# The system is rigged
## A discursive analysis of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to discover, in the selected speech texts, whether or not Mr. Donald Trump and Sen. Bernie Sanders are populists, and if so, how their discourse is constructed. Using populist literature, both historical and analytical, this question serves as a basis for this research. By employing Critical Discourse Analysis, six speeches were examined by the researcher: three made by Mr. Trump and three of Sen. Sanders' speeches. Using Fairclough's three dimensions of analysis, four themes were unearthed in those texts: their construction of America, 'the people', themselves and the antagonists. These themes are explored and are followed by an overall discussion of the implications of the findings. While Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders fall on opposite sides of the political aisle, their discursive tendencies often align. However, they diverge in their views of who or what constitutes the antagonists. These differences provide insight into who or what each candidate perceives as a threat to America, 'the people', and themselves.

**INTRODUCTION**

On November 8th, 2016, voters in the United States will head to the polls and cast their ballots for the next president. At the time of writing, the nomination process has concluded and the general election is in full swing. Coverage of the nominating process dominated the airwaves in an unprecedented fashion (Patterson, 2016) due to the candidacies of Republican nominee Mr. Donald Trump and Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders. Mr. Trump is a well-known businessman from New York City and has toyed with the idea of running for president since 1988 (Knoblauch & Daileda, 2015). However, he has never run for or held public office and has donated money to candidates on both sides of the political aisle (Belonsky, 2016). Sen. Sanders has represented the state of Vermont as an 'Independent' (free to caucus with either party (Merica, 2015)) in both the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate for nearly 30 years (Merica, 2015). Both unconventional candidacies have been remarkably successful; political elites in both parties did not believe in the viability of either campaign (Golshan, 2016). Mr. Trump is now the Republican Party's presidential candidate (Collinson & Kopan, 2016) and Sen. Sanders, while unable to win the Democratic Party's nomination, exceeded expectations after entering the race and polling at two percent before the Iowa caucus (Roberts, 2015).

The millions of votes both Sen. Sanders and Mr. Trump accumulated over the nominating process (Silver, 2016; Bump, 2016) are considered a 'success' and are the reason for delving deeper into this phenomenon. These two candidates, while representative of opposite sides of a seemingly ever-widening aisle, share discursive traits. These commonalities serve as the backdrop for analyzing their discourse. The success of Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders has the media, pundits, and seasoned campaign professionals searching for answers. Because they don't fit the mold, they have been dubbed 'anti-establishment' candidates (Bender & Jones, 2016; Guo, 2015; Brinker, 2016; Roberts & Jacobs, 2016). The political media has made it clear Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' candidacies are outside the norm, thus outside of the 'establishment' (Lowry, 2015; Collinson, 2016; Roberts & Jacobs, 2016) and has occasionally compared them to incarnations of populism seen throughout America's political history (Gerson, 2015). The literature reviewed demonstrates how populism has made its mark on the American political landscape (Kazin, 1995). The definition of populism and its specific manifestations are subject to intense debate. This work does not attempt to settle this argument, but endeavors to explore the theoretical landscape and settle on the most appropriate approach for this study: as a way of talking about the people and the elites.

An important aspect of the populist theory, and what this work will argue for, is how discourse plays a role in the implementation of populist ideology in political campaigns. One of the most recognizable ways candidates gain support is through speeches at rallies and their performance in debates (Benoit, 2007). These discursive events culminate and create a specific message intended for the electorate. The spoken elements of campaigning present an opportunity for a researcher to study what is said and the implications of such speech. In an attempt to bypass the mediation of politics (Meyer, 2002) I will use speeches the candidates deliver at key stages in the campaign: the announcement of their candidacy, after Super Tuesday[1], and the Indiana Primary. Not only do these speeches represent important points in the American electoral calendar, but they are widely accessible to the average voter through online and offline mediums. In this manner, discourse is a form of social practice that uses language to produce knowledge and subjectivity (Hall, 1997). I will use Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to challenge claims made by the media, as outlined above, in its coverage of Sen. Sanders and Mr. Trump throughout the primary process. The aim of this work, through original research, is to answer the question: Do Mr. Donald Trump and Senator Bernie Sanders construct themselves as 'anti-establishment' in their discourses? If so, how? It is my hope that by addressing this query, this work will contribute to the study of the populist tradition found in American political history and will indicate whether the media was on the right track in its claims.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand the current political situation unfolding in the presidential election, it is imperative to acknowledge the impact of a few recent events. Firstly, the vision of a participatory electorate has fallen to the wayside in America; involvement in politics and trust in government has declined significantly (Putnam 1995, 2000; Elving, 2015). These trends have been exacerbated by the 2008 financial crisis and the resulting 'recovery'. While Wall Street has bounced back, economic revival has not reached 'Main Street' (Allen & Sherlock, 2016). Members of the electorate responded with the rise of the Tea Party in 2010 (Furm, 2016). The power of the far right's rank-in-file supporters is at it again six years later, this time throwing its support behind Mr. Trump (Barbaro, Parker & Martin, 2016). Similarly, movement has been made on the left; the Occupy Wall Street movement of 2011 is now backing Sanders (Gabbatt, 2015) and his self-proclaimed socialist platform (Sanders,

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[1] Super Tuesday refers to March 1, 2016 when twelve states and one territory go to the polls and vote for their preferred presidential nominee. No other day in the electoral calendar holds as much weight because of the amount of delegates up for grabs and it is the first test of a candidate's ability to organize and campaign nationwide. (Weiland, 2016).

2015). In addition to these political movements, the digital revolution has changed how everyone lives their lives – an upheaval similar to what was brought on by the agrarian and industrial revolutions – potentially causing a further rise in inequality (McFarland, 2015). The media has deemed the resulting frustration with the 'status quo' felt amongst the electorate as opposition to the establishment: the political establishment (Barford, 2016).

This is not the first time such frustrations have influenced the political field in the United States. Mr. Trump is serving as the media's populist torchbearer (Lehmann, 2015), but populism is not limited to the American conservative ideology (Kazin, 1995). In his work, Kazin (1995) discusses at length the populist movements in American history, tracing its initial appearance to the People's Party in 1890. Throughout its history in America's political landscape, populist conventions have been used by both sides of the aisle: 'The Populist heritage has been ambiguous: it provided ammunition both for liberals and conservative[s]' (Szasz, 1982, p. 203). While there were shifts in populist policies and the compositions of such movements, 'continuity lay in the assumption that the elite was a morbid growth on an otherwise healthy and democratic body politic; its attempts to centralize power in a few hands subverted the principles of self-rule and personal liberty.' (Kazin, 1995, p. 16).

