

ABSTRACT

GILLESPIE, JAMIE GUSTAVA. Framing Strikes: A Media Analysis of Two Teacher Strikes. (Under the direction of Lance Fusarelli, PhD).

With the presence of print media, broadcast media, digital media, and social media in our everyday lives, we are able to follow news events across the country and around the world as closely as we would like. Media portrayals of teachers, their unions, and school district officials are how most people learn about what is happening in schools. Public opinion on school issues is generally based on how they are presented in news media, making it important for teachers and school officials to understand how these issues are being framed in the news. In times of conflict within school districts, teachers and district leaders should make efforts to understand how public opinion is being shaped by issue framing in order to ensure their viewpoints are represented. In this study, I examined the media framing of teachers strikes in Chicago in 2012 and in Seattle in 2015 by analyzing depictions of the people, issues, and events involved in the months before, during, and after the strikes in local media outlets. My findings indicate that the overwhelmingly negative coverage of teachers and their union in Chicago may have impacted the less successful negotiations outcomes, while the mostly positive coverage of teachers and their union in Seattle may have played a role in the more successful negotiated agreement between teachers and the school district.

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Framing Strikes: A Media Analysis of Two Teacher Strikes

by
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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
North Carolina State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Educational Research and Policy Analysis

Raleigh, North Carolina

2021

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For Andrew, Hannah, and May – my inspiration.

BIOGRAPHY

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Almost since their inception, teachers' unions have been a focus of public debate. Although there have been teacher organizations since the mid-19th century, unions for teachers did not begin to develop until after the passage of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, also known as the Wagner Act, which granted private employees the right to organize and bargain collectively. Although the law did not explicitly give those rights to public employees, over the next 50 years most states passed various public employment relations acts that allowed public employees, including teachers, to organize and bargain collectively (Cooper, 2015).

With official recognition, teachers' unions began to negotiate and advocate on behalf of their members. From approximately 1935 to the 1960s, there was a hostile public attitude toward worker organizations and bargaining, especially for teacher organizations. Teacher bargaining changed the public view of teachers from the role of servants to the role of activists (Cooper, 2015). This was a particularly difficult adjustment, since the very word "servant" has class connotations that could not be avoided, especially since most teachers were women (Mitchell & Kerchner, 1983). Women as servants did not traditionally speak out about their working conditions or their desires to improve them.

However, beginning in the 1960s, teachers' unions, along with other public sector unions, came to be seen as legitimately having a seat at the bargaining table. Management began to negotiate regularly regarding salary, workload, benefits, and worker rights. Teachers' unions increased in strength during the following decades and, while private sector unions have declined in membership to 6.5% of the labor force, and only 10.7% of all workers are members of unions

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018), teachers' unions represented about 80% of all teachers in 2012 (Wilson, 2012).

At a time when unions were losing their power in other occupations, teachers' unions remained strong through 2012. At the same time, confidence in organized labor dropped to being lower than confidence in the police, the criminal justice system, and banks (Gallup, 2011). Although most teachers were members of unions, the enactment of policies that encourage competition with public schools and a general decline in public confidence in organized labor weakened the bargaining power of teachers in 2012. That trend continued through 2017. In 2017, only 45% of elementary and middle-school teachers and 50% of high-school teachers were union members (Antonucci, 2018).

Portrayals of unions in the media have focused primarily on protests and strikes. When individuals were fired for their union activities, those events were generally covered only when the National Labor Relations Board made a ruling (Carreiro, 2005). In a study of portrayals of teachers and unions in relation to No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Goldstein (2011) found that media outlets portrayed teachers and unions negatively the majority of the time. This study was particularly interesting because it focused on the portrayal of teachers' unions in relation to a specific policy, NCLB. In stories in which unions were displaying or communicating information that was aligned with NCLB or with school reform, the words used to describe them were positive. In stories in which the unions were communicating information that was in opposition to NCLB or to school reform, they were described using negative terms.

The ways teachers' unions and school-district officials are portrayed in the media during contract disputes is my area of study. During the last decade, there have been two teacher strikes in large urban areas that both received extensive media coverage; however, the outcomes of the

strikes were quite different. My study will analyze the role of the media in the Chicago strike of 2012 and the Seattle strike of 2015.

Background of the Study

While there have consistently been disputes between teachers' unions and school management since the growth of teachers' unions in the 1960s and 1970s (Cooper & Sureau, 2008), the outcomes of two recent strikes in large urban districts have the potential to influence teacher working conditions beyond the districts involved. On September 10, 2012, teachers in the Chicago Public Schools went on strike. A list of the people who played roles in the strike is found in Appendix D. Their disagreement with Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who controlled the schools, boiled down to three main areas: restoring things that had been taken away, decreasing the focus on test scores, and increasing pay. Mayor Emanuel had proposed several things to which the union objected, including a longer school day and school year, more school closings, and teacher evaluations that used student test scores for 50% of the teachers' ratings (Rado, 2012).

The Midwest in 2012 had just seen the election of many Republican governors and legislators who favored school reform and presented bills that were anti-union. In February of 2011, the Wisconsin legislature eliminated the right of public sector unions to bargain collectively, and required these unions to be certified annually. These restrictions applied to all public unions except police and firefighters. The protests by public employees that followed Governor Scott Walker's proposal of this law lasted over six months and resulted in a recall election, which the Governor won. In 2012, Indiana and Michigan added right-to-work laws, bringing the total number of states with those laws to 24, nearly half of the country.

Thus, the atmosphere in which the Chicago teachers went on strike on September 10, 2012, was less than friendly. From 2001 to 2011, the Chicago Public Schools had closed dozens of schools, on the premise that the schools were underutilized, and had opened dozens of charter schools, under the direction of the Chicago Public Schools CEO and Mayor Richard M. Daley (de la Torre et al., 2015). The charter schools were funded by the Chicago Public Schools, drawing money away from the existing schools. In 2012, new Mayor Rahm Emanuel was continuing these practices, with nine schools closed in the 2011-12 school year (de la Torre et al., 2015). The union had objected to the closings for a variety of reasons, but Emanuel had the support of the mayor-appointed school board and much of the business community in Chicago (Goodman, 2012).

The contract which was eventually ratified in Chicago included some victories for the union and some victories for management. The teachers won concessions on salaries, layoffs and rehiring, and, in part, teacher evaluations. Management won concessions on the length of the school day and the use of student test scores in teacher evaluations, although the scores would constitute a smaller percentage of evaluations than they had wanted. The contract represented compromise on both sides, with neither side claiming total victory. The strike brought forward some issues associated with school reform in Chicago, such as charter schools and school closings, that were points of conflict. It also shined a light on student testing and its uses, another part of school reform since the passage of No Child Left Behind. These issues remain conflicts to this day, in Chicago and in other school districts around the country.

All states had responded to the 2008 recession by cutting funding to a variety of programs, including public schools. Some states have since restored school funding to the 2008 levels, or beyond. However, for 28 states, these budget cuts continued into 2016, with less

general aid per student than in 2008 (Leachman et al, 2016). The strike in Chicago took place in Illinois, a state that has seen a net school funding increase in the period between 2008 and 2016 (Leachman, Masterson, & Wallace, 2016). Public schools in Seattle in September of 2015 were facing funding difficulties due to the recession of 2008. In Washington, however, the funding problems led to a State Supreme Court decision that left the state legislature in a bind. In *McCleary v. State of Washington* (2012), the Court found that the state had not been properly funding public schools. The judges found that the state's system of funding schools had led to vast inequities, with some districts able to raise taxes for their schools and others not. Those who were relying exclusively on the state's funds were working with fewer resources and were providing significantly different educational programs to their students.

So, in January of 2012, the Washington Supreme Court decided that the State of Washington was violating the constitution of Washington, which stated that education was "the paramount duty of the state" (Supreme Court of Washington, 2012). The Court ordered the State to adopt a plan immediately to comply fully with the constitution by 2018. However, no plan was developed and, on August 13, 2015, the Court ordered that the State be fined \$100,000 per day until it adopted a plan for compliance with the constitution. On September 4, 2015, the Court also ruled, in *League of Women Voters of Washington v. State of Washington* (2015), that the law enacting charter schools, their governance, and their funding was unconstitutional. The ruling left charter schools wondering whether they would be able to stay open. If the State wanted charter schools to continue to operate in Washington, they would need to make some major revisions to the law that made their existence possible (Johnson, 2015).

This was the context in which the Seattle Educators Association and the Seattle Public Schools were negotiating a contract for teachers. A list of the people who played roles in the

strike is found in Appendix D. The teachers' disagreement with school district officials focused on salary, work hours, teacher evaluation, equity, student discipline, and testing (Hoop, 2015). Teachers said they had not had a pay increase in six years, and they wanted the students to be tested less often. They were also concerned about working extra hours with no additional pay, and inequitable student discipline.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions apply throughout this study.

1. Framing: the ways in which media organize and present the information they cover, which influence how people process that information and their perceptions of the information
2. Unions: organizations of workers that are recognized, by the employees and employers, as having the authority to negotiate on behalf of their members
3. Agenda-setting: the choices (which stories to cover, where to place them in the publications, how to report on them, etc.) by media which alert the public to which issues are important

Media

Representations of issues and people in newspapers, videos, and photographs have an effect on how people view the problems and solutions of our society (Funkhouser, 1973). News outlets have the power to sway people's opinions on a great number of issues, as do advertisements (Haddock & Zanna, 1997). The use of television, radio, and internet advertisements by political candidates, as well as their continued use of print materials, bear witness to the faith that politicians have in the power of media representations to influence the public. The advertising industry employs hundreds of thousands of people (Bureau of Labor

Statistics, 2015) because a great number of businesses, agencies, and individuals believe advertisements have an impact on people's opinions and actions.

Agenda-setting theory posits that news media set the political agenda at any given moment based on what issues they give the most coverage. Research has shown that people are more likely to identify something as an important political issue if it has received significant coverage by news media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Links have been found between reporting on certain issues and people's opinions on the relative importance of those issues. Additionally, second-level agenda-setting theory argues that news media representations shape how people feel about the issues they say are important. In other words, the "slant" used in any particular report or representation of an issue affects people's attitudes on that issue (Shen et al, 2014).

The strikes in Chicago and in Seattle garnered plenty of news coverage. Between August 31 and September 18, 2012 (the day the strike ended), the *Chicago Tribune* published 148 different pieces focused on the strike. In Seattle, between August 24 and September 15, 2015 (the last day of the strike), the *Seattle Times* published 135 different pieces focused on the strike. In Chicago, there were three newspapers with steady readerships and six television stations with news programs. In Seattle, there were two newspapers and five television stations with news programs. The teachers' strikes were covered by all of these media outlets and a great number of people learned about the strikes through their reports.

Purpose of the Study

In order to understand the relationship between the media and the outcomes of teacher strikes, I explored the framing issues involved in the media representations of teachers, teachers' unions, and school management in the context of two teacher strikes – Chicago in 2012 and Seattle in 2015. My research questions are:

- How were teachers portrayed by the media?
- How were teachers' unions portrayed by the media?
- How were management officials (e.g., superintendents, board members, mayors) portrayed by the media?

Significance of the Study

There has not been much research done on the ways that teachers and unions have been represented in the media. Goldstein (2011) reviewed media representations of teachers' unions in reference to NCLB and found that they were portrayed positively only 4.5% of the time from 2001 to 2008. In my research, I could find no other analysis of media representations of teachers' unions in the United States, and no analysis of media representations of teachers' unions during strikes. There is a clear need for this research, however, since the use of media in our daily lives appears to be an increasing phenomenon. The impact of a public image on how people react and on how voters eventually vote is an important element for teachers and union officials to bear in mind and make efforts to control, particularly during times of dissent and job actions.

The idea that the media set the political agenda has been around for more than 40 years, beginning with a study in Chapel Hill, NC during the 1968 presidential campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The researchers found a very strong correlation between the issues considered most important by voters and the level of coverage of those issues in the news media those voters used. Multiple subsequent studies have reproduced these findings across a variety of settings and time periods, leading to the theory of agenda-setting.

Second-level agenda setting, in which the media influence how people feel about the issues on which they report, has also been demonstrated in research. Tan and Weaver (2010) found the *New York Times* had second-level agenda setting powers from 1956 to the late 1970s.

In 2011, Moon found that the more people use news media, the more susceptible they are to agenda-setting effects, and that the agenda-setting effects influence their political participation. Shen, Ahern, and Baker (2014) found that news framing effects can be mediated by viewers' cognitive and affective responses. They found the second-level agenda setting effects to be particularly significant when the narrative news items focused on negative consequences of issues.

These issues become more important during times of crisis or conflict, such as strikes. Union participation in our society has decreased in every industry apart from public employees since the mid-20th century. Throughout that same time period, the role of the media in politics has increased, through the proliferation of televised news programs and the internet. Events such as teacher strikes receive coverage because of their impact on the daily lives of readers and viewers. Each media outlet makes multiple decisions throughout a strike as to how to present the two opposing sides. Understanding the choices that the media make in how they cover teachers' unions and school-district officials during strikes would help both sides to better manage their public images, leading to increased support from readers and viewers.

Overview of Methods

I reviewed news articles and photographs from Chicago and Seattle during the time periods of the strikes. Although I planned to also review news broadcasts, the costs associated with obtaining access to the recordings was prohibitive. The time periods I focused on were from August 1, 2012 to September 30, 2012 in Chicago, and from August 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015 in Seattle. The selection of these time periods allowed me to capture how the strikes were reported from the times when negotiations were on-going to the times when the contracts were settled.

I used inductive analysis to come to conclusions regarding whether the representations of the parties involved in the strikes were positive or negative. In my analysis, I looked for indications of framing and second-level agenda setting. I used content analysis, discourse analysis, and image analysis to identify patterns and themes. With each news article, I engaged in content and discourse analysis, looking for patterns in the content selected to be reported on and the language used while reporting. With photographs, I used image analysis to identify any patterns in the content of the images selected to be paired with the articles. I employed a critical analytical framework, bearing in mind the representations of the power relationships and the historical roles of teachers, schools, and management in our society.

Organization of the Study

The next chapter includes a review of the literature related to media analysis, second-level agenda setting, and critical discourse analysis. Chapter three describes the methodology used in the study and the approach to data collection and analysis. The fourth and fifth chapters present the findings of the study, and the sixth chapter includes a discussion of the findings and recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter places this study in the context of prior research regarding media analysis. Particular emphases are placed on the topics of framing, agenda setting, second-level agenda setting, and media portrayals of teachers. Additionally, literature regarding the use of critical discourse analysis, in general, and specifically in regard to education policy, is discussed.

Framing and Agenda Setting

Framing

We are engaged in a constant effort to make sense of the world, and one of the ways we do this is through conceptual frames. By organizing experiences into frames, whether natural or social, we are able to understand events (Goffman, 1974). These frames are used to interpret new experiences or events, shaping a person's perspective on any given topic. The frame that someone uses to interpret, though, can be affected by the way in which the information is presented. Media outlets, politicians, decision-makers, advertisers, and others wishing to influence public opinion engage in framing, the use of conceptual frames to present information in ways that will sway public opinion in particular directions.

Within media analysis, framing is a concept that overlaps with theme and discourse (Altheide & Schneider, 2017). Figure 1, from *Qualitative Media Analysis*, provides a helpful illustration of the relationships between format, frame, theme, and discourse. Altheide (1996) defines frames as “very broad thematic emphases or definitions” (p. 7), and themes as “general meanings or even ‘miniframes’” (p. 7). He defines discourse as “the parameters of relevant meanings that one uses to talk about things” (p. 8).

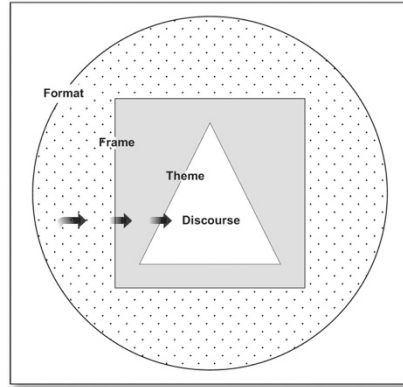


Figure 1. This figure illustrates the relationships between media formats, frames, themes, and discourses. Altheide & Schneider (2017, p. 15).

In this study, I examine the framing of media reports on teacher strikes and the possible reasons the media outlets made the framing choices they did. There is much research on framing in the news media, dating back to the 1970s, when Goffman first put forth framing theory. In an examination of how framing could be used to sway public opinion on education inequality, Eng framed the issue in four different ways, to appeal to different types of audiences (Eng, 2016). He argued that the media has historically played a significant role in how educational issues have been received by the public, and that framing has led to some changes in public perceptions of the power and role of schools in our society. Unfortunately, as in the case of the media’s consistent portrayal of the “hero teacher,” this can lead to negative consequences for educators and schools (Harris, 2009).

Numerous examples of the effects of framing on educational issues can be found in recent years. The Common Core suffered because those in opposition to it portrayed it as an attempt on the part of the federal government to dictate curriculum to states and schools (Henderson et al, 2015). The “Wisconsin uprising,” the series of protests and resistance that began when Governor Scott Walker introduced the Budget Repair Bill in February of 2011, eliminating the right of public unions to engage in collective bargaining, was not successful in

stopping the passage of the bill by the legislature. Chesters (2016) argued that the uprising suffered from framing of the issue as one of fairness because, “the concept of fairness is also hostage to the structural and situational context in which such judgments are made” (p. 464). At the time of the “uprising,” the country was experiencing very high unemployment rates and budget reductions in state and local governments, which colored people’s perceptions of fairness.

Agenda Setting

Framing and agenda-setting work together to influence people’s perceptions of issues of importance. The two theories were first proposed nearly simultaneously, with McComb and Shaw’s agenda-setting theory published in 1972 and Goffman’s framing theory published in 1974. While framing theory argues that the ways in which media presents topics influence how they are perceived and processed, agenda-setting theory posits that news media set the political agenda at any given moment based on what issues they give the most coverage and/or what issues they do not cover.

Research has shown that people are more likely to identify something as an important political issue if it has received significant coverage by news media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Links have been found between reporting on certain issues and people’s opinions on the relative importance of those issues. Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans (2008) found that the media, especially newspapers, had agenda-setting power in Belgium throughout the 1990s. Their argument, that agenda-setting occurs in parliamentary democracies, was supported by their analysis of three longitudinal data sets of the period of 1993 to 2000 in Belgium. They also demonstrated that the agenda-setting power of the media varies by issues. This was also shown in a study by Lecheler, de Vreese, and Slothuus (2009) which found that news framing of an issue produces large effects when the issue is of low importance to the audience.

McCombs (1997) argued that the agenda-setting ability of the media requires journalists and publications to consider carefully the purpose of each article in building consensus. Although many journalists argue that any agenda-setting effects are inadvertent, McCombs identified the various roles, from less to more overt, that journalism has played in setting political agendas. In 2011, Moon found that the more people use news media, the more susceptible they are to agenda-setting effects, and that the agenda-setting effects influence their political participation. Another study found that, depending on an individual's schema (issue schema or character schema), political advertisements had varying effects (Shen, 2004). Participants were categorized as having an issue schema if they viewed politic ads through the lens of issues, or as having a character schema if they viewed politic ads through the lens of the individual politician's character. Those with an issue schematic were likely to have issue-related thoughts after viewing issue-framed political advertisements. Likewise, those with a character schematic were likely to have character-related thoughts after viewing character-framed political advertisements.

There are, however, mediating effects due to the individual's cognitive and affective responses. Slothuus (1999) argued that framing can have a variety of effects and should therefore be considered as a dual-process: belief importance - how important the issue is to an individual - and belief content - the things an individual considers when forming opinions on an issue. Lecheler and de Vreese (2012) conducted an experiment on the mediating effects of framing on people's political attitudes. They selected an issue that was not discussed much in the media -- the economic impact of the additions of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union. They found that belief importance and belief content both acted as mediators of issue framing. The effects of the various frames on the participants' opinions were mediated by how important they

thought the issue was and by the things they considered when forming their opinions. They also found that opinions were more likely to change in participants with high levels of political knowledge when they were exposed to framing that added to their existing belief content about the issue. This was the mediating effect of belief content -- framing was successful in persuasion when it added to the stockpile of things participants considered when forming an opinion on the issue.

Second-Level Agenda Setting

Second-level agenda-setting theory can be seen as a combination of framing and agenda-setting. This theory argues that news media representations shape how people feel about the issues they say are important. In other words, the “slant” used in any particular report or representation of an issue affects people’s attitudes on that issue (Shen et al., 2014). However, the research is not conclusive. Studies regarding the effect of political advertisements, for example, on people’s attitudes toward individual candidates have had mixed results. One study found that negative advertisements focusing on physical attributes of candidates had backlash effects (Roese & Sande, 1993). In other words, when a candidate ran a negative advertisement that drew attention to his opponent’s physical appearance, people often felt more negatively about the candidate running the advertisement. However, when the negative information focused on other aspects of the candidate’s opponent, it was effective. Wu and Coleman (2009) found significant second-level agenda-setting effects in the 2004 presidential campaign for John Kerry. Voters absorbed negative portrayals of Kerry in the media and transferred those negative perceptions to their voting intentions.

Matthes and Marquart (2015) used data from the German Longitudinal Election Study to examine the effects of cross-cutting advertisements, or ads that are in opposition to the viewer’s

opinions, on political participation and the timing of voting decisions. They found a significantly positive effect on political participation from opinion-friendly advertisements, and no effect from opinion-hostile advertisements. Patterns revealed that those who were dissatisfied with democracy were more likely to participate, and “age, ideological strength, and campaign interest accelerated voting decisions” (p. 148). Shen, et al. (2014) found that news framing effects can be mediated by viewers’ cognitive and affective responses. They found the second-level agenda setting effects to be particularly significant when the narrative news items focused on negative consequences of issues. In a study of the effect of news coverage of a foreign nation on an individual’s opinion of that nation, Wanta, Golan, and Lee (2004) also found that second-level agenda setting was apparent in the negative affective attributes. This link between negative reports or advertisements and negative public opinions was also found in a study of media framing of New York City’s sugar-sweetened beverage portion-size cap. A study by Donaldson, et al (2015) found that news coverage used frames opposed to the regulation 84 percent of the time, helping to solidify public opinion against the regulation and leading to its demise.

Another study found that people, particularly males, exposed to rape myths through media experienced negative thoughts about the sexual assault victims. Franiuk, Seefeldt, and Vandello (2008) used headlines endorsing or not endorsing rape myths with male and female participants. They found male participants were more likely to be influenced by their exposure to rape myths and to express negative attitudes toward rape victims after such exposure. In an analysis of the attitudes of financial stakeholders to British Petroleum (BP) after viewing news reports on the oil spill of 2010, Kleinnijenhuis, et al. (2015) found positive feelings after viewing BP press releases discussing solutions, but negative feelings after viewing news reports about the judicial claims against BP.

Media Bias

Framing, agenda-setting, and second-level agenda setting naturally lead many people to argue that media outlets have biases that are apparent in what they cover and how they cover it. Many conservative politicians have long argued that the media have a liberal bias, beyond simply endorsing liberal candidates for president. Tan and Weaver (2010) found that the *New York Times* demonstrated a citation bias from 1956 to the late 1970s, during which the paper frequently cited liberal policy groups and think tanks, even when the groups were not the subjects of the articles. This corresponded with liberal congressional policies and a liberal public mood during the time period, indicating second-level agenda setting by the *Times*. On the other hand, in a content analysis of *Time* and *Newsweek* from 1975 to 2000, Adkins, Covert and Washburn (2007) found no support for the claim of a liberal bias in mainstream media. In fact, in the four topics analyzed (crime, environment, gender, and poverty), the researchers found the articles inhabited a centrist region of political views.

A content analysis of the conservative publication *Human Events* found a consistent framing of the media as liberal (Major, 2015). This framing of the media was achieved through a focus on certain details and the omission of details that were contrary to the framing. The researcher placed *Human Events* in the conservative “counter-sphere,” a place where conservative activists go to reinforce their beliefs, and that has a coordinated discourse in which the media is critiqued as being liberal.

While most people would not categorize think tanks and philanthropic foundations as part of a “counter-sphere,” I would argue that they share some of the same characteristics. Organizations such as the Education Trust, the Progressive Policy Institute, the Aspen Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Fordham Institute, provide research and publications that

reinforce the beliefs of school reformers of the 21st century, and that have a loosely coordinated discourse in which traditional public schools are portrayed as failing and in need of more accountability, via common school reform ideas. This counter-sphere provides the narrative about schools that has been used by both liberals and conservatives advocating school reform (DeBray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009).

Berliner and Biddle (1995) identified right-wing foundations, such as the Adolph Coors Foundation and the John M. Olin Foundation, who were responsible for funding many ultra-conservative initiatives beginning in the 1970s. These same foundations funded conservative think tanks, including the Hudson Institute, The American Enterprise Institute, the Hoover Institution, and the Manhattan Institute. Berliner and Biddle point out that, “one of the far right’s major voices is the Heritage Foundation” (p. 133). Indeed, some of these think tanks were created in the 1930s in order to offer a counterpoint to what their founders viewed as the liberal viewpoint held by the original think tanks (Troy, 2012).

Think tanks, when they began in 1916 with the founding of the Brookings Institution, had the mission of using research to study public policy. Over time, however, they have evolved to be very effective arms of the two main political parties, and their influence in government grew throughout the late-20th and early-21st centuries (Troy, 2012). Their research and policy recommendations, when they are embraced by politicians, tend to be embraced by either Republicans or Democrats, but not both. Some think tanks do little to no research, or allow donors to influence the design of their research, planting them firmly in the camp of political organizations (Troy, 2012). Even those that do research often pursue research in order to further political agendas (DeBray-Pelot & McGuinn, 2009).

Fairclough (1995) felt it necessary to defend critical theory and critical analysis in the 1980s and 1990s because of a sustained attack by “an aggressive ‘new right’” (p. 15), that included think tanks. Specifically, he cited British social theorists and right-wing think tanks as arguing against critical concepts and critique of ideology, particularly critique of ideology’s relationship with power and domination.

The impact of think tanks currently is such that it allows politicians to continue pursuing plans and programs that have been shown to be ineffective, rather than identifying alternative ways to address issues and problems (Troy, 2012). Some think tanks actually provide politicians with talking points and communication strategies, and they have partner groups that are advocacy organizations, which goes well beyond the original mission.

Portrayals of Educators

Portrayals of Teachers’ Unions

Media outlets report on education, schools, and teachers frequently, particularly around times of conflict or when educational studies are published which could have great impacts on schools. The tone of the coverage, however, has not been the subject of much scholarly research, and there has been almost no research on the tone of coverage of teachers’ unions. In one of the few studies to examine how news stories about teachers’ unions were framed, Goldstein (2011) found that news items were negative 54 percent of the time between 2001 and 2008. In analyzing coverage of education in the *Chicago Tribune* from 2006 to 2007, Cohen (2010) identified two dominant social languages used by the paper—Accountability and Caring. She found a disproportionate number of stories in the *Tribune* were framed by the social language of Accountability, effectively supporting the labeling of schools as “failing” and setting the audience up to support school closings in Chicago. Further, Cohen argued that this framing

“reinscribe(d) the construction of teachers as lacking authority and knowledge, or even as the cause of student failure” (p. 116).

In their book on the 2012 Chicago teachers’ strike, Ashby and Bruno (2016) referenced the many news items in the Chicago newspapers covering the contract negotiations and strike, and the statements made by both the union and the mayor to the news media. They offered little analysis of the news coverage, however. Rather, the authors reported what was said or written and the reactions of the key players. Weiner (2012), on the other hand, referred to “the corporate media” and criticized their promotion of anti-union ideas through their publications and news reports via TV and radio. However, she did not provide any analysis of specific news articles or news broadcasts.

In his study of media coverage of teachers’ unions in Britain, Baker (1994) found that newspaper stories covering the national teachers’ union conference were mainly negative, and that newspapers demonstrated biases against teachers and the teachers’ union. In newspapers categorized as “right of centre” the articles quoted a “small group of commentators, many of them associated with influential right-wing think tanks such as the Centre for Policy Studies” (p. 291).

In a current example of media portrayals of teachers’ unions, Bidgood and Robertson (2018) described the strike in West Virginia as being led by rank-and-file teachers, not by union leaders. The authors compared the strike to strikes in the early 20th century by West Virginia coal miners, prior to the Wagner Act of 1935, which gave workers the right to strike. Although the Wagner Act does not apply to public employees, teachers in West Virginia organized a coordinated action via social media and they went on strike across the state.

