon and Michael Xenos (2000) contend that framing, whether it be episodic or thematic, tends to be “an ever-present discursive device that channels the audience as it constructs the meaning of particular communicative acts,” thus allowing this secondary reason for consenting some stories to be run while leaving others out (p. 368).

Patterns of ownership of the media outlets are also important to understand when dealing with researching the media. Over the years large conglomerates, many whom are owned by individuals or corporations that have specific political goals, have become more increasingly involved with the cultural industry (Ringer, 2009) which have become more “fully integrated with ownership interests in the national and international economy, intensifying their association with capitalist class interests” (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 43). It is a way for the media companies

to make sure that the most dominant voices are those from the steadfast political and social establishment that are in-line with the ownership themselves. However, it should be noted that the US government does not seemingly have concern or interest in controlling media outputs, nor using political manipulation on a large scale. Raymond Williams (1975) indicated in a piece about the global domination of the media that it has become essentially a way for advertising that is based on the standards of a capitalist society where goods buying and selling are a way of life. The culture that was once found within the local, has been subsumed by capitalist attentions and authorities, and is now systematized by internationally controlling powers. According to many researchers, this ethos is found within the discourse that is mass produced and disseminated (Norman Fairclough, 1995).

Although at one time the media was a place that rational debate and discussion of issues pertaining to subjects of society, such as public sector unions could occur, scholars like Habermas (1984) contend that the commercialization and extreme privatization of the media has led to an inevitable demise of the greater public good once cast by reputable media sources. Although it is not my intention in this work to challenge the perceptions of the media outlets as good or bad in their coverage, it is my intention to give the whole account of their leanings concerning what might be going on regarding the research that follows on teacher unions.

However, understanding the background and preoccupations that the media exhibits in U.S. society today, allows one to begin to understand the media's attempts at orienting their coverage toward the ideological (the way they want their 'causes' to be viewed and interpreted). In particular, "representations in media texts may be said to function ideologically in so far as they contribute to reproducing social relations of domination and exploitation" (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 44). Discourses in the media tend to be a 'naturalized' and seem 'commonsensical' to

their intended audiences, when in fact they are filled with presuppositions that lend weight to the desired ideological outcome for those who dominate the sources. This is something that CDA research can contribute to our understanding. As a side note, persuasive argumentation can be differentiated from ideological aspects of discourse by careful research review and analysis of presented information.

Therefore, the notion of ideology “often implies distortion, ‘false consciousness,’ manipulation of the truth in the pursuit of particular interests” (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 46). “Truth” as what the media represents may in fact be only one set of ideas that represent a particular set of values, ideas, etc. The “truth” in that sense than, is always up for argument and debate, sometimes a fruitless endeavor that ends up in ideological circles itself. However, researchers tend to agree that the media is a site of composite and often conflicting processes that include ideological practices even if they say they are simply trying to convey ‘the facts.’ “Truth,” as the media portrays it then are the effects of the discussion of ideology in question (O’Farrell, 2007).

Fairclough (1995) and Richardson (2007) tend to agree that “media texts do indeed function ideologically in social control and social reproduction: but they also operate as cultural commodities in a competitive market” (p. 47). They both further claim that although media texts may be ideological in nature they do function as both entertainment and information of cultural artifacts for a society at large. This however, should not take away from the need to understand what exactly is being done within the media itself and the information that they are thus presenting.

The argument here is that the media “shape[s] the wider society, but also play[s] a vital role in the diffusion of social and cultural changes” by exposing the public to arguments for or against those changes (Norman Fairclough, 1995, p. 51). In this sense, the media establishes a delicate gage of sociocultural change, and they should be researched because it is valuable material

to research change. In this vein, it can be seen that several types of power can be held within the confines of media outlets, including newspapers. Although power can often be viewed negatively within and outside the constraints of research and society, Foucault (2006) writes of power in the following way:

The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. And ‘Power,’ insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these motilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement. One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure, neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society (Michel Foucault, 2006, p. 93).

In this way Foucault would see the media as a part of an institution within a society that everyone knows holds a certain amount of power, and the ability to suffuse change with its discourse. The question then becomes how much is too much and are they abusing the power they have? Hence, delving into the realm of social justice.

Finally, it is important to also remember as the section concerning media comes to a close, that the media is a product that is produced, one that is not naturally occurring, and one that facts do not simply come straight from reality per se (Norman Fairclough, 2012). It is produced by an industry, shaped by the bureaucratic and economic structure of that industry, by the relations between the media and other industries and by relations with government and with other political

organizations,” and reported by fallible human beings (Richardson, 2007, p. 222). According to John Richardson (2007), there is always a reason that the media chooses what it chooses to show, there are simply not ‘just because’ spots left in the stories they cover. If we trust that discourse and ultimately the language the media uses are social in nature, and that communication or text are activities intended ultimately to create or do things, then the media is a powerful form of communication thus needing to be examined for its larger social implications especially in regards to something as important as educational matters.

So How Does It Work? ... A Workable Methodological Framework

Methodologically, CDA is a qualitative research tool that entails working through “dialogue with other disciplines and theories which are addressing contemporary processes of social change” (Norman Fairclough, 2012 para. 2). However, most CDA scholars will contend that methodology greatly depends on the person researching and the topic being researched. Fairclough (2012) understands that methods such as data selection, collection, and analysis depends upon what is being researched and the point of such research, especially since CDA is interdisciplinary and these techniques can vary depending on the type of research being performed; however, they should contain some type of textual analysis.

Recognizing that analyzing one genre of media reporting, such as newspapers, over another, like speeches, is vastly important when considering using CDA as a viable research methodology.

Yet, given the conjoint standpoint and the general purposes of CDA, the researcher can find inclusive conceptual and theoretical frameworks that are related (van Dijk, 2008). CDA in general asks “questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance” from whatever sources or contexts they happen to be from (p. 354). Besides more traditional DA analytical techniques that may be employed, such as:

semiotics¹⁸, morphology¹⁹, presuppositions²⁰ or pragmatics²¹, CDA features concepts relating to ‘ideology,’ ‘class,’ ‘hegemony,’ ‘discrimination,’ ‘politics,’ etc. (p. 354). But for all intents and purposes, the research is driven and guided by the data (Wood & Kroger, 2000).

One of the first points in which CDA must contend with concerning a methodological framework in use is the idea of the macro versus the micro within what is being researched—in this case, teacher unions. However, in most cases, the language and discourse use, along with the communicative interactions are considered among the micro-level within CDA (van Dijk, 2008). The representative for the macro level would be those issues of power, dominance, and inequality being researched. According to van Dijk (2008), CDA must “theoretically bridge the well-known ‘gap’ between micro and macro approaches, which is of course a distinction that is sociological construct” (p. 354). He further claims that CDA essentially is a “wholistic” approach to researching (p. 354). For instance, regarding teacher unions, a story run in a newspaper or magazine concerning teacher union activism in Wisconsin is at a micro level of social interaction. It happens in a specific situation (an episodic framing), at a particular place and time; but at the same time because of this particular presented event within the media, a politician may try to enact particular legislation in regards to public sector unions either in Wisconsin or in other places. This last act outside the newspaper or magazine article would be considered at the macro level (a thematic framing). Van Dijk (2008) identifies that there are several ways to analyze and connect these levels within the data a researcher is using, and thus, as he claims to arrive at a unified critical analysis:

¹⁸ Machin and Mayr (2012) explain semiotics as the study of signs and symbols including images, sounds, colors, postures, and words that humans use to communicate.

¹⁹ The study of the structures of words and the way that they are used within human communication.

²⁰ Presuppositions are basically “a taken-for-granted assumption found in communication” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 222). Most language and communication use within human speech contains presuppositions, however, their use within certain instances are important to study and understand.

²¹ Pragmatics is a subdivision of linguistics that studies language in use and the various ways the contexts are used. Within pragmatics things such as turn taking, organization of text, and other techniques such as presuppositions and metaphors are studied.

1. Member-groups: Language users-engage in discourse as members of (several) social groups, organizations, or institutions and conversely, groups thus may act “by” their members.
2. Actions-process: Social acts of individual actors are thus constituent parts of groups actions and social processes, such as legislation, news making, or the reproduction of racism.
3. Context-social structure: Situations of discursive interaction are similarly part or constitutive of social structure ... “local” and more “global” contexts are closely related, and both exercise constraints on discourse.
4. Personal and social cognition: Language users as social actors have both personal and social cognition: personal memories, knowledge and opinions, as well as those shared with members of the group or culture as a whole. Both types of cognition influence interaction and discourse of individual members, whereas, shared “social representations” govern the collective actions of a group. (p. 354).

Next, a CDA methodological framework must also include the notions contending with the idea of social power of groups and institutions within society (van Dijk, 2008; Wood & Kroger, 2000). Groups have control over other groups if they can control the minds and eventual actions of other groups outside their own. These dominant groups amalgamate into the very laws, policies, and norms of general society, this is what Gramsci (1971) would call hegemonic ideology, and in this research this will be referenced later as the ‘little p policies’ that were discussed in Chapter One. Therefore, many of the actions of these dominant groups are not done by force or abusive actions, but rather in the everyday actions and/or discourses produced by them, and ultimately the results of those actions.

In this regard, it is essential that an analysis using CDA must contend with the principles of power and the discourse within the data. It is important to note that access “to specific forms of discourse” such as, the newspapers, “is itself a power resource,” one that reflects the powerful group that it represents (van Dijk, 2008, p. 355). With this perception, it is easier to understand within the analysis that these groups have more chances to control the behaviors and eventually the minds of others. Given the function of discourse that is highly political, such as the teacher

unions, “the enactment, reproduction, and legitimization of power and domination,” is thus important to discuss within the context of the methodology for CDA (van Dijk, 2008, p. 360). Although much of the discourse that is examined and researched within CDA frameworks is political by nature, it is relatively unknown within the political science and public policy fields, even though there is some rhetorical overlap and discussion within political science of such issues of discourse (Derian & Miller, 1989; Fox & Miller, 1995).

With these principles in mind, the products of the media conform generally well to research agenda/methods within CDA. The point of using CDA as a methodology within the context of the media, as it will pertain to this particular research regarding teacher unions, is that “events and actions may be described with syntactic variations that are a function of the underlying involvement of actors” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 359). The cultural studies perspective of the media transitions well into the CDA methodology in this regard by defining the media not as an echo of reality, but as a product of ‘political, economic, and cultural forces’ (Fowler, 1991). But taking it one step further, Van Dijk (2008) claims that a methodology incorporating CDA and the media should also include a focus on “linguistic tools” such as, “the analysis of transitivity in syntax, lexical structure, modality, and speech acts” such as, the use of metaphors, presuppositions and the like (p. 359).

Hence, as stated previously, using CDA as a methodology is not unlike other qualitative methods whereby the researcher looks for patterns within the data, and then categorizes using themes and other techniques of qualitative methods²² (Wood & Kroger, 2000). However, CDA takes these ideas two steps further by being “concerned with the identification of social functions”

²² This work is not meant to be a full explanatory attempt at qualitative methodologies, but rather at the methodological work involved pertaining to CDA. For further information on qualitative methods please see the following: *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research* (2013) by Saldana and *The Discussion of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967) by Glaser and Strauss.

instead of like many other qualitative methodologies that are primarily “concerned with the generation of a set of interrelated (and often hierarchical) categories (a set that may or may not be taken to represent some internal psychological structure) (p. 28). In doing CDA research, the researcher may use words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or even larger pieces to determine what is going on within the discourse and the text being researched. Within this, the chosen discourse/data within the research can then be taken apart to see how it systematized and ordered.

The final stage of any CDA methodological framework, is to take the information found within the discourse/data and interpret and analyze it for content relating to issues of social justice. Thus, taking the “micro” within the data set and trying to generalize and obtain understandings related to the “macro” (van Dijk, 2008). In this way, what is found in the discourses/data, speak for themselves, allowing the researcher in the analysis to identify what is undergirding the surface structure of the text and possibly hiding the real meaning and force within the discourse.

Critical discourse analysis must present a unified whole between method and theory as an outcome of the work that is performed. In this manner, the final product of research using CDA is a philosophical endeavor of a data set that utilizes discourse on a topic being researched, i.e. teacher unions. Each work that utilizes CDA as a component of “tool” looks different because of the research that is conducted. It is most important to remember that a thorough and thoughtful job of research must be done for this “wholistic” outcome to take place. Thus, in what follows, the procedure for the research that will be performed on teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin will be articulated.

The Research Situation and the Procedures of Investigation

In Chapter Two I reviewed the history of teacher unions and the role that they play within U. S. society. Here, I explain the methodology that I will be using to determine the impact that the

media is having upon the public's perception of public sector/teacher unions based upon the discourse being used by the media toward these organizations. In what follows, I will apply the methodology previously explained to analyze the data acquired concerning the media's portrayal of unions in the state of Wisconsin, specifically the newspaper as the media form.

In this research on teacher unions focusing on the state of Wisconsin, I have chosen to utilize articles from three reputable newspaper organizations for the basis of my analysis. These three newspapers represent differing levels of contextualization — national (*New York Times*), state (*Wisconsin State Journal*), and local (*Capital Times*). The articles were written by various authors from January 1st, 2011 through December 31st, 2015. I chose these dates because the issues concerning teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin began in the early part of 2011 shortly before Governor Scott Walker helped to push the ACT 10 legislation into law. Further, even though CDA does not essentially necessitate a large data set to get accurate and well defined results, the period was extended to 2015 to give both breadth and depth to the analysis.

About the Newspapers and Their Articles

The first newspaper I chose to use in my research on teacher unions in Wisconsin is the *New York Times*. I chose the *New York Times* because the *Times* is considered a national paper and is read all over the U.S. It is considered to be a reliable and reputable source from which to garner good information (Soderlund, 2002). The *Times* has been continuously publishing since 1851 and has won over 117 Pulitzer Prizes for its journalistic integrity (The New York Times, 2016). The *Times* over its history has been referred to as the “newspaper of record,” meaning that the *Times* tries to reflect history as accurately and unbiased as possible (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015).

The *Times* has three major sections. The first is the *News* section and includes columns titled: *International*, *Business*, *Education*, *The Metro Section*, *Weather*, *Technology*, *Sports*, *Health*, *Science*, and the *Obituaries*. Another section titled *Opinion* has columns dealing with *Editorials* and *Op-Eds*. The last section includes columns relating to *Features* and includes the following: *The New York Magazine*, *Art*, *Movies*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Food*, *Fashion and Style*, *NYC Guide*, *Crossword*, *The New York Times Style Guide*, *Travel*, *Theater*, *Home and Garden*, and the *Sunday Review* ("The Times in Print for Tuesday, May 10, 2016," 2016). Not all sections of the *Times* are available all over the nation, but rather are available in areas where the information is relevant. However, the major sections of the paper are available all over the nation, including most of the columns under the *News* and *Opinion* sections.

As far as the styles of the *Times*, they use a typical column, section, header and top line formatting within their newspaper. Within the writing of the articles, they use honorifics rather than plain last names which helps to add weight to the formality of the overall paper (Soderlund, 2002). According to the company that owns the *Times*, the language used in the *Times* is supposed to reflect a genuine integrity that shows its substantiated place in history. Therefore, profanity and other 'vulgar' language is strictly forbidden by writers within the *Times*. Other important stylistic components include the use of more experts within articles which enhances the seemingly factual component of the newspaper itself.

To some, the *Times* political stance and how they report the news seems biased toward a liberal stance. In a 2007 Rasmussen Report, 40% of the 1000 adults surveyed believed that the *Times* "has a bias in favor of liberals," while only 17% found it had a more conservative bias (Media Research Center, 2007 para. 5). A public editor, Daniel Okrent in 2004 wrote an opinion piece that claimed the *New York Times* did exhibit liberal bias in coverage that concerned social

issues within the U.S. such as, gay marriage and abortion. However, ‘harder news,’ such as *Business* and *Education*, seemed to many, including Okrent, to be less liberally biased and more evenly reported, so using the *Times* seems to be a more balanced media representation for researching teacher unions. Table 1 in Appendix A represents the articles that were used for researching perception of teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin per the national media.

The second newspaper that I chose to use concerning the perception of teacher unions in the media comes from the state level in Wisconsin--the *Wisconsin State Journal (WSJ)*. The *Wisconsin State Journal* is a daily newspaper that was founded in 1839 by a hotel proprietor, William W. Wyman. Though today the paper is owned by Lee Enterprises (Capital Newspapers), a company that publishes 54 daily newspapers in 23 states across the U.S., it is still rooted in the history and traditions that it was founded upon in Madison, Wisconsin (Simmons, 2014). Although WSJ is not widely known outside the state of Wisconsin, it was nominated for two Pulitzer Prizes for its new reporting of the “27 days of around-the-clock protests” at the Wisconsin state capital during the 2011 Wisconsin protests (Columbia University, 2012). These protests are directly related to what is being researched concerning teacher unions within this work, hence the reasoning for choosing the WSJ.

Stylistically, the WSJ is like many other state level papers that largely focus on politics and business matters. The sections include: *Politics*, *Sports*, *Education*, *Opinion*, *Entertainment*, *Business*, and *Lifestyle* (*Wisconsin State Journal*, 2016). As does the *Times* and many other newspapers throughout the U.S., they use a column, section, header, and top story selection within their daily paper. Although not explicitly outlined in any research that I could find pertaining to company policy concerning language usage, observationally the WSJ, like the *Times*, reframes from using any vulgar language within its paper.

The political stance within the *WSJ* is highly conservative according to its history. The *WSJ* moved throughout its long history to many buildings around the Madison area, but eventually ended up in the same building as the *Capital Times*, the newspaper that will be discussed next. These two newspapers have been

co-dependent rivals for nearly a century. William Evjue, founder of the *Capital Times*, earlier worked for the *State Journal*, [but] he left over a disagreement with the *State Journal* on La Follette's²³ opposition to entering World War I. The *State Journal* under editors such as A.M. Brayton and Roy L. Matson, assumed a more conservative stance. (Simmons, 2014 para. 17-18)

The newspaper has consistently remained aligned with the Republican Party, although in the 1990's the editor, Frank Denton, moved the paper's leanings more toward what he called the "center-right" after seeing that over the last 50 years Madison had become less liberal (para. 19). Table 2 in Appendix A represents the articles that were pulled and used to research within *WSJ*.

