Southern Illinois University Carbondale
OpenSIUC

Research Papers Graduate School

Spring 2021

The Framing of the Common Core State Standards in the New York Times and Chicago Tribune from 2014-2015

Conor Joseph Byrne
Southern Illinois University Carbondale, byrne.conorj@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/gs_rp

Recommended Citation

Byrne, Conor J. "The Framing of the Common Core State Standards in the New York Times and Chicago Tribune from 2014-2015." (Spring 2021).

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at OpenSIUC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Papers by an authorized administrator of OpenSIUC. For more information, please contact opensiuc@lib.siu.edu.

THE FRAMING OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND CHICAGO TRIBUNE FROM 2014-2015

by

Conor J. Byrne

B.A., The College of New Jersey, 2011

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts

Department of Sociology
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2021

RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

THE FRAMING OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND CHICAGO TRIBUNE FROM 2014-2015

by

Conor J. Byrne

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the field of Sociology

Approved by:

Dr. Jean-Pierre Reed, Chair

Dr. William Danaher

Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

March 26, 2021

AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

CONOR J. BYRNE, for the Master of Arts degree in SOCIOLOGY, approved on March 26, 2021, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: THE FRAMING OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND CHICAGO TRIBUNE FROM 2014-2015

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Jean-Pierre Reed

A narrative of optimism abounds in dominant U.S. culture regarding education as the "great equalizer" of society. As a result, the experience of the disenfranchised such as those with learning differences, English language learners, and racial minorities often go unnoticed or misrepresented. Other factors such as the role of big business and standardized testing in funding school districts avoid critical analysis, including in the mainstream media. In a content analysis of 120 articles from the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* covering Common Core State Standards from 2014-2015, this study discovers both newspapers fail to make significant mention of the aforementioned elements in their framing of this education policy. The framing of any significant topic in the mass media is important because many individuals tend to form their opinions about it through this outlet. This study adds nuance to what contributes or comprises inequitable education in the public eye.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A hearty thank you to Dr. Jean-Pierre "J.-P." Reed, my mentor and the chair of this paper's committee. Your knowledge, boundless enthusiasm, and research interests have been a major source of joy and appreciation for me throughout my exciting immersion in the field of sociology.

Additional thanks to Drs. William "Bill" Danaher and Rachel Whaley for their invaluable feedback, guidance, and expertise during my completion of this project. I am also grateful to the entire faculty of the SIU-C Sociology Department. My graduate education with you all has truly been one of the best things to happen to me.

Thank you, Benjamin "Ben" Pflughoeft, for consulting with me on my approach toward the statistical component of this paper. And to one of my lifelong friends: Steven Avigliano. Thank you for serving as an outside reader to this work.

Last but not least, to my mother and father, who have pushed me to be and do my best within the calling of the present moment. I am forever grateful to you both.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

ABSTRACT……………………………………………………………………………………….i

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS………………………………………………………………………...ii

LIST OF TABLES………………………………………………………………………………..iv

CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1 – Introduction………………………………………………………………1

CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review……………………………………………………...3

CHAPTER 3 – Methods: On Framing and Coding..……………………………………19

CHAPTER 4 – Results…………………………………………………………………..30

CHAPTER 5 – Conclusion………………………………………………………………41

REFERENCES…………………………………………………………………………………..47

APPENDIX – Coding Sheet…...……………………………………………………………….58

VITA……………………………………………………………………………………………..62

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

Table 1 - Frequencies of the primary dependent variables of interest overall and by newspaper.31

Table 2 - Frequencies of the primary dependent variables of interest overall and by newspaper, utilizing the positive presence status of variables……………………………………...33

Table 3 - Association between tone of article and elementary student discussion………………34

Table 4 - Association between how test results are discussed and elementary student discussion……………………………………………………………………………34

Table 5 - Association between how underserved communities are discussed and elementary student discussion…………………………………………………………………...34

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The general debate in U.S. schooling is that some educators feel that the reaffirmation of efficiency and productivity in education policy is neither progressive nor inclusive, that it fails to serve large segments of special needs populations and does not acknowledge cultural and material differences. At the same time, other educators fear that attempting to address all segments of society may not serve what the country will need to compete globally in the future. Those educators instead find valuable applications from increasing the rigor and standards of curriculum, with an emphasis on maximizing the productive output of any given student (Feldmann 2005). Regardless of pitfalls or merits, both sides look to society at large to question what education is meant to deliver to students. Whether through more individualized learning methods, or demands for increased accountability or rigor, the general direction of the education debate has been the continued promotion of success and equality for our nation's youth.

While the sociology of education research has researched both negative and positive consequences to education policy implementation in general, research on the impact of the 2009 Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is still emerging. And, to date, no research has yet investigated how we are understanding this policy as a society. Given that policy making oftentimes is a political spectacle whereby rhetoric impacts public perception much greater than the science (Smith 2004), the manner in which a policy is being discussed is sometimes just as important as the policy itself. This discussion is typically captured by the mass media, which frames the understanding of current events (Berger and Luckmann 1966). The present study aims to make sense of this relationship; the relationship between CCSS and the framing of this policy. It does so by providing an overview of some of debates connected to CCSS and in light of a

content analysis of two national newspapers.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background of Problem

Education is often identified as the "great equalizer" of society (Kerbo 2012). Our societal assumption and expectation is that if our student population works hard to attain grades, their reward will be greater structural and intergenerational mobility. Unfortunately, our education system produces inequality. A student potentially capable of a 4.0 GPA and a Harvard Law Degree is delimited by location, the material inequities that come with it, and lack of social capital (Sensoy and DiAngelo 2012). That is, segregation, income inequality, racism, and deterioration of public space (Kozol 2005; Lareau 2003; Smith, McPherson, and Smith-Lovin 2014; Giroux 2004) are significant factors that get in the way of educational attainment and as such structural and intergenerational mobility.

Consider program disparity by race as one factor that speaks to this point. White students vastly out-represent minority groups in Gifted and Talented Programs, rewarding these students with the necessary social and cultural capital to navigate more prestigious careers. Why is this the case? Some research suggests teacher-student interaction as an explanation. Minority groups, for example, tend to be much more likely to be punished for any school infraction incurred, sometimes simply for speaking "out of turn" (Brunn-Bevel and Byrd 2015). In other words, white students are more likely to be encouraged to succeed, while it is more common for minority students to be sanctioned for the same behavior. It is not that one demographic is more "intelligent" or capable than another (Neisser et al. 1996). Given the right opportunity structure, minority students can outperform national averages (Demi and McLean 2007). These are only some examples highlighting discrepancies in the system. The "great equalizer" has not been

designed to benefit all populations.

Although the problems of schooling in the USA are vast, I intend to analyze the social and economic mechanisms that may currently be "operating" in the system. While I intend to highlight the social problems our education system has accrued throughout its history, I also seek to specifically address *what* is occurring today. Stemming from this perspective, my goal is to study the way in which CCSS is portrayed in two of our national newspapers today: the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*. I ask the question: *How are these newspapers framing this educational policy?* My analysis of this framing will emphasize the social problems surrounding education.

CCSS: Its Historical Precedents

Race and stratification are inherently intertwined in this nation's history in such a way as to make them necessary factors in understanding disparate educational outcomes. Consider that the funding of schools is directly dependent on the property taxes of any given local neighborhood (Lindholm 1970). Disinvestment in minority communities, however, undermines the value of properties that would otherwise create a tax base for adequate schooling. This barrier to growth is not an invisible, non-identifiable problem. Insurance agents, for example, have made choices to deny mortgages and property insurance to potential homeowners on the basis of their race (Squires, Dewolfe, and Dewolfe 1979). This lack of access to investment in property has offset disenfranchised populations' ability to accumulate wealth and raise the overall well-being of their communities. As such, property tax in these communities remains low. High, rigorous educational standards become irrelevant when discussing an isolated and ignored community. With little local tax given to education, coupled with the historic segregation enforced in this country and maintained through "white-flight," there are deeply rooted structural issues which

must be addressed in local communities (Lindholm 1970; Kozol 2005).

To complicate matters further, funding alone is not enough to resolve disputes or variances between different school systems. In 1966, the Department of Education commissioned James Coleman to conduct an investigation on the state of inequality in the school system. Coleman's study managed to sample over 650,000 students and discovered that even in instances where segregated school systems receive equal funding, outcomes for students in graduation rates and college readiness favored white schools. The conclusion of the report brought attention to the roles of socioeconomic status (underserved communities as mentioned in the previous paragraph) and cultural exclusion. Specifically, Coleman's research found that underserved students with ties to more privileged peers (coming from different environments) fared better in school than poor students without those ties. This phenomenon is understood as social capital (1966).

The lack of social capital for a minority student as a means to unequal schooling is also verified by the recognition of culturally skewed tests. Standardized testing produces poor academic achievement for the disenfranchised. One reason for this outcome is the construction of the test itself. Standardized tests are comprised of cultural biases that favor the dominant middle class so that students of underrepresented groups without social capital are vulnerable to lesser test performance (Sensoy and DiAngelo 2012). This phenomenon is one component of the racial achievement gap. Because the largest powerbrokers in the education system are typically of the white middle-class, their input in creating testing methods tends to reflect the social and cultural capital valuable to their life experiences. This process is known as test bias and may be one of the direct causes for the racial achievement gap. Tests do not strictly measure intelligence, but the possession of social and cultural capital within a dominant segment of society (Sensoy and

DiAngelo 2012).

Within the context of a call for greater racial equality in the United States at the time, the Coleman Report acted as a stimulus for the desegregation of the bussing systems and integration of schools. Two prominent cases to begin to advance the country in this direction were McNeese v. Board of Education (1963) and Goss v. Board of Education (1963). Other examples include Green v. County School Board (1968), in which the court ruled against freedom of choice plans, meaning that students could not be left to choose whether they would attend a predominantly white or black school as this approach maintained segregation. The 1971 Supreme Court ruling in Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education was an integration ruling that would promote legislation and policy for equality in the school systems through the 1980's. With the aid of community support, racial balance was increased under these policies, testing results improved, and economic development in implementing regions was spurred (Mickelson, Smith, and Nelson 2015). Research found shortly thereafter that policies pursuing equality and integration typically raised the test performance of all students, regardless of their race or ethnicity (Jencks and Brown 1975).

However, it is also important to keep in mind that the progress of the Civil Rights Era, while positive, was also rooted in a particular *global* context as a response to international pressures. Just pre-dating the Coleman Report and LBJ's "Great Society" was the unfolding of Cold War political dynamics that would shape much of the geopolitics of the rest of the century. Take, for example, the Eisenhower Administration's signing of the 1958 National Defense Education Act into law. The policy was designed to raise high school standards to increase college readiness and, thereby, college graduation rates. While these stated goals would presumably raise the future quality of life for students, the policy emerged as a reaction to the

fear of falling behind the Soviet Union in global competitiveness (New York State Education Department 2009; Wallender 2014). Thus emerged the notion of efficiency and productivity as necessary outcomes of an American education.

