Abstract

The labor movement as a whole has been in constant transition and faces a devastating decline. This research explores different ways which the labor movement is internally adapting to the changing worker demographics and different ways in which this contributes to the overall success or failure of specific organizations and campaigns.

Introduction

Unions began as a means to protect skilled workers and their industries from unskilled workers and minorities such as; women and people of color. Unions then morphed to become more broad and accepting institutions to protect the rights of all workers (Rosenzweig 2008). As unions began to transition to become more inclusive there was a shift in the workers that they represented, there was also a need to shift the manner in which unions operate in their internal affairs, organizing, and campaigns to better fit the shifting needs of workers.

My exploration of unions is meant to create a better understanding of the complex relationship between the internal operations of unions, the shifting identity characteristics of the workers, and what that means for the labor movement in America today. To better understand this relationship I explored the internal workings of unions through their constitution and through people who work within them.

A union’s constitution states the objective of the union, and from it one can tell where the emphasis on organizing and campaigns is placed. For example, organizations that mention defensive tactics, such as strikes, within their constitution emphasize their importance. Similarly, if a union has a commitment to representing a diverse group of workers and its move away from the historical ideologically racist legacy of unions.

Gaining understanding how and why unions operate in the manner in which they currently do is important because unions have been in decline since after World War I, but remain the main defense of all workers (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). Therefore, it is important to understand ways in which unions can emphasize on organizing and campaigns is placed. For example, organizations that mention defensive tactics, such as strikes, within their constitution emphasize their importance. Similarly, if a union has a commitment to representing a diverse group of workers and its move away from the historical ideologically racist legacy of unions.

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It is important to strengthen unions to in turn strengthen protection for workers. Strengthening most of our lives

protected, because so many people fall within the category of workers who are eligible for union protection. Presently the most common way to protect workers is through unions and labor organizations. Therefore, it is important to understand how the current labor movement operates in order to address ways in which it can become more effective in our current society to protect workers and the institution of work overall.

Through this research I hope to better understand the manner in which the current labor movement and the organizations from within it operate in order to find a way for unions to be more effective overall in adapting to the changing demographics of workers and the increasingly hostile environment for organized labor overall, because one of the major challenges that unions face today, besides the incredibly politically hostile environment, is finding a way to adapt to the shifting industries and in turn worker demographics.
Unions: Internally Adapting to the Changing Workforce and Political Environment

Literature Review

surrounding work reflects the current ideology about workers and the protection that exists within the current labor movement, as well as the political opportunities that are present for them through formal or informal rules (Wisler and Guigni 1996). For example, in the early years of labor organizing the political opportunities were only in favor of protecting skilled male workers from other groups of workers taking their work and lowering their wages, as well as from abuses from employers (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). Unions worked to emulate the structure of corporations due to the desire to be as effective a possible against such a powerful institution; more specifically meaning that unions have a very hierarchical system with a very bureaucratic system of decision making. For example, in larger unions there is typically a president, a series of executive vice presidents, and a national secretary and treasurer. Then the smaller local unions have a similar structure consisting of similar positions and a few people who interact with the larger national union (AFL-CIO 2011, SEIU 2011, Teamsters 2011, USW 2011).

Owing to the hierarchical and bureaucratic structure of unions the scope in which this organizational structure affects how successful the organization and larger movement are overall, which then relates to the idea within social movement theory that discusses the aspects of a movement contribute to its success or failure. There are two main aspects that contribute to the success of labor campaigns and organizing, these are internal and external aspects (Biggert 1997). For the purpose of this research I will explore the internal aspect of what creates success for the labor movement. More specifically how unions internally address the different gender and racial boundaries that currently exist within the labor movement and how it can react to the shifting identity characteristics in a manner to make it more effective in both organizing and campaigning against companies (Wisler and Guigni 1996 and Biggert 1997).

There are two ways in which any social movement operates, with either, offensive or defensive measures (Alinsky 2003 and Morris 2003). Unions have historically been organizations that focus on defense of workers (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). This can be seen through the tactics that unions have historically used; some of the earliest tactics were sit down strikes and walk outs. These tactics were employed to gain shorter hours, higher wages, and union representation (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 223, 243). These tactics persisted for many years and began to become less and less effective as the working environment changed. Companies went from having one factory that constructed entire products to have multiple factories where production could easily be shifted to another factory (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). With the rise of industrialization companies began to diversify and grow, and instead of having one small factory they had multiple factories creating the same product (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 28-33). The transformation greatly debilitated unions and union organizing, rendering many of the early tactics nearly useless due to the ability of companies to shift production to a different factory. This began the decline of union membership that continues to this day with union membership at twelve percent of workers (USDL 2006). Despite the decline that unions have faced since World War I, there is hope in that there are aspects of the labor movement that are growing.

An example of this growth can be observed through the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). They are the fastest growing union in North America and women make up fifty-six percent of the workers they represent (SEIU 2011). The expansion of this union can be explained by the changing sexual division of labor. Meaning that over time, the composition of workers in different industries change based on ideologies and need at the time (Padavic and Reskin 2002). For example, since the paid work force first emerged after the industrial revolution men have been more likely to be participants in paid labor, and this pattern continues with a fluctuation in how many women participate in paid labor and in what fields (Padavic and Reskin 2002: 20-22). Currently our society faces a shift from an industry based economy to a service based economy, which creates more jobs that have typically been viewed as industries, is the largest growing union due to the current shifts in the sexual division of labor. Women
societies view as “naturally” female or male are assigned to the other sex” (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 586 and Padavic and Reskin 2002: 7). The devaluing of women’s work based on ideologies about the value of women as a whole results in a persisting pay gap, but it also has more political effects, such as discrimination (Padavic and Reskin 2002: 10, 21-23 and Reskin 2008).