The local paper that I chose to use for the research on teacher unions in Wisconsin is the *Capital Times* (*Cap Times*). The *Cap Times* began publishing in 1917 (Weisberger, 1994). However, after years of trying to 'scoop' one another and vying for advertising contracts, the paper was purchased by Capital Newspapers in 1948, the same company that owns *WSJ*. This acquisition by Capital Newspapers did not end the long held competition between the *WSJ* and the *Cap Times*. This competitive edge between the two news organizations has led to quality journalism by both, and although the *Cap Times* has not won a Pulitzer Prize, they have won many local and state

²³ This is in reference to Robert La Follette, also known as "Fighting Bobby" (Wisconsin Historical Society, 1996-2016). Alive during the early part of the 20th century, La Follette was fiercely opposed to corporate power and political corruption. He would eventually have a career within the U.S. Senate, Congress, and the governorship of Wisconsin. His frequent clashes with his fellow Republican Party members and his ability to orate proactively earned him the name "Fighting Bobby." He also was later in his career monumental in creating laws that empowered and allowed public sector unions to develop within the state of Wisconsin.

sponsored awards for local newspapers in the state of Wisconsin. The reason I chose to use the *Cap Times* in the research that will follow is because of the newspaper's longevity and reputation in the local Madison community.

Stylistically, the *Cap Times* look is different from both the *Times* and the *WSJ*. Due in part to newspaper sales all over the country are in decline, the *Cap Times* went to a bi-weekly printed paper in 2008, with the majority of their articles published online (Barthel, 2015; Stein & Kissinger, 2015). Today, they publish a traditional style *News* and *Opinion* section on Wednesdays, with an *Art* and *Entertainment* section printed on Thursdays (Sentinal, 2008). Online articles are published daily and include sections such as, *Business*, *Entertainment*, *Lifestyles*, *News*, and *Sports* (*Capital Newspapers Website Design*, 2016). However, for the research that will follow on teacher unions in Wisconsin, only articles that appeared in their printed papers on Wednesdays are used.

Out of the three newspapers used within this research, the *Cap Times* has a more liberal quality to the paper overall, thanks in part to the history of the newspaper. As previously stated, William Evjue, founder of the Capital Times, left the *WSJ* in opposition to many of the positions that the *WSJ* held concerning politics and the war. Thus, Evjue established the *Cap Times* as the “liberal voice” that has remained largely with the newspaper ever since, even after the acquisition from Capital Newspapers (Simmons, 2014 para. 17). Overall, the *Cap Times*, like both the *Times* and *WSJ*, claim to be as fair and unbiased as possible in their reporting (Weisberger, 1994). Table 3 in Appendix A shows the articles used within the *Cap Times*.

The data found within these three newspapers has garnered a wealth of information about what has been happening within the state of Wisconsin concerning the perception of teacher unions through the media. These newspapers serve as excellent examples for use with CDA as a

methodology. In the following section I will lay the foundation for the analysis that will follow from the newspaper articles concerning teacher unions in Wisconsin.

Data Collection Methods

I first began my search within these newspapers for articles pertaining to teacher unions by entering the LexisNexis database that is available to students at the University of Tennessee (LexisNexis, 2016). The database allows the researcher to search individual organizations, within a particular state, for a particular period of time. After choosing which newspapers I wanted to focus my research upon, I began by entering *Teacher Unions* in the search engine within the database. LexisNexis includes with the newspaper articles a section called “Classifications.” This section includes subject matter, industries, persons, and geographical information that is found within the article, along with the percentage that these topics are referenced. Using the information found in the “Classification” section, I pulled every article from the time period stated above that mentioned the following key terms: 1. Teacher Unions; 2. Public Sector Unions; 3. Collective Bargaining; 4. ACT 10; 5. Scott Walker; and 6. Wisconsin.

After pulling these articles I began a preliminary reading for content use only. Some of the articles that were found using the key words did not contain discussion about teacher or public sector unions; these articles were discarded from the research as I felt they would not be beneficial to the overall picture of what was being researched in this analysis. For example, one article that included the key terms *Scott Walker*, *Wisconsin*, and *ACT 10* was discarded because its focus was on the upcoming election of new legislators. The three key terms found in the article were simply mentioned in passing as references to issues that were going on in Wisconsin from 2011-2012. In another example of discarded articles, the key term *Teacher Unions* was referenced, but after a preliminary reading, I found that the article was simply reporting about an upcoming meeting for

the local teacher union in Madison. The article simply contained the time, date, and place of the local meeting, and although it did contain a one paragraph agenda for the meeting, I didn't feel that it was relevant contextually to the research to be analyzed. In total, there were 10 articles from the *New York Times*, 8 from the *Wisconsin State Journal*, and 12 from the *Capital Times* that were discarded. After the preliminary reading of the articles, what can be found in Tables 2-4 in the appendix are what remains for the analysis that will follow. This includes a total of 15 from *The Times*, 25 from the *WSJ*, and 19 from the *Cap Times*.

After the preliminary reading of the articles was completed, the steps to the process of providing an analysis of the data for use within a CDA methodology vary depending on the researcher and their needs based on the topics being addressed. However, for this particular set of data I began by using Johnny Saldana's (2013) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research* and Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss' (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, as well as, techniques that can be contributed to CDA solely (i.e. metaphor usage, particular uses for linguistic oddities, omission of words, addition of certain words, repetition of phrases, use of verbs and adjectives, etc.) (Norman Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Machin & Mayr, 2012; Ruth Wodak & Michael Meyer, 2009).

Glaswer and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative method for qualitative data research is a way for investigators to perform "an intense, systematic process of examining and re-examining the data while comparing one source with another to find similarities and differences" (p. 73). I used this method to begin my initial work on the data to begin breaking down some of the elements within. As in the constant comparative model, Saldana (2013) begins with open coding²⁴, followed by re-reading the material and finding other units of data that might be helpful to the researcher;

²⁴ Open coding in Saldana's model refers to looking for words or phrases that stand out to the researcher.

this is done until saturation²⁵ of the data occurs. The next steps are to re-read the data, and where indications for coding were first marked, begin to look for certain patterns within the codes; these patterns are then assigned a word or a short phrase that might denote how the particular code is related. Through this process, filters are then attached to the patterns that are then categorized and placed into themes, a “process that permits data to be segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation” (Saldana, 2013, p. 8). This process was repeated many times over in the research that follows.

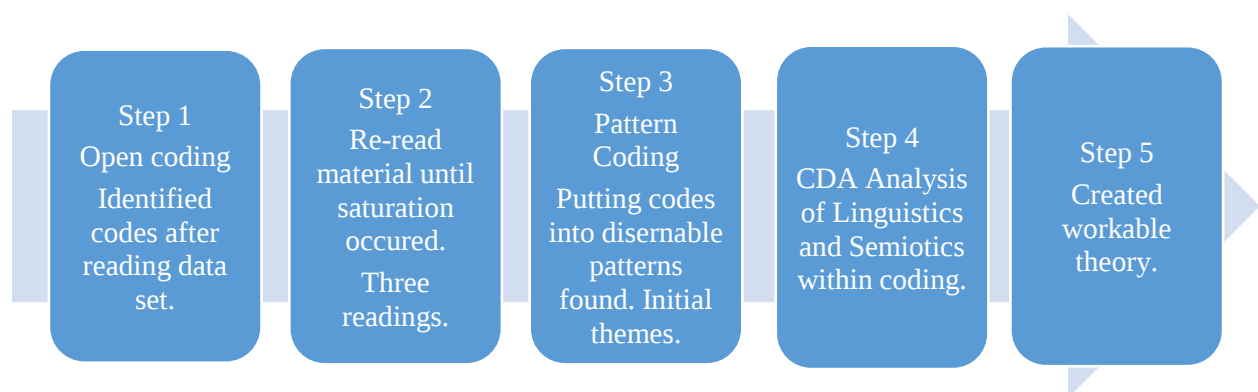


Figure 1: Steps Involved in Qualitative Analysis for Teacher Union Preliminary Work

Essentially I performed two levels of analysis to the research. After the completion of the above-mentioned process which seemed to me to be helpful to start to begin seeing patterns and overall themes being used within the articles, I diverged into a linguistic and semiotic analysis of the coding which is characteristically important to a CDA analysis. Figure 1 in above illustrates a representation of Fairclough’s (2001) critical discourse analytical framework adapted for my research on teacher unions. This process was performed four separate times and was checked by a

²⁵ Saturation of data occurs when no other information can be coded or ‘pulled’ from the data.

fellow colleague during and after the process to make sure that the research was both predictable and reliable.

During the processes concerning CDA analysis of the research, I began to find some interesting characteristics within the coding and patterns. Where marks were made concerning coding in the first set of analysis done on the material, the use of conceptual metaphors²⁶ seemed to be prevalent within the discourse. I then began combing through the material and realized that conceptual metaphor usage within the articles across all three levels of newspapers was strongly represented. Thus, one component of the analysis that follows contends with use of conceptual metaphors.

The second component addressed within the CDA analysis has to do with the use of opposition. Opposition within a CDA analysis deals with how linguistic frames “allow us to create oppositions through language” (Evans, 2013 para. 7). When done well through the use of naming,²⁷ opposition can create a powerful binary for the casual observer, one that is often unquestioned as factual. For example, an author may write something like, ‘The teacher posed for Playboy when she was 20. But most teachers know better than to do such things that may later affect their careers.’ The use of the conjunction ‘but,’ makes the reader aware that the propositions articulated in these two sentences should be seen as contradictory. This statement essentially creates an ‘us versus

²⁶ Conceptual metaphors refer to a term found generally in cognitive linguistics where the understanding of a conceptual domain is understood in terms of another (Lakoff, 1992). Conceptual metaphors not only shape the way we communicate with one another, but also the way we act and think within ourselves and our society. An example of such metaphors would be ‘Time is Money.’ For further information concerning conceptual metaphors please see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980).

²⁷ Naming is a linguistic devise that looks at the content of noun phrases—how we name things in the world (Evans, 2013). Of particular interest to naming is the idea that as humans we apply a label to something that presupposes its existence in the world around us. News stories can be particularly ripe with interesting and often unmitigated and bizarre noun phrases which include other parts of speech such as, adjectives, verbs, and adjectives.

them’ mentality, a binary, through the use of the conjunction ‘but.’ Opposition is a very legitimate and much emphasized avenue within the news articles that were researched for this study.

The third component in the analysis is the use of modality. The term ‘modality’ can mean different things in different disciplines. In disciplines, such as philosophy, modality applies to the categorization of logic and logical reasoning having to do with truth propositions (Lillian, 2008). However, in CDA, modality is more than simply recognizing the “over modal auxiliaries such as may, might, can, could, will, would, shall, should, must, and ought,” but rather modality “concerns the writer’s attitude toward and/or confidence in the proposition being presented” (p. 2). Modality in CDA can be expressed through many different parts of speech, including, adjectives, and adverbs, among others. Fowler (1985) defines modality in linguistic terms in the following manner:

Modality is signified in a range of linguistic forms: centrally, the modal auxiliary verbs may, shall, must, need, and others; sentence adverbs such as probably, certainly, regrettably; adjectives such as necessary, unfortunate, certain. Some verbs, and many nominalizations are essentially modal; permit, predict, prove, obligation, likelihood, desirability, authority. (p. 73)

Within these modalities, Fowler (1985) goes on to compose 5 categories of modality that specify an author’s attitude to the proposition (p. 72). The list below contains the five categories with explanations.

1. Allowance to perform some action--Permission.
2. Judgment that someone else is obliged to perform an action of some type—Obligation
3. Certain types of judgments performed, either practical, moral, aesthetic—Desirability.
4. Events are referred to as more often than not going to happen—Predictability.

5. Expression that the proposition is more or less the truth—Validity.

These various types of modalities are found throughout the news articles. Although there are five categories of modalities listed here, modalities within the analysis will be discussed as one unit, and simply referred to categorically as what kind of above-mentioned modalities it does contain.

After finding that the three above-mentioned components were overwhelming present throughout the news articles on teacher unions in Wisconsin, and were linked directly to overarching themes that would emerge as I read through the data. I decided that I would write the analysis based on a system that contained the three main themes that the research presented. These themes, that I have chosen to call ‘strands’ within this work, demonstrate whether the media is helping to perpetuate a certain type of characterization of teacher unions, which in turn are leading to policies that seemingly are detrimental to them. These three strands with their corresponding themes will assume all three levels of papers where a comparison across them will be obtained from the research material that CDA will provide. The three main strands being discussed within the analysis are: 1. The Language of Battle; 2. Neoliberal Ideals; and 3. Teacher as a Defunct Agent.

What I found within the analysis using CDA is a complex rhetorical web. The two levels of research performed, including an in-depth analysis using mechanisms of CDA as listed above, in conjunction with the three-strand analysis help to uncover ‘hidden interpretations’ or ‘naturalized’ language within the newspaper articles. But, what is important at this point is to understand some of the questions that the analysis will address about teacher unions in the state of Wisconsin.

Research Questions

When thinking about teacher unions and the attacks that have been done unto them all over the U.S., but particularly in the state of Wisconsin, I directed my research question for this project toward understanding what might be some of the causes and issues surrounding teacher unions:

Is the anti-labor/anti-public sector union's stance being perpetuated by the media in, particularly, newspapers?

The following questions were kept in my mind as the research was performed, as they pertain to the above question in inquiry:

1. Is there a clear agenda or theme that the media is trying to press onto the larger public in regards to education and teacher unions?
2. What about issues of social consciousness and knowledge concerning mass society in regards to the seemingly anti-labor stance?
3. Could these questions lead to answers regarding power issues and equity with what is being introduced to the mass public in regards to public sector unions?
4. Could a critical study of the media using their own work lead to more responsibility with their theme of teacher unionization in their reporting?

In this study, I try to capture data that enables me to study the role that the media plays as an active participant in regards to reporting the news concerning teacher and public sector unions within Wisconsin, thus bridging whatever gap may exist between the understanding that teachers, parents, or individual politicians have, and the larger society. These questions help to delve deeper into the understanding of the culture, history, and perceptions of public school teacher unions, and helps us examine more closely why it seems they are under attack by the media.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. ~ Sir Francis Bacon, *English Essayist from "Of Studies" (1625)*

As described in chapter two concerning the history of teacher unions in the state of Wisconsin, the road has been rocky and filled with many detours and potholes. With the legislation of ACT 10 introduced by Governor Scott Walker, the impediment of public sector unions seems to be getting worse. Revisiting the question of whether the discourses produced by the media have been contributing to the seemingly anti-labor union stance within U.S. society, is the paramount question in my mind when I began this research. But what was found and how might it be impacting the beliefs and attitudes about teacher unions in the state of Wisconsin? This chapter will present the data from the three newspapers researched from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015, which includes: the *New York Times (Times)*, the *Wisconsin State Journal (WSJ)*, and the *Capital Times (Cap Times)*.

As was noted in chapter three, I began my research with a qualitative approach to the data, which, can be done to narrow down and define the parameters within which the CDA research can take place (Machin & Mayr, 2012). However, this strictly qualitative work is not the primary focus within this study, CDA is, and the work from the qualitative part will only be presented in the introduction to designate the overall themes that were produced. I purposively chose to perform the qualitative part of the research in the beginning of this study because of the sheer volume of articles that were available during this time period and the expansive amount of information within them. As noted in Chapter 3, extensive and exhaustive CDA work can be performed on just one artifact, so the fact that I have four complete years of material led me to resolve to perform thematic

determinations since there was quite a bit of data to comb through. After doing an initial reading to make sure that the articles contained information that are relevant to the topic, I began analysis to find the codes, patterns, and eventual themes that were present within the data (see Chart 1 in Chapter 3 for the visual representation of this qualitative process model). The themes that were eventually found within the qualitative analysis include the following: Neoliberalism, Teacher, Parents, Student, Teacher Unions, Government, Law Involvement, and Social Justice. Appendix B shows the extensive work and definitions that resulted from the qualitative part of the study.

After these themes were determined to be part of what could be found within the articles, I then began looking at the individual cases of discourse that surrounded these themes within the articles themselves. Figure 2 below illustrates the processes that occurred concerning the CDA work that will follow:

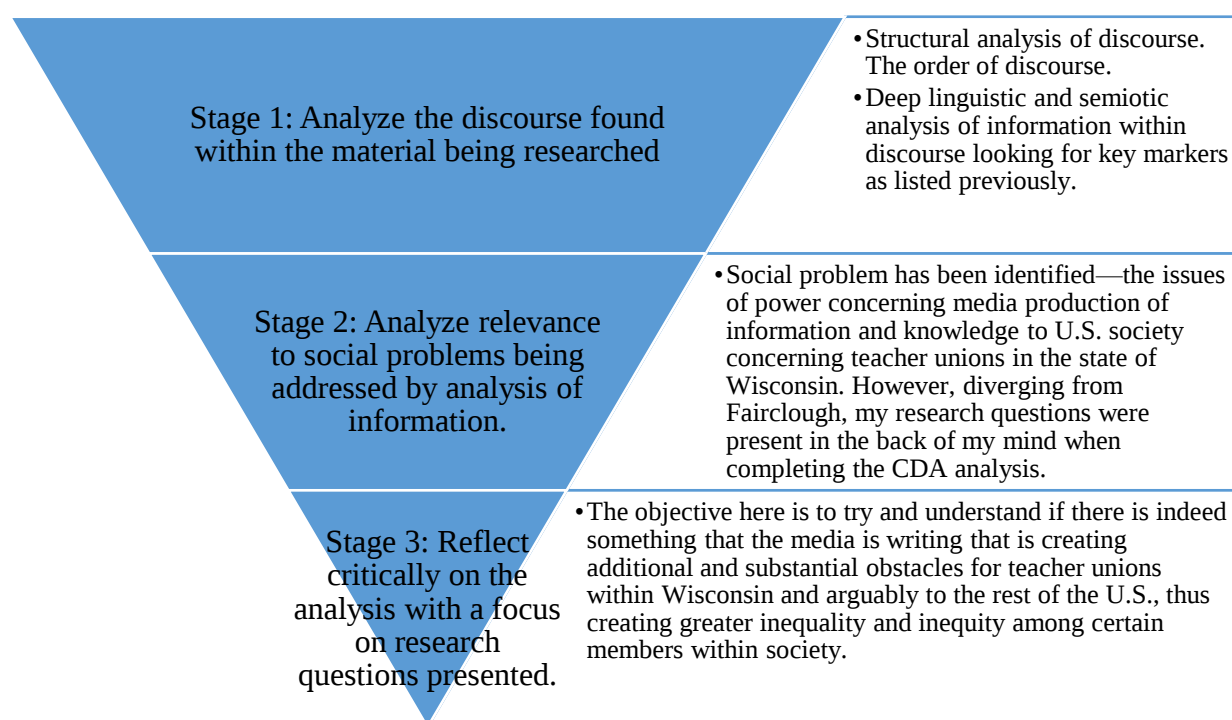


Figure 2: Critical Discourse Analytical Framework on Teacher Unions in the State of Wisconsin

After researching the discourses that were in these themes, it became clear that many of the themes were in fact interlinked concepts that were feeding into what I later determined to be the three strands that will be discussed in the analysis that follows. These three strands include *The Language of Battle*, *Neoliberalistic Discourses*, and *Teacher as Defunct Agent*.