Furthermore, any progress established by the progressive tendencies of the 1960's was quickly de-emphasized to fit a more neoliberal agenda in the 1980's. The National Commission on Excellence in Education published *A Nation at Risk* under the Reagan administration, which identified the pursuit of equity in education as a direct obstacle to the maintenance of standards, college readiness, and subsequent college graduation rates (Wallender 2014). This report in turn shifted the emphasis in American education back toward a rhetoric of efficiency and productivity. By the 90s, the Supreme Court began dismantling desegregation plans with the notion that testing standards alone could make schools become more equal (Brunn-Bevel & Byrd 2015).

This political climate introduced what would eventually become the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), signed into law under President George W. Bush in 2001. The stated goal of NCLB was to create a 100% student passing rate on standardized tests in all of the nation's schools by 2014. While a very clearly stated intention, the underlying path to achieving the goal was never fully addressed. As such, each state took a different approach toward accountability measures, making comparisons of success difficult. Furthermore, schools which did not improve their passing rates faced punitive measures which often took resources away at expense to that particular student body (Wallender 2014). Administrators and parents found the results of these punitive measures to be injurious to student, teacher, and community morale (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education 2011; Newman and Roskos 2013).

CCSS: Its Traits

As a partial response and extension of NCLB's intentions, CCSS was implemented in 2009 to create commonality in state standards with the additional goals of providing: challenging tasks which connect to the obligations of the real world, granting knowledge related to college and career readiness, and increasing the nation's global competitiveness (Common Core State Standards 2013). With only seven years of implementation (as of 2016), the long-term impacts of the policy remain to be seen, but some educational factors must be considered immediately if parity in our country is to be addressed.

Teacher feedback and voice. Consider teacher self-efficacy. National surveys suggest that teachers feel a high level of uncertainty and unpreparedness with regards to how to teach the new content, which can lead to a lower sense of independence and ability. This apprehension can impact student engagement as they observe their teacher's potential frustration (Heibert and Mesmer 2013). As it currently stands, research suggests that teachers are trying to find their place in the context of the new education policy (Smith and Teasley 2014). Furthermore, a significant proportion of teachers feel unprepared to teach the new curriculum (Gewertz 2013). While CCSS has the potential to improve students' college and career readiness, it must be accompanied by professional development that allows teachers to help all students reach that readiness (Venezia and Jaeger 2013).

Union voice. High quality teaching staff are essential to better served disenfranchised school districts. Haskins et al. (2012) identify that an incentives system needs to be in place in order to attract the greatest talent to the teaching force, and whereby excellent teaching is rewarded. Salary and bonuses are underrecognized elements of teacher resources, yet they can be the catalyst to fuel teacher motivation to achieve in the classroom. Instead, these classrooms are largely supervised by unsupported substitute teachers, whose own chances for social mobility are

only marginally better than their students (Kozol 2012).

Community voice. Smith and Teasley describe the implementation of these policies to be typically occurring from the top-down, particularly when the law is an unproven mandate (2014), and some opposed to CCSS feel that this is too much of a centralization of federal power (Eng 2016). Are local solutions to unique on-the-ground situations being generated? Some in the public sphere believe that CCSS has been the product of a strict Obama mandate. These individuals believe that CCSS was developed under the federal government without any input from state governments (Eng 2016). This perception may fuel a disempowerment of actors at the local level, getting in the way of national parity.

Accountability considers testing results and how schools are impacted by that information. This approach pools the significance of testing as one of the sole factors in a school's performance. Eng (2016) points out that this is in contradiction to Coleman's seminal finding that outcomes are connected to social capital (1966). When Coleman's findings are not taken into account, it places the core of accountability on the school. In other words, the school alone can make an impact on the results of its students. This places the emphasis on school-based interventions, from a top-down mandate, rather than broader community-based assistance (Eng 2016).

Business interests. According to Illich (1971), education also operates in an informal manner, which he regards as the hidden curriculum. By instructing children on what their future role in social will be, the hidden curriculum reproduces social inequality by race and social class. Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue the same idea. Schools reflect the inequity in both society and the workplace, arranging students to eventually submit to authoritative work culture. Schools socialize children to become compliant workers by teaching them how to be obedient students

first.

To what extent are their interests, influence, and capital able to affect the development of school policies? On a local level, there is the Chicago Public School system as one example of how business can impact education policy. Khadduri, Turnham, Chase and Schwartz (2003) cite the first decade of the 2000's, a time period when Chicago Public Schools were taking on an expansion of educational opportunities, with an emphasis on novelty and selection. The initiative was launched on the behalf of the mayor and the head administration of Chicago Public Schools. This effort was not launched without outside support, however. The Commercial Club of Chicago raised over $50 million for certain new schools. So, a large portion of the business community was involved in the success or development of the initiative, with the capacity to invest their capital discriminately into neighborhoods that they regarded as most valuable to their interests.

Special needs populations. There are ongoing questions as to whether there is any credibility that the standards lend themselves to students of differing abilities, another arena of stratification in education (Smith and Teasley 2014). Some research has argued that CCSS is a simplified response for all students regardless of the particular circumstances of their needs (Ayres 2012). Does CCSS have the ability to incorporate the needs of any underserved population? As outcomes-based research of CCSS is scant, educators are skeptical of the curriculum. The long-term results of this policy remain vastly unknown and yet there is a push for school populations in the country to adapt to its expectations irrespective of differences within the overall total student population. Some critics indicate that for these special-needs populations there are no certainties of being granted the right work skills to adapt to the professional world CCSS expects them to find themselves in (Ayres 2012; Tienken 2011).

Learning differences. There are some arguments with regard to those with learning differences that they do not get the proper amount of cognitive support under this new policy (Smith and Teasley 2014), and that CCSS implementation is not being based on data that recognizes this type of factor (Tienken 2011). Worse still, some research also suggests that the overemphasis on increasing the rigor of curriculum can create student disengagement for this population. The consequences of this disconnect include these students being less willing to take academic risk and less likelihood to identify as a reader (Heibert and Mesmer 2013). There are much further developed arguments for how to approach the inclusion of those with learning differences in this policy.

Hunt, McDonnell, and Crocket (2012) argue for a middle ground in which curriculum is also met with an ecological approach focused on the present and future needs of the student. In this regard the authors feel that typical approaches to education policy do not encompass the needs of this population. The authors suggest that there needs to be longitudinal data that follows students through their schooling and post-education to see where the most ideal opportunities are for these students. They support advocacy for teaching that has curriculum related to the appropriate grade-level, but that also recognizes the current and future quality of life and possibilities.

Meanwhile, Ayres (2012) believes that a common set of standards eases the burden on how to judge progress but does not bypass the need to have teaching methodology and technology that recognizes how to effect progress with this population. The author argues that we should not teach something just because we know how to teach it. This practice does not necessarily equate with teaching the right material. All students have the right to a curriculum, but just because it is mandated by law does not mean it is the right curriculum. Based on

National Longitudinal Transition Study-2, anything taught to students with disabilities would be better in the long-term than what is currently being taught, just based on those data and outcomes (Ayres 2012). That is a ghastly indictment of the current state of affairs of the education of the learning disabled.

English languages learners (ELL). ELL comprise 9.4% of all high school students (English Language Learners in Public Schools 2017), placing one out of every ten students as a non-native learner. What is more, these learners are supposed to be the quickest expanding school-age demographic in the country by 2020 (Fry 2008). As English is the lingua franca of the U.S., this population must be guided toward a proper working grasp of the language. Language represents the ability to navigate the symbols of a society and if educational policy ignores facilitating ELL's ability to acquire that skill, it will place a major barrier to socio-economic advancement. Without proficient English, the ELL student has a harder time performing in school to graduate and take the next step: adequate participation in the workforce.

Capitelli (2016) explored the advocacy for placing the ELL at the center of curricula rather than at the edges as is the current status quo. The study goes on to consider policies that enforce English-only education, even in linguistically diverse classrooms. The results are student shame and disengagement, as well as a restriction of what can occur for teaching and learning in the classroom. Hopewell, Butvilofsky, and Escamilla (2016) report research that advocates for a multilingual approach to CCSS. Currently, CCSS focuses on English-only comprehension. The authors of the article question to what extent that is at the cost of other language speakers in the community. The authors contend that biliteracy and multilingualism are inclusive objectives that deserve attention but have not necessarily been given serious attention. It is confusing to them why a student who has already come in with another language would be evaluated in standards

that only address the English language arts, when this might have the unintended consequence of devaluing other languages. The article describes a more comprehensive image of what language arts can be: one that would propose a focus on becoming biliterate as part of an encompassing vision of multilingualism that is more holistic and integrated. The authors argue that in an increasingly globalized world it is hard to believe that being biliterate would be a disadvantage (Hopewell, Butvilofsky, and Escamilla 2016).

(Racial) achievement gap. There are achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, and poverty level which are profound and multi-generational. It begins with the disparate resources accessible to white and black grandparents, impacting mothers' initial childbearing comportment, cognitive abilities, socioeconomic standing, and spare time to offer an intellectually stimulating home. Additionally, black grandparents, on average, have two and a half years less schooling, and a higher proportion have debts or zero wealth compared to white grandparents (40% vs. 13%). Both black grandparents and parents are much more likely than their white counterparts to live in neighborhoods with high poverty and fewer positive role models. These intergenerational differences result in more children of color having less cognitive skills earlier in life, which has implications for how they will potentially achieve in the future (Yeung, Persell, and Reilly 2013).

Achievement gaps extend into neighborhood composition and school segregation. Research from Saporito and Sohoni (2006) suggests that race can serve as a catalyst among more well-to-do families who are more likely to activate their assets to evade public schools when high numbers of minority students are present in their neighborhoods. So therefore, race augments the anticipated class-avoidance patterns of guardians, playing a significant part in determining poverty and racial concentrations in schools. White children live and grow up in

neighborhoods and schools in which most of the children are not impoverished and this is partly a result of more affluent families avoiding schools that serve high proportions of minority and low-income students. Finally, Roscigno (1998) finds that school racial composition has import for arithmetic and reading achievement, even with familial composition, class, and educational attainment controlled for. Attending a black segregated school still has a negative impact for scholastic achievement, while white segregated schools typically shape their students to have a more positive test performance, on average. Roscigno (1998) acknowledges that some of this may be due to cultural capital, and he also believes it may be related to the distribution of quality trained teachers (non-material resources).

On the ground, one study finds that 60% of Asian/Pacific Islander and over 50% of white high school freshman have a guidance counselor who says one of their primary goals is to find them college placement, while only 44% of black freshmen, 41% of Hispanic freshman, and 29% of American Indian/Alaskan Native freshmen have such counselors (Venezia and Jaeger 2013). White and Asian students are more likely to attend low-poverty schools while American Indian/Alaskan Native, black, and Hispanic students are more likely to attend high-poverty schools. Though challenged, 91% of students in low-poverty schools still graduate with a diploma while only 68% do so from high-poverty schools. Similarly, college attendance is at 52% for low-poverty schools while at 28% for high-poverty schools.

