VILJA HULDEN

Employer Organizations' Influence on the Progressive-Era Press

One of the major issues of public debate in the early twentieth century was "the labor question:" what rights did workers versus employers have and what forms of production and ownership were fair? This article examines the attempts of organized employers to shape this debate by influencing press coverage in the early twentieth century. It focuses on the two main business organizations of the period, the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Civic Federation. They ostensibly advocated different approaches to industrial relations, but this study argues their public disagreements ultimately had the effect of constricting the boundaries of discussion about labor in not only small newspapers but even the sophisticated press—respected daily newspapers and prominent magazines.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the American labor movement pushed for rapid expansion and made an energetic push to remove legal impediments to organizing. After a promising beginning on both fronts, by 1906 progress was stalling on membership growth as well as legislative efforts, partly because of organized employer reaction.

Publicity was a key battleground in the contest between organized workers and organized employers, and its significance intensified in the opening years of the twentieth century as workers and employers navigated the growing web of state presence. The upheavals brought by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization had resulted in numerous calls for the state to take more of an active role. As employers and workers well understood, the exact shape of that role would crucially affect labor relations. What labor union strategies were to be considered legal? How would the state strike a balance between protecting workers from excessive hours or unsafe conditions and protecting employers' property rights? Would the state use its coercive power to break strikes as it had done several times in the nineteenth century? Would it force the parties to arbitrate? The answers to these questions depended partly on how effectively both labor and capital succeeded in convincing politicians that their position had greater support among voters and opinion leaders.

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Support from the general public was especially important for labor; business, after all, undoubtedly held the advantage in gaining direct access to congressmen, judges, and administrators. Business could offer (or withhold) campaign finance, and businessmen were far more likely than workers to move in the same social circles as politicians.[1] Traditionally, support from the local community had sustained many individual strikes, but as labor issues increasingly moved onto the national scene, organized workers could not rely on personal or community relationships.[2] Rather, a more amorphous "public opinion" became key.

This study analyzes the attempts of organized employers to shape public opinion through influencing press coverage of labor issues in the early twentieth century. It focuses particularly on the two main business organizations of the era: the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the National Civic Federation (NCF). These organizations advocated different approaches to la-

bor relations. The NAM exhorted all employers to band together against organized labor while the NCF advocated reasoned discussion and conciliation and cooperation between labor, capital, and "the public." Viewing each other as rivals, even enemies, the organizations repeatedly clashed in public. The NCF ridiculed the NAM's extremist rhetoric, mocked its inconsistency in exhorting employers to band together against labor while telling laborers to remain "independent," and warned that strident anti-unionism paved the way for revolution. It even implied the NAM secretly admired the socialists because they shared the NAM's extremism even if they came from the opposite end of the political spectrum.[3] The NAM, in turn, accused the Civic Federation of being a dupe of organized labor and therefore "a menace to free American industrialism."[4] According to the NAM, the NCF had allowed the "ferocious lions" of labor unions to dictate the policies of the organization with the result that it had "proceeded to shear and trim the lambs for their snug repose in the bellies of the lions."[5]

Thus, the NAM and the NCF each focused their attention on what contemporaries termed "the labor question:" the serious and apparently growing conflict between employers and workers that had been raging spectacularly, if intermittently, since the end of the Civil War in 1865. The turn of the century was a particularly uncertain time in labor relations. On the one hand, organized labor was growing with great strides, and strikes seemed to be ubiquitous. Between 1897 and 1904, the number of labor union members quadrupled, reaching over 2 million members by the latter date, while in 1901-05 strikes more than doubled in frequency over the previous five-year period, involving hundreds of thousands of workers.[6] On the other hand, whereas the late nineteenth century had been characterized by the broad-based organizing and utopian-tinged visions of the Knights of Labor, by the turn of the century the labor movement had come to be dominated by the businesslike and bureaucratically disciplined American Federation of Labor (AFL). The craft unions affiliated in the AFL accounted for three-quarters of labor union members by 1903, and their demands had less to do with extensive social transformation and more with practical day-to-day issues such as hours, wages, and union work rules.[7]

The Civic Federation trained its vision on the potential of the more conservative unions to control the militancy and the political ferment that seemingly seethed just below the surface, occasionally erupting in strikes and mass protests. If society was to avoid being convulsed by radicalism, the NCF argued, it had to welcome moderate organizations such as the AFL. The NCF emphasized that unlike movements such as the Industrial Workers of the World or the Socialist Party, the AFL accepted the principle of private ownership of property and aimed for a stable industrial regime governed by trade agreements between employers and workers. The NAM, by contrast, stared at the burgeoning numbers of union members and strike actions and saw a serious and growing threat to what it viewed as fundamental employer prerogatives. For the NAM, there was nothing conservative about the AFL; its promotion of the closed shop (a union-members-only workplace) and its demands regarding wages and work rules violated the individual rights of employers as well as of non-union workers.[8]

This article examines the publicity campaigns that each organization mounted to convince the public of the correctness of its analysis. Drawing on their publications and the correspondence of the NAM and the NCF, early-twentieth-century newspapers and magazines, and the research and insights of media scholars, an analysis is made of the way in which those campaigns shaped the political climate in which labor unions had to operate. It is argued that although the early-twentieth-century print media environment contained more diversity than today, a number of structural features of the newspaper and the magazine industries nevertheless contributed to making the press susceptible to employers' messages about labor. Furthermore, it is contended that though the NAM and the NCF seemingly advocated different positions, ultimately their public disagreements curbed discussion on labor issues far more effectively than either organization could have done on its own.

The National Association of Manufacturers was founded in 1895 and originally concentrated primarily on promoting foreign trade, but in 1902, it shifted its attention to the threat allegedly embodied in the growth of unions. According to the NAM, unions were an unnatural limitation on the operations of the free market and thereby circumscribed the liberties of workers, employers, and the public at large. Unionism was "a despotism springing into being in the midst of a liberty-loving people," a disease eating away at American freedoms, the NAM president said in 1903.[9]

The growth of unions concerned the NAM on many fronts, but the Association was especially vocal in opposing the demands that labor was making of the government. In particular, it invested substantial resources in opposing the AFL's campaigns to limit the power of the courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes and to exempt labor unions from prosecution under the Sherman Antitrust Act. The AFL viewed both as basic protections for labor's right to organize and argued that neither the extensive use of injunctions to prohibit union strategies such as picketing nor the prosecution of union actions as "restraint of trade" was a question of long legislative precedent. Rather, both were innovations that benefited employers and hamstrung unions.[10] Indeed, the courts had issued an increasing numbers of injunctions against unions since the 1890s, and the definitions of property rights on which the injunctions rested had become so extensive as to practically grant an employer a property right "in the 'natural flow' of labor to his shop or factory."[11] But labor's demand to limit the courts' powers, the NAM argued, was a demand for "free conspiracy and free riot" and for protection of labor's "secret policy" of using "force, intimidation, and violence."[12]

The shift to vehement opposition of unions was, in itself, a major publicity success; the Association's new line attracted considerable notice, and its membership entered a period of rapid growth.[13] Even before the shift, it had established a Bureau of Publicity, explaining to its members that "[t]he printing press is an invaluable agency in promoting the interests of the manufacturers."[14] When it began to focus on unions, the Association was keen to get as much publicity as possible for the employers' viewpoint. It started a new magazine, *American Industries,* which was distributed not only to all NAM members but also as broadly as possible to congressmen, newspapers, and workers. It also used the magazine to encourage its members to monitor press coverage of labor issues.[15]

In 1907, the NAM injected a new professionalism into its publicity efforts by engaging the services of a publicity bureau, the Century Syndicate. The Century Syndicate undertook to "conduct a campaign of education . . . covering the labor problem, tariff revision, merchant marine and such kindred subjects as may be made a part of the policy of the association" as well as to take over the editing of *American Industries.*[16] Well aware of the NAM's reputation as the mouthpiece of the most intransigent employers,

the Syndicate recommended keeping the source of the stories hidden because "unless the matter that is caused to appear all over the country comes with the utmost naturalness, and without the evidence of any inspiration, it would be discredited [as biased]."[17]

Causing material "to appear" in newspapers in the early 1900s was not a particularly difficult proposition. At least 18,000 newspapers received boilerplate or ready to print matter from either the Western Newspaper Union (WNU) or the American Press Association (APA), the two main newspaper unions supplying non-local news for small papers.[18] Although they denied ever accepting paid stories for their ready to print service, both the WNU and the APA admitted that they offered both "standard" and "free" plates. For the standard material—news and features gathered and written or compiled by the newspaper union—payment was made by newspapers, but for the free matter the cost was covered by a third party. That is, the free matter cost nothing to the newspaper that wished to print it; instead, a third party would pay a set sum to the WNU or the APA every time a newspaper decided to order its plate material. According to the newspaper associations, there was no deception involved in the process; a newspaper received proofs of the free plate matter along with a statement about who had produced and/or paid for the matter. Yet sometimes the purported sponsor of the boilerplate was a "front" that revealed little about who really was behind the material. Furthermore, no newspaper disclosed to its readers that part of the paper's reading content was created and paid for by an interested party.[19]