In what follows, the findings from the CDA research will be presented. As previously examined in Chapter 3, CDA research can be presented in any way that the researcher feels that is beneficial in explaining what can be found within the material being researched. In the case of the newspaper articles concerning public sector unions within Wisconsin, it is important to not only demonstrate what exactly the discourse is that is within the material, but also help to untangle and examine the concepts that can be found within that discovered discourse. I have included examples from different newspaper articles in this chapter, signified by hanging indents, to illustrate how my analysis of the language was performed. Therefore, what follows will be a walking of the line between a presentation of the discourse itself found with the techniques of CDA and the philosophical analysis of the topics addressed within the strands themselves. This line has led to both an interesting and surprising understanding of how words can change when we begin to look at them in new ways.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Strand One: The Language of Battle

The media coverage from all three levels of newspapers of the teacher unions within Wisconsin stressed the all-important politics of battle, war, and conflict. The amount of discourse that was spent on this strand contributed the most to the themes that were found. In the *Times*, out of the 19 articles, 12 or 63% contained discourse relating to this strand. Similar statistics can be found in both the *WSJ* (25 total, 20 present at 80%) and the *Cap Times* (19 total, 12 present at

63%). These statistics are telling of why this strand was the most prominent among the three, with over half of all the articles researched containing discourse that surrounded battle or war. In addition to finding the battle discourse heavily represented in all three newspapers, all three components of the CDA research, conceptual metaphor, opposition, and modality were used within this strand, even though the strand itself lends from metaphor.

These ideas of battle and war concern two or more sides in opposition to one another, and this type of discourse overtly summons to mind a directive binary, leading to the ideas behind opposition. This type of language within discourse, especially newspapers is not uncommon according to Melinda Wenner (2007) who contends that “these terms have an intention, [that] they are sort of modern propaganda” (para. 2). The newspapers, particularly the *Cap Times* and the *WSJ*, used this battle language as a sort of propaganda to pit one side (those within the government; frustrated conservative legislators, the Governor, and lobbyists) against the teacher unions and often legislative Democrats and teachers themselves. By doing so, the newspapers have cast the teacher unions and the teachers within them as a sort of enemy, pitting them against society and the elected officials. As a result, the objectives of the teachers and their unions appear to be contrary to the wants and needs of the U.S. population; thus, creating a win or lose scenario in which any compromise with teacher unions by government officials are viewed as a loss by restricting the government’s ability to fulfill the will of their constituents.

By settling many of the arguments within an interpretive and politically binary arena, the newspapers used particular framing of the unions and its ultimate motivations concerning the state of education within Wisconsin to help demonstrate that the unions were counter-positional. The articles showed “skirmish[es]” (Zweifel, 2011), unions being “in fight mode” (Rickert, 2011a), or being “thrown on the defensive” (Greenhouse, 2012), all in opposition to Governor Scott Walker,

legislators, and reform activists. The following is discourse that is indicative of the overall battle language and oppositional positionality found within the articles:

The collateral damage to the morale and reputations of Wisconsin's 60,000 or so classroom teachers seems of no concern to Walker and his allies inside and outside the state.

In fact, based on recent Walker press releases, teachers and teacher unions remain a prime target. In terms of there being a bull's-eye on teachers' backs, just consider last week.

...moderate Republican[s] wanted to win. I suggest the new Republican politics is to crush the opposition permanently. (Fanlund, 2014)

However, on closer inspection of the language provided within this selection from the *Cap Times*, the terms underlined by the dotted line lend themselves to establishing a battle or war between the different sides in this fight concerning public sector/teacher unions. Phrases, such as, 'collateral damage' and 'prime target' bring forth the connotation of discourse that is used within the realm of the military and embattlement. Further, the single underlined discourse, such as, Walker and other governmental entities (Republicans, etc.), denote one side of this battle, with the double underlined terms standing for their opposition—the teachers and their unions.

Constructions of the teacher unions using the language of battle within this strand were found throughout the time period that was researched between 2011 and 2015, but were particularly noticeable following the introduction of ACT 10 legislation and its signing into law. At each point during this time frame that was from approximately January 2011 until mid-2012, the authors and editors writing for the newspapers chose to use episodic framing of teacher and other public sector unions (firefighters, police officers, government office workers, etc.). The episodic framing that was used often confronted the teacher unions prevailing discourses and their

political motives, which often did not bode well for them. These prevailing discourses described: lazy teachers, outdated tenure and seniority rights, teacher professionalism and merit based pay, along with an unwillingness to support reform efforts (these topics will be discussed later). Within these prevailing discourses were nestled the political motives that the media seemed to inscribed to the teacher unions themselves. These political motives often were described in conjunction with principles that were part of the Democratic Party's platform²⁸, thus the media's predilection was to create opposition between not only the unions and the republican legislators, but to describe a battleground between the two political parties, using the teacher unions as fodder. In one article in the *Cap Times* titled "Hey Guilty Liberals, How About Ok For Madison Prep?" the battle language within the establishment of the political discourse can be seen in the following:

Marj Passman encouraged a John Nichols protégé named Sarah Manski to force a

Primary. Democratic power brokers from Kenosha and Milwaukee endorsed her. Why? Because Madison Prep would have been non-union. In the liberal pecking order, union privileges trump education reform...almost anyone who supported Madison Prep has been labeled the enemy because communities of color are asking for a better future for their children. (Blaska, 2014)

Interpretations of the public sector unions, in particular the teacher unions, symbolized what was understood to be the junction²⁹ faced by teacher unions within the new; more conservative policy making environment where laws like ACT 10 are being formulated and put into law (Colvin &

²⁸ The Wisconsin Democratic Party platform can be found on the following website: http://webivadownton.s3.amazonaws.com/477/99/d/1346/1/DPW_2012_Platform.pdf. Particulars on public sector unions within the document can also be found within the same material.

²⁹ The junction is in reference to how many conservatives in the U.S., and in this specific case, Wisconsin, see public sector unions as an outdated means for labor in our new wholly capitalist, globalized society where they are thought of as holding back the ability of business to expand and markets to run independently with little interruption of production or issues pertaining to personnel. In this regard, this junction is in reference to when new policies that are meant to curtail what many see as antiquated, politically too powerful labor unions meet, and where this will lead in the future.

Bauer, 2015). By the media creating a firestorm with such political discourse concerning teacher unions, it is not difficult to see how and why some citizens within society would begin to see the unions as detrimental to the furthering of education.

The interesting point concerning the junction was how much time was spent by these newspaper writers on drawing out into the public what was happening in Wisconsin to the public sector unions. By drawing this battle concerning public sector unions out into the larger public with the media, the battle in Wisconsin was consequentially drawn out to the rest of the U.S. The *WSJ* signified the importance of this juncture for public sector unions in 2015 when Governor Walker helped to pass legislation making Wisconsin a right-to-work³⁰ state (Colvin & Bauer, 2015). Even after the initial ‘battle’ of the ACT 10 legislation was won concerning curtailing public sector unions, Governor Walker was quoted as stating “I think people in our state, just like people in America, want a fighter, as long as the people fighting are fighting for people like them” (Colvin & Bauer, 2015). In response to these claims by the Governor, the only emotion and response by the three newspapers came predominantly from the *Cap Times*, which expressed hopelessness and helplessness concerning the seeming end of rights for public sector unions within the state of Wisconsin and what that meant to the future of labor. And in response to this juncture it was written—“the ACT 10 train had already left the station” (Fanlund, 2014).

³⁰ According to the Legal Defense Foundation, a right to work state “guarantees that no person can be compelled as a condition of employment to join or not to join, nor to pay dues to a labor union under section 14 (b) of the Taft-Hartley Act affirms the right of states to enact Right to Work Laws. The 25 states which have passed Right to Work laws are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Kansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming” (National Right to Work Foundation, 2015). Most recently, however, a deadlocked 4 to 4 Supreme Court ruling left intact a U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit upholding a decision that public sector unions could still collect fees from non-union members for collective bargaining costs (“Rebecca Friedrichs, et al, *Petitioners v. California Teachers Association, et al.*,” 2016; Wolf, 2016). This is a major win for public sector unions within the U.S.

Within the creation of the oppositional and the use of battle language, conceptual metaphors were used regularly and at times seemed to me to be in excess throughout all three levels of newspapers. Some of this may have been to catch national attention, and it did work. As my earlier story in chapter two illustrates, media outlets around the U.S were covering the unfolding demonstrations and sit-ins in Madison for weeks following the initial stories coming from Wisconsin. Nonetheless, in referring to a type of war positionality in 2011, the *Cap Times* wrote concerning the teacher union sit-ins in the capital of Wisconsin, that “It was kind of their last hurrah before [Walker] dropped the bomb” (Simmons, 2011). In the *WSJ*, “This will be one hell of a battle, the weak of heart need not apply,” was written concerning the ACT 10 legislation and the fight teacher unions were facing in Wisconsin during 2012 (Garvey, 2012).

Although much less common, some articles framed the unions as politically savvy and worthwhile for education even within the theme of battle. For instance, in the *Cap Times*, 5 out of 19 articles, or 26% contained writing that framed the unions as an important part of the education system. Similarly, the *Times* contained 4 out of 19 or 21%. These instances were found most often within modalities, particularly within modalities dealing with that of obligation or desirability, and most often than not, found within the *Cap Times* and the *Times*. The following illustrates an example of such a modality that was used in a way that seemed to be leaning toward a more pro-union stance:

Rather than declare war on unions, we should demand a new deal with them—one that reflects today’s economic realities and workplace conditions, not those of a century ago. If we fail to do that, the fault is not in our unions, or in our stars, but in ourselves. (Bloomberg, 2011)

The underlined words note a modality that was used within the passage. These modalities still harken to the ideas of battle between teacher unions and another force, presumably society and the governmental officials; but they are modalities showing compromise, not hard positionality that could be demonstrated in other articles throughout, say the *WSJ*, or even a few within the *Cap Times*. In this way, the *Times* is demonstrating their willingness to establish equity in their reporting with the words they are choosing to use within their articles. However, as demonstrated statistically above, these instances were few and far between and they would show contradictions to their own language sometimes within the same articles

A perfect contradiction can be found in this same *Times* article; oppositional language dealing with battle between general society and teacher unions can be exemplified. For example:

If contract terms or labor laws from years past no longer make sense, we the people should renegotiate—or legislate—changes. (Bloomberg, 2011)

In this particular passage the use of the pronoun ‘we’ indicates a referral to the general society in opposition to the teacher unions. This statement is in opposition to the above statement about supporting unions. However, this statement also contains a modality (should) that is showing an obligation or desirability concerning the unions to create exactly what was being asked for in the previous statement—a new deal. Overall, the *Times* in this case is generally creating a pro-union stance; or at the very least asking for a more accommodating union stance. This was not an uncommon occurrence within the *Times*, but was more uncommon within the *Cap Times* and the *WSJ*.

It is interesting to note that it initially appeared that for the most part, the *Cap Times* and the *Times* were largely reporting the news as un-biased and without overtly exaggerated reporting. Whereas, the *WSJ* seemed to be extremely anti-union, especially in the initial reading and coding

that was performed. However, after conducting the CDA analysis and realizing how much of the language led to this idea of ‘battling’ and ‘fighting’, I began to understand that the discourse, even if it appeared neutral, or pro-union on the surface, seemed to be inciting a predilection for a stoppage of what they deemed as too powerful of unions within Wisconsin (Piazza, 2014a). Again, this is something that good newspapers are very good at; pulling their readers into the article by getting them to feel emotionally invested in what is being discussed (Norman Fairclough, 1995). These newspapers within this strand concerning embattlement between unionizers and anti-unionizers wanted to choose a clear winner and loser, much like there would be in a war. This was a surprising revelation during this research because I began to ask myself: Is there in fact a real winner in this situation? Should there be?

Even after late 2012, the language of battle continued in the *Times*, the *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*, although its mention became less prominent and less obvious than before and directly following the passage of ACT 10. However, in the case of the *Times*, an article referring to court hearings in Wisconsin concerning collective bargaining rights and ACT 10 in 2013 stated:

I don’t believe the two ships pass in the night; I believe they collide (Yaccino, 2013). In another article in 2015 when referring to the probable presidential campaigning of Governor Walker in 2016, *The Times* wrote that

...his battles with labor unions would prepare him to take on terrorists (Baker, 2015). The language of war continued within the topic of teacher unions throughout the entire period researched.

This strand of analysis suggests that the predilection for battle or war language within the newspapers during the time period of 2011-2015 concerning the state of Wisconsin became a facade for what needed to be accomplished concerning the unions and the proposed and subsequent

legislation that was put into law. Precluding the battle language concept in which teacher unions are painted as saboteurs rather than partners in real reform, always in opposition to those who are trying to make real changes (Governor Walker, reformers, lobbyists, legislators, etc.). According to the articles written within the *Times*, the *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*, it would seem that teacher unions are more enamored with engrossing in battles with opponents, manifesting the oppositional character, than in delivering to the communities in Wisconsin. Sadly missing within the reporting is a tangible sense of the work teachers and teacher unions actually perform, how the unions encourage the work within the system, and how and why they are a vital part of efforts to reform the schools within Wisconsin. This overall picture within the language of battle strand suggests that to construct a more useful public conversation about teacher unions and truly develop society's thinking about public sector unions and their role in the U.S., it is simply not enough to read the newspapers and their reporting of the protests and subsequent rendering in Wisconsin as something that is just happening. It is important for readers to further understand what else is being 'said' within the discourses that they presented. The media in this study are creating a clear power structure and presenting to their audiences the need to choose a side—the winning side—the more anti-union side. The following section goes a step further by uncovering another discourse that ran congruently with the language of the battle; one that furthers the claims of persuasion and power concerning teacher and public sector unions within the media.

Strand Two: Neoliberalistic Discourses

The concepts surrounding the strand on neoliberalism are complex and layered. The push for education toward the market is often inspired by the doctrines linked to neoliberalism and is fueled and informed by the discourses that can be found in the media concerning their ideas of neoliberal traits. These traits include, but are not limited to the deregulation of the economy and

trade, and the unprecedented importance of the financial sector. In this capacity, neoliberalism produces a one-size-fits-all mentality, essentially a business model for the education field and for the teachers and their unions (M. Harness, 2013). In this regard, the battle language discussed above makes sense, as the two entities, those of governmentality and social aspects of the ‘we,’ come in direct opposition to the more business-like entities that are trying to develop within education throughout the U.S. This fight is exemplified perfectly within the state of Wisconsin through the newspapers studied.

Statistically, this strand was the second largest represented within the three newspapers. Out of the 19 articles studied within the *Times*, 10 of those contained discourse pertaining to the ideas around neoliberalism, making it 53% of the total articles compositions. Within the *WSJ*, 13 out of 25, or 52% of the articles contained discourse of neoliberalism. Both of these papers percentages concerning neoliberalism came close to their counterparts within the use of battle language discussed above. Whereas, the *Cap Times* contained only 8 out of its 19, or 42% of its articles concerned neoliberalistic discourse. It is immediately recognizable that the local newspaper, the *Cap Times*, shows less concern with issues that pertain to neoliberalism, and more with embattlement as seen previously. This might be explained by the overt focus on local issues concerning the teachers and curriculum which will be discussed in the next strand. Discussion of the economy, globalization, and job production were more readily evidenced within the *Times* and *Cap Times*. Also, the *Cap Times* heavy reporting of the protests and strikes within Madison during 2011-2012 could help explain this as well. The reports of the protests and strikes harkened greatly to battle between the teachers and the State, so the other more neoliberal tendencies were very much a secondary topic for the *WSJ*.

These statistics around the number of instances that neoliberalism appears in the newspapers can possibly be explained by the way that the U.S. federal and state governments determine what is beneficial for society concerning entitlements³¹, such as those in education. Using trade theory, the government essentially uses a logics model, amply named, the input-output model, that states that principally the output of any endeavor should equal the sum of the inputs (Christ, 1955) In other words, the State does not like to put money into endeavors that do not necessarily have a quantifiable outcome, or where the input may not necessarily equal the output. Both of these cases are unfavorable to economists and many politicians. Therefore, in many of the articles that contained discourse pertaining to neoliberalism, phrases like “extend[ing] the new statewide accountability system” (Bauer, 2012), “starting merit pay system[s] for teachers” and the “balancing of budgets,” were present and seemed to exemplify this determination of the need for the state to justify the expenses of education as one of the necessities for the citizens.

Further, Pierre Bourdieu (1998) explains the input-output model well in conjunction with neoliberalism and education by clarifying it using a metaphorical person. Bourdieu describes that educational policy production is essentially the ‘right hand of the state;’ whereby education has been given over within both the federal and state governments to their treasuries and educational policy teams (Bourdieu, 1998). These policy mechanisms are “then linked to the introduction of quasi markets within school settings, which are equated to a human capital approach to education” (M. Harness, 2013, p. 74). This leads to a culture that is all about performance, as was witnessed in the above quotations, both for teachers and students, where pay performance and testing become all important in proving that good outcomes will come from what the state has paid for. Bourdieu (1998), goes on to write that on the other hand, metaphorically the left, we have teachers who are

³¹ Governmental entitlements refer to those programs that are rights granted to U.S. citizens and sometimes non-citizens by federal law, such as, Social Security, Unemployment, Medicare, Education, etc. (Cogswell, 1996).

the spending part of the unit. According to Bourdieu (1998), it is believed that due to neoliberalism's effects within education, that the left hand, the teachers, "resist the right hand, the government, in an effort to hold onto some of the improvements [that their unions] have made over the last hundred years" (p. 74-75). Bourdieu (1998) concludes his metaphor by asserting that it is difficult, even if wanting to, for the left hand to shake the right.

The explanations above in connection with the promulgated discourses by the media's infusion of neoliberalism throughout their articles can help us understand the attack on teachers and their unions in the state of Wisconsin, and the resulting consequences of Governor Walker wanting to cut the budget by more than \$800 million dollars; most of which was coming from education. In the same vein, Walker also restricted the rights of cities and counties in Wisconsin to raise property taxes beyond 5.5%, which could help make up for some of the lost education budget (Hetzner & Richards, 2011). In response, districts throughout Wisconsin began to eliminate regular classroom teacher aid positions, special education teachers and aids, ESL programs, pre-kindergarten programs, humanity classes, such as, art and music, nurses in schools, part-time teacher positions (Bidden, 2012; Hetzner & Richards, 2011). Full-time teacher's benefits and salaries were also significantly cut or restructured (Stein, 2012). The newspapers reflected this more conservative and neoliberalistic stance of the Governor by using language that engaged and furthered the discussions surrounding overspending and the need for more competition within the education arena by creating an oppositional positionality between the citizens within Wisconsin and the teachers and teacher unions. A good example of this can be found in *The Times*:

Across the country, taxpayers are providing pensions, benefits and job security protections
for public workers that almost no one in the private sector enjoys. Taxpayers simply

cannot afford [it]...the scale has been increasingly tipping away from taxpayers.
(Bloomberg, 2011)

The language found in this passage clearly depicts the newspapers attempt at creating an oppositional environment between larger society and the unions. The language within this passage is also telling of the more neoliberalistic stance that the *Times* takes regarding what they view as an impractical business practice, one that those in the private sector cannot afford to do. This ‘advantage’ that the public sector union gets according to the *Times*, also creates competition between the taxpayers and the public sector unions; so now they are not only creating an oppositional arena for the unions and society in Wisconsin, but they are creating an atmosphere of competition, even though the workers within the public sector unions are also taxpaying members of society. The double lined verb, ‘tipping’, indicates this competition between these two entities by creating a picture within the reader’s mind. This picture harkens to a scale of sorts, that if anything else goes the way of the public sector unions, then the results are that the taxpayers, the citizenry outside public sector workers, are going to be the clear losers, hence the only action is to denounce the unions and make it harder for them to be able to collectively bargain, just what ACT 10 has provided for them. This leads to the idea that since the taxpayers (outside of public sector workers) do not want to pay more for education, that the possible answer lies within the private sector and what they can provide. It can be ascertained that the “privatization of state institutions, particularly the defunding of public education, appears to have serious implications” for the future of equity and democracy within the U.S. (Baltodaro, 2012, p. 494).