Private schools, school vouchers, and charter schools. Politics on the right often advocate for private schools, school vouchers, and charter schools as a way of facilitating educational growth by promoting what is meant to be greater school choice for the average family. However, there is research available that suggests that charter schools actually heighten, or at least maintain, imparity.

For example, Renzulli (2006) recognizes that since the majority of students in charter schools are minorities, they are provided the opportunity to address issues of racial and economic inequality. But, ultimately, the school is still segregated. This redress, that is, occurs within a vacuum. This phenomenon is doubled down in support by Burdick-Will, Keels, and Schuble (2013). The authors note that it is important for the charter school to have a very explicit mission to educate the disenfranchised in order for the school to actually make any difference. Those charter schools with a profit orientation are much more likely to place themselves in advantaged neighborhoods where they will not reach those that could use the help, thus perpetuating segregation.

This profit orientation extends itself toward a brain drain of sorts on disenfranchised neighborhoods. The reality is that, even when placed in underserved communities, it is only the most well-equipped families that can grant their child access to these schools. Navigating entrance into a charter school requires various resources: the time to research and advocate for the student, the technology such as internet and cell phone service to receive the necessary information from the school, and the social capital to navigate the competitive landscape of entering the school in the first place. Few families actually get their student into this type of school, and when they do, the remaining students of the underserved school are that much worse off as they have even less exposure to the social capital of a succeeding student (Kozol 2012).

Elementary students. The first years of schooling are critical to students, as future high school and college drop-outs can be identified as early as third grade. Elementary students will be impacted by CCSS for the next decade and beyond, and the research does not suggest that the experience will benefit them. Elementary school students, particularly low-income, are being increasingly exposed to finite, constrained skills because they are readily teachable and can be

easily measured, at the cost of long-term literacy development through vocabulary expansion and world knowledge. CCSS defends the status quo approach because early testing of elementary school students demonstrates basic proficiency in reading at this stage but fails to acknowledge that literacy rates drop significantly by the eighth grade (Snow and Matthews 2016). This short-term vision of success distracts the public from holding policy makers accountable to the long-term consequences of CCSS.

Underserved/segregated communities. Past research from Chall (2000) has suggested that curriculums and pedagogy may be developed around norms that better fit privileged backgrounds. Even well-intentioned approaches that are more student-centered and lack measurement may fail disadvantaged families. The input by class for CCSS plays a critical role in determining the fairness of the development of curricular standards. Additionally, the implementation of new content is a major financial burden, particularly for those school districts that are already struggling. Resources are growing increasingly significant in this transition toward more technology in schooling. Local school communities are seeking to understand the new standards and adapt accordingly, but often at a cost (Smith and Teasley 2014). Other barriers to inclusion of the economically disadvantaged include limited cultural support, community resources, peer supports, racism, ineffective counseling, and limited networking opportunities (Venezia and Jaeger 2013).

What is more, low-income students attend schools with much more concentrated forms of poverty than if all children simply attended their local schools. Racially speaking, while the white student typically attends a school where the majority of students are above the poverty line, the Black or Hispanic student attends schools where the majority of students are below the poverty line. Given the relationship between school-level poverty rates and individual student

academic achievement (discussed earlier), this circumstance does not bode well for the Black or Hispanic student. Additionally, it contributes to social isolation which only compounds economic disadvantage (Saporito and Sohoni 2006).

Furthermore, the economically disadvantaged continue to be ignored, even in thriving communities. The middle- and upper-class parents of these communities have the social capital to breach barriers to advocate for their children, but to the point that lower-class parents may be forgotten (Roza 2010). In further relation to the disadvantaged living in relatively prosperous areas, it is said that low-income families in college towns are at more of a disadvantage than low-income families elsewhere. While this area should be designed to serve families of all socio-economic backgrounds, it seems that the differences in economic class are only exacerbated in this setting. Upper-class parents tend to have their way in the classroom, regardless of real cultural differences between them and lower-class parents. Disadvantaged families may not feel comfortable in these towns (Maranto and Dean 2015). Being underserved, therefore, transcends geography.

Test results. In a recent study, Croft, Roberts, and Stenhouse (2015) employed the term “testing industrial complex” to argue that the federal government, driven by neoliberal principles, has successfully crafted a narrative that educational success and improvement hinges on a standardized curriculum that holds all schools and students accountable Test results are the measure of that success and schools that “fail” lose funding resulting in laid off staff, school closure, cuts to the arts and music, and allocating what little revenue that remains to the support of standardized testing. What is more, the past decade of testing results has demonstrated almost no improvement in student performance, despite the narrative espoused. Ultimately, the premium placed on testing hides systemic inequities, insuring imparity remains.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this investigation was to address the current gap in the sociology of education literature which is the absence of research on the framing of CCSS. I examined how two of our country's most prominent newspapers are framing our nation's understanding of the implementation of CCSS. In order to do so, I conducted a content analysis of 120 newspaper articles from the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Times* over the course of a one-year period, and posed the following research questions/hypotheses:

1. What is the framing of CCSS in our national conversation?
2. Does the conversation surrounding CCSS suggest that this policy will facilitate or inhibit parity in the U.S.?
3. Do generated themes in the framing of the policy relate to one another? Are there any significant relationships?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS: ON FRAMING AND CODING

Theoretical Framework

Education is certainly a knowledge disseminator of society, and in Freireian terms, is modelled all too frequently on the banking concept of knowledge in which factual bits are deposited into students as though they were receptacles (1970). In a similar skepticism toward not only the educational process, but the distribution of commodified information by the mass media, I employ the constructionist perspective first espoused by Berger and Luckmann (1966). As educators and sociologists consider that the manner in which knowledge and information distribution is a socialized process in our schools, we can also identify that how facts and perspectives are shared in society at wide is also a contentious process. Upon completing schooling, the larger population still relies on outlets of information, largely the mass media, to inform their opinions. The theory of the social construction of reality questions how society comes to know what it does, recognizing that, although not everybody in society has the opportunity to shape ideas, their understanding/knowledge of reality is always situated and constituted (Ibid.).

The constructionist perspective recognizes the importance of understanding how humans come to identify what is "real" in their everyday lived experience (Vera 2016). Humans do not biologically inherit an objective reality in their minds, but rather come to socially understand their surroundings through the meanings and instructions constructed before them by others (Berger and Luckmann 1966) and in the messages they receive and interpret (Best 1995). The constructivist perspective thus emphasizes the process of communication in reinforcing idea currents in society. Macro-level forces such as the media assert for dominance while average

citizens must cognitively determine their acceptance or rejection of the messages transmitted through these communication streams (Gamson and Mogdigliani 1989). When certain messages and framings are communicated frequently enough (perhaps owing to, at a minimum, not being rejected), they can begin to become institutionalized and thus considered as taken for granted realities. At that point, these assumptions are reinforced in symbolic interactions and through social mechanisms which can be repeated for any given amount of time. Therefore, our reality is both shared and intersubjective (Dreher and Vera 2016). What we come to know is through a collective process of cultural contention (Gamson and Mogdigliani 1989).

Recognizing that the development and acquisition of knowledge and reality is a collective and constructed process, it is important to keep in mind that our perceptions and impressions of the world are not simply our own doing, and that not all voices are heard in this knowledge production process (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Some strains of critical sociology argue that most members of society are merely the products of ideological apparatuses constructed by an influential establishment with particular interests (Smith 1987). One such avenue to promote these interests would be the media. When considering the increasing convergence of media outlets, establishing the presence of fewer, yet more dominant global corporations (Pew Research Center: Journalism and Media 2010), it is prudent to consider how this conglomeration process might cater to elite interests. Research does suggest that traditional media such as newspapers do tend to represent the perspectives of powerful interests (Savrum and Miller 2016). And, when considering the elite are dependent on how their information sells for capital, there is additional concern that it is more "rational" for the industry to create stories that are easier to distribute to the mass society, though not necessarily more informative (Marcuse 1964; Downs 1972). These points become all the more salient when heeding Gurevitch and Levy's conception

of the media as, "a site on which various social groups, institutions, and ideologies struggle over the definition and construction of social reality" (1985, p. 19). At stake is the legitimation of frames, to be discussed below, which when cemented are not often re-evaluated by society at large. Instead "truths" become self-evident and are established as *the* reality of a circumstance (Berger 1963).

Because Berger and Luckmann's theory concerns itself with how the construction of knowledge becomes social fact, applications of this approach have been very broad. For example, sociology can consider the social construction of grander interactional variables such as power or authority (Dreher 2016; Furedi 2015), and this work does or does not have to consider the media. I reiterate my interest in media distribution of information, particularly because of its vast consumption and owing to just how frequently accessed it is by the public (Gamson and Mogdigliani 1989). The constructivist perspective has been employed in media analysis in a variety of ways. Research focused on discourse analysis, for example, has demonstrated how cultural scripts and gender stereotypes in newspaper accounts have influenced discussion of mental health issues (Eisenwort et al. 2014). A constructivist approach has also been used to examine the relationship between the media and social policy issues (Xu 2015; Wayne 2013). The array of media content appropriate for analysis is vast, and all of the studies concern themselves with how the media influence audience perceptions.

One such way to demonstrate how newspapers influence policy makers is to consider the codes the media use to depict public events or objects such as CCSS. This is understood in the literature as framing (Binder 1993), a concept which "designates interpretive structures that render events and occurrences subjectively meaningful, and thereby function to organize experience and guide action" (Snow 2007a:1778). Framing provides a model of reality which the

public can refer to as the foundation by which events occur. These frames represent some pattern of phenomena which influence public opinion. They are an organizing principle by which both media and consumer understand the world (Goffman 1974; Gamson and Mogdigliani 1989; Gitlin 1980). In some way, this approach is a useful tool in helping individuals come to understand everyday circumstances (Binder 1993).

Frames contain storylines which selectively and intentionally represent, or neglect, an issue or topic as a media outlet determines (Gamson and Mogdigliani 1989; Snow 2007a; Snow 2007b). For example, as previously discussed, the media typically frames issues in such ways as to protect and maintain elite views (Savrum and Miller 2016), and there are various other motivating mechanisms which can guide the construction of a frame. Whether for impact, sales, or as a pre-established guide, the most successful frames are typically those which already resonate within a larger cultural schema (Snow 2007b). If education is understood in most media storylines as the great equalizer, future media reports will probably resonate the most with their audience by acknowledging, if not embracing this frame (Binder 1993). The media therefore, while capable of establishing a frame, is also dependent and responsive to the reinforcement any topic has been given by the wider society (Gitlin 1980). This fact emphasizes the facility with which framing can deceive as this cementing of a reality can be at the expense of certain frames and voices ever even being considered (Goffman 1974).

It's reasonable to imagine that the framing for disenfranchised populations in the education system may be kept to a minimum as this inclusion would intrude on the more optimistic mainstream cultural belief that education is the great equalizer. Therefore, it is important to remember that when new legislation arises it presents a fresh opportunity to consider the cultural discourse of the media surrounding a given social problem (Gamson and

Modigliani 1989; Snow 2007b).