It is from this foundation that I form my theoretical discussion. First, I will introduce Barr's (2009) examination of politicians who use public sentiment to their advantage and employ specific discursive techniques to establish an anti-establishment narrative. I will explore anti-system or anti-establishment political traditions in which I will call upon Canovan (1981), Westlind (1996) and Laclau (1977, 2005) to focus on the discursive appeals populists utilize. In order to grasp populism as a discursive force, power must be discussed with specific focus upon Bourdieu's (1991) symbolic power. Furthering the discussion of discourse as a form of symbolic power, I will later draw upon Laclau (1977, 2005) to further establish the importance of speech in populism. It is through these theoretical disciplines I will establish my hypothesis that will allow me to analyze Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' 'anti-establishment' discourse.

**Anti-establishment movements**

Political actors have found it advantageous to cultivate and capitalize upon public discontent with politics using anti-establishment discourse (Barr, 2009). Thus, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders capitalizing on this label put forth by the media and supporters (Lowry, 2015; Collinson, 2016; Healy, 2015; Brinker, 2016) is a strategic move. It is unclear, however, what exactly is meant by the 'anti-establishment' label utilized regularly by the media and

candidates throughout the primary process (Kurtzleben, 2016). As Barr (2009) points out, there are three key factors to distinguish anti-establishment politics, political outsiders and populism from each other: the appeals designed to build support, the location of political actors with respect to the party system, and linkages between citizens and politicians. The use of anti-establishment discourse by politicians can be traced through multiple types of political systems including: anti-partyism and anti-party politics, anti-political-establishment politics, and populism (Barr, 2009). These concepts:

> deal with a specific rhetorical appeal, where political actors attempt to gain support through an "us versus them" discourse, opposed to the entire class of individuals wielding power. Rhetoric, party platforms and even material payoffs are various types of appeals – reasons for citizens to offer their support to a party or politician. (Barr, 2009, p. 31).

Differentiating these anti-establishment political concepts is a challenge: there is little agreement in how to differentiate among the various anti-system political movements coined by scholars (Abedi, 2003). Some scholars use the criteria of 'loyal' and 'disloyal' opposition to distinguish different movements (Kirchheimer, 1966; as seen in Abedi, 2003). Schedler (1996) writes that disloyal opposition constitutes itself in the form of anti-politics, anti-party politicians, or parties challenging the entire political system. Semi-loyal opposition manifests as opposition 'not only to the incumbents but instead the entire entrenched power elite'. (Barr, 2009, p. 32). However, differentiating based on loyal or disloyal opposition isn't enough. Abedi (2003) argues that opposition is too broad and too restrictive because 'this definition captures only those parties that are overtly anti-system and/or anti-democratic.' (p. 7). Even populism scholars do not agree on its characteristics and often distinguish between populist movements based on the movement's message (Abedi, 2003). Definitions of populism are 'very difficult to operationalize. […] these definitions are not clear enough with regard to the number of features that a party (or a movement, or individual) would have to have in order to be labeled populist.' (Abedi, 2003, p. 9).

*Why populism*

For Ionescu and Gellner (1969) populism has two common features: it emphasizes the power of 'the people' over special interests in that 'it defines itself more by what it is against than by what it is for.' (seen in Abedi, 2003 p. 7). This is in line with Canovan's (1981) vision of political populism. Outlined by Abedi (2003), Canovan argues that unlike agrarian populism, which is mainly concerned with specific issues, political populism 'asserts that there is a deep

division between the political establishment and "the people". In that struggle, political populist movements and parties claim to be with the people, representing their interests.' (p. 7). While Canovan delves further into describing sub-genres of political populism, it is beyond the scope of this work to list them out in detail. She argues political populist actors claim the political elite have excluded 'the people'[2] from power and thus fail to fight for the electorate's interest (Canovan, 2002).

Canovan (1999) theorizes that populist movements emerge when there is a tension between the 'redemptive' and 'pragmatic' styles of politics found in democracy. She specifically highlights three aspects of democracy and the contrasting viewpoints between these two styles: democracy's main goal for society – where the power in democracy is generated from – and the role of institutions in the implementation of democracy as a government (Canovan, 1999). It is when there are tensions between the redemptive view – or 'government of the people, by the people for the people' as Canovan (1999) states – and the pragmatic – 'a system of processing conflicts without killing one another' (Przeworski, 1991 as seen in Canovan, 1999) – that the growth of populism within democracy occurs (Canovan, 1999)[3]. Populists attempt to renew democracy by returning to the days when government represented its people and the people have control over their government (Canovan, 1999).

Erstwhile, Westlind (1996) contends Canovan's view of populism is incomplete. He postulates that her account is more historical than analytical. 'The researcher's task is to classify rather than to analyze.' (Westlind, 1996, p. 43). His assertion parallels Laclau's (1977) theory of populism in that 'it does not seek to "define" populism, but rather to study political movements that have already defined themselves as populist by their common discursive reference to "the people."' (Westlind, 1996, p. 60). To rectify Laclau's failure to incorporate a critique of economic determinism into his (1977) theory of populism, Westlind incorporates Gramsci's theory of hegemony to reformulate Laclau's populism theory.

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[2] The phrase, 'the people', will be critical in the understanding of populist appeals, but it will be discussed in more detail below.

[3] While Canovan (1999) writes in detail about the foundation from which the redemptive and pragmatic views of democracy are derived, this goes beyond the scope of this work. More information can be found in the reference above.

By removing the class privilege from our analysis, we realize the importance of non-class struggles not only for their own goals and those of the classes with which they may form alliances, but even for the possible responses to such struggles by dominant political practices.

(Westlind, 1996, p. 90)

Westlind expands the field of populism, allowing analysts to investigate the construction of popular identities through populist discourse that incorporates non-class identities. Discourse's critical importance to populism applies to populist movements and their organization. Specifically highlighting the charisma of leaders who, through their discourse, are able to both establish themselves as representative of 'the people' thus breaking with those very people they claim to speak for while simultaneously repressing this break to maintain the allusion a hierarchy does not exist (Westlind, 1996).

**Populism and power**

What has been hinted at, but has yet to be addressed, is the placement of power within the populist political movement. 'In political terms, populism signifies the effort to destroy established institutions of interest intermediation and elite control and to put in their place some kind of "direct" voice of the people, embodied in the leader of the populist party.' (Kitschelt & McGann, 1995, p. 160). Westlind (1996) writes:

the central antagonism in populism is between the people and the "power-bloc." It follows that a central element of populism consists in the determination of what is within the category of the people, and what exists outside of it as the power-bloc. (p. 54).

It is this effort to change the status quo that represents the power struggle populist leaders attempt to win on behalf of 'the people' they are representing or trying to represent.

While academics have written extensively about power (Thompson, 1995; Castells, 2009), this study's research objective will be best served by Bourdieu's interpretation of power. 'Symbols are […] instruments of knowledge and communication […], they make it possible for there to be a consensus on the meaning of the social world, a *consensus* which contributes fundamentally to the reproduction of the social order.' (original emphasis; Bourdieu, 1991, p. 166). If symbols are instruments of communication, speech and discourse are symbols that have power to construct the social world, and thus reality (Bourdieu, 1991). However, the

power of speech is only created through 'the belief in the legitimacy of the words and of those who utter them.' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170). Therefore, it is Bourdieu's contention that the audience to discursive acts, such as audiences of political speeches, give those discursive acts power through the audiences' legitimation of what is said and by whom. This speaks to Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' power to construct themselves as outsiders, despite their job titles suggesting otherwise. This power to create reality comes from the relationship between them and the American electorate, i.e. 'the relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 166).