Women dominated fields face more opposition, thus it is important to understand gender differences and intersectionality. To understand gender within this research I use West and Zimmerman’s idea of “doing gender (2008). Gender is presented as an accomplishment that is socially constructed and is “an achieved status: that which is constructed through psychological, cultural, and social means” (West and Zimmerman 2008: 147). Social construction of gender shows that the reason women have been segregated, both historically and currently, into different industries is based on ideas of what is acceptable work for women, and can give some reason for the current devaluation of women within the workforce.

Intersectionality is also an important concept to understand when exploring different identity characteristics and organized labor. Intersectionality is a sociological theory, based in feminist theory, that discusses how different identity characteristics that one person has, such as, gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc., interact in a way to create a unique experience for each person (Crenshaw 1991 and McCall 2005). The theory of intersectionality works to explain the unique experience of individuals and does not give a value to these different characteristics like the additive model of oppression does. For the purpose of this paper it is better to understand that different identity characteristics create different experiences rather than an additive model which ranks who is more or less oppressed than another group, because quantifying oppression in this case would only create more differences and different treatment for workers rather than creating more effective movement for all workers as a whole.

Unions need to have an understanding of the diversity of workers to accommodate their different experiences so that the union can become more effective as a whole movement. For example, when a union covers predominantly women, as in nurses or personal care workers, it is important to understand that this group of workers has a much different experience than a group of predominantly men workers, such as miners or construction workers. In terms of this research the importance of intersectionality lies in

I think I will find that in most cases there will be at least some awareness of these identity characteristics, intersectionality, and the different needs of the workers when organizing and campaigning. I believe that the awareness of the need to accommodate for different identity characteristics will be strong because of the historical path from which the labor movement has come. More specifically, the labor movement origins are in protecting skilled white male workers from other workers, and over time the labor movement had to drastically adapt to the changing worker demographic their rights as workers. This also occurred within communities of color, where there were special divisions for people of color (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). The manner in which the labor movement has historically addressed different identity characteristics was to try and place all workers demanding representation and protection into the labor movement that was designed for white men, therefore not considering intersectionality or the diverse experiences created from different identity characteristics. Owing to this historical ignorance toward diversity and identity characteristics there is a need for flexibility and willingness to adapt the historical methods of organizing. I believe the labor movement is overall very aware of the need for diversity and to adapt to changing worker demographics, but it is unclear if they truly understand the importance of intersectionality in organizing. Within this research it is difficult to understand if the labor movement is truly understanding and adapting to intersectionality versus just diversity. This topic needs further exploring but for the purpose of this research the two are connected and although awareness of diversity is not intrinsically connected to an understanding of intersectionality it is a good first step and this first step is what I will be exploring.

Another important aspect of understanding diversity and in turn intersectionality is that it could create higher union density, which is important in creating an effective movement overall. Wisler and Guigni explain that the number of participants in a movement greatly affects the overall effectiveness in creating positive change (1996). This is also important because accounting for the different members of a
movement can drastically affect the success of the movement. This is especially important for the labor movement because it is a movement that has been in decline for so long, and some of the reasons for this are leadership pursuing their own agenda and working with political groups that do not consider the rights of the workers first (Sexton 2005: 320-322). Therefore, it is important to understand the different needs of the workers, which does stem from the unique identity characteristics of the workers organizations cover.

Another important aspect of understanding the intersectionality of workers can be explained by the decline of other movements. The feminist movement has been in decline as a large centralized movement since the second wave in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of this can be explained by the conflict between different branches of the movement that work to represent specific groups of women and their needs, and not just the needs of the white middle class women who creates the movement (Epstein 2005). In terms of the labor movement this relates to the need for the movement to stay cohesive to retain power, labor movement needs to understand that different workers do have different experiences and different needs that have to be considered but also there needs to be a balance where workers are not alienated by their differences. Alienation due to focus on identity is also a risk when considering intersecting identity in a social movement. For example, within the queer movement this has become a real road block that has created conflict from within the movement (Gamson 2005). It is important that different identity characteristics are considered but not in a way that creates differences and conflict from within the movement. Due to the declining labor movement and the risk of alienation that is associated with lack of consideration or over consideration of identity characteristics it is critical to fully understand the origins of identity characteristics and what they mean for individual groups of workers.

In the case of gender this is especially important because there is still extensive inequality that currently exists from the gendering of work, and because the labor movement has struggled to adjust to the constant shifting gender demographics within the workforce (Williams 2008 and Rosenzweig et al. 2008). According to Gerson and Peiss, within gender there are boundaries, negotiations, and consciousness that all address the different manners in which gender interacts in different situations (2008). Boundaries are particularly important in exploring gender and labor campaigns and organizing as they address the different spheres that have been historically created for men and women. These boundaries can also help explain the players and their numbers within the labor and other specific industries. Gerson and Peiss originally discussed the public and private spheres, but for the purpose of this paper I will apply their idea to the different spheres that have been created for men and women when it comes to labor (2008: 136). Understanding the different spheres within which men and women operate in the workplace also helps to create an environment in which the labor movement can operate in a manner in which they can be more successful overall. Specifically understanding intersecting identities and their socially constructed nature can create an identity where groups of workers are not receiving the resources they need to be more successful while at the same time not alienating workers due to their differences. They key is in how intersectionality operates. Addressing intersectionality allows one to at the same time not alienating minority workers.