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In the fall of 1907, Atherton Brownell of the Century Syndicate offered to use the WNU's services to have more than 4,500 newspapers print a half-column editorial attacking AFL president Samuel Gompers under the dramatic title, "Gompers Incites to Treason." Similarly, Brownell planned to "put out a half-page story regarding the general uprising against the methods of organized labor" through another company offering boilerplate. The cost of this, the Syndicate noted, would be $1,400 for the editorial and $3 for each paper that took the plated story.[20] It is difficult to ascertain whether the editorial or the plated story were sent out and how extensive the Century Syndicate campaign finally was. Certainly the Syndicate purchased some material on the NAM's behalf since Brownell noted that some matter was already being printed at "about the rate of 30 [papers] a day."[21] Purchasing desired coverage, in any case, was nothing out of the ordinary in a period when "puffs" (favorable stories of an advertiser) were a regular item in newspapers as well as among the offerings of syndicates and when "reading notices" (advertisements disguised as news) and canned editorials were openly acknowledged and even praised by newspaper editors as good business.[22]

Brownell's description of the material he was preparing to distribute indicates that the general flavor of the matter that the NAM hoped to place in the national press roughly matched what was printed in *American Industries.* This consisted of two basic types of anti-union material: full-page or multi-page articles expounding the general views of NAM members and their allies on such issues as the closed shop or union boycotts of a particular employers' products, and short news items that showed unions and unionists in an unfavorable light. Often the longer articles either liberally quoted from or were written by prominent non-NAM individuals such as judges, religious leaders, or university presidents. To make sure that readers grasped the legitimacy and prestige that this lent to the NAM, *American Industries* regularly ran a column describing the "eminent authorities" who contributed to the magazine.[23] On occasion, the NAM even commissioned or influenced an article in a general-interest magazine and then asked to reprint it in *American Industries* in order to raise the profile of the magazine and show the Association's members that their views had support in the popular press.[24]

In contrast to the expository articles' prominent attribution and careful style, the short news items were usually anonymous and often not well written. The very insignificance of these small anecdotes, however, may have made them disproportionately influential. When a reader was informed that a miner had abandoned his fiancee for riding on boycotted streetcars, that a burglar reported overhearing a union meeting planning the assassination of mine operators and federal officials, or that unionized actors were considering not playing to non-unionized audiences, he was unlikely to investigate the broader context of such incidents or to know anything to contradict the claims made in the story.[25] The article stood on its own, a small, apparently objective factoid that nevertheless implied a view of unions as unyielding, violent, and slightly ridiculous, and made the reader more receptive to the arguments presented in the longer pieces. Or, in the Century Syndicate's more florid description, short news items formed "the infantry" of a publicity campaign while "the heavy artillery . . . is in the magazine field," where current events could be placed in context and their meaning explained through well written pieces by professional writers.[26]

The Century Syndicate also was likely involved in two rather outlandish publicity stunts. One was a classic "planted" story that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in late 1907. The Workingmen's Protective Association, the paper reported, had awarded "a handsome walking stick" to James W. Van Cleave, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, as "a token of recognition" for his work "in the preservation of harmony between the fair minded workingman and the fair minded employer."[27] The article did not mention that the Workingmen's Protective Association was a semi-political organization created and controlled by the NAM and that the person presenting the award, M.M. Mulhall, had been working for the NAM since at least 1903.[28]

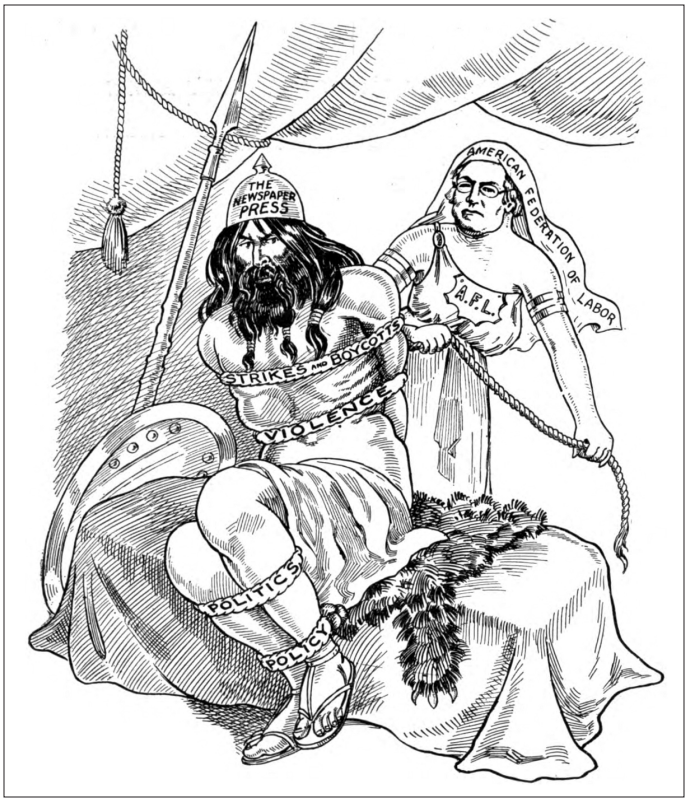
In an even more bizarre episode, earlier in the same year the NAM put into operation a scheme to discredit Gompers, first by having him followed in an effort to find material for a scandal and, failing in this, by trying to bribe him to leave the labor movement (apparently with the ultimate aim of then publicizing his accep-

tance of the bribe and thus discrediting not only him personally but also, by association, the integrity of labor leaders in general). The execution of the plan was almost farcically incompetent, and in the end only last-minute cold feet saved president Van Cleave from being caught in the act of offering the bribe. As for Gompers, he recounted the story at the 1907 AFL annual convention and received a unanimous vote of confidence; he even got a special show of support from Victor Berger, the Socialist leader who was usually opposed to Gompers' presidency.[29]

Because the Century Syndicate's records have not survived, and the NAM's records are incomplete, it is difficult to ascertain how common such story-manufacturing attempts were or how comprehensively the newspaper and magazine campaigns were pursued. None of the main figures involved in the Syndicate appear to have published labor-related articles in major magazines during the period when the Syndicate was employed by the NAM; Henry Harrison Lewis, one of the Syndicate employees, did remain as the editor of *American Industries* after the Syndicate contract expired and in 1908 published an article in the *North American Review* which closely dovetailed the NAM line on unions without mentioning his affiliation with the NAM.[30] Apart from the Syndicate's professional efforts, personal contacts with magazine editors also could help in getting desirable articles published. For example, the friendship of the Association's counsel, James Emery, with S.S. McClure of *McClure's Magazine* resulted in at least one article that supported the NAM position without the Association's influence being acknowledged.[31]

In addition to the stealthy publicity that the NAM hoped to gain through the Century Syndicate, it also worked to get its officers into the magazines as authorities on labor and economic matters. Explicit NAM pronouncements might be greeted with greater skepticism than those of presumably impartial authorities, but being published in major magazines could at least give greater standing for the Association's leaders. Again, friendship with editors was the key. John A. Sleicher of *Leslie's Weekly,* in particular, gave "considerable space to affairs of the National Association of Manufacturers," the NAM secretary reported, both by commissioning articles by its officers and by printing editorials (perhaps written by them) in support of the NAM. Thus, in July 1908, NAM President Van Cleave was asked to supply an article on the "Duty of Business Men of the Country in the Presidential Campaign," while an editorial later in the same year praised the NAM's firmness in standing up against labor's demands in Congress.[32] Such exposure may have had an impact beyond the readership of a specific magazine because newspapers and magazines routinely reprinted each other's stories in part or in whole or used them as sources with or without attribution.[33] Yet the Association's success with the majority of the general-interest press appears to have been limited: it rarely got prominent mention, and its officers were seldom published or quoted as authorities.[34] Perhaps partly as a result of this, the NAM in about 1908 began to shift its publicity line (though not its stance on unions) toward a more "progressive" position, which emphasized workplace safety, industrial education, and insurance compensating workers for injuries sustained on the job. As James Emery put it, "the trap must be baited for the game," and the "bait" of frothing-at-the-mouth, anti-union rhetoric may not have been the most suitable one for the "game" of the Progressive-Era general magazine audience.[35] The new line produced some results with NAM officers' articles appearing in such magazines as *Harper's Weekly* and *The Survey.*[36]

Producing material and trying to get the press to print it



An* American Industries *drawing in August, 1911 showed the American Federation of Labor, portrayed as Delilah, binding the newspaper press, shown as Samson.