Bourdieu addresses this relationship, which he defines as symbolic violence, in a discussion with Terry Eagleton: 'Very often the persons who are able to speak about the social world know nothing about the social world, and the people who do know about the social world are not able to speak about it.' (Eagleton & Bourdieu, 1992). While speaking about academics and their attempts at understanding the world, this approach could easily be applied to this analysis. Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders possess the power to speak about the social world, to speak on behalf of those who lack the power to speak for themselves; but Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders are the very people who 'know nothing about the social world' and thus are not qualified to speak for those who lack power. However, '[…] the production of politically effective and legitimate forms of perception and expression is the monopoly of professionals […].' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 173). Consequently, the dominating political establishment dictates the dominant cultures' ideologies, establishing and legitimating hierarchies that results in the definition of non-dominant cultures being based on how different or distant they are from the dominant culture (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 167).

**Power and discourse**

The power Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders inherently possess does not just manifest in their speech but their entire surroundings. As Laclau (2005) argues, 'discourse […] [does] not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which relations play the constitutive role.' (p. 68). The complex elements Laclau refers to, of course, assists in the formation of Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders as leaders but crucially as leaders and symbols of populist movements. Thus, analyzing the entire setting – the events leading to and occurring during their candidacies – to understand its formation is imperative: 'The linguistic and non-linguistic elements are not merely juxtaposed, but constitute a differential and structured system of positions – that is, a discourse.' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 108).

As such, discourse plays a crucial role in the creation of populist movements because, as examined by Westlind (1996), populism is 'a process of naming, of defining movements and political discourses as "populism." Populism is not a fully pre-constituted object that we then find a name for, rather, we create it as an object in our very act of calling something "populism".' (p. 159). Populism is about creating, through discourse, a populist movement. As outlined in Savage (2010), Laclau argues in his discursive model of populism political identities form through populist discourse. Laclau (2005) states there are two clear requirements of populism: '(1) the formation of an internal antagonistic frontier separating the "people" from power; and (2) an equivalential articulation of demands making the emergence of the "people" possible' (p. 74). Laclau asserts that not only must there be distance between 'the people' and those who hold power, but 'the people' are the result of feeling rejected by society. Excluded groups, despite internal differences between the groups, unite and become equivalent, forming a hegemonic identity that becomes an empty signifier (Laclau 2005). This empty signifier, and for the purposes of this work 'the people', represents a community formed from many social groups and their unsatisfied demands (Savage 2010). The 'accumulation of unfulfilled demands and an increasing inability of the institutional system to absorb them in a differential way (each in isolation from the others)' results in an equivalent chain of demands spearheaded by 'the people' (Laclau, 2005, p. 73).

'The people' are an integral part of populist movements, as stated above, and the construction of 'the people' occurs through discourse. 'The definition of popular characteristics is established through articulation in discourse, often referring to elements from other established discourses.' (Westlind, 1996, p. 95). Kazin (1995), as seen in Savage (2010), argues American populism has a common element which is defined as 'a language whose speakers conceive of ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bound narrowly by class, view their elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic, and seek to mobilize the former against the latter' (p. 179). As Canovan (1999) aptly points out, the claim of populists to speak for 'the people' is not straightforward and can be changed to fit a populist politician's narrative. However, those who employ the language of populism to speak on behalf of 'the people' are those who possess more power than the hegemonic identity they claim to represent; 'Thus, an enduring irony of populism: this language that praises connections between anonymous people and mistrusts the palaver of elites has often been communicated most effectively by eloquent men who stand above the crowd.' (Kazin, 1995, p. 24).

**Conceptual framework**

From this foundation I will draw upon the key theories that will assist in the structuring and

conducting of this research project. It is my contention that Westlind's (1996) reworking of Laclau's theory of populism is most appropriate for the analysis at hand. It is not, therefore, my goal to label either Mr. Trump or Sen. Sanders as populist; they have done this themselves by their 'common discursive reference to "the people"' (Westlind, 1996, p. 60). Thus through their definition of 'the people' they simultaneously define 'the other': the antagonists to what is popular (Westlind, 1996). 'Populist critics must always pinpoint which individuals and which elites have defamed the national spirit; they cannot question the terms of the civic religion itself.' (Kazin, 1995, p. 12-3). This of course, is done discursively, with the use of anti-establishment appeals being a defining characteristic of populism (Westlind, 1996; de la Torre, 2000; Laclau, 1977; Barr, 2009; Canovan, 1981). At the heart of populist discourse is the construction of politics as a moral and ethical struggle between the people and the powerful elite (de la Torre, 2000).

But for such speech to be successful, a populist leader must break from 'the people' they claim to represent to establish themselves as the 'exclusive representatives of the people' all while minimizing the distance and hierarchy to be conceived as an authentic member of the identity they are spokesperson for (Westlind, 1996, p. 103). Of course, the ability to construct an identity is the power to constitute the social order. Symbolic power is 'a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world'. (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170). Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders, in the very act of running for president must define, through various discursive events, how they see the world, America, 'the people' and themselves.

It should not, however, be assumed that symbolic power is only applicable to speech acts, for discourse 'brings into complex relations which constitute social life: meaning, and making meaning.' (Fairclough, 2013, p. 3). The study of discourse is an analysis of an entire setting; it goes beyond language and incorporates forms of social action that correspond to a given discursive formation (Savage, 2010). 'The linguistic and non-linguistic elements are not merely juxtaposed, but constitute a differential and structured system of positions – that is, a discourse.' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 108).

*Research objectives*

Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' discourse is appropriate to analyze for multiple reasons. Based on Westlind's (1996) and by extension Laclau's (1977) theory of populism, their discourses lean in the populist direction. This leads to the obvious question: how? This question is the primary motivation and objective of this project. Do Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders construct

themselves as anti-establishment using populist discursive patterns, and if so, how? Using Critical Discourse Analysis, I will focus on three specific speeches made by each candidate and will focus on their construction of the United States, 'the people', their own identities, and finally their perceived antagonists. Through these discourses their impact on the hegemonic order and ideology of society will be observed in the specific speeches being analyzed.

The news media has certainly decided that Mr. Trump is in fact populist (Lehmann, 2015) but I hypothesize this analysis will reflect both of their discourses to be populist. It is unclear, however, how and in what way they manifest. This research thus aims to contemporize the existing scholarship on populist discourse.