Creating this sort of system of improvement through intersectionality can also add identity to one of the characteristics of the labor movement, which could help to strengthen the movement if the risks mentioned above are taken into consideration. Identity based social movements internally motivated; mean that the power to create changes comes from the people involved and who the problem affects (Bernstein 2005). This is how the labor movement operates but adding identity beyond the worker identity could strengthen the worker commitment to the movement. Bernstein explores this idea through the gay and lesbian movement, which used the collective identity of a minority sexual orientation to unite the members (2005). Moving to a more identity based movement based on the different intersecting identities that exist within different industries could be a powerful tool to increase numbers and in turn resources to success within the labor movement, and the membership and their support as one of these vital resources (2008: 509-512).
larger the number of actors within a social movement the more powerful and influential they will be in promoting their cause for several reasons. The first of which is the more people involved the more likely a movement is to succeed according to (Hirsh 1986 and Hirsh 2005).

If large numbers are willing to sacrifice themselves for the movement, the chances for success because it presumed ability to accomplish the movement goal (Hirsh 1986 and Hirsh 2005).

If this is true then it becomes very important that workers feel committed to the movement and as if they and Hirsh 2005). One way this can be done is through addressing the different mentality that intersecting identities tend to take longer to commit to joining a union, but then to be more militant and committed once they join (1994: 226). This study also explains that there is some awareness of the difference between organizing men and women but it needs to be acknowledged by women organizers and organizers that work with women dominated fields and organizations such as the SEIU (Crain 1994).

In this research I believe I will find that there will be an increased awareness of the shifting worker demographics but in the manner which Crain discusses where organizations match organizers to the worker group, more specifically matching the race or gender of the organizer to the main race or gender of the workers (1994). I want to explore if this continues to be the mentality within the labor movement where there is awareness of intersectionality, but the manner in which it is addressed is through the matching of organizer to work force. I will explore this pattern through the presence of diversity statements within union constitution and within the interviews with union members.

The gendering of work is a system which has created differences between men and women within the labor force, and is an important aspect of intersectionality that can be used to create more effective organizing and campaigning within the labor movement (Padavic and Reskin 2002). According to Padavic and Reskin, all social institutions are gendered, which means they are shaped by the socially constructed differences between men and women (2002: 6). The sexual division of labor has played a role in shaping the labor force historically and currently; the placement of different sexes into specific types of labor and occupation has been determined through the sexual division of labor which varies greatly from place to place and from one time period to the next (Padavic and Reskin 2002: 7). For example, tailors tend to be female in industrialized countries but in the Middle East it is a male dominated field (Padavic and Reskin 2002: 7). Therefore, due to this constant shifting sexual division of labor there is a need for unions to be aware of these shifts in the roles in order to be able to react to the changes that happen and use other techniques to create more effective organizing techniques. Awareness of this issue can also add to the number of actors and create a movement that can be more identity based and therefore possibly build number and solidarity amongst workers. This is particularly importance due to the decline of union membership and power since World War I (Rosenzweig et al. 2008).

Unions are social institutions which have historically had a lot of influence over the treatment of workers, but due to their declining status and power in our current society they need to find ways to adapt to the political and social environment but more importantly to the needs of the current workers. To do this it is important first that the changes are understood and then that they are used in a manner which will help both the institution itself and in turn workers across the country and the world. The purpose of this paper is to explore if unions are finding ways to adapt so that they can later specialize their adaption to better protect workers in the future.

Methods

For this research I employed two research methods, a content analysis of union constitutions and in-depth interviews with union leaders, researchers, and organizers. Both methods helped me better understand the complex relationship between union organizing and ideologies. By examining the content
of their constitutions and experience of people involved with unions, I am looking to explore whether or no unions are adapting to changing worker demographics.

I generated a list of all the unions that are U.S. based and have a national headquarters. From this I derived a convenience sample of all the organizations which have their constitution available on their websites or by request. Although, many unions post their constitutions on their webpage there were many cases in which it was difficult to find the documents. If I was unable to locate the document I excluded union constitutions (Appendix A). The number of actual constitutions is limited, the number of organizations covered is much larger due to some of the larger constitutions covering several organizations, the largest of which is the AFL-CIO. Considering this the sample is ten but the number of organization covered is seventy.

Exploring a union’s constitution as a text is helpful in that it is an internal document created by the leadership of the union to be a set of rules and regulations for all people within the organization. It is a direct statement about the ideologies of the union, thus studying it as a text helps one to better understand what the organization finds important. To supplement this research I also analyzed the upper leadership of the organization I explored. To do this I created a code sheet to determine the age, race, and gender composition of the upper leadership. Upper leadership includes President, Vice President, and Secretary Treasurer.

The significance of a union’s constitution is in what is and is not mentioned. Also, the number of times that the constitution mentions something has significance because it indicates the importance of that topic. An example of this is, if defensive tactics are mentioned repeatedly in their constitution it shows the importance of these tactics to the specific organization. Examining the number of times a specific aspect of the constitution can also shows where organizations are not focusing their efforts. This is an important aspect of this research because when examining how unions could more effectively address identity characteristics it is important to understand areas that need to be focused on.