may have been a straightforward strategy, but it had a number of drawbacks. First, as NAM officials repeatedly observed, it was expensive, and it was hard to tell what return one really got for the money sunk into boilerplate, Century Syndicate fees, and similar ventures.[37] Second, no matter how much material that the NAM produced, the newspapers and magazines always produced more. It was imperative, therefore, to stay abreast of what newspapers and magazines were saying about labor relations and to try to direct them "toward right industrial thought," preferably in a manner that was not too costly.[38]

True to its style, the NAM expressed matters without undue coyness. Early in its anti-union campaign, it told its members to appoint a press committee to "examine carefully the labor news printed in the papers of the home city." If the newspaper showed signs of having "gone over bodily to the labor agitators," the committee should "draw up resolutions of protest" and send these to the business manager of the paper. As a consequence, the business manager "will make a *bee line* to the office of the publisher" and point out to him "the danger of offending the employing and property-owning 'class'."[39] Certainly one should never advertise in papers that "vilify employers," which was, according to the NAM, "an unpatriotic act, even a traitorous act."[40] The NAM even made its views known to newspapers on at least one occasion when it wished to bring them "more closely in touch with" the employing printers' attempt to institute an open shop in the printing trades over the objections of the Typographical Union—an undertaking which was supported by "[t]he manufacturers of the country, many of them advertisers and friends of yours."[41] In the employing printers' fight, the NAM also contacted the advertisers of journals that could have an impact on the struggle, asking them to use their

power to push the journals to get their publishers to "stand pat" against the Typographical Union.[42] The NAM justified such heavy-handed tactics by arguing that it was only trying to counterbalance the influence of labor unions, which, it claimed, were much more businesslike in their publicity efforts and which demanded that their members working in newspapers or related industries enforce pro-union views in the press.[43] Overall, the NAM's expectation was that the press would cooperate. As the NAM secretary, Marshall Cushing, wrote to another officer: "[I]f you will show [the papers] how to suppress matter and even print matter in a way that will not be unsafe for them . . . they will do it."[44]

Cushing ought to have known what he was talking about since his work background included employment as a reporter and editor on Washington and New York newspapers.[45] Certainly papers recognized the problem of pressure from advertisers, and several documented instances exist in which advertisers exerted concerted pressure on newspapers, not only to provide "puffs" for particular businesses but to change their political or other substantial reporting. The best known of these is probably the decision of many companies to withdraw their advertising from newspapers that endorsed the left-leaning Democrat William Jennings Bryan for president in 1896.[46] Since advertising had become more than half—and in some cases much more—of newspaper and periodical revenues, business offices ignored the wishes of important advertisers at their peril.[47]

Apart from keeping the business manager aware of who was paying the piper, it also could pay to be on good terms with individual journalists, which was a strategy explicitly recommended by major advertising trade publications such as *Printers' Ink.*[48] Cushing's newspaper background meant that he was well aware of the conditions under which reporters worked, and he was friendly with many who still worked in papers. He was a case in point in another way as well: as his career indicates, reporters often moved from the newspaper business to secretarial positions with various associations and businesses. Newspaper reporting in the early twentieth century paid so poorly that surviving on the salary, let alone staying in the business for the long term, was simply not an option for most reporters. Thus, many journalists were susceptible to actual bribes as well as the more subtle influence of potential extra income or future stable employment; indeed, it was common for reporters to "continue a career elsewhere after having gained *experience* and *contacts* in newspaper work," according to historian Ted Curtis Smythe in 1992.[49] Employer associations and other businessmen's organizations could pay for individual stories; they needed writers for their publications and ghost writers for their officials' speeches; and they employed a cadre of secretaries, lobbyists, and press agents. All of these were positions for which journalists with their newspaper and other contacts were well suited.

Influence, of course, was not always the same thing as pressure, and outright bribery and deceit was, on the whole, not an effective or even necessary strategy. Many newspaper editors and magazine writers shared the outlook of the men who made up the NAM, and personal friendships abounded. For example, the NAM's president, Van Cleave, was on good terms with Charles M. Harvey, the author of many magazine articles and the editor of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (despite its name, it was a Republican paper and the largest daily in St. Louis).[50] Harvey routinely received payment from the NAM for writing speeches and articles for Van Cleave, as well as editorials for *American Industries,* but the NAM adamantly denied it had ever paid him for an article published in the press under his name.[51] Although it praised his *Globe* editorials on labor issues, there is no reason to assume that he did not write them out of conviction. What probably counted for more than financial inducements was shared backgrounds and similarities in outlook; for example, in 1900, more than half of the editors of the largest dailies were the sons of businessmen, and the NAM had at least one newspaper publisher among its active members.[52]

"The National Civic Federation was founded in 1900 explicitly to deal with the 'labor question.' While the National Association of Manufacturers used lobbying and publicity to combat the American Federation of Labor, the NCF argued that employers might do better to consider the AFL an ally: working together, reasonable employers and workers might yet be able to defuse the discontent that threatened to boil over into radical movements such as socialism and anarchism."

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Given the membership structure of the NCF, it is important to briefly justify treating the NCF as a business or employer organization. First, businessmen were the largest single group in the NCF, making up about 40 percent of the membership at any given time. Second, the "members of the public" hardly constituted a cross-section of the American population; rather, they mainly consisted of such people as corporate lawyers, retired businessmen, or "capitalists" (i.e., men active in financing but not necessarily running businesses). For instance, Andrew Carnegie was on the executive committee as a member of the public as was the investment banker Isaac N. Seligman of J.&W. Seligman & Co. Finally, the funding of the Federation came primarily from donations from its wealthy capitalist members because there were no membership fees or simi-

lar sources of steady income. This meant in practice that "it was the influence exerted by the business men . . . which defined the nature and meaning of the National Civic Federation," according to historian Gordon Maurice Jensen in 1956.[54]

In contrast to the NAM's extreme free-market, anti-government position, the NCF often advocated an increased role for government. Christopher J. Cyphers argued in 2002 that the Federation "played a pivotal role in bringing the state into the realm of the nation's economic and social life." It did not, however, envision this as a politically contested process but as one of expert administration with solutions "based upon sound data and proven theories of political economy."[55] Consequently, it worked hard to promote research into social conditions and to advocate regulatory and educational solutions to problems ranging from housing to monopoly. Such a strategy appealed to many leaders of large corporations, banks, and insurance houses, magnates who otherwise, too, liked to think of themselves as engaged in civic betterment and social leadership. The prominence of such businessmen, in turn, lent substantial prestige to the NCF's pronouncements on economic issues.[56]

In contrast to the NAM, the NCF cared little about small country dailies or about manufacturing sordid stories about its "enemies" because such strategies were neither necessary nor well suited to the Federation's purposes. As Ralph Easley, the NCF's moving force, the chairman of its executive council, and the person primarily responsible for its publicity work, explained, "the only kind of [newspaper] publicity worth much to us is that of the large daily papers," which reached a far greater number of employers and employees than did the small papers and which relied on ready-print and boilerplate material.[57] Large dailies and major magazines also were more in keeping with the image of soundness, respectability, and rationality that the NCF so carefully cultivated. Access to such media was far more difficult to buy than boilerplate stories, but the outright buying of attention was hardly a necessity for the Federation. The prestige of the people associated with the Federation and the timeliness of its project of building labor-management concord ensured substantial (and mostly favorable) publicity. In many ways, the Civic Federation strove not so much to create story hooks as to *be* one, and it largely succeeded. The presence of high-wattage guests at its functions and the slight oddness of the spectacle of labor unionists dining at the home of Carnegie or Mrs. J. Borden Harriman got the Federation noticed while underlining its conciliatory message.[58]

The apparent ease with which the NCF got into the press aroused even the admiration of its arch rival, the NAM, which noted that the Federation's "skillful adaptation of persons and things to desired ends" was a model worth studying.[59] The publicity was not sheer luck, of course: Easley was a proficient and tireless promoter. Like the NAM's Cushing, he had begun his career in the newspaper business, first as owner-editor of a Kansas newspaper and then as a supervisor at the *Chicago Inter-Ocean,* and then at the NCF, he almost single-handedly produced the *National Civic Federation Review*, which was sent to various magazines and newspapers so they could use it as a source. [60] In addition, he and other NCF functionaries produced piles of magazine articles on the work of the Federation and on related topics. This gained the NCF visibility in many of the major general-interest magazines of the day, such as *The Independent, McClure's Magazine,* and *Harper's Weekly.*[61]