## METHODOLOGY

To investigate this question, I will utilize Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a guide through which this research will be conducted. To understand its origins and its place amongst a broader discipline, discourse analysis theory will be explored. As I hope to make clear in this section, CDA is the ideal approach to investigate the question posed above. This being said, CDA is by no means a flawless research method; its qualitative nature implies potential problems a researcher may encounter. Below I will expand upon the critiques of CDA, but they are few in comparison to the justification in using this methodology to answer my research question. It is, however, imperative to understand the benefits and the limits of such a methodology in order to place the results under the appropriate amount of scrutiny. Equally vital is the researcher's own biases and the ethical implications of her research. In the current case, I have been in the employ of a political campaign, thus am privy to unique aspects of presidential campaigns the general public may not be aware of or deem important. Also, I am a member of the Democratic Party, which suggests a bias against Mr. Trump. However, I have also volunteered for Sen. Sanders' Democratic opponent, which insinuates a bias against him as well.

*Overview of Discourse Analysis*

CDA is one of many interdisciplinary approaches under the umbrella term of discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1). These approaches share a goal of investigating and analyzing 'power relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities for social change.' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 2). In addition, Laclau (2007) articulates that

discourse is where objectivity is created through relations of things that go beyond just speech and text. The implication being both Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' discourse is more than just words strung together to gain supporters, but indicate multiple layers of relations and how they view the world. Through these relations is the flow of power: referencing Young (1981), Hook (2001) states, 'discursive rule are hence strongly linked to the exercise of power: discourse itself is both constituted by, and ensures the reproduction of, the social system, through forms of selection, exclusion and domination.' (p. 2). Thus, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' discourse has the power to change and be changed by the social system in place via their inclusion, marginalization and/or supremacy of specific discursive choices.

*Why Critical Discourse Analysis*

Where CDA separates itself from other discourse analysis techniques is the acceptance that the 'discursive practice is viewed as one dimension or moment of every social practice in a dialectical relationship with the other moments of a social practice.' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 18-9). Unlike post-structuralists[4] such as Laclau and Mouffe, CDA asserts that discourse can reproduce or shape other parts of our social world, just as those aspects of the social can influence 'the discursive dimension.' (Phillips & Joregensen, 2002, p. 19). For van Dijk (1997), discourse is a dialectical relationship: 'the properties of the text and talk and with what is usually called the context, that is, the other characteristics of the social situation or the communicative event that may systematically influence' the text or speech (p. 3). The study of discursive practices shows how relations of power and ideologies shape discourse (Fairclough, 1992). This dialectical relationship must be examined to understand how 'the powerful' use language to 'deceive and oppress the dominated.' (Howarth, 2000, p. 4). Such an approach to discourse is appropriate for the discursive habits of presidential candidates seeking to represent 'the people'. Going further, CDA attempts to understand the nature of social power and dominance and allows the researcher to 'formulate ideas about how discourse contributes to their reproduction.' (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). Political discourse has a role in the 'enactment, reproduction, and legitimization of power and domination' so it is to be expected analysts of political talk and text use CDA (van Dijk, 2001).

*Limitations of Critical Discourse Analysis*

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[4] It should be noted that the researcher has used a post-structuralist approach to the theory populism but is using CDA as opposed to a post-structuralist discourse analysis approach.

Research using CDA is not without its trepidations. Analysts must accept its subjective nature as an inevitability and that the discourse being analyzed is up to the researcher's interpretation (Fairclough, 1992). 'What we are able to see of the actuality of a text depends upon the perspective from which we approach it, including the particular social issues in focus, and the social theory and discourse theory we draw upon.' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 16). Neither the circumstances under which the discourse being analyzed was fashioned nor the potential impact such discourses would have upon their dissemination are part of Critical Discourse Analysis (Blommaert & Blucaen, 2000). 'The main issue is that by its very nature such critical work is often undermining some versions of social arrangements while simultaneously presupposing others.' (Potter, 1996, p. 231). Furthermore, quoting Widdowson (1998), CDA doesn't take into consideration the number of ways a text can be read (Blommaert & Blucaen, 2000).

*Alternative methodologies*

Despite its limitations, CDA is the most appropriate method for the research project at hand, and to strengthen this justification, other approaches to analyze text will be discussed and why such methods would not serve as sufficient alternatives to answer my query. Fairclough (2012) suggests Political Discourse Analysis as a way to analyze texts in that, 'it views political discourse as primarily a form of argumentation, and as involving more specifically practical argumentation for or against particular ways of acting, argumentation that can ground decision.' (p. 1). This methodology focuses on the choices made and actions taken based on those choices. In the case of this study, the actions taken based on the discursive are not under consideration.

Given this work's reliance on post-structuralist influenced populism theory, it would seem Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) discourse theory would be consistent. However, there are aspects of their theory that are problematic for the research question at hand. Three critiques highlight the short-comings of discourse theory analysis. First, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) point out that Laclau and Mouffe are interested in specific discourses 'as abstract phenomena rather than as resources that people draw upon and transform in the practices of everyday life.' (p. 25). Second, 'Laclau and Mouffe overlook the fact that not all individuals and groups have equal possibilities for rearticulating elements in new ways and so for creating change.' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) as seen in Jørgensen & Phillips (2002), p. 30). It is Chouliaraki and Fairclough's contention that for dominated groups, socially created structures are hard to change (as seen in Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Finally, Jørgensen and

Phillips argue discourse theory overlooks 'the structural constraints because they focus so much on contingency: everything is in flux and all possibilities are open.' (p. 30).

Fairclough's CDA is the analysis of 'dialectical relations between discourse and other objects, elements or moments, as well as analysis of the 'internal relations' of discourse' (2013, p. 4) and not strictly the discourse itself. Thus, CDA allows for a more thorough analysis of the entire situation in which Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders is speaking; specifically, what the candidates are speaking about, to whom, as well as the current and historical events that lead to this moment. While quantitative content analysis allows for the process of larger amounts of data it fails to consider the 'text above the level of sentences.' (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 16).

**Research Design and Sampling Method**

Above outlines why critical discourse analysis was the appropriate method to conduct my research in regards to Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' rhetoric. It is my hope that by laying out the steps I have taken while conducting this research, two of the critiques of CDA – the inability to replicate analysis and its subjective nature – will be mitigated. However, since discourse analysis is a qualitative methodology there can only be limited expectations of impartiality, for the biases laid out above will inevitably come into play.

*Research Design*

Fairclough's (1992) model of three dimensions of analysis will assist in my attempt to be consistent throughout my analysis of the discourses chosen.

> 1. Textual dimension: this consists of observing the linguistic characteristics and organization of the text itself. Included in this level of analysis will be the choices in vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure along with force, coherence and intertextuality.
> 2. Discursive dimension: this level 'involves process of text production, distribution, and consumption, and the nature of these processes varies between different types of discourse according to social factors.' (p. 78).
> 3. Societal dimension: the 'social practice' dimension attempts to contend with the broader implications of the discursive event and 'how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice, and the constitutive/constructive effects of discourse' (p. 4).