The *WSJ* was the newspaper that was overly concerned with the economy and relaying a cost benefit analysis to their readers. They consistently pitted teacher unions against others in society like Wisconsin citizens, but especially the politicians who were trying to make ACT 10 a

state law. In the following instance, the *WSJ* wrote about how the teacher unions (WEAC) were willing to talk reform only after the initial introductions of ACT 10 was going into motion on the floor of the legislature:

Under its “performance pay” proposal, teachers would get more for staffing hard-to-staff schools and filling hard-to-fill positions. Pay would also be related to regular employee evaluations—if in some as-yet-defined, possibly very weak way...This is about a bigger education pie, in other words, not about the same pie cut into different-sized pieces...What’s most irritating about WEAC’s proposal is not its shortcomings or its political motivations though, because it’s clear that teachers at least are starting to move toward a more rational employment model; it’s that had all these ‘reforms’ been proposed a year ago, Wisconsin and their citizens, probably would have had a better chance at winning a grant through the Obama Administration’s *Race to the Top* initiative. (Rickert, 2011c)

This discourse from the *WSJ* exemplifies the language that is indicative of the neoliberal stance that the newspapers took within their articles concerning the teacher unions within Wisconsin. The single underlined instances above indicate ‘corporatist’ language that harkens to principles that are generally found within the business world. The double underlined part above indicates a metaphor within this passage relating to the economy and education. While the dotted line indicates the use of the oppositional. As the above example provides, we see that the *WSJ*’s article is insisting that the society within Wisconsin should be angry with the teacher unions because the reforms that were discussed after ACT 10, should have been done before. The author claims that if the reforms had been put into place, then Wisconsin may have been able to receive money from the federal program, *Race to the Top*—another neoliberal reminder here. Within this short

example, a modality can also be ascertained, as what the teacher unions ‘should’ have done months before the Governor’s introduction of ACT 10. The pursuance here is that if the unions had come up with any types of reforms or different ways of doing things before, then Governor Walker wouldn’t have introduced the new legislation. As Bourdieu would ascertain, this is an instance where the left hand could not shake with the right. Whether this may be the case is inconsequential, as the discourse within the article has done its job in inciting a negative look at the teacher unions, and how the union’s practices clash with the new globalized reality, the one that the business world embraces.

What’s interesting about the above-mentioned example is the way in which the neoliberalistic agenda is so tightly placed, and to most readers their use would go largely unnoticed within the newspaper articles that were researched. The way that they use and promote facets of the marketization of education through, “standards-based assessment, all of which are pillars of the global education reform movement” is fascinating to see over and over again within the discourse (Gautreaux, 2015, p. 3). Ellison (2009) asserts that the language above makes sense since the newspapers are “attempt[ing] to frame popular discourse and sway public opinion that provide a ‘common language’ unifying the disparate and often conflicting actors and interests engaged in policy debates under one broad discursive umbrella,” which in this case happens to be that of the ideals around neoliberalism (p. 2). So it can be seen within the newspapers that the discourse includes everything from “a merger” (Craver, 2012) between unions and education to the government, to calling students “consumers” (Rickert, 2011b) of public education, to estimating the “value to society” (Gabriel, 2011) that teacher unions and their collective bargaining bring to education to the overall community in Wisconsin and beyond. This neoliberal language is

indicative of a broader issue concerning the ability of individuals within society to ascertain the impact that these types of representations have on themselves. In this capacity,

Neoliberalism functions at the level of the subject, producing docile subjects who are tightly governed, and who, at the same time define themselves as free. Individuals [it is] sugges[ed], have been seduced by their own perceived powers of freedom and have, at the same time, let significant collective power, through for example, allowing erosion of union power. (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 349)

It makes sense that the discourses within the newspapers would provide a means of reinforcing what the neoliberal agenda provides—an answer to the state’s educational money and staffing problems. In this way, the neoliberal strand can be regarded as a strand that contains a great deal of hegemony on the part of the newspapers. In fact, in a *WSJ* article titled, *New Work Rules...* by Steven Verburg (2011) he writes, that “transparency is the key to trust” in regards to teacher unions and the new ACT 10 laws that were put into place. Essentially, Verburg claims that if the teachers and their unions had been transparent to begin with, then the government would not have had to step in and create laws to produce a more competitive environment. This idea of ‘transparency’ is something that the media has been pushing hard for the last 10-15 years within governmental agencies and those who deal with the government like public sector unions (Bowles et al., 2014). For example, this message of transparency was a prominent feature for the media to expel to the public during both of President Obama’s election terms (R. Hall, 2015). The media believes that it has an obligation to hold the government “accountable in an era of professed transparency” (p. xi). The ideas behind ‘transparency’ comes from neoliberalistic ideals where business owners know everything, at all times, that is going on within their company’s walls; this is especially inclusive of financial issues. But in the case of the discourse provided by Verburg, the idea of

transparency is one of hegemony where teacher and other public sector unions are concerned. Chiefly, the thought is that if ACT 10 causes the unions and teachers to act and react in a certain way to new reforms that are going to be introduced concerning education, then the government will be able to better hold them accountable for creating a situation where the output outgrows the input; meaning, the students of Wisconsin will better be able to compete globally for jobs. It seems that they are taking a clear stance within their discourse of where education needs to be heading--toward a more globalized understanding of the world. Even if this is the case for the students of Wisconsin, the preponderance for the need to push for transparency by the media, a neoliberalistic goal, creates a hegemonic situation, lending itself to an anti-union stance.

As shown, all three newspapers contained instances from the neoliberal stance and all three in most instances used this as a means of demonstrating the incorporated ideology of neoliberalism and in turn, hegemonic power. However, there was one newspaper within this strand that in some instances used it to try and promote public sector unions rather than tear them down—the *Cap Times*. Although, the language that was used was still couched in neoliberal discourse and had to be softened using conceptual metaphor, it is nonetheless present. One such example can be found in the following:

In business journalism, it's popular to suggest a company is "burning the furniture" when it takes ill-advised, short term steps that compromise its ability to ever rebound. In other words, when there is no money for fuel in the middle of winter, desperate residents resort to burning the furniture, which obviously only works as long as the furniture lasts. The state of Wisconsin has been burning furniture these past few years, haphazardly cutting taxes beyond what's prudent and placing our historically excellent system of public education, both K-12 and the university system, in

jeopardy. It has also been undercutting soup to nuts the signature programs, policies and protections that have defined Wisconsin since the Progressive Era of a century ago. (Fanlund, 2014)

As we see, the business emphasis is used here as a means to establish normalcy that is seen throughout the rest of the articles concerning teacher unions, but in this article the writer takes the use of the normal and turns it on its head by couching a pro-union stance within the metaphor provided by the “burning furniture.” What this does is allow the reader to engage with, and be comforted by, the ideologies of neoliberalism that have become so naturalized within the discourse of the everyday, and also provides the reader with a sense that what is going on with the unions could be detrimental to the future of education in Wisconsin. The passage above and the few other instances that could be found within the articles in the *Cap Times*, are providing a softened modality of what should happen with unions—that is, that they are a vital part of not only the education system, but society in general. However, these instances do very little to chip away at the hegemonic processes that the neoliberal ideology created in the rest of the articles.

Therefore, it can be understood through the analysis of the discourse contained within these newspapers that neoliberalism “corrodes the institutions, values, and processes of liberal democracies” (Baltodaro, 2012, p. 494) which seek to eradicate the concepts of education as “a common and public good in the public interest” (Luke, 2005, p. 161). Under this neoliberal strand concerning teacher unions in Wisconsin, it is easy to understand that in this way neoliberalism is a form of governmentality (Michel Foucault, 1977). It is “always [an] active political intervention and manipulation” infused and used by social institutions, like the media (Baltodaro, 2012, p. 493). Giroux (2002) wrote that the practices of institutions, such as, the media and the policies that comes from such discourse “assault all things public, sabotage the basic contradiction between

democratic values and market fundamentalism[;] it also weakens any viable notion of political agency by offering no language capable of connecting private considerations to public issues” (para. 1). In this way, the public’s good becomes “burdensome [to] private firms, causing even greater strife within society” (Baker, 2015, p. 45). It can further be argued that the media’s usage and incorporation of neoliberal educational discourses portends a precarious understanding of the association between public education and equity there within. As can be seen in the following section on the teachers themselves within Wisconsin, these hegemonic responses, specifically found within this strand are damaging to the overall well-being of all involved within the education system, including, the students, parents and the unions, but specifically damaging to the teachers involved.

Strand Three: Teacher as a Defunct Agent

It is evident in the material above, that neoliberalism has a direct impact on what is being reported within the media, in conjunction with the harkening of an us versus them mentality found in the use of battle language, where winners and losers need to be decided. There seems to be a clear loser within the discourse from the media—the teachers. ACT 10, along with other more neoliberalistic policies, which will be discussed later in this section, are creating even tighter control over money and outcomes, which is emphasizing the need to have more control through accountability and tighter restrictions on those who are on the bottom of the bureaucratic chain. We can see through the research I have presented that through loss of issues that teacher unions previously fought for and won on behalf of teachers over the twentieth century, such as, seniority and tenure rights, because of these tighter controls, teachers often become the products of the neoliberal agenda. This agenda often pushes for better grades and higher test scores with the goal of fostering economic competition, instead of fostering a real love of learning. These same harsh

accountability measures harken back to the same principles that were contrived at the beginning of the 1980's with the report of a *Nation at Risk*; coincidentally, a neoliberalistic look at the profession of teaching, teachers, and the unions that represent them (Ellison, 2009).

However, this strand was the least represented out of the three within this research, even though teacher unions and ACT 10 directly impact the teachers within Wisconsin. Within the *Times*, out of the 19 articles only 6 or 32% contained discourse that directly related to the teachers within Wisconsin. Similarly, in the *WSJ*, out of the 25 articles researched, only 9, or 36% contained discourse directly about teachers. The *Cap Times* had the most representation for teachers within its discourse, having 8 out of the 19, or 42%. Again, the reasoning for the *Cap Times* to include more discourse on teachers is because they are dealing more with local issues, and the teachers are in direct contact with the individuals within the communities they know and write about.

Teachers were the least represented within all three strands found within the research. However, all three newspapers in this research echoed the need for extra accountability and control over the teachers, who often were discussed in the discourse as the defunct agents of the education system within the state of Wisconsin. Many of the articles were about taking the first steps to increasing such control, which included their curtailing collective bargaining rights for their unions as we have seen in the discourse examined within the previous two sections. By no means were all the articles examined trying to tear down the job and performance of the teachers within the state; in fact, the *Cap Times* provided many good counter examples of this. But, the overwhelming majority presumed such explanations for the need for “merit and performance pay” (Greenhouse, 2012), a “new accountability system” for teachers and schools (DeFour, 2011b), and the ability and need to “unwind tenure and seniority protections [that have been] in place for more than 50 years,” even if the newspapers favored the teachers side (Gabriel, 2011). The discourse

surrounding the teachers and the systems that they function within, established an interesting paradox of opposition, in culmination with the ideologies of neoliberalism within this strand of research.

This paradox of opposition created through the discourse established a no-win situation for the teachers within Wisconsin. Although individual teachers were viewed favorably within the state of Wisconsin, especially at the local level as was mentioned earlier, the discourse within the newspapers concerning teacher's unions created an oppositional positionality that produced a paradoxical conundrum for the teachers, one of which they had could have no response or cure for. The discourse within the articles, even at the local level within the *Cap Times*, suggested that either the teacher unions were usurping the power of the individual teachers making it impossible for them to help push through new educational reforms, or that the teachers themselves, who are part of the unions, are in fact, causing the problems within the system. In either scenario, whether the teacher unions held all the power as a solidified unit and the teachers were in fact the victims, or the teachers themselves as part of the unions were keeping reform and 'real' change from happening, the teachers were the villains. According to the discourse that was presented by all three newspapers, being either the victim or the villain is not a good place to sit in the education system. In either case, the government, with their legislative action, ACT 10, became the good guys in the scenario by creating a mechanism to control either the too power heavy unions, or by taking control and creating more accountability for the teachers themselves that sit within the union. In the following passage, we can see that the language used depicts this scenario well:

Although crushing state budget deficits are the proximate cause of lawmakers' pressure, a further justification for many of the proposed measures comes from the broad accountability movement which aims to raise student achievement and sees

teachers' unions as often blocking the way...Accountability,...particularly as measured by student test scores, has brought sweeping change to education and promises more, but many teachers feel the changes are imposed with scant input from classroom-level educators...the decline in teachers' status [can be] traced to the success of unions in paying teachers and granting job security based on their years of service, not ability. They are reaping a bitter harvest that [the teachers] individually plant[ed] over 50 years ago (Gabriel, 2011).

In the above example, the single underlined phrases denote the governmental presence within the work. Even though the government is only presented as a worded discourse once within the passage, the undertones imply that the governmental presence runs throughout the entire section. In this way, the government is set up as the good guys, especially with the introduction of the ACT 10 legislation, while pitted against both teachers and teacher's unions, as can be seen in the passage indicated by the dotted line for the teachers themselves, and the wavy lines for the unions. What's particularly interesting about this example and others like it within the articles researched, is that the language harkens back to both the neoliberal ideology. This neoliberal ideology is undergirding this discussion surrounding both the abilities of the teachers, and their preponderance to lack the desire for 'real' reform, as harkened to by the governmental entities within Wisconsin. These oppositional tendencies concerning the teachers themselves are guided by the use of metaphor, as can be found by the bolded underlined discourse. Where teachers' predilection for circumventing either themselves or through their unions, the reforms that the government and more neoliberalistic entities would like to see passed are gauged in talk of planting crops. This metaphor creates a picture for readers that harkens to Bible verses about 'reaping what we sow.' In essence, the teachers have surrendered their power and have received what's coming

to them according to the discourse provided here. The use of the metaphors within this passage straddles a boundary between teachers being the victims of something that is out of their control, and teachers as the villains because they are part of the unions, because they are the ones who began them.

This strand of research dealing with the discourse that is about the teachers within the unions in Wisconsin is an intricate web. No one wants to come out and make the profound statements that the teachers are the ones to blame for both the issues with education and with the public sector unions; however, the implication of this is quite clear within the newspaper articles.

...if you'd like to see your district have an easier time keeping that awesome first-year teacher and ditching the underwhelming 20-year vet, if you want [et.al] less money [spent] on teachers' generous health care and pension benefits--now's your chance.
(Rickert, 2011b)

...innovative contract...which softens tenure protections and calls for steps to improve underperforming teachers...working to train teachers for new tougher core standards. (Greenhouse, 2012)

In these instances, modalities are inferred as to what the teachers in Wisconsin should be doing to make education better, and what could be if they had been doing it all along; both are modalities of obligation and desirability. If the teacher unions are not blamed directly for the seeming issues within the educational systems in Wisconsin, then it becomes apparent that the blame should rest on the teachers themselves because the teachers are part of the unions. The issues, like tenure, seniority, pensions, and vacation time that were won by the unions over the twentieth century, seem to be taken advantage of by the teachers. Government officials, parents, and reformers claim

that teachers get ‘excessive’ vacation and paid time off during the regular school year, all of which are negotiated by their unions.

Within certain articles researched, the teachers of Wisconsin were not just victimized or villainized, but their means of power and autonomy within the classroom were also called into question. These articles inquire whether the unions that teachers have been a part of for so many years, have in fact contributed to the lack of innovation and hence the overall ability of their performance within the classroom. Specifically, the *WSJ* more so than the other two, was the newspaper that pushed this agenda unto its readers using more inflammatory discourse and exemplification of issues that were coming to a head within Wisconsin after the passage of ACT 10. For instance, in one article titled, *New Work Rules Set in as Contracts Lapse: Administrators, Workers are Adjusting to a Different Employment Landscape: Public Employee Unions\Post-Collective Bargaining*, discourse on policy manuals, or employee handbooks, what they would later be called in most counties, was written about as

...replacing union contracts...giv[ing] public administrators a clear upper hand for the first time in 50 years under a state law that essentially ends union rights for most public employees. (Verburg, 2011, p. 1)

In this example, again we see that the us versus them mentality is taken in regards to the public administrators and the public employees. They are essentially pitting two entities that work together against one another. The writer’s couch this within metaphorical language as denoted by the double underlined section above, possibly making it easier for readers to understand and accept ACT 10 and the changes to unionization as an important and upturning event for public education in Wisconsin.

The employee handbooks are essentially ‘rules of conduct,’ ‘job performance requirements,’ and the laws and policies that will hold the teachers accountable for student performance and testing outcomes. However, the discourse further in the article goes on to create the picture that the unions are the ones causing the issues for the teachers within the states, affirming that now the school administrators and boards have a “free hand to reward” teachers for performance based on merit. Changing over to a system that, instead of using contracts and negotiations, uses the new handbooks will allow teachers who work the hardest to get rewarded for doing so. The new system “no longer us[es] seniority” to keep or fill positions, which the newspaper claims will help teachers more than anything, giving them back their power within the classroom and education system (Verburg, 2011 p. 2). The article further claims that most teachers who are under these new employee handbooks are “pleasantly surprised” by how easy and good it feels to have such a tranquil transition to an easier way of teaching, and that those who are against these changes are part of the problem (p. 2). In turn, the key they claim to prosperity for education in Wisconsin comes down to ‘transparency’—another recall of a more neoliberal ideology as discussed in strand two. Considering the teachers themselves, the asserted claim is that unions protected rights have been essentially destroyed, making the institution of the unions become more ‘transparent’ with passage of the ACT 10 legislation. The passage of ACT 10, in turn, has freed teachers to ‘compete’ and show who they are in the classroom, thus giving them back their power and autonomy. In truth, the opposite may very well be the case. Teachers may have less power and autonomy in the end. However, the way in which the media presents the teachers within their articles, does not give the readers an opportunity to gauge that for themselves, but readily helps them to decide who should be held accountable and why these new implementations for teachers are going to ‘save’ the education system in Wisconsin and further, if passed in other states.