Portrayals of Teachers

Studies of media representations of teachers that were not necessarily related to union activity exist, but there are not many. Rooks and Munoz (2015) studied the media coverage of charter schools and found that teachers in charter schools and in alternative schools were depicted more positively than teachers in traditional public schools, even though they also found reason to doubt that the education that students in charter schools receive is significantly different than the education received by students in alternative schools and in traditional public schools.

In a study of the public discourses on schooling in Queensland, Australia, Thomas (2003) found that one newspaper, in soliciting public input regarding an educational report, created public discourse focused on crisis in public education. She argued that the resulting discourse limited the authority of teachers to speak about education policy, and increased the authority of the paper's editor to speak as the public voice on that topic. Another analysis (Thomas, 2011) found that the portrayal of teachers in an Australian sitcom, showed them to be "lacking in the qualities expected of the good teacher and as needing to lift professional skills to improve educational standards" (p. 372). The sitcom aired during the same period as the introduction of the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme, which had as its objectives to "equip teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in the 21st century, provide national leadership in high priority areas of teacher professional learning need, and improve the professional standing of school teachers and leaders" (Australian Curriculum, Assessment, and Reporting Authority).

Portrayals of Other Educators

In 2002, researchers in Australia received funding to investigate a shortage of principals the country was experiencing, particularly in some locations and types of schools (Thomson et al., 2003). One of the researchers' first steps was to analyze 43 media representations of principals between 1999 and 2002, including 39 from the U.S. They found that articles and broadcasts about principals showed the job as undesirable, "a combination of extreme sport and martyrdom" (p. 122). They also found that the solutions proposed in the media all centered around recruitment of principals and improved professional development. Although many of the representations of the job showed the workload, or the working conditions, as problematic, none of the solutions discussed in the news reports addressed these aspects. Further, while many of the negative aspects of the job described in the reports were related to high-stakes accountability, the researchers found that only one accountability-related solution was described in one news article.

There is a small amount of research on the representation of educators in film, including an analysis of *Blackboard Jungle* (Leopard, 2007) as an ethnographic narrative of education. Leopard's study included other films as he explored "otherness". In this analysis, Leopard described the portrayals of the teachers in the films, prior to the pedagogical breakthrough, with terms such as "cynical," "opponent" (of students), and "high-strung." The principals are described as "incompetent," "inept," and "self-serving." After the pedagogical breakthrough, the teachers are described as "ally" (of students) and "connected" (to students).

In a study of representations of professors in film, Dagaz and Harger (2011) found that stereotypical images of race and gender dominated in the films studied. African American professors in film often required additional professorial markers (glasses, bow ties, suits) that white professors did not require. Additionally, there were occasions where African American

professors had to prove their authenticity (i.e., being “authentically” black) to their African American students and university colleagues. Similarly, the researchers found that the few female professors who were portrayed in more traditionally male disciplines were given masculine characteristics. In general, the female professors in film were more often than not depicted in the humanities, and they tended to be sexualized.

Critical Discourse Analysis

In my analysis, I used a framework of critical discourse theory in order to understand the ways that the language and images used in the media reports of the teacher strikes contributed to, and created, the public’s understanding of the strikes. The media’s portrayals of the power relationships, their characterizations of the issues and personalities involved, and their depictions of the individuals and their actions were examined using the lens of critical discourse theory.

General Principles

Coulthard (1985) identified four different types of discourse analysis: anthropological (the ethnography of speaking), speech-act theory, ethnomethodological conversation analysis, and systemic linguistics-based. Other researchers have adopted different approaches, such as those associated with French structuralism and post-structuralism (Hammersley, 1997); however, social science research has focused primarily on the ways that language creates a social reality. Gillian Rose, in explaining Foucault’s theory of discourse, stated, “discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it” (Rose, 2007, p.142). This is how discourse theory is used in this analysis.

Critical discourse theory followed from the critical linguistics movement of the 1980s, and, as van Dijk (1993) argued, it is a critique of social inequality. Kress (1996), and van Dijk described critical discourse analysis as having political goals and implied political action.

Critical discourse analysts must be activists (van Dijk, 1993). In Hall's definition of discourse, we construct our knowledge in the ways we talk about a topic, and in the ways we restrict other ways of talking about the topic (as cited in Van Sterkenburg et al., 2010). Thus, activists among critical discourse analysts hope to shape how we discuss, which shapes how we think.

In analyzing public discourse, researchers focus on the form and function of language. The form of language consists of the grammar, vocabulary, syntax, semantics, morphology, and pragmatics of language (Rogers, 2004). It is taken as a given in critical discourse analysis that the interplay between form and function in language is one of the best sources of information about what our society values. Not all utterances are treated equally, and powerful messages regarding insider or outsider status, social class, cultural identity, and politics can be found in public discourse.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) distinguishes itself from rhetoric and composition by going beyond an analysis of how language is used to persuade. It draws on a range of tools, qualitative and quantitative, to analyze textlinguistic details (Huckin et al., 2012). Critical discourse analysts pay attention to all parts of the text, including silences, in order to pull out the inequalities and abuses of power that are in the text and its context. Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon (2012) argued that it allows the researcher to "coordinate the analysis of larger (macro) political/rhetorical purposes with the (micro) details of language" (p. 111). Critical discourse analysis is particularly useful for educational researchers because it can make visible the connections and discrepancies between discourse and policies.

Critical discourse analysts operate under several assumptions. First, they assume that all language use is social and that discourse is not just a product, but actually does ideological work (Rogers, 2004). Gee distinguished between little "d" discourse and big "D" discourse (as cited in

Rogers, 2004), arguing that Discourses are ideological and do political work in that they advocate and are closely related to distributions of power in society. Critical discourse analysts, according to Rogers, “treat language differently than linguists, sociolinguists, or conversation analysts...Discourses are always socially, politically, racially, and economically loaded” (p. 6). CDA seeks to uncover the dominance within a discourse and to disrupt the power relations.

Another assumption of CDA is that discourse is not merely a reflection of social contexts, but constructs and is constructed by contexts. Analysts examine how discourse operates to construct, and be historically constructed by, social problems. Further, CDA often assumes that discourse occurs through arguments between individual power and structural power. Analysts seek to reveal and examine hidden power relations within a discourse and between a discourse and its social and cultural contexts (Rogers, 2004), in order to disrupt them. According to Gee (2004), CDA combines grammatical and textual analysis with critical theories of society. It is assumed that CDA is based in social theory, such as theories of power and ideology.

CDA Frameworks

Fairclough (1992) described a framework for CDA with three parts -- discourse as text, discourse as discursive practice, and discourse as social practice. The discourse-as-text part concerns the linguistic features of the discourse. Analysts examine the vocabulary, grammar, structure, and cohesion of the discourse, identifying the choices and patterns that are characteristic of the discourse. The discourse-as-discursive-practice part requires the analyst to place the discourse “as something that is produced, circulated, distributed, consumed in society” (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 448). The analyst must consider coherence and intertextuality when examining vocabulary, grammar, and text structure. Finally, in the discourse-as-social-practice part, the analyst looks at the ideological effects of the discourse. The role of the

discourse in power processes is examined, along with the role of dominance in the discourse.

The analyst studies the ways in which the discourse is being reported in order to identify changes in the balance of power -- new orders of discourse, resistance against power, and attempts to control.

Another framework for CDA uses the tools of social languages, situated meanings, cultural models, and Discourses (Gee, 2004). Social languages, according to Gee, are ways of using language to create a particular identity within a social situation. The analyst pays attention to the technical and structural parts of the discourse in order to place the language in its socially situated identity. Situated meanings are key to discourse analysis because they identify meanings within contexts. Analysts focus on situated meanings in order to discover why language choices were made within specific situations. Cultural models are used in CDA in order to help solve what Gee refers to as “the frame problem” (2004, p. 30). They help the analyst determine what is and is not relevant to the analysis. Finally, Gee defines Discourses as the distinctive ways of using language, along with ways of thinking, acting, interacting, feeling, dressing, believing, etc. In CDA, the Discourses are examined in order to place them within social and political contexts. In sum, Gee (2004, p. 48) explains his framework of CDA thus:

How people say (or write) things (i.e., form) helps constitute *what* they are doing (i.e., function). In turn *what* they are saying (or writing) helps constitute *who* they are being at a given time and place within a given set of social practices (i.e., their socially situated identities). Finally, *who* they are being at a given time and place within a set of social practices produces and reproduces, moment by moment, our social, political, cultural, and institutional worlds.

Critiques of Critical Discourse Analysis

A common criticism of CDA is that the analyst projects ideologies onto the data rather than letting them be revealed during the analysis (Rogers, 2004; Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel,

2016). In this way, the analyst confirms what she suspected through a sort of *a priori* kind of analysis. Another criticism is that CDA does not apply social theory and linguistic method equally in its analysis, by placing emphasis on either the social context or on the linguistic attributes. Depending on the training and background of the analyst, the analysis leans one way or the other (Rogers, 2004).

Alternately, some have argued that CDA removes the data from social contexts, or that the methodology is not rigorous. Again, depending on the training of the analyst, the analysis may be more a thematic examination of a discourse than a systematic analysis of the discourse within its social context. Other critics have noted the lack of strong foundational links to linguistics or to critical theory (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000), instead pointing to the commitment to social action that is common among practitioners of CDA.

Critical Discourse Analysis in Education Policy

Critical discourse analysis is uniquely suitable for dismantling the, at times, conflicting messages and policies in the public discourse of public education. Critical discourse analysis does not merely describe and interpret discourse in context, as other discourse analysis methods do; rather, it goes beyond that level of analysis to include an explanation of why a piece of discourse worked (Rogers, 2004). Researchers can use critical discourse analysis to investigate social problems, power relations, and ideological discourse. It allows for the exploration and uncovering of inequalities and biases that, at first glance, were not apparent. This is precisely why it is so well suited to the analysis of discourse regarding education, particularly in the 21st century – because it can make visible the assumptions, biases, inequalities, and skewed power relations inherent in current educational conversations. Within the school reform movement, or the accountability movement, public discourse on education uses language that our society

associates with things we value, such as equality, results, opportunity, and productivity.

However, just because someone invokes those ideas does not mean that the policies he advocates bring them into being.

For example, in an analysis of the discourses of the Transforming Schooling reform program and the educators on the ground who were implementing the program, Lenhoff and Ulmer (2016) found “a significant power asymmetry” (p. 11) regarding the intended beneficiaries of the program. This discrepancy was discovered through the use of CDA to examine the public documents of the reform program, interviews with school and reform program personnel, observations of participants in a variety of settings, and internal reform program documents.

The language used by reform program personnel focused on the reform program’s benefits “for all” students. This language reinforces our society’s value of equality, particularly within the focus of the program, which is on college and career readiness for all students. Program documents used language such as, “Transforming Schooling believes all schools can meet the full potential of each student” (p. 12). The language of the schools’ staff members, however, was quite different. Their language was categorized by the researchers as “for some.” In interviews and observations, the researchers found that school employees used language such as, “the Transforming Schooling format is really too long for some of these kids” and, “By no means is it a model that is perfect for everybody” (p. 12). Their discourse was colored by a deficiency mindset, which is in opposition to the values stated by the reform program.

The researchers found that the gap between the “for all” discourse of the reform program and the “for some” discourse in the schools created conflict between program staff and school staff. The reform program staff regarded school staff members who didn’t adopt the “for all”

discourse as the parties responsible for poor implementation of the program, resulting in its failure. The researchers did not find that the reform program staff ever examined their own roles in the quality of the implementation in the schools.

In a study (Jimenez-Silva et al., 2016) of the presentation of information regarding Arizona's language policy (Proposition 203) passed in 2000, which mandates that all English language learners (ELLs) receive four hours daily of English Language Development (ELD) in a Structured English Immersion (SEI) setting from which students are expected to exit within a year, researchers used CDA to analyze the information on the Arizona Department of Education (ADE)'s website and on the websites of three different school districts. They found that the language on the ADE's website made it clear that "the power to control the elements of the proposition is held by the ADE" (p. 16).

They further found that the presentations of the law varied greatly in the three districts studied. On the website for the Flagstaff schools, the law's requirements were presented as one of three possible options, with statements regarding the value of bilingual education, demonstrating the district's commitment to bilingual education, not to SEI. On the website for the Tucson schools, information on the law's requirements was presented on a separate page that was hard to find. Instead, on its main homepage, the district presented two-way dual immersion programs as the default programs for ELLs, not SEI. Additionally, the website cited research that supports dual language immersion as the most effective form of bilingual education, communicating that their choice of programs was based on research. Finally, on the website for the Mesa schools, the law's requirements were presented through multiple references to Arizona state law, and the language emphasized that ELLs needed to learn English as quickly as possible.

On a separate page, the district presented information on a two-way dual immersion program, but it was not made clear if ELLs were part of this program.

The researchers included information about the communities of the three districts which provided crucial contextual information. Their analysis, therefore, was able to place the discourses of the websites within the communities' cultures, histories, demographics, and politics. By focusing on how the law's information was presented, what information was privileged in terms of priority and location within the websites, and the contextual information of each school district, the researchers were able to identify the ways that the districts communicated their philosophies on educating ELLs, and how these differed from the language of the law, if at all.

Conclusion

The literature discussed in this chapter provides the research background in which this study is centered. As research on agenda setting has shown, the issues that are covered the most in the media are the issues that people then identify as the most important. In second-level agenda setting, the framing of these issues affects people's opinions on them. In this study, I examined articles to discern the ways the issues related to the strikes were framed, i.e., second-level agenda-setting. I then used critical discourse analysis to identify the language used to create those frames and to determine what the purposes and effects of those frames were in coverage of the teacher strikes in Chicago in 2012 and in Seattle in 2015. The next chapter presents the methodology I used in my study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand how the media represented the teachers, union representatives, and the school district officials during two teacher strikes — Chicago in 2012 and Seattle in 2015. This understanding may shed light on the relationship between the framing of the news media coverage of the two strikes and the strike outcomes. This chapter presents the research questions that guide the study and the methods to be used for data collection and analysis.

In my analysis of the media with regard to the two strikes, my research will be guided by three questions:

1. How were the teachers portrayed by the media?
2. How were the teachers' unions portrayed by the media?
3. How were school district officials and/or political leaders portrayed by the media?

Selection of Case Study

An examination of the portrayals of individuals, groups, and ideas in the media is, inherently, qualitative. The researcher is key because it is her selection of items to examine, her coding of the discourse and images, and her interpretation of the themes that emerge through the analysis that define the research. Creswell (2012) defines qualitative research as scientific, since it seeks to solve a problem through the collection and analysis of data. However, Creswell also notes that the data used in qualitative research is collected by the researcher, and the researcher does not rely on instruments developed by other researchers, as quantitative researchers often do.

Although absolute objectivity can never be achieved, and researchers always influence the outcomes of their research, whether the methods are quantitative or qualitative, the role of the researcher in qualitative research is distinctly different from that in quantitative research.

Creswell argues that the role of qualitative researchers is to “build their patterns, categories, and themes from the ‘bottom up,’ by organizing the data inductively into increasingly more abstract units of information” (p. 45).

In this study, which seeks to understand two specific events over short periods of time, it is appropriate to use a multiple case study approach. The research questions, which limit the study to the portrayals of the strike actors by the local media, focus the study on the cases as they played out in public. The goal is to understand how each group and each side of the negotiating table was portrayed in the media. Since the primary goal of a case study is to understand the case, and any hypotheses or themes that emerge would only be used to further the goal of understanding the case being studied, Stake (1978) would very likely agree that a case study is the best approach.

Stake (1978) defined case studies as including, “descriptions that are complex, holistic, and involving a myriad of not highly isolated variables; data that are likely to be gathered at least partly, by personalistic observation; and a writing style that is informal, perhaps narrative, possibly with verbatim quotation, illustration, and even allusion and metaphor” (p. 7). He argued that, when the goal of a study is to understand, the case study is an appropriate choice. Case studies are distinct from other studies in that what is included in the case (and what is excluded from it) is clearly laid out. What happens within those boundaries determines what the study is about, which is what distinguishes it from quantitative and other types of studies, in which the hypotheses determine what the study is about (Stake, 1978). Because the purpose of this study is

to understand the media portrayals of these teacher strikes, the contexts of the data being analyzed are critical to the analysis. Stake explained that experts develop their understanding of human affairs through personal experience, within specific contexts, which allows them to gather expertise that applies in a broad variety of situations. Flyvbjerg (2006) also argued for the use of case studies in research because they produce context-dependent knowledge that allows people to progress in their learning from beginners to experts, and because, “in the study of human affairs, there appears to exist only context-dependent knowledge” (p. 221).

Stake (1994) distinguished between intrinsic case studies and instrumental case studies. Intrinsic case studies are those in which the case, itself, is primary, and the issue is secondary. In other words, intrinsic case studies seek primarily to understand a particular case, and the issues around it are “examined only as they serve the effort to understand the case” (p.35). Instrumental case studies, on the other hand, are those in which the issues are primary and the case is the vehicle used to explore them. In an instrumental case study, the researcher is only interested in the case insofar as it illustrates the issue(s). Stake identified a tension between the case and the issue as to which one is primary, and that tension exists in this case study. I am deeply interested in the cases and would, if time allowed, delve even more deeply into them; however, this is an instrumental case study. The issue of media depictions of teachers and unions during teacher strikes is primary, and the cases are used to illustrate the issue.

Site Selection and Sampling

Nonprobability sampling, which is most common in qualitative research, will be the sampling method used in this study. This study will use purposive sampling, as defined by Chein (1981), because the items selected for analysis have been selected with the understanding that they are the items from which the researcher can learn the most. As Patton (2015) explained,

qualitative sampling is effective because it emphasizes in-depth understanding. Using purposive sampling will allow me to develop a deep understanding of the cases and to identify possible reasons as to why the events were framed in specific ways.

This study analyzes media portrayals of teachers, management, and teachers' unions during teacher strikes, in Chicago and Seattle, in August and September of 2012 and August and September of 2015, respectively. These time periods allowed for media coverage of the strikes from beginning to end, with thorough descriptions of the issues and resolutions. The media outlets used to gather data for this study included the newspapers in Chicago and Seattle with the largest circulations. The *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* each circulate over 400,000 copies daily. *The Seattle Times* circulates approximately 230,000 copies daily.

The data collection also includes items from the weekly newspapers the *Chicago Reader* (approximately 100,000 copies weekly) and *The Stranger* (approximately 90,000 copies weekly). I had planned to also use data from other publications in Chicago and Seattle and from television news broadcasts from both cities. Unfortunately, I could find no relevant articles in *Seattle Weekly*, and only two articles in the *Chicago Defender*, one before the strike and one after. Other publications required subscriptions to access their archives and I had to limit my expenses, which prevented me from accessing the archives of the *Daily Herald* in suburban Chicago. I had also intended to use data from television news broadcasts in both cities; however, the costs for obtaining videos of the relevant broadcasts were prohibitive.

Selection of these data sources allowed for consideration of the context, author, publisher, institution, and intended audience of each item, which assisted in identifying the framing taking place, and in determining why any particular item worked in the way it did.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

The items selected for inclusion in the data were identified through online archive searches of each publication using specific terms that pertained to the cases, as well as through searches of LexisNexis and Proquest. Appendix A includes the search terms used throughout the study. The exception to this was the *Chicago Tribune*, whose archives consist of scanned paper copies of issues, requiring me to read the news and city news sections of every issue between August 1 and September 30 of 2012. This sampling method is purposive in that the goal of the research is to understand how those involved in the strikes were portrayed in the media during the periods immediately before, during, and immediately after the events. By including all news items and letters to the editor pertaining to the strikes that were published in the major daily and weekly newspapers, the study includes the representations of the actors that people following the events were likely to encounter.

I had planned to use qualitative research software, specifically atlas.ti, to gather, organize, and store the documents. Unfortunately, the format of the archives for the *Chicago Tribune* was not compatible with atlas.ti. Instead, I created Excel spreadsheets and conducted the analysis “by hand.”

Data Analysis

All of the items included in the analysis were studied with the use of protocols designed to identify the framing that was used. Each protocol lists the details that were recorded and used in the analysis, such as the headline, the placement of the article within the publication, and the descriptive language used in the article. The protocols were intended to be used as steps of analysis that would assist with the interpretation and the identification of the frame. The analysis

examined framing and possible second-level agenda-setting effects; however, it did not establish whether second-level agenda-setting occurred. To establish second-level agenda-setting would require a different kind of study, one which examined individuals' opinions as a result of viewing the items under analysis. This study identified framing and possible reasons for the framing, i.e., possible second-level agenda-setting.

Written items were analyzed using a document analysis protocol applied to each article. Appendix B contains the protocol. Each article was coded and numbered for data organizational purposes. Visual support items were analyzed using a photo analysis protocol. This visual analysis protocol was informed by the recognition that there are three modalities to visual images (technological, compositional, and social) and the use of semiotics to understand ideologies and the social effects of meaning (Rose, 2007). The photo analysis protocol is in Appendix C.

The use of these protocols assisted in addressing issues of reliability in the study. Attribute coding, descriptive coding, emotion coding, and simultaneous coding was used in the first cycle of coding. The second cycle of coding included a search for patterns, categories of the representations of the actors, identification of specific elements of the discourse to be used in the critical discourse analysis, and examples of the framing that occurred. Narrative descriptions were also recorded during this cycle of coding, to assist in keeping track of the analysis and to elaborate on the patterns that emerged. Use of a matrix display to organize the representations by their authors or media outlets and by their patterns allowed a big picture of the media framing to emerge for each case.

I used critical discourse analysis determine how discourse was used to create the frames for the issues in the articles. I created a detailed analysis of the language as it pertained to teachers, the union, district officials, students, parents, the strike, and any other categories of

people mentioned in the articles. This language was examined for positive or negative descriptive language, use of voices (active vs. passive), and placement of the language and articles (e.g., page numbers, next to other articles about the strike, next to photographs, etc.). Photographs were also examined for the language within the captions and to determine whether the photographs supported the framing of the articles through the people in the photographs, facial expressions, gestures, and settings. An example of the critical discourse analysis is in Appendix E.

Because this study involves two different cases, I engaged in cross-case analysis. My goal in this was not necessarily to identify a causal relationship, or to create a theory; rather, it was to see outcomes across cases in order to understand how they were affected by local conditions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). My comparative analysis followed a modified version of the steps laid out by Miles and Huberman (1994), including understanding each case, avoiding aggregation, preserving the case configurations, and combining variable-oriented and case-oriented strategies. In order to be able to compare the two cases in ways that are useful to other researchers, I used conceptual analysis (e.g., teachers as public servants, district officials as guardians of the public purse) as well as variable analysis within and across cases. Using data and analysis displays assisted me in drawing and communicating well-founded conclusions.

Reliability and Validity

This study examines documents and photographs, all of which have been archived as public documents by virtue of their publication by media outlets. There are no confidentiality issues associated with this study, as no live subjects were included. Reliability was assured through the selection of the items from the major daily and weekly newspapers from the two

locations. While this study was designed to develop understanding of the framing of teacher strikes by the media, it was not intended to identify general truths to be applied to other contexts.

Validity was assured through multiple considerations throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Keeping careful track of my procedures, and describing them in detail, allows readers to understand how the data were processed. The use of data displays enhances the reader's understanding of how my conclusions were drawn. I identified any uncertainties I had in my analysis and I looked for negative evidence, meaning I sought out instances when the framing of a report was contrary to the framing of other reports. This was particularly important when considering within-source items, i.e., when examining items from the same publication. I also tested any emerging patterns across the cases, as a form of triangulation.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Because this study is focused on the teacher strikes that took place in Chicago in 2012 and in Seattle in 2015, there are limits to how much its lessons can be generalized to other job actions by teachers in other school districts. Similarly, limiting the data for analysis to the major newspapers and television networks in each location, during periods of two months in 2012 and 2015, may prevent inclusion of relevant news items that could have led to different conclusions. For example, I have not included any data from social media sites. This decision was made in order to limit the data to an amount that could be analyzed within a reasonable timeframe. Inclusion of social media postings in the data collected and analyzed would have created an unmanageable amount of data.

Chicago is the third largest school district in the country, and Seattle is the ninety-ninth largest (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). As of 2010, there were 13,588 public school

districts in the United States, so understanding these two cases does not necessarily lead to anything that can be used to understand situations in the 13,586 other public-school districts. Additionally, in right-to-work states, teachers' unions, if they exist, play no real role in teacher contracts or working conditions. Therefore, in those states, the findings from this study may not shed much light on the dynamics of the relationships between the media, school districts, teachers, and unions. The issues involved in the two strikes, however, include several that are universal to public schools throughout the country, given that they deal with requirements of federal and state laws.

This case study is not a thorough analysis of the strikes in Chicago and Seattle. No participants or reporters were interviewed and site visits and observations in the field were impossible, since the events took place several years ago. The study relied on document and photograph analyses of public documents. The study is intended to provide information about the media representations of the teachers, union officials, and school district management officials and how those representations were used to frame the issues of the strikes. Critical discourse analysis was used for an added level of analysis. It is hoped that the understanding provided by this study will help teachers, unions, and district leaders see the importance of media framing to their work.

Researcher Bias

I have extensive experience in public schools, beginning in 1987 and continuing through 2016, in the roles of teacher, program coordinator, principal, district-level administrator, and parent of children in public schools in the states of Illinois, Maryland, Wisconsin, and North Carolina. I also worked for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction from 2012 to 2014 as a school transformation coach, coaching principals of low-performing schools. As a

teacher, I was a member of the local teachers' unions. As an administrator, I was trusted to enforce the policies of the local boards of education. I have never worked for any media outlets or publishing companies and have no connections to the newspapers studied.

As someone who has been a member of teachers' unions and who has worked in both union and non-union states, I have a well-developed opinion on their role in education and in society, in general. I understand the value that unions can bring to the workplace and to the lives of individual workers, and the limitations that unions can place on the options available to school and district officials. I have been a teacher in union states and a school and district administrator in both union and non-union states. My experiences allowed me to observe situations in which negotiated agreements stipulated the range of actions that were available to me, and situations in which there were no negotiated agreements and no such stipulations. In terms of managing the workplace and employee discipline and/or non-renewal of a staff member's contract, I have worked through issues in both union and non-union states.

I guarded against allowing my bias to influence my research by maintaining a detailed research log which included reflections on my own subjectivity. This allowed me to identify moments when my personal bias may have been affecting my findings. Throughout the research, I sought out negative evidence and rival explanations and tested them across cases.

Summary

This chapter describes the methodology to be used in this research. The study uses a multiple-case study design. Documents from newspapers and photographs from newspapers were the primary sources for the study, and protocols were used in the analysis of each item. Chapter four presents the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS
OVERVIEW AND CHICAGO, 2012

Introduction

This chapter presents the articles from the newspapers in the study. The greatest number of articles came from the *Chicago Tribune* and, due to their format, I was unable to enter them into ATLAS.ti; therefore, I created a spreadsheet of the elements in the document analysis protocol and recorded my observations there. I continued using the spreadsheet for articles from the other publications and for the critical discourse analysis.

Data is presented on the volume of articles regarding the teacher strikes, the descriptive language used, the people referenced, the people quoted, and the overall frames. The frames of the coverage of the strikes were analyzed through the document analysis protocol and through critical discourse analysis.

Overview of Articles

Articles were collected by dates and publications. For the *Chicago Tribune*, I searched the entire archived issues between August 1, 2012 and September 30, 2012, reading headlines on each page for references to the teachers' union, the school district, or contract negotiations. I restricted my search to the first section and the city section of the paper. For the other publications, I searched online archives with specific search terms pertaining to the dates, school districts, unions, and contract negotiations. The articles were then read for relevance. The number of articles in each publication is included in Table 1.

Table 1. Publications and articles

Publication	Total # Articles
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	217
<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>	49
<i>Chicago Reader</i>	12
<i>Seattle Times</i>	63
<i>Seattle Stranger</i>	20
Total	361

As the table indicates, the strike in Chicago garnered significantly more news coverage than the strike in Seattle, with 278 of the 361 items being from Chicago, for 77 percent of all articles. Given Chicago’s size (3 million) relative to Seattle (725,000), and the number of students in the Chicago Public Schools (350,000) versus the number of students in the Seattle Public Schools (50,000), this is perhaps not surprising. The student population of the Chicago Public Schools was roughly seven times the student population in the Seattle Public Schools, and the city population in Chicago was roughly four times that of Seattle. Interestingly, 78 percent of the Chicago items were in the *Chicago Tribune*. The other Chicago daily newspaper, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, accounted for only 18 percent of the Chicago articles.