The above three-dimensional structure will be employed during the investigation of the texts chosen for this research by a system of codes that references the three components to Fairclough's CDA methodology. Its implementation will occur in the annotation of the texts, as seen in the appendices.

*Sampling*

Before specifying the sampling criteria, it is worth acknowledging why speeches were the discursive text chosen in the first place. Speeches by candidates are an essential aspect of campaigns. They offer a glimpse into what direction the candidate and campaign are moving in and what can be expected by supporters as well as where they fit in the campaign. In addition, campaign speeches are a form of direct communication between 'the leader' and 'the people' (Benoit, 2007). This direct communication would be hindered by observing media texts such as interviews or debates: 'the concept of "mediation" also includes the notion of communication through a medium which has specific properties which affect the nature of the communication.' (Fairclough, Cortese & Ardizzone, 2007, p. 16).

The textual samples for this research project were chosen for their overall significance in the 2016 presidential campaign. The announcement speeches for both candidates is the first opportunity to introduce themselves to the electorate. It lays the groundwork for their identity construction. Super Tuesday is historically one of the most important days in the electoral calendar (Weiland, 2016); due to the number of states and territories voting in a single day, it often results in candidates dropping out of the race because they didn't win enough delegates (Eleftheriou-Smith, 2016). The final selection consists of the speeches made after the Indiana Primary. This moment was chosen for two reasons: firstly, it was the final push for Mr. Trump's main competitor, and his loss resulted in Mr. Trump being the presumptive nominee for the Republican party (Tartar, 2016); and secondly, Sen. Bernie Sanders was not predicted to win the state, but did by a large margin (Tartar, 2016).

However, the amount of texts in each of these speeches was too long for this project. This also accounts for focusing on the text of the speeches and not incorporating an audio-visual aspect to this analysis. Using purposive sampling to guide the selection process allowed this researcher to ensure the chosen texts would 'enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions which the researcher wishes to study.' (Bryman, 2012 as seen in Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 113). In the case of this study, that includes the elimination of policy proposals made by the candidates. This is due, in part, to the populism theory laid out by Westlind (1996). As he contends, populism is constructed through discourse and is not

restricted to a specific political party or policy stance. Therefore, I used purposive sampling again to shorten each text to approximately two pages each, equaling six pages of text dedicated to each candidate thus ensuring the text analyzed was relevant to the question at hand (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

*Limitations*

As to not be repetitive, this research will reserve the discussion of method limitations to the section above, but limitations in regards to sampling and the overall scope of this work still must be addressed. To offer a more thorough and comprehensive result, it would ideal to analyze how the speeches were delivered, incorporating the visual and audio aspects into this analysis. It would also be helpful to include the speeches made throughout the primary by Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders to aid in a more thorough analysis. Specifically, how do their 'stump' speeches change the discursive patterns observed, if they do at all? Does the inclusion of the entirety of the texts chosen influence the results?

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Before analyzing the texts, they must be contextualized. As briefly acknowledged above, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders represent the two major political parties found in American democracy. The economic stresses and the digital revolution has radically changed how society operates which manifests amongst the American people as fear of a phenomenon that cannot be controlled (Gould, 2016). The unrest and anger felt by the electorate meant they needed something or someone to blame: the political establishment (Seib, 2016).

This leads me to the analysis. First I will explore how Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders construct and view 'America'. Second, I will examine how both candidates discursively convey their perception of 'the people'. This will be followed by Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' stylization of their public personas. Finally, the analysis will delve into their fashioning of 'antagonists'. I favor 'antagonists' as opposed to 'the establishment' because, as I will discuss at greater length below, both Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders view many groups of people as their opposition and is not strictly confined to the economic or political establishment. Each of the above sections will present a direct comparison between both candidates and support for claims made using the textual and discursive dimensions of CDA. This will culminate in an analysis of the broader implications of the research conducted in concert with the societal dimension of the CDA methodology.

*On America*

If either of these candidates are to be believed, America is on the brink of disaster and ruin. No one is stronger in this assertion than Mr. Trump. From the start he states the following:

> Our country is in serious trouble. We don't have victories anymore. We used to have victories, but we don't have them anymore. [...] The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems.
>
> (Appendix A).

It is apparent from this passage that Mr. Trump is extremely confident in his opinion of America and its standing in the world. His simple phrasing of sentences and the basic, no-nonsense language employed makes these short, to-the-point statements portray assertiveness and power in addition to being easy to grasp by the audience. This communicative style can enhance his message (Fairclough, 2000). In five words, 'we don't have victories anymore,' Mr. Trump quickly conveys his message: the United States as a country was a winner in the past, which he acknowledges later on, but in its current state it doesn't win. Mr. Trump provides a reason why the U.S. is incapable of winning in its current state: 'The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems.' He has solved the conundrum felt by his audience; why they are angry, why they are struggling is because America is taking on the problems from, not just specific nations, but 'everybody'. In this sense, he is setting America and 'the people' as equivalent (Fairclough, 2000). America is losing, therefore it's people are also losing. In his speeches these antagonists tend to be other countries, but as it will be shown later on, politicians are partially to blame for the situation American faces. In this instance, Mr. Trump draws a line in the sand with this statement and immediately poses the U.S. against 'everybody else' because 'everybody else' put America in this mess (implied through 'dumping') in the first place. This argument is extremely nationalistic, calling upon Americanism (Kazin, 1995); it identifies the single characteristic every U.S. citizen is and can rally behind and understands innately: being an American.

It should be made clear that his view of America isn't necessarily negative, more that America is in a negative space causing it to 'become close to a third world country' (Appendix C). It is his contention that America that is crumbling by calling upon the Western view of supposed third world countries in his metaphoric use of the state of the infrastructure in comparison to other countries (Appendix B). These descriptions add to the assertions strength as a statement of fact (Potter, 1996). While America is in dire straits, Mr. Trump supplements this assessment with hope: '[...] we are going to make our country great again. It can happen. Our

country has tremendous potential. We have tremendous people.' (Appendix A). Mr. Trump has his eye on the future of America, where it 'can' become great like it used to be (implied through 'again'). His use of 'we' and 'our' unify the audience and collectively the 'tremendous' people of America. The country has 'tremendous' potential because of its 'tremendous' people. In bolstering his definition of America, his definition of nationalism, he is defining the empty signifier to fit his narrative (Laclau, 2005). Consistent with his style, the repetition of complementary words reiterates his point.

Sen. Sanders' assessment of the United States does not stray far from Mr. Trump's:

> This country faces more serious problems today than at any other time since the Great Depression and, [...] it may well be that the challenges we face now are direr than any time in our modern history.
>
> (Appendix D).