Another way that the argument above could be perceived and was written within the *WSJ*, is that the unions are protecting all of the ‘bad teachers’ within Wisconsin. This underlined perception of ‘bad teachers,’ especially in the media, is not a new concept for researchers; however, it becomes problematic when a state level newspaper, such as the *WSJ*, promulgates the stereotypical tenured, ‘lazy’ teacher, and that they perceive the teachers shortcomings as causing the failure of the public schools not only in Wisconsin, but all throughout the U.S. (Kumashiro, 2012) In an article by the *WSJ*, *Best Teachers Shouldn’t Even Need Protections*, which the title alone implies that the author, Chris Rickert, has a bias that is unfavorable to teachers to begin with, writes that

...one would think good teachers should have secure employment, dibs on choice positions and regular raises by virtue of being, well, good teachers. (Rickert, 2013a, p. 3)

This asserts the fact through the use of a modality (should) that teachers who have rights of seniority and tenure are more likely to be of poor quality. These claims made within the *WSJ* about the preponderance of ‘bad teachers’ are what CDA research would contend as evidentiary, meaning that they are assumptions on the part of the author of the discourse. This can also be evidenced by Rickert’s choice of the word ‘well,’ by using it as an interjection. In fact, teachers with tenure and seniority rights, according to research, tend to have stronger performance and abilities, be less intimidated, and more knowledgeable than do non-tenured teachers (Furman & Bordoff, 2008). Nonetheless, the theme of ‘bad teachers’ in this sense, was a very prominent vein within the *WSJ*’s articles.

The *Cap Times* and *Times* on the other hand, were more evenly handed with teachers within their discourse in regards to how they treated the abilities of teachers. In this way, these two papers contradicted themselves when dealing with the teachers, versus how they treated the unions

overall, within the discourse. This seems understandable, especially of the local newspaper, the *Cap Times*, due to research showing that often times, even when issues are viewed negatively within a state or national debate, the local level will show a variation of ideas and opinions, often times resulting in more favorable outlooks than their bigger counterparts in regards to street level bureaucracy (Bohte, 2002). In many instances, these two papers had discourse that denoted a partiality, showing that the teachers were in fact trying to make not only their jobs better, but the outcomes for their students better too. For example, in the *Cap Times* the following was written:

While most work under “handbook” rules instead of a contract, teachers who have stayed with their unions have been active in supporting “pro-education” school board candidates, lobbying against further attacks on public schools like expanded voucher programs, and advocating for better pay for starting teachers so that quality young people are still attracted to the profession. (D. Zweifel, 2015)

This example above is complex. As can be seen, the unions are still discussed, but it is the teachers that are part of the union that shines within this passage. The teachers as part of the union, which is represented by the bolded underlined, are essentially advocating for concepts that they see as ‘pro-education,’ and deeming the entities they find are harmful—voucher programs, low pay, etc. The use of battle language can be found once again, as though they are fighting for their very lives. However, this very well may be the case, and accurately reflects the way many teachers felt after the passage of ACT 10 in Wisconsin.

The example above is fairly typical of the discourse that can be found within the *Cap Times* and *Times* in regards to the attitudes concerning teachers. These two newspapers do not necessarily focus on the quality of the teacher within the classroom, but focus more on the overall education system of which they are an intricate part. Again, I underlined the words ‘pro-education’ in above

example because this phrase denotes several concepts. One, it harkens to the ideas that the teachers are the ones on the side of improving education, even if the government and the unions as a whole, are seen as generally not. And second, it reiterates the point that the ideas that are being put on teachers are part of the neoliberal ideology that goes against many of the ideas concerning the ‘good of the public.’

As time went on within the period from 2011-2015, the discourse itself became less about the teachers and their inadequacies, but kept the sense that teachers were somehow to blame as agents of the teacher unions and the education system. The ACT 10 legislation codifies the crisis message that reverberates throughout discourses about the educational systems within the U.S., namely that they are lacking or falling behind the rest of the world in some form or fashion. This message places the emphasis of educational reform upon the teachers by claiming that a lack of supervision has allowed the teachers to engage in practices that are detrimental to the education of their students. This failure of oversight has led to U.S. children not being adequately prepared for the competitive world workforce. The media is clearly blaming the teachers, as part of their unions for the issues that have led to the implementation of ACT 10; whether they are victims or villains, it is their fault in one fashion or another. The media is perpetuating the stereotypical ‘lazy, no good teacher,’ in essence taking their power away one word at a time. This strand exemplifies the need for extreme care when dealing with the complexities of teacher unions issues.

One Final Note

Policy, and in this case educational policy like the ACT 10 legislation put into law in the state of Wisconsin, engages society across all social contexts, including teachers, the unions, taxpayers, voters, students, parents, and those who consume the media (Cohen, 2010). However, what was significantly missing in the above three strands of research concerning the teacher unions

within Wisconsin was the voice of the parents and students. Their voices were largely neglected or dismissed within the discourses provided in the newspapers. Generally speaking, their presence was not considered a part of the discussion concerning public sector unions or the legislation that was introduced and eventually passed.

In all three newspapers, if parents were mentioned it was only in passing as a type of ‘reformer’ of the education system. They didn’t necessarily admit that the parents were overwhelming for or against the unions, nor did they peruse whether they thought the teachers in Wisconsin needed to be watched more closely and held more accountable for their actions within the classroom. Parents were mentioned most often in one of two ways. One, they were used as ‘fillers’ of seats, metaphorically, within the protests and sit-in’s in the capital of Madison in 2011. They essentially lent ‘community support.’ And two, they would be mentioned as part of surveys, that coincidentally never had them in favor of the public sector/teacher unions, nor did they contain what survey had been performed or any other factual information about the surveys within the articles. For instance, the following can be found in regards to one of only a few areas of discourse concerning parents within the articles:

Parents are divided in their view of teacher unions. 41 percent say the unions put teachers’ interests above those of students and 37 percent say they fight for the greater good of public education according to a new poll reported by Politico. (P. Schneider, 2014)

As you can see from above, although in this particular example who provided the survey is given—Politico—no other information or citations were given in regards to the survey. Survey results from parents were given and stated as a matter-of-fact when it is not apparent that the survey results are accurate. A little further down in the same article, the discourse changes to the questioning of

a reporter from the Washington Post who commented that opinions from parents about policies like ACT 10 “should be based on facts, not fear” (p.1). Yet, the voices and opinions of the parents in regards to education, the teachers, and the unions in the state of Wisconsin are rarely, if ever, heard, factual or otherwise. It makes it difficult to analyze discourse within newspapers when there was nowhere within any of the discourse that was presented the parents beliefs and attitudes about unions and the education system.

Another part of the education policy equation that was largely ignored was that of the students. Much like their parents, the students’ opinions and information about what is happening to them and those whom they interact with daily—the teachers--was also largely missing or relegated to a position where ‘education rhetoric’ was thrown at or about them, but not able to be reciprocally answered. In fact, the students had less of a voice than did the parents. Most articles, in regards to students, wrote about “student achievement” (Rickert, 2011a), “student testing” (Greenhouse, 2012), and “student well-being” (Craver, 2012), all without citing the students. As a matter of fact, nowhere, in any of the newspaper articles, was there statistical data concerning student achievement or testing results within the state of Wisconsin. Authorizing student perspectives, according to some scholars, would help fix many of the issues within the education systems we have within the U.S. (Cook-Sather, 2002), by letting those speak who “have been silenced all their lives” (Giroux, 1992, p. 58). As long as their voices are excluded from the conversation, including the discourses within the media, the efforts to do any type of reforms will be based on an incomplete picture.

A “real” conversation about education and the laws that are being put into place concerning public sector/teacher unions and education was a one-way conversation within the newspapers.

This conversation largely was encompassed by governmental entities, those in the law, and the unions to an extent, but left many others out of the loop.

In Conclusion

The description above provides discourse analysis on ways that the media portrayed public sector/teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin between 2011-2015 in the *Times*, *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*, and the ways in which they both have added to and detracted from a conversation with the larger society. The analysis shows that the media largely vilified public-sector/teacher unions and the teachers within them by instituting a winner take all mentality, as was shown in the strand concerning battle language. In conjunction with the neoliberal discourse that the media promulgates within their reporting, the question of whether they add to the overall disapproval of public sector unions comes one step closer.

The U.S. public's views of public sector unions have been seemingly eroded and undermined by the discourse framed in the media's reporting to the public at large. This is a huge contention when, as we saw above, parents and students are completely left out of the discursive picture. By doing so, the media has ignored half of the groups involved in the educational process. Whether this is intention, it plays to a larger issue that harkens back to both the battle strand and the neoliberal strand presented above. Ignoring parents and students leaves the discourse involving teacher unions and the government isolated in a bubble without allowing for influence by parents and/or students. As a nation, how can we improve education when the discourses are not complete or are too isolated from everyone involved?

Issues of social justice created by the media within this analysis represent a problematic tendency for the future of our education system. As presented above, the ideas of the media using its hegemonic abilities to frame certain issues pertaining to education, including, tenure, seniority

rights, vacation time, poor versus good quality teachers, etc. is egregious when one considers the amount of time and energy it took for unions to secure equity within the educational system for teachers. Also, the media has, for the most part, essentially advocated for teachers to be stripped of their rights to collectively bargain their contracts against a large, systematic and sophisticated employer—the government. The right to form contracts is considered a fundamental right throughout our society from a large segment of the population, and ACT 10 strips teachers in Wisconsin of a fundamental right.

What will follow in chapter five will include the implications and recommendations of this research based on what has been provided through the CDA analysis above. I will begin by answering my research questions and analyzing the results. Then, I will address certain arguments that may be made against the findings of this work. The following questions will be discussed within chapter five as well: what are the implications if in fact the media is perpetuating the negative and detrimental stereotypes concerning teacher unions; what should be done to mitigate or change the perceptions being instigated by the media if they are perpetuating a negative connotation of public sector and teacher unions; and will new anti-labor union policy continue to be expanded throughout the U.S.? I will end by considering the limitations of this study as well as discuss what research may be needed in the future. Simply put, a continuation of a much-needed conversation will be made in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

**Unity is strength. . . When there is teamwork and collaboration wonderful things can be achieved. . . Knowledge becomes the power to begin that journey to achievement.
~ Unknown Author**

My purpose in this research was to ascertain whether by virtue of political and neoliberal agendas, the framing of public sector/teacher unions in the United States is unfavorable, which in turn, is creating issues of social justice through the policies and laws being enacted concerning the unions. The answer to this study and my central claim is yes, the discourses that the media have chosen to present to society, favor the anti-union movement. In this manner, if we use Foucault's (1980) understanding of control through social institutions, such as the media, then it makes sense that we see what we did through the strands within the analysis: control through the discourse that is presented to U.S. society especially in regards to naturalized understandings of neoliberalism. Essentially, the hidden discourses within the text that were examined, help to create and recreate an ideological hegemony about the negative characteristics of unions, and the detrimental policies they helped to create (Apple, 1995; Gramsci, 1971; van Dijk, 2009). These negative connotations presented by the media are problematic.

It is important to understand that teacher unions are not perfect, for instance, some in U.S. society claim that unions have seriously derailed public spending on education by protecting inept or mediocre teachers, raising salary and benefits that outpace inflation, and by reducing workloads by hiring lower than necessary student to teacher ratios (Coulson, 2014). Although these are valid opinions in some instances, for the overwhelming majority of teacher unions they are a force working for and within public education in hopes of substantiating change that is beneficial to students and teachers alike. For example, teacher unions are one of the only organizations in the

field of education that fights for equity in education, like equal access to funding for every public school, not just those in wealthier areas (Husted & Kenny, 2000). They also protect teachers' First Amendment rights by allowing them to advocate for students without fear of retaliation, and they help teacher and student safety by requiring proof of good sanitation and cleanliness in the schools (Moe, 2011). Further, teacher unions are shown in research to be overwhelming good for the achievement of both academics and occupational outcomes for students (Moe, 2011; Nelson & Gould, 1988). These are just a few of the many benefits that the unions contribute to the educational system. However, the big lie, as Katy Swalwell (2014) puts it, is that unions are "not doing what's right for kids" (p. 93). She claims that this idea of 'not doing what is right for kids,' some of which we saw concerning the claim that teacher unions are stuck in the past, not wanting real education reform that will improve the outcomes for students, assumes that there are two groups fighting against one another—one that wants what's best for the kids and the other, what is best for the adults. To union opponents, it can be assumed that what is best for the adults is the idea that schools continue doing what they have always done for student's generation after generation, while steadily increasing the cost for teacher's salaries, supplies, and training. Husted and Kenny (2000) call this the equity-efficiency trade off. This simply means that government organizations, including schools, are supposed to be run efficiently, meaning with as few people and as cheaply as possible. However, efficiency is not always the best way to create equality and equity. Schools must have both, and teacher unions help to add this value to schools.

This dualism created in the discourse demonstrated a strong affirmation toward pitting teachers and unions against all others like the government and others; this could be seen in the discussion in chapter four concerning battle language. This two-sided argument paints one side, generally the reformers or the governmental entities, as the hero's, making the other the villains.

It is within this dualistic logic that teacher unions hinder needed or desired changes. Many contend that the new laws and policies like ACT-10 are necessary to combat the apparent corruption of the unions, forcing them to benefit others by stripping them of undeserved advantages and making them ‘accountable’ to the larger public for the first time.

This logic enables the media to pin education anti-union advocates against the backdrop of the greedy, stodgy³² teacher unions within the discourses. It is clear from my analysis that the media is taking a stand and contends that the reformers and the government are the ones who care about the students, and in turn, they embrace the new policies set forth by laws concerning standardized testing, voucher programs, merit pay, and the like. In essence, how the media frames public sector/teacher unions helps to shape and mold beliefs to the ideologies of the elite (Gramsci, 1971).

Although the research in this dissertation brings to light several questioning aspects of the media’s role of the promulgation of anti-union legislation, unfortunately this study does not explain all the different factors that could be in play regarding the anti-union movement. I will discuss the implications of this study at length regarding how the discourse used by the media has impacted public sector/teacher unions. I will also provide my recommendations regarding the media, unions, and policy at large. Finally, I will conclude by writing in regards to the limitations of this study, as well as, areas of further available research.

Implications

In the United States, the most numerous of all government bureaucrats are teachers. They operate the most collective and numerous of all governmental agencies—the public schools. There are over three million teachers in the U.S., at over 90,000 schools (Moe, 2006). And around 45%

³² Stodgy in this chapter simply means slow moving, unwilling to face change.

of all teachers in the U.S. belong to a union (Moe, 2006; U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). These statistics help to demonstrate the vastness and seeming need that the unions play within the field of public education to help bring together a workforce that is similar, but at the same time, diverse.

Some political theorists, like Deborah Stone (1989), write that often times “people who are victimized by a problem do not seek political change because they do not see the problem as changeable, do not believe they could bring about change, and need the material resources for survival provided by the status quo” (p. 288). In the case of public school teachers, the money they need for survival is provided by the state and federal governments. Although this may be the case in some instances, teachers, through the movements of their unions, have tried and succeeded in bringing about change within their respective areas. We have seen this throughout the history of the teacher unions as they have fought for and won issues, such as, collective bargaining and tenure rights, better working conditions, better pay and benefits, and the like. However, with the media using its discourse to frame public sector unions, especially teacher unions, in ways that demonstrate a too politically powerful and savvy organization; teachers are looked down upon for being part of the union. We witnessed this degradation of teachers within the media, in the strand described in chapter four, *Teachers as Defunct Agents*.

The negative outlook through the discourse provided by the media of teachers within Wisconsin has huge implications for them and the future of teaching. Alan Singer (2016) explains well the implications that are arising from such discourse:

We all benefit from a teachers union that fights for maintaining teaching as a profession rather than a temporary job. We also all benefit from public employees unions that oppose budget cuts and tax cuts for the wealthy, support active government involvement in regulating and promoting economic development, and fight for wages and benefits that

support middle-class families. Teachers and public employee unions were an important part of the New Deal coalition of the 1930's that fought for Social Security, were active in the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and teacher unions were especially active in recent campaigns against the Common Core aligned high stakes testing of students that have forced the federal government to revise some of its mandates. (para. 14)

To this we can add the predictability that more new laws and policies will be enacted that are detrimental to the education systems (i.e. budget cuts, curriculum narrowing, etc.) in and outside of Wisconsin, as what happened there with ACT-10 sets a precedence for the rest of the U.S. to follow.

Some may ask how is this different from what has been previously written in regards to teachers throughout the U.S.? What is different is that the newspapers don't just outright demonstrate or concentrate within their articles on the inadequacies of the teachers; rather, the articles hide the agenda of the need for tighter policy and new laws to 'control' the 'lazy' teachers within the discourse of 'bad teachers', so they can fire the teachers whom they feel are not performing to standards deemed appropriate under the new laws and policies. Further, by controlling and severely limiting collective bargaining rights through laws like ACT 10, the state again reinforces that the teachers are a low priority, and they are in fact the ones that are standing in the way of real educational reform.

As it was pointed out in chapter three, Van Dijk (2001) writes about how dangerous the hidden ideologies are within texts. Accordingly, these negative discourses that are subtly implied and tightly controlled within the articles that were researched, lead the general reader to assume that the reason that the new laws are being put into place is because bad teachers are being protected by the unions, whom are also a 'bad' influence within the education system. Some of the

implications of this kind of discourse pertaining to the teachers themselves have already started to affect the education system within Wisconsin. In 2015, the Joint Committee on Finance of the state legislature in Wisconsin, brought the old adage...‘anyone can teach’...to fruition when they proposed new laws that were slipped into the bill for the upcoming budget that would essentially eliminate teacher licensing standards for many public school teachers, along with oftentimes only requiring the individual to have graduated from high school with a regular diploma³³ (Strauss, 2015). Taking this one step further, in non-core curriculum classes, such as art, music, and other electives, individuals would not even be required to have a high school diploma or GED, but rather they would be hired on the grounds of their ‘expertise’ in a particular field.

Although there is some research that claims that credentials for teaching do not necessarily necessitate a better teaching outcome, the overwhelming majority of research supports the need for, at the very least, programs, such as those found in teacher education colleges and universities throughout the country (Cochran-Smith, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2000). These teacher programs teach individuals about the development of children, along with the techniques and application of the understanding of basic educational strategies in and outside the area of expertise for K-12 (Darling-Hammond, 2000) Many of these teacher preparation programs have seen drastic cuts in their funding over the last 10-15 years, leaving many classes that politicians feel unnecessary (the philosophy of teaching, the history of teaching, the sociology of teaching, etc.) to be slashed from teacher preparation programs (Zeichner, 2006). But it is these classes, along with all the others that teachers take in and outside their programs that make good teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Simply put, these lax teacher standards that we are seeing in and outside of Wisconsin help to signify and reinforce the ideologies behind the very message that undergirds the media’s discourse

³³ These new standards for teacher licensure are still being debated in Wisconsin upon the completion of this research.

about the need to have tighter control over the individuals teaching because they essentially cannot be trusted to do their job effectively and efficiently as they should be doing it—a harkening back to both governmentality and the managerial style of the neoliberalistic ideology. So, making teachers more equipped to teach their particular subject matters in their respective grade is not necessarily what some individuals are asking for, but rather they want those that will blindly follow directions and ‘perform the script’ they are given with little or no complaining about the process or end results. They in fact, do not want critical thinkers. They do not necessarily care about equality or equity. In this case, education and training are not the end desired result, but more efficiency, with less money and less man power (Husted & Kenny, 2000).