In addition to directly producing material, the NCF courted the friendship of editors and publishers. For instance, it invited them to join one of its many departments, especially the Advisory Council and the Industrial Economics Department. Such membership involved little obligation and no fees; rather, the invitation and its acceptance was like a mutual nod of approval and recognition, and, in the case of the Industrial Economics Department, a more or less vague commitment to attempt to attend quarterly dinners to consider various industrial and labor-related topics.[62] The number and prominence of the editors and publishers, who agreed to either type of membership, is an indication of the general favor with which the NCF was viewed in the print media. The Industrial Economics Department had among its members Lawrence Abbott of *The Outlook,* Hamilton Holt of *The Independent,* and Bradford Merrill of *The World* while the Advisory Council included Sereno S. Pratt of Dow Jones & Co. as well as Herman Ridder of the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung.* Others associated with the Federation in different capacities included Albert Shaw of the *American Monthly Review of Reviews* and Charles H. Taylor of the *Boston Globe.*[63] Such contacts were useful when the NCF wished to gain publicity for its official doings or get specific material published, and they established an opening for it to send material and inquiries to editors.[64]

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The extent of the Civic Federation's contacts with prominent editors and the eager interest which the press displayed in the organization's activities indicate the NCF could play a major role in supporting the efforts of moderate union leaders such as Gompers and Mitchell to create awareness of what they viewed as labor's legitimate grievances. Explicit NCF backing could lend these leaders some of the respectability that they so desperately desired and open doors for them at major magazines and newspapers. But when the NCF distributed publicity specifically on labor issues, the content of that publicity remained invariably cautious and vague; it supported unionism as an abstract principle but tended to keep quiet about specific issues that unionists were raising. Preferring expert commissions and administrator-led solutions to autonomous working-class action, the NCF envisioned moderate labor organizations, such as the AFL-affiliated unions and the railroad brotherhoods, not as an independent force on par with social and business leaders but as junior partners in the project to convince employers of the usefulness of moderation and workers of the foolishness of utopian visions.[65]

In a set of articles written during the height of the NCF's conciliatory work, Easley painted a picture of unions that emphasized restraint rather than vigorous action. The essential conservatism of trade unions repeatedly got the bulk of the attention in his articles. In other words, he was trying to "sell" unions to the magazine audience by emphasizing the limits of the challenge that they posed to

the existing order. He especially zeroed in on the firm stance that the unions affiliated with the NCF took on the sacredness of the contract between a union and an employer. This, in fact, was one of the benefits that he attributed to unions: rank-and-file members, or unorganized workers, might act rashly when dissatisfied with labor conditions, but the leaders of large unions, operating on "business principles," would understand the value of reliability and therefore would check their members' militancy. In this spirit, he recounted several instances where prominent union leaders had gone to great lengths to bring the hotheaded membership into line, including revoking the local union's charter and bringing in strikebreakers to protect the sanctity of the national union's contract.[66]

In keeping with the emphasis on unions as a conservative force controlling rank-and-file militancy, the Federation appears to have done little to lend publicity support to the AFL's lobbying efforts; there is little to indicate that the NCF ever conducted publicity work, for example, on labor injunctions. To be sure, the annual conventions and hosted discussion dinners organized by the NCF provided a forum at which such figures as Gompers and Mitchell could present their views on various topics, including their wishes to limit the use of injunctions.[67] These statements would surely have gained added weight had they received flank support from the NCF, but such support was not forthcoming. The Federation did arrange for a commission to study the issue, but the commission never took any action. the NCF's business members found the issue too important to compromise on, and thus its hands were tied.[68]

"The one labor-related issue on which the NCF carried out an intensive publicity campaign was socialism, which it bitterly opposed."

The one labor-related issue on which the NCF carried out an intensive publicity campaign was socialism, which it bitterly opposed. While the threat of socialism, and of radicalism in general, had been one of the original arguments for the necessity of a cooperative organization such as the NCF, in about 1906 or 1907 that threat began to loom larger and larger in the NCF's activities and in the thinking of its most active leader, Easley. Originally, raising the threat of socialism and radicalism had mainly served as a whip to get unions and employers into the negotiating room, but now it took center stage in the NCF's concerns, and the main strategy to combat it was no longer the promotion of the trade agreement but the direct confrontation of socialist arguments. The NCF threw itself into anti-socialist publicity with far greater fervor than it had displayed in its promotion of the trade agreement.[69]

In its anti-socialist campaign, the Civic Federation also expanded its publicity strategy to one of more active recruitment. Realizing that an organization whose membership was dotted with prominent capitalists might not be the most credible or engaging voice against socialists, the NCF recruited religious leaders to speak against Christian socialism, labor leaders to speak against socialism in the unions, and ex-members of the Socialist Party to generally expose the iniquities of the movement.[70] Thus, it worked with, for instance, F.G.R. Gordon, a former Socialist Party member and an officer of the Boot and Shoe Workers Union, and with Martha Avery, another former Socialist. Besides publishing their anti-socialist writings in the *National Civic Federation Review,* Easley promoted their articles in newspapers and magazines, recommended them as anti-socialist speakers, and tried to interest Henry Holt & Co. in publishing a book by Avery.[71] The Federation financed the work of these labor anti-socialists and tried to secure their income in other ways. For example, when it seemed that Gordon's employment at the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization might be in jeopardy, Easley wrote Supreme Court Justice William Henry Moody, U.S. Vice President James S. Sherman, and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge to ensure that Gordon would keep his job.[72]

The NCF also monitored the popular press for socialist writings, socialist-leaning editorials, and similar items and, on finding them, facilitated the publishing of a response by one of its labor writers or other anti-socialist affiliates. Often, the responses were sent to the paper as questions via the NCF, but the NCF-affiliation of the author was not explicitly displayed in the piece if published, and sometimes the pieces were published anonymously.[73] In addition, the Federation watched for authors whom it considered particularly effective in countering the socialists, either because of their arguments, their eloquence, their social position, or their group affiliation. Thus, Easley contacted Corra Harris, a southern woman writer, because he was pleased with her vehement critique of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "tirades" for solidarity beyond the family and a greater societal role for women. Harris complained that *The Independent* (in which she mostly wrote and in which the exchange with Gilman had taken place) was too socialist-leaning to give full scope for her views, and he replied with a promise to try to find other venues for her writings.[74] Similar exchanges, more or less fruitful, took place between Easley and Walter P. McGuire (a magazine writer) and the anti-suffragist and promoter of women's higher education, Annie Nathan Meyer. Her article on the misguided affinity of college women for woman's suffrage had peaked the interest of Easley, who opposed suffrage and believed "the Socialists are capturing the suffrage movement." Recruiting Meyer to speak against both would have killed two birds with one stone while her status as a college-educated, professional woman would have given her greater credibility with modern young women being "captured" by suffragettism and socialism.[75]

Thus, the case of the labor publicity of the NAM and the NCF highlights the complexities of what it means to have an impartial, representative press. Simply eliminating the explicit instances of money changing hands in payment for a slanted story would hardly have solved the problem of bias. Indeed, while direct bribes, underhanded publicity stunts, or planted stories may make the juiciest tales for historians to tell, they probably did not form the most significant source of organized employers' influence over the public discussion on labor union legitimacy.

To be sure, money mattered. Running a newspaper or a magazine was an expensive proposition, at least if the publication was to gain a real foothold. Thus, it was not surprising that the press tended to be more business friendly than the population at large. In the late nineteenth century, for example, Republican papers far outnumbered Democratic ones even in areas where voter numbers were roughly equal because "[t]he men who put up the capital—the Northern business class—were mostly Republican," wrote historian Michael E. McGerr in 1988.[76] Labor papers, always of limited reach but far more of a presence in the early twentieth century than currently, struggled under severe budgetary constraints, which were made worse by advertiser avoidance of these papers.

The *Chicago Daily Socialist,* for instance, could not get many advertisers even when its circulation in 1912 topped Chicago's other English-language papers combined.[77] Papers that were not run by labor but that made an effort to serve the working class also felt the squeeze. Scripps newspapers, which tried to find a market niche among the working class by being attentive and sympathetic to labor news, constantly fought with advertisers and frequently decided to forgo revenue in favor of editorial independence.[78]

Money also mattered in a slightly different way: circulation figures depended on getting the readers' attention. Thus, the desire of the "yellow" newspapers to attract lower-class readers may have made them more sympathetic to labor issues than most papers, but it also encouraged apolitical sensationalism and later an emphasis on entertainment.[79] Similarly, studies of press coverage of labor in the latter half of the twentieth century have found that news about unions have tended to be about strikes, while the strike coverage has usually focused on the effects of the strike on consumers rather than on the causes of the strike. This, in turn, has led to popular overestimation of strike frequency and disapproval of unions' willingness to disrupt the normal operations of society.[80] Such an outcome does not necessarily require deliberate bias; rather, strikes as events make for better copy than prolonged trade agreement negotiations while more readers will probably be directly affected by the strike as consumers than as workers.