Initially, Sen. Sanders is not as possessive of the United States as Mr. Trump. By using the phrase 'this country', he narrows the focus for the audience, giving a very specific realm Mr. Sanders is referring to, separating America from the rest of the world. Throughout this excerpt, Mr. Sanders is constructing his view of America using history. Similar to Mr. Trump, he is defining his view of America to fit his narrative (Laclau, 2005). He calls upon a well-known reference, the Great Depression, for direct comparison with the current situation facing the country; a previously established discourse (Westlind, 1996). Following this declaration is his claim that the challenges are more critical than any others in recent history. He isn't certain about this claim and is distancing himself from making an outright declaration of fact (Potter, 1996), but still wants his feelings and the overall sentiment to be known even if it is not true. Beyond his use of historical context to situate his vision of America, the use of 'direr' to describe the problems facing, not just the country but 'we', indicating his place amongst the American people. The situation is reaching a breaking point, it's grimmer and more desperate than at any other time 'in our modern history'.

A point from which Sen. Sanders differs with Mr. Trump is in his mention of American democracy:

> We can disagree in a democracy, and that's what a democracy is about, but I hope all of us agree that we're going to not allow billionaires and their super PACs to destroy American democracy. (Appendix E).

Sen. Sanders is contending that not just democracy, but American democracy is being destroyed from antagonists that do not have its best interests at heart. While this will be discussed in further detail below, the point remains that Sen. Sanders is connecting values that he, and the people in his movement (with the use of 'we're'), is fighting for with what American democracy stands for. This claim of equivalency (Fairclough, 2000) assists in building the 'us vs. them' discursive trope of populism (Barr, 2009). Like Mr. Trump, Sen. Sanders defines America as a democracy because it is what the United States was founded around and gives meaning to the signifier of America (Westlind, 1996). Again, he calls upon American history as the basis for his claims and the values he is fighting for. These values unite 'us', creating a chain of equivalences (Laclau, 2005), and they are to be protected.

*The elusive 'people'*

Throughout populist literature, the power of 'the people' is a common theme. 'Populist speakers in the United States voiced a profound outrage with elites who ignored, corrupted, and/or betrayed the core ideal of American democracy: rule by the common people [...].' (Kazin, 1995, p. 2). But identifying who 'the people' are is easier said than done. For Westlind (1996), 'the people' are both a community that is 'articulated in discourse as a group sharing certain traits' (p. 94) and an identity when 'individuals realize themselves as belonging to this community' (p. 94).

In Mr. Trump's discourse, 'the people' are closely tied to his description of America as well as his depiction of himself and his campaign.

> [...] people are tired of these nice people. And they're tired of being ripped off by everybody in the world. And they're tired of spending more money on education than any nation in the world per capita [...]. (Appendix A).

> He just called me and said, "It's a movement you've got going. We've got to do something because I'll tell you what, it's an incredible movement." (Appendix C).

In the first excerpt, he explicitly describes 'the people' in terms similarly used to describe America: 'they're tired of being ripped off by everybody in the world'. In Mr. Trump's view, 'the people' are tired and cannot continue the way they're going. In addition, he is constructing a group of people who share his thoughts. The vagueness in articulating how a group of people feel and not describing them directly allows for more people to identify with the community he is constructing (Westlind, 1996). By repeating the adjective, 'tired', when

referring to the people, it creates a rhythm emphasizing his point. Being 'tired' is an easily relatable sentiment. He continues by describing this community as a movement, but removes himself from actually labelling it directly. The movement label comes from someone else, a third party observer, thus giving it more weight than if Mr. Trump were to label it as a movement himself (Potter, 1996). What should be noted in the second excerpt, however, is the credit for the formation of the movement goes to Mr. Trump. While he seems neutral to this assertion, Mr. Trump claims at an earlier point in the campaign that he is a 'unifier' (Appendix B). This will be an important aspect of how he constructs himself discursively, from claiming he united the movement to shifting footing to a third party for endorsement (Potter, 1996).

Sen. Sanders unifies 'the people' through being vague about who specifically makes up this community (Westlind, 1996). Like Mr. Trump, Sen. Sanders describes the emotions of 'the people' but also their needs.

> What that revolution is about is bringing millions and millions of people into the political process. Working people who have been so disillusioned, they no longer vote. Young people who have never been involved. What the political revolution is about is bringing our people together. (Appendix E).

> [...] And to bring people together we need a simple and straight-forward progressive agenda which speaks to the needs of our people, and which provides us with a vision for a very different America. (Appendix D).

In both excerpts, Sen. Sanders' vocabulary is one of unity and generalities. He explicitly states the campaign, which is 'a political revolution', is about 'bringing our people together'. 'Our people' means many things: it refers to all American people; it refers to the people who are immediately present; and it refers to everyone who shares his policy agenda vision. Thus, it represents a timeless signifier (Laclau, 1990) which empowers this group by allowing membership to anyone as long as they agree on the issues (Westlind, 1996). Sen. Sanders offers two descriptors to help narrow down the scope, 'working people' and 'young people'. 'Working people' and 'young people' gives the audience a specific image, but that image may change depending on the audience member. His lack of specifics is a specific strategy to unify millions of people. Millions of people can feel 'disillusioned and 'discontent' (Appendix D) with the political process, a claim that could explain the steady decline in voter turnout in the United States (Bialik & Fisher-Baum, 2014). Unlike Mr. Trump, Sen. Sanders is eager to describe 'the people' joining him as a 'revolution', and by extension, a movement. Part of

being a revolution is being willing to fight to change the current situation 'the people' find themselves in. Sen. Sanders refers to this revolution as 'a movement of millions of Americans who are prepared to stand up and fight back'. He presents solutions for how 'the people' feel – 'they are tired […] they are worried' (Appendix F) – and speaks to their needs as a way to bring 'our people' together. He is presenting a solution to the frustrations of 'the people', a solution he can deliver for them (Barr, 2009).

*Constructing themselves*

For Westlind (1996), an important aspect of populist movements is a charismatic leader. This leader must both establish themselves as the legitimate head of 'the people' while maintaining the perception as a member of 'the people's' community (Westlind, 1996). For Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders, this is a challenge. As discussed above, they are members of the economic elite and political elite respectively thus are not members of 'the people' they reference. Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders attempt to bridge that divide discursively.

In the case of Mr. Trump, he asserts himself as a leader of 'the people' first and foremost.

> I'm proud of my net worth. I've done an amazing job. I started off – I started off in a small office with my father in Brooklyn and Queens, and my father said – and I love my father. I learned so much. […] So the total is $8,737,540,000 […] I'm not doing that to brag, because you know what? I don't have to brag. […] I'm doing that to say that that's the kind of thinking our country needs. (Appendix A)

In the first speech of his candidacy, it makes sense for Mr. Trump to introduce himself to the electorate. However, the way he does so is unique. He does not shy away from his accomplishments and the fact he is worth, according to his own calculations, almost $9 billion. Being upfront about his wealth shows he is aware his wealth may be perceived as problematic to his candidacy, a type of stake confessing (Potter, 1996). It also presents himself as the person most 'able and willing to represent the people effectively' (Barr, 2009 p. 37).