The notion of social problems as also the product of a socially constructed reality of social facts emerged roughly parallel to Berger and Luckmann (1966). In a response to the work, Spector and Kitsuse (2001) sought to adapt the theoretical approach to social problems by incorporating this constructivist perspective. This understanding of social problems recognizes that in order to understand an issue it is necessary to examine not only social conditions, but the role various claims makers have in bringing attention to topics. From that point of view, social problems are another component in the sociology of knowledge, and social actors are a vested factor for the field insofar as shaping the prevalence of issues. The role of the sociologist is to observe as the voice of community or media unfolds.

Content Analysis

In accord with my constructionist interest in the framing perspective, my study employed content analysis. Content analysis is a form of unobtrusive research which investigates forms of human communications in social artifacts such as websites, books, and newspaper articles (Babbie 2010). Unlike experimental methods which seek to understand what or why social phenomena occur within a causal framework, content analysis enables researchers to codify, quantify, and systematize verbal communication streams, and meaning making, in both qualitative and quantitative ways (Cho and Lee 2014; Sandelowski 1995; Giesler and Beadlescomb 2015). This approach is ideal for the study of human messages.

According to Babbie (2010), the systematized investigation of media messages as related to content analysis date back to at least the research of Ida B. Wells at the end of the 19th century. Wells studied the discrepancy between the occurrence of lynchings in the South and the accused crimes those victims of lynching received. Recent research in content analysis focused on

representations of gender in textbooks and newspapers, the portrayal of mental illness in stigmatizing fashions in the media, and the discussion of health concerns to name a few (Giesler and Beadlescomb 2015; de Cabo et al. 2011; Calo and Băban 2013; Classen et al. 2012).

Content analysis seeks to find both manifest and latent content. Manifest content are those communication strands and messages directly present in a text. For example, if a researcher is investigating the media's framing of nuclear arms deals, the manifest content in a newspaper article might include references to weapons facilities, accidents, or progress in safety measures (Cho and Lee 2014; Gamson and Modigliani 1989). Latent content refers to underlying meanings embedded in a text and read in between the explicit semantics. *How* is an author framing a particular event? If a researcher examines an article on nuclear deals, can he infer derision of these politics by the journalist via sarcastic language, or a generally negative tone in his word choice? (Krippendorff 2004). This data collection process enables social scientists to recognize and categorize broader messages being transmitted to society through the characteristics and emerging patterns in the communications they study (Holsti 1969; Babbie 2010). In summary, content analysis is concerned with who is saying what to whom, why, how, and to what effect (Babbie 2010).

Content analysis enables a systematized nuance of mass communication not quite attainable in other research approaches. In particular, this method is very strong when a research topic is just first being understood. Content analysis has the ability to generate themes and codes which can support the growth for more substantive theory (Cho and Lee 2014). Furthermore, this research process can come to understand public agendas which can set policy making rhetoric with large data sets (Khan 2013).

The present study is exploratory and focused on how CCSS has been framed in two

national newspaper outlets. Guided by findings in previous theory and studies, I developed an a priori coding sheet with pre-established themes (Neuendorff 2011; Mayring 2000). These guided my coding of the aforementioned newspapers. While I largely coded manifest content including the mention and presence of resources, teaching methods, and the racial achievement gap, I also coded some latent content such as the emotional language of a given article (Cho and Lee 2014).

Sample

My total sample consisted of 120 newspaper articles collected from the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times*. I selected these newspapers owing to their status as top-5 distributed newspapers in the United States and because they emerge from the two largest megaregions of the country (Associated Press, 2013; Hagler 2009). Heeding Chilton's construct of "critical discourse moments" (1987), I decided to collect a sample from a one-year time period. In so doing I increased my ability to gather language and framing which captured school calendar-based cycling related to reporting about CCSS. With a sample of articles from September 15, 2014 – September 15, 2015, I included the beginnings of two school years, the entire academic calendar, the typical testing season in spring, and the unpacking of the results over the summer. This time frame is comprehensive of the moments which make the culture of testing "visible" (Chilton 1987).

I used two search engines to gather the articles: ProQuest Historical Newspapers, an index of the politics and events of various newspapers, and LexisNexis which is a repository of various legal and journalistic documents. In the advanced search options I entered my pre-determined date span and the search term "Common Core." ProQuest, which produced my *Chicago Tribune* results, generated a total of 201 articles and LexisNexis found 139 articles from the *New York Times* totaling 340 articles. 220 articles were deemed irrelevant to the study. These

articles either were completely unrelated to CCSS and just happened to contain the word "common" or "core" in the article, or the mention of CSSS was so minute to the broader context of the article that there was no useable data. For example, in many articles there were cases of simply stating a politician's stance toward CCSS in a sentence or two.

I read through a dozen of the articles (10% of the sample) and modified my coding sheet to include new themes which surfaced repeatedly in the majority of this first preliminary sample, such as the mention of the "opt-out movement" in some of these articles. After final modifications of my coding sheet, I then proceeded to read through the entire sample and coded according to the presence, absence, and in some cases, *degree* or *nature* of certain variables. I collected data such as the article title, word length of article, date, and day of week as well as encoded each article with a unique number for identification for data analysis.

Variables

I used an a priori coding sheet (see *Appendix*) to collect data on 59 distinct variables. For the purposes of this study, seven variables remained relevant to my analysis. Following Bond's (2015) presentation of variables, below I display the variables relevant to my analyses organized by category.

Involved members. For invested people I looked for community members, union members, business interests, and teachers. I first coded for the presence of involved members: Community and labor union members and teachers. If they were present in the article, I then coded for whether they supported or criticized (or were opposed) to the standards. In some article cases I coded that the figure both supported and criticized the standards.

Populations. Similarly, I coded for vulnerable populations who are impacted by CCSS: those with learning differences, ELL, elementary students, underserved communities, and

minority students (understood on my code sheet by the racial achievement gap). I coded first for their presence in the article and then if the article frames that CCSS will either help or hurt these populations. In some cases I coded for the policy both helping and hurting these populations, while in other cases neither was applicable.

Resources. The resource category investigates the role financial resources have in the framing of the policy and I included teacher resources and training. Like the population category, I coded for the presence of these variables and then whether or not CCSS legislation would help or hurt these items as framed in the article.

Outcomes. The outcomes category investigates how the articles framed what might come from the CCSS policy. I coded first for standardized testing and looked at test results as a byproduct of standardized testing. I also coded for college and career readiness and the incorporation of teacher feedback. In all variable cases I first coded for their presence or absence in the article, and then whether CCSS would help/improve/support this variable or result in its decline.

National picture. The national picture category considers the most macro-level framing of CCSS and what larger effect the standards might be having on society overall. I coded for the mention of private schools, vouchers and charter schools and if an article framed them as being helped, hurt, or both by CCSS.

Coding and Analytic Strategy

My coding process began with the *Chicago Tribune* selection of articles and I then proceeded to the *New York Times* sample. I read through the articles at least three times, scanning for the variables generated on my code sheet, keeping in mind their explicated operationalization which I provided above. I also wrote down any qualitative observations at the

end of coding any article. Following the general trend of coding in content-analysis I conducted "human coding," as opposed to a software sometimes used for qualitative coding. (Neuendorf 2011). Furthermore, I coded alone. One advantage of this decision was that it reduced my need to worry about reliability. Without a team of coders, I did not need to monitor the coding process by others who may not have as readily understood my codebook. Of course, without a team of coding and a reliability check, I cannot be sure that my observations would be replicated. But since my codes collected manifest meaning, achieving reliability would have been likely. I conducted one pilot sample of 10% of the articles which provided me the opportunity to clarify some of the terms of my codes for my own clarity (Neuendorf 2011).

Upon completing the coding process of all 120 news articles in my sample, I examined my coding sheets and returned to clean some of the data. In some cases, my notations on variables needed to be clarified and in other cases I recognized that I introduced "both" or "not available" in some variables where that had not previously existed. In this latter situation I had to assign a numeric value to "both" and "not available" and review all 120 of my code sheets to ensure consistency. After cleaning the data, I created an SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) file where I would use the software to run analyses. I first examined univariate statistics to further clean the data and examine distributions.

In reviewing the frequencies of the data, I was also able to recode, or relabel certain variables. The variables for the populations of learning differences, ELL, elementary students, underserved communities and the racial achievement gap were recoded from two variables into one whereby the labels were help, hurt, both, not mentioned, or not mentioned and neither help nor hurt. These five numeric codes were also used in some variation of semantic depiction of teacher resources, test results, college and career readiness, teaching, and private schools/charter

schools/vouchers. Certain variables were excluded in the final analysis as they were not appropriate for bivariate analysis, but were still regarded as noteworthy in the overall description of the presentation of CCSS in the papers.

The main task of my project was examining the portrayal of CCSS in each newspaper separately. Additionally, I conducted a chi-square analysis by newspaper to determine if there were any significant differences between variables by region (the Midwest and the Northeast) and I used t-tests in the instances of ordinal variables.

I ran all of my variables in a chi-square analysis and, due to the high number of significant variables returned, capped my significance level at $p \leq .005$. This left me with 21 significant variables. I determined the eligibility of inclusion for analysis of these variables by looking at the original chi-square tables to examine the distribution of the cells. In some cases, there were empty cells in the table, or in other cases there were too many "NA's" answered, or sometimes the variable appeared correlated with other similar variables. I made a judgment call to remove 8 variables for this reason (low cell entries or high correlation).

Chi-square tests for independence revealed the frequency distributions of the primary dependent variables and the significance of their association with each newspaper. Variables with statistically significant Pearson Chi-Square values have their X^2, df, and Cramer's V values listed (Cramer's V effect sizes can be categorized as smell, medium, or large, using the thresholds of 0.06, 0.17, and 0.29 respectively as cited in Cohen, 1988). Further analysis was conducted to explore the relationships that dependent variables had with each other. The four variables that had significant associations by newspaper were run separately for each newspaper, to control for newspaper variable's effect. In instances where more than 20% of cells had expected counts of less than five, analyses were disregarded (McHugh 2013).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

A content analysis of two national newspapers suggests CCSS fails to address teacher feedback, union members, business interests, those with learning differences, ELL, the (racial) achievement gap, and lastly, private schools, school vouchers, and charter schools. These are troubling findings in light of the literature highlighting the imparity of education in the United States.

Univariate Statistics and Sample Description

My total sample of 120 articles was split between the *Chicago Tribune* (N = 54) and the *New York Times* (N = 66). Of the series of the invested population variables, 74.2% of the articles espouse teacher voice, yet teacher feedback appears in 36.7% of the articles examined, suggesting an anomalous effect when it comes to the importance of teacher voice. Union members are not mentioned in 75.8% of the articles. Community members are not invoked in 70% of the articles. Lastly, business interests are not mentioned in 83.3% of all articles.