There were elements in the early-twentieth-century environment that might lead one to expect a media climate more open to labor voices. Objectivity and press independence were the new trends in journalism; magazines provided a venue for investigative, in-depth stories; and the Progressive reform fervor highlighted poverty, corruption, and the misdeeds of big business, potentially providing a context in which unions might be portrayed as a counterweight to business power and as a way to raise the standard of living of the masses. Certainly, the magazines, which were the period's middle-class opinion makers par excellence, were far less receptive to the NAM's extreme anti-unionism than to the NCF's moderately labor-friendly attitude. Yet the magazines' labor sympathies only extended so far; like Progressive reformers in general, the muckrakers were wary of encouraging independent working-class activity.[81]

In the end, it is not the direct economic pressures but the vaguer, more ambiguous relationship of the press to the prevailing constellations of power and cultural norms that is the most intriguing part of this history. In a 2001 book on the transformation of the press in the broader upheaval of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, Richard L. Kaplan argued "the press is permanently dependent upon the overarching institutions and political culture of the public sphere" because it has no independent authority but derives its ability to speak authoritatively from other actors, such as politicians and experts. In the context of high levels of partisanship and an explicitly partisan press, ample and unabashedly partisan coverage of political issues (as defined by the two major parties) was the norm. In contrast, as levels of partisanship as well as the political authority of parties declined, the press came to assert its independence from parties and to formulate a new ethic of objectivity. According to Kaplan, however, "the liberation of the press from the constraints of partisan correctness did not expand the content or quantity of political discussion." Instead of freeing the press to broaden the political news agenda beyond the concerns raised by the dominant parties, "once the press severed its formal ties to legitimate political organizations, it lost its own mandate for forthright political expression," leaving it weak in the face of criticism and prone to providing "an effaced, deferential narration of the views of legitimate authorities from formal political society." In other words, the ideal of objectivity could sometimes hamper rather than bolster the questioning of authority: if the aim was to "report the facts," what mandate did the journalist have for impugning the wisdom of democratically elected officials and what yardstick was objective enough to measure the officials against?[82] Objectivity sometimes meant little more than steering a path close to the middle of contending opinions.

"Perhaps this lack of a source of independent authority helps explain the apparent paradox of why even the sophisticated press—respected major dailies and prominent magazines—seems to have taken the Civic Federation practically at face value, rarely questioning the disinterestedness of an organization that was funded by the best known capitalists of the day."

Perhaps this lack of a source of independent authority helps explain the apparent paradox of why even the sophisticated press—respected major dailies and prominent magazines—seems to have taken the Civic Federation practically at face value, rarely questioning the disinterestedness of an organization that was funded by the best known capitalists of the day.[83] The Civic Federation encouraged the most conservative elements of the labor unions, to an extent that caused considerable rank-and-file criticism; the United Mine Workers even forced Mitchell to resign as UMW president because of his NCF affiliation.[84] More importantly, the NCF rarely gave its full support to the conservative labor leaders whom it presented as the "good" unionists. It emphasized union restraint over union militancy to an extent that left unions little to bargain with and never undertook significant publicity work in support of the "bread-and-butter" unions' key demand of meaningful government impartiality in labor disputes. Journalists, though, mostly seemed to welcome the Civic Federation as an expert on labor issues and more often criticized it for an overly sympathetic stance toward labor than for a pro-business bias.[85]

The Civic Federation's success in establishing itself as an acceptable source probably owed more than it realized to the vehemency of the National Association of Manufacturers. For journalists trying to hew to a new ethic of objectivity and caught between the competing claims of unionists and intransigent employers, the Civic Federation looked moderate and reasonable while the NAM provided the ballast at the other end of the spectrum. The NAM's vocal vilification of labor unions helped define an employer position against which almost any other representation of the labor situation seemed progressive. The vehemence of the NAM's opposition to the NCF's rhetoric of conciliation also seemed to confirm the NCF's representation of itself as a truly progressive

organization, promising substantial reform in labor-management relations. Finally, the NCF emphasized the values that were gaining ascendancy among journalists: professionalism, deliberation, and objectivity. The Civic Federation offered what it called a balanced view of the labor question, which the press largely accepted. But in relying on organizations such as the NCF in analyzing labor issues, the press got a prepackaged "balance" rather than finding its own.

NOTES

[1] For more on organized employers' direct contacts with politicians in this period, see Vilja Hulden, "Employers, Unite! Organized Employer Reactions to the Labor Union Challenge in the Progressive Era" (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2011).

[2] Of course, even at the local level, press coverage played a role in shaping the public's attitudes toward a particular conflict. See, for example, John N. Ingham, "A Strike in the Progressive Era: McKees Rocks, 1909," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 90 (July 1966): 353-77. On the broader theme of strikes and community support, see Josiah Bartlett Lambert, *"If the Workers Took a Notion": The Right to Strike and American Political Development* (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, 2005).

[3] See, for example, Ralph M. Easley, "The Two Irreconcilable Foes of the Civic Federation," *National Civic Federation Review* 3 (Nov. 15, 1909): 7ff., which is a long article contrasting the reasoned and moderate position of the NCF with the extremism of both socialists and anti-union employers. For an example of NCF mockery of NAM's logical inconsistencies, see "Some Anti-Boycotters' Boycotts," *National Civic Federation Review* 2 (April 1905): 8. A note on usage must be mentioned. Though there were of course many strands of socialism, not all of which lined up behind the Socialist Party, the NCF regularly conflated all varieties in its tirades against them, and it is impossible to discern whether the party or the ideas were the target in a specific instance. Therefore, this study capitalizes "Socialist" only when explicitly referring to the party and uses "socialist" in all other contexts (apart from, of course, direct quotations).

[4] John Kirby Jr., "A Disloyal and Unpatriotic Organization," *American Industries*, August 1911, 10.

[5] John Kirby Jr., "The Goal of the Labor Trust," *American Industries*, February 1909, 15-19. This was a response to Easley, "The Two Irreconcilable Foes of the Civic Federation."

[6] See Irving Bernstein, "The Growth of American Unions," *American Economic Review* 44 (June 1954): 303; and Paul H. Douglas, "An Analysis of Strike Statistics, 1881-1921," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 18 (September 1923): 868.

[7] For AFL and total labor union membership figures, see tables I and II in Selig Perlman and Philip Taft, *History of Labor in the United States, vol. IV: Labor Movements* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1935), 13. The best treatment of the AFL's political vision is Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism,* 1881-1917 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For the Knights of Labor, see Leon Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor in American Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985).

[8] The views of each organization are discussed in more detail below. On the responses of different groups of employers to the idea of trade agreements, see, for example, Jeffrey Haydu, "Trade Agreement vs. Open Shop: Employers' Choices before WWI," *Industrial Relations* 28 (1989): 159-73. On the Industrial Workers of the World and their philosophy of direct action, the standard source is Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World,* 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

[9] This summary of the NAM view of unions is based on an examination of articles published in the association's magazine, *American Industries,* from about 1902 to 1910. The quotation is from NAM President David M. Parry and appeared in "Bitter Toward Labor," *Washington Post,* April 15, 1903. An editorial in *American Industries* compared unionism to typhoid fever and warned "we do not think of its insidious advance until we are in the grip of the disease and laid low." See "An American Danger," *American Industries*, Sept. 1, 1902, 6.

[10] *Greene,* Pure and Simple Politics, *83-85.*

[11] William E. Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 88.

[12] See "Relief for Manufacturers in United States Courts," *American Industries*, June 15, 1903, 11; and Pamphlet, "Free Conspiracy, Free Riot," n.d. [1903?], National Association of Manufacturers Records*,* Accession number 1411, series I, box 43, Hagley Museum, Wilmington, Del.

[13] On membership trends, see, for example, Richard W. Gable, "Birth of an Employers' Association," *Business History Review* 33 (1959): 535-45. Gable points out that not only membership but the financial resources of the NAM also increased substantially after the adoption of the anti-union line. As its name indicates, the NAM was composed exclusively of manufacturers, mostly midsized ones, although it allied itself with other types of employers (such as railroads and merchants) through subsidiary organizations that it created. The most significant subsidiary or affiliate organizations were the Citizens' Industrial Association of America (a type of umbrella group that the so-called Citizens' Alliances businessmen and anti-union activists had created in various cities) and the National Council for Industrial Defense. These had at best a semi-independent existence, for example, sharing most of their directors with the NAM. See Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics,* 90-92.

[14] "Circular of the National Association of Manufacturers," No. 1, 2nd ed., June 15, 1896, 7, *National Association of Manufacturers Records,* series I, box 43, Hagley Museum.

[15] How widely *American Industries* was read in Congress or elsewhere is difficult to ascertain. In *Newspaper Directory and Advertisers' Manual* (Detroit, Mich.: Geo. M. Savage Advertising Agency, 1907), 167, the circulation was reported as 17,000, which was several times larger than the association's membership, but inflation of circulation figures was, of course, ubiquitous among magazines. The editor of *American Industries* reported being told that the magazine "is welcomed in a large number of editorial offices and that it is known at Washington." See H.H. Lewis to F.C. Schwedtman, April 11, 1908, United States Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation: Exhibits Introduced During the Hearings,* vols. 1-4 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 1545-47. For examples of *American Industries* exhorting employers to greater publicity efforts, see, for example, the issues for Jan. 15 and Feb. 15, 1903.