Further, the villainization of the unions, and essentially the teachers that are a part of them, are only constrained by the imaginations of the public at large that are introduced and become engrossed with the presentation of material by the media. According to Stone (1989), research suggests that the public’s beliefs are ‘sensitive’ to the way that the media portrays the problems that are being introduced to them (p. 293). In the case of the research provided within this body of work, articles were written as though they were based upon only facts, as was the analysis of the material. Much of the time, these articles went against the public sector/teacher unions. It was a type of propaganda. They asserted a naturalized, unassuming conversation about the problems of the unions—the unwillingness for reform, the stodginess of the unions, the archaic means that the unions are holding on to outdated practices for their members, the money hungry teachers, and the power-hungry nature of the unions as a whole. According to researchers, such as, Rotherdam (2008), the presentation of “objective facts” as naturalized understandings have huge implications for issues concerning equity within society, as we have witnessed within the state of Wisconsin, the implementation of ACT 10, and the views and opinions expressed concerning the unions and

the teachers within them. Even for myself, as researcher, with the first read of the articles that I performed, which was a more casual read, it was difficult to ascertain fact from opinion. For someone who reads the article one time, pulling the underlying message, or ascertaining the ideological presences within, would seem to be all but impossible. This can lead to a misinformed or beguiled society concerning what is in the best interest for labor and the people working within society.

These casual assumptions (the unwillingness for reform, the stodginess, etc.) that were written about within the articles are hugely problematic for the future of the public sector/teacher unions, not only in Wisconsin, but within the entire U.S. These casual assumptions within what the media presents to the public become entrenched and create a successful new perception that the unions are believed to be behaving in a certain unfavorable way. These new dominant beliefs and assumptions guide policy makers then to create and implement new laws and policies that can be detrimental to those that are under them; doing much more harm than good. For instance, in Wisconsin when ACT 10 was introduced, many of the writers within the newspapers that were researched wrote about the union's unwillingness to reform, but did not explain why they didn't want certain reforms, what was in the reforms, or the alternatives that were presented to the call for action in education. The casual belief presented to the public through the discourse provided about the unwillingness of the teacher unions for reform in education in Wisconsin, only lent fuel to the fire that was already brooding within Governor Walker's more conservative political base—a dominant force within the political realm during 2011-2015. In essence, these casual understandings presented to the public through the media concerning public sector/teacher unions, are a form of instrument of “social control to maintain existing patterns of dominance” (Gramsci, 1971; Stone, 1989, p. 296).

Thus, we see in many instances in the articles that underneath the surface of the discourse is an underlying push toward the more neoliberal inclination within education. For instance, again in the same Joint Committee on Finance in the state legislature in Wisconsin, the state budget that was proposed by Governor Walker and state conservatives was one that included a voucher program for students with special needs (Strauss, 2015). This, at first, would appear to be something that seems fair, creating more equity and equality within the education system; overall it appears to help students with special needs. Essentially the voucher program is supposed to allow students to choose where they want to go school, respectively enabling children to attend schools that ‘out-perform’ the lower performing schools that a child may be zoned for. The voucher system was supposed to be the answer to creating equity within the school systems in the U.S. However, opponents of voucher programs contend that they do not work, and in fact “any gains [to] overall student achievement from a large scale voucher program are at best small [and] undoubtedly harm[s] large numbers of disadvantaged students, [as well as] do[es] little to improve education for low performing schools” (Ladd, 2002, p. 3). This voucher plan may in fact be doing more harm than good for the students who need help the most. However, voucher programs come from a more neoliberal ideology where competition drives the means to an end.

These neoliberal ideologies that are rampant throughout the newspaper articles and have become so naturalized within our society, seem to want to create more competition within education, but they do not want to pay those within the system for the work that is deemed so valuable. Having discourse and ideologies that minimize teachers’ abilities within our society is detrimental to attracting and retaining individuals to the field of education. An even bigger deterrent to most teachers is the financial incentive that was written about in the articles researched, and has been discussed in length within the state of Wisconsin as a means to attracting new

individuals to teaching. This more neoliberal approach to attracting teachers has been deemed an ineffective means to recruit new teachers by the unions, and in fact, less than half of all teachers in the U.S. believe that paying people extra to work in the education field should be considered (Duffett, Farkas, Rotherham, & Silva, 2008). Furthermore, just because someone is paid a little extra to teach in a needed field, such as physics, doesn't mean that their teaching skills of that subject are going to be acceptable. In fact, in some cases, the quality of education may be reduced which could cause even more problems within the educational systems (Guilfoyle, 1995).

Most importantly here, is that teachers, or any other public sector union member in Wisconsin, were not asked how they felt about their collective bargaining rights being taken away by the ACT-10 law that Governor Walker put into effect. All the sit-in's and protests by the teachers, students, parents, police officers, firefighters, and other government supporters did not influence, nor deter the push by conservative legislators to enact this law. In fact, in most cases, fueled by the reporting of the media of the 'money-hungry' or 'power-hungry' unions and the teachers that are a part of them, most citizens in the public sector agreed that the unions needed more control by the government. However, research on teachers about their unions states that "most teachers see the teachers union as vital to their profession;" in fact "54% of teachers responded that they are absolutely essential" (Duffett et al., 2008, p. 8). Eighty-one percent of teachers in the U.S. believe that "without collective bargaining, the working conditions and salaries of teachers would be much worse" (p. 8). The findings are: severely limiting or altogether outlawing collective bargaining and other abilities of public sector unions, specifically important in right-to-work states, is detrimental to the varying fields, but especially important to the field of education's well-being, and those who work within it. ACT-10 seemed to be targeting teacher unions specifically.

Abandoning public sector unions has many implications for the nation at large. Diane Ravitch (2015) writes that if it weren't for unions within the U.S., "workers [would] be exploited, treated as chattel, paid below minimum wage, expected to work long hours in poor conditions, and fired with or without cause" (para. 4). She goes on to write about how losing unions would simply create a larger divide between the haves and the have nots, hastening the shrinkage of the middle class. These implications about the disparaging effects of the lack of unionization within the U.S. seem not to affect the media's presentation concerning unions and the teachers within the education system, as witnessed in the articles concerning Wisconsin shared in chapter four.

The disregard within the discourse that the media is disseminating unto the larger public has many ramifications for the overall well-being of public sector/teacher unions and those who are members of them. The negative understandings of the public sector unions that are being written about within the media are damaging not only the unions and their members, but the very fabric of labor relations within the U.S. These attacks are causing further degradation by forcing the Supreme Court and other courts in the nation to take on cases dealing with public sector unions, the results of which have been mixed, but the disparaging picture created by the media is not helping the overall plight of the unions.

Recommendations

What can and should be done pertaining to the media and its reporting on public sector/teacher unions? It is not overly evident what should be done to change the way the media presents the unions. As long as media outlets follow the procedures set up by their own individual organizations, and the law pertaining to the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution, there may be little that can be done. Further, it must be understood that as humans, situated in a particular place and time, we are bounded within the constraints of our own biases. This process of passing

information from oneself to another cannot be done without understanding that we bring all of who we are and what we have done to all endeavors outside ourselves; these understandings of bias also are relevant to the media. The media, and those who are within it are human, and these same constraints are also part of who they are. But we must make suggestions on how to make the information given to the society at large more trustworthy, reliable, and as least biased as possible moving further into the twenty-first century.

Even though I have contended that at least some of the issues pertaining to the negative connotations of teacher unions have left the media to blame, the fact is that we do need more media coverage of labor issues that pertain to the average worker in the U.S. Even though millions of workers are represented by the public sector/teacher unions, the number of media outlets covering such issues relating to the average worker has steadily shrunk over the last 20 to 30 years, and only when an episodic event happens, such as the sit-ins and protests in Wisconsin, does the media have coverage (Leighley, 2004a). Even in newspapers like the *Times* that carry a lot of articles concerning labor relations, these seemed to still be dwarfed by the newspaper's coverage of finance and the like.

However, more coverage may in fact lead to the chance that more bias will come forth concerning the anti-union stance we have seen in this research. Media organizations, need to reframe from producing news coverage that pushes certain ideologies onto the larger society that can be considered socially unjust practices, even though they are owned and often operated by certain individuals that have certain agenda's in mind. The idea of ideological hegemony and the damages that can be done when false, misleading, nonfactual, or overtly biased information are given to the public at large as simply 'news,' needs to be called out by researchers and activists alike, as well as, the unions themselves.

There are some signs that the media is changing as we continue into the twenty-first century, though. New media forums, such as: *Salon*, *Huffington Post*, and *Gawker*, have unions that protect their writers from the over-reaching of the owners and their ideologies. It would seem that the new generation of journalists have witnessed for themselves the inequalities in U.S. society that have been so stark since the beginning of the 2000's (Hackett, 2006). With the online move for many members of the media comes a new reality, one that sees the journalists as vulnerable members of the working class. In this vein, it is through their experiences in this working realm that the new generation of writers won't repeat the same mistakes, by writing information that is blatantly biased and unfair to labor in the U.S. It is recommended for these new writers, and even the ones that have written for a long time, to give the unions and the issues they are fighting for, their due space in the media, particularly seeing that the information being given out is as fair and neutrally reported as can be.

Furthermore, if the media is going to charge the public sector unions with being more transparent, thus being more accountable to society as they claim they want them to be, the media should be held to the same accountability standards. The media claims that they self-regulate in terms of their reporting; they fix what is incorrect. However, it seems that it is grossly negligent for them to retract or make necessary changes since these changes generally appear buried deeply in the pages of the newspaper. Therefore, I believe there should be an independent board that do audits of the information presented within the media organizations. This organization should check and rate the reliability and factual information, among other factors, creating a standard accountability for them. This board should be independent from the media organizations, thereby hopefully creating greater accountability for the discourses that the media introduces to the larger society, thus creating less bias in their reporting. The information found by this board should be

made available to the public. Media organizations would register with the board, thereby agreeing to the board's standards of journalistic ethics and factual accuracy. Thus, the logo found on media would let readers know that the source has some accountability for what it is reporting to its audience. Although this may not end all bias or ideological presence, it would help to minimize gross negligence on the part of the media organization.

Another avenue for recommendations is in relation to the public sector/teacher unions themselves. Discouraged by media attitudes toward the unions, many of the unions do not want to have anything to do with the media. Oftentimes they do not return phone calls to those in the media even when it would be most advantageous for them to do so. The unions do not want to be in contact with the media for fear of being misrepresented and/or being misquoted within the reporting (Epton, 2004). Unfortunately, there is little that can be done to protect themselves from these issues concerning the media. However, because of these fears, the media very rarely gives reports on the attitudes and undertakings of the unions themselves. Those mundane issues can later turn into huge issues leading to strikes and sit-ins. Throughout much of the twentieth-century, major media outlets, like the *Times* and *WSJ*, would have journalists that were assigned issues pertaining to labor, which included being in regular contact with the public sector unions. These journalists formed personal relationships, coming to understand and sympathize with them and the issues that they were dealing with concerning labor relations in the U.S. But sadly, unions do not want to reach out to the media any longer. However, it would be most advantageous for the public sector unions to do so, thus allowing the voices of the union and its members to be heard as well. Right now, the view of unions in general is very skewed one way, as was witnessed by the lack of parents, students, and union voices in the research provided here; however, if the media were influenced by outside sources, such as the board mentioned above to add more voices to the

conversation, the better the outcome for everyone, possibly even unifying labor for all within society.

Further, despite public sector unions presence in the political arena, many of the reform efforts and policies like ACT-10 that are touted by the media and reformers as intending to improve education in the U.S. are not contributing to improvement at all. Many of these policies and laws that are supposed to be helping education have in many instances hurt it by targeting the influence the unions have in regards to decisions to the overall well-being of both students and teachers (Cowen & Strunk, 2014; Rotherman, 2008; Swalwell, 2014). For example, many states, including Wisconsin, have legally relegated things like seniority and collective bargaining out of the practice of teaching. I am recommending in the case of the government that they stop enacting further legislation that is detrimental to both public sector and private sector unions. Doing so, will help ensure a more productive and economically forward society of individuals that see both unions and government as socially just entities (Devinatz, 2004). Social justice and economic feasibility can go hand in hand. As a matter of fact, it is shown that economic productivity increases when workers are happier and fairness is apparent within social institutions around them (Devinatz, 2004).

We must also look to current legislation concerning unions and right to work to examine the benefits to the people within the U.S. If the answer is that it is not benefitting workers and their families, then what is the point to having laws and policies in place that only hinder the productivity and economic forwardness of the U.S.? Passing legislation (i.e. policy lightening) on the whim of an individual's view of an issue, or one episode of an event taking place at one point in time, like the shooting of children in Sandy Hook school, does not make for good policy making. We need to help individuals understand that who they vote for is important, and will reflect what that person

stands for within their own lives at home. Further, how these individuals react to situations also makes a huge difference in how things change, and how they will affect everyone down the line who is affected by a new law or policy. Thus, voting and understanding policy, legislation, and the processes of government are important as well for all citizens within the U.S., and needs to be the focus within education and as we go out to vote as citizens of the U.S.

I will turn now to probably one of the most important recommendations concerning the media, labor unions, and the government—education. In terms of my own education throughout most of both high school and undergraduate degrees, I do not remember having any discussions about how important labor unions were to the overall development of U.S. society. Nor do I remember ever being taught how to critically examine varying aspects of academic work, let alone things within my everyday life, like movies, television shows, the news, and books, until I was studying for my master’s degree. I remember as an undergraduate in the history department briefly reading two or three paragraphs about Samuel Gompers (the first president of the AFL), but that was about the extent of the labor unionization that was covered. I am not sure if because I studied in Southern states it may be to blame for the lack of coverage on unions, but I would speculate that this is probably more normal across the U.S. as far as coverage for labor unions, then it is being abnormal. In fact, Victor Devinatz (2004), who teaches history at Illinois State University, reports that “many of the students (usually second-semester juniors and seniors) in [his] labor relations classes [et. al] report that they cannot remember discussing the labor movement in high school and before they actually get into the subject matter of the class, their perceptions of labor unions are almost always negative” (p. 106). This lack of knowledge is problematic, and what’s worse is that when they are confronted with issues pertaining to labor unions, it is usually in a manner through which the media is presenting them as anything but good.

In this matter, the curriculum in public schools must step up and present labor unions far more than they do now. This should be in a manner that depicts the good and the bad, but most importantly the role they have played to help all workers within U.S. society. This is important to stress to students, as many of them see government regulation as a means to protect workers. What they often fail to realize is that the unions are the ones who provided the means to that type of protective legislation. Also important in this same vein is the need to teach what the legislation is, and what it means to them as they begin their journey into the workforce.

It is also important within a discussion of labor unions to discuss “how the labor movement has often been active in promoting social justice issues in the U.S. (Devinatz, 2004, p. 112). For instance, one can see this within the efforts of the United Farm Workers (UFW) in the 1960’s. The UFW helped migrant lettuce and grape workers gain greater control over working conditions and pay in California. Further, specific instances of the work public sector unions should also be discussed, like what the teacher’s unions have done for the betterment of the teachers and students within the education system. Hearing stories from the teachers about their involvement or lack thereof, will also help students begin to understand about labor unions in the U.S. Again, just like with the media, the bias needs to be left out as much as possible unless stating that it is the teachers own opinion. My hope is that individuals begin to understand that unions help to promote a healthy democrat society that pushes against the fringes of our society, providing one of the few remaining voices that help speak for those not within the elite within U.S. society.

Further, within the history of labor unions, current discussions should include all types of unions, including those that are considered ‘white-collar’ and ‘pink-collar.’ Our transition in the twenty-first century from jobs that could be considered ‘blue-collar,’ such as those in manufacturing and vocational, to ‘white-collar,’ such as information technology, business, and

government is an important topic to cover. We also need to examine deeply the value behind what is added to society concerning jobs that are ‘pink-collar,’³⁴ since they have largely been excluded from discussions concerning labor. Because of the emphasis of unionization in connection with more ‘blue-color’ work, many feel that unionization and the newer sort of employment opportunities are incompatible. But the fact is that they are compatible, and the unions are needed more than ever within our neoliberal/corporatist society. In educating students to the fact that unions are relevant and helpful to all workers, it will help the overall understanding for them when reading and listening to media outlets in the future that discuss unions.

Finally, my last recommendation is that of criticality. We must as a society that strives to educate every member of the nation, teach individuals how to look beyond just the surface. We need to teach how to turn a critical eye on the media, and call for action when we see that the media is trying to use their means as a vehicle for a particular ideology as was seen within this research. We must also teach these same skills when it comes to the government and the laws and policies they are being enacted concerning not just unions, but all aspects of our society, especially when it pertains to issues of social justice. The future health and well-being of the U.S. are at risk when both the media and the government are left out of check.

Limitations

This study does have some limitations, most of which relate to predictability and reliability, geography, the newspapers, the authors of the articles, policy, and lastly, time.

First, although I did use the mechanisms previously described in the usage of CDA which I performed on the data four separate times, and I had a fellow colleague check my work on a

³⁴ Pink-collared was a term coined during and after World War II when women held certain jobs within U.S. society; such as, secretaries, typists, nurses, child care workers etc. Many of these jobs are still held by women in present day America.

number of occasions during and after the process, there are always questions of predictability and reliability of information found within the data. I do acknowledge this as a limitation of any work that takes on issues pertaining to that of language. Using different news organizations might lead to other types of outcomes and therefore may not be able to be replicated.

Further, I am thankful that in this study I only concentrated on one state—Wisconsin. I write this because there was so much information to go through pertaining to the topic of public sector/teacher unions within the state of Wisconsin during the time period of 2011-2015, which I will write about later in this section. However, there are many other states throughout the U.S. that are having their own issues concerning public sector/teacher unions, and the laws and policies that are either being passed or are being considered within their state governments. Other states that need to be researched concerning the media and the reporting they are doing on the unions include: California (legal battles concerning tenure and seniority rights), New York (member fee collection rights), Chicago, Illinois (the strength of the unions politically), and Tennessee (collective bargaining). There are issues all over the country, but the above four states have garnered significant amounts of media coverage concerning the public sector unions. I will also write about these four states within the section on my future research endeavors.