In terms of the populations category, 89.2% of the articles do not mention those with learning differences, 85% of the articles do not mention ELL, And, finally, the (racial) achievement gap is omitted from newspapers 75% of the time.

Private schools, school vouchers, and charter schools are not mentioned in 81.7% of the articles.

Chi-Square Statistics

Table 1 examines the distribution of the key themes of interest overall and by newspaper, using codes to designate whether the theme in question was mentioned positively (affirmative), negatively (dissident), both positively and negatively, or not at all. The tone variable is an

exception, as all articles were coded as either positive, negative, or neutral. Overall, the code that had the largest positive presence was the code associated with discussing the effect of CCSS on elementary students. When looking at the presence of negative code mentions (dissenting, unfavorable language), underserved communities leads the pack with 24% of codes being negative.

Comparing the presence of these codes across papers reveals four statistically significant differences in the codes of standardized test results, (racial) achievement gap, elementary students, and underserved communities. The *New York Times* had codes of underserved communities and (racial) achievement gap mentioned positively about 15% more often than the *Chicago Tribune*. Conversely, the *New York Times* articles contained codes for standardized test results getting worse about 20% more often than the *Chicago Tribune*. Differences in presence of positive and negative codes were not as pronounced for the elementary students code, but the *New York Times* had about 20% more codes that indicated this theme was mentioned both positively and negatively.

Table 1. Frequencies of the primary dependent variables of interest overall and by newspaper.

	Total % (120)	**CT % (54)**	**NYT % (66)**	**$X^2(df)$ (Cramer's V)**
Tone of CCSS discussion				
Positive	18 (21)	20 (11)	15 (10)	NS
Neutral	55 (66)	50 (27)	59 (39)	
Negative	28 (33)	30 (16)	26 (17)	
Standardized test results				
They are better	12 (14)	17 (9)	8 (5)	9.88(3) .287
They are worse	22 (16)	9 (5)	32 (21)	
A mix of better and worse	2 (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	
Neither	65 (88)	72 (36)	59 (39)	
Standardized test improvements				
Tests will improve	16 (19)	11 (6)	20 (13)	NS
Tests will decline	4 (5)	4 (2)	5 (3)	

A mix of improve and decline	2 (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	
Neither	78 (94)	83 (45)	74 (49)	
Standardized test efficiency				
Roll outs are efficient	15 (18)	17 (9)	14 (9)	NS
Roll outs are inefficient	8 (10)	6 (3)	11 (7)	
Neither	77 (92)	78 (42)	76 (50)	
Racial achievement gap				
Racial gap – Positive	11 (13)	4 (2)	17 (11)	14.20(3) .344
Racial gap – Negative	10 (12)	4 (2)	15 (10)	
Both positive and negative	3 (3)	0 (0)	5 (3)	
Neither	77 (92)	93 (50)	64 (42)	
Learning disabled				
They are better	5 (6)	2 (1)	8 (5)	NS
They are worse	3 (4)	4 (2)	3 (2)	
Neither	92 (110)	94 (51)	89 (59)	
ELL				
Tests will improve	6 (7)	4 (2)	8 (5)	NS
Tests will decline	8 (10)	4 (2)	12 (8)	
A mix of improve and decline	1 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)	
Neither	85 (102)	93 (50)	79 (52)	
Elementary students				
They are better	24 (29)	26 (14)	23 (15)	12.52(3) .323
They are worse	14 (17)	11 (6)	17 (11)	
A mix of better and worse	13 (15)	2 (1)	21 (14)	
Neither	49 (59)	61 (33)	39 (26)	
Underserved communities				
They are better	16 (19)	7 (4)	23 (15)	9.95 (3) .289
They are worse	24 (29)	19 (10)	29 (19)	
A mix of better and worse	4 (5)	4 (2)	5 (3)	
Neither	56 (67)	70 (38)	43 (29)	

Table 2 utilizes a recoding scheme that dichotomizes all variables except for tone. For these variables, their presence was recoded into either 1) mentioned positively or 2) mentioned negatively, positively and negatively, or not at all. This table illustrates the positive presence of our variables of interest overall, and again by newspaper outlets. There are two statistical differences by paper and in both occurrences, for (racial) achievement gap and underserved communities, the *New York Times* mentioned the codes positively significantly more often. Still,

overall of the total number of articles examined, only 13% discussed the (racial) achievement gap and 21% discussed underserved communities positively.

Table 2. Frequencies of the primary dependent variables of interest overall and by newspaper, utilizing the positive presence status of variables.

	Total (%) (n)	**CT (%)**	**NYT (%)**	$X^2(df)$ **(Cramer's V)**
Tone of CCSS discussion				
Positive	18 (21)	20 (11)	26 (17)	NS
Neutral	55 (66)	50 (27)	59 (59)	
Negative	28 (33)	30 (16)	15 (10)	
Standardized test results discussed positively	13 (16)	19 (10)	9 (6)	NS
Standardized test improvements discussed positively	18 (21)	13 (7)	21 (14)	NS
Standardized test efficiency discussed positively	15 (18)	17 (9)	14 (9)	NS
Racial gap discussed in article positively	13 (16)	4 (2)	21 (14)	7.88 (1) .256
Learning disabled discussed in article positively	5 (6)	2 (1)	8 (5)	NS
English language learners discussed in article positively	7 (8)	4 (2)	9 (6)	NS
Elementary students discussed in article positively	37 (44)	28 (15)	44 (29)	NS
Underserved communities discussed in article positively	21 (25)	11 (6)	29 (19)	5.63 (1) .217

Moving beyond differences between papers, Tables 3, 4, and 5 showcase the variables that had statistically significant association with each other. Overall, tone of the article is

significantly associated with how the elementary student theme is discussed, and the nature of how elementary students is discussed is also associated with how test results are discussed. Looking at *New York Times* articles specifically, elementary student discussion is also associated with how underserved communities are discussed.

Table 3. Association between tone of article and elementary student discussion.

Tone	**Elementary discussed positively % (n)**	**Elementary not discussed positively % (n)**	**$X^2(df)$ (Cramer's V)**
Positive	3 (3)	7 (8)	17.51 .382
Neutral	23 (28)	32 (38)	
Negative	11 (13)	25 (30)	

Table 4. Association between how test results are discussed and elementary student discussion

	Elementary discussed positively % (n)	**Elementary not discussed positively % (n)**	**$X^2(df)$ (Cramer's V)**
Results discussed positively	(10)	(6)	5.31 (1) .210
Test results not discussed positively	(34)	(70)	

Table 5. Association between how underserved communities are discussed and elementary student discussion.

NY Paper	**Elementary discussed positively % (n)**	**Elementary not discussed positively % (n)**	**$X^2(df)$ (Cramer's V)**
Underserved communities discussed positively	(12)	(7)	29.65 (1) .67
Underserved communities not discussed positively	(17)	(30)	

Discussion

The most significant finding of this study is that the mainstream media are *not* drawing attention to matters of imparity as a consequence of CCSS. Key players in the field of education

such as union members, community members and business interests do not arise often in the national discussion.

Firstly, the literature recognizes that the presence of union members in disenfranchised school districts can attract long-term teachers who can bring adequate skills, experience, and knowledge to their classrooms. Kozol (2012) discusses the white middle-class school experience, describing multi-acre campuses, access to media centers such as TV rooms and modern computer labs, advanced science laboratories for biology, chemistry, and physics, thriving arts programs, up-to-date textbooks, etc. These resources are monitored and supervised by well-paid teachers with sizeable benefits packages. The staff are rewarded for their efforts, and their students go on to private universities, and sometimes the Ivy League. Without a public awareness that enthusiastic teachers are not being drawn to poor neighborhoods, there can be no calls for changing the state of education for underserved communities. Perhaps the national union presence will not identify this issue as one worth fighting. In the same vein, the absence of community voice in the papers suggests that perhaps the media would prefer to frame CCSS as an effective national legislation that will stimulate better performance from local schools. This view emphasizes a pro-testing approach whereby grants and funding depend upon a federal assessment of school performance. The reality of socio-economic deprivation is ignored in place of a narrative of “laziness.” Similarly, if there *are* local voices giving time to this inequity, they are not being portrayed in the media, potentially alienating them from a broader audience to mobilize toward action.

More frighteningly, the role of big business in the formation of education policy goes largely unacknowledged. Various corporations are on record as contributing millions to education and this begs the question of intention. Are they protecting their vested interest in the

hidden curriculum? That is, producing a labor force compliant with the demands of an increasingly complicated global marketplace. This hidden curriculum may heighten imparity and the stratification of American citizens by class. If, for example, corporate money invests in strict vocational opportunities for students from low performing schools, their career outcomes may be limited to becoming beauticians, hair stylists, or factory workers (Kozol 2012). If no discussion of the cause and effect of the life chances of disenfranchised populations arise, it may come as no surprise that the nation accepts these circumstances as the best that the disenfranchised can do, when in fact resources could be redistributed for a more equitable education and potentially a more equal society.

An extension of this lack of discourse on imparity includes special needs populations such as those with learning differences, ELL, and the (racial) achievement gap. Their exclusion in the national conversation might suggest that the media does not recognize these issues as significant enough to draw to the public's attention. Perhaps those stories do not sell, and maybe that is because these populations do not exist within an established narrative frame to which the public can relate. If they do struggle it may be understood that it's their inherent capacity and disability that limits their ability for success. The notion that a curriculum could be constructed to recognize the differences in their learning styles does not enter the public consciousness because the media does not bring this possibility to their attention.

To be sure, the absence of a conversation surrounding ELL serves to isolate a growing segment of the American population. There is an increasing mistrust of ELL populations, across age, as anti-immigrant sentiment increases alongside nationalistic, xenophobic attitudes. To draw attention to the lack of service to ELL may only anger the national audience. Or, conversely, lack of attention may maintain an image of doing-good to this population by well-meaning

populations. Along the same lines, a newspaper frame making mention of the (racial) achievement gap may align with the more mainstream, optimistic view U.S. society holds of education. Maintaining a notion of "grabbing oneself by the bootstraps," subscribers of these two newspapers may not care to hear a contrarian view, may not be willing to embrace it, or may simply not have the cognitive wherewithal to register such a story. Regardless, these omissions do all the disenfranchised a major disservice.

The general absence of private schools, school vouchers, and charter schools in the framing of CCSS is noteworthy. Perhaps the national media does not view this option as a particularly appealing narrative to the CCSS roll-out? Does CCSS apply equally to these schools? There may be a gap between the policy and the curriculum these schools adhere to. Or, perhaps the newspapers prefer to not address the inequity produced by these schooling options so as to adhere to the mainstream narrative of education as the great equalizer. For example, Khadduri, Turnham, Chase and Schwartz (2003) argue in favor of charter schools. They cite what they claim is a popular argument: that charter schools can actually serve as solid supports in the effort to revitalize neighborhoods' socioeconomic growth. The idea is that the charter school would keep middle class families inside the neighborhoods due to enhanced education provided by the charter school. This means that neighborhood revitalization has the potential to occur as a side effect of school enhancement. Though other literature contradicts this idea, it may be a more palatable narrative for the American audience.