Unions as organizations model themselves after corporations with a hierarchical and bureaucratic system. Therefore, most unions have an objectives, the roles of leadership, what it takes and means to be a member, the election process, what and how benefits are allocated to members, and overall the general manner in which the organization needs to be run. Although most unions have had an established constitution when unions have consolidated smaller organization usually adopt the constitution of the larger national union. For example, The American Federation of Labor and Congress of International Organizations (AFL-CIO) is a federation of 55 national and international unions that all operate under the AFL-CIO 2011. This is true for many of the larger national unions such as; The United Steelworkers (USW), The Service Employees International Unions (SEIU), and several others (United Steelworkers 2011, Service Employees International Union 2011). Unions have recently been following the trend of creating alliances, coalitions, and affiliations with other smaller unions and organizations to consolidate their

With coalition building sweeping the labor movement as a whole it is important to understand that some larger constitutions, such as that of the AFL-CIO have more influence due to their role as the head organization of a large group of affiliate organizations.

I created a coding sheet that included basic demographic information about the organization, a place to categorize the type of labor that the organization covered, and then sections to count specific aspects to explore within the document (see Appendix B for full coding sheet). These included a diversity statement, the presence or absence of amendments, and the sex composition of the organization. For the purpose of this research, a diversity statement refers to a declaration from the organization that they will represent or support workers at least regardless of race or gender, but in addition it could also include religion, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or national origin, etc. (see Appendix C for Code Book).

For the purpose of this study progression through changes in union constitutions over time, mainly through amendments to the original document. The progression of the document is important to understand if there has been evolution in the
movement as a whole. I coded for this in several ways. The first was by skimming the document to see when it was established, if there were amendments to the document and if so in what years. This information was used to explore content changes within the document. If the document was established early in labor history and had amendments I used that information to deduce that the union was adapting to the changing political environment and worker demographics. I also examined the constitution to explore the structure of the organization because this is vital in understand the manner in which unions operate.

I utilized a combination of the webpage and constitution to determine the gender composition of the organization and what type of labor it covers. For the purpose of this research gender composition is either all men, predominately men, half men and half women, predominately women or all women (see Appendix C). In cases there was not explicit information about the gender composition of unions, I examined which industries the organization covered from their webpages, and then I used the typical gender composition of that industry to infer the gender composition of the union. For example, if the union covered flight attendants or teachers I would deduce that the gender composition of the union was likely predominately women since those industries have a significantly higher percentage of women who work within them (Crain 1994). Similarly, if the union focused on mine workers or waste management I deduced that the union, like the field, was made up of mostly men. This deduction comes from the idea that there is a sexual division of labor and men and women have been broken up into different industries throughout history (Padavic and Reskin 2008: 7). I used the current sexual division of labor to determine the gender composition of the organization.

**Methods: In-depth Interview**

For the in-depth interviews I found a list of the major unions on the Internet; from this I visited each of the web pages and got contact information for their top officers from the organizations webpage. I sent out thirty six letters to twenty six different unions from across the country. I initially received sixteen responses, and then sent out secondary letters further explaining my research and the role that they would play if they chose to participate the short time frame limited the overall response rate, and I was forced to perform a secondary search. I conducted two interviews for this research. One with an executive vice president of a large national union who was an African American female, and the other with a white female organizer and researcher who worked at the national headquarters of a large national union.

I conducted the interviews over the phone or in person and audio recorded them. The interviews consisted of twenty loosely-structured, open-ended questions. I asked people about how they are involved with the labor movement and then more specific questions about organizing and campaigns with which they were involved (see Appendix D for interview questions).

I was searching for trends in what people working within the labor movement observe from an internal perspective. I did this by asking questions about the most effective campaigns that they have participated in and what made them most effective. I also asked about their least effective campaign, and what made it least effective. Finally, I overtly asked about how they or their organization address shifting gender and racial demographics of their workers.

**Findings**

The unions explored through this research show that organizations are making an effort to be flexible and change for the shifting political environment and worker demographics. Predominantly individually unions are adapting through changing of their policies by amending their constitutions. From the eleven constitutions I examined six have amendments, and one was undeterminable. The unions who did have amendments were the American Federation of Labor- Congress of International Organization (AFL-CIO), American Postal Workers (APW), Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA), The Office and Professional Employees International Unions (OPEIU), International Brotherhood of Teamsters (Teamsters), and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Among these are the
unions that have several different organizations which operate under them. The unions that did not have amendments are the International Machinist and Aerospace Engineers (IMAE), Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Unions (PACE), and The Food and Commercial Workers International Union (FCWIU). Of these three, both the International Machinists and Aerospace Engineers and Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International unions have become affiliates of larger unions and now are using those constitutions as a guideline in addition to their own constitutions. The presence or absence of amendments to constitutions can be explained in several ways including the date a specific organization was founded, and whether the organizations is operating under a larger parent organization such as the AFL-CIO.

In terms of timeline, the date in which the organization was formed also played a role in whether or not the union had amendments. Of the three unions which did not have amendments two were the youngest organizations, with UFCW being founded in 1999 and PACE being founded in 1979. This is likely due to these organizations writing their constitutions at a time where the political and social environment involving workers is similar to the conditions today and there has not been a need for them to amend their constitutions to better fit the current environment. The older organizations I explored had amendments to their constitutions with one exception, IMEA which was founded in 1888, but has no current amendments to their constitution. This may be explained by their affiliation with the AFL-CIO; in most cases organizations unions that are affiliates of the AFL-CIO do not maintain their own constitutions as a governing document, therefore although this union does have its own constitution it may not be their primary constitution and may serve as a historical document only. Despite this exception the older organizations are the ones which have amendments to their constitutions, which show that unions are overall trying to make changes to better protect workers. Organizations which were founded earlier in the history were products of their time and their policies reflected the ideologies which were prominent at the time.