With regard to the Seattle items, 76 percent were in the *Seattle Times*, the only daily newspaper in Seattle. The *Stranger*, a bi-weekly newspaper, accounted for the remaining 24 percent of Seattle items.

The document analysis protocol focused on the people mentioned, the organizations mentioned, the people quoted, the descriptive language used, and the placement within the publication. For the *Chicago Reader*, the *Seattle Times*, and the *Stranger*, I was not able to analyze the placement of the items because print copies of the publications were not available and the digital archives did not indicate where the items had been placed. For the *Chicago Sun-*

Times, I was not able to analyze the photographs that accompanied the articles because they were not available in the digital archives.

Chicago Tribune.

The first item that mentioned contract negotiations in the *Tribune* appeared on August 10, 2012 on page five of the first section. During the months of August and September of 2012, there were 108 news articles regarding teachers' union contract negotiations and/or strikes in the *Tribune*. Teachers in the Lake Forest High School District, in a suburb of Chicago, went on strike around the same time as the Chicago teachers did, and there were several articles that discussed both strikes. There were also 15 editorials, two editorial cartoons, 41 opinion columns, and 47 letters to the editor on the topic. There was an article on teacher strikes of the past, a full-page advertisement regarding the teacher strike, a photograph without an accompanying article, and an article comparing an elementary school in the 1970s to an elementary school in 2012.

In the presidential elections of 2008 and 2012, the *Tribune* endorsed Barack Obama, the first Democratic candidate the paper had ever endorsed for president. Traditionally, the paper has endorsed Republican candidates. In 2016, the paper endorsed Libertarian candidate, Gary Johnson (*Chicago Tribune* Editorial Board, 2016).

Chicago Sun-Times.

In the *Sun-Times*, the first article pertaining to the teachers' union contract negotiations was published on August 10 on page three. During the months of August and September of 2012, there were 33 news items, five editorials, seven letters to the editor, two opinion pieces, two sports items, and one feature article pertaining to the strike. The *Sun-Times* is a tabloid-style newspaper that does not have individual sections and has a circulation of 120,000 (Bosman & Ember, 2017), whereas the *Tribune's* circulation is 450,000.

In January 2012, the paper decided to no longer endorse political candidates, arguing that the endorsements were irrelevant; however, it reversed course in 2013 and endorsed several Democratic candidates (Kapos, 2013). In 2016, the paper endorsed Hillary Clinton for president (*Chicago Sun-Times* Editorial Board, 2016).

Chicago Reader.

The *Chicago Reader*, an alternative weekly newspaper, published 12 items that mentioned the strike between August 1 and September 30 of 2012. Three of the items were news articles, six were opinion pieces, two were blog posts, and one was a review of a music festival. At the time of the strike, the *Reader* was owned by the *Sun-Times*'s parent company (Kirk, 2012) and had a circulation of approximately 87,000.

Seattle Times.

Between August 1 and September 30 of 2015, the *Seattle Times* published 63 items regarding contract negotiations and the eventual teachers' strike. There were 43 news items, four editorials, five letters to the editor, seven opinion pieces, three articles in the Lifestyle section, and one item in the Sports section. The *Times* is a daily newspaper with a circulation of approximately 230,000 (Burrelles Luce, 2013). In the 2016 presidential election, the *Times* endorsed Hillary Clinton (*Seattle Times* Editorial Board, 2016), and in 2008 and 2012, the paper endorsed Barack Obama (*Seattle Times Editorial Board*, 2008 and 2012).

The Stranger.

The Stranger was an alternative weekly newspaper (it is now bi-weekly) in Seattle with a circulation of approximately 87,000 (Association of Alternative Newsweeklies, 2007). The *Stranger* published 20 items regarding contract negotiations and the strike between August 1 and September 30 of 2015. There were 14 news items and six opinion items.

Chicago Strike.

The two major daily newspapers in Chicago, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, published a total of 266 items about the strike of 2012, which lasted eight days. I was able to establish a frame for the majority of the items in these newspapers, based on the document analysis protocol and the photograph analysis protocol. With the critical discourse analysis protocol, I was able to look deeper into the language choices and visual choices the newspapers made, and how they were intended to affect the readers.

Chicago Sun-Times.

In the *Sun-Times*, 49 percent of the articles about the strike had an anti-strike and/or anti-union frame, 22 percent had a pro-strike and/or pro-union frame, 4 percent had a pro-teachers frame, and 14 percent had an anti-Rahm Emanuel (Mayor of Chicago) frame. I distinguished between articles that were pro-strike/pro-union and those that were pro-teachers because there were some that espoused pro-teacher views that were also against the strike. For 10 percent of the articles, I could not establish a frame or the frame was something unrelated to the strike.

Table 1 shows the two major frames that were found and the numbers of each type of published item that were found between August 1 and September 30 of 2012.

Table 2. *Chicago Sun-Times* articles

	Pro-strike/CTU frame	Anti-strike/CTU frame
News items	5	15
Opinion items	1	3
Editorials	0	6
Letters to the Editor	5	0
Total	11	24

Anti-strike and anti-union articles.

Among articles that were framed to be anti-strike and/or anti-union, six were editorials and three were opinion pieces. The remaining were news articles. In the news articles, the union was described as “deliberately dragging out the protest,” “angry,” “hell-bent on striking,” and “extremely frustrated.” The strike was called “theatrics,” “devastating,” “drama,” “unnecessary,” “a strike of choice,” “avoidable,” “a tragedy,” “a roller coaster,” and a “battle.” Teachers were described as “angry” and “complaining.”

The people quoted in the news articles included Karen Lewis, Becky Carroll (CPS spokesperson), David Vitale (board president), teachers, parents, Stephanie Gadlin (CTU spokesperson), principals, students, coaches, various anonymous sources, Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Aldermen, Robert Bloch (CTU attorney), Tim Daly (President, New Teacher Project), Kate Walsh (President, National Council on Teacher Quality), and Mike Shields (President, Fraternal Order of Police).

In the editorials and opinion pieces with an anti-strike or anti-union frame, the union was described as “flame throwing,” using “fiery rhetoric,” and “shouting.” The strike was called “avoidable,” “unnecessary,” and “polarizing the city.” Karen Lewis was described as “fiery,” “passionate,” and having taken union members “over the edge.” The headlines of the editorials – e.g., “If Chicago teachers strike now, it’s the union’s bad call,” (September 7, 2012) “Teacher union’s unwise ‘strike of choice’,” (September 10, 2012), “Teachers risk losing a lot if strike drags on,” (September 12, 2012), and “Stand up to teachers, don’t demonize them” (September 13, 2012) – make it clear that the *Sun-Times* did not support the strike and believed the teachers were being unreasonable.

Next, I used critical discourse analysis to delve further into the language and images used in the items that created the frames. In its reporting on the events prior to the strike, the *Sun-Times* published an article on August 23, 2012 by Rosalind Rossi and Kim Janssen with the headline, “Lewis: We want our members prepared.” The article describes Lewis as “strident” and states that she “charged that a 2 percent raise was ‘unacceptable,’” presenting her as verbally aggressive (“strident”) and accusatory (“charged”). The authors also write that the union could go on strike “at her [Lewis’s] discretion.” Again, Lewis is seen as the aggressor. Meanwhile, CPS officials are described as “sign[ing] off on a proposal to spend up to \$35 million to shelter and feed children of the nation’s third-largest school district in the event of a strike.” There is also a quote from David Vitale stating that “‘ultimately, we have the responsibility to take care of our kids.’” In this way, the authors present CPS officials as concerned about the welfare of the students (“feed children”) and taking steps to provide services to them in the event of a strike. In effect, the article shows readers an aggressive and “strident” union that is on the verge of striking while the district leaders are concerned with “taking care of our kids.”

Also, on August 23, the *Sun-Times* Editorial Board wrote, “If you paid attention only to the theatrics on the streets this week, the easy prediction is of a Chicago teachers strike on Sept. 4, what should be opening day.” Referring to the union’s rally outside the board of education’s building as “theatrics” minimizes the issues that were raised by union leaders and teachers. The editorial also describes the officials of the CPS as “playing the mature adults,” portraying the district officials as being forced into that role due to the union’s “theatrics.” The language used to describe the union’s efforts includes “rabble-rousing,” “fight to the death,” “setting everyone on edge,” and “ring the alarm bell.” Choosing these terms to discuss the union’s actions and

statements paints the union as the volatile aggressor in the situation, setting it up to be blamed if a strike does occur.

The editorial argues that the union won't really go on strike and that the authorization to issue a strike notice that was given to Lewis was all part of the "negotiations dance" that should not be taken seriously. Clearly, they were wrong on that part. They describe the entire situation between the union and the board of education as a "bumpy ride," again, minimizing the issues.

The next day, August 24, the paper published an article by Fran Spielman ("Rahm's 'Gonna need to ratchet it up'") that presents arguments from confidants of Mayor Rahm Emanuel that he will need to "ratchet up" the negotiations with the union, and that he plans to "step it up a notch" by working personally with senior-level district leaders, "away from the same cast of characters currently at the bargaining table." This language positions Emanuel as having the power to influence the negotiations more than he has to that point. Simultaneously, by referring to the negotiators as a "cast of characters," the writers present them as pretending or playing, rather than taking action, in comparison to Emanuel, who could ride in to rescue the situation.

The article differentiates between Emanuel and the previous mayor, Richard M. Daley, in how they handle contract negotiations. Emanuel is said to be willing to "personally broker" the final agreement. The authors state that Daley "never got personally involved," and "ended up agreeing to contracts taxpayers could not afford to maintain labor peace," as if these negotiated agreements were not what the mayor saw as fair and reasonable. He is described as "allergic to strikes." Emanuel, according to a confidant, "can't cave." Again, Emanuel is portrayed as powerful and having more concern for "taxpayers" than his predecessor in his approach to union negotiations. He is said to have "cleared his calendar for Labor Day weekend to be available to

broker eleventh-hour teacher talks,” and to be willing to ““skip the [Democratic] convention in the event of a strike. He’s not about to leave town while working parents are scrambling to make alternative plans for their kids.”” In this way, the writers show Emanuel as a powerful ally of taxpayers, concerned for Chicago families and willing to give up something important to him, a speech at the Democratic National Convention, to avoid a teacher strike. It provides no information as to why Emanuel has not been personally involved in the negotiations to this point. It is almost a call to Emanuel to step in forcefully to put the teachers in their place and end the strike. How he will accomplish these negotiations, however, is not made clear since his relationship with Karen Lewis is described as “non-existent.”

In “Clock is ticking” (August 30, 2012), Rosalind Rossi and Fran Spielman explain that the Chicago Teachers Union had filed the 10-day notice of intent to strike, meaning that teachers would be able to strike as of September 10. In describing the potential for a strike, they write, “Chicago’s first teacher walkout in 25 years could erupt as early as the fifth day of school...” making a strike sound like a volcano. They go on to say that the union’s House of Delegates is “armed with that notice,” presenting the union as a militant force. That frame is continued throughout the article, with statements that the union is “fighting,” “battling,” and “bound and determined to go out.””

David Vitale is quoted calling a strike “disruptive” and saying ““I’m optimistic we’ll come to a solution,”” and ““We’re working hard with them. I believe both sides do not want a strike and I believe we’ll get there.”” These statements present the school board as calm and focused on a solution. The article also includes a quote from Karen Lewis saying that ““CPS seems determined to have a toxic relationship with its employees,”” positioning the school

employees as victims. It does not provide any details as to why Lewis perceives the relationship between the board and the teachers as “toxic.”

Also, on August 30, the *Sun-Times* published a strongly anti-CTU column by Mary Mitchell in which the union is described as “deliberately dragging out the process.” She describes Chicagoans as “desperate” to get their children out of the public schools and “fed up” with a variety of conditions, including “schools that warehouse kids but don’t educate them.” The author argues that a strike would inflict more “suffer[ing]” on the students of the CPS and send more of them to the charter schools in the city. Mitchell is attempting to scare readers into opposing the strike by invoking images of families fleeing the public schools, a version of “white flight.” She provides no data to support these assertions.

Karen Lewis is described as “rattling her saber,” “ha[ving] taken the next step toward a showdown,” and “fiery,” and a possible strike is described as “devastating” and “undermin[ing] public education.” The writer argues that Emanuel “needs to get cracking” to resolve the remaining issues in the negotiations in order to avert a strike. The union and Lewis are presented as destructive and angry, working in ineffective schools, and Emanuel is portrayed as having the power to prevent the strike, although it provides no information on why he hasn’t yet done so.

On August 31, the *Sun-Times* published an article by Rosalind Rossi and Fran Spielman that describes what CPS officials say would be the impact of a strike: “350,000 students would be kept from classrooms, 11,000 athletes would be denied varsity sports, and the transcripts and recommendations of 20,000 seniors would be ‘put on hold.’” The choices of verbs – “be kept from,” “denied,” “be ‘put on hold’” – emphasizes the depiction of the students as victims of a strike, at the mercy of a union that places its members’ needs above theirs. Later in the article, the writers describe the strike authorization vote by saying the members of the House of

Delegates “thundered” their approval, again presenting the union as aggressive and angry. A quote from Karen Lewis underscores this presentation: ““We’ve said from the beginning that we are tired of being bullied, belittled and betrayed. We’ve done everything that’s been asked of us and we continue to be vilified and treated with disrespect.”” Rather than go into details about what Lewis said, such as providing examples of union members being bullied or vilified, the authors chose to state that Lewis filed an intent-to-strike notice that “allows the union to wage a walkout at any time after 10 days of labor peace.” This places the union and Lewis firmly in the position of breaking the “peace,” again, the aggressor and the party responsible for a strike.

An article published on September 4 (Rossi, R., September 4, 2012) describes the potential strike as “drama,” and a “threat” that “looms over everyone,” making the union seem like a petulant, malevolent force. The article includes information on the multiple new initiatives in the school year, including a longer school day, mandatory recess (recess had been cut previously), and a more rigorous curriculum. It describes the strike contingency plans created by the district and how much they will cost (“\$25 million”), positioning the district as the entity that cares for the students. The author includes a quote from a professor at DePaul University saying “the first four days of school could become ‘a thrown-away week’” if the strike goes forward on September 10. She does not provide any further information on what that would mean. The professor is also quoted saying, ““we can’t afford to start over. We need to start and stay on course.”” She compares starting the school year then having the strike to ““a failed mission to Mars.”” Given the previous content of the article, it is clear that the blame for that “failure” would fall on the union.

Three days later, the *Sun-Times* published an editorial arguing that the potential strike would be unjustified, listing the issues that remained to be settled in the contract negotiations and

explaining why the union was wrong in what it was asking for. The union is described as “flame-throwing,” “wrong,” and “fired-up.” The authors say that Lewis needs to “walk her...teachers back from the ledge,” as if she were leading them to a mass suicide. The article ends by arguing that “each side can claim victory,” continuing the description of the contract negotiations as a contest or a battle, with one winner and one loser.

Also, on September 7, the *Sun-Times* published an article by Mike Clark in the Sports section (“Uncertainty rampant as strike looms”) describing high-school football preparations for the season in light of the possible strike. The author describes the situation as “an uncertain future” that the players “are not at all happy about.” He quotes a student saying, “It’s pretty bad. We don’t like dealing with uncertainty. It’s the worst thing for a team.” This sets the strike up to be bad for student-athletes and to be a cause of emotional distress for them. The author also quotes a football coach, who is also a teacher, saying, “I know all the teachers are pretty much Democratic. If they watched President Clinton [Wednesday] night...telling people [they’ve] got to cooperate – hopefully both sides can learn from that and get it done.” This frames the strike as political and, specifically, an action of Democrats. This fails to acknowledge, however, that Mayor Emanuel is also a Democrat, as are most of the Aldermen. The author’s choice to include this quote erroneously implies a Democrats-vs.-others situation, minimizing the actual issues the union wants addressed.

On September 9, there was an opinion piece by Neil Steinberg (“Many stand to lose if teachers strike”), that argued that the city could be “plunged into disarray” if the teachers went on strike. The author describes visiting the Chicago Vocational Career Academy by invitation of the CPS leadership, as part of “a last-minute push by the administration to try to illustrate what is at stake here.” He argues that “It’s a compelling argument – the school year just started, the

students are learning.” He states that there are “four groups and one person with a lot to lose here,” then makes his arguments as to what each of those has at stake. In his argument about what the teachers have at stake, he states, “led by their fiery president, Karen Lewis, who passionately points out, and not without cause, that all these advances [by the district] are also demands – a longer workday, longer work year, without either input from them or a comparable raise in pay.” In this statement, the author has managed to both paint the union leader as aggressive and argumentative, and to provide a valid argument for the strike.

Later in the article, however, the author makes clear that he does not support the strike, saying, “The longer school day is undeniably a good thing – getting paid more would be nice, but as someone who hasn’t gotten a raise in years, I’m one of the many wondering what planet teachers live on. I live on Planet Glad to Have a Job.” This is an argument that appears with some regularity in the *Sun-Times* and other publications – if I can’t have a raise, you shouldn’t get one, either. The economic recession is cited as evidence that the teachers are being greedy, because the poor economy has had negative impacts on many industries and many people have lost their jobs. While it is true that the recession caused hardships for millions of Americans, this is not a logical argument against the teachers’ demands. It is a rather juvenile attitude to say that if I can’t get it, you shouldn’t get it, either, and it makes clear what the *Sun-Times*’s position toward the union is.

On September 10, the first day of the strike, there was an article (Rossi, R. & Fitzpatrick, L., September 10, 2012) that includes multiple quotes from Emanuel, presenting his point of view toward the strike. He is quoted calling it “totally unnecessary. It’s avoidable and our kids don’t deserve this... This is a strike of choice.” Emanuel is quoted four times, the Board of Education President, Vitale, is quoted three times, and Karen Lewis is quoted three times,

making it clear that the authors see more power lying with the mayor and the Board of Education. Vitale describes the district's most recent offer as "not a small commitment." He also talks about the work of churches and other organizations to provide activities for students as "extraordinary." The authors state, "Churches and other not-for-profit organizations also stepped up to ensure that children would not be left on Chicago's streets, already plagued this year by an onslaught of violence." These statements frame the teachers as not caring as much about the students in Chicago as other organizations and the Board of Education. The mention of the violence in Chicago and of children being "on Chicago's streets" is a clear assumption on the part of the authors that if children are not in school, they have nothing else to do but to walk the streets, alone. This contributes to the depiction of the teachers' union as heartless, and will be shown to be a false assumption by later reporting.

The Alderman, Pat O'Connor, Emanuel's floor leader, is quoted three times, discussing the negotiations and whether the strike will be long or short. He argues that "everybody has been steeling themselves for it," but cautions that a longer strike could have "a lingering effect," even if it isn't a surprise. The authors include three quotes from Karen Lewis in which she explains one of the issues the strike is about and in which she says that they will not sign an agreement, "until all matters of our contract are addressed." Lewis is also quoted, however, saying, "Real school will not be open...No CTU member will be inside our schools. Please seek alternative care for your children." This quote is the first paragraph of the article, which sets the frame of teachers being negligent toward the students. The article ends with a quote from a parent saying, "I think it's going to divide our city and it's going to get ugly," depicting the strike as a thoroughly negative thing.

Also, on September 10, the *Sun-Times* published an editorial titled “Teacher union’s unwise ‘strike of choice’.” The first sentence sets the tone – “Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis has taken her members over the edge,” again presenting Lewis as leading teachers to a mass suicide. The article presents arguments against the strike and against the union’s stance, stating that the Board of Education had “put a good – not perfect – but good offer on the table.” The authors argue that the union reacted unreasonably, saying, “the union, clinging to an unrealistic notion of what it can accomplish through labor negotiations, rejected it.” This is followed by the statement, “From the get-go, the union seemed intent on striking.” No evidence is offered to support these statements. The authors also describe Vitale trying to reach Lewis by text the night before, unsuccessfully. They then say that Lewis texted Vitale after announcing the strike, “asking about their next meeting. Nice to hear talks will continue, but how about a text before the strike announcement?” It is clear that the editors will interpret everything Lewis says and does in a negative light.

The article also describes parents as “scramb[ling] for day care,” which is interesting, given that the potential for a strike had been reported in the *Sun-Times* since August 23. It discusses the argument that teachers cannot legally strike over teacher recall procedures or teacher evaluations, based on a law Illinois passed in 1995 stating that Chicago teachers could only strike over wages, benefits, and hours (Chicago Teachers Union, n.d.). The authors describe the teachers as “still fixated on issues that cannot be resolved at the bargaining table, such as financial resources for schools and wraparound social service supports for students.” There is no indication in the article of how teachers or the union leadership could *legally* argue these issues or present their positions as to the importance of these issues in relation to the quality of education in Chicago’s schools. The editorial ends with a warning to readers not to fall for the

union's argument that the sides are far apart on contract negotiations, saying, "A deal is within reach. All CTU has to do is grab it." This perpetuates the view that the teachers are being unreasonable.

The next day, there was a lengthy article by Fran Spielman ("No wiggle room for Rahm"), that describes Emanuel's political situation with regard to the strike. This article is an example of a type of article that appeared multiple times during the strike, that of the anti-Rahm Emanuel *and* anti-strike article. The author argues that the strike presents a risk to the mayor's reputation as a problem-solver and to the city's reputation "as a business center." She discusses the mayor's relationship with Karen Lewis and with the union, saying he has "alienated" the union and used "strong-arm tactics." There are no details provided regarding these tactics. She also notes that, since Emanuel criticized the previous mayor for "caving" to union demands, he cannot afford to do the same now. The use of the word "caving" indicates the perception that agreeing to any of the teachers' demands would be losing. The article describes Emanuel as "somewhat exasperated when asked whether the teachers strike was directed at him politically." The author provides no evidence for the hypothesis that the strike is directed at Emanuel and his response to the question is, "Don't take it out on the kids of the city of Chicago if you've got a problem with me." In this way, the author makes the teachers appear to be using the effects of the strike to hurt Emanuel politically and makes no mention of the union's stated reasons for the strike.

The article includes a description and a photograph of a press conference Emanuel held at a church, with students standing behind him. The photograph shows Emanuel standing in front of a church, facing reporters, surrounded by students. The choice to include this photograph helps to frame the issue as one in which Emanuel and his staff have the best interests of students at

heart. When asked if the strike was “a test of his leadership,” the article quotes him as answering, ““The real test that should matter – which is why I want the negotiators to stay at the table – is the test these kids take in third grade on reading and math [and] the test they take at sixth grade on whether they’re at international levels.”” This is another attempt by Emanuel to say that the teachers are irresponsible for going on strike, and the decision to include the quote in the article adds to the frame of teachers as negligent. The author goes on to say that “the union is clearly hoping to test the mayor. Teachers picketed outside the church where Emanuel spoke. And later they staged a noisy demonstration at City Hall.” This is again portraying the teachers as interested in hurting Emanuel politically. There is no mention of the fact that, since Emanuel has the final say-so regarding the schools, teachers demonstrating and picketing where he is located makes sense. If they want to make it clear to the mayor what they are unhappy with, they need to communicate directly to him.

Former Alderman Dick Simpson was interviewed for the article and said that “Emanuel has a history of talking tough, then ‘backing down part-way,’” but no examples were provided. Simpson said he expected Emanuel to do the same thing here, although there was no elaboration of what that might mean. He further discussed the firefighters’ strike of 1980, during which the mayor, Jane Byrne, ““fought it, [and] she lost the support of labor unions, which is one of the many reasons she lost the next election.”” Simpson noted that Emanuel didn’t have the support of unions during his recent election but, ““he may need them in future elections because money may not be enough to control the election.”” This continues the idea that the strike and the actions of all of those involved in the situation are primarily political and not about specific issues, and that the CTU’s main goal is to hurt Emanuel politically.

Aldermen were also quoted in the September 11 article by Kim Janssen and Fran Spielman (“Aldermen back mayor, but parents with teachers”), which begins with a quote from Emanuel calling the strike “totally avoidable...strike of choice.” The authors state that “Aldermen almost unanimously fell in line behind the mayor,” and quote Alderman Joe Moreno saying the CTU was “hell-bent on striking.” This paints the union as unnecessarily provoking the conflict. Another Alderman, Michele Smith, “warned a protracted strike could send middle-class families fleeing to the suburbs,” an attempt to use fear, especially fear of “white flight,” to get people to oppose the strike. The article includes quotes from two parents who support the union and describes a meeting with union representatives organized by parents at an elementary school.

The article also includes a quote from a parent who opposes the strike, saying, “I blame the teachers. They didn’t have to strike. They should just come back and let these kids go to school. It’s too much going on out here in Englewood to have these babies out in the street.” This is followed by a quote from another Alderman, Edward Burke, arguing that the strike could become a problem if it goes on for too long. By choosing to begin the article with the quote from Emanuel and to end the article with these two quotes, the authors have created a clear frame of opposition to the strike based on teachers being overly aggressive and self-interested.

On September 12, the *Sun-Times* published another editorial (“Teachers risk losing a lot if strike drags on”) that picks up on the idea shared by Alderman Burke, above. The editors argue that the CTU has already achieved “victories” on merit pay, a raise, a “shorter ‘longer day,” and has gained significant public support for their cause. In describing these “victories,” however, the authors use language such as, “We lost and the union won” and “Teachers need to appreciate how far they’ve come – and how much they stand to lose if they hold out for a pie-in-the-sky

deal they can never get.” This continues the perception of the strike as a win-lose situation and of the teachers as too greedy. Regarding the public support for the union and the remaining issues that are unresolved, the authors say, “Much of that, we suspect, comes from the CTU’s very public push for more resources in schools...they’re shouting from a larger stage.” The implication here is that people would not be supporting the union if they weren’t being so vocal, which isn’t much of an argument against the strike. The authors continue, “The tragedy here is that these problems won’t be fixed at the bargaining table – for lack of money, not will – and the union is legally barred from striking over them anyway.” No evidence is provided of the “will” to resolve these issues on the part of CPS. There is no recognition of the possibility that the union is striking over these issues, knowing they cannot be resolved, because of their importance to teachers’ working conditions and to students’ learning conditions. Additionally, the *Sun-Times* fails to mention why the district’s finances are so limited or how historic financial decisions could have led to the lack of resources for schools.

That same day, there was a lengthy article (Esposito, S., et al, September 12, 2012), “It’s ‘lunacy,’” in which the authors describe the reaction of David Vitale to quotes from Karen Lewis. They quote Lewis at a rally saying, “To say that the contract will be settled today is lunacy.” They then describe her saying “she had to return to the ‘silly part’ of her day negotiating with Vitale and encouraging teachers ‘to have fun.’” The article includes a lengthy response from Vitale, including, ““This is not the behavior of a group of people who are serious about the interests of our children...It’s time for us to get serious.”” In publishing Vitale’s response to Lewis without any follow-up commentary from Lewis, the authors allow the union leader to be framed as dismissive of the negotiations process and unaware of the seriousness of the situation.

The authors go on to note that Lewis was “not present to receive” the most recent written proposal from the board, although they indicate that the CTU attorney “said Lewis returned to the table Tuesday [the day of the rally] night and saw the proposal.” The authors then refer to the quotes above from Lewis and Vitale as “dueling statements,” portraying the situation as a he-said-she-said scenario, as if they were writing a gossip column.

In describing the teachers’ demonstrations and picketing, the authors state that, “The teachers ripped Emanuel, and expressed anger over how the city diverts property taxes from the schools to give tax increment financing to some of the city’s biggest companies,” choosing to frame their statements as anger rather than genuine efforts to inform the public of these issues. There is no explanation of why this diversion of property taxes is important to the situation. They state that Lewis “ridiculed suggestions the strike could end Tuesday,” without any clarification of why she said they were not close to a resolution.

On September 13, there was an article (Rossi, R., et al, September 13, 2012), that discusses the negotiations, particularly the issue of teacher evaluations. The authors quote Karen Lewis, Becky Carroll, Rahm Emanuel, and Jesse Sharkey regarding the negotiations and the latest proposal from CPS, which “softens an evaluation system that the union said could have put nearly 30 percent of CPS teachers on the path to dismissal if they didn’t improve their performance within a year.” They are referring to the district’s proposal to lower the weight of test scores in a teacher’s evaluation. The authors also quote people who support tying teachers’ evaluations to students’ test scores, such as Tim Daly, the president of the New Teacher Project, who said, “I think it’s a pretty generous concession,” and Kate Walsh, president of the National Council on Teacher Quality, who said, “I don’t even know a small district to strike over teacher evaluation.” These statements make it seem as if the CTU is asking for something outrageous.