Interestingly, frames evoking the teacher voice are frequent (74.2%). As the bridge between family/community, student, and the larger educational system, the teacher is at the frontlines. They are the face of education. Furthermore, there is a general impression of the teacher as an educated, good-hearted public servant, entrusted with the upbringing of the nation's

youth. Perhaps it would be unavoidable to mention this invested member and including the teacher may create the impression that they are in support of CCSS. Of course, that their feedback is generally disregarded supports the literature's findings that teachers are struggling to make sense of the policy's impact on pedagogy. By incorporating teachers in the mainstream narrative about CCSS allows the newspapers to cover their bases, while ignoring the frustrations and difficulties of the classroom experience.

Returning to Table 1, there were no significant associations observed between the two newspapers for tone of the article, standardized test improvements, standardized test efficiency, learning differences, or ELL. It can be noted that 55% of the article sample employs a neutral tone when discussing CCSS. When reading national newspaper accounts about CCSS, a subscriber might conclude that CCSS is in and of itself not all that polarizing of an issue, that it may be able to unite various interest groups and that is in fact serving the American public. The status quo in education policy could be protected as there is no alarm raised in these articles.

The significant results found in Table 1 included in relation to tone of the article included standardized test results ($x^2(3) = 9.88$ (.287)) and elementary students ($x^2(3) = 12.52$ (.323)). However, neither were particularly more positive or negative for either paper, therefore not meriting discussion. A similar conclusion could be drawn toward codes of underserved communities ($x^2(3) = 9.95$ (.289)) and (racial) achievement gap ($x^2(3) = 14.20$ (.344)). Neither paper was especially more positive or negative toward these themes. However, Table 1 does indicate that underserved communities were related to be served positively by CCSS in over three times as many *New York Times* articles than the *Chicago Tribune*, and over four times the number of articles for the (racial) achievement gap. Underserved communities and the (racial) achievement gap seem like they could be interconnected. Why is a positive frame more likely in

the *New York Times* than in the *Chicago Tribune*? Is more wealth or corporate interest invested in this policy in New York? As the world's center for culture, finance, and social capital, perhaps it is preferable to pay lip service to issues of racial socioeconomic disparity in the area given how NYC remains vastly segregated in education (Kozol 2012). However, to eradicate this significant social problem, a redistribution of resources would necessitate a sacrifice from wealthier parties of Northeast society.

In Table 2, underserved communities ($x^2(1) = 5.63$ (.217)) and (racial) achievement gap ($x^2(1) = 7.88$ (.256)) were again both much more positive for the *New York Times*, supporting the theme from Table 1. The *New York Times* invoked a positive tone over twice as often than the *Chicago Tribune* when discussing underserved communities and over five times as likely when discussing the (racial) achievement gap.

Of course, when examining the results, most variable x associations (12 out of 21) that were explored were not significant. As a paper more concerned with national perception, as opposed to regional, this finding supports a broader societal ignorance of inequity. Neither region is willing to draw attention to the disenfranchised. Both newspapers are framing CCSS in a manner that maintains the status quo.

Now, moving beyond an examination of variables that are different between paper, there is one interesting result that emerges when examining Table 1 and Table 3. Elementary students are framed as very positive in both. The only tables with significant associations (that pass chi-square assumptions) beyond newspapers all have elementary students as a theme. Table 3 demonstrates that the newspapers adopt a neutral or negative tone in 57% of articles when elementary students are not discussed positively ($x^2(1) = 17.51$ (.382)). Table 4 suggests it can be noted that test results are not discussed positively in 58% of articles when elementary students

are not discussed positively ($x^2(1) = 5.31$ (.210)). Lastly, Table 5 shows that the newspaper articles do not discuss underserved communities positively when elementary students are not discussed positively 25% of the time ($x^2(1) = 29.65$ (.670)). There is strong evidence that, relative to other themes, elementary students have a more consistent direction in how it is discussed. There seems to be a premium placed on this population so much so that when an article is skeptical of how CCSS will impact the elementary student, it then becomes slightly more willing to consider imparity. Relative to the literature, the face and future of education seems to be the emphasized target of education policy, or is at least regarded as most important in the national discussion.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The present study concerned itself with the role of the media in the perpetuation of imparity in education. I questioned if there was discrepancy between the reality of education policy and newspaper accounts. Has the framing of CCSS in the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* suggested the policy will facilitate or inhibit parity in the United States?

My immersion into the sociology of education literature, including critical pedagogy, highlighted issues to me that prevent structural and intergenerational mobility by race, stratification, language knowledge, and learning style. While there were some efforts at the mid-20th century to address some of these disparities, education has been increasingly impacted by neoliberal ideology since the 1980's, emphasizing efficiency, standardization, and "results." These values delimit the capacity of educational policies' capacity to expand curriculum to the marginalized, because the debates typically do not keep them in mind. And should these special needs populations "fail" at mandated testing measurements, policy makers attribute this loss to the inefficiency of the local school community, with consequences such as suspended funding. There is no investigation into the social and economic factors that drive this failure in the first place.

By and large, my findings have shown that the national media has created a conversation that frames CCSS as contributing to parity in the nation. The articles I studied rarely address the key issues that would ensure CCSS effectiveness. Rather, they typically employ a functional lens and do not take the critical perspective necessary to draw national attention to those populations CCSS has ignored. Imparity, it seems, will continue in our educational system so long as the public is not made aware of structural issues at play.

With regards to relationships between variables, the only significant finding was with respect to elementary students. Their framing in the newspapers seemed to relate to the general tone of an article as well as the framing of test results and underserved communities. When elementary students were not framed positively, there was a correlation that suggested these variables were also more likely to be framed in neutral or negative terms.

Significance

The framing of any significant topic in the mass media is important because many individuals tend to form their opinions about it through this outlet (Kamalipour and Carilli 1998). Additionally, to the extent that any of the coded themes generated in this content analysis of the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York Times* might produce new themes or highlight the significance of others, this research contributes to larger theoretical literature in the sociology of education. From an applied perspective, this study adds nuance to what contributes or comprises inequitable education in the public eye. Despite findings that suggest that policy-related issues have yet to be adequately addressed, it is important to recognize CCSS has made some positive strides.

Venezia and Jaeger (2013), for example, do not have a fatalistic view of the impact of the CCSS curriculum on teaching. Their research suggests that CCSS will make it possible for: 1) teachers to focus less on their rigid lessons and more on coaching and enabling student potential and 2) students to take ownership over their own learning, incorporate more difficult core classes in their individual schedules, learn to construct and critique an argument, move away from rituals of memorization, and deepen their understanding of course content. This has been possible, they argue, because there has been a shift from “what and when” to “why and how” thinking (Venezia and Jaeger 2013).

CCSS has also meant an increase in student cultural and media literacy (Bickford,

Bickford, and Rich 2015). Students, for example, are encouraged in social studies curriculum to critically analyze historic photographs by inferring photographers' meanings and intentions by examining the photographs' titles, use of imagery and so on. This learning process is finally settled when coupled with IT literacy whereby students utilize internet tools to create their own images with prompts such as a photo title (Bickford, Bickford, and Rich 2015). To the extent that class activities in various subjects can promote the means to critically engage the new literacy of technology and mass media within the context of a critical historical perspective (Bickford and Hunt 2014; Bickford and Rich 2014), students are being served in learning how to cope with the vast array of information and stimulation available to them in this century.

But who selects those media files? Where is the voice of the disenfranchised in this developmental process? It is hard to accept the uncritical proposition that educational policy, in particular CCSS, is having a positive impact when the material (e.g., scarce resources, inexperienced teachers, malfunctioning restroom facilities, inoperable or unavailable technology); segregated (e.g., white management of schools); and pedagogical (e.g., a pedagogy of dictation as opposed to engagement) realities continue to restrict the potential of students in underserved communities (Kozol 2012; Common Core State Standards Initiative 2014; Sensoy and DiAngelo 2012). These circumstances, sociological research conveys, produce unequal childhoods (Kozol 2012; Lareau 2003), a sense of marginalization, and low self-esteem in students bearing serious consequences for future life choices (Della Fave 1980; Giroux 2004; Wilson 1996). Scholars are aware of these phenomena, but is the public? My research sheds some light on the extent to which the media fails to bring these realities to the American public.

Delimitations

Of course, CCSS was implemented in 2009 and has since been challenged and rearranged

by the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). It goes without saying that educational policy continually evolves. Finally, owing to human limitation, most major newspaper coverage of CCSS simply could not be covered in this paper. The scope of CCSS as a social problem is therefore undoubtably much larger than what I could study through these bounded limits. My research, as such, must be understood as introductory and exploratory.

Future Lines of Research

To conclude, I discuss possibilities for future research. My first two ideas are extensions of my findings, while the final two are ideas I had not considered as I constructed this study.

The absence of imparity in the national media. What mechanisms are specifically inhibiting the discussion of imparity in the national newspapers? Is corporate money invested in maintaining the status quo? What role does big business play in the construction of a national curriculum? These questions are beyond the scope of this study but must be explored to address the lack of focus on imparity. This study did not get at *why* this phenomenon is occurring either.

Elementary students. The framing of several variables in the newspapers related to how elementary students were discussed. Future studies might explore if there is a historic trend in the media of seemingly placing a premium on the elementary student. It doesn't surprise me as it is this population that will experience a curriculum for over a decade. At the same time, is there any redress toward failure to previous generations? Does the impact of past policy on older students get investigated by newspapers? By a similar token, will the impact of CCSS on these current elementary students be considered by the media in a decade or so? The past cannot be corrected if it does not get discussed.

College and career readiness. College and career readiness is a principle that suggests that increased standards are designed to guarantee students are prepared for the next phase of

their education and lives (Porter et al. 2011). As it currently stands, measures indicate that students are falling behind on college readiness. Only 38% of 12th grade students perform at a proficient level on reading assessments, and only 26% do so for mathematics (Venezia and Jaeger 2013). Venezia and Jaeger (2013) continue to postulate that CCSS should bridge the divide between high school performance and college and career readiness. However, in order to connect secondary schools as a step toward higher education, there remains to be seen a consensus on what it means to be college and career ready.

The authors indicate that it is not entirely clear how current school systems will drive this new change to readiness. Will it be core academics? Applied pathways? Will elementary schools target children to develop and instill the right habits into youth, as this is often needed well before high school? What about teaching instruction? Is it possible to create a form of standards to evoke capability building, student backings, or developing strong habits of mind? These questions address other potential future lines of research.

Finally, reform efforts may only have so much reach; it would be ideal to have higher education play a larger role in this bridging process (2013). CCSS has already been indicted on this front, with American College Testing (ACT) declaring that CCSS is disconnected from the expectations of college instructors. ACT conducted a survey of over 9,000 educators of students from elementary school through higher education and concluded that CCSS testing excludes the promotion of nonacademic skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, to name a few (American College Testing 2016).