For example, The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, founded in 1903, a time where unions operated under racist and sexist ideology. This union would have been created to protect the dominate white male workforce from other workers stepping in and taking jobs from the skilled trade workers (Rosenzweig et al 2008). Therefore, the organization has made changes to the constitution to step away from the practices of the past and to better adapt to the new goals and purpose of labor organizations as a whole. The best example of this is the adding of statements which encourage diversity within the organization.

These types of changes of the constitutions explored in this study. Many times this includes the addition of a diversity statement in earlier amendments and then later modification to add specific identity characteristics. For example, a union may add a specific identity characteristic as it becomes more prominent, such as race after the civil rights movement or sexual orientation, when discrimination against the said group becomes less socially acceptable and then illegal. The SEIU is a good example of this, their statement, amended in 2008, reads:

discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, physical ability, sexual orientation or

Amending their constitutions to include statements promoting diversity demonstrates that unions are adapting to the changing worker composition and the shifting ideologies of the political and social environment overall. I found that unions work to include a diverse range of different identity characteristics, which shows that they are not only looking to be inclusive, but also progressive in their diversity promotion. By this I mean unions tend to have very extensive diversity statements that go far beyond the typical statements that protect people from discrimination. For example, the law in the United States protects workers against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age and disability for hiring and firing process (The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2011). While these are the basics of discrimination laws, unions tend to go much further and include aspects of discrimination that are not protected identity characteristics under the law. A typical example of this is the American Postal Workers
sexual orientation, nationality, handicap, political affiliation, age, or religion to hold their heads high and
what is legal required from discrimination laws show that unions are working to become more
progressive, or to hold themselves to a higher standard.

The push to be more progressive in diversity is a common pattern among the organizations which I
examined; eight of the ten organizations have a statement about diversity in some way. All of these
include the federally protected categories of race, sex, age, and ability status, but also include religion,
national origin, immigration status, and sexual orientation (AFL-CIO 2011, APWU 2011, AFA-CWA
2011, Teamsters 2011, NEA 2011, PACE 2011, SEIU 2011, UFCWIU 2011). This shows that unions are
trying to be more progressive than the federal standard. This could suggest that unions are trying to
compensate for their discriminatory past, and to take a step forward to protect all workers regardless
of their identity, or that unions are just more progressive in their standards and practices. Related to this is
that unions could be trying to push for these groups to be protected federally because it would lead to
better treatment of all types of workers, which is a main goal of the labor movement. Both interviews
supported the idea that unions are working to adapt to changing worker demographics, but mainly in the
manner discussed by Crain, where the organizer is matched to the demographics of the workforce they are
looking to organize (1

versifying employees also
became more popular as different organizations tried to diversify the industries and types of workers that
they represent.

The pattern of looking to diversify is also reflected through my analysis of union constitutions is
that it was uncommon for a union to be all men or even predominately men when historically this was the
dominate composition of the original trade unions (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). The diversification of the
teaching union organizers to the workforce in order
to become more successful. In a case where an organization an interviewee worked were looking to
an African American woman was unable to deliver that vote, they needed to have someone that related to
of matching, it goes much further than this basic matching of race and sex. The same interviewee states
that although she did have a white male working as an organizer, [the organizer and workforce] were not
hics of

This example shows that some of the organizations are realizing that there are more complex relationships
that need to be addressed, and this is reflected in many of the constitutions.

Along with unions push to diversify there are other amendments which demonstrate an
organizations progression. The main other amendments are semantic changes to the document, but in
four of the six documents that did contain amendments they involved creating tools to deal with internal
conflict. For example, the AFL-CIO section that discusses the settlement of internal conflict which state
who can file complaints, on what grounds, who deals with the conflict, and resolution types. An example of this is Article XVIII section 4 which states:

In the event that any affiliate believes that such special and unusual circumstances exist that it would be volatile of its basic jurisdiction or contrary to basic concepts of trade union morality or to the constitutional objectives of the AFL-CIO or injurious to accepted trade union work standards to enforce the principles that would apply in the absence of such circumstances, such organization shall nevertheless observe such principles unless and until its claim of such justification is upheld (AFL-CIO 2011).

The addition of this kind of amendment can be explained by the diversification of the industries that a single organization may cover currently in contrast to the single industry that many unions once covered. With the addition of different industries which a union covers creates different groups that have different needs, and want different benefits creating different ideas that could lead to a means for resolution of conflicts. An example of this conflict may be as Crain discussed, when a women dominated group of workers are unionizing they have a different idea of important issues; women often see flexible hours and childcare as important issues while men do not see this as a top issue when organizing (Crain 1994: 229). Having a more diverse membership will surely lead to conflict when it addressing large organization wide decisions such as, voting for top leadership. Therefore, unions have had to add ways to address these types of conflicts as they arise. Addressing the issue of conflict shows that unions are acknowledging that there are different needs of the present day workforce than the one which they covered at their founding.

Overall it appears that unions are working to adapt in several ways, but there is still room for improvement. The changes are happening in a rudimentary manner that needs to be reexamined to create a more effective movement and to organize and protect workers. Although there are positive changes are several places in which unions need improvements. The first of which is more diversification within upper leadership. As one interviewee mentioned there was not very much diversity at the highest levels of leadership. Addressing diversity at all levels show the most progression from organizations discriminatory past because it shows that unions are making an effort to not only diversify at the lower and often simpler levels, but also to overcome institutional level discrimination where women and people of color are less likely to hold positions of power (cite). Despite the information that one interviewee provided there has been some progression since the time in which they were involved in the labor movement. In several cases there has been diversification of top leadership in small ways. Of the AFL-(Presidents, Executive Vice President and Secretary Treasurer) two are held by women. The Secretary Treasurer is a white woman that was the first women elected to the position 2009, and the Executive Vice President is an African-American woman.