> Recent articles came out talking about how great a company we built, and now we want to put that same ability into doing something for our nation. (Appendix B).

This quotation appears later on in the campaign, after Super Tuesday. The voters know him and with this he adds to his claim he has run a 'great' company by bringing in corroborating

evidence found in the media. In addition to the first excerpt he qualifies that he is 'proud' of his wealth, that he has done an 'amazing' job to earn so much money, and how 'great' his company is. In the first excerpt, this is juxtaposed with a perceived smaller operation he was part of with his father; a father and son business that started in the outskirts of Manhattan. This seemingly 'rags-to-riches' tale plays into the 'American Dream' ideal all Americans have grown up with (Westlind, 1996). In both excerpts he spins his wealth confession as a positive characteristic and evidence for his qualifications to be President: 'that's the kind of thinking our country needs'. Mr. Trump is portraying himself as a successful business man and thus has authority (or a 'category entitlement' (Potter, 1996)) and can be trusted.

These assertions, of course, do nothing to overtly align himself with 'the people'. Instead it comes out with the subtle uses of 'we', 'our' country, and 'our' nation. He unites himself with 'the people' in their view of America:

> I'm doing that to say that that's the kind of thinking our country needs. We need that thinking. We have the opposite thinking. [...] We have people that are selling this country down the drain. (Appendix A)

Mr. Trump's construction of antagonists will be explored below, but for now it can be recognized that he is being sold short along with everyone else in this country by our leaders, the 'power-bloc' (Laclau, 1977). Mr. Trump is in the same boat as 'the people', no matter how successful he may be. They are all united against a common enemy that is ruining 'our' country that belongs to all of us.

Through his construction of America and 'the people', Sen. Sanders constructs himself and his campaign. In all three speeches the way he refers to himself is directly related to how he refers to America and 'the people'.

> This campaign – as I think all of you know, this campaign is not just about electing the president. It is about transforming America. It is about making our great country the nation that we know it has the potential to be. It is about dealing with some unpleasant truths that exist in America today and having the guts to confront those truths. (Appendix E).

> Let's be clear. This campaign is not about Bernie Sanders. It is not about Hillary Clinton. It is not about Jeb Bush or anyone else. This campaign is about the needs of

the American people and the ideas and proposals that effectively address those needs. [...] This is what I believe the American people want and deserve. (Appendix D).

In both of the above excerpts, Sen. Sanders distances himself from his position as a Senator and as the leader of the 'political revolution' in an effort to bridge the divide between himself and 'the people' (Westlind, 1996). The campaign, the movement is bigger than himself. He refers to himself in third person in the excerpt above as well as multiple times throughout the chosen speeches, all in an effort to portray this as a movement of 'the people' for which he serves as its voice. In being elusive when describing himself, it enables him to be on the same level as 'the people' and that voters are supporting for the movement of broader values than for a specific person. This purposeful vagueness also signifies the power of the ideological systems Sen. Sanders is working in, the symbolic violence being played out (Bourdieu, 1991). He does not want to acknowledge the power over 'the people' he has for fear of alienating them if they become aware of the power hierarchy. The campaign is an acknowledgment that 'the people' are hurting and their 'needs' are not being met, the result being America isn't reaching its potential. Again, establishing equivalence between 'the people' and America (Laclau, 2005). By articulating the 'needs' of the American people followed immediately by how to address those needs, Sen. Sanders sets himself up as the only person to 'transform America' because he is in touch with how 'the people' feel (Barr, 2009). This is in an effort to counteract his speaking style which plays a role in forming a narrative (Fairclough, 2000). Unlike Mr. Trump, who's speech is very conversational, Sen. Sanders is showing his politician side through his style of delivery during his remarks. While he uses accessible language, it flows and has a rhythm compared to the staccato of Mr. Trump.

*The antagonists*

Populist movements are defined by specific rhetorical tropes. One, as explored above, is the populist's construction of 'the people'. The second is the populist's construction of the antagonist of 'the people'. (Westlind, 1996; Kazin, 1995). By appealing to 'the people', populist politicians must be in opposition to the elite, which holds the power, and present a solution to give power back to the citizens (Barr, 2009, p. 36). The discontent felt by supporters of anti-establishment politicians stems from disparity between those who hold no power and those who do, which explains the 'us versus them' rhetoric (Barr, 2009).

Unlike his vague description of 'the people', Mr. Trump is more forthcoming about who he views as 'the opposition' to average Americans and who threatens America and its ideals. 'Given two discursively constructed identities A and B, an antagonism exists if A cannot fully

be A given A's relation to B.' (Westlind, 1996, p. 84). As indicated by both excerpts seen below, as well as in the rest of the texts, Mr. Trump believes that America is under attack from international foes as well as foes within its borders.

> When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. [...] They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people. (Appendix A).

Mexico is actively sending 'its people', and they aren't 'their best'. He de-humanizes the immigrants with the use of 'it' as well as with the sweeping statement on the character of these immigrants. These immigrants, he contends, are bringing their problems over the border and are wreaking havoc because they are bringing crime and drugs. As a passing side note, to inoculate himself from being accused of making generalizations, he assumes are okay. But the emphasis is clearly, through his repetitiveness, on accusing Mexican immigrants for the problems facing the country. Through devaluing Mexicans, he glorifies Americans because, due to the implication in this excerpt, Americans are the opposite of his characterization of Mexicans; Americans vs. Mexicans or, 'us' vs. 'them' (Barr, 2009). The repetition of 'they're' further serves to generalize and undermine the Mexican identity by creating a sense of othering and distance from them.

In the second excerpt, Mr. Trump outlines groups of people within America that are the causes for the issues the United States is facing.

> I know it was a very tough night for Marco Rubio. [...] He is a lightweight, as I've said many times before [...] I know that a lot of groups, a lot of the special interests and a lot of the lobbyists and the people that want to have their little senator do exactly what they want [...]. (Appendix B).

In this quote, Mr. Trump explicitly names another candidate for president, Senator Marco Rubio. He labels him a 'lightweight' and 'little' to minimize his power, saying he's in control of special interests. Special interests, in this case, is code for money. The label is an umbrella term for any advocacy group, business, or donor that gives money to his campaign in the hopes of having privileged access to a politician (Marks, 2000), in this instance Sen. Rubio. The implication is that politicians like Sen. Rubio are not accountable to their constituents but instead are controlled by the people or groups who donate to their campaigns. Mr. Trump is tapping into 'the crisis of representation' that is at the heart of any populist (Laclau, 2005).

Ever since the Citizen's United decision in 2010 (Tedford, 2010), complaining about money in politics has been a common strategy for politicians (Cole, 2016). Mr. Trump believes that this is wrong because the power is out of 'the people's' hands and is in the hands of those who donate large sums of money to politicians.

The antagonists in Sen. Sanders' eyes are closer to home. Unlike Mr. Trump, Sen. Sanders is strictly focused on the economic inequalities, the political system, and the media within the United States (Canovan, 1999).