The authors describe the issue of teacher evaluation as “contentious” and state that “a growing number of states and districts are in the process of implementing new teacher evaluation systems as part of an attempt to win federal Race To the Top funds or to win waivers from some of the more onerous provisions of the No Child Left Behind law.” The authors do not offer any explanation as to why the teachers have opposed the district’s proposal for teacher evaluations, other than the fear that many teachers could lose their jobs. No arguments are presented as to the value of any form of teacher evaluation.

The same day, the *Sun-Times* published an opinion piece by Alejandro Escalona arguing that the teachers should be teaching while negotiations continue. He describes the strike as “polarizing the city” and says that both sides of the negotiations should work to get teachers back to teaching. He states, “This could be done if both sides remembered that the children come first and foremost.” While he appears to apply this statement to both the union and the Board of Education, he makes it clear throughout the article that it applies primarily to the teachers, framing them as being negligent in their duties.

The article begins by quoting a teacher saying, “We are not only teachers. We are parents, counselors and nurses for our students, and we do it with love. We deserve a fair contract.” Later in the article, the author states that he agrees with this teacher that they “deserve a cost-of-living salary increase;” however, he goes on to say that “people in the private sector have been getting by on 1 percent salary increases – if that – for years.” He continues this theme of teachers being ungrateful by arguing that the offer from the district is generous, placing it as more generous than people in other lines of work get. This is another of the if-I-can’t-get-it-neither-should-you frame of the strike that portrays the teachers as being unrealistic and greedy in their stance.

In spite of acknowledging that the teachers have valid points, such as when he states, “Sure, teachers agreed to work longer hours and a longer school year, but plenty of other people have been working longer hours for years just to hang on to their jobs during the recession,” he repeatedly places the strike in comparison to various, unnamed other people’s jobs with no specific data for evidence. He ends the article by saying, “An agreement can be reached. The two sides are not that far apart. Let’s get it done for the sake of the students. And so that teachers like Marcela Martinez can go back to the classrooms where they belong.” This statement makes clear his belief that the strike is not valid and that teachers are being irresponsible by striking. In saying the classrooms are “where they belong,” he is implying that they do not “belong” anywhere else, such as in protests or rallies.

On a neighboring page in that issue of the *Sun-Times* is an editorial, “Stand up to teachers, don’t demonize them.” This is another editorial against the strike, but it has a very different tone. In it, the editors describe what the teachers “are demanding,” including air conditioners, social workers, textbooks, more money, and job security. They appear to support these demands, saying, “Anybody who has ever sat in a classroom without air conditioning on a brutally hot Chicago day knows this is no trivial matter.” They also appear to support the teachers when they say, “The 25,000 striking members of the Chicago Teachers Union are not aliens dropped among us, selfish and dumb and duped by their union bosses. They are hardworking Chicagoans, about two to every square block in the city, who take intense pride in their profession.” When they then state that the strike must end, however, they place the burden of ending it squarely on the teachers. The editors argue that the teachers “have already gained a great deal” and that, “Times are tough and there is no way to pay for significantly more air-conditioners or social workers or libraries.” Here, again, is the argument that the recession

prohibits the district from giving the teachers what they are asking for, with no discussion of the district's finances or why the teachers feel the need to go on strike for these basic elements of their working environment.

On September 14, Fran Spielman had an article ("Lessons Rahm can learn") that analyzed the strike in terms of Emanuel's performance, and is another article that is both anti-strike and anti-Emanuel. The first sentence, "Instead of ridiculing striking teachers for complaining about sweltering schools without air-conditioning, what if Mayor Rahm Emanuel had put his formidable fund-raising skills to work to persuade corporate donors to bankroll school air-conditioners," makes it clear that the author does not support Emanuel's response to the strike. She quotes various politicians offering their critiques of the union and of Emanuel in the guise of providing suggestions, such as, "Karen Lewis has been very provocative and at times rather insulting. It's important in those circumstances not to allow yourself to get baited into it. There were instances where the mayor allowed himself to do that." This statement gives the article the opportunity to be critical of both Emanuel and Lewis. This politician went on to say, "Clearly they may have underestimated the degree of anger among the rank and file that Lewis was able to take advantage of." This presents Lewis as manipulative, rather than representing the concerns and desires of the people who elected her, with no acknowledgement of the fact that over 90 percent of the teachers voted to strike.

The author organizes her "lessons" for Emanuel into categories, such as "Message Control," "Political Timing," and "Don't Underestimate Your Opponent," as if this were a political campaign rather than a legitimate labor dispute. The author argues that public relations are an important part of the strike and that Emanuel was "out-manuevered." There is no consideration of the idea that the teachers had valid demands that were generally supported by

the public. In arguing that “Emanuel met his match in Lewis,” the author quotes an Emanuel confidante saying Lewis has “equally aggressive tendencies as our mayor.” This quote makes it seem that Lewis and Emanuel are battling each other, not that they represent opposing views. Additionally, the author does not reference Lewis’s frequent statements that Emanuel has bullied and belittled teachers, which could have framed Lewis as standing up to Emanuel, rather than being aggressive.

Pro-strike and pro-union articles.

There were fewer articles with a pro-strike and/or pro-union frame, and several of those also expressed doubts about the strike or agreements with the CPS officials. Among the articles that had a pro-strike and/or pro-union frame, six were letters to the editor and seven were news articles. In the news articles, the union is referred to as a “clear winner,” “ready to strike,” “not the bad guys,” and having “no sense of urgency.” The teachers are described as “believ[ing] the public supports them,” “competing in the court of public opinion,” and “sincerely want[ing] to be back in the classroom.” The authors state that the teachers have had many things taken from them and had “stuff rammed down their throats.”

By contrast, Rahm Emanuel is described as “known for his long memory and take-no-prisoners politics,” having “more experience in messaging,” “demonizing the teachers’,” having “cancel[ed] the previously negotiated raise,” and “danc[ing] around the elephant in the room,” the “elephant” being how to pay for the raises being negotiated.

The strike is described as having many causes, including lack of resources, lack of staff, lack of programs, lack of playgrounds, lack of textbooks, lack of respect, and lack of air-conditioning. It was also described as “drag[g]ing on all week,” full of “political fallout for Aldermen,” “locally supported,” and “nationally bashed.”

In the letters to the editor, the union is described as not wanting to strike, wanting “what’s best for students,” and going on strike to “force quality education.” By contrast, the district officials were said to have “belittle[d]” and “offend[ed]” teachers and not put students first. They were described as not “understand how to effectively educate children,” “funding charter schools ahead of public schools,” and “hav[ing] no idea what they’re doing.” Rahm Emanuel is described as “wrong” and as making an “immoral demand” when he “demand[s] [that] workers work for free.”

In the news articles, the people quoted include Randi Weingarten (AFT President), the Cook County Board President, Aldermen, Karen Lewis, Jesse Sharkey (CTU Vice-President), teachers, CPS spokespeople, Rahm Emanuel, picketers, and a hip-hop duo.

Using critical discourse analysis, I dug deeper into the language used in the articles. In the days leading up to the strike, the *Sun-Times* published two news articles and two letters to the editor that had a pro-strike and/or pro-union frame. On August 22, 2012, a letter to the editor was published that describes the actions of CPS officials as “belittl[ing]” to teachers and “not put[ting] students’ interests first” (Stieber, D., August 22, 2012). The author argues the CPS is “pushing for merit pay, which has been proven ineffective in study after study.” Siteber also states the union doesn’t “want to strike” but is “prepared to do what’s best for students.”

The first news article, on September 5, 2012 (Korecki & Spielman), quotes Randi Weingarten at the Democratic National Convention saying, ““The teachers of Chicago feel deeply disrespected and deeply disenfranchised and that’s what this struggle is about.”” The article describes Weingarten’s statement as “forceful” and says it “put members of the Illinois [Democratic] delegation on the spot.” The authors argue that the delegates were cautious in their statements because, “nobody wants to cross Emanuel, who is known for his long memory and

take-no-prisoners politics.” Their answers to questions about the potential strike were vague (“I’m hopeful ...there’ll be no strike.”). Alderman Leslie Hairston, however, was more direct when asked if she agreed that teachers in Chicago felt disrespected by Emanuel. Her response was, “Yes.” When the reporters asked how, she replied that Emanuel was dismissive of how hard teachers work and how much they “give of themselves.”

The last article before the strike that had a pro-union frame was by Rosalind Rossi and Stefano Esposito (September 6, 2012). In it, the CTU is said to be “ready to strike,” and the authors report that the CTU has filed a charge with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board arguing that the CPS had “unfairly den[ied] CTU members ‘step’ increases for additional years of experience.” The union is also arguing that “CPS has improperly eliminated a longevity sick-leave benefit and improperly implemented new teacher evaluation procedures.” The CPS is depicted as unfair and taking away things that teachers are entitled to. There is a quote from Becky Carroll, CPS spokesperson, that “the union continues to mischaracterize the proposals made during negotiations,” but the authors follow that with the statement, “Carroll did not immediately explain how the union had mischaracterized talks,” an example of recognizing that the statement was not supported by evidence, something other authors should have followed.

On the second day of the strike, September 11, 2012, the *Sun-Times* published a pro-union column by Mark Brown listing all the different reasons teachers were striking, which was a long list including large class sizes, not enough staff, no air conditioning, no playgrounds, no textbooks, and no respect. The article states that a poll of parents of public-school students found overwhelming support for the union, but the author argues that to keep that support, the union would have to do a better job of explaining their reasons for striking. He also argues that Emanuel has more experience “competing in the court of public opinion, especially when it

comes to crafting a campaign message,” although he describes Emanuel as “agitated” during a press conference about the strike, perhaps indicating that the strike was out of his control. The article includes quotes from teachers sharing their reasons for striking and ends by arguing that it’s unlikely that the strike is about air conditioning, but that the union is sharing the “laundry list of classroom-related issues because each item on it motivates somebody.” In this way, the teachers are depicted as striking over things that matter to them, but not in a unified way. So, while the author states he believes the teachers would rather be in the classroom, he also believes that Emanuel’s version of what the remaining issues are is a more accurate reflection of the negotiations.

That same day, there were three letters to the editor that were pro-union. In his letter, Bernie Cicirello argues that the union is on strike to “force a quality education for kids” and to “force all of us to look at the long term,” (Cicirello, B., September 11, 2012). Mark Datema argues that the district officials and Emanuel’s “hand-picked board” don’t understand the importance of the issues (Datema, M., September 11, 2012). These descriptions clearly paint the union as the group with a vision for the future of public education in Chicago and the district officials as beholden to Emanuel. The following day, there was another letter published (Criner, S., September 12, 2012), that describes a third-grade classroom with “no air conditioning,” students who “have severe emotional problems,” and an overloaded system that can’t provide the supports the students need. The author’s description is trying to elicit sympathy for teachers in Chicago and support for their strike.

On September 12, in the Sports section, the *Sun-Times* published an article (*Chicago Sun-Times* Staff, September 12, 2012), about a professional hockey player’s Twitter post arguing that the teachers shouldn’t be on strike. The author highlights the responses to the Tweet, which are

distinctly pro-union and which argue that a professional athlete is not in a position to understand the issues involved. The athlete is subtly accused of hypocrisy, since the players in the National Hockey League were in “contentious labor talks with the league.” By pointing out the athlete’s hypocrisy, the author frames the responses to the Tweet as more reasonable.

That same day, there was another Mark Brown column (“Republicans suddenly Rahm’s biggest fans”) in which Brown describes the Republicans who have publicly sided with Emanuel about the strike as “an infestation of hitch-hiking critters” and a “strange assortment of conservative bedfellows crawling all over themselves this week to side with Emanuel in his fight with the Chicago Teachers Union,” effectively dismissing them as pests and opportunists. The author argues that, since it was Mitt Romney who was the first to make a statement on the strike, Republicans are more interested in scoring points off Obama (a Chicago native whose former Chief of Staff is the mayor of the city) during the presidential campaign than in taking a stance on an educational issue. Emanuel had also “been forced by the strike to temporarily suspend his role of campaign fund-raiser from the super-rich for Obama’s re-election SuperPAC,” which the author argues pleases the Republicans.

Although the column isn’t pro-union in its content, it is clearly anti-Emanuel in statements such as, “the mayor crawled into this bed long before now when he embraced the anti-teachers’ union agenda put forward by certain well-financed elements of the education reform movement,” putting Emanuel on the same footing as the pests he painted the Republicans to be.

On September 13, an article by Fran Spielman was published which describes a discussion happening at City Hall as to whether to file a lawsuit to get a judge to order the teachers back to school. Emanuel is quoted as saying, “of the two issues that are really at the

crux here, there is nothing that can't be worked through while our kids stay in the classroom.”

The author then logically points out that returning to the classroom would mean the union “would be forfeiting its political leverage.” The article continues to say that the mayor had still not shared how the district would pay for the raises if the union agreed to them. This portrays Emanuel as not being forthcoming with all the information regarding the negotiations and the district’s plans. Given Spielman’s article of August 24, in which Emanuel was depicted as more concerned about labor agreements that didn’t overburden the taxpayers than Daley was, this is a notable change.

Spielman also refers to Aldermen who, earlier, had been speaking about the strike in similar ways to Emanuel, blaming the union and calling it “a strike of choice.” She then quotes another alderman who says, “it was from Day One about [the mayor] demonizing the teachers. The teachers aren’t the bad guys in this,” and refers to other Aldermen who “pointed to the mayor’s decision to cancel a previously negotiated 4 percent pay raise for teachers, his attempt to use cash bounties to convince individual schools to immediately implement a longer school day and Emanuel’s alleged cavalier use of the f-word in a City Hall meeting with Lewis” as causes of the strike. These quotes and statements clearly present the union and the teachers as being justified in any anger toward Emanuel they express, and in the strike.

On the same day, the *Sun-Times* published a letter to the Editor by a former CPS teacher (Knoblock, J., September 13, 2012), titled, “What I did as a CPS teacher.” In it, the author lists 15 things she did while teaching in Chicago, including “Went weeks without getting paid due to mistakes made by the board. Multiple times,” “Packed my belongings in plastic bins the minute I walked in the door of my class due to a bed bug infestation that was ignored by the administration,” and “Bought supplies and awards with my own money for an entire middle

school's science fair because the company who supplied awards refused to work with CPS due to unpaid bills." The author ends with a plea for fair working conditions for teachers. The letter is clearly trying to evoke sympathy for the teachers and the strike and paints the district as dysfunctional.

Mark Brown had another column on September 14 ("Every which way you look, the teachers are winning") that was vaguely pro-union. In it, he points out that the teachers have already obtained concessions from the district during the strike, have been able to "give voice to the frustrations of [the] members," and have made clear that they're "not going to be taken for granted in the future." He frames these things as victories for the union and states, "it's hard to see how CTU President Karen Lewis and her members come out of this week as anything but a decisive winner." This maintains the depiction of the negotiations and strike as a competition or battle between the union and the CPS. The author describes the strike as locally supported and nationally "bashed," and lists ways that he thinks Emanuel might try to present himself as the winner, by citing the longer school day, the right of principals to select their teachers, and teacher evaluations that include student test scores. He goes on to argue that the strike "was partly about him, and anybody who saw him sleep-deprived and rattled in front of the cameras on Monday knows Emanuel did not want this strike." Again, this article is not so much pro-union as anti-Emanuel. It ends with a reference to the Twitter hashtag "#Rahmney," a nod to Mitt Romney's public support of Emanuel during the strike, and the opinion that Emanuel's "Enemies in labor will be more emboldened." The author is portraying Emanuel as unable to thwart the strike and unable to claim a real victory in the negotiations, while depicting the union as having "won."

Chicago Tribune.

With the document analysis protocol, I found that 46 percent of the articles about contract negotiations and/or the strike in the *Chicago Tribune* between August 1 and September 30, 2012 were written with a frame that opposed the Chicago Teachers' Union, teachers, Karen Lewis, the strike, or unions, in general. Among these items, 54 were news articles and 47 were opinion pieces, editorials, or letters to the Editor. The language describing teachers in the news articles referred to them as "walk[ing] off the job," having a "fiery attitude," and "hitting below the belt." One article implied that teachers had to be bribed to implement any reforms in the past: "Since 1987, when the city's teachers last walked out, former Mayor Richard M. Daley got leaders of the Chicago Teachers Union to go along with various reform measures by raising teachers' pay and improving their retirement benefits."

In the news and opinion pieces, teachers were often portrayed as unaware of the impact the recession had on employment, and as "demanding respect and they will take it by force if necessary." The union, it was said, "may walk out on children next week," and was "stiffing their students, the children's parents, the taxpayers and the town in general." Karen Lewis was described as "patronizing, blustery," "grip[ing]," "fueling [the] membership's anger," and "talk[ing] tough." The strike was described as "expensive," a "terrible inconvenience," "disrupt[ing] a child's education," "stressful...for parents and children," and a "challenge for parents citywide, but especially for those in poor neighborhoods." One letter to the Editor asked, "Is it a leap from a strike to a street shooting?"

There were fewer pieces with a pro-strike and/or pro-union frame; only 16 percent of the articles in the *Chicago Tribune* had that frame. Among these pieces, 29 percent were opinion pieces and 38 percent were letters to the Editor, indicating that the *Tribune* was primarily

interested in publishing pro-strike pieces that were somewhat removed from the newspaper, not written by staff members. In them, teachers were described as “know[ing] what their students need,” not “deserv[ing] to be vilified,” “treated with disrespect,” and “hardworking.” The union was described as powerful, and “push[ing] back against the potent forces of big money and high government.” The strike was depicted as a fight “for basic needs, not luxuries,” and “a strike of no choice.”

There were also items with a neutral frame. These were items that presented positive and negative views of both sides of the strike and they made up four percent of the total number of items. I also found articles that had an anti-CPS frame, an anti-Rahm Emanuel frame, an anti-vouchers frame, an anti-privatization frame, and a pro-education reform frame. There were also articles (16 percent) for which I could not establish a frame. Table 3 includes the number of items of each type that fit into the two major frames.

Table 3. *Chicago Tribune* articles

	Pro-strike/CTU frame	Anti-strike/CTU frame
News items	11	54
Opinion items	10	15
Editorials	0	15
Letters to the Editor	13	17
Total	34	101

Anti-strike and anti-union articles.

Among the articles published prior to the strike is the news item “Diverging views of CPS talks” by Noreen S. Ahmed-Ullah and Joel Hood (August 21, 2012). The article describes some of the points that haven’t been settled yet in the negotiations and provides quotes from union officials and a district spokesperson; however, the last three paragraphs describe the financial situation of the district, including, “a 2 percent raise for teachers next year would cost

CPS roughly \$40 million. Each percentage point above that would cost an additional \$20 million, officials said.” These statements come immediately after a paragraph explaining what is included in the district’s budget proposal, such as “raises property taxes to the legal limit, boosts pay to charter schools, cuts operating expenses and drains the district’s financial reserves to close an anticipated \$665 million budget deficit.” There is no explanation of how the district developed such a deficit and no discussion of what the cuts to operating costs will mean for schools. This positions the union’s offer in salary negotiations as too expensive.

The next day, August 23, the *Tribune* published an editorial in which the editorial board argued for an approach to granting tenure to teachers similar to New York City’s approach, based largely on students’ test scores. The editors describe this as “a terrific gift for students in New York.” They go on to note that “many of those denied tenure still have opportunities to earn it in the future,” implying that they are still employed as teachers in New York City, making me wonder what this “terrific gift” to students is. Teacher evaluation is one of the issues that the Chicago union and the district were negotiating. The *Tribune* argues that, “Union officials want weaker standards that CPS says would translate into more teachers rated as proficient or better; fewer would be rated as needing improvement or failing.” There is no explanation as to how the standards desired by the union are “weaker” than those proposed by the district, and no explanation of how students’ test scores are an accurate evaluation of a teacher’s skills.

On August 24, in another article by Ahmed-Ullah and Hood (“Charters won’t strike, but tension affects them”) the chief executive of a charter school organization is quoted as saying, “The rhetoric coming from the teachers union is at an extreme high where it creates a lot of confusion among parents.” He goes on to say that his organization is using advertisements, phone calls, and letters to communicate to parents of their students that their schools will be

open. The president of the state charter school network said that “he expects uncertainty over a teachers strike to boost charter enrollment.” By stressing the uncertainty of some parents regarding the strike possibility, and the reassurances provided by the charter schools leaders, the article frames the CTU as less reliable than charter schools.

The *Tribune* published an opinion piece on August 31 written by Sean Kennedy, who was a visiting fellow at the Lexington Institute, a conservative think tank in Virginia. The article argues for Mayor Emanuel to continue with the school reforms he has advocated and to decertify the CTU. He begins by citing the average CPS teacher pay, with benefits: “the average CPS teacher costs the taxpayer between \$100,000 and \$107,000 a year.” This frames teachers’ salaries and benefits as a bill to taxpayers. This is followed by the statement, “That compensation is not tied to performance, or else it would be much lower.” He supports this statement by sharing graduation rates. After quoting Karen Lewis saying the union does not support merit pay, he says, “Instead of ceding to CTU’s demands, the mayor and the school board should accelerate plans for reform.” This depicts the negotiations as a competition in which ground is either gained or “ceded,” and the union’s proposals as “demands.” He goes on to argue for more elements of school reform and to recommend that, “If the CTU goes on strike, Emanuel should act to decertify...the union.” He then clarifies specific steps Emanuel could take to achieve that goal. This article is in line with several editorials in the *Tribune* that state their disdain for the union and support the school reform agenda that Emanuel has proposed. They present the same view of the union, as uninterested in providing good education and only interested in job security for its members, with no description of the union’s proposals during the negotiations.

That same day, there was an editorial with the headline, “Hold firm, CPS: This is about the future of Chicago.” In it, the motives of the union are described as “fighting to protect the

jobs of adults, the union members.” The possibility of a strike is “teachers could walk off the job and abandon their children in 10 days.” This portrays the teachers as parents and the students as their children. Going on strike is depicted as willful neglect or abandonment of those children. The editorial then goes on to discuss some of the issues remaining to be negotiated and argues that the union’s positions on each item do nothing to help students. It never brings up the issues of class size, school resources, or the conditions of the schools. It frames the entire situation as a choice between “a progressive, reform-oriented education system or protect[ing] the status quo.” It does not explain precisely how the reform agenda is “progressive” and takes for granted that the students of the best teachers have good test scores.

Ahmed-Ullah had another article on September 2 (“‘Chaos’ attends first day of school”) which states that students will return to school the following Tuesday “facing a longer day and the threat that their teachers will walk out after the first week of classes.” Describing the potential for a strike as a “threat” and teachers “walk[ing] out” makes it sound as if teachers are being aggressive (“threat”), irresponsible (“walk[ing] out”), and intending to cause harm. The author describes the start of the school year as “even more stressful than usual” and quotes a local school council chair saying, “‘It feels like there’s complete chaos across the system,’” which is immediately followed by a paragraph stating the teachers could go on strike on September 10. This makes it seem as though the “chaos” is due to the troubled negotiations; however, the person quoted, as the authors note, is opposed to the longer school day that will be in place and he indicates, “‘The strike obviously is a big piece of the picture, but it’s not the only thing out there.’” The remainder of the article, however, is only about the potential strike.

In describing the ongoing negotiations, the author says “the union clearly hopes the added pressure of a strike threat leads to a settlement,” painting the union as manipulative. The article

also includes a quote from the director of the University of Chicago's Urban Education Institute saying "there's a huge, huge anxiety on the part of parents." He states further that, when teachers and school officials are in disagreement, "Teachers stop collaborating, stop working with management closely. They won't go above and beyond to do the right thing either through professional development or after-school programming." This clearly frames teachers as selfish and irresponsible, with no interest in doing their jobs, without providing any evidence. It also places "go[ing] above and beyond" as what is expected of teachers.

Lisa Black and Joel Hood wrote about a teachers' Labor Day rally on September 4 ("Teachers rally for contract"). In it, they describe Karen Lewis as "talk[ing] tough" and "blam[ing] Mayor Rahm Emanuel and administrators for the stalemate," making her seem to be looking for a fight. The article goes on to describe the contingency plans the district is creating and how parents could register their children for the activities, making the district out to be more concerned about the students and the parents than the union. It does not describe the issues that remain to be negotiated. Toward the end of the article, the author states "Lewis has used harsh language to describe Emmanuel, once again Monday calling the mayor a 'bully' and a 'liar.'" She does not say why Lewis describes him that way, leaving the impression that Lewis is simply engaging in name-calling. The last paragraph of the article is an extended quote from a statement put out by the district's CEO, saying he hopes they will reach an agreement soon to avoid "disruptions to our kids' school year." This positions district officials as focused on the students and concerned that a strike will disrupt their learning, with no indication the union cares.

An editorial on that same day presents arguments for merit pay. It begins with a description of the merit pay pilot program that was not approved by the union as "designed to

help teachers improve their classroom performance and boost student academic growth.” The article goes on to say that merit pay is an effective way to keep high-performing teachers in the classroom, citing only one study as evidence. Later in the article, there is the statement that “many young, extraordinarily talented teachers leave the classroom every year because they don’t see any way to get paid what they’re worth,” with no evidence provided for this claim. Once again, the *Tribune* depicts teachers as lazy, incompetent, or uninterested in their students’ learning and in need of external motivators to perform better, such as merit pay.

On September 9, the *Tribune* published an article by Noreen Ahmed-Ullah about ongoing negotiations (“CPS leader optimistic after talks”). The article begins with a quote from the board of education president, indicating that the district’s latest proposal ““does cover all of the issues that they [union] have raised, and it has been responsive to those issues,”” and ends with a description of a statement from a community organization director, “saying a strike would only worsen the situation for underperforming schools.” In between, the article quotes Jesse Sharkey saying the proposal ““was disappointing, to say the least,”” cites the average teacher salary in the CPS, and describes an earlier proposal from the union which asked for a 19 percent pay raise in the first year. All of this portrays the union as asking for too much and the district as having given much of what the union has asked for. The last paragraph is a quote from the community organization director: ““Parents are afraid the streets are going to embrace [their children] instead.”” Ending the article with a quote about parents’ fears leaves the impression the strike is a scary event that could have negative consequences for students and their families and again leaves the impression that, without school, students would have nothing else to do but walk the streets.

The union went on strike on September 10. The next day, the *Tribune* published an article (Hirst, E. J., et al, September 11, 2012), titled “No discussion on major issues” in which the authors included quotes from a few parents and from Rahm Emanuel, as well as updates on the negotiations. The authors interviewed parents who were dropping their children off at schools where the district was offering partial-day programs during the strike. One parent was quoted saying, “I understand both sides; they have their right to strike. But it’s a shame my daughter can’t learn.” A few paragraphs later, the authors write, “Like other parents, Vicente Perez had to cross raucous picket lines, with teachers chanting and banging drums, when he dropped his two boys off,” indicating that this “scared off his youngest son,” leading him to change plans and take his children elsewhere. These descriptions, without any discussion of the district’s decision to set up these contingency programs at schools where teachers were picketing, and with no quotes from union members, make the teachers seem indifferent to the difficulties families face. The article later describes a union rally outside the district’s headquarters at which “Much of the teachers’ anger was directed at the mayor as they chanted, ‘Rahm hear our voice, the strike is not our choice.’” This chant does not sound like anger to me. Rather, it sounds like a rebuttal of the mayor’s statement, made multiple times, that this was a strike of choice. Calling it anger portrays the union, once again, as the aggressors in the disagreement, the emotional, unreasonable side.

That same day, the *Tribune* ran a large, half-page article (Ruthhartm B., & Rado, D., September 11, 2012), “Job security at heart of 2 big stumbling blocks: Reformers see things differently than striking teachers do,” that focuses on two issues that remained to be negotiated – the teacher recall policy and the teacher evaluation system. The article includes a quote from Jesse Sharkey arguing that the district had put in place a teacher recall policy in exchange for a longer school day but is now taking away that recall policy. There is also a quote from Mayor

Emanuel, saying, “If we’re going to hold our local principals in the school accountable for getting the results we need, they need to pick the best qualified.” The authors provide details on the latest proposals from both sides and a statement from the president of the Center for Education Reform, saying, “recall policies do not encourage improvement or change within school districts but rather a status quo that has never led to improvement in educating children.” There is no evidence cited to support this claim.

The article also includes a table that compares the most recent proposals from the union and the district regarding salary, recall, and evaluation. The description of the union’s proposal for teacher recall says, “pushing for a system to recall teachers who have been laid off when openings occur. This has become important because of rumors that the district plans to close up to 100 schools in coming years.” This portrays the union’s proposal as aggressive (“pushing”) and unreasonable (based on “rumors”). The description of the district’s recall proposal says, “Teachers displaced by school closings will be eligible for a job at the new school if there is a vacancy, may elect to take a three-month severance or may be placed in a ‘quality teacher force’ pool in which teachers who apply for positions will be entitled to an interview.” This depicts the district’s proposal as offering multiple options for teachers who are laid off. Again, the district is presented as reasonable and the union as aggressive and emotional.