The presence of women and people of color at the top leadership is becoming more common it is there is still clearly some inequality happening. Of the eleven organizations I explored nine of them had white men as the President. The two organizations which did not were The Association of Flight Attendants and Service Employees International Union (AFA 2011 and SEIU 2011). The other top positions tended to be more diverse with three of the organizations having women as Executive Vice President, one of which was an African-American, and there were also two African-American men in the position. Despite this diversification there are still organizations which their upper leadership is all white men including The United Steele Workers and The Food and Commercial Workers International Union. This shows that there is still organizations which have no diversity at the top. Another area which all organization lacked diversity was age. All upper leadership was older than forty years old. This can be explained in several ways, but is an area where many organizations could look to make changes.

Through this exploration of the diversification of unions it is apparent that organizations are making an effort to become more diverse, but it tends to occur most commonly at the level of workers and members rather than the upper levels of an organization. The labor movement is working to take steps to
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overcome their discriminatory past although there are still remnants of the past embedded in sections of the organization which hold most power and influence.

**Discussion/Conclusion**

Through a historical analysis of unions it is clear that they have been in transition from very early on in their history with a shift from being exclusionary organizations meant to protect skilled white male workers and to ensure job security, to the organizations that we know today that are meant to protect all full time workers from unfair employment practices (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). These shifts have occurred for several reasons. The first of which is a demand from different demographics of workers to receive support from unions. Also, the changing social and political climate of the times made practices that were discriminatory, to both women and people of color, quickly became unacceptable, and unions had to adapt to this change or become obsolete (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). Although there have been large shifts throughout the history of the labor movement, the individual organizations within the movement all have had different manners in which they react to the changing trends. They can either be more or less progressive than the overall trend of the movement. An early example of this is The Knights of Labor, founded in 1869, who was among the earliest labor organizations to support diversity both for gender, race and skill level in regards to labor organizing (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 94). The Knights of Labor faced fierce opposition for their radical policies regarding the protection of workers and the working class, although they blatantly discriminated against Chinese workers (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 99). Progressiveness, as long as it does not include groups which are still viewed negatively, will continue and unions will become far more progressive in trying to include all groups of people despite their identity characteristics. An example of this is although sexual orientation is in many diversity statements of organization it is still not seriously discussed among many organizatio

more diverse. (Interviewee B 2011). This shows that although unions are working to be progressive there are things that get left out depending on the times. Much like The Knights of Labor discriminating against the Chinese due to their status and the social climate at the time, current unions do not consider groups that are socially controversial, such as homosexuals or illegal immigrants, in an overt manner (Rosenzweig et al. 2008). While there are groups within the labor movement that are radically progressive in who they represent, such as the United Farm Workers who work with illegal immigrants, the labor movement as a whole has a politically and socially progressive stance due to their origins in socialism (Rosenzweig et al. 2008 and UFA 2011).

Historically the labor movement has operated in a manner where the goals of individual organizations were drastically different and this often created tension and conflict. There are examples of this throughout the history of the labor movement starting early on with The Knights of Labor and their organization working to bridge the gap between white skilled male workers and the rest of the working world in the late 1800s to the early twentieth century (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 94-99). This change lead to the creation of the International Workers of the World (IWW), which was a socialist organization looking to sever all connections between the employee and the employer (Rosenzweig et al. 2008: 249). The IWW was considered a radical organization that was stepping on the toes of all that the labor movement was working for as a whole, which created a divide between the more conservative traditional organizations and the new radical organizations looking to change the structure of the labor movement and what it meant to be a worker.

How unions chose to react to the trends that are externally dictated, such as the political and social ideologies of the time, determine the manner in which workers rights are dealt with. The current labor movement is working in an environment in which there has been a nearly constant decline in union density since World War I. The main industry of the country is in transition from an industry based economy to a service based economy; there is also a shifting gender composition where more women are entering the workforce at all levels.

Although many organizations have progressive diversity statements within their documents they often are still trapped within their exclusive histories. For example, much of the top leadership is still
dominated by older white males, and small subtle practices still have discriminatory tones. For example, one organization an interviewee spoke about the male leadership, organizers, and researchers treating women employees differently, based on chivalry (Interviewee B 2011). In the cases I explored it shows that although unions have intentions to be progressive, to diversify their employees, the industries and workers they cover, their actions often tend fall short.

One example of this is the lack of diversity at the national leadership level. The lack of diversity at this level can be explained by several factors. First of which is that national leadership is the most experienced and successful of leaders from smaller branches, making people who have been involved the longest and who have had the most influence overtime tend to occupy these positions. This explains both the lack of age diversity and gender and race diversity at the top level. All the top leaders are over forty which can be explained by the amount of experience within an organization and the labor movement as a whole needed to properly fill these powerful positions. This also applies with race and gender. White men have had the longest history with being involved within labor organizing giving them an advantage when it comes to taking leadership positions. For example, in The United Steelworkers upper leadership is dominated by white men over fifty. This organization is one that historically and presently has had white men as their membership making it more likely for this demographic of worker to take leadership position within the organization.

On the other hand organization that have more women and people of color as members tend to have a more diverse upper leadership. For example, The Association of Flight Attendants is a women leading the positions (AFA 2011). The AFA is one of two organizations which I explored which has a women President which can be explained by the large number of women that they represent. The top positions are filled through elections and it makes sense that women workers would like to have their leadership to be like them. Having leadership that appears similar to workers makes it seem as if it is more likely that they will understand the needs of the workers and be more likely to support their interests. This idea of matching identity characteristics is one of the major ways in which the labor movement addresses diverse needs or different demographics of workers.