Another limitation this study has is related to the newspapers and the authors writing the articles. In CDA work, quantity is less important and less stressed than quality. Quality research is key when engaging in any work related to CDA. There was a wealth of information that was garnered from the three newspapers, the *Times*, the *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*; however, as in any empirical research, the more one can show reproducibility the sounder the research becomes. However, I do not feel reproducibility was an issue within this study. These three papers almost had too much information for a study as it was conducted. As previously written in chapter three,

CDA analysts can garner a wealth of information in some cases with just one piece of research material, so having an overabundance of information was at times frustrating and marveling, but also good as it helped to demonstrate the validity of the central claim. No matter how many newspapers I would have used, the issue of some being left out while others were included can be problematic.

Further, the authors of the articles within the newspaper can also be viewed as a limitation. I did not research the authors of the articles simply as a time restraint measure. We do not necessarily know what their personal agendas and ideologies are in their own lives and how their values might influence their newspaper writing. However, with this limitation also comes an understanding that the newspapers hired these individuals to do a particular writing job for them. At any point in time, editors or owners can pull or refuse to print a particular story; so, in this regard, I viewed their acceptance as a means to justify their particular ideology or viewpoint on the subject matter of the public sector unions. This is a limitation with the understanding that the newspaper stories were an acceptance of particular viewpoints and ideologies of the writers, editors, and owners.

The next limitation within this research had to do with policy. Simply put, this dissertation study was by no means research directly dealing with particular policies or laws, although ACT-10 and other system policies were mentioned within the research and discussion. However, I have included this as a limitation because I believe that in-depth policy discussion was largely relegated to a position beneath the issue of unionization within Wisconsin. If anything here within would be changed, it would be the addition of more policy issues and discussion. Future research should include in-depth policy analysis.

Lastly, I faced the limitation of time. Time is something we never have enough of. In regards to this research, there are two issues of time that I contend are limitations. One, the amount of time in terms of the years selected for the study could have either been extended, shortened, or done so that the period of time maybe leaped every two years that was included in the research, beginning in or around 1990 and ending in 2015 (i.e. 1990-1992, 1994-1996, etc.). I think playing with the time line would have helped to demonstrate how or if any the media's presentation of material on the unions changed over time. This however, would go to the second issue of time—the fact there would not be enough time to do all that needs to be done on research pertaining to the unions, policy, and the media. What I am pointing to as research limitations can be addressed through a career of research on this topic. However, what I judged to be the most important time period was selected within this research—the 2011-2015 period with Governor Scott Walker. A proper amount of time was spent researching what was available in the three newspapers to understand the picture that would eventually emerge concerning the media and union presentation

My Future Research Endeavors

For my future research on public sector/teacher unions and the media I think a multi-faceted approach to the various entities within this research would be beneficial for understanding the hegemony that is going on even further. For instance, I would like to do research on policies and laws that have been put into place over the last 10-20 years pertaining to public sector unions in the various areas of the U.S., including, the South, West, Southwest, North, North-West, North-East, and the Plains. I would then compare these new laws to determine what areas of the U.S. are most actively creating legislation that goes against the unions. In this same vain, I would like to try and ascertain why it might be like it is, in these different U.S. geographic areas, using either media information or governmental/political propaganda.

Another area of research that I am interested in delving into is the further research of the areas mentioned within the implication section—California, Chicago, Illinois, New York, and Tennessee. I would like to examine the laws these states have enacted concerning unions, and the reasons that have been given by both the government and the media for doing so, to see whether they align with each other, or if the information being disseminated to the public is different than the reasons given by the government.

In this same vein, I would like to do action research, perhaps a mixed methods study that would interact with governmental officials, union members and leaders, and students and their parents. In this study, I would ask questions about their knowledge of various unions, including: what they know of the history of unionization, their perception of unions, their knowledge of the laws and regulations that unions have, what their representatives' views are on unions, and what they have heard within the media concerning unions. This would be an interesting study to see just what all the differing facets of U.S. society feel about unions, and where some of the perceptions might be coming from. This would also give a voice to some of the individuals who are otherwise relegated to not having a voice, like the parents and students. This would also allow the unions to voice their concerns, interests, and aspirations as well.

I would also like to possibly put a book together that had individual stories from both leaders and members of public sector unions, and another from private sector unions. Each chapter would essentially be one person's story where they talk about their time in the union, how the individuals felt about their time in the unions, including whether they felt they were helping or hurting, what some of the issues they were involved in, and what it looks like from the inside being part of them. These stories would be capped by a short introduction, and then a final chapter that summed up the overall book. After both books were complete, one public sector and one private

sector, I would write a third book that explored the concepts within, breaking down issues and comparing the two. It would be interesting to see if there are vast differences or if the experiences are the same. What works better for one or the other, and which is more efficient as an organization? I would also like to try and see if the unions are worried about issues of social justice or if they are more worried about politics.

These future research projects I am hoping to do will help find causes for the anti-union discourse within U.S. society. It hopefully will also help to demonstrate from where it might be coming. Lending voices to those that otherwise would not be allowed to come forth is another reason for doing the above-mentioned research, one that I think is vastly important to help sustain and further the economic and civic health within the U.S.

Concluding Remarks

The U.S. labor movement once was one of the poignant avenues for workers who wanted and needed to fight a system that could not be fought on one's own. Despite the decline in unionization in the U.S., public sector unions still maintain some power in evident pockets throughout the country. As Pope Francis (2014) was quoted as saying, "Trade unions have been an essential force for social change without which a semblance of a decent and humane society is impossible under capitalism." In this way, it can be understood that a revitalizing of the labor movement in the U.S. is surely important for both the economic and civic health of the nation.

Part of this component of a healthy nation is to make clear that the media has an important role to play as the interpreter of accurate and factual information, not only concerning issues pertaining to unions, but all news, news that is unburdened from discourse that shows a clear ideology and agenda. In this way, it can be understood that interpreting and presenting 'knowledge' to the broader society is an immensely important part of the fabric of society, one

that is necessary for cultural and societal dissemination. But one that needs to be socially just. The central claim in this research endeavor was to ascertain an idea of whether the media is framing public sector unions, particularly teacher unions, in an unfavorable way through certain usages of political and neoliberal agendas, thereby creating an issue of social injustice. What I learned by performing the research on the three newspapers, the *Times*, the *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*, within the state of Wisconsin from the years 2011-2015, is yes, the media is perpetuating a certain unfavorable attitude toward unions in the discourse being introduced in their writing. They are framing the issues surrounding public sector unions in a way that pits unions against everyone else in society, and in turn helping to perpetuate and create a substantiated anti-union movement within the mass society. This anti-union movement in American society is then helping to support push for legislation that calls for tighter control through law and policy introduction that directly affects the unions and in turn, their members (teachers, police, firefighters, et.). The anti-union stance is taken one step further by government officials, like Governor Walker, who push for even further control through decreasing budgets and implementing ideas that seem counter-productive to these public institutions in the name of efficiency. The next question is what will be the consequence of these actions in the next 20-30 years?

Further, the hegemonic revolution of teaching into an anti-autonomous state begins with depriving teachers of their voices within the education system, which includes rights to development of curriculum, how they teach, their working conditions, what they are paid, etc.—all the issues that teacher unions try to address. The media has assisted in persuading the public that teachers and the work they perform are questionable at best, and more importantly here, that the unions, and the positions that they stand for, like tenure and seniority rights, are outdated and impede real reform, hence the need for laws, such as ACT 10. Based on the fact alone that so many

newspapers and other media sources carried stories about the Wisconsin protests and sit-in's, and the overwhelming majority of those stories reported how the unions were too powerful, including papers like the *Times*, the *WSJ*, and the *Cap Times*, it is no surprise that public opinion polls show that a majority of Americans feel that unions are hurting our chances of competing internationally (Pew Research Center U.S. Politics & Policy, 2011).

But, what is most disheartening concerning the research on public sector/teacher unions is the fact that the breaking down of the rights of public sector unions hurts the ideals and principles of democracy, something upon which the U.S. was founded. Public sector unions provide many ways in which they promote democratic and other socially just mechanisms within U.S. society. One way is that they put a check on capricious government power by making them responsible for elaborating why certain policies and laws need to be put into place instead of doing so for political gains or other arbitrary reasons. They also serve to help sustain some type of balance for wages and benefits for the middle class, so that the facets of our more neoliberal society do not create a more uneven class system than has already been developed. In the case of the education system, teacher unions help support public school systems that encourage more democratic values by pushing back against neoliberal reforms that don't always have all the students best interest in mind, such as, taking art, music, and P.E. classes away. Essentially, the whole of unionism is based upon the principles of social justice, and for the media to be promulgating a means to an end for them through their reporting, needs to be addressed as the recommendations above considered.

There are always two sides to every argument. However, the media in the case of public sector/teacher unions is only exhibiting one side of a very complicated and multi-faceted argument. The unions have their issues, just like any other organization within a society; however, their issues are miniscule compared with the fight they take on within the governmental and societal realm.

Unions are an organization that exists to protect the lower and middle classes—those within our society who have the most to lose. However, the individuals that wield the power in U.S. society—the upper class and elites—are the ones controlling the perceptions of the unions. These elites are the ones wielding the power within U.S. society. The hegemonic processes within the conglomeration of the media outlets, fostered by their politically obtuse corporate owners, and backed by certain governmental entities that have a stake to see that unions are disbanded, are hard at work, as the research performed upon the three newspapers in Wisconsin has uncovered.

This research then is a call to action. We must be diligent in understanding what the media presents to us; not blindly accepting and following what it ‘reports.’ We must protect those organizations and entities in society that are there to protect the people because they are few and far between, especially an organization that has the political reach and ability that the unions do. We need to actively engage with the dominant organizations, like the media, in our society to push against the hegemonic forces that are ever present, thus creating more equity and equality in our world.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Newspaper Articles

Table 1: *New York Times* Articles

Title	Date	Author
“When I Run Out of Fights to Have, I’ll Stop Fighting”	02/27/2011	Matt Bai
“Role for Teachers Is Seen In Solving Schools’ Crises	02/16/2011	Sam Dillon
“Limit Pay, Not Unions”	02/28/2011	Michael R. Bloomberg
“Teachers Wonder, Why the Heaping’s of Scorn?”	03/03/2011	Trip Gabriel
“Judge Voids Law Curbing Union Rights in Wisconsin”	05/27/2011	Steven Greenhouse
“Recall Battle In Wisconsin May Snarl Obama Camp”	06/04/2012	Jeff Zeleny
“In Standoff, Latest Sign of Unions Under Siege”	09/11/2012	Steven Greenhouse
“A Different Class Warfare”	09/26/2012	Trip Gabriel
“Seeking Growth, Nurses’ Federation Links to Teachers’ Union”	02/14/2013	Steven Greenhouse
“Wisconsin Supreme Court Hearts Arguments on Collective Bargaining Law”	11/12/2012	Steven Yaccino
“The Wisconsin Legacy”	02/23/2014	Steven Greenhouse
“Money Talks”	10/19/2014	Jim Rutenberg
“Little Opposition Seen in Some Votes to Raise State Minimum Wages”	11/04/2014	Steven Greenhouse
“Republicans Sure Love to Hate Unions”	11/19/2014	Thomas B. Edsall
“Obama Orders Federal Contractors to Provide Workers Paid Sick Leave”	09/08/2015	Peter Baker

Table 2: *Wisconsin State Journal* Articles

Title	Date	Author
“Union Plan Too Late To Help Schools”	02/13/2011	Chris Rickert
“Anatomy Of A Protest; It Began With A Simple March And Evolved Into A National Fight For Labor Rights, Today, We Dissect The Movement; State Budget Crisis”	02/27/2011	Dan Simmons
“Education Solutions Will Have To Wait”	03/19/2011	Chris Rickert
“Districts Asked To Identify Teachers Who Protested; Many Have Complied, But Madison Officials Refuse, Citing Safety Concerns”	05/22/2011	Matthew DeFour
“Unions Reject Discussions; Task Force Aims to Develop School Accountability System Unions Reject Discussions”	07/23/2011	Matthew DeFour
“Teachers Unions, Welcome To The Debate	10/15/2011	Chris Rickert
“Unions Sideline Individual Decisions”	12/20/2011	Chris Rickert
“New Work Rules Set In As Contracts Lapse; Administrators Workers Are Adjusting To A Different Employment Landscape; Public Employee Unions; Post-Collective Bargaining”	12/25/2011	Steven Verburg
“Wisconsin Unions Offer Support; Chicago Teacher Strike”	09/11/2012	Matthew DeFour
“Of Partisan Thought, Gun Laws And Unions”	02/16/2012	Chris Rickert
“ACT 10 Ruling Effect Minimal?: Some Labor Experts Say Management Still Would Have Most Of The Power In Contract Negotiations; Collective Bargaining”	09/18/2012	Matthew DeFour and Steven Verburg
“Evers urges more respect for teachers; State Schools Superintendent Says They Have Been Targeted By The Collective Bargaining Law”	09/21/2012	Scott Bauer
“Change Is Only Path To Better Schools”	02/12/2013	Chris Rickert
“Bet Teachers Shouldn’t Even Need Protectors”	02/24/2013	Chris Rickert
“Walker Spars With Union Over Surveys	04/13/2012	Matthew DeFour

Table 2 Continued

Title	Date	Author
“Public Unions Face Uncertain Future; Their Leaders Vow To Continue Fighting Despite Reduced Dues And Cuts In Their Staff; Recall Aftermath”	06/10/2012	Steven Verburg
“Majority Of School Unions Survive; The Recertification’s Rate Was Roughly 80 Percent, According To A Tally By The Associated Press”	12/20/2013	Todd Richmond
“Alternative Teachers Union Surfaces; The Group Bills Itself As Nonpartisan But Gets Sizable Donation From Conservative Groups and Supports Act 10 Union Restrictions”	12/29/2013	Molly Beck
“Unions Lose Their Appeal Of Act 10; A Federal Appeals Court Upholds Walker’s Public Union Restrictions; Collective Bargaining”	04/19/2014	Associated Press
“Justices Ready To Rule On Act 10; Wisconsin Supreme Court’s Decisions Coming Thursday”	07/30/2014	Scott Bauer
“Walker Zings Burke For Black Students Troubles In Madison”	09/04/2014	Molly Beck and Mary Spicuzza
“Act 10 About To Hit Local Teachers, Government Workers”	08/01/2014	Steven Verburg and Molly Beck
“Madison Schools Resistant To Change”	08/11/2015	Chris Rickert
“WEAC Turns To Boards, Parents; Union Uses Local Focus In Bid To Rebuild Influence”	02/22/2015	Molly Beck
“Walker, Christie Take Different Paths On Union Issues”	02/26/2015	Jill Colvin and Scott Bauer

Table 3: *Capital Times* Articles

Title	Date	Author
“‘Silent Majority’ Raps Union Response To Glendale Report”	01/19/2011	Susan Troller
“GOP Legislators Play Hardball Not Beanbag”	01/26/2011	Ed Garvey
“MATC union feels sting of new bargaining law”	03/23/2011	Todd Finkelmeyer
“Walker Should Take The Bull’s-Eye Off Teachers”	06/01/2011	Paul Fanlund
“Bullish About Public Education; Superintendent Tony Evers Has Emerged A Fierce Advocate of Schools In The Face Of Massive Cuts And Privatization Efforts”	07/06/2011	Susan Troller
“Walker Brings Unions Together”	12/14/2011	Dave Zweifel
“Teachers Union Chief Explains New Reality For Labor Mary Bell”	12/05/2012	Jack Craver
“‘Not Yet.’ Cheatham Says On Contract Talks; Schools”	05/22/2012	Pat Schneider
“UW Dean; Public K-12 Schools Are For The Public Good Julie Underwood”	09/05/2012	Todd Finkelmeyer
“Education Forum Shows Divide persists Over Achievement Gap Strategy; Madison”	12/12/2012	Pat Schneider
“Cheatham Calls For Accountability At Every Level,’ Schools”	06/19/2013	Pat Schneider
“Hey Guilty Liberals, How About Ok For Madison Prep?”	02/22/2014	Dave Blaska
“Bold Words, Bold Deeds For Public Education”	04/23/2014	John Nichols
“New Poll Shows Parents Divided On Teachers Unions; Schools”	10/15/2014	Pat Schneider
“Is Wisconsin Destined To Be A Rust Belt BackWater?; Editors Column”	12/31/2014	Paul Fanlund
“Politicians Dish Out The Lies, And We Let Them; Plain Talk”	03/25/2015	Dave Zweifel
“Rumors Of Teachers Unions; Deaths Greatly Exaggerated; Plain Talk”	07/01/2015	Dave Zweifel

Appendix B: Finalized Codes and Definitions

Code	Definition
THEME: Neoliberalism	
<i>The New York Times</i>	
Innovation	A new way of doing something. This newspaper refers to businesses being able to change things quicker than education systems do.
Economics	The condition of a particular region or place. This is in reference to the money issues within Wisconsin.
Competition	The act of rivalling. In this newspaper, this was referring to whether or not education should take on more of a business look than a governmentality.
Negotiations	The act of transferring ownership of responsibility from one party to another contractually. In this newspaper, this refers to how teacher unions have been negotiating within Wisconsin versus their business counterparts (private education).
Corporate	Relating to a corporation or large company.
Merit Pay	A concept in the business world referring to the ability of a person to get extra pay and bonuses due to factors of performance. In this newspaper, this concept is linked to accountability of teachers.
Climate	The atmosphere that something is found within. This refers to the governmentality of the education system versus that of the business climate.
Management	The process of controlling certain individuals.
Globalization	The process of spreading technology, philosophy, business, and educational practices around the world. These practices lead to an interconnectivity of marketplace, philosophy, and practices.

Wisconsin State Journal

Budget	A determined expenditure and income based system that is heavily monitored and adjusted accordingly based on market principles and fluctuations.
Merit Pay	A concept in the business world referring to the ability of a person to get extra pay and bonuses due to factors of performance.
Rational Employment Model	This is based on the ideas that human beings are rational and are motivated by self-interest. Where laissez faire conditions are optimal and government has little or no influence over the behaviors of both business and employees.
Consumers	In this paper, consumers are the students who are being educated in Wisconsin.
Vouchers	A system whereby students are given a type of coupon that can be used to go to a school outside the child's normal environment where they are zoned for considering their house placement. These coupons act like money and can be used at both public and private schools. Vouchers can create a sense of competition within the education system, although the theory behind vouchers has not been proven to work within the education system. A form of privatization.
Competition	The act of rivalling. In this newspaper, this refers to how ACT 10 would open the way for better teachers without seniority to stay in their positions.
Negotiations	The act of transferring ownership of responsibility from one party to another contractually. In this newspaper, this referred to how the teacher unions were outdated with their negotiations skills versus that of their business counterparts.
Management	The process of controlling certain individuals.
Globalization	The process of spreading technology, philosophy, business, and educational practices around the world. These practices lead to an interconnectivity of marketplace, philosophy, and practices.