The union’s argument against the evaluation system, which would require that “at least 25 percent of a teacher’s evaluation must stem from how students perform on various assessments,” is presented as “[not] fair for a lot of reasons.” The article also says the union believes that “bad ratings resulting from the new system could threaten teachers’ livelihoods.” This frames the union’s position as focused on fairness to teachers and presents none of the union’s actual arguments against the evaluation system. The article includes quotes from the

executive director of Advance Illinois, an education reform organization funded by the Walton Family Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among others. She is quoted as saying, “the time has come to have more substantive evaluations.” The article also includes a statement that “supporters of the new system – created under a 2010 Illinois law – say it’s good for students and a way to ensure that the best teachers are in America’s schools.” These statements are presented with no evidence supporting them and they paint the union as being for the status quo, which is assumed to be bad, and against something that is “good for students.” The article ends with a quote from a teacher saying, “Children are more to me than their test scores,” which, again, does not present the union’s actual arguments against the evaluation system.

September 11 was also the day that the *Tribune* ran an editorial titled, “Don’t cave, Mr. mayor.” The article begins with a description of the most recent district offer as “a remarkably generous *16 percent* raise over four years.” This is followed with a question for “working stiffs on the street: Would you take that deal? Sure they would.” This is another example of using the recession to paint teachers as greedy. It describes the teachers as “walk[ing] out of classrooms,” and “abandon[ing] the children they say they’re committed to teaching.” The article argues that this “threw families into chaos,” and that teachers have “tossed away whatever academic gains had been achieved in the first week of a longer day.” All of these statements paint the teachers as not caring about their students’ education (“abandon[ing] the children”) or families’ welfare. Parents are said to have “scrambled” for childcare, in spite of the fact that there were ten days between the announcement of the strike authorization and the beginning of the strike. The article also compares this to the situation of parents of charter-school students, whose teachers were not union members and did not strike, and says that the union opposes charter schools because they

do not employ union members. There is no mention as to why it could be good for students to have teachers represented by a union.

The editorial also argues that CPS could ensure that there would be no more teacher strikes by “Convert[ing] a much larger number of CPS schools into charter schools.” In a final irony, the article says that “Decade after decade, CPS faintheartedness at the bargaining table has led to early settlement of strikes but never to fundamental reforms,” even though in an earlier paragraph, the editorial stated, “Chicago is nationally known as a laboratory for innovative school reforms. That’s why this strike is grabbing headlines across the country.” The authors have contradicted themselves, nullifying their argument.

The front page of the *Tribune* on September 12 bore the headline, “Talks ‘still miles apart’: Possible school closings fuel union fears.” Beneath the headline was a large photograph (Strazzante, S., September 12, 2012), of students playing football at a beach with the caption, “While Chicago teachers were striking for a second day, junior Patrick Koegler, 17, and eighth-grader Leona Belle Sansone, 13, were playing football at Ohio Street Beach.” The implication of the photograph (Figure 2) within the story about ongoing negotiations and the strike is that students are playing rather than learning, and that this is a bad thing. The article (Glanton, D., et al, September 12, 2012), continues this theme with details about programs for students that are being run by community agencies and the district during the strike. It describes the strike as “challenging for parents citywide, but especially for those in poor neighborhoods,” and describes scenes in some of those poor neighborhoods, saying, “Across the South and West sides, displaced public school children gathered at basketball courts and hung out in front of corner stores Tuesday, while others piled into the houses of relatives and friends to play video games.” Again, the implication is that all students are playing or hanging out rather than learning, which

the reader is supposed to think is bad. There is no discussion of the causes of the strike or any quotes from parents or community members supporting the strike.



Figure 2. This is the photograph that was published on the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* on September 12, 2012.

The article continues on page eight with a half-page spread of text and photographs. One photo shows a mother and son at one of the district’s contingency sites, the child hugging the mom, with a caption that reads, “Ethan White, 7, with his mom, Elvia Bravo-White, eyes a crowd of unfamiliar kids at the Sheridan Park field house” (Figure 3). The photo does not show what they are looking at, and the child and his mother look apprehensive. The photo and caption are designed to induce pity for the child and mother for what they are experiencing during the strike.



Figure 3. This photograph was published on September 12, 2012 in the *Chicago Tribune*.

The rest of the article is descriptions of the arrangements individuals and groups have made for students during the strike. There are quotes from the people providing the activities and from one student. A quote from a member of an educational community group says, ““There’s an old African proverb: When elephants fight, it is the grass that gets trampled. When it comes to this strike, when the Board of Education and the Chicago teachers fight, it is poor [B]lack and Latino children that get trampled.”” The implication is that the strike is harming these students and that the teachers are either unaware or do not care about any harm the strike might do to Black and Latino students. There is also a quote from Jean-Claude Brizard, saying, ““Since the

(Chicago Teachers Union) chose to strike on Sunday, parents are seeking greater support, and we have responded by increasing hours to more closely mirror a traditional school day.” There are no quotes from union members. Once again, the *Tribune* depicts the district as responsible and caring for the students while the union is, irresponsibly, on strike.

Also on September 12, there was a brief article (*Tribune* staff, September 12, 2012), with photographs of teachers at a union rally (Figure 4). The photographs show a sign saying, “Emanuel is a bully, stop Rahmunism!” (Bzdak, Z., September 12, 2012), and a teacher wearing a t-shirt that says, “I hate you Rahm,” (Osorio, J., September 12, 2012), while holding a sign saying, “Hey Rahm, nobody likes you!” The article lists other things that were seen on signs at rallies and while picketing, all having to do with Emanuel, and describes how a photo of one sign, “Rahm Emanuel likes Nickelback,” “went viral...prompting jokes about how the teachers were hitting below the belt.” The article and photos make it look as though the strike is about teachers’ issues with Emanuel rather than about educational issues or working conditions. It paints the strike as entertainment or a personality conflict.



Figure 4. These photographs appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on September 12, 2012.

On the 13th, the *Tribune* published an editorial arguing that the union was fighting a losing battle. It refers to educational reforms such as tying teacher evaluations to student test scores and merit pay as “vital.” The article describes the 2011 Illinois education reform law, in which teacher evaluations were required to be linked to student tests, by noting the votes in the Illinois House (112-1) and Senate (54-0). It does not provide any other context to this law, such as the eligibility requirements for receiving funds from Race To The Top. The authors argue that states passing legislation like this are doing it “so that teachers can improve.” There is no explanation of how laws like these will help teachers improve. They also quote an editorial from

the *New York Times* that argues that the policy changes such as those in the education reform law are “sensible” and “increasingly popular.” The article ends with the statement, “CTU officials can’t be allowed to claw back crucial reforms. A contract that sets CPS on the losing end of history’s arc will cost thousands of Chicago children the best education possible.” There is no evidence offered that these reforms could result in improvements in the education provided in Chicago’s schools.

The editorial is accompanied by a cartoon (Stantis, S., September 13, 2012), in which a picket sign is squashing a child (Figure 5). There are feet and hands sticking out from under the sign and a spilled backpack lying next to the sign. The clear implication is that the strike is crushing, possibly killing, the students of Chicago.

scores are valid measures of students' learning, are accepted without any evidence. It is assumed that the reader agrees with these ideas.

A few pages away in the *Tribune* on that same date is a full-page advertisement by TeachersUnionExposed.com that features a photograph of George Wallace in 1963 blocking a school door in order to prevent integration. The headline above the photograph says, "Someone new is blocking the schoolhouse door." The text below the photograph says "Teacher Unions." The advertisement states that unions "bully school officials into keeping bad teachers, scare politicians who support school reform, and block efforts to fix failing schools." The choice of the *Tribune* to run this ad just three pages from the editorial makes it clear that the paper shares the same attitude toward the Chicago Teachers Union as the advertiser. This attitude goes beyond simply opposing the strike and into opposition to teachers' unions, in general. It frames teachers' unions that go on strike or oppose certain school reforms as racist entities that believe in white supremacy, like George Wallace.

The headline at the top of page one on September 14, "Close to the finish line? Pay raises could force even more school closings, layoffs," is for an article (Dardick, H. & Hood, J., September 14, 2012) about the district's "dire financial straits." The authors indicate that the pay raises that have been negotiated would increase district spending "by up to \$80 million in each of the next four years." This is followed in the next paragraph by a quote from the president of the "nonpartisan Civic Federation budget watchdog group," saying, "That raises real questions about where they would get that money."

The article goes on to state that "School closings, larger class sizes and teacher layoffs are all real possibilities in coming years." This article is placed beside another article, "Despite optimism for deal, meetings go late into night." In this article, the authors describe the most

recent salary offer from the district of an “average 16 percent raise over the next four years.”

There are several quotes from teachers and parents supporting the teachers saying they are content to stay on strike until a fair contract with better classroom conditions is negotiated. The concerns they list are not related to salaries and raises.

Placing these articles side by side creates a frame that the district cannot afford the raises that teachers are asking for and that the teachers’ demands could lead to more school closings and teacher layoffs, making their efforts seem self-defeating. By not mentioning the other issues of the strike, such as adequate classroom resources and smaller class sizes, the first article makes it seem as though the strike is only about raises. The two articles contain multiple references to the district not having any funds in reserve and not being able to afford the raises over time. There is no discussion of how the district’s finances got to this point and no exploration of other ways to pay for the raises than by closing schools.

On September 18, the seventh day of the strike, the *Tribune* published an article (Ahmed-Ullah, N., et al, September 18, 2012), on page one with the headline, “Union anger hard to quell: With 2nd vote on strike set, teachers’ high hopes pose challenge to leaders.” The article describes how the union leadership has “spent months fueling their membership’s anger,” but that “curbing that vitriol enough to seal a deal now could be Lewis’ biggest challenge.” This continues the *Tribune*’s practice of framing the union as emotional. The authors indicate that Lewis was faced with “questions, disappointment and some frustration,” when she presented the outline of a tentative contract to the union delegates. The article goes on to discuss the various political and social viewpoints represented by the members of the union, with special focus on CTU members who “[write] for socialist websites” and a socialist organization that “handed out [fliers] to delegates.” The authors describe what some of the disagreements regarding negotiations have

been and highlight points of dissent within the union. They indicate that the activism that has characterized the union recently has “made some in the union uncomfortable,” and describe a moment in December when “CTU and Occupy [Chicago] members took command of a school board meeting with an orchestrated protest as the district was considering a rash of school closings, and several protesters were forcibly removed.” The article refers to a CTU staff organizer as “downplay[ing] criticisms” when he said, ““There’s disagreement, but those never detract from our ultimate goal.””

The decision to place this article on the front page, with it continued on the top two-thirds of page seven, is a clear effort to show the union as in a potentially self-destructive disagreement. By focusing on the more politically extreme members of the union, even though the authors state at one point, “as in many labor organizations, Lewis is faced with uniting a membership that spans the political spectrum,” they are attempting to present the union as unruly, angry, politically radical, and in disarray. It is never mentioned that over 90 percent of union members voted to go on strike, signaling a high level of agreement.

Also on the 18th, there was an editorial with the headline, “Classrooms or chaos: Get back to work, Chicago teachers.” The topic is whether the union delegates will vote to have the teachers return to the classrooms until the teachers vote on the contract agreement that negotiators had just worked out. The authors argue, yet again, that teacher evaluations tied to student test scores will “help identify the teachers who consistently help their students learn. It might prod mediocre teachers to improve, though the triggers for that are modest.” Once again, there is no explanation or evidence provided to support this claim. Beside the editorial, there is a cartoon (Handelsman, W., September 18, 2012), in which a caricature of Karen Lewis and a caricature of Rahm Emanuel are screaming at each other while a student is being blown by their

yelling, upside down and with her school supplies flying out of her backpack (Figure 6). This is the *Tribune* making the argument that the dispute is actually between Lewis and Emanuel, not due to any disagreements regarding actual working conditions, and that the students are being harmed.



Figure 6. This cartoon appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on September 18, 2012.

The next day, a column by John Kass, titled “No. 1 strike lesson learned: The schoolchildren lost,” argues that the strike “exposed a growing rift between two main constituencies of the Democratic Party, the public service unions and the urban poor.” Kass quotes Rev. James Meeks, a former state senator, who says, “There will be no more resources in the classroom than there were two weeks ago. If the fight was about putting children first and making sure children had books, I didn’t hear anything in any settlement that said we will buy the kids more books, so no...I’d say the kids won’t be better off.” There is no mention of the

very lengthy list of needed resources brought up by teachers during the strike. Kass also shares his support of vouchers “as the fairest and best way to give parents choice,” with no further explanation of how that might be true. He argues that a recent voucher bill in the Illinois Senate failed because the Republican legislators “caved to state teachers unions that fund Republican campaigns and viewed vouchers as a threat.” This is followed by a quote from the CEO of the United Neighborhood Organization, a charter school organization, saying, ““The unions obviously think of charters as a big threat, which I can understand it (sic) in terms of what the union is about, it’s about protecting its members’ interests. But at some point, I hope they can think beyond that and be thinking about what we’re trying to do in education and schools and communities.”” He is clearly stating that charter schools are doing something positive for the communities of Chicago and that the teachers’ union is afraid of charter schools because it is only interested in protecting the teachers. Kass then continues his argument that there is a growing rift within the Democratic Party and again quotes the CEO about his experience at the Democratic National Convention, during which he saw ““billboards on trucks going back and forth in the streets of Charlotte, against Gov. Pat Quinn,”” paid for by the Illinois state employees union. Quinn is a Democrat.

While Kass points out, accurately, a disagreement within the Democratic Party regarding education, he assumes that those who support the reforms desired by Emanuel are right and the teachers’ union is wrong, without any supporting evidence. Additionally, his argument that the strike will not result in anything positive for students is another assumption that is not supported by any evidence. He has framed the teachers and union as against the things he says would allow parents and students to access better education.

Also on September 19th, the *Tribune* published an article by Rick Pearson, “Emanuel adviser wants to split teachers, union,” that describes a speech given at a seminar organized by the President George W. Bush Institute and the Illinois Policy Institute, both right-leaning organizations. The speaker, Illinois Republican Bruce Rauner, critiqued the Chicago Teachers Union and the strike, along with the new contract, and predicted a ““multiyear revolution.”” He argued that the ““critical issue is to separate the union from the teachers. They’re not the same thing. The union basically is a bunch of politicians elected to do certain things – get more pay, get more benefits, less work hours, more job security. That’s what they’re paid to do. They’re not about the students. They’re not about the results. They’re not about the taxpayers.”” While he acknowledges that the union leaders are elected, he seems to be unaware that it is the teachers that do the electing. His argument that the teachers and the union are not the same thing is illogical, especially in light of the fact that over 90 percent of the teachers voted to strike.

His espoused strategy of breaking ““really talented teachers”” away from the union is simply a form of union-busting. Rauner, who has a charter school in Chicago named after him, believes this could be accomplished through offering merit pay. The article describes his argument that this is ““critical to improving the schools long-term,”” but offers no explanation why that would be the case. The clear portrayal of teachers’ unions as protecting ““lousy, ineffective, lazy teachers,”” goes unchallenged by the author.

An editorial on the 19th argues that more charter schools and more “turnaround” schools are the way to improve education for Chicago students. The authors describe the new teachers’ contract as “bring[ing] Chicago closer to other big cities and states that are pushing even more dramatic reforms,” something that they view as a positive development that “will help identify the teachers who most consistently help students learn. It should help teachers improve.”” The

argument here is that evaluating teachers based on their students' performance on tests is how to identify strong teachers. This is internally consistent, given that the measure of success that the authors cite for successful charter schools is student performance on tests. No other measures of success are mentioned in the article. The authors also argue that CPS should use the "turnaround" program -- in which the leadership and staff of a school are replaced, the curriculum is revised, and more security, social workers, and counselors are added to the school - - to improve more schools. There is no acknowledgement of the fact that one of the issues raised by the union during the strike was the need for more social workers and counselors in schools. The article ends with a call to identify teachers as essential workers that would be prohibited from striking by Illinois law. The authors argue that, "The academic damage done to the children of Chicago has been unconscionable...Most states bar teacher strikes. Illinois needs to join the crowd." Nothing is offered as evidence of this "damage" the strike has done to the students. Charter schools are portrayed as more successful than the CPS schools and the authors argue that more CPS schools should be closed and replaced by charters. Again, no evidence of charters' success is offered.

On September 20th, the *Tribune* published an opinion piece by John Tillman and Paul Kersey, directors of two different right-wing think tanks. The authors argue that Illinois is facing "\$200 billion in unfunded government retirement costs" because of public-employee unions. They argue that "unions resist any and all changes," and "government employee unions have become a reliable obstacle to positive, necessary and long overdue changes that will give taxpayers relief from the burden of unaffordable employee benefits, improve failing schools and make core government services more efficient." They continue, saying that public-employee unions "cause or aggravate most of the fiscal and economic problems that Illinois faces." This is

an extremely slanted view of the fiscal situation in Illinois at the time, given that the state has frequently chosen to maintain a flat income tax rate, rather than a progressive income tax (Andrzejewski, April 27, 2020), and the tendency of past state administrations to make insufficient contributions to the pension funds (Finke, February 10, 2013). The article ends with a call for labor law changes that would be very similar to Act 10 in Wisconsin, eliminating automatically deducted union dues and requiring unions to be certified annually. No evidence is provided that these changes would benefit schools or facilitate the “long overdue changes.”

On the 23rd of September, there was a column by Steve Chapman in the *Tribune* titled, “Striking a blow for choice: Charter schools get a closer look.” Chapman argues that the strike benefited charter schools, “where teachers are obliged to protect their jobs the old-fashioned way: by doing them well,” because parents saw that teachers in charters, who are not union members, were not on strike. It does not indicate whether the charter teachers actually do “do [their jobs] well.” The article goes on to cite research by Eric Hanushek that “indicates that if the worst 5 to 10 percent of teachers were replaced with merely average ones, ‘the achievement of U.S. students would rise from below the developed country average to near the top if not at the top.’” Chapman argues that charter schools and voucher programs are ways to “enhance competition among different educational models for the benefit of kids and parents,” clearly assuming that this competition will lead to increased student achievement while providing no evidence of this.

He goes on to state that unions “are not necessarily the chief problem with traditional public schools,” stating that schools in the South, where unions are relatively powerless, often have poor test scores. He offers no potential explanations for this. He follows this with the statement that “collective bargaining agreements are often an impediment to innovation,

efficiencies and the elevation of standards – areas in which charter schools have a built-in edge.” Again, no evidence to support this statement is provided. Apparently, the reader is to take these arguments on faith. He finishes the article by stating “charter schools tend to deliver subpar results when they are new or operating in rural areas.” He quotes Patrick Wolf saying, ““Those in urban areas tend to outperform traditional public schools, and particularly when they’re serving disadvantaged kids.”” Chapman adds that “the gains are not huge, but they’re enough to make a significant difference over time.” He has clearly framed unions as holding back student achievement without actually making that statement directly or citing any evidence in support of it.

Pro-strike and pro-union articles.

There were far fewer items with a pro-strike or pro-union frame in the *Tribune*, and those that were published were overwhelmingly opinion pieces and letters to the editor. Among articles with a pro-strike or pro-union frame published prior to the strike was an opinion piece by Christopher de Vinck (“In praise of teachers: Stop the bashing; celebrate the successes”) on August 24. In it, the author, not a *Tribune* staff member, argues that “teachers are not the problem in our schools.” He goes on to identify some of the things he sees as being problems in our schools, including “low teacher pay, missing fathers, the misguided testing mania, illiteracy, [and] antiquated school-funding schemes.” For the bulk of the article, though, the author reminisces about an English teacher who had a strong, positive impact on him.

On September 3rd, the *Tribune* published several letters to the editor. One, (“Do not return to pre-labor-union days”), from Michael Reilly, argues that labor unions have given people “livable salaries, the 40-hour work week, benefits packages and pensions,” and that these things are in danger due to “special-interest groups, funded by anti-union industry giants that

have persuaded a sizable segment of the working class to act and vote against its own best interests.” He argues that the recent changes in other states, such as “Gov. Scott Walker’s union-busting in Wisconsin, [and] right-to-work legislation in Indiana and other states,” is leading to the “steady decline of union membership...the subsequent loss of middle-class political power, and the overall decline of median family income.” While this is a support of unions, in general, it does not specifically support the CTU. There were also two letters -- “Teacher appreciation” by Vera Vasudevan and “Special teachers” by Richard Dreger -- that were written in praise of the de Vinck piece on August 24. There was also a letter from David Derbes (“Teacher corps”) arguing that more needs to be done to attract top college students to teaching, this last not being a ringing endorsement of teachers.

On September 6, the *Tribune* published two letters from CPS parents. The first (Tiknis, J., September 6, 2012), “Listen to teachers,” argues that the money allocated by the U.S. Department of Education to CPS for merit pay, which the district had returned, would have been better spent on “additional staff and support programs that would help teachers teach their students.” The writer also argues that the “pending strike is about so much more than teacher salary and benefits.” Another letter (Gutierrez, R. R., September 6, 2012), published on the same date, “End testing,” describes the editorial of September 4, in which the editors argued for merit pay, as “appalling.” The writer argues that “Tying teacher pay to student test scores does not improve academic achievement.” She goes on to say that the editors would do better to argue for “proven ways to retain the best teachers,” “smaller classroom sizes, more support for teachers to be innovative and creative, decent working conditions and a well-rounded curriculum that includes music, recess, art and world languages.” While these two letters weren’t explicitly

supportive of the strike, since they came before the strike began, they are clearly supportive of the teachers and critical of education reform.

On September 10, the first day of the strike, the *Tribune* ran an opinion piece from Gregory Longhini, “A caring face in the crowd.” The piece is accompanied by a photograph (Sanchez, A., September 10, 2012), of the teacher who is the subject of the piece, holding a sign at a union event. In it, the author recalls his and his son’s experiences with a special education teacher at Lane Tech High School. He describes how he first met the teacher, during a meeting when his son was in eighth grade and was deciding which high school to attend. He recounts how the teacher “convinced Joe [his son] that he would love Lane Tech, and that she and her team would do everything possible to make his high school experience rewarding and productive.” In praising the teacher, the author argues that “Every nameless face has a person inside with a story to tell, whether it’s a face of a kid asking a principal what the school has to offer, or a teacher holding a picket sign.” In this way, he attempts to show that the CPS teachers, who have just gone on strike, work for the benefit of the students. The *Tribune*, in choosing to show a photograph of the teacher holding a sign at a union event, decided to focus on the strike, alone.

On September 12, there was an opinion piece, “What are Chicago students worth?” accompanied by a photograph of a crowd of CTU members holding picket signs and chanting. The opinion piece, written by a retired professor, is about his daughter, who is a CPS teacher. The author describes her, at the age of 12, trying to sneak out of the house when she was grounded. He presents this incident as an example of her “innate sense of fairness,” because she viewed the punishment as unjust. He goes on to describe her as a high-school English teacher who chose to teach in Chicago because, “kids in the city deserved a quality education, too.” He

then argues that his daughter is now striking due to that same sense of justice that characterizes her decisions throughout her life, saying, “when Mayor Rahm Emanuel and school board President David Vitale originally presumed that a teacher in Chicago ought to work an extra hour or two each day with no compensation, they made a troubling and incorrect implication about the value of that work, of that teacher and of the worth of the students on the receiving end.”

By placing this piece beneath a large photograph of teachers marching with picket signs, with their mouths wide open and fists raised, the *Tribune* is attempting to focus on the strong emotions, rather than the quality of the teaching or the issues being negotiated.

On September 13, the *Tribune* published an opinion piece by Leslie Russell (“From the picket line”), a CPS teacher, who argues that her current working conditions make it impossible to provide the “hour of reading and hour of writing each day,” that Emanuel claimed students were getting thanks to the longer school day. She describes the conditions, including “There are 41 seventh-graders in one classroom,” “I cannot give each student a literature textbook because I do not have enough of them,” and “my classroom was a blazing inferno last week.” She ends with, “Rahm Emanuel picked the wrong union to try to bust. I will be shouting that from the picket lines for as long as it takes to get teachers a fair contract and for as long as it takes to get students the schools they deserve.” This supports the claims that the union leaders had been making regarding the issues at stake in the strike; however, it also supports the perception that the union is trying to hurt Emanuel politically.

On that same day, there was a feature article (Manker, R. September 13, 2012), on page 3, “Union in the family,” that told the story of “Three generations of educators spend[ing] time on the picket line.” The article is about the Mayer family of CPS teachers. Kathleen Mayer participated in the CPS strike of 1983 and brought her daughter, Keelin, with her on the picket

lines. Keelin Mayer, now a CPS teacher, is bringing her daughter, Opal Jane, with her on the picket lines in 2012. The article includes photographs from 1983 and 2012 that show the Mayer women holding picket signs with one hand and holding their daughters' hands with the other hand. It describes the family as having a "pro-union heritage," and says that "Mayer's mother, Kathleen, was part of all five teacher walkouts in the 1980s." The article does not address any of the issues of the strike and presents no new information.

On September 14, the *Tribune* published an opinion piece by Karen Lewis ("Union president fires back at critic of CPS teachers") that was in response to an opinion piece published on September 12 written by Bruce Rauner. Lewis describes Rauner as a "Millionaire capitalist" and describes his article as "a scathing opinion aimed at Chicago Public Schools teachers." Lewis takes issue with Rauner's "political power" and his argument that many teachers in CPS are "grossly inadequate." She counters his criticism of teachers with questions that evoke some of the working conditions for teachers:

"Have you been in a computer lab when the power went out while students were trying to take a standardized test? How about standing in a classroom where the roof leaks or snow blows in because the windows are in desperate need of repair? I wonder how well you would learn your ABCs in an overcrowded classroom where 10 percent of the children have asthma, 20 percent didn't get a good night's sleep and another 30 percent are recovering from witnessing a shooting in their neighborhood?"

Lewis concludes by describing the suggested solutions Rauner wrote about and arguing that research has shown them to be ineffective, without providing any evidence. She then asks, "How much money has Bruce Rauner personally invested in all of these 'solutions'?" Lewis provides some support for the strike in her descriptions of difficult classroom conditions, but she spends most of the article criticizing Rauner and his political connections.

There were five letters to the editor in the September 14 issue of the *Tribune* that addressed the strike. Three of them were pro-teacher or pro-strike, such as “Hug a teacher,” (Santos, B., September 14, 2012), in which the author describes the community living conditions of many students in Chicago, “where the drug culture is strong and this is young people’s only ‘job,’ where many young men particularly do not believe they will ever see age 21.” The author shares this perspective in order to argue that “Good teachers, principals and staff members are out there trying to fulfill their mission.” Although this letter shares emotional support for teachers, it does not address any specific issues of the strike.

Beside this letter is a letter (Kaegi, R., September 14, 2012) arguing that students’ test scores “do not measure the merit of a teacher.” This author states that basing teacher evaluations on test scores will result in “teachers who narrow their curriculum, who abandon critical inquiry and writing skills, and who spend more classroom time drilling multiple-choice strategies than introducing new material.” This letter discusses one of the key issues of the strike, teacher evaluation, and makes an argument in support of the union’s position.

Next to these letters is an editorial cartoon (Kohnke, J., September 14, 2012), depicting a school entrance with a sign saying “closed.” There is a student facing the door, wearing a backpack and carrying a lunchbox. We do not see her face, only the fact that she has tried to enter the school and couldn’t. Clearly, the *Tribune* felt the need to express its disapproval of the strike beside the letters supporting teachers.



Figure 7. This cartoon was published in the *Chicago Tribune* on September 14, 2012.

Also on September 14, there was an article (Nix, N., September 13, 2012), “Logan Square students get education in issues of strike,” that describes a camp put on by the Logan Square Neighborhood Association that taught students “about civic engagement and the democratic process.” The camp, titled The Freedom Camp, taught students what the teachers were striking about and led them through activities such as role-playing picketers and presenting what they would do if they were the mayor. The article ends by describing students singing protest songs in support of the teachers. There is a photograph accompanying the article of several students walking in a line, carrying hand-made signs in a pretend picket line. The article does not include any information about the positions of CPS on any of the issues and does not indicate whether both sides of the dispute are being taught to the students.