Unions tend to be stuck in the idea that matching obvious demographic characteristics between workers and organizers was enough to strengthen their chances of success. This technique, although a good start, is not enough. As an interviewee explained, just because basic demographic characteristics match, such as race or sex, it does not mean that organizers and workers will be able to work together in the best possible manner. This can be explained by intersectionality; there are complex experiences that different individuals have that make it far more complicated than basic demographics. Although matching workers to organizers has proven to be effective, there needs to be more consideration of the other intersecting identity characteristics so that there can be more effective organizing. Adding this kind of understanding of intersectionality to organizing would help organization avoid the problems of workers and organizers not connecting at the level they desire, and then causing a campaign to be less successful (Interviewee A 2011).

Overall unions have radically progressed in their 200 years of existence. They have taken major steps to better protect all workers regardless of sex or race, but there is a lot of work to be done to represent and include all different identity characteristics that are mentioned in many of the diversity statements. Many of the identity characteristics they mention go much further than having to match ones sex or skin color to the workers to understand the complexities of intersecting identities and finding a way to represent these workers and the intersecting identity characteristics. This may have to do with finding a more effective way to match workers and organizers at a more complex level, or to find new ways address these issues.

In the future, finding ways to better organize workers could change the way that the labor movement views diversity and how effective they are overall. Finding ways to work it into all of their structure, not just when organizing workers, could lead to an overall more progressive and accepting movement. In time I believe that with changing political environments and shifting ideologies about some
of the less socially accepted groups of individuals the labor movement will become stronger advocates for these groups of workers, as they have for women and workers of color.

Taking this exploration of what could be expanded to examining a way to create more effective organizing could be a strong way to improve the effectiveness of organizing campaigns and increase the power of the labor movement as a whole.
Appendix A

Table 1  
Sample of Union Constitutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Union</th>
<th>Year Established</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Federation of labor and Congress of Industrial Organization</td>
<td>1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Postal Workers</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Flight Attendants</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Brotherhood of Teamsters</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Educators Association of US</td>
<td>1857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and Professional Employees International Union</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Employees International Union</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Steel Workers</td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Food and Commercial Workers International Union</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B

**Basic Information**

1. Name of Organization___________________________________________________

2. Main Industries Covered by Organization____________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

3. What kind of labor does the union appear to cover?
   3a. White Collar Yes No
   3b. Blue Collar Yes No
   3c. Pink Collar Yes No
   3d. Other Yes No

4. What does the sex composition of the union appear to be?
   All males Predominately males Half males/ half females
   Predominately females All females

5. Other Demographic Information______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

6. Year of Establishment________
   Number _______ Date of Examination _________________________________

**Objectives**

7. Is there an objectives or similar section to the constitution? Yes No

8. Are there clauses that seem to promote diversity? Yes No

9. If yes what are they -
   _______________________________________________________________________

10. How many times are wages mentioned as a worker right? _________
11. How many times are benefits mentioned as a worker right? ___________

12. How many times is financial support for members mentioned? ___________

13. Is dissemination of information mentioned as an objective? Yes No

14. Who is dissemination of information focused on?

14a. Workers Yes No

14b. Members Yes No

14c. Leadership Yes No

14d. Companies Yes No

14e. The Public Yes No

14f. Other Yes No

14g. Non-applicable

Notes____________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Organization

15. When was the constitution established? ___________

16. Has there been any amendments to the constitution? Yes No

17. If yes what years? ________________________________________________

18. How many sections include information about members? ___________

19. How many sections include information about leadership? ___________

20. What leadership positions are mentioned?__________________________

21. How involved does leadership appear to be in decisions making?

Not at all  little involvement  some involvement  very involved  only decision makers
Notes
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Actions

22. In how many sections are tactics mentioned? ____________

23. What tactics are mentioned?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

24. Who has the decision power when it comes to doing shop wide tactics?
All leadership  Predominately leadership  Half and Half
Predominately Members  All members

25. Does the constitution mention elections?  Yes  No

26. What kind of elections are mentioned?_____________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Notes
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________


Appendix C

**Code Book**

**Basic Information**

1. Name of Organization (List the name of the organization) _______

2. Main Industries Covered by Organization (List the industries that are mentioned that they cover this information will most likely not be found in the constitution but will need to be sought out on the internet.)

3. What kind of labor does the union appear to cover?
   This may or may not be present in the constitution. This may need to be supplemented with internet research. Also use the list from #2 to help you decide.
   - 3a. White Collar
     Yes = 1  No = 0
     Includes but is not limited to office jobs, accounting, union workers, researchers.
   - 3b. Blue Collar
     Yes = 1  No = 0
     Includes but is not limited to manufacturing jobs, construction workers, mine workers, metals workers, waste management, auto workers.
   - 3c. Pink Collar
     Yes = 1  No = 0
     Includes but is not limited to nurses, secretaries, bank tellers, personal care providers, elementary and secondary school teachers, flight attendants.
   - 3d. Other
     Yes = 1  No = 0
     If it is unclear in anyway what of the above categories an occupation fits into place it here.

4. What does the sex composition of the union appear to be?
   This may not be present in the constitution and may need to be supplemented with internet research.
   - All men= 1
     This means that above 80% of members are men.
   - Predominately men = 2
     This means the membership is made up of above 50% men in the organization.
   - Half men/ half women= 3
     This means the members are about the same amount of men as it does women.
   - Predominately women= 4
     This means the membership is made up of above 50% women in the organization.
   - All women= 5
     This means that above 80% of members are women.
5. Other Demographic Information (list any other demographic information that is mentioned in the constitution or that is found through internet research. This can include racial composition and other similar things.)