Future research must continue to monitor not only the streaming of students from high school to college, but also their job outcomes, with particular emphasis by race, socioeconomic status, language abilities, and learning style.

An unexpected result that emerged from the data analysis is the *Opt-out movement*. 34.2% of the articles espoused the concept of students "opting-out" of CCSS testing. 52.2% of those articles framed this phenomenon with positive regard. In some articles, terms such as "movement," "protest," "dissent," or "organize" were used. Are angry families or educators organizing themselves against CCSS in a significant way beyond disgruntled rhetoric or withdrawing their child from testing? Will this set a new precedent for responding to future education policies? Could enough attention to opting-out subsequently highlight deeper issues of imparity?

Media may choose to frame this occurrence as a social movement of sorts. If so, future research must investigate who the actors on the ground are, their claims, and which members of society are reached as a result of such a movement.

REFERENCES

"ACT National Curriculum Survey 2016." 2016. American College Testing. Retrieved December 5, 2016. (www.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/NCS_Report_Web_2016.pdf).

Ayres, Kevin M. 2012. "Reconciling Ecological Educational Planning with Access to the Common Core: Putting the Cart Before the Horse?: A Response to Hunt and McDonnell." *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities* 37(3):153-156.

Babbie, Earl. 2010. *The Practice of Social Research* 12th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage.

Benford, Robert D. 1997. "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective." *Sociological Inquiry* 67(4):409-30.

Berger, Peter L. 1963. *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.

Best, Joel. 1995. "Constructionism in Context." Pp. 363-80 in *Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bickford, John H. and Cynthia W. Rich. 2014. "Historical Thinking and Common Core: Facilitating Adolescents' Scrutiny of the Credibility of Slave Narratives." *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies* 75(1):1-14.

Bickford, John H. and Lauren Hunt. 2014. "Common Core, Informational Texts, and the Historical (Mis)Representations of Native Americans within Trade Books." *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies* 75(2):1-16.

Bickford, John H., Molly S. Bickford, and Cynthia W. Rich. 2015. "History Literacy and Visual

Informational Texts: Scrutinizing Photographs Beyond their Borders. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies* 76(2):1-17.

Binder, Amy. 1993. "Constructing Racial Rhetoric: Media Depictions of Harm in Heavy Metal Music and Rap Music." *American Sociological Review* 58(6):753-767.

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Brunn-Bevel, Rachelle J. and Carson W. Byrd. 2015. "The Foundation of Racial Disparities in the Standardized Testing Era: The Impact of School Segregation and the Assault on Public Education in Virginia." *Humanity & Society* 39(4):419-448.

Burdick-Will, Julia, Micere Keels, and Todd Schuble. 2013. "Closing and Opening Schools: The Association between Neighborhood Characteristics and the Location of New Educational Opportunities in a Large Urban District." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 35(1):59-80.

Calo, Larisa and Adriana Băban. 2013. "The Stigma of Schizophrenia in Romanian Newspapers: A Content Analysis Approach." *Sociologie Românească* 11(3):8-21.

Capitelli, Sarah. 2016. "English Language Learners' Use of the Phrase 'I Forgot': A Window into the Challenges of Learning in a Restrictive Environment." *Multicultural Education* 23(3-4):14-19.

Chall, Jean S. 2000. *The Academic Achievement Challenge: What Really Works in the Classroom?*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Chilton, Paul. 1987. "Metaphor, Euphemism, and the Militarization of Language." *Current Research on Peace and Violence* 10(1):7-19.

Cho, Ji Y. and Eun-Hee Lee. 2014. "Reducing Confusion about Grounded Theory and Qualitative Content Analysis: Similarities and Differences." *The Qualitative Report*

19(32):1-20.

“Circulation Numbers for the 10 Largest Newspapers.” 2013. The Associated Press. Retrieved November 4, 2015 (https://apnews.com/article/560b8f3b5fc844bcb4836752db0d0884).

Claassen, Liesbeth, Tjabe Smid, Fred Woudenberg, and Danielle R.M. Timmermans. 2012. “Media Coverage on Electromagnetic Fields and Health: Content Analysis of Dutch Newspaper Articles and Websites.” *Health, Risk, & Society* 14(7-8):681-696.

Cohen, Jacob. 1988. *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Coleman, James S. 1966. *Equality of Educational Opportunity [Summary Report]*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education.

“Common Core State Standards Initiative: Preparing America's Students for College and Career.” 2014. Common Core State Standards Initiative. Retrieved November 4, 2015 (http://www.corestandards.org/).

Croft, Sheryl J., Mari Ann Roberts, and Vera L. Stenhouse. 2015. “The Perfect Storm of Education Reform: High-Stakes Testing and Teacher Evaluation.” *Social Justice* 42(1):70-92.

“Dataset: Media Ownership.” 2010. Pew Research Center: Journalism and Media. Retrieved November 5, 2015 (http://www.pewresearch.org/download-datasets/).

Della Fave, Richard L. 1980. “The Meek Shall not Inherit the Earth: Self-Evaluation and the Legitimacy of Stratification.” *American Sociological Review* 45(6):955-971.

Demi, Feyisa and Christabel McLean. 2007. “Raising the Achievement of African Heritage Pupils: A Case Study of Good Practice in British Schools.” *Educational Studies* 33(4):415-434.

Downs, Anthony. 1972. "Up and Down with Ecology – The 'Issue-Attention Cycle'." *Public Interest* 28:38-50.

Dreher, Jochen. 2016. "The Social Construction of Power: Reflections Beyond Berger/Luckmann and Bourdieu." *Cultural Sociology* 10(1):53-68.

Dreher, Jochen and Héctor Vera. 2016. "The Social Construction of Reality, A Four-Headed, Two-Fingered Book: An Interview with Thomas Luckmann." *Cultural Sociology* 10(1):30-36.

Eisenwort, Brigitte, Benedikt Till, Barbara Hinterbuchinger, and Thomas Niederkrotenthaler. 2014. "Sociable, Mentally Disturbed Women and Angry, Rejected Men: Cultural Scripts for the Suicidal Behavior of Women and Men in the Austrian Print Media." *Sex Roles* 71(5):246-260.

Eng, Norman. 2016. "Education Inequality: Broadening Public Attitudes through Framing." *Journal of Social Issues* 72(4):676-695.

"English Language Learners in Public Schools." 2017. The Condition of Education. Retrieved January 23, 2018 (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp).

"Federal Education Policy and the States, 1945-2009: A Brief Synopsis." 2009. New York State Education Department. Retrieved November 4, 2015. (http://www.archives.nysed.gov/edpolicy/research/res_essay_contents.html)

Feldmann, Doug. 2005. "Twenty-Five Years of Erosion in the Curriculum: The Committee of Ten to the Cardinal Principles, 1893-1918." *Research for Educational Reform* 10(2):41-50.

Finn, Chester E., Richard D. Kahlenberg, and Sandy Kress. 2015. "Rethinking the High School Diploma." *The Education Digest* 81(2):29-37.

Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company.

Fry, Richard. 2008. *The Role of Schools in the English Language Learner Achievement Gap*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center.

Furedi, Frank. 2015. "Bringing Historical Dimensions into the Study of Social Problems: The Social Construction of Authority." *Qualitative Sociology Review* 11(2):94-108.

Gamson, William A. and Andre Modigliani. 1989. "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power." *American Journal* of *Sociology* 95(1):1-38.

Gewertz, Catherine. 2013. "Standards Worrying Teachers." *Education Week* 32(22):1.

Giesler, Mark A. and Teresa Beadlescomb. 2015. "Elevated or Erased? A Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Men in Introduction to Social Work Textbooks." *The Journal of Men's Studies* 23(2):147-160.

Giroux, Henry. 2004. *The Terror of Neoliberalism: Authoritarianism and the Eclipse of Democracy*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Gitlin, Todd. 1980. *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience.* Boston, MA: North-eastern University Press.

Goss v. Board of Education, 373 U.S. 683 (1963).

Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, 391 U.S. 430 (1968).

Gurevitch, Michael and Mark R. Levy, eds. 1985. *Mass Communication Review Yearbook: Volume 5*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Haskins, Ron, Richard Murnane, Isabel V. Sawhill, and Catherine Snow. 2012. *Can Academic*

Standards Boost Literacy and Close the Achievement Gap?. Washington, D.C.: The Brooking Institute.

Hagler, Yoav. 2009. *Defining U.S. Megaregions*. New York, NY: Regional Plan Association.

Heibert, Elfrieda H. and Heidi Anne E. Mesmer. 2013. "Upping the Ante of Text Complexity in the Common Core State Standards: Examining its Potential Impact on Young Readers." *Educational Researcher* 42(1):44-51.

Holsti, Olavi R. 1969. *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Hopewell, Susan, Sandra Butvilofsky, and Kathy Escamilla. 2016. "Complementing the Common Core with Holistic Biliteracy." *Journal of Education* 196(2):89-100.

Hunt Pam, John McDonnell, and Margaret A. Crockett. 2012. "Reconciling an Ecological Curricular Framework Focusing on Quality of Life Outcomes With the Development and Instruction of Standards-Based Academic Goals." *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities* 37(3):139-152.

Illich, Ivan. 1971. *Deschooling Society*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Jencks, Christopher and Marsha Brown. 1975. "Effects of High Schools on their Students." *Harvard Educational Review* 45(3):273-324.

"K-12 Facts." 2016. Center for Education Reform. Retrieved February 20, 2016 (http://www.edreform.com/2012/04/k-12-facts/).

Kamalipour Yahya R. Theresa Carilli, ed. 1998. *Cultural Diversity and the U.S. Media*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Kerbo, Harold R. 2012. *Social Stratification and Inequality: Class Conflict in Historical and Comparative Perspective*. 8th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Khadduri, Jill, Jennifer Turnham, Anne Chase, and Heather Schwartz. 2003. *Case Studies Exploring the Potential Relationship between Schools and Neighborhood Revitalization*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates.

Khan, Muhammad U. 2013. "Role of Newspapers in Education Policy Making in Punjab." *Journal of Gender and Social Issues* 12(1):1-19.

Kilbourne, Jean. 1999. *Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel.* New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Kozol, Jonathan. 2005. *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*. New York, NY: Broadway Paperbacks.

Kozol, Jonathan. 2012. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. Paperback ed. New York, NY: Broadway Books.

Krippendorff, Klaus. 2004. "Reliability in Content Analysis: Some Common Misconceptions and Recommendations." *Human Communication Research* 30(3):411-433.

Lareau, Annette. 2003. *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Laundra, Kenneth and Tracey Sutton. 2008. "You Think You Know Ghetto? Contemporizing the Dove 'Black IQ Test'." *Teaching Sociology* 36(4):366-377.

Lindholm, Richard W. 1970. "Financing Public Education and the Property Tax." *Journal of Economics and Sociology* 29(1):33-47.

Loseke, Donileen R. 1999. *Thinking about Social Problems: An Introduction to Constructionist Perspectives*. New York, NY: Aldine De Gruyter.