> [...] I hope all of us agree that we're going to not allow billionaires and their Super PACs to destroy American democracy. [...] And you know that while our people are working so hard, almost all of the new wealth and income generated in America is going to the top 1%. (Appendix E).

> Brothers and sisters: Now is not the time for thinking small. Now is not the time for the same old – same old establishment politics and stale, inside-the-beltway ideas. (Appendix D).

> It's going to give us a great deal of momentum because I think there are many in the media, like you and others, who have decided that the campaign is over. (Appendix F).

When Sen. Sanders speaks about the elites, the people in power, his language invokes a battle mentality: it's a fight to get the power away from the people who don't deserve it to the people who do. 'The people' aren't going to let billionaires buy elections, or politicians get stuck by the old ways of thinking, or letting the media paint a wrong picture. They are preventing 'the people' from being in power (Westlind, 1996). By mentioning what is going wrong, and who is doing wrong by the American people, Sen. Sanders is targeting specific groups that he has decided are the cause for the struggles of 'the people'. He is defining the signifier that is 'them' in the 'us vs. them' relationship (Barr, 2009; Savage, 2010). These groups are described using impersonal language, 'the top 1%', 'stale, inside-the-beltway', and finally, 'the media'. He is calling upon unflattering images, demonizing them with their identity only being what they do wrong, and not for what they potentially add to society. 'The people' are united against them, as 'brothers and sisters' in arms to fight for American democracy.

**Discussion**

Having analyzed four prevalent discursive themes in the texts, the broader implications of the findings of their intertextuality must be explored. What is particularly evident is both Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders attempt to change the political system in the United States. Using an 'us vs. them' type discursive pattern, they endeavor to give power back to 'the people' and to change the hegemonic order. By articulating the struggle in such a way is an open acknowledgement of Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic violence. However, instead of Bourdieu's contention that symbolic violence occurs unbeknownst to the persons involved, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders are bringing it to the forefront of the electorate's mind. Which could be interpreted as an attempt to regain control. Through identity construction that is closely linked with 'the people', they are attempting to articulate a change in the normative definition of power holders in American democracy. By aligning themselves with 'the people' and their struggles, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders establishing themselves as the only possible power brokers in the effort to change the hegemonic order through the return of power to 'the people'.

How they go about accomplishing such tight alignment to 'the people' through their discourse is indicative of the vagueness the term allows and therefore their party affiliation (Laclau, 2005). In the case of Mr. Trump, he aligns himself to 'the people' through othering those who he believes to be different. His dehumanizing language when referring, not only to Mexicans but groups such as 'the African-Americans' and 'virtually every group' (Appendix B). This othering, particularly in reference to non-whites could be seen as a response to globalization and the fear of the loss of identity. Sen. Sanders aligns himself to 'the people' through distancing himself from the hegemonic power of neoliberal policies and greed which he believes is weakening American democracy. By naming 'the billionaire class' or 'the top 1%' uses terms to distance the economic elite from everyone else, allowing him to articulate where his loyalties lie: with 'the people'.

Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be said that within the scope of the six chosen speech texts, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders do indeed construct themselves as anti-establishment through their discourse. This indicates that not only is populism alive and well in the American political psyche, but it is being wielded by both sides of the aisle. Their construction as anti-establishment is accomplished by the employment of various rhetorical tropes identified in populist literature. Specifically, Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders utilize the vague signifier of 'the people', and construct unique definitions of this community to their benefit (Westlind, 1996). Through this, as well as the discursive construction of their own identity, America and 'the people' directly challenge the perceived antagonist and bolster its hegemonic power (Westlind, 1996; Kazin, 1995; Laclau, 2005).

Where Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders differ is their view of the antagonist. This assessment directly relates and explains the production of the other observed themes. It is Mr. Trump's perspective that the antagonists to 'the people' (and by extension America and himself) is globalization and the loss of identity such a change threatens; an assertion consistent with populists in the past (Kazin, 1995). Meanwhile, Sen. Sanders threatens the overpowering neoliberal way of thinking and it's resulting greed as the reason for strife felt by 'the people' (and by extension America and himself). These threats are historical in nature as well, aligning with the 'put people first' message of the 1990s (Kazin, 1995).

## CONCLUSION

What remains to be seen is whether Mr. Trump will have the opportunity to put his words into action. Out of the two, Mr. Trump is the nominee for the Republican Party and thus running in the general election. The literature suggests populists 'face the challenge of tangibly improving the lives of supporters in order to solidify or maintain their basis of power.' (Barr, 2009, p. 42). The study of his discourse while in office would be interesting if Mr. Trump is indeed elected President of the United States.

Other analytical approaches could bring to light further findings relating to this phenomenon. For instance, due to the time and space constraints, this study could not incorporate more texts for analysis. However, broader discursive analysis of speeches made at rallies, after caucuses and primaries as well as at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions would, most likely, bring to the forefront further details regarding both candidates' populist natures. That being said, a broader study would most likely bring more information and a fuller picture to Mr. Trump and Sen. Sanders' discourse tendencies and how it relates or even repeats strategies and traits from America's populist past. Despite its subjective nature, this researcher still contends discourse analysis would be the best way to advance this enquiry due to its historical and societal framework of analysis. It could be argued, however, that quantitative methods such as content analysis could bolster the findings in this and more thorough research endeavors.

What is apparent to the researcher, based on historical and analytic literature on populism, that America's strand of this political style, specifically the 'rising' of 'the people', is primarily reserved for whites and 'rarely extended beyond the color line' (Kazin, 1995, p. 14). There are, of course, exceptions, but very few. Given the potentially historic election of the first women President of the United States, it causes this researcher to wonder that within the confines of

the current American political system could anyone who is not an automatic member of the hegemony, i.e. women and members of minority groups, successfully employ the populist style rhetoric, especially on the federal level? Exploring this question would require further inquiry at a later date, but will be eagerly awaited by this writer.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Donald Trump Announcement Speech, June 16, 2016

Available from http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/


Appendix B: Donald Trump Super Tuesday Speech, March 1, 2016

Available from http://time.com/4245134/super-tuesday-donald-trump-victory-speech-transcript-full-text/


Appendix C: Donald Trump Indiana Primary Speech, May 3, 2016

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeEzYSWwiSU


Appendix D: Bernie Sanders Announcement Speech, May 26, 2015

Available from http://www.whatthefolly.com/2015/05/27/transcript-sen-bernie-sanderss-presidential-campaign-kick-off-speech-in-burlington-vermont-part-1/


Appendix E: Bernie Sanders Super Tuesday Speech, March 1, 2016

Available from http://time.com/4244244/bernie-sanders-super-tuesday-speech-transcript-full-text/


Appendix F: Bernie Sanders Indiana Primary Speech, May 3, 2016

Available from https://www.c-span.org/video/?409018-1/bernie-sanders-addresses-supporters-louisville-kentucky

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