[16] Agreement between the National Association of Manufacturers and the Century Syndicate, in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1025-26.

[17] Atherton Brownell to J.W. Van Cleave, May 25, 1907, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 957-60.

[18] Boilerplate refers to stereotype plates purchased by newspapers from a plate service such as WNU or APA; the paper could use the whole plate as it was or cut it up for use in parts. "Readyprint" or "patent inside" refers to newsprint that was already printed on one side; the other side was blank and could be used for local news and advertising. Readyprint could be ordered either with or without advertisements, although according to the WNU advertising manager, 97 percent of papers chose the advertising-laden print since it was much cheaper. See "Testimony of Alfred Washington," United States Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 4682.

[19] See "Testimony of Courtland Smith," "Testimony of George A. Joslyn," and "Testimony of Alfred Washington," *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings,* 4623ff. See also Alfred McClung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1937), 141-42, 212, 385-86. On the problem of "fronts," an early article on publicity techniques claimed, for example, that the Municipal Ownership Publicity Bureau hid behind it "a powerful group of gas, light, water and traction companies." The bureau explicitly advised its member companies not to send matter to papers directly but to purchase boilerplate through the bureau instead, which would not reveal the company's identity in creating the boilerplate. See William Kittle, "The Making of Public Opinion," *The Arena*, July 1909, 433ff.

[20] Atherton Brownell to Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, Oct. 10, 1907, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1071. Brownell's claim to be able to place matter in a set number of newspapers was interesting because the WNU categorically denied accepting paid material in its ready-print material, which would seem to be the only manner of placing material in a definite number of papers.

[21] Brownell to Schwedtman, n. 20. Stories corresponding to Brownell's descriptions during the winter of 1907-08 could not be located in the Readex Early American Newspapers database, which covers hundreds of newspapers. Brownell noted in his letter to Schwedtman that he did not think that the Gompers editorial was the best possible use of money and was mainly making the offer in response to NAM demands. So, perhaps the NAM took his advice and dropped the idea.

[22] See Gerald Baldasty, "The Rise of News as a Commodity: Business Imperatives and the Press in the Nineteenth Century," in William S. Solomon and Robert W. McChesney, eds., *Ruthless Criticism: New Perspectives in U.S. Communication History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 113; and Linda Lawson, *Truth in Publishing: Federal Regulation of the Press's Business Practices, 1880-1920* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), chapter 3.

[23] See, for example, J. Laurence Laughlin, "The Hope for Labor Unions" (reprinted from *Scribner's), American Industries,* Dec. 1, 1905, 5-6; Walter H. Bradley, "The Rights of Labor and Capital," *American Industries*, Dec. 15, 1905, 3; and Charles A. Blanchard, "The Industrial Need of the Hour," *American Industries*, Jan. 1, 1906, 11. As was prominently noted in the articles, Laughlin was a professor of economics at the University of Chicago, Bradley a dean at Blackburn College in Illinois, and Blanchard the president of Wheaton College, also in Illinois. For examples of the columns presenting the "authorities," see, for example, *American Industries,* Feb. 3, 1903, and April 1, 1903.

[24] One such article was Burton J. Hendrick, "Battle against the Sherman Law,"*McClure's Magazine*, October 1908, 665-80.

[25] *See American Industries*, March 16, 1903, May 15, 1906, and Oct. 15, 1903. The short items were often reprinted from regional newspapers. One wonders if the same strategy applied here as in the case of Hendrick's magazine article—for example, whether some of the news items had originally been placed in the newspapers by the NAM.

[26] Atherton Brownell to J.W. Van Cleave, May 25, 1907, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 957-60.

[27] "Faithful Work Is Rewarded," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 20, 1907.

[28] Although the correspondence does not mention this incident, its timing during the fall of 1907 would imply that it was designed by the Century Syndicate. In any case, placing this story would not have been difficult. Harrison Gray Otis, the owner of *The Los Angeles Times,* was a vehement anti-union employer and an NAM ally. See Grace H. Stimson, *Rise of the Labor Movement in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), esp. 104-22; and Harrison Gray Otis, "The Lawlessness of 'Labor;' A Soldier's View," *American Industries*, April 1, 1903, 1-3. On Mulhall's career with the NAM, see, for example, "Testimony of Martin Michael Mulhall," *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings,* 2446-51.

[29] The story of the bribing effort is convoluted and not fully documented; it was apparently hatched by the Century Syndicate and agreed to by president Van Cleave as well as other NAM officials. See testimony of Martin M. Mulhall, *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings,* 2881-83; and Samuel Gompers' remarks in American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention, Norfolk, Virginia, Nov. 11 to 23 Inclusive, 1907* (Washington, D.C.: National Tribune Co., 1907), 249-67. Also see Secretary to the President [Ferdinand Schwedtman] to J. Philip Bird, Aug. 17, 1908, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1896-97. Schwedtman was almost certainly referring to this incident when he wrote, "If it had not been for Mr. Van Cleave's presence of mind we would have at one time last year given the American Federation of Labor and the sensational press opportunity for a full page headline which would have been anything but creditable to the National Association of Manufacturers."

[30] Henry Harrison Lewis, "The Peril of Anti-Injunction Legislation," *North American Review,* October 1908, 577-83. Author searches using the names of the major Century Syndicate employees and partners were run through the *Readers' Guide Retrospective* database, which indexes most major magazines from the early twentieth century, as well as through the ProQuest databases American Periodicals Series Online and American Periodicals from the Center of Research Libraries. These latter databases index not only general-interest periodicals but also trade and labor publications. The names of the Syndicate personnel are from Atherton Brownell to James W. Van Cleave, Aug 22, 1907; President [Van Cleave] to Charles A. Becker, Nov. 29, 1907; and H.H. Lewis to Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, Aug. 19, 1908. All are in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1034-35; 1169-72; 1909.

[31] The article in question was Hendrick, "Battle against the Sherman Law," for which the Association's officers and allies had supplied "much of the information." A similar article on the tariff question was considered although apparently not published. See Secretary to the President [Ferdinand C. Schwedtman] to H.H. Lewis, Oct. 7, 1908; and Secretary to the President [Schwedtman] to H.E. Miles, Oct. 20, 1908. Both are in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 2153-54, 2245-46.

[32] The quotation is from Secretary [George S. Boudinot] to Charles M. Harvey, Sept. 30, 1909, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 3177. According to Marshall Cushing, Sleicher was "a great friend of" David M. Parry, the Association's president from 1903 to 1905, while Ferdinand Schwedtman noted that Sleicher "has always had a warm regard for Mr. Van Cleave," the NAM president from 1906 to 1908. See Secretary [Cushing] to F. C. Nunemacher, Sept. 21, 1905; and Secretary to the President [Schwedtman] to James A. Emery, Oct. 29, 1908. Both are in the *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 511, 2303-05. On the probability of Van Cleave having written the NAM-praising editorial, see the same letter from Schwedtman to Emery, and for the editorial , see "Editorial from *Leslie's Weekly* of Oct. 29, [1908]," reprinted in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 2410. On a different editorial apparently being written or edited by the NAM, see John A. Sleicher to [Charles M.] Harvey, July 28, 1909, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 3039-40. Regarding Van Cleave's article, see *Leslie's Weekly* to James W. Van Cleave, July 2, 1908, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1794. Other magazines that are mentioned in the NAM correspondence as favorably (though not necessarily uncritically) inclined toward the association included *Van Norden's* and *Success.* See Ferdinand C. Schwedtman to James W. Van Cleave, Nov. 20, 1907; H.E. Miles to H.H. Lewis, April 3, 1908; and Secretary to the President [Schwedtman] to Charles M. Harvey, Aug. 18, 1908. All are in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1151-53; 1506-07; 1904-05.

[33] For example, a description of newsroom routines in a 1913 handbook for prospective journalists explained that "an exchange editor goes over all the newspapers received in exchange to clip and edit material worth reprinting" while "'rewrite men' are often employed to take the facts from another newspaper and rewrite them." Of course, newspapers and magazines continued to quote from each other in addition to using the services of syndicates. See Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, *Newspaper Writing and Editing* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), 5-6.

[34] A search with the names of presidents David M. Parry, James W. Van Cleave, and John Kirby, as well as the names of Marshall Cushing (NAM secretary in 1903-06) and George S. Boudinot (NAM secretary after 1907), in the *Readers' Guide Retrospective* for 1900-15 yields only eight articles: seven were published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* and one in the *Engineering Record.* A search with the keyword "national association of manufacturers" yielded only eight hits, seven of which had to do with the rather inglorious topic of a major congressional investigation about whether the Association had engaged in illicit lobbying practices.