Maranto, Robert and Jeffery Dean. 2015. "Not Separate and not Equal? Achievement and Attainment Equity in College Towns." *Social Science Quarterly* 96(4):985-995.

Marcuse, Herbert. 1964. *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Mateos de Cabo, Ruth, Ricardo Gimeno, Miryam Martínez, and Luis López. 2011. "Perpetuating Gender Stereotypes via the Internet? An Analysis of the Women's Prescence in Spanish Online Newspapers." *Munich Personal RePEc Archive* Paper 33557.

Mayring, Philipp. 2000. "Qualitative Content Analysis." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* 1(2):Article 20.

McHugh, Mary L. "The Chi-Square Test of Independence." *Biochemia Medica* 23(2):143-149.

McNeese v. Board of Education, 373 U.S. 668 (1963).

Mickelson, Roslyn R., Stephen S. Smith, and Amy H. Nelson, ed. 2015. *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Monroe, Paul, ed. 1911. *A Cyclopedia of Education: With the Assistance of Departmental Editors and More than One Thousand Individual Contributors*. New York, NY: Macmillan.

National Center for Education Statistics. 2015. *The Condition of Education 2015: English Language Learners*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Neisser, Ulric, Gwyneth Boodoo, Thomas J. Bouchard, Jr., A. Wade Boykin, Nathan Brody, Stephen J. Ceci, Diane F. Halpern, John C. Loelin, Robert Perloff, Robert J. Sternberg, and Susana Urbina. 1996. "Intelligence: Knowns and Unknowns." *American Psychologist* 51(2):77-101.

Neuendorf, Kimberly A. 2011. "Content Analysis: A Methodological Primer for Gender Research." *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 64(3-4):276-289.

Newman, Susan B. and Kathleen Roskos. 2013. “Why Common Core Matters: What Parents Need to Know.” *The Reading Teacher* 67(1):9-11.

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. 2011. *Report to Congress on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: State Reported Data for School Years 2003-04 to 2007-08.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Porter, Andrew, Jennifer McMaken, Jun Hwang, and Rui Yang. 2011. “Common Core Standards: The New U.S. Intended Curriculum.” *Educational Researcher* 40(3):103-116.

Renzulli, Linda A. 2006. “District Segregation, Race Legislation, and Black Enrollment in Charter Schools.” *Social Science Quarterly* 87(3):618-637.

Ritzer, George and Douglas J. Goodman. 2004. *Classical Sociological Theory*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Roscigno, Vincent J. 1998. “Race and the Reproduction of Educational Disadvantage.” *Social Forces* 76(3):1033-61.

Roza, Marguerite. 2010. *Educational Economics: Where Do School Funds Go?*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press.

Sandelowski, Margarete. 1995. “Qualitative Analysis: What it is and how to Begin.” *Research in Nursing and Health* 18(4):371-375.

Saporito, Salvatore and Deenesh Sohoni. 2006. “Mapping Educational Inequality: Concentrations of Poverty among Poor and Minority Students in Public Schools.” *Social Forces* 85(3):1227-1253.

Savrum, Yagmur M. and Leon Miller. 2015. “The Role of the Media in Conflict, Peacebuilding, and International Relations.” *International Journal on World Peace* 32(4):13-34.

Sensoy, Özlem and Robin DiAngelo. 2012. *Is Everyone Really Equal?: An Introduction of Key*

Concepts in Social Justice Education. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Smith, Dorothy E. 1987. *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

Smith, Kari and Martell Teasley. 2014. "The Impact of Common Core State Standards on the School Community." *Children & Schools* 36(2):67-69.

Smith, Mary L. 2004. *Political Spectacle and the Fate of American Schools.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Snow, Catherine E., and Timothy J. Matthews. "Reading and Language in the Early Grades." *Future of Children* 26(2):57-74.

Snow, David A. 2007. "Framing." Pp. 1778-1780 in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Snow, David A. 2007. "Framing and Social Movements." Pp. 1780-1783 in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Spector, Malcolm, and John I. Kitsuse. 2001. *Constructing Social Problems*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Squires, Gregory D., Ruthanne Dewolfe, and Alan S. Dewolfe. 1979. "Urban Decline or Disinvestment: Uneven Development, Redlining, and the Role of the Insurance Industry." *Social Problems* 27(1):79-95.

Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, 402 U.S. 1 (1971).

"Teachers Say they are Unprepared for Common Core." 2013. Education Week. Retrieved November 4, 2015 (http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/02/27/22comnion_ep.h32.html).

Tienken, Christopher H. 2011. "Common Core Standards: The Emperor Has No Clothes, or

Evidence." *Kappa Delta Pi Record* 47(2) 58-62.

Venezia, Andrea and Laura Jaeger. 2013. "Transitions from High School to College." *Future Child* 23(1):117-136.

Vera, Héctor. 2016. "Rebuilding a Classic: *The Social Construction of Reality* at 50." *Cultural Sociology* 10(1) 3-20.

Wallender, Jennifer. 2014. "The Common Core State Standards in American Public Education: Historical Underpinnings and Justifications." *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin* 80(4):7-11.

Wayne, Rachel. 2013. "The Social Construction of Childhood Bullying through U.S. News Media." *Journal of Contemporary Anthropology* 4(1):37-49.

Weber, Max. 2002. *The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism: And Other Writings*. Translated by Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells. New York, NY: Penguin Classics.

Wenglinsky, Harold. 1997. "How Money Matters: The Effect of School District Spending on Academic Achievement." *Sociology of Education* 70(3):221-237.

Wilson, William Julius. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York, NY: Random House.

Xu, Jianhua. 2015. "Claims-Makers vs. Non-Issue-Makers: Media and Social Construction of Motorcycle Ban Problems in China." *Qualitative Sociology Review* (11)2:122-141.

Yeung, Wei-Jun, Caroline H. Persell and Michael C. Reilly. 2013. "A Multigenerational View of the Black-White Achievement Gap." Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Annual Meeting, Hilton New York and Sheraton New York, New York, NY, August 10-13, 2013*. http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p651287_index.html.

APPENDIX – CODING SHEET

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Newspaper:	CT	LAT	NYT	WP	USA	WSJ	

Number of Words: ____________

Pages/Length: ____________

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Day of Week:	M	T	W	R	F	Sa	Su

Date: ____________

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Section of paper:	Front	Local/National	International	Business	Politics
	6		**7**		**8**
	Letters from Readers		Opinion/Editorial		Entertainment
	9		**10**	**11**	**99**
	Arts/Culture		Family	________	Unknown

How is CC mentioned:

__1__ As a side topic (mentioned once or twice, as part of a larger issue such as election politics)

__2__ Moderately (analyzed more than twice, and as much as 50% of the article, w/ other topics)

__3__ Extensively (is the central topic of the article's analysis)

Does the article use the following method to discuss CC:	**Yes**	**No**
Rhetoric (how CC "brands" itself)?	__1__	__2__
Political analysis	__1__	__2__
Legal analysis?	__1__	__2__
Educational analysis?	__1__	__2__
Does this analysis support or detract from CC?	__1__	__2__

How is the overall tone of the article to CCSS?

__1__ Negative (CCSS is bad for the country, poorly thought out, dangerous, harmful)

__2__ Neutral (The article is simply considering the content of the policy itself and what it means)

__3__ Positive (CCSS will improve education; it is innovative; it raises our learning standards; it will help students)

How is the CCSS depicted politically?

1	**2**	**3**	4
Liberal	Bipartisan	Conservative	Not Applicable

How is research adherence mentioned in the article?

1	**2**	**3**
CC follows research.	Neutral.	CC does not follow the research.

What parts of the country are mentioned?

0 None

1 One state

2 Multiple states

3 Whole country

List the states: ____

Does the article mention who provides curriculum?	No	Private		Non-profit		Gov't
	1	**2**		**3**		**4**
How is the implementation of CC mentioned?	Fast		Fine		Slow	NA
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**9**
To what end is accountability discussed?	Help It		Neutral		Hurt	NA
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**9**
How is opting out of testing mentioned?	Good		Neutral		Bad	NA
	1		**2**		**3**	**9**
Is there enough testing, just enough, or too much?	Not enough		Enough	Too much		NA
	1		**2**		**3**	**9**

Does the article use an appeal to authority and how?	**Yes**	**No**	**Supports?**	**Criticizes?**	**Both**
Education leader	1	0	1	0	9
Political leader	1	0	1	0	9
Family leader	1	0	1	0	9
Business leader	1	0	1	0	9

Are the following invested people mentioned?	**Yes**	**No**	**Supporter?**	**Opponent?**	B
Political leader	1	0	1	0	9
Family member	1	0	1	0	9

Community member	1	0	1	0	9
Union member	1	0	1	0	9
Students/children	1	0	1	0	9
Teacher	1	0	1	0	9

Does the article mention the following vulnerable populations:	**Yes**	**No**	**Help?**	**Hurt?**
Learning Disabled?	1	2	1 0	1 0
English Language Learners?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Elementary students?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Underserved communities?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Is the following mentioned?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
Technology? (good/prb)	1	2	1 0	1 0
Federal funding?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Is the (racial) achievement gap mentioned?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
	1	2	1 0	1 0
Are standardized tests mentioned?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
Does it mention test results? Are they better or worse?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Does the article state that they will improve or decline with CC?	1	2	1 0	1 0
If so, are the roll outs of test efficient or inefficient?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Is college and career readiness mentioned?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
	1	2	1 0	1 0
Does the article mention this about teaching methodology?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
Will teaching improve or decline with CC?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Will it provide a more or less holistic student? (emotional, psycho-social development)	1	2	1 0	1 0
Is "teaching to the test" considered?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Are teacher resources/training available or lacking?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Is teacher feedback incorporated or does it go unheard?	1	2	1 0	1 0
Does the article mention privacy & data collection concerns?	**Yes**	**No**	**+**	**-**
	1	2	1 0	1 0

Are business interests mentioned?		1	2	1 0	1 0
Are private schools, school vouchers, or charter schools mentioned?		1	2	1 0	1 0
Does the article mention content areas?		**Yes**			**No**
Math:		**1**			**2**
Reading:		**1**			**2**
Geography:		**1**			**2**
Science:		**1**			**2**
History:		**1**			**2**
Does the article mention a protest movement or major dissent?		**1**			**2**
What is the theoretical orientation of the article?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	Functional				Conflict

Is emotional language used?

1	None used	3	Pessimistic, cynical, critical
2	Optimistic, hopeful	4	Angry, upset

Are any action words (boycott; strike; abandon; opt-out) used regarding local reactions to CC implementation? Write them here:

____

List any states regarding # students who took the exam and their results:

____

List names of any organizations, non-profits, grass-roots movements, think-tanks, education groups in article:

____

____

Name any politicians mentioned in the article:

____

____

Qualitative Observations: ____

____

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Conor Joseph Byrne

byrne.conorj@gmail.com

The College of New Jersey
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, May 2011

Research Paper Title:
The Framing of the Common Core State Standards in the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune from 2014-2015

Major Professor: Dr. Jean-Pierre Reed