On September 15, the *Tribune* published a feature article (Huppke, R., September 15, 2012), “Striker loses house, not resolve,” about a CPS teacher whose house was lost in a fire two days before the strike began. The article states that, in spite of losing his house on Saturday, “Majewski joined his fellow teachers on the picket line outside Ebinger Elementary School on the Far Northwest Side first thing Monday morning.” The author describes how Majewski’s fellow teachers took up a collection to support him. The article ends by explaining that the teacher plans to rebuild, and with a statement from Majewski: ““Just like a phoenix from the ashes, man. Rise again.”” There is no discussion of the issues of the strike.

An opinion piece on September 17, (Alessio, C., September 17, 2012) “Teachers must build character,” supports the teachers’ strike by arguing that “defining teacher performance mainly through test scores could undermine teachers’ deeper mission of developing character.” The author goes on to describe the private school where she teaches in Chicago and its focus on developing students’ character. She argues that “our school is a success, but we have not gotten there by overemphasizing test scores.” She concludes by noting that “It is unclear whether our city’s recent contract negotiations ever got around to character formation, but they should have.” The author spends more time describing her school’s “innovative model” than on support for the CTU strike.

On September 23, the *Tribune* published a column by Eric Zorn, “It’s the teachers union in a squeaker,” in which he describes being asked which side won the strike and what he thinks about it. He states, “The easy, vague answer is that both sides won,” because each side can identify issues on which the other side made concessions. He continues, however, by saying that the teachers won because they negotiated “good raises” and limits on the use of test scores in teacher evaluation, and because the contract “does not include a merit-pay program they didn’t

want and contains reasonable protections for good teachers who lose their jobs.” Although Zorn describes Karen Lewis as “a more and more annoying presence,” he argues that the union was able to maintain public support in spite of declining union power nationally.

Zorn also shares things that CPS “won” in the strike, such as including test scores as part of a teacher’s evaluation, but he argues that a recent TV commercial from Rahm Emanuel, describing his view of how the district won the strike, sounded “more like a brandishing of the ol’ whuppin’ stick instead of an extension of the olive branch.” Zorn then implores both sides to “[call] off the ad war...and divert those funds toward, say, buying window air conditioners for sweltering classrooms or paying for tutors, social workers or basic supplies.”

Zorn’s column is not clearly in support of the strike, since he has negative things to say about Lewis and he presents the union’s “victory” as comparable to “get[ting] one more run across the plate” than the other team. His overall argument, that both sides need to “stop angling for advantage and start working together,” does not sound like an endorsement of either side.

On September 24, five days after teachers returned to their classrooms, the *Tribune* published nine letters to the Editor about the strike. Three of the letters were in support of the teachers and each was about a different issue that had been part of the strike. The first letter (Somers, T. September 24, 2012), “School miracles,” argues that current measurements of teacher performance are incomplete and that teachers “should not be faulted for fighting a losing battle against all the other factors working against [them.]” The second (Dolansky, O., September 24, 2012), “Miracle-makers,” argues that, if principals have the authority to “fire underperforming teachers,” then teachers should have the authority to “‘fire’ underperforming students.” The third letter (Kuenn, S., September 24, 2012), argues that the Editorial Board of the *Tribune* should not argue for more charter schools, but should support the public schools and their teachers.

Although each of these letters is, in some way, supportive of the teachers, their support is not overwhelming. In arguing for a different way to measure teacher performance, the author of the first letter concedes that teachers are, generally, not having great success. In the second letter, in which the author argues that principals should not be able to fire teachers for “underperforming,” the author concedes, as the first author concedes, that teachers are not raising student achievement. In the third letter, in which the author argues that the *Tribune* should support the public schools rather than charter schools, the author states that charter schools “[are] not going to save public education in the city,” making it clear that public education is in need of saving.

In choosing to publish these three letters beside six other letters that are opposed to the strike, the *Tribune* again makes it clear what their position is. Additionally, while it is not possible to know what the ratio of positive letters to negative letters was that the *Tribune* received, we do know that more Chicagoans supported the strike than opposed it. It would seem possible, then, that this selection of letters does not accurately reflect the overall tone of letters the *Tribune* received.

Chicago Reader

As an alternative weekly newspaper, the *Chicago Reader* has a higher ratio of opinion pieces and columns to news articles than the *Tribune* or the *Sun-Times*. As such, of the 12 items related to the strike that appeared in the *Reader* between August 1 and September 30 in 2012, eight were opinion pieces or columns and four were news articles. There was one item in the *Reader* that was anti-union or anti-strike; however, several of the items were primarily anti-Emanuel. There were also items that were pro-union.

Table 4. *Chicago Reader* articles

	Pro-strike frame	Anti-strike frame
News items	2	1
Opinion items	5	0
Total	7	1

Prior to the strike, the *Reader* published three pieces about the contract negotiations. One of these articles, published on August 30, was a blog post by Mick Dumke (“UNO’s Juan Rangel does a damn good Chris Christie impression”) that describes a speech given by the CEO of a charter school organization to the City Club. The author quotes Rangel talking about the possibility of a strike, saying, ““We should expect more from adults, and certainly should expect more from the educators of our youth.”” Rangel goes on to say there are ““children languishing in the mediocrity called a public school”” and that charter schools outperform public schools. The author then states that, even though Rangel’s charter schools are funded by taxes, he ““prefers to think of them as private entities in the mold of Catholic parish schools.”” He also said that ““data show they’re not consistently outperforming regular public schools.”” Both of these statements provide links to other articles that provide evidence. In this way, the author is able to refute much of what Rangel said in his remarks to the City Club, although he does not directly support the teachers or the union.

On September 4, the *Reader* published an opinion piece, “The *Reader* goes to the CTU Labor Day rally,” by Ben Joravsky in which he describes attending the CTU rally and what he saw and heard. He refers to the union’s relationship with Mayor Emanuel as “the union’s standoff with Mayor Emanuel.” He shares the teachers’ chants, the conversations about the rumor that the mayor wanted to fire the district’s CEO (Jean-Claude Brizard), and the teachers’ march to City Hall. Much of the article is spent analyzing a *Tribune* article that discusses the

rumor about Jean-Claude Brizard's job security, and the author speculates that the *Tribune* was able to obtain a copy of Brizard's evaluation because someone in the mayor's office had given it to a *Tribune* reporter, "at the mayor's insistence." Overall, the article is highly critical of the mayor, with statements such as "Heckuva job, Mr. Mayor," and "All in all I haven't seen such a nasty display of duplicity since *Godfather II*, when Michael had a henchman shoot Fredo." Comparing the rumored behavior of the mayor to the behavior of a fictional mafia boss is an extreme way of showing disapproval. Although the article is strongly anti-Emanuel, it is neither pro- nor anti-teachers.

On September 10, in one of the few *Reader* articles that had a pro-strike or anti-strike frame (Rosenberg, T., September 10, 2012), there was a brief news article in the *Reader* announcing the strike ("It happened last night: CTU goes on strike"). The article includes links to a tweet from the *Sun-Times* account and to an article in the *Sun-Times*. The article also includes a quote from Emanuel saying, "This is totally unnecessary. It's avoidable and our kids don't deserve this...This is a strike of choice." With no quotes from union leaders, the article comes across as anti-strike. The next day, there was a longer news article (Miner, M., September 11, 2012), "Two sides in Chicago teachers' strike can seem worlds apart," that describes education reform and how people in education reform organizations and politicians have placed themselves in opposition to teachers' unions.

The author begins with a quote from an article in the *Tribune* that describes those on the side of the mayor as "self-proclaimed education reform groups, which have spent tens of thousands of dollars on radio ads to undercut the union's position." The article continues by describing the organizations that provide financial support to Emanuel and to education reform organizations, noting that both the mayor and the education reformers send their children to

private schools not subject to the reforms they advocate. The author briefly describes his family's experiences in the Chicago schools in positive terms, saying, "it turns out there are plenty of great teachers and many of them are indomitable. They are the most impressive critics of Chicago's public schools that you will find, but they don't want the system blown up with them inside it. They simply want to be left alone to teach." He ends the article with a quote from Jonah Edelman, executive director of Stand for Children, in which he speaks about the new law he helped get enacted in Illinois in 2011. The law sets a 75 percent CTU vote threshold for Chicago teachers to be able to strike. Edelman says, "[t]he unions cannot strike in Chicago. They will never be able to muster the 75 percent threshold." The author ends with, "[a]t that point, the current strike probably became inevitable. Insulted, the city's public school teachers gave the CTU 90 percent." This paints the strike as a personal attack on Edelman.

Also on September 11, the *Reader* published a column (Joravsky, B., September 11, 2012) titled "President Obama: please save our schools from Mayor Rahm." The author describes how, since it's an election year, he assumed that "President Obama would step in to keep Mayor Emanuel from doing something stupid to force [a strike]." He goes on to argue that Obama and "the Daley brothers ushered Rahm in as our mayor." The author is assuming Obama has a great deal of influence over Chicago's politics and is willing to use it, but provides no evidence. He goes on to argue that there is "no educational value" to the mayor's educational initiatives, saying that his ideas are "linked to the fantasy that somehow we can close the gap in performance between rich and poor kids by firing 'bad teachers.'" He says that other issues, such as poverty and crime, have impacts on student achievement, but does not argue whether test scores are valid measurements of student achievement. In this way, the author frames the mayor's position as invalid, but does not provide any support for the union's position.

The lengthy opinion piece (Joravsky, B., September 12, 2012), “Why Chicago teachers hate Rahm,” is a pro-strike piece that argues that teachers have been “pushed...to the limit” by Emanuel. The author refers to an advertisement published in the *Sun-Times* by “various clergymen with close ties to the city government.” In the ad, directed at the CTU leadership, the clergymen indicate that they “do not side with the Mayor, the Chicago Public Schools, or your organization. We side with the 350,000 students who will be placed in harm’s way if you lead Chicago teachers into a strike.” The author argues that the clergymen of this ad are, indeed, siding with the mayor because “if the union calls off the strike they lose what little leverage they have.” This makes clear what an illogical argument was put forward in the ad. Additionally, the ad’s use of language such as “placed in harm’s way” paints the teachers as negligent and heartless with regard to the students’ well-being.

The author argues later in the article that the seeds of the strike were planted before Mayor Emanuel took office, in spite of the article’s headline. He recounts some CPS history, including when Mayor Daley put Ron Huberman in charge of the schools. Huberman attempted to end teacher tenure with a policy that gave principals the power to “redefine” a teaching position so that the current occupant of the position no longer met the job requirements. The article includes a link to an article from 2010 that describes the policy. It’s clear how a policy like this would be met with hostility by teachers. With the election of Emanuel, the “war on the union” continues and the author sees charter schools as “his main weapon.” The author mentions that Emanuel argued during his campaign that charter schools were the top-scoring schools in Chicago, “even though no charters are in the top ten.” He does not cite any evidence of this statement.

The article continues with an explanation of other steps Emanuel has taken that the author interprets as being anti-union, such as not meeting regularly with the union president, working with the state legislature to “divert more state aid from regular unionized schools to the charters,” and lengthening the school day without increasing resources for the schools. Finally, the author cites the fact that the Board of Education “rescind[ed] the raise the previous board had negotiated with the union,” and questions how Emanuel’s efforts to install a system “in which all teachers – charter and union – are lower-paid, at-will employees who have about as much job protection and say in their workplace as grill-line workers in a fast-food restaurant,” is good for the students. Clearly, the author believes that teachers who have good working conditions and job security will be better teachers, and that the CTU can facilitate good working conditions and job security.

The pro-union column (Miner, M., September 15, 2012), “School reform by the numbers,” takes issue with the basic premises of education reform. Michael Miner describes the arguments of education reformers, such as “the progress of students will be measured by testing and retesting them,” and “Just as they measure the presumed progress of students, so with a little massaging do they also measure the presumed worth of the students’ teachers.” He presents arguments from an editorial in the *Tribune* and from a column in the *New York Times* that the students of good teachers perform better on tests. He takes issue with this by arguing that “numbers have been known to lie” and that reformers have “made it clear they do not trust and do not respect teachers, and do not trust and do not respect the principals teachers report to.” He does not provide any evidence to support these claims. He ends by stating that the City Hall position that the teachers are “stand[ing] in the way of progress” assumes that “progress is waiting in the wings.” In his opinion, it is not clear that these reforms are bringing progress.

On September 19, the day after the strike was suspended to give teachers time to read the negotiated contract, the *Reader* published a lengthy pro-union column (Joravsky, B., September 19, 2012), titled, “Democracy is messy – welcome to the teachers’ union.” The article spends some time initially pointing out that the union is made up of teachers, so the mayor’s stated attitude that he loves the teachers but hates the union doesn’t make sense. As the author states, “the union isn’t some alien creature that’s brainwashed the poor unsuspecting teachers of Chicago and forced them to go on strike.” He argues that teachers “get kicked around by principals, sliced and diced by pundits, and punched for good luck by politicians,” extreme language that paints the district administration and City Hall as hostile and violent toward teachers. There are no examples presented of this treatment.

The author then relates some CTU history in order to explain how Karen Lewis became the president. He states that the teachers became fed up with what they saw as a “union leadership [that] was way too soft on issues like job security and school closings.” He explains the teachers’ attitude that has been shared with him that “they would be very upset if the delegates had approved the contract without running it by them. Give them credit for this – it may be the last democracy left in Chicago.” Again, extreme language that does not speak well of the city’s government.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings regarding the teachers’ strike in Chicago in 2012. The articles were analyzed to determine whether they had framed the strike in any particular way and those that were found to have a pro-strike or anti-strike frame were further analyzed using critical discourse analysis. It was notable that most of the items with a pro-strike frame that were

published in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* were opinion pieces or letters to the editor. Chapter Five presents the findings from the strike in Seattle in 2015.

CHAPTER FIVE
FINDINGS
SEATTLE, 2015

Introduction

This chapter presents the data from the Seattle newspapers in the study. I continued using the spreadsheet analysis that I began with the Chicago articles for the articles from the Seattle publications and for the critical discourse analysis. With regard to the Seattle items, 76 percent were in the *Seattle Times*, the only daily newspaper in Seattle. The *Stranger*, a bi-weekly newspaper that was weekly at the time of the strike, accounted for the remaining 24 percent of Seattle items. Between August 1 and September 30 of 2015, the *Times* published 63 items regarding the contract negotiations and the teachers' strike. During that same time period, the *Stranger* published 20 items pertaining to the strike and negotiations.

Seattle Times

Using the document analysis protocol, I determined the frames for the articles in the *Times*. As Table 4 shows, 35 percent of the items had a pro-strike frame and 46 percent of the items had an anti-strike frame. The remaining 19 percent of the items had other frames, such as anti-public schools, anti-legislature, or anti-Supreme Court decisions.

Table 5. *Seattle Times* articles

	Pro-strike frame	Anti-strike frame
News items	17	22
Opinion items	2	4
Editorials	0	2
Letters to the Editor	3	1
Total	22	29

Anti-strike articles

Among the articles with an anti-strike frame, two were opinion items and three were letters to the editor. The remaining items were news articles. In the news articles, the teachers were described as having “walked out” and as “receiv[ing] raises at levels many haven’t seen in recent years.” The union was said to feel “no mutual trust” with the district, to “want to see new ideas from the district before it goes back to the bargaining table,” and to “[have] an incentive to get a good deal this year,” because of the recent Supreme Court rulings. The Court had ruled that the state needed to develop a plan for fully funding schools using reliable, dedicated funds. The argument here was that teachers were striking to get big raises because that would ensure higher levels of funding for the schools and teachers moving forward. The strike was called “harmful and damaging to the District, our students, and our community,” “illegal,” “inconvenient,” “put[ting] pressure on families,” and “forc[ing] parents to get creative.”

The people quoted in the news articles included parents, union negotiators, Superintendent Larry Nyland, Phyllis Campano (the union’s Vice-President), Mayor Ed Murray, judges, state legislators, lawyers, a conservative think tank, the state Attorney General, students, parents, Stacy Howard (SPS spokesperson), Jonathan Knapp (union president), Washington Supreme Court justices, university professors, teachers, and Governor Jay Inslee.

In the editorials, letters, and opinion pieces, teachers were described as having “walked out demanding raises,” “demanding too much,” “at risk of becoming a symbol of excess,” and using “inflammatory rhetoric.” The union was described as having “siphoned off [funding] for wages,” “continually ask[ing] for more,” “plan[ning] to close schools,” “fighting,” and “want[ing] to get as much as it could before...cutbacks occurred.” The strike was described as “causing 53,000 children to remain on summer vacation,” “so hurtful to communities, families,

and children,” “illegal,” “hurt[ing] broader efforts to improve education funding,” and “stiff-arming more than 50,000 kids and their families.”

Using critical discourse analysis, I was able to delve further into the language and images used in the items that created the frames. In reporting on the events prior to the strike, the *Seattle Times* published an opinion piece on September 1, “Teacher strikes hurt students and divide the community,” by Live Finne. Finne is identified as “the education director at Washington Policy Center, an independent policy-research organization.” The Center, however, frequently advocates for free-market principles, has consistently supported charter schools, and has criticized Washington’s schools’ response to COVID-19 as being “more concerned about ‘equity’ issues than consistent learning” (Finne, 2020). In her opinion piece in 2015, Finne argues that “strikes close schools with depressing regularity.” She refers to union leaders as “union executives” five times in the article, an effort to depict them as something other than advocates for their members, and discusses “closing schools” or “shutting kids out of schools” eight times. She argues that teachers in Washington, on average, make more than the “average worker” in the state, as if this were a problem. She engages in an argument that was used in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* regarding the strike in Chicago in 2012 – if we can’t have raises, why should they?

Throughout the piece, Finne refers to the students as “children,” a clear attempt to engage the reader’s sympathy and protective attitude, and argues that teacher strikes “divide parents from teachers, and teachers from administrators.” This would prove to be inaccurate, as polls during the strike would show that parents were generally supportive of the teachers (Burnett, September 11, 2015). She ends her article with the statement that “(n)ot all children are at risk of school closures. The education of students at religious and other private schools, students at

public charter schools, and children who are home-schooled or take online courses are protected from the politics and controversy of union strikes.” Her view that private and charter schools are safe from union politics ignores the other political controversies attached to private and charter schools, especially in Washington at the time, where charter schools funded by taxes had just been declared illegal by the state Supreme Court.

On September 4, the *Times* published an editorial, “Teachers threatening to strike are demanding too much,” in which the editors argue that, given the “education crisis” in Washington, “the last thing that’s needed is for teachers in Seattle...to march out on strike.” The authors go on to state that all that would be remembered about a strike would be that “teachers walked out demanding raises of 18 percent over three years to take home as much as possible of additional funding the district received.” They argue that asking for these increases “gives ammunition to those who believe teachers are already well compensated.” Most of the editorial is spent arguing that the teachers are simply asking for too much money. There is no discussion of the other issues raised by the union.

Toward the end of the article, the authors add that the state Attorney General’s Office has determined that teacher strikes are illegal and that “disruptive, last-minute strikes happening across the state also make clear that teacher contracts must be negotiated at the state level, not locally, once the state fully assumes funding of basic education.” This is a reference to the state Supreme Court’s ruling of 2012 (Supreme Court of Washington, 2012), the *McCleary* decision, that the state must develop a plan to fund public schools that addresses the inequities that result from some school districts being able to raise more local funds than others. In arguing that teacher contracts should be negotiated at the state level, the editors are advocating the denial of local control and the denial of local differences in costs of living.

The *Times* published an opinion piece on September 8 (“Why charter schools are worth saving”) by Taylor Williams, a founding teacher at a charter school in Kent, Washington. This piece is primarily about the recent state Supreme Court ruling that the Washington Charter Schools Act was unconstitutional. The author argues that, since some charter schools had already opened for the school year, the decision was unfair. Although much of the article describes the positive things happening at the author’s school, Williams also argues that “while public school teachers in Seattle may be on strike, leaving their students behind,” teachers at the author’s school “will greet our students with open arms. We will do this gladly because they matter, because their education matters, and because the trust their families have given us matters.” The author is painting the charter-school teachers as caring more about students than the regular public-school teachers, as if voting to strike were a sign that teachers don’t care about students. This ignores the fact that the 2015-16 school year was the first year of operation for Williams’s charter school, making it extremely unlikely that teachers there would be in a position to vote to strike.

The Seattle Education Association (SEA) members voted on September 3 to strike if no agreement was reached by September 9, the first day of school. On September 8, the *Times* published a news article by Paige Cornwell (“Seattle teachers go on strike; superintendent is going to court”). In the article, Cornwell begins with the statement, “Seattle teachers are on strike Wednesday, the first time in 30 years they have walked out over stalled contract negotiations with the city’s school district.” By choosing to use the expression “walked out,” Cornwell is presenting the strike as teachers abandoning their responsibilities. She goes on to report that the Seattle School Board has authorized the superintendent “to seek legal action to try to force

teachers and other school employees back to work.” There is no explanation of why this action was authorized or what potential consequences of taking such action would be.

The article includes a summary of the recent negotiations, including that the announcement of the strike came shortly after the district sent the union its most recent offer. Cornwell quotes Phyllis Campano, the union’s vice president, saying, ““We didn’t think it was a serious proposal.” The author does not indicate why the union thought this, although just before the quote, the article includes the information that the union presented a counteroffer earlier that day, which was met with the district’s last proposal just a few hours later.

Cornwell states that the negotiators “reached agreement on a number of significant issues” a few days earlier, but that the remaining issues included “pay increases and increased instructional time.” The article includes a quote from Sherry Carr, the board president, saying that “the failed negotiations were a ‘textbook case’ of a broken K-12 funding system and a ‘deep overreliance’ on local property-tax levies to fund education,” thereby absolving the district of any responsibility in the stalemate. The author includes no information as to why the district is saying it cannot provide the pay increases the union is seeking.

There is also a quote from Jonathan Knapp, the union president, saying ““They (the district) don’t seem to understand the issues.”” There is no explanation as to why he said that. Cornwell then explains that, along with taking the teachers to court to force them to report to work, the superintendent’s “other options include closing or limiting educators’ access to school buildings, according to the board’s resolution.” She includes a quote from the resolution: ““A strike for any reason by District teachers or other personnel is harmful and damaging to the District, our students, and our community.”” The author offers no explanation of what the district believes the harm from a strike would be.

This is followed by an explanation that the board's vote to seek legal action to stop the strike "was 5-1, with one abstention," indicating strong support for it among the Board of Education. There is a statement from Knapp that "We won't be scared into abandoning our commitment to winning a fair contract." The article ends with a summary of past court rulings ordering teachers in districts in Washington to return to work, implying Seattle teachers will also be forced back to work.

On September 9, the first day of the strike, the *Times* published an article by Lynn Thompson ("Parents rush to find child care during teacher strike") describing the childcare arrangements made by some parents. The article begins with a report from city leaders saying there weren't enough child-care slots in community centers to meet the need, and with a quote from a staff member at Seattle Parks and Recreation. Thompson also includes information about other child-care sites, such as the YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, and The Community Day School Association. The author describes a parent who "ran inside Thurgood Marshall Elementary School's YMCA program at 7:30 a.m., her hands raised in prayer," hoping her children would be able to spend the day there. Describing the parent as praying makes her seem desperate, evoking sympathy for her. Thompson also described the program as not as fully staffed as during the summer, so with limited capacity. This, also, makes the situation seem desperate.

The author then describes the scene at another community center where another parent is dropping off her child. She quotes the parent saying, "I'm so grateful to the city for doing this. What would we do if they hadn't provided this backstop?" Again, this quote makes the situation seem desperate and evokes sympathy for the parent. It also paints the city as rescuing families during the strike, with no reports of concern on the part of teachers.

The same day, September 9, the *Times* published an article (Long, K. & Lee, J., September 9, 2015), on the strike and the contract negotiations that begins with the statement, “As Seattle teachers walked the picket lines for a second day on Thursday, district officials are saying they don’t have enough money to pay educators as much as they’re asking.” This is followed by a paragraph in which the authors state that the school board has authorized the superintendent to ask the courts to force the teachers back to work, although it doesn’t intend to do so at this time. This sets the tone for the article, that of a district doing the best it can within its financial limits and of demanding teachers who are picketing while their schools are empty.

The article continues with an update on the most recent negotiations, indicating the district made the most recent offer and is waiting for a response from the union. This is followed with a quote from Jonathan Knapp saying, “The school board needs to come forward with some new ideas. Until we have something new from the district, we don’t see why we would go back to the bargaining table.” The authors then state that union members “will continue picketing” until there is an agreement, and that the SEA’s proposal would “cost \$84 million over two years, more than twice as much as the \$29.4 million the district says it can afford.” Again, this paints the union as demanding and the district as doing its best, with no information on why the district says it cannot afford what the teachers want.

Later in the article, the authors quote a teacher on a picket line who says, “It doesn’t seem like we’re getting much respect from the district. It isn’t about money or anything else; it’s respect.” Immediately after, the authors quote a district negotiator who says, “It’s not like we’re sitting there in an adversarial relationship,” describing negotiations as “relatively cordial.” This highlights how far apart the two sides are in their perspectives, with teachers feeling disrespected and district officials feeling the relationship is “cordial.” The district negotiator says

further that the district was “taken aback” when the SEA announced it was going on strike, with no indication of why it was a surprise.

The article also describes recent teacher contracts in other Washington districts, where teachers will receive large (e.g., 7.75 percent, 17.1 percent, 8.3 percent) pay increases, and in each case the authors provide some information that explains why the pay increases are so large. No such information is provided regarding the Seattle teachers’ desired pay increases. In the case of the Spokane teachers, “(s)ome of that increase is in the form of benefits.” In Shoreline, teachers’ salaries had been ““at the very bottom”” of the region. This is followed by the statement, “Some Seattle parents said they were disappointed that the district and union leaders didn’t do a better job of signaling a strike was imminent.” While this appears to express disappointment in both the district and the union, coming immediately after the explanations for the salary increases in the other districts, it contributes to the depiction of the Seattle union as demanding too much.

The last part of the article includes information on how much Seattle teachers are currently paid and a quote from the executive director of Community & Parents for Public Schools, calling the strike a ““crisis,”” saying, ““If you’re going to hold the community hostage in the effect of your impact, you need to include the community in your conversations,”” as if school board members and union members weren’t members of the community. Her use of the term “hostage” also paints the teachers as aggressive and in total control of the situation, ignoring the role played by the district. The authors then share that negotiations have been ongoing for months.

On September 11, the *Times* published an editorial that appears complimentary to teachers initially, then continues the frame that the teachers are asking for too much. The editors

begin with, “Striking Seattle teachers are teaching, even on the picket line. During the extended summer break, they’re providing a refresher on civics, math, debate and finance. They’re driving home the importance of reforming Washington state’s broken and confusing education-funding system.” Later in the article, however, the editors argue that teachers saying they haven’t had a raise in years is a lie, stating, “Seattle teachers actually received 5.5 percent raises over the last two years. The district paid for those raises, using levy dollars, to make up for the state not providing cost-of-living increases.” The authors do not explain the difference between a pay raise and a cost-of-living increase.

The editors add that “some teachers received periodic increases due to seniority and their educational advancement,” with no explanation that these are benefits that are part of the negotiated agreement between the district and the union and do not constitute a general pay raise. The authors then describe the increased funding the state has provided for smaller class sizes in K-3 classes and for supplies, which they say adds up to an additional \$37 million per year for the district. They state, “Less than \$9 million of that is discretionary, according to the district.” They do not provide any information from the funding bill or any details about how the money from the state is actually earmarked.

The editorial ends with the argument that the teachers’ saying they haven’t had raises is “inflammatory rhetoric” and doesn’t “help the community understand how education is funded in Washington and what steps are needed to fix the system.” There is no mention of any measures the union or district has taken to help the community understand the educational funding system. They argue that “If raises are too high, other things must be cut, such as buying new textbooks and support services for special-education students.” Describing potential raises as “too high” paints the teachers as unreasonable and selfish. The authors’ decision to single out services for

students with disabilities is misleading and a clear attempt to appeal to readers emotionally, evoking sympathy for students who have limitations that must be accommodated for them to learn. There is no mention that districts are legally obligated to provide services to students with disabilities, so these services cannot legally be cut.

On September 12, the *Times* had a lengthy article (Brunner, J., & Shapiro, N., September 12, 2015), on the state Supreme Court with the headline, “State Supreme Court: activist justices, or just different?” The headline and the first sentence of the article, “Even before this month’s tumultuous ruling quashing charter schools as unconstitutional, the Washington Supreme Court had been a central player in some of the state’s biggest recent political fights,” set the tone. Calling the ruling on charter schools “tumultuous” is clearly an attempt to focus on disagreement and drama. The ruling states that taxpayer money can only go to schools that are under the authority of elected local school boards (Supreme Court of Washington, 2015). The authors then cite several recent rulings, saying “The high-profile rulings have been applauded by unions and Democratic-leaning groups, while angering conservatives and some business organizations.” This is followed with the observation that the “ideological makeup of the court shifted over the past several years, with the departure of its two most conservative members...as well as centrist former Chief Justice Gerry Alexander.” This frames the court’s recent rulings as political, rather than constitutional.