6. Year of Establishment Write in the year the union was established

Number Date of Examination

Objectives

7. Is there an objective or similar section to the constitution? Yes= 1 No= 0

8. Are there clauses that seem to promote diversity? Yes= 1 No= 0

Referring to statements such as, regardless of age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender or To conduct all affairs of the Union in a manner that will preclude discrimination based on age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation or gender expression.

9. If yes what are they - (write in what specifically the constitution sates about diversity).

10. How many times are wages mentioned as a worker right? Wages can also be included under terms such as pay and compensation. Place a tally mark on the line each time the mentioned is present in a section.

11. How many times are benefits mentioned as a worker right? Workers rights is referring to higher pay or wages, benefits, pension plans, retirement, and insurance. Place a tally mark on the line each time the mentioned is present in a section.

12. How many times in financial support for members mentioned? Financial support refers to strike benefits, compensation for injury, death benefits Place a tally mark on the line each time the mentioned is present in a section.

13. Is dissemination of information mentioned as an objective? Yes = 1 No= 0 This will be something about informing who ever they want to inform and if is not in the objectives section mark circle no.

14. Is dissemination of information focused on workers, members, the public, companies or other?

14a Workers These are workers that are not specifically covered by the union. Yes= 1 No= 0

14b. Members These are the actual current members of the union. Yes= 1 No= 0

14c Leadership This is the leadership at all levels within the union. Yes= 1 No= 0

14d Companies This is all companies if mentioned. Yes=1 No= 0
14e The Public
   Yes= 1   No= 0
   This is the general public.

14f Other
   Yes= 1   No= 0
   If dissemination of information is mentioned in any other group.

14g Not applicable

**Organizations**

15. When was the constitution established?  
   (List the years there were amendments)

16. Has there been any amendments to the constitution?  
   Yes= 1   No= 0
   These will likely be listed in the beginning?

17. If yes what years?   

18. How many sections include information about members?  
   Information about members counts anytime that members of the union are mentioned.  
   Place a tally mark on the line each time the mentioned is present in a section.

19. How many sections include information about leadership?  
   Information about members counts anytime that leadership of the union are mentioned.  
   Place a tally mark on the line each time the mentioned is present in a section.

20. What leadership positions are mentioned?

21. How involved does leadership appear to be very involved in decisions making?  
   This will be determined by the amount leadership is mention and in what ways.

Not at all = 1  
   Leadership has no decision making power.

little involvement= 2  
   Leadership has a little involvement but it is mainly another group is making most the decisions.

some involvement= 3  
   Leadership has about half the decision making power.

very involved= 4  
   Leadership makes most the decisions and other groups have little say.

only decision makers= 5  
   Leadership makes all the decisions.
Actions

22. In how many sections are tactics mentioned? ___________
   Tactics are organizing, solidarity, sit down strikes, walk outs, work to rule campaigns, protests, demonstrations, attending share holder meetings, voting, presenting asks to Company leaders, press releases, dissemination of information to public, etc
   Put a tally for each section that tactics are mentioned in?

23. What tactics are mentioned?
   ______________ (List What tactics are mentioned throughout the constitution.) __________

24. Who has the decision power when it comes to doing shop or local wide tactics?
   This will be accessed through what tactics they mention and how they go about go through the process to do them. This will be a more subjective question.
   All leadership= 1
   Leadership makes all the decisions.
   Predominately leadership= 2
   Most the decisions are made by the leadership.
   Half and Half= 3
   Leadership and members have about the same amount of decision making power.
   Predominately Members= 4
   Most the decisions are made by the leadership.
   All members= 5
   Members make all the decisions.

25. Does the constitution mention elections? Yes=1 No=0

26. What kind of elections are mentioned? (List the different elections that are mentioned in the constitution.)
Appendix D

Interview

1. What organization do you work for and what is your position at the organization?
2. How long have you been involved in the labor movement?
3. What got you initially interested and involved with the labor movement?
4. What responsibilities does your position entail?
5. What role do you think unions play in our current society?
6. What are some of the most commonly used tactics for organizing used by your organization?
7. Can you describe some cases or give some examples of the organizing tactics employed in the past?
8. Which of these have had the most success in your opinion, can you give me some examples?
9. What are some of the most commonly used tactics for bargaining used by your organization?
10. Can you describe some cases or give some examples of the bargaining tactics employed in the past?
11. Which of these have had the most success in your opinion, can you give me an examples?
12. Tell me about one of your most successful campaigns?
   - What tactics did you use?
   - How long did it last?
   - What were the results?
   - What industry was it in?
   - Was rank-n-file heavily involved in the process?
   - What were the rough demographics of the workers involved?
13. Can you tell me about one of your unsuccessful campaigns?
   - How long did it last?
   - What were the results?
   - What industry was it in?
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- Was rank-n-file heavily involved in the process?
- What were the rough demographics of the workers involved?
- What was your major obstacle?

14. What were the main reasons the campaign was unsuccessful?
15. In what different projects is your organization currently participating?
16. How are specifically involved?
17. What are your hopes for the future of your organization?

Basic Demographic Information

18. What is your age?
19. What is your sex?
20. What is your race and ethnicity?
21. Do you have any final thoughts you would like to share?
22. Do you know anyone else that would be interested in speaking to me?
References

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Interviewee A. 2011. Conducted May 2011 by St


The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