[35] James A. Emery to Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, March 22, 1909, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 2730-31. On the publicity value of being "affirmative rather than denunciatory negative," see H.E. Miles to F.C. Schwedtman, June 1, 1908, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1679-80.

[36] See Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, "Nation Wide Movement for Industrial Safety," *The Survey*, April 19, 1913, 102-04; and Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, "Ounce Of Prevention," *Harper's Weekly*, Sept. 2, 1911, 9-10. I do not mean to imply that the NAM's interest in industrial education and worker safety were exclusively driven by publicity. There also were other reasons for its interest in these topics. For example, industrial education was partly an effort to wrest control of worker training from the union apprenticeship system. Similarly, employer activity on workers' safety and workers' compensation had potential to head off compulsory workers' compensation legislation, which was being planned in several states in the early twentieth century. See Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "The Politics of Vocationalism: Coalitions and Industrial Education in the Progressive Era," *Historian* 46 (1983): 39-55; and David Woosang Park, "'Compensation or Confiscation'?: Workmen's Compensation and Legal Progressivism, 1898-1917" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 2000).

[37] See, for example, H.E. Miles to F.C. Schwedtman, Dec. 31, 1907; J.P. Bird to F.C. Schwedtman, Aug. 14, 1908; and George S. Boudinot to F.C. Schwedtman, Sept. 18, 1908. All are in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1244, 1882-83, 2067-68.

[38] James A. Emery to Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, March 22, 1909, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 2730-31.

[39] "Why the Boycott Thrives: Its Cure," *American Industries*, Jan. 15, 1903, 8. The italicized words were in the original.

[40] C.W. Post, "Yellow Newspapers Unpatriotic and Cowardly," *American In-*

dustries, June 15, 1903, 4.

[41] Secretary [Marshall Cushing] to Dear Mr. —, Sept. 23, 1905. This was a form letter noting that it was sent to 225 members of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association. The same letter also was sent to 2,500 daily newspapers, dated Oct. 7, 1905. See Daniel Augustus Tompkins papers, accession number 724, microform, reel 2, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

[42] See Marshall Cushing to Dear Sirs, Oct. 10, 1905; and Marshall Cushing to Dear Sir, Dec. 20, 1905 (marked "advertisers of this publication," i.e., *American Industries?)*. Both are in the Daniel Augustus Tompkins papers, accession number 724, microform, reel 2, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

[43] The reference to labor's "businesslike" methods comes from an article, "The Lesson for Capital in Organized Labor," which lamented the contrast between capital's lack of "diplomacy" and labor's success in gaining press sympathy. See *American Industries*, Sept. 14, 1902.

[44] Secretary [Cushing] to F.C. Schwedtman, Oct. 9, 1906, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 828-29.

[45] See Secretary [Cushing] to Frederick E. Matson, Feb. 6, 1904, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 236-37; and Testimony of Martin Michael Mulhall, *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings,* 2446.

[46] On this and other instances of advertiser pressure, see Gerald J. Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), chapter 3.

[47] See Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America*, table XXIX, 748-49; and Lawson, *Truth in Publishing*, 9.

[48] Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century*, *73.*

[49] Ted Curtis Smythe, "The Reporter, 1880-1900: Working Conditions and Their Influence on the News," in Jean Folkerts, ed., *Media Voices: An Historical Perspective* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1992), 221. The italicized words were in the original. See also Ted Curtis Smythe, *The Gilded Age Press, 1865-1900* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), chapter 8; and Baldasty, "The Rise of News as a Commodity," 101-02. By the early twentieth century, journalism was becoming more professional, but this process had yet to touch most newspapers, and in any case, wages remained generally low. See Leonard Ray Teel, *The Public Press, 1900-1945* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 28-29, 41-42.

[50] The data on the *Globe*'s circulation and political affiliation are from Edward P. Remington, *Edward P. Remington's Annual Newspaper Directory: A List of All Newspapers and Other Periodical Publications in the United States and Canada,* Twentieth Issue (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Edward P. Remington, 1907), 156.

[51] See, for example, Secretary to the President [Schwedtman] to Charles M. Harvey, April 8, 1908, and June 14, 1909. Both are in *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 1530-31, 2920. For the denial of any stealth in Harvey's writings, see Testimony of Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, *Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation: Hearings,* 4426-29. Although the statements of Marshall Cushing and Atherton Brownell, which are cited above, clearly show that the NAM had little scruples in general about leaving the reader in ignorance of the source of news and magazine stories, there is no evidence that Harvey wrote anything in magazines on the NAM's behalf. Nor does a search of the *Reader's Guide Retrospective* database reveal any articles by Harvey on industrial topics. He published extensively but mostly on topics related to westward expansion and the development of the American West.

[52] Jack R. Hart, "Horatio Alger in the Newsroom: Social Origins of American Editors," *Journalism Quarterly* 53 (Spring 1976): 16. Daniel A. Tompkins, a longtime member of the NAM's board of directors, was publisher of the *Daily Charlotte Observer*, the *Charlotte Evening Chronicle*, and the *Greenville News*. See Stephen Goldfarb, "Tompkins, Daniel Augustus," in *American National Biography Online,* Oxford University Press, February 2000, at http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-01655.html (accessed on March 31, 2009).

[53] The names of the members of the executive committee were printed on NCF letterhead, and the names mentioned here are taken from that letterhead. See Unsigned to Samuel Gompers, Feb. 25, 1908, National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949, microform, box 25, folder 1, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[54] Gordon Maurice Jensen, "The National Civic Federation: American Business in an Age of Social Change and Social Reform, 1900-1910" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1956), chapter III (the quotation is from 50). For Carnegie and Seligman, see, for example, the letterhead in Unsigned to Gompers, cited in note 53.

[55] Christopher J. Cyphers, *The National Civic Federation and the Making of a New Liberalism, 1900-1915* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 8-9.

[56] For a detailed analysis of the demographics and industry characteristics of the businessmen who joined the NCF, see Jensen, "The National Civic Federation," chapter 3.

[57] Ralph Easley quoted in ibid., 180.

[58] For a few representative examples, see "Industrial Conciliation," *New York Times,* Dec. 18, 1900; "Lever for Labor Peace," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* May 3, 1903; "Will Urge Fair Play for Private and U.S. Labor," *Washington Post,* Jan. 15, 1912; "Election Reform Conference," *The Outlook*, March 17, 1906, 580-81; and "An Able Defense of the Labor Union," *The Outlook*, March 16, 1912, 572ff. On the Carnegie and Harriman dinners, see "An Evening of Industrial Peace," *New York Observer and Chronicle*, April 11, 1907; and "Banker's Wife Dines Labor Delegates," *New York Times,* Aug. 19, 1909. In contrast to the NAM's poor results with most major magazines, a search with the keyword phrase "national civic federation" produced twenty-five hits in the *Reader's Guide Retrospective* database between 1900 and 1915 with eighteen of these were in general-interest magazines. See also Jensen, "The National Civic Federation," 178-81.

[59] James A. Emery to Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, March 22, 1909, *Appendix: Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,* 2730-31.

[60] See Cyphers, *The National Civic Federation and the Making of a New Liberalism, 1900-1915*, 20; and Jensen, "The National Civic Federation," 45.

[61] For example, between 1900 and 1915, Ralph Easley published five articles, all labor-related, in the *The Independent, McClure's Magazine,* and *Harper's Weekly.* The information comes from an author search in the *Reader's Guide Retrospective* database. All of the articles were published between 1902 and 1904, which was the peak period of interest in the NCF's arbitration work, although later articles by Roland Phillips, a journalist affiliated with and regularly employed by the NCF, continued the campaign. See, for example, Roland Phillips, "What the Civic Federation Is Doing," *Harper's Weekly*, April 20, 1907, 570-71.

[62] On the structure of the NCF and the functions of its various departments, see Cyphers, *The National Civic Federation and the Making of a New Liberalism, 1900-1915*, chapter 1; and Clarence E. Bonnett, *Employers' Associations in the United States: A Study of Typical Associations* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922), chapter XI.