The authors spoke with “attorneys, former justices, legislators and other court observers.” They found that the people they spoke with viewed the justices as “studious and engaged,” but, the authors noted, none of the justices has “deep experience in other branches of government.” This is followed by a quote from a former justice, saying, “they have a certain outlook about the judiciary. It’s basically a court that sees itself unrestrained in its authority.” It is interesting that

the authors placed this quote here, and it implies that the reason for that “outlook” is the lack of deep experience in other branches of government. That same former justice, along with several other people, disagree with the court’s ruling regarding charter schools and find the timing of the decision, the Friday before Labor Day, “tone deaf.” The article describes this position on the issue, stating that the ruling “is an example of overreach that breaks with a precedent of deference to the Legislature on budget matters.” These people, the authors state, feel the same way about the *McCleary* ruling regarding school funding.

The *McCleary* ruling, which states that the state must *fully* fund public education through “regular and dependable state-level tax sources,” (Supreme Court of Washington, 2012), and subsequent findings by the Court that the state was not in compliance with that ruling, meant that the state was subject to significant fines, leading to the plan that the Legislature put forward in 2015 in which districts across the state saw increased state funding. The Chief Justice was quoted in the article saying the court “has often been asked to decide difficult constitutional questions, which is the role of a judiciary in a democratic society.” A constitutional law professor is also quoted, saying “A court is always called activist when it issues a ruling that someone doesn’t like.” The authors also include a quote from a Democratic state senator, who says, “Contrary to some of my Republican colleagues who think this is a massively activist court, I think they have been extremely restrained in their dealing with the *McCleary* case.”

By including these statements, stating that elections for the Supreme Court have been less competitive “with spending dominated more by liberal groups,” and noting that these decisions “ha(ve) led some Republicans behind the scenes to start mulling whether to recruit challengers for the court,” the authors paint the decisions as based on political affiliation, rather than law. This continues for the rest of the article, with quotes from Republicans arguing that the court is

ideologically driven and that, since there are more women than men on the court, they don't understand the role of hunting in Washington. One Republican "compared the court majority to 'George Wallace standing in front of the charter-school doors,'" which is similar to the advertisement during the Chicago strike that compared the union to George Wallace. This argument is comparing historic, sometimes violent, opposition to school integration to a ruling of the Supreme Court that charter schools cannot receive funds earmarked for schools under the control of local school boards. This is clearly hyperbolic.

The authors spend the remainder of the article discussing the election of justices and donations to their campaigns, along with the Washington Supreme Court's position on justices recusing themselves when cases involve campaign donors. By noting that the WEA "has been the largest donor to Supreme Court races since 2008," the authors imply that these rulings were influenced by the WEA or that they were some kind of favor to thank the WEA for the donations. Nowhere is it noted that the election of more liberal-seeming justices could be reflecting a shift in political views among the general public.

On September 13, the *Times* published a letter from Linnea Mattson. She argues that the teachers' strike means that the programs at community centers for older adults have been "suspended for the duration of the strike as room is needed to accommodate childcare," resulting in age discrimination. She further states that this has happened before and that it "has been a long-standing practice." She ends her letter saying, "The Parks motto 'Healthy Parks, Healthy You' is a mockery. Perhaps they should consider 'The Baby-sitters Club' instead." The decision by the *Times* to publish this letter in the midst of the strike could be seen as an attempt to further sway public opinion against the union.

On the 14th, there was an article by Tricia Romano, “With schools shut down, parents scramble to find care,” in which the author describes the experiences of a few parents in finding places to send their children during the strike. Although the *Times* had been reporting on the ongoing negotiations since August 13, and had reported on the vote to strike on August 24, the headline would have readers believe that the strike was sudden. In the article, one parent expressed her frustration with the lack of available programs for children her son’s age, 12. She said, “It’s costing me a lot of headache at work.” She then added, “I’m really sympathetic to teachers, (but) I hate this tactic every year. It’s hurting parents, not the school district.” In fact, while other districts in Washington had been on strike in recent years, the last teachers’ strike in Seattle was in 1985 (Cornwell, September 8, 2015). The article does not include this information.

Another parent, who took her child to a community center during the strike, said it was “chaotic” and that “(s)ome kids seemed really freaked out. Their knees were tucked in the fetal position.” This description, while vivid, seems hyperbolic. Other parents are quoted as saying that they or their spouses could be fired if they did not go to work or saying they have lost money during the strike because they had to stay home with their children. There is even a quote from a striking teacher who describes having to pay “several hundred dollars” to share a nanny with another family so that she can manage picketers at a school. All of this paints the strike as insensitive to the needs of families and not achieving its stated goals. The article ends with a description of a parent as “an adamant supporter of the strike, taking her kids to the school and picketing with the teachers,” in spite of the fact that the strike has cost her money. The strike is presented as a negative event.

On September 17, two days after the strike was suspended and one day after classes had begun, the *Times* published an article by Paige Cornwell about the beginning of the school year.

The author includes quotes from students and teachers and describes what she saw in schools on the first day. One student is quoted describing the strike by saying, “It was kind of annoying, because everyone was ready to go back to school.” Another student said regarding returning to school, “It’s better than sitting bored at home.” By selecting these quotes to include in the article, Cornwell depicts the strike as being negative for students.

In an article by John Higgins on September 19, “After teacher strikes, all eyes are on Olympia,” the author notes that there were four teachers’ strikes in Washington in 2015. He describes the strikes as not “all about money,” but further notes that “teachers will receive raises at levels many haven’t seen in recent years.” There is no discussion of whether teachers’ prior salaries had been appropriate or competitive. He goes on to describe some of the negotiated pay raises in districts, such as in Seattle and Shoreline, some of which are funded by local funds, and says “Most contracts around the state were settled with minimal drama.” The “drama” he refers to is the strikes that happened in Seattle, Pasco, Kelso, and South Whidbey. By describing the strikes as drama, he is minimizing the issues.

Higgins goes on to discuss the *McCleary* decision and the fact that “the state must pick up the full cost of paying teachers, not just a portion of it as it does now.” He notes that the Legislature has not yet come to agreement on what the statewide teacher salary will be or how to pay for it. The author then states, “the raises teachers received this year make the gap even bigger to fill between what the state provides and what teachers are really paid.” In discussing how teachers are currently paid, the author describes it as “mind-numbingly complicated.” He quotes a legislative report from 2012, which recommended that the state “should pay beginning teachers about \$48,700,” which would be about \$13,000 more than what the state contributed to beginning teacher pay in 2015. That same report, however, found that “salaries for Washington

teachers (state plus local funding) were competitive in most of the state and the fringe benefits appeared ‘unusually generous.’” The author notes that now that the Supreme Court has ruled that the state has to pay the full amount of teachers’ salaries, many members of the Legislature argue that they are not obligated to follow the report’s recommendations.

The author continues with a quote from an Assistant Superintendent in Puget Sound (one of the authors of the report) who says that the teachers’ unions “had an incentive...to get the best deals they could.” He argues, ““They are basically bargaining against the state. They want this big number from Seattle so that when they next have to bargain with the Legislature, then the Legislature has this very high bar to meet.”” This is presented as if it would be a bad thing to do on the part of the teachers’ unions. Higgins notes that the Washington Education Association denies this and their spokesman is quoted as saying that the local unions “were fighting for other issues specific to their districts that addressed far more than money.” Evidently, Higgins couldn’t find any legislators or administrators who agreed with this statement since he doesn’t include any quotes of that nature.

The article finishes with a discussion of the potential impact of the Seattle strike on the state and includes a quote from a Democratic state senator saying, ““The strike will definitely have an impact statewide because it will force us to realize that if we don’t do our job, there are going to be ramifications.”” This should have already been made obvious by the *McCleary* decision and the Supreme Courts orders to the state and corresponding fines. The article ends with a quote from the Assistant Superintendent, arguing that the way Washington funds schools according to the *McCleary* decision is inconsistent because the state provides the funds, but the districts decide how to use them. As he says, ““the state has the burden and an obligation to pay for the full cost, but it’s going to be decided by a whole different body (local districts) with

different goals and objectives at the local level.” The author does not provide any information on how other state services are funded and how much the state Legislature is involved in the decision-making processes for how those funds are spent.

Pro-strike articles

In the items with a pro-strike frame in the *Seattle Times*, teachers were described as “put(ing) students at the center of everything (they) do,” underpaid, and as “want(ing) to work.” The union is described as arguing for state funds to go “to kids,” and as having been bargaining since May. The district is described as “unwilling to invest in the priorities that educators need to be successful with students,” and as unready for negotiations back in August. The items refer to the strike as being “about properly funding schools (and) giving kids the recess time that research shows they need.” The articles include quotes from representatives of the SEA, judges, parents, professors at the University of Washington, and teachers.

On August 23, the *Times*, published an article (*Seattle Times* staff, August 23, 2015), “Seattle teacher-contract talks to resume Tuesday,” describing the negotiations and the issues that were still unresolved. The article begins with a quote from the union’s statement regarding the additional funds from the state. The union stated that the “funds slated for the district this year should go to ‘kids and classrooms,’” and that “it would like the talks (negotiations) to focus on ‘addressing the opportunity gap and inequities that hold kids back, including a lack of recess and too much time spent on testing.’” This statement paints the union in a favorable light, showing them as concerned about the students and the inequities that exist across schools and students. There is no quote included from the district.

An article by Paige Cornwell on September 3 (“Seattle teachers vote to strike if agreement isn’t reached”) describes the teachers’ frustrations with the contract negotiations to

that point. The article quotes the SEA Vice-President saying, ““This should let the School Board know we are serious, and they need to get serious.”” The author notes that the negotiators “have met more than 20 times since May but still remain far apart on several issues.” The author states that the latest SEA proposal of 18 percent raises over three years is far from the district’s proposal of eight percent over three years.

Cornwell points out that the raises are far from the only issues remaining, noting that the superintendent stated the eight percent raises in the district’s proposal would be in exchange for additional instructional time, something the SEA said was “unrealistic and would make teachers work more for free.” An additional issue noted was “children’s recess time, which varies across the district.” In describing the issues that remain to be negotiated, the author takes the union’s arguments seriously. She also includes a quote from a teacher saying, ““It’s been a buildup all year. It’s sad. I would rather not go on strike, but we need a good contract.”” Cornwell also includes a quote from Superintendent Nyland that depicts the teachers in a positive light: ““Our goal is a contract which honors, respects and pays our educators and provides more instructional time for all students, including those children who desperately need more time with outstanding teachers in order to succeed.””

On September 4, the *Times* published an article on teacher residency programs, “Teacher residencies better at keeping grads on the job than other programs, study finds,” by John Higgins. In the article, Higgins describes a report from Mathematica Policy Research showing that teacher residency programs, like one in Seattle, “keep a higher percentage of their graduates in the districts that train them than other teaching preparation programs.” The article includes a brief description of teacher residency programs and notes that Seattle’s program doesn’t yet have three years of data, so it wasn’t included in the study. Higgins also notes that Seattle’s program was

“one of the first in the country to include the teachers union as an equal partner, along with Seattle Public Schools, the University of Washington and the Alliance for Education.” Although this article is not about the teachers’ strike, it mentions teachers and the union in a positive relationship with the Seattle Public Schools.

In an article by Rachel Lerman on September 6, “Seattle district, teachers agree to higher pay for subs, longer recess, but strike could still happen,” the author sums up issues that were settled in the most recent negotiations. Lerman quotes a spokesman for the Washington Education Association, the state level of the SEA, saying that negotiators had settled on “at least 30 minutes (of recess)...teachers had originally asked for 45 minutes.” Lerman then notes that teachers had “voted overwhelmingly last week to strike if the district and teachers fail to reach a contract agreement by the first day of school,” highlighting the unanimity of the membership.

The author identifies the issues remaining, “pay, teacher evaluations, and the length of the school day.” There is a further discussion of the importance of recess and how much the length of recess has varied across schools, which paints the union as making sure children get enough time to play and exercise during school.

The *Times* published an extremely brief article on September 9, the first day of the strike, by Jack Russillo, stating that the union had agreed to allow sporting events to proceed during the strike. This makes the union seem cooperative and supportive of student athletics.

On September 16, in the “Rants and Raves” section of the paper where readers submit positive statements or complaints, the *Times* published a thank-you to “the educators on the contract negotiating team who donated so many hours over the summer to try to come to an agreement with the Seattle School District, including weekends and late nights, until there was a

solution.” The submission paints the union in a positive light by depicting the union’s negotiators as “donating” their time to the negotiations.

The Stranger

Between August 1 and September 30 of 2015, *The Stranger*, Seattle’s alternative newspaper, published 20 items about the Seattle teachers’ union negotiations and the strike. Of those items, 14 were news articles and six were opinion pieces. Among the news items, seven used a pro-strike frame and one used an anti-strike frame. Among the opinion items, all of them used a pro-strike frame. The remaining items used other frames, such as anti-legislature, or had no discernible frame.

Table 6. *The Stranger* Articles

	Anti-strike frame	Pro-strike frame
News items	1	7
Opinion items	0	6
Total	1	13

Anti-strike article

In the only anti-strike item in *The Stranger*, Sydney Brownstone wrote a news roundup including information about the contract negotiations in Seattle and other districts (“Seattle Teachers Still Don’t Have a Contract, But Seattle Kids Sent Their Cat to Space”). The article notes that the teachers approved a strike if an agreement is not reached by the first day of school. Brownstone also notes that the most recent negotiations had settled the question of recess time. The author then describes reporting by a local television station stating that “superintendent Larry Nyland wants to take the Seattle teachers’ union (SEA) to court to stop a potential strike, calling a teachers’ strike ‘unlawful.’” The article states that “Nyland called for an emergency

school board meeting Tuesday night, asking the board to vote to authorize Nyland to take ‘necessary actions’ to end a potential strike.”

This is followed immediately by the news that another school district, South Whidbey, had completed negotiations successfully and would start the school year on time. Placing these paragraphs sequentially frames the Seattle teachers as potentially striking illegally and causing the school year to be delayed, while teachers in other districts would start the school year on time.

Pro-strike articles

On September 8, the day before the strike began, *The Stranger* published an article by Jen Graves, “Hey Parents, Here’s What You Need to Know About the Teachers’ Strike (Hint: It’s the Legislature’s Fault)”, in which the author begins by describing her reaction, as the parent of an SPS student, to the news that the teachers had voted to strike if no agreement was reached. She refers to the district as “deeply divided along economic and racial lines,” and notes the difference between “what is happening and what my emails from Nyland [the superintendent] have told me is happening.” This makes Nyland appear dishonest.

Graves then shares what she says she found in her research on the situation. She begins with the 2012 *McCleary* decision that “the state’s system for funding education is broken to the point of being unconstitutional.” She then notes the finding of the Supreme Court that the Legislature was in contempt because it had not made progress on meeting the orders of the 2012 ruling. She mentions the one-day strike of teachers in 65 districts in May of 2015, which she describes as an effort on the part of the teachers to “compel the Legislature to get moving.”

The author then mentions the \$100,000 per day fines imposed by the Supreme Court on the state until a plan is presented to reform the funding system. She describes the Washington tax

system as “one of the most regressive and haphazard tax systems in the United States,” and says, “If this system were your family’s source of funding for paying your bills, you would be homeless, starving, uneducated, and physically and mentally ill.” This is followed by quotes from the 2012 decision which describes the underfunding of public schools going back to the 1970s and criticizes the Legislature for not providing school funding that is “dependable and regular.” All of this frames the state as irresponsible in funding schools. Graves then describes what she will encourage her child to pay attention to during the strike, including what the teachers are striking for, how the strike is covered in local media, and the updates provided by the superintendent.

The article ends with quotes from parents who responded to her Facebook request for them to share their thoughts about the strike. She indicates that, “(e)very parent who responded supported the union.” She does not discuss whether this is a representative sample of parents. Many of the quotes position the teachers and parents on the same side. This article clearly depicts the teachers as being on the right side of history by placing the strike in the context of the Supreme Court’s decisions and the failure to act by the Legislature.

Also on September 8, *The Stranger* published an opinion piece by Sarah Lang, a parent of students in the Seattle Public Schools. The author argues that the SEA “has made reasonable proposals in their contract negotiations that would dramatically improve the quality of education our children receive.” She says that the district has ignored parents’ requests to address these same issues and praises the SEA for getting a concession from the district on recess time. Throughout the rest of the article, Lang discusses other issues that remain to be resolved and describes how what teachers are asking for would benefit students. The author expresses her support for the teachers clearly and encourages readers to support them.

A third article from September 8 is “The Legality of a Seattle Teachers Strike Is More Complicated Than You Think,” by Sydney Brownstone. The author quotes Superintendent Nyland calling a strike “unlawful,” and states that he “threatened to take the union to court,” making Nyland seem aggressive and hostile. Brownstone notes that the *Seattle Times* editorial board described the union as “asking for too much” and calls the strike “illegal.” The author shares what labor lawyers think about the legality of a teachers’ strike and describes the difference between public employees like teachers and public employees like police officers. She notes that, since “teachers...don’t have the interest arbitration option,” they may have the right to strike. By not simply quoting the opinion of a former attorney general that teacher strikes are illegal, the author depicts the strike as neither legal nor illegal.

The author then lays out possible scenarios if the superintendent does take the teachers to court, since the relevant statutes neither explicitly outlaw a teachers’ strike, nor explicitly grant teachers the right to strike. She cites previous situations in which teachers were sued by school districts to get them back to work. She notes that, even when judges issued temporary restraining orders and penalties on teachers, the issues were not resolved in court. In one instance, the governor at the time had her staff handle the negotiations until an agreement was reached. The article ends with a statement from SEA President Jonathan Knapp, saying, “We’re ready to keep knocking and have some new ideas. Hopefully that will break the logjam and keep things going.” In ending the article this way, Brownstone portrays the teachers as reasonable.

On September 9, the first day of the strike, *The Stranger* published an opinion piece by Ansel Herz, “Blame the Billionaires, Not the Teachers.” He begins with a reminder that “back in May, when school was suspended and Seattle teachers walked off the job for a single day, the Seattle School District and the local teachers union were singing a different tune.” He notes that

the superintendent and the SEA president stated publicly that this one-day strike was a message to the legislature about inadequate school funding. He then states, “There was unity in hatred for Olympia.” This may be an overstatement of the level of emotions involved in the demonstration, but it depicts the district and the union as cooperating with each other.

The article continues with a description of the school board’s vote to allow the superintendent to take the teachers to court to get them to return to work and quotes one board member, Sue Peters, who voted against it, saying, “A sure way to end the strike is not with a court order.” The author then explains that “Peters never would have been on the board to begin with if billionaires Nick Hanauer, Steve Ballmer, and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce’s political arm had had their way.” He ties this in with the Supreme Court’s ruling that public funds cannot be used for charter schools. Herz notes that the *Washington Post* reported that Initiative 1240, the ballot issue that allowed charter schools to be created in the state, had a campaign funded by Bill Gates, Alice Walton, Nicolas Hanauer, and Jackie and Mike Bezos. He argues that the campaign for charter schools and the campaign for Sue Peters’s opponent in the school board race both were funded by the same group of people in Washington. He adds that some of these people, along with others, have “fought efforts to create a progressive income tax” in the state, which might have increased school funding.

Herz ends the article with “(i)f you’re, say, the *Seattle Times* or the district itself, you can go around blaming the teachers for being allegedly greedy bastards. But if you keep your eye on what counts, you’ll reserve your ire for the powerful 1 percenters who systematically defund and devalue our public schools.” Clearly, the author’s attitude toward the strike is not anger; rather, his anger is directed at a handful of extremely wealthy people for his perception of their influence over legislators. In the end, this is a sympathetic view of the strike.

Also on September 9, *The Stranger* published an article by Sydney Brownstone, “Voices from the Picket Lines: Washington Middle School,” in which she quotes several teachers picketing in front of Washington Middle School in Seattle. The author quotes a school psychologist, a speech therapist, a counselor, and a classroom teacher. The educators are quoted discussing their working conditions, including caseloads, the financial impact of their salaries on their life decisions, and equity concerns. There is no commentary on what they said, which presents the strike as necessary and justified. Similar articles were published in *The Stranger* throughout the strike from different schools where teachers picketed.

On the next day, September 10, *The Stranger* published a news item by Sydney Brownstone, “No Public School in Seattle Tomorrow; Negotiations Between the District and the Striking Teachers Are Still Broken.” Brownstone notes that mediators are meeting with the teachers’ union and with the school district, separately. The author quotes Stacy Howard, spokesperson for the district, saying, ““We are looking for a swift resolution and agreement, but unfortunately there is not one at this time.”” She then states that the most recent offer from the district was on September 8, after which the union announced teachers would be striking. This is followed by a quote from a member of the SEA’s bargaining team saying, ““All of our proposals have been out on the table for months, so they know what they need to do to get us back to the table.”” This frames the union’s position as one of good-faith negotiations over an extended period of time.

The author then provides details about the district’s most recent offer, including that the proposed 14 percent raise for teachers included the state’s cost of living adjustments, parts of which are not permanent. “The school district’s real offer for striking educators is something closer to a nine percent raise.” This makes the district’s description of the latest offer seem

disingenuous. She notes that the district's claim is that what the teachers are asking for would cost \$172 million over three years and writes that "[w]hen I asked SEA president Jonathan Knapp about that \$172 million figure, he called it a 'fantasy.'"

The article ends with a reminder of why the district will be receiving "\$38 to \$40 million" in additional funds from the state this year, because of the *McCleary* decision, adding, "you know, that teensy, tiny issue of the state legislature criminally underfunding our schools," and by noting that the SEA spokesperson stated those funds would be permanent. This portrays the union's proposals as reasonable and implies that they are supported by a decision of the Supreme Court. In fact, the Court did not direct where the additional funds should go in any individual district's budget.

Also on September 10, *The Stranger* published an opinion piece by Charles Mudede. The article lives up to its headline, "The Sucky Education System in Seattle Is Working Exactly As It's Supposed To." The author begins by relating a conversation between a teacher and an engineer about the teachers' strike in which the engineer argues that teachers should not be on strike because "they are asking for too much." The author includes more assertions from the engineer, such as teachers are selfish, a longer school day should not be a problem for them because they "are salaried employees" and that "if the teachers' union sucks so bad and hasn't been able to get its members a cost of living increase, maybe the teachers should fire the union and spend their money on a lobbyist."

Mudede then states that he will not "challenge or examine or expose the inanity of these points made by the dude." Instead, he states "the system we have right now is structured not to solve actual problems but to generate vacuous conversations of this kind, to direct bad feelings toward teachers and unions, and to reproduce the inequalities of our society." He goes on to write

that “in a normal world” things such as what the engineer said would not be said and that it is because of the “system we have – one which forces teachers to strike, that leaves parents and students politically frustrated, and finds the city’s major daily deliberately directing this frustration away from the actual disease.” The article includes a link to the article he is referencing, the September 4 editorial in the *Seattle Times* which argues that teachers are asking too much from the district. Clearly, the author is viewing the teachers’ strike through a broader perspective that is critical of the state’s economic priorities.

Mudede then describes the education system as one that “sends specific racial and class groups to the army, to the prison, to the streets, and other groups to local colleges, the Ivy League, to top jobs.” He then quotes a piece from the *Huffington Post* by Rebecca Klein (Klein, R., October 30, 2014), “States Are Prioritizing Prisons Over Education, Budgets Show,” and argues that, until these priorities are changed, “we can expect more strikes, more bad feelings, more misdirected frustrations, more pointless conversations – in short, more of the same.” In this way, the author frames the strike as an inevitability and as part of a social justice issue.

Another article in *The Stranger* on September 10 (Graves, J., September 10, 2015), “How Can Washington Properly Fund Its Schools? Do What New Jersey Did,” references a school shut-down in New Jersey in 1976. The schools were shut by the New Jersey Supreme Court when the governor, in response to the Court’s decision in *Robinson v. Cahill*, tried, unsuccessfully to pass a statewide income tax to pay for schools (Yaffe, 2007). After the shutdown, the legislators passed the state income tax. The author then writes that she researched whether something similar would be possible in Washington and argues that the answer is yes. She shares what she learned from a law professor at Harvard, who explained how New Jersey

was ordered by its Supreme Court to fund its schools which eventually lead to the state's income tax.

The author also spoke to Thomas A. Ahearne, the lawyer who represented the plaintiffs in the *McCleary* case, to discover what the next steps for the plaintiffs will be if the legislators do not live up to the Court's ruling. She quotes him saying that "the Supremes [justices of the Supreme Court] are going to give the Governor and the Legislature a couple months to do what they're going to do. My guess is they're not going to do anything, and the Supremes will ask both sides [the plaintiffs in *McCleary* and the State] to submit something to the court saying, 'So, how's it going?' and our response will be that it's going nowhere, and the court should impose the heavy sanctions like the ones you saw with the New Jersey Supreme Court."

The author continues by citing court decisions in other states that resulted in increased funding for schools and quoting the state's Constitution describing education as "the paramount duty of the state." She interprets this to mean that "nothing else should be funded if schools are not." The article finishes with advice from the *McCleary* plaintiffs' attorney, including to "support the strike," and "Goddamnit, get the legislators to start amply funding the schools." She follows this with the argument that the people whose rights are being violated by a lack of sufficient school funding are children, who cannot vote, leaving it up to the adults to advocate for them.

This article is organized to lead readers to conclude that the state is not living up to its constitutional duties and that the only way it will do so is if the Supreme Court, and/or the voters, force them to. The author states her support for the strike and her support for following the lead of other states clearly.

There was a guest editorial published in *The Stranger* on September 11 by Macy Quigg. The author is identified as “an incoming freshman at Ingraham High.” Quigg is the stepdaughter of Jen Graves, a writer at *The Stranger*. She discusses, briefly, how she has been spending her days during the strike and the research she has done on the reasons for the strike. She states that the main reason teachers went on strike was not wages. In her article, Quigg links to one of Graves’s articles on the strike and states that it is a clear explanation of why the teachers are striking, listing “advocating for longer recesses, better and less crowded facilities, and equality for poor students and students of color.” She argues that “the teachers don’t have to do this. It isn’t for them; it’s for the students who don’t have anyone on their side.” She finishes by stating that “I personally hope school starts up again soon, but if it doesn’t, I’ll know it’s for a good reason.” The author is framing the strike as about justice for the underserved populations in the schools and clearly stating her support for it.

On the same day as Quinn’s article, *The Stranger* published an article by Rich Smith about a “Read-In” organized by high-school students in Seattle. One of the organizers, Eli Konsker, states that he organized the Read-In “in solidarity with the teachers’ strike because teachers have supported him during his three years at Nathan Hale High School.” He also states that he wanted to engage other students in a productive activity during the strike. Another of the organizers, Jessamyn Reichman, is quoted as saying that she had noticed teachers using the food bank where she volunteers. She notes, ““The fact that they’re working so hard, and yet they don’t have enough money to simply put food on the table – that’s an issue for me.””

The author continues quoting Reichmann saying that teachers are striking for things other than pay, such as “less testing and more equity in the schools.” The author then states, “Reichmann knows first-hand what an underfunded school looks like,” and follows that with

more quotes from Reichmann describing the overcrowded classes in her school. The article includes photographs of several of the high-school students who participated, showing them smiling with their books, sitting on Red Square on the campus of the University of Washington.

The author's choice to include quotes from the student organizers that express their support for their teachers during the strike, along with the choice to include photographs of the smiling students, frames the strike as having support among students. The decision to publish the article, at all, is indicative of *The Stranger's* support for the strike. The article is framed to engage the readers' emotional support for the strike, through their support for the students. By focusing on a group of engaged high-school students expressing their support for their teachers, *The Stranger* is also encouraging readers to think that Seattle students in general are supportive of the strike.



Figure 8. This photograph was published in *The Stranger* on September 11, 2015.

On September 14, *The Stranger* published a brief article (Garbes, A., September 14, 2015), detailing how a local restaurant was offering free burgers to Seattle teachers. The last paragraph shares information on the restaurant owner's newest restaurant and suggests that readers should patronize it in order to show their support for his support of the strike. This is followed by a link to a *Stranger* article that explains what the strike is about. This article frames the strike as being supported by members of the business community and by readers.