America's Competitive Edge	A perception that the U.S. was always the best at anything they were involved in socially, economically, or conceptually. The belief is that the U. S. is losing this competitive edge within the world.
<i>Capital Times</i>	
Budget	A determined expenditure and income based system that is heavily monitored and adjusted accordingly based on market principles and fluctuations.
Corporate Funding	Money given to schools within Wisconsin to help make up for the shortfalls of the budget. Other types of funding were also mentioned, such as, when businesses give students merchandise for athletic teams, etc.
School Choice	A term given when students and parents are given alternatives to traditional public schools or programs offered within a given district.
Corporate	Relating to a corporation or large company.
Mergers	A coming together of two entities, specifically in this context, a combining of two companies to help run the education system, something outside of the government.
Power Brokers	In reference to a business person who affects the circulation of political and economic power by influence.
Privatization	The ceasing of ownership by the government, replacing it with corporate ownership. This is in reference to the continued push to take control of education away from the government.
Vouchers	A system whereby students are given a type of coupon that can be used to go to a school outside the child's normal environment where they are zoned for considering their house placement. These coupons act like money and can be used at both public and private schools. Vouchers can create a sense of competition within the education system, although the theory behind vouchers has not been proven to work within the education system. A form of privatization.

THEME: Teacher

The New York Times

Seniority	First in, first laid off
Tenure	Teachers concerned about job security (weakening)
Testing	Teacher quality reduced to a number on a test
Accountability	Teachers responsible for ability of students to have superb outcomes. High stakes testing contributes to this.
Scapegoats	Teachers used as a means to explain sliding position of American students on international testing models.
Performance	Teacher's ability to accomplish certain tasks and requirements within the classroom. Also refers in part to student testing achievement.
Professional	An atmosphere that holds certain standards and practices within its field and membership.
Benefits	Within this newspaper, these were dealing with health and retirement compensation after completion of employment.
Target	A person selected for an attack.

Wisconsin State Journal

Seniority	First in, first laid off.
Tenure	Teachers concerned about job security (weakening)
Professional	An atmosphere that holds certain standards and practices within its field and membership.
Performance	Teacher's ability to accomplish certain tasks and requirements within the classroom.
Ability	Skill or talent to effectively teach.
Evaluation	The judgement or value of a particular teacher based on criteria provided in each individual county.
Safety	Bodily harm of teachers within Madison, Wisconsin.

Accountability	Teachers responsible for ability of students to have superb outcomes, as well as responsibility to the government for performing a certain way within the classroom.
Benefits	Within this newspaper, these were dealing with health, retirement, and vacation compensation during and after completion of employment.
Transparency	The ability of parents, government entities, and evaluators to judge, correct, and determine appropriate changes in the education system concerning teachers.
Graduation Rates	The number of students that a teacher is able to get to completion of their schooling.
<i>Capital Times</i>	
Performance	Teacher's ability to accomplish certain tasks and requirements within the classroom.
Safety	Bodily harm of teachers, but also cognitive and emotional harm.
Accountability	Teachers responsible for ability of students to have superb outcomes.
Graduation Rates	The number of students that a teacher is able to get to completion of their schooling.
Reformers	Teachers that are actively involved with the protests/sit-ins within Madison.
Professional	An atmosphere that holds certain standards and practices within its field and membership.
Benefits	Within this newspaper, health and vacation compensation during years working were focused upon.
Sacrifice	The act of surrendering a person to a cause. This is in reference to, how teachers have been the ones that make all the accommodations and are still being mistreated within the education system and through the ACT 10 legislation.

Captives	Teachers are being commandeered through the ACT 10 legislation. According to this newspaper, they are being told either do what the legislature wants or they will be out of a job.
Defeats	In reference to how teachers have been let down again in the education system within Wisconsin.

THEME: Parents

The New York Times

Reformers	Parents taking a role in reforming public education. Many of them in this newspaper were pro-union and were calling for change in government, not education.
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Wisconsin State Journal

Critics	Parents that are critical of teachers and the unions that they are a part of.
Madisonians	Individuals who live in or around Madison. These parents were some of the most vocal and involved during the protest/sit-ins during 2011-2012.

Capital Times

Community Support	Parents within individual places in Wisconsin that were lending their support for teachers, public sector unions, and the protests and sit-ins.
Reformers	Parents taking a role in reforming public education. Many of them in this newspaper were pro-union, and were calling for compromises from all parties involved.
Advocacy Groups	Parent sponsored and organized groups that state they are giving a voice to students who are not represented in teacher unions or other societal entities.

THEME: Student

The New York Times

Achievement	How well a student can do within the education system and their means of finishing school.
Testing	High-stakes means to examine student ability.

Wisconsin State Journal

Achievement How well a student can do within the education system and their means of finishing school.

Ability The means or skill to do something, in this case schooling.

Capital Times

Learning Conditions Refers to the cultures, circumstances, and physical places where students learn.

Standards A set of guidelines that students must follow.

Captives Student's education being disregarded in the fight against teacher unions.

THEME: Teacher Unions

The New York Times

Collective Bargaining Rights Refers to negotiations between an employer and a collection of employees where certain conditions of employment are decided upon. These are often negotiated by a union.

Powerful Within this newspaper there is a mixed understanding between the unions having strength and perceptibility to them being too strong and politically motivated.

Political Active within the political sphere either through direct or indirect actions.

Neglect Within this newspaper, neglect refers to how the teacher unions have not properly cared for the teachers and education systems.

Champions Refers to how teacher unions have fought or argued for causes on behalf of teachers and students.

Battles A fight between the governor and the Republican legislators, and the public sector unions.

Wisconsin State Journal

Collective Bargaining Rights

Refers to negotiations between an employer and a collection of employees where certain conditions of employment are decided upon. These are often negotiated by a union.

Recertification

In conjunction with ACT 10 law, teacher unions are required to vote every year to determine whether or not they should remain open for members. Every unit must participate, and every one must have at least 75% of their members vote, if they do not, the recertification fails and by law that particular branch must close permanently.

Reforms

To make changes in something. In the *WSJ*, reforms refer to the need for teacher unions to have significant changes made internally and how they handle new circumstances within education.

Pay Standards

Certain level of pay consummate with the position and duties being done within a field.

WEAC

Acronym for the Wisconsin Education Association Council. They are one of the largest unions within the state of Wisconsin and represent many teachers throughout the state.

Protests

Teacher unions (WEAC) in objection to ACT 10 demonstrated within Madison, Wisconsin.

Transparency

In this newspaper, this refers to the ability to see all that the teachers and teacher unions are doing.

Employee Handbook

New book that details rules and regulations for teachers. Put into law with ACT 10 and written with the help of the teacher unions in individual areas.

Falling Revenue

The money teacher unions take in every year has been steadily declining every year since the beginning of the 21st century.

Powerful

The belief that the teacher unions hold too much political and economic clout within the state of Wisconsin.

Battles

The sustained fight between teacher's unions and the governor and Republican legislators within the state of Wisconsin.

Capital Times

Collective Bargaining Rights	Refers to negotiations between an employer and a collection of employees where certain conditions of employment are decided upon. These are often negotiated by a union.
Recertification	In conjunction with ACT 10 law, teacher unions are required to vote every year to determine whether or not they should remain open for members. Every unit must participate, and every one must have at least 75% of their members vote, if they do not, the recertification fails and by law that particular branch must close permanently.
Part-time unionization	Unions that have mostly members that do not work full-time within their given profession.
Critical	Analysis of teacher unions and the work they have and continue to do.
Traditional	The long established idea of teacher unions within Wisconsin.
Services	The work that the teacher unions do for the teachers themselves, such as, law suit protection, collective bargaining, and contract negotiations, etc.
Stakeholders	Someone that has an interest or concern with a particular domain.
Negotiations	A conversation in an attempt of reaching an agreement. In this paper, they are referring to how the governor and the legislators were not trying to do any negotiations or discussion with protesters, teachers, or the various public sector unions during 2011-2012.
Protests/Sit-ins	Demonstrations against a particular set of actions. In this paper, this is in reference to Madison, Wisconsin and ACT 10 legislation.

THEME: Government

The New York Times

Scott Walker	Wisconsin governor from 2010 till present.
Chris Christie	New Jersey governor from 2010 till present.

Democratic Legislators	Those legislators in the Democratic Party.
Republican Legislators	Those legislators in the Republican Party.
Budget	A plan for spending and income for a particular state. Within this newspaper, the budget referred to two facets: the budget shortfalls within Wisconsin and the lack of education budget for the corresponding year justified by the articles date.
Reform	To make changes in something. In this context, <i>The Times</i> is referring to educational reforms in a broader sense outside teacher unions control.
Race to the Top	A grant program set up by the U.S. Department of Education to give incentive to K-12 schools based on innovation and improvement within their systems.
Military	There are two references here. One, the real military was called into Madison, Wisconsin to assist with protestors; and two, the use of excessive force in how the governor is exercising his ability to make changes to the laws in the state.
Declaration of War	A sentiment that perceives violence between the government of Wisconsin and the public sector unions.
<i>Wisconsin State Journal</i>	
Scott Walker	Wisconsin governor from 2010 till present. In reference to ACT legislation and right to work laws.
Race to the Top	A grant program set up by the U.S. Department of Education to give incentive to K-12 schools based on innovation and improvement within their systems.
Budget	A plan for spending and income for a particular state. In this newspaper, referral to the budget was about the budget shortfall within the state of Wisconsin.
Democratic Legislators	Those legislators in the Democratic Party.
Republican Legislators	Those legislators in the Republican Party.
Union-busting	A term that refers to activities that disrupt or prevent unions from doing business either through law making or other means.

Reform	To make changes in something. Specifically, in this context the <i>WSJ</i> is calling for changes in how public sector unions are handled within Wisconsin.
Conservative Lobbyists	Individuals who try and persuade legislators to vote certain ways on certain interests to them. This group is mostly comprised of individuals who adhere to Republican side within politics.
Public Policy Debates	Extensive discussions surrounding what policies should be allowed and what ones should not.
Supreme Court	Highest court in the country. Decides constitutionality of laws within the U.S.
<i>Capital Times</i>	
Scott Walker	Wisconsin governor from 2010 till present. In reference to ACT 10 legislation.
Barak Obama	President of the U.S. from 2008 till 2016. In reference to Race to the Top and public sector unionization topics.
Arne Duncan	Current educational secretary to the U.S., and the one promoting some of the negative imagery of teacher unions.
Budget	A plan for spending and income for a particular state. In this newspaper, the budget not only referred to the shortfall in the state of Wisconsin, but also the limiting of money to the education systems there within.
Democratic Legislators	Those legislators in the Democratic Party.
Republican Legislators	Those legislators in the Republican Party.
Politics	Debates surrounding conflicts of individuals within various entities—Democrats, Republicans, public sector unions, etc.
School Boards	A local authority of individuals responsible for the maintenance of schools in a certain area.
Supreme Court	Highest court in the U.S. Hears cases that pertain to the Constitutionality of the laws within the U.S.

Tax Increases	Raising how much individuals within a particular location pay to the government for items, such as, roads, schools, infrastructure, etc. In this newspaper, the tax increase refers to the budget shortfall and the need for extra money for activities, such as, education.
Spending Issues	In this newspaper, this refers to what the state spends on certain entities within education, i.e. teachers' aides, paper, etc., and how some members have trouble justifying these expenses.
Military	There are two references here. One, the real military was called into Madison, Wisconsin to assist with protestors; and two, the use of excessive force in how the governor is exercising his ability to make changes to the laws in the state.
Battles	This is in reference to how the teacher unions, teachers, and others like the Democratic party are fighting the new legislation.
Strategy	A policy designed to achieve a major change within Wisconsin. This is in reference to both ACT 10 and the right to work laws.

THEME: Law Involvement

The New York Times

Challenges	Law suits and objections to the Constitutionality to ACT 10 in the state of Wisconsin.
ACT 10	Wisconsin law enacted by Governor Scott Walker that essentially strips public sector unions of much of their bargaining rights within the state.
Right to Work	In absence of all unrelated topics this term means that workers have the right not to join a labor union. In this paper, this was used to exemplify the way many state legislatures are favoring the right to work laws.
Constitutionality	Determination of what is Constitutional and what is not. This is in reference to ACT 10 legislation.

New Deal	This reference harkens to the New Deal that was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930's where social and economic programs were put into place to help society. This was used in the sense within this newspaper to refer to how the teacher unions are essentially being silenced with ACT 10 being put into law by the governor and the Republican legislators.
Victory	The passing of ACT 10 in the state of Wisconsin.
<i>Wisconsin State Journal</i>	
ACT 10	Wisconsin law enacted by Governor Scott Walker that essentially strips public sector unions of much of their bargaining rights within the state.
No Child Left Behind	A reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This newspaper used this as a means to show how teachers have been coming under stricter standards for many years.
State Standards	A set of guidelines that have been provided by the State to public sector workers. The handbooks are one step concerning state standards.
Constitutionality	Determination of what is Constitutional and what is not. This is in reference to ACT 10 legislation.
Employee Handbook	Determined parameters concerning what is required of public sector workers on the job. No longer in the state of Wisconsin are contracts negotiated. However, these handbooks are negotiated with the workers and the individuals in each individual county.
Common Core	A set of state standards that explain what students should be able to do after going through K-12 education. The core areas are English, Literacy, and mathematics. This newspaper uses these to demonstrate the incapacity of teachers in Wisconsin to perform their given duties according to the common core standards.
Right to Work	In absence of all unrelated topics this term means that workers have the right not to join a labor union. In this newspaper, this is determined to be helpful to curtail public sector unions bargaining power within Wisconsin.

Law Suits	Many law suits have been filed concerning the Constitutionality of both ACT 10 and Wisconsin becoming a right to work state.
Victory	The passage of ACT 10 in the state of Wisconsin, and the ability of the governor to control public sector unions' activities.
<i>Capital Times</i>	
New Deal	This reference harkens to the New Deal that was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930's where social and economic programs were put into place to help society. This was used in the sense within this newspaper to refer to how the teacher unions are essentially being silenced with ACT 10 being put into law by the governor and the Republican legislators.
ACT 10	Wisconsin law enacted by Governor Scott Walker that essentially strips public sector unions of much of their bargaining rights within the state.
Right to Work	In absence of all unrelated topics this term means that workers have the right not to join a labor union. In this paper, this term was used in a negative connotation that assumes that workers have fewer rights within a state under right to work laws.
No Child Left Behind	A reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This newspaper uses it as a platform to expand on how teachers are treated in Wisconsin.
Victory	The passing of the ACT 10 legislation within Wisconsin.
THEME: Social Justice	
<i>The New York Times</i>	
Sexism	Refers to the use of prejudices against certain sexes within society—generally women. In this newspaper, sexism is referred to because of the composition of the teacher unions being mostly female.
Democracy	A system of government where all qualified individuals have a representation through legislative means.

Class	A way that a society classifies its members based on observed social or economic status. This is referenced in this paper as a means to demonstrate the divide between those in the unions and those in the government introducing legislation.
Racism	A belief system that is social in nature where it is believed that certain races contain certain characteristics, abilities, or lack thereof to that specific race. This is distinguished generally by the societal belief that these characteristics extricate some people as superior, while others are inferior.
<i>Wisconsin State Journal</i>	
Democracy	In this newspaper, this term was used in two different ways. The first, is a system of government where all qualified individuals have a representation through legislative means. The second use was as a mechanism to demonstrate that not all members of the teacher unions (the teachers themselves) did not have any control over the unions they were a part of.
Racism	A belief system that is social in nature where it is believed that certain races contain certain characteristics, abilities, or lack thereof to that specific race. This is distinguished generally by the societal belief that these characteristics extricate some people as superior, while others are inferior.
Class	A way that a society classifies its members based on observed social or economic status. In this newspaper, this is in reference to teachers not being part of the blue-collar, or lower socioeconomic class, therefore they should not have unions.
Achievement Gap	In reference to the disparity of educational experiences between certain groups of students within a particular area. In this newspaper, this is in reference to students in Madison and the perception that the teachers there are not doing their jobs well.

Capital Times

Democracy	In this newspaper, this term was used two different ways. A system of government where all qualified individuals have a representation through legislative means. The second was a means of the ideas behind equality.
Class	A way that a society classifies its members based on observed social or economic status. This newspaper based class on how the unions were in society to help all people no matter their class status.
Power	The capacity to influence the ability of others to perform a needed task.
Racism	A belief system that is social in nature where it is believed that certain races contain certain characteristics, abilities, or lack thereof to that specific race. This is distinguished generally by the societal belief that these characteristics extricate some people as superior, while others are inferior.
White privilege	This is a societal perception that is based around the idea that white individuals benefit from being white within society. This is in reference to within this newspaper as a means to demonstrate that teacher unions do not always have everyone's best interest at heart because they are mainly comprised of white, middle-class women.
Poverty	A socio-economic status designated to those within U.S. society who do not reach a certain threshold for income requirements given by the U.S. government.

VITA

Dr. Melissa Ann Harness was born in Fountain Valley, California. She moved to Knoxville, Tennessee while in high school. She has always been dedicated to education and believes in life-long learning. Her passion for education stems from the belief that everyone deserves equal access to quality education, and works to make changes in the educational system to obtain that goal.

Dr. Harness obtained her Bachelors of Arts in History with a minor in Education and a secondary teacher's license from East Tennessee State University in Johnson City in 2006. After spending several years working in the school system in various positions, Dr. Harness decided to return to academia to further her understanding of the education system. She obtained her Masters of Science in Education in 2012 from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee specializing in Cultural Studies and published her first book, entitled "Pretending Teaching is a Profession: Why Public School Teaching Will Never Be Considered a True Profession."

However, after publishing her book, several questions remained regarding the role of various parties within the education system. Dr. Harness decided to continue her work in academia and began pursuing a Doctors of Philosophy degree majoring in Education to gain the knowledge and skills needed to answer these questions. During her tenure with the University of Tennessee Knoxville, she presented at multiple conferences and published multiple works in various journals and books. After four years of hard work and dedication to the field of education and academia, culminating in this dissertation, she obtained her Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Education from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee in 2016, concentrating in Learning Environments and Educational Studies (LEEDS) with a cognate in public policy.

Today, Dr. Harness is continuing to enhance her knowledge of public policy and government by pursuing a Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD) at the University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law in Washington, D.C. Using the knowledge she gains while pursuing her JD, she will be able to provide and implement programs and policies on the local, state and federal levels of government to further enhance the education of students while promoting the interests of all parties within the education system. She will be joined by her youngest son, Sam, her husband, Adam, and their dog, Roxy, in D.C.

Dr. Harness, in addition to attending law school, is currently working on a series of articles and papers dealing with teacher unions and public policy pertaining to social justice issues for several conferences for 2016-2017. She also hopes to complete several publications by the end of 2019 in the education, government, and legal fields.