[63] See Lawrence Abbott to Ralph M. Easley, Nov. 4 and Dec. 23, 1904, box 184, folder 1; Hamilton Holt to Ralph M. Easley, Oct. 19, 1904, box 184, folder 7; Bradford Merrill to Ralph Easley, Oct. 19, 1904, box 185, folder 1; Sereno S. Pratt to Seth Low, Feb. 13, 1908, box 26, folder 3; Herman Ridder to Seth Low, Feb. 13, 1908, box 26, folder 4; Secretary [name illegible] to William R. Corwine, April 13, 1908, box 27, folder 1; [Unsigned] to Charles H. Taylor, June 4, 1908, box 27, folder 2; and Charles H. Taylor to R.M. Easley, Nov. 5, 1908, box 27, folder 2. All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[64] For example, between 1908-10, Easley wrote a series of letters to Charles Miller of the *New York Times*, asking for advice on how to handle particular cases of anti-socialist publicity and sending him material he might wish to use. Miller was apparently fairly active in the NCF's anti-socialist campaign. See, for example, Unsigned [Easley] to Charles R. Miller, July 11, 1908; Feb. 15, 1909; March 22, 1909; Oct. 13, 1909; April 28, 1910; and C.R. Miller to Ralph M. Easley, Nov 23, 1908. See *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 185, folder 2, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[65] See, for example, Jensen, "The National Civic Federation," 70-72. One might, of course, ask why Gompers, Mitchell, and other labor leaders remained in the Civic Federation if its support was lukewarm. This is a question long debated among labor historians and is too complex to enter into in full here. Facets of the explanation include: in the hostile climate of the turn of the twentieth century, many unionists were concerned that they needed support to avoid their organizations being destroyed; the NCF was of tangible use in trade agreement negotiations; conservative union leaders saw the NCF as an ally in their struggle against challengers from the left; and men such as Gompers and Mitchell, who by the turn of the century were far from their rank and file roots, perhaps enjoyed hobnobbing with the rich and the powerful. See Craig Phelan, "John Mitchell and the Politics of the Trade Agreement, 1898-1917," in John H.M. Laslett, ed., *The United Mine Workers of America: A Model of Industrial Solidarity?* (University Park: Pennsylvania

State University Press, 1996), 72-103; Robin Archer, "Unions, Courts, and Parties: Judicial Repression and Labor Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *Politics & Society* 26 (September 1998): 391-422; David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 275-81; and the exchange between James Weinstein and Philip S. Foner in James Weinstein and D.W. Eakins, eds., *For a New America: Essays in History and Politics from Studies on the Left, 1959-1967* (New York: Random House, 1970), 101-24.

[66] Ralph M. Easley, "What Organized Labor Has Learned: A Measure of the Progress of Trades-Unionism in the United States," *McClure's Magazine*, October 1902, 483ff. See also Ralph M. Easley, "The Work of the National Civic Federation," *Harper's Weekly*, Nov. 26, 1904, 1805ff.; and Ralph M. Easley, "National Civic Federation," *The Independent*, Aug. 28, 1902, 2065ff.

[67] See, for example, "Injunction Assailed: Mitchell and Gompers Before Civic Federation," *Washington Post,* Dec. 13, 1906.

[68] Jensen, "The National Civic Federation," 211, 308-10.

[69] There are different interpretations regarding the reasons behind this shift. Christopher Cyphers, for instance, attributed it mainly to the passing of the NCF's presidency from Mark Hanna to August Belmont and to a crystallization of, or return to, the Federation's broader purpose, which was "social and public policy reform." See Cyphers, *The National Civic Federation and the Making of a New Liberalism, 1900-1915*, 32-34. John Zerzan, on the other hand, contended that the shift resulted from the failure of most of the trade agreements promoted by the Federation, which partly resulted from the rank-and-file workers' dissatisfaction with the Federation's actions because they tended to favor employers. See John Zerzan, "Understanding the Anti-Radicalism of the National Civic Federation," *International Review of Social History* [Netherlands] 19 (1974): 194-210.

[70] On the need for anti-socialist speakers not affiliated with major capitalists, see Unsigned [Easley] to J.S. Crawford, June 6, 1910; and Unsigned [Easley] to Elisabeth Marbury, Feb. 7, 1910. Both are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 3, and box 185, folder 1, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[71] See Unsigned [Easley] to Henry Holt, Nov. 4, Nov. 10, Nov. 16, and Nov. 20, 1909; and Henry Holt to R.M. Easley, Nov. 6, Nov. 15, and Nov. 18, 1909. All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 7, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. On the promotion of Gordon's articles in the press, see also Easley's (apparently successful) effort to get articles by Gordon and another anti-socialist labor unionist, E.A. Moffett, published in the *Sun.* See Unsigned [Easley] to F.G.R. Gordon, April 22, 1909; and Unsigned [Easley] to E.B. Mitchell, July 15, 1909. Both are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 5, and box 185, folder 2, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[72] Easley argued Gordon's work was probably being badmouthed by socialists at the Bureau, and because "Labor and other bureaus over there are giving jobs to Socialists," it "behooves us" not to fire prominent anti-socialists. Moody as well as Lodge replied, reassuring Easley of the security of Gordon's position. See Unsigned [Easley] to William Henry Moody, to James S. Sherman, and to Henry Cabot Lodge, all on March 9, 1909; W.H. Moody to R.M. Easley, March 10, 1909; and H.C. Lodge to Ralph M. Easley, March 12, 1909. All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 5, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. For direct payments and references to salary, see, for example, Unsigned [Easley] to E.A. Moffett, Jan. 18, 1909; and E.A. Moffett to R.M. Easley, Jan. 20, 1908. Both are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 185, folder 2, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[73] See the notes for the discussion of F.G.R. Gordon in the previous note as well as E.A. Moffett to Easley, Jan. 18, 1909; Anti-Gorky (E.A. Moffett), "To the Editor of the *New York Times*," March 26, 1909; Unsigned [Easley] to E.A. Moffett, June 24, 1909 (about responding to a "Socialistic" article in the *Sun);* and E.A. Moffett to R.M. Easley, Jan. 19, 1909 (about a letter reacting to material in *The Outlook).* All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 185, folder 2, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. On *The Outlook* matter, see also Easley's efforts to get Moffett's response published. See Unsigned [Easley] to William B. Howland, Jan. 7, 1909; Harold J. Howland to R.M. Easley, Jan. 8, 1909; and Chairman, Executive Council [Easley] to Harold J. Howland, Jan. 11, 1909. All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 7, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. For the published response, see E. A. Moffett, "Public Opinion," *The Outlook*, March 6, 1909, 537ff.

[74] For the exchange between Gilman and Harris, see Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Future of the Home," *The Independent*, Oct. 4, 1906, 788ff.; Mrs. L.H. Harris, "The Monstrous Altruism," *The Independent*, Oct. 4, 1906, 792ff.; and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Why Monstrous?" *The Independent*, Oct. 4, 1906, 798. For the Easley-Harris exchange, see Unsigned [Easley] to Mrs. L.H. Harris, March 25, 1909; Corra (Mrs. L.H.) Harris to Ralph M. Easley, March 31, 1909; and Unsigned [Easley] to Mrs. L.H. Harris, April 7, 1909. All are in the *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 184, folder 6, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

[75] See Chairman, Executive Council [Easley] to Walter P. McGuire, May 28, 1908; and Chairman, Executive Council [Easley] to Annie Nathan Meyer, March 15, 1909, *National Civic Federation Records, 1894-1949,* box 185, folders 1-2, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. The quotation is from the letter to Meyer. For Meyer's article, subtitled "Loyalty [to Sex] Does Not Demand Allegiance to the Equal-Rights Cause," see the *New York Times,* March 7, 1909. For a brief biography of Meyer, see June Sochen, "Meyer, Annie Nathan," in *American National Biography Online* at http://www.anb.org/articles/09/09-00505.html (accessed on Nov. 8, 2011).

[76] Michael E. McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865-1928* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 136.

[77] Jon Bekken, "The Working-Class Press at the Turn of the Century," in Solomon and McChesney, *Ruthless Criticism*, 165. See also Jon Bekken, "'This Paper Is Owned by Many Thousands of Workingmen and Women': Contradictions of a Socialist Daily," *American Journalism* 10 (Winter-Spring 1993): 61-83.

[78] Gerald J. Baldasty, *E.W. Scripps and the Business of Newspapers* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), chapter 6.

[79] See, for example, McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics*; *Irwin Yellowitz, Labor and the Progressive Movement in New York State, 1897-1916* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1965); and Teel, *The Public Press, 1900-1945*.

[80] See Diane E. Schmidt, "Public Opinion and Media Coverage of Labor Unions," *Journal of Labor Research* 14 (Spring 1993): 151-64; William Puette, *Through Jaundiced Eyes: How The Media View Organized Labor* (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, 1992); and Christopher R. Martin, *Framed!: Labor and the Corporate Media* (Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, 2004).

[81] On Progressives and class, see Shelton Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006). On Progressives' attitudes toward unions and their demands specifically, see Chad Pearson, "Not Right: Progressive Era Liberals and Open-Shoppery" (Paper delivered at the Newberry Seminar in Labor History, Newberry Library, Chicago, Jan. 15, 2010).

[82] Richard L. Kaplan, *Politics and the American Press: The Rise of Objectivity, 1865-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 142, 175, 193-94.

[83] This is not to say that journalists never noticed the disproportionate weight of the wealthy in the NCF. For example, "A Great Movement" in the *Washington Post* on May 17, 1908, editorially criticized the NCF's Woman's Auxiliary for including mostly wealthy women although the auxiliary was newly created to be concerned with the problems of working women.

[84] James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 120-22.

[85] For one example of such criticism, see the editorial, "The Two Federations," in the *New York Times* on March 20, 1908.