Also on September 14, in *The Stranger* published a summary (Frizzelle, C., September 14, 2015), of recent news on the strike that included links to other articles, both in *The Stranger* and in other publications. It describes how several local musicians performed in a benefit for the teachers to help them make ends meet during the strike. One of the musicians is quoted saying, "the community stands behind the teachers." There is also a link to the Jen Graves article of September 10 about how New Jersey funds its schools, and a link to a podcast in which Jen Graves discusses school funding. This continues the framing of the strike as being justified and necessary.

On September 15, *The Stranger* published another article by Jen Graves, "There's an Art Exhibition in Seattle Right Now That's Very Relevant to the Teachers' Strike," that describes an art installation by Rodrigo Valenzuela. The author begins by describing her mother, a retired teacher who was not in a union, and by describing Washington's education situation as "so broken it's unconstitutional." She continues with the statement, "I'll believe that the school district offered a good tentative agreement last night when I see it inked by teachers." Then she describes the exhibition, which is a photographic series on labor unions throughout history, both in films as well as in real life. She presents the exhibition as a commentary on the current state of labor unions, "(b)ut the logos seem possibly to refer to organizations that are, or may be, no

longer around. The gray air of the whole place feels suspended in the recent past, hovering between extant and extinct, dim as an ember.” She continues by noting that unions in the United States are not as strong as they once were, stating, “their backs were broken throughout the late-20th and early-21st centuries.” This use of the passive voice frames the weakening of unions as due to circumstances outside of the unions’ control.

The article ends with quotes from the artist, Valenzuela. The author asked him for his thoughts on the teachers’ strike and he responded that he supported the strike and that it could be important for Seattle’s future: “I think right now it is the moment. As the population of Seattle keeps changing and [becoming] more well-paid, single people move to Seattle. Rent for working class people will be impossible in good school districts. We talk about the ‘shared economy’ growing in Seattle. This soft, cool way to dissipate working from the possibility of unionization is really tricky. Mostly [it happens] when the city doesn’t think or feel like a citizen.”

The author does not try to hide her support for the teachers’ strike and for labor unions. By publishing this on what would turn out to be the last day of the strike, *The Stranger* has placed the strike in the history of labor unions, making it seem an important moment in that history.

Summary

Chapters Four and Five presented my findings from my analysis of the items in local newspapers for each strike that addressed the teachers’ strikes. Table 7 shows a summary of the data from each publication included in this study.

Table 7. Summary of items relating to the strikes in all publications.

Publication	Anti-strike items		Pro-strike items		Readership
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage	
<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>	24	49	11	22	400,000 daily
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	101	47	34	16	400,000 daily
<i>Chicago Reader</i>	1	8	7	58	100,000 weekly
<i>Seattle Times</i>	29	46	22	35	230,000 daily
<i>The Stranger</i>	1	5	13	65	90,000 weekly

This chapter presented my findings regarding the teachers' strike in Seattle in 2015. I analyzed articles to determine whether they had framed the strike in any particular way and those that were found to have a pro-strike or anti-strike frame were further analyzed using critical discourse analysis. Notably, there were more anti-strike articles than pro-strike articles in the *Seattle Times*, but there was only one anti-strike article in *The Stranger*. Chapter Six presents a discussion of the data and recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings from this study of news coverage of the Chicago and Seattle strikes in relation to previous findings and research. Given the scarcity of research on media coverage of teacher strikes, the previous research discussed includes research on issue framing and portrayals of educators. I also compare the contexts of the strikes in order to deepen the cross-case analysis. The chapter includes implications for future research and practice.

Discussion

Issue framing

My study consisted of an analysis of articles to establish what, if any, issue framing occurred. In articles where anti-strike or pro-strike framing was found, I use critical discourse analysis to determine how the frames were created that encouraged readers toward particular opinions about the strikes. I evaluated the words the authors used, the photographs that were included with the articles, the selection of quotes the authors used, and the placement of the articles within the publications in order to discern how anti-strike or pro-strike frames were created. In this way, I used Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis framework, engaging with the discourse as text, as discursive practice, and as social practice.

Issue framing has been established through multiple studies. Wu and Coleman (2009) found that negative framing of John Kerry in the media during the 2004 presidential campaign affected voters' intentions. In a study of media framing of the beverage portion-size cap in New York City (Donaldson et al., 2015), researchers found that frames in news articles were

overwhelmingly against the regulation, leading to general opposition and the eventual removal of the regulation. My study argues that media frames of the teacher strikes likely affected support for or opposition to the strikes, and that the differences in the framing in Chicago and in Seattle may have led to the different outcomes.

There were some similarities in the issues in the strikes in Chicago and Seattle. In both situations, the teachers were striking for higher pay. Teachers in both strikes were also trying to get student test scores eliminated from their evaluations. Teachers in Chicago were concerned about class sizes and a lack of resources in their schools. They were also concerned about an insufficient amount of support services available to students. In Seattle, teachers were concerned about caseloads for psychologists and therapists, which affected the availability of those services to students, and about the amount of student testing.

In both of the strikes, the teachers enjoyed strong support from the parents of the students (Moser, September 17, 2012; Burnett, September 11, 2015). It is possible that this support played a role in gains at the bargaining table. Prior to the strike in Chicago, the union executed a communications plan that distributed their talking points to the public, in general, and to parents, in particular. By the time the strike was declared, parents already knew what the issues were (*Sun-Times* editorial board, September 12, 2012). Given the economic and political context of Chicago in 2012, union leaders were wise to communicate to parents that they were trying to achieve changes, such as smaller class sizes and increased resources for schools, that would benefit their children. States near Illinois had recently implemented right-to-work laws that outlawed collective bargaining for public employees and the new mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, took a more aggressive approach to negotiating with the CTU than his predecessor

(Spielman, August 24, 2012). The political momentum in the Midwest at the time appeared to be in favor of anti-union policies.

Some have argued that the union in Chicago actually gained more than it lost in the strike. Bruno and Ashby (2016) argue that the strike was a social justice fight that, in the context of decades of education reform that included the closing of many neighborhood schools, brought together community groups, labor groups, and parents so that “the union became the fulcrum of an emergent social movement around public schools” (p. 7). I would argue that this community organization and communication prior to the strike offset some of the impact of the negative framing in the media and the anti-union political mood. In this way, the union framed the strike as being necessary for students and instructional resources and student services. This frame competed with the frames created in the newspapers and provided a counter-narrative to that found in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Union members in Seattle stated that they learned from Chicago (Hoop, D., n.d.). As one union member put it: “We’re following the example of Chicago in showing people how you fight back. For years, this union has been much more of a negotiating, concessionary union. Now we’ve managed to turn it a little bit toward power.” It is interesting that the teacher used the word “power” when describing the union’s approach to the contract dispute. Labor strikes are displays of power that challenge the traditional employment power structure, where most of the power lies with the employer. In 2018 and 2019, teachers went on strike in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado, and Los Angeles and gained significant pay raises and other changes to their benefits and working conditions (Fernandez Campbell, February 14, 2019; Goldstein & Dias, April 12, 2018; California Federation of Teachers, January 23, 2019;

Associated Press, May 3, 2018; Bidgood, March 6, 2018). It is clear that teachers can change the power dynamics with school districts and state governments when they organize.

The style of “fighting back” in Seattle was significantly different than in Chicago, where the mayor controlled the district and he and the union president were often confrontational in their speech. In Seattle, which was not a mayor-controlled district, the union president, the superintendent, and the board of education did not engage in personal critiques that were documented in local media. This may have contributed to the more positive media coverage in Seattle or, if personal critiques were in fact lobbed at each other by the negotiators in the Seattle strike, the choice by the media not to include those comments created more positive framing of both sides.

Contextual comparison

I reviewed a total of 361 articles covering the strikes in Chicago in 2012 and in Seattle in 2015. Through my review, I found that, in the case of Chicago, 45 percent of the articles had an anti-strike frame and only 19 percent had a pro-strike frame. In Seattle, there was a higher percentage of pro-strike articles (42) than of anti-strike articles (36). Given these findings, I believe a discussion of the results of the two strikes is necessary.

Results of Chicago strike

As reported by the *Chicago Tribune* (Byrne & Dardick, September 19, 2012), the eventual contract the union and district agreed to included:

- Teacher pay raises of three percent during the first year of the contract and two percent during the second and third years, for a total of seven percent. This was down from the eight percent the union wanted.
- Retention of teacher salary step and lane increases.

- Elimination of the option to cash in their remaining sick days at retirement, meaning veteran teachers would either use those sick days or lose them.
- A settlement on the role of student test scores in teacher evaluations at 25 percent during years one and two, and 30 percent during year three. This was down from the 40 percent that the district wanted.
- The right of principals to hire their own staff with no positions set aside for teachers who had been laid off. This was a concession on the part of the union.
- A longer school day and year staffed by 500 additional teachers. Current teachers did not have to work any additional time, a concession from the district.

These results show that each side achieved some of its negotiation goals, but not all. For example, the union negotiated a raise for teachers, but not at the level it had hoped for. The district was able to avoid being required to place laid-off teachers in schools with vacancies, giving principals the power to select their teachers. This meant that laid-off teachers would be put into a “pool” of teachers available for hire, although teachers with good prior evaluation ratings would be separated into their own pool. The Chicago union was able to hold on to teacher salary step and lane increases, but lost the ability to cash in remaining sick days at retirement. Teachers were not successful in gaining the social service supports they believed students needed.

Results of Seattle strike

In the *Seattle Times*, Paige Cornwell and Walker Orenstein reported on the agreement reached by the union and the district in “Union suspends strike; school to start Thursday in Seattle” (Cornwell & Orenstein, September 17, 2015). The contract that was eventually implemented included:

- Pay raises of three percent in the first year, two percent in the second year, and four and a half percent in the third year, for a total of nine and a half percent. This was less than the 17 percent over three years the union asked for.
- The creation of Equity Committees in 30 schools and a half-day of training on reducing student discipline inequities.
- The creation of a joint union-district committee to review testing and the testing schedule and to make recommendations.
- The elimination of student test scores from teacher evaluations.
- A slightly longer school day with additional pay for teachers.
- Limits on caseloads for physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and audiologists.
- Mandatory recess in elementary grades.

The Seattle union achieved most of its goals. Although teachers did not get raises at the rate they wanted, the union succeeded in focusing attention on inequitable disciplinary outcomes, in eliminating student test scores in teacher evaluations, in securing additional pay for the longer school day, in limiting some caseloads, in getting mandatory recess time for elementary students, and in gaining a voice in the district testing plan. The district succeeded in limiting pay increases, but provided significant raises, nonetheless.

There were other differences between the contexts of the strikes, and the difference of three years between the two strikes is also important to note. In 2012, many states still had not recovered from the 2008 recession, and unemployment in the country in December was just barely below eight percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 11, 2012). Although school funding in 2012 in Illinois had increased beyond 2008 levels (Leachman et al, 2016), the

Chicago district was facing a budget shortfall. CPS leaders throughout that time had increased funding for charter schools while closing neighborhood public schools since 2001.

By 2015, unemployment was down to 5 percent nationally (Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 2016), but school funding in Washington was still below 2008 levels (Leachman et al., 2016). Washington had a history of under-funding schools, as found by the Washington Supreme Court in the *McCleary* decision. The 2015-2016 school year was the first year that charter schools had been allowed to operate in Washington, but the Supreme Court ruled on September 4, 2015 that the law allowing charter schools and their funding was unconstitutional.

Although the different contexts are important to remember, my study also noted very different framing of the strikes in the local media which may have played a role in the eventual contractual outcomes. It is not possible to demonstrate conclusively from this study that framing influenced the outcomes of negotiations, but the differences in the framing of the issues and the outcomes in the two situations is compelling.

There were also significant differences in the formats of the anti-strike and pro-strike items included in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*. The items with a pro-strike frame were more often letters to the editor or opinion pieces. Of the 11 items in the *Sun-Times* that were pro-strike, five were letters and one was an opinion piece. Of the 34 items in the *Tribune* that were pro-strike, 13 were letters and 10 were opinion items. The table below compares the pro-strike and anti-strike items, by type, in the *Tribune* and the *Sun-Times*.

Table 8. Pro- and anti-strike items, by type, during Chicago strike

Item type	<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>		<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	
	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti
Letter	5	0	13	17
Opinion	1	3	10	15
Editorial	0	6	0	15
News	5	15	11	54

In the *Sun-Times*, 54 percent of the pro-strike items were letters or opinion pieces. In the *Tribune*, 68 percent of the pro-strike items were letters or opinion pieces. Compare those numbers to the anti-strike items in the *Sun-Times*, where only 36 percent of anti-strike items were letters or opinion pieces, and in the *Tribune*, where only 32 percent of anti-strike items were letters or opinion pieces.

During the strike in Seattle, pro-strike items in the *Seattle Times* were less likely (23 percent) to be letters or opinion pieces than news items. Of the pro-strike items in the *Times*, 77 percent were news items. In *The Stranger*, pro-strike items were more likely to be letters or opinion pieces (73 percent) than news items (27 percent); however, there was only one anti-strike item. It is also important to note that *The Stranger* is an alternative newspaper, so the proportion of opinions to news is higher than in a regular newspaper. The table below shows the number of each type of item that was pro- or anti-strike in each publication in Seattle.

Table 9. Pro- and anti-strike items, by type, during Seattle strike

Item type	<i>Seattle Times</i>		<i>The Stranger</i>	
	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti
Letter	3	1	13	0
Opinion	2	4	6	0
Editorial	0	2	0	0
News	17	22	7	1

It is interesting that the pro-strike items in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* were more often letters from readers or opinion pieces. Anti-strike items were much more likely to be news items. The opposite was true of the Seattle publications. By including more pro-strike news items than opinion items, the *Seattle Times* made the pro-strike position in Seattle seem reasonable and valid. In Chicago, where pro-strike items were more likely to be in the opinion section, the anti-strike framing of news items presented the anti-strike view as the

fact-based view, and the pro-strike view as the emotional view. These choices by the editors may have influenced readers' opinions regarding the strikes, which in turn may have affected the outcomes of the strikes. It is likely that the negotiators during the strikes read some of the news coverage and/or heard from people who had read the news coverage.

It is also important to note that the total number of articles about contract negotiations and the strike was much higher in Chicago than in Seattle. There were 278 items in Chicago newspapers dealing with the strike and only 83 items in Seattle newspapers. The Seattle strike lasted two fewer school days than the Chicago strike and there was only one daily newspaper in Seattle, but it is notable that the Chicago strike had more than three times the newspaper coverage of the Seattle strike. Given that the majority of articles in Chicago were anti-strike, this is significant agenda-setting and negative framing.

Portrayals of educators

As noted in previous chapters, within the negative framing, educators in both strikes were depicted as greedy, asking for too much, and aggressive. This aligns with the idea of teachers as public servants who work at the will of the taxpayers, a view that has often conflicted with the idea of teachers as activists (Cooper, 2015). In an analysis of the *Chicago Tribune's* coverage of education between 2006 and 2007, at a time when teachers in Chicago were not striking, Cohen (2010) found that most of the stories used a frame of accountability, which presented teachers as "lacking authority and knowledge, or even as the cause of student failure" (p. 116). Critical discourse analysis indicates that this kind of representation of power relationships serves as reinforcement of pre-existing assumptions about the role of teachers in our society and works to maintain that hegemony.

This is in line with other studies (Baker, 1994; Goldstein, 2011) that have found anti-union and anti-teacher frames in media coverage of educators. My study adds to these findings through the use of critical discourse analysis, which identified specific items or characteristics of the publications and specific discursive practices that advanced these negative frames. The use of critical discourse analysis enabled me to discern which individuals or groups of people were perceived by the authors to have power, through the words used to describe them and who was quoted. I was able to show how the words used, the individuals quoted, the placement of the stories within the publications, and the photographs that accompanied the stories were used to show teachers in a negative light most of the time in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and sometimes in the *Seattle Times*. Since discourse is always social, I theorize that the newspapers were engaging in this type of framing in order to maintain existing power structures by swaying public sympathy away from the teachers and toward the taxpayers and families. Given the number of anti-Emanuel frames included in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the articles were not intended to encourage support of the mayor, but to encourage support of the hierarchy.

I was also able to show how these same tools were used to show teachers in a positive light, particularly during the Seattle strike. In the *Seattle Times*, 44 percent of news items that had a discernible frame had a pro-strike frame. In *The Stranger*, that figure was 88 percent. Compare that to the news items in the *Sun-Times* (25 percent) and in the *Tribune* (15 percent) that had a pro-strike frame, and the differences in media coverage during the two strikes are clear.

Implications for Research

This study adds to the small body of knowledge on how media portrays educators and teachers' unions. I am not aware of any studies of media framing of teachers that use critical discourse analysis to examine what pieces of the coverage make the frames work. It would be beneficial to have future studies that compare the discourse used in the media that creates frames regarding teachers and their unions in normal conditions to that used during strikes. This would help shed light on whether the findings of this study are context-specific or if they reflect a more general approach toward teachers in the media. Given the strikes and teacher demonstrations during 2018, there are many data sets that could be used to answer this question.

Another possible area of study would be to include an analysis of social media postings related to teachers and their unions. News media outlets have social media accounts where they post links to their stories. It could be useful to study the language used in these posts and the images that accompany them. Studying replies and reposts of these posts by individuals would be an additional area of inquiry that could present an opportunity to identify framing and counter-framing through readers' responses.

Analyzing article placement on a publication's web page could prove more complicated but would add value to the body of knowledge on issue framing. Which stories are chosen to be at the top of the landing page, toward the bottom of the landing page, or only accessible through navigation to other pages could reveal agenda setting and issue framing by the editors.

Another area of research would be to examine how this kind of issue framing may perpetuate political and social polarization. Many articles regarding the strikes portrayed the union and the district as either winners or losers. Just as describing states as either "red" or "blue" ignores the fact that there are Republicans and Democrats in every state, describing

unions and school districts as either winners or losers oversimplifies the disagreements that led to the strikes. Exploring the role the media plays in political and social divisions could prove enlightening for social scientists, particularly during this time of declining influence of newspapers and increasing influence of social media.

There were also very few attempts in the publications during the strikes to discuss the financial and economic decisions of the districts and the state governments that contributed to the conditions for the strikes. There were no articles that discussed public-sector unions versus private-sector unions. Studies investigating the lack of contextual information in media coverage of teachers and unions, and education generally, could open new ways of interpreting media and framing.

Implications for Practice

The findings of my study point out the ways that news media can portray teachers and unions and may lead readers to view them negatively or positively. The examples of framing included in this study demonstrate how language works with the structural elements of publications to lead readers to draw specific conclusions about the subjects. Teachers and their unions would do well to consider how their actions and advocacy have been reported in the past. Understanding how framing, agenda setting, and second-level agenda setting work would be useful to them in designing their own communications. Likewise, school district officials, boards of education, and mayors should consider how their actions and statements are portrayed in the media.

In the case of Chicago's strike, there were several times when Karen Lewis's statements or actions were used to create an anti-strike frame. Teacher leaders, particularly in times of conflict, would be wise to consider how they are depicted in the media. Union leaders should

consider how to educate their members regarding issue framing so that rank and file teachers can be mindful of how their public statements fit into an overall message about teachers and unions in the media, particularly during times of labor disputes. This would require a high level of discipline among union members, but having even half of the teachers using common talking points could influence the framing of the news.

Similarly, there were multiple instances when Mayor Emanuel's statements and actions were used to create an anti-Emanuel frame. Because the Chicago Public Schools are under the mayor's control, his statements carried more weight than the statements of the superintendent or board of education. It is important for district leaders, in whatever role, to consider how their statements are being framed in the media and to be especially aware of this during times of conflict. Particularly for mayors, who are elected, it is important to be aware of second-level agenda setting effects that can persuade readers to view issues in specific political ways.

District leaders also need to be aware of the language used by teachers and union leaders to describe them and their actions. During contract negotiations, this awareness could cue district leaders into the issues that are most important to the teachers and why they care so much about them. This would also allow district leaders the opportunity to create their own narratives about the key issues and to develop talking points to use in interviews with the media.

Teachers and unions should also consider how district leaders describe them. Observing the language used by superintendents and boards of education could provide opportunities for teachers and union leaders to identify areas of conflict or misunderstandings and to address them immediately, potentially avoiding public disagreements. In Chicago and Seattle, public statements from district officials and the mayors were used to create negative frames of the union

in media coverage. Union officials and teachers being prepared with their own narratives could positively influence the media's framing.

Framing is important for teachers and unions even when they are not negotiating contracts or going on strike. A recent article in the Associated Press (Mulvihill, G., Sainz, A., & Kunzelman, M., January 31, 2021) provides an example of issue framing that is anti-teachers and their unions. The article begins with the statement that President Biden wants schools to reopen this spring and then includes multiple quotes from the president of Democrats for Education Reform (DFER), an organization that has advocated for school choice, using student test scores to hold educators "accountable," and increased funding for charter schools. Jeffries, the DFER president, says that "powerful teachers unions are standing in the way of bringing back students," and, "(t)he teachers unions tend to be pretty obstinately opposed to going back to school." This portrays teachers and their unions as blocking students from returning to schools with no discussion of their safety concerns. It portrays the unions as obstructions.

The article later provides a statement from a pediatrician about the mental health needs she has seen in children recently, which she blames on remote learning. In this way, the author presents anecdotal observations of one pediatrician and gives them authority by placing them in an article about whether schools should reopen. Further, the author provides no caveats regarding the doctor's observations, such as the level of COVID spreading in her region and what the typical rates of mental health issues among children have been.

The negative framing in this article makes it clear that teachers and unions need to always be aware of how media outlets are framing issues for their readers. In a situation as serious as the current pandemic, where school employees' lives could be at stake, it is even more important

that teachers and unions understand how these issues are being framed and how these frames can affect readers' opinions.

Summary

In analyzing media coverage of two teacher strikes – Chicago in 2012 and Seattle in 2015 – I focused on how teachers and their unions were portrayed and how management officials were portrayed. Analyzing the frames of the articles led me to conclude that 45 percent of the articles in the Chicago publications had an **anti-strike frame** and, by contrast, 42 percent of the articles in the Seattle publications had a **pro-strike frame**.

I also found that, of the pro-strike items in the Chicago publications, most were opinion pieces or letters. In the Seattle publications, however, most of the pro-strike items were news items. This is also framing, in that Chicago's papers depicted the anti-strike frame as fact-based news and the pro-strike frame as emotional. The Seattle papers presented the pro-strike frame in news articles and in opinion pieces equally, placing it on the same level as the anti-strike frame. I then compared the outcomes of the strikes and found that teachers in Seattle achieved more of their goals than teachers in Chicago. My conclusion is that the issue framing in the media during the two strikes likely played a role in the outcomes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Internet search terms

Chicago teachers' strike 2012

CTU strike

Chicago teachers union strike 2012

Teachers' strike

Teachers' strike 2012

CTU strike 2012

CPS teacher strike 2012

CPS strike

CPS teachers' strike

CPS strike 2012

Chicago Tribune teachers' strike 2012

Chicago Tribune CTU strike 2012

Chicago Tribune CPS strike 2012

Chicago Sun-Times teachers' strike 2012

Chicago Sun-Times CTU strike 2012

Chicago Sun-Times CPS strike 2012

Seattle teachers' strike 2015

Seattle teachers' strike

Seattle Education Association strike 2015

SEA strike 2015

SPS strike 2015

SPS teachers' strike

SPS teachers' strike 2015

Teachers' strike 2015

Teachers' strike

Seattle teachers strike 2015

SPS teacher strike

Seattle Times teachers' strike 2015

Seattle Times SEA strike 2015

Seattle Times SPS strike 2015

Seattle Stranger teachers' strike 2015

Seattle Stranger SEA strike 2015

Seattle Stranger SPS strike 2015

APPENDIX B

Document Analysis Protocol

The items included in this protocol will lead to the interpretation of the document by identifying the framing that is present. When all the numbered items have been identified, the frame will become apparent.

1. Publication code and number (CT, CST, DH, ST, CR, SW, TS, CD)
2. Date of publication
3. Byline
4. Headline
5. Placement within publication
6. Context
7. Subject
8. People referenced
9. Organizations referenced
10. People quoted
11. Descriptive language used

APPENDIX C

Photo Analysis Protocol

The items included in this protocol will lead to the interpretation of the photo by identifying the framing that is present. When all the numbered items have been identified, the frame will become apparent.

1. Publication code and number (CT, CST, DH, ST, CR, SW, TS, CD)
2. Date of publication
3. Credit
4. Caption
5. Placement within publication
6. Context
7. People
 - a. Names
 - b. Roles
 - c. Genders
 - d. Ethnicities
 - e. Self-presentation, including attire
8. Facial expressions
9. Actions
10. Objects

APPENDIX D

People in Strikes

People in Chicago Strike

Name	Role	Organization
Rahm Emanuel	Mayor	City of Chicago
Karen Lewis	President	Chicago Teachers Union
Jesse Sharkey	Vice-President	Chicago Teachers Union
Becky Carroll	Spokesperson	Chicago Public Schools
Jean-Claude Brizard	Chief Executive Officer	Chicago Public Schools
Pat Quinn	Governor	State of Illinois
Arne Duncan	Secretary of Education	United States Department of Education
Sarah Hamilton	Spokesperson	Mayor's Office
David Vitale	President	Chicago Board of Education
Kaitlyn Rowney	Communications Director	Chicago Teachers Union

People in Seattle Strike

Name	Role	Organization
Jay Inslee	Governor	State of Washington
Larry Nyland	Superintendent	Seattle Public Schools
Rich Wood	Spokesperson	Washington Education Association
Phyllis Campano	Vice-President	Seattle Education Association
Jonathan Knapp	President	Seattle Education Association
Ed Murray	Mayor	City of Seattle
Sherry Carr	President	Seattle Board of Education
Stacy Howard	Spokesperson	Seattle Public Schools

Appendix E

Sample of Critical Discourse Analysis

Frame	Teachers	Union	CPS	Lewis
Anti-union				
Anti-strike.				
Skeptical of longer day				
Pro-CPS. Ends with quote from CPS spokesperson				
Anti-strike. Last 2 paragraphs include statement	describe strike as also being against private	paints union demands as too expensive, given district budget problems		
Anti-union. CTU wants to keep ineffective	Argues that teachers getting tenure based on	wants to force principals to pick from the pool of laid-off Principals are being "forced to hire for the positions added from a pool of CPS tea		
Neutral				
Pro-teachers	are not the problem in our schools; intrinsic			
Anti-strike.				
Anti-CPS				
Pro-CTU.	the earliest teachers could walk out would be the	fighting to create a permanent system for rehiring laid-off teachers; continuing their effort this week to win public support for their side; le		
Very anti-CTU	"the average CPS teacher costs the taxpayer		"should accelerate plans for reform"	"won't budge on merit pa
Extremely anti-union, anti-CTU, anti-teacher	"could walk off the job and abandon their	"wants to make sure its members don't have to compete	"will likely close or consolidate scores of schools next year"	"CPS' overarching goal
Anti-CPS CPS organizational structure and				
Anti-CPS/Emanuel? Counsels reserving judgment				
Article ends with explanation that Brizard would				
anti-strike. paints potential strike as damaging	"will walk out," "stop collaborating, stop working	"hopes added pressure of a strike threat leads to a settle	"complete chaos"	
Anti-union quote from Hyman "You will see				
Anti both sides			administrators should "back off on trying to institute a m	"suggested last week that
Very anti-Emanuel, anti-Brizard				
Very pro-union		argues that unions have been integral to creating the modern work day, benefits, salaries, middle class		
anti-state. State has not paid required				
pro-teachers				
pro-teacher, government needs to do more to				
anti-union. Pro merit pay, anti lane and step	"will respond to economic incentives" "will go to			"refused" to develop a m
anti-union. Positions Lewis and the union as				"talked tough," "shouted,"
anti-strike. parents need more certainty to start				
anti-union. CTU members are selfish in their		"may walk out on children next week" "We hope CTU m	"officials at the cash-starved CPS have returned \$34 milli	"We don't believe in mer
Vaguely pro-CTU Analysis of tactics and				
Pro-teachers Supports teachers and argues they	they know what their students need; they are			
Pro-teachers Supports teachers and argues the	argues merit pay is actually test-based pay and			
anti-strike. Positions strike as a stressful,	"demanding more pay"			
Very anti-CTU				
Slightly pro-CPS officials				
Neutral				
Anti-both sides. Somewhat cynical view of				
Breathtakingly anti-unions, anti-teachers, anti-	"might walk away from the classroom"	"threatening to go on strike"		
Mild rebuke of both sides				
anti-union. Placement of these articles is an	"walk off the job"			