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THE RHETORIC OF BOURKE COCKRAN:
A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Richard Lee Stovall, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1975

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation to Professor Goodwin Berquist for unselfishly sharing his scholarship, advice and friendship.

A special note of thanks is due the members of the dissertation committee for their many words of encouragement and helpful suggestions.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this study to my wife, Susannah, and our children, Christopher and Stacy. Without their sacrifice this study would not have been completed.
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This study grew from Dr. Goodwin Berquist's suggestion that I read a portion of a recent biography by Ralph Martin. He noted a specific portion of the biography was devoted to Winston S. Churchill's oratorical training.¹ My initial interest was specifically limited to Churchill's friend and tutor, Bourke Cockran, and how their oratorical relationship approximated the classical rhetorical concept of imitation. Preliminary research soon broadened to include Cockran's own remarkable career. From that limited focus, I developed a genuine interest in both Cockran and the more expansive concepts of the nineteenth century in general.

From the Civil War to the turn of the century, this nation developed and changed rapidly. Such growth always breeds complexity both at the time it occurs and later as historians and rhetoricians seek to understand the events of change. Historian Paul H. Buck viewed the post-Civil War period as one of reunion, a time when the disparate social, economic, and political forces were brought into harmonious balance.²

In contrast to Buck's view, Richard Hofstadter judged the interval from Bryan to F.D.R., a slightly later period, as an age of reform. His revisionist view suggested that turn-of-the-century Americans reacted with paranoia as they witnessed the destruction of the agrarian myth in favor of commercial realities.3

Interpretations differing from both Buck and Hofstadter are presented by Dobson and Weinstein. For example, Dobson labeled America's reconstruction era as a gilded age of machine politics. He contended that development of a middle and upper-middle class gave rise to civil service reform via the power of socially elite Mugwumps and Independent Republicans.4 Weinstein contended that the growth of corporate power between 1900-1918 established the corporate ideal. His position was that corporate power had so influenced governmental action that radical social reform techniques were declared illegal and only the more conservative reforms, those acceptable to the giant corporations, were deemed acceptable avenues to social justice.5


Although historical interpretations vary, certain key issues of this period can be identified as falling into America's mainstream of concern. The growth of giant corporations gave rise to doubts about unbridled industrial power, trusts, and the formation of labor unions. As labor and management argued about their respective rights, women at last gained the right to vote. The influx of immigrants and the development of metropolitan concentrations brought to the forefront not only the question of limited entry but the first real attention to urban problems such as mass transit, public utilities, and municipal ownership. The emergence of "have" and "have not" elements in a newly urban America ripened conditions for machine politics which pork barrelled for both rich and poor. On a broader scale, America's divergent economic practices brought into focus the issues of protective tariffs, and the gold versus silver money standards. But not all of the contested issues were isolated within America. The Spanish-American War and disposition of the Philippine Islands produced a debate over imperialism. The luxury of isolation was gone by 1916. It was in the context of these turn-of-the-century issues that William Bourke Cockran was acclaimed one of America's finest orators.
Cockran was born at Rock Lodge, Carrowkeel, near the city of Sligo, Ireland on February 28, 1854. Bourke was the third son born to Martin and Harriet White Cockran. Martin Cockran was the son of Tom Cockran, "big man" in Ballinacarrow. He held this title because he operated a large farm and held substantial business interests. Tom Cockran's status as landed aristocracy allowed Martin the social and financial wherewithal to pursue almost any course and career he wished. Martin was not known to shy away from the taverns; he loved to ride to the hounds; and frugality was not one of his stronger points.6

Martin Cockran met Harriet White on the eve of a most important legal battle. The following day Miss White's financial standing was to be determined by court decision. Prominent and well-educated, she had taken matters into her own hands and was attempting to regain ancestral land that had been confiscated during the reign of William the Third (1688-1702). By virtue of a favorable court decision, Miss White became wealthy overnight. After a one-week courtship, Martin and Harriet were married.7

7 Ibid.

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Bourke Cockran was but five years old when his father met a violent death. Martin's adventurous nature had again drawn him to the saddle. It was the faulted water vault of the steeplechase that sent Martin Cockran crashing to the ground with a fractured neck. Martin's extravagant nature depleted the reserves of his wife's estate. Harriet Cockran was faced with rearing five children and managing the debt-ridden financial affairs of her late husband. She called upon her courage, education, practicality, and determined energy to insure that all her children would receive a good education.\(^8\)

At age nine, Bourke Cockran was sent to France to continue his studies at the Institut des Petits Freres de Marie at Beauchamp, near Lille. His first year of education was obtained at the Christian Brothers School in Sligo. Cockran's early schooling apparently made a lasting impression on his life and his oratory. The Jesuit scholar, Reverend John J. Wynne, S.J., wrote that Cockran's early training accounted for the unity of his politics, economics, religion, and character.\(^9\)

Initially, Bourke's academic endeavors in France were plagued by homesickness. However, as he adapted to

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^9\) McGurrin, pp. 11-20.
his new setting his intellectual capacity began to bloom. He made exceptional progress during the year his brother, Martin, attended school with him. After five years of school in France he was known as an outstanding scholar with a fine speaking voice.\textsuperscript{10}

Cockran's additional education was received at St. Jarlath's College, Taum, and later at Summerhill College in Athlone. It was at Summerhill that he, "...astonished his teachers by the brilliancy of his wit and the versatility of his genius." Returning from Summerhill to Dublin where his family had moved, Bourke was encouraged to accept his mother's arrangement for him, a civil service position in the Imperial Department of Woods and Forests of India. A Mr. Johnson was to train Bourke for the position.\textsuperscript{11}

Dublin and Mr. Johnson's tutelage commanded little of Bourke Cockran's attention, however. What did was public speaking. Cockran had the opportunity to hear the Irish orator and advocate, Isaac Butt. Leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party in the British House of Commons and one of the founders of Irish Home Rule, Butt had been speaking in Dublin on behalf of the Fenian prisoners. Cockran was so impressed by Butt that he joined the Dublin

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}
Debating Society. Cockran's first forensic encounter caused Archdeacon O'Rorke to conclude that he possessed the rare and precious gift of genuine eloquence.\textsuperscript{12}

An immediate oratorical success, Bourke informed his mother that he was seriously considering the study of law. Not fond of lawyers after her long court battle, Harriet Cockran suggested that Bourke not waste time or money on such a worthless profession. With the aid of a friend, she arranged a position for Bourke with a Dublin stockbroker. But her plans were again interrupted when Bourke announced his intention to visit America. Harriet thought Bourke's desire for travel was nothing more than the adventuresome spirit of a seventeen-year-old. In the spring of 1871, Bourke sailed to America aboard the steamship \textit{England}. He was met by his late father's cousin Edward Martin, who had received from Harriet one hundred twenty-five pounds for Bourke's expenses.\textsuperscript{13}

The ocean voyage did not still Cockran's interest in public speaking. Upon arrival in the New World, Bourke spent only one evening in New York; the next day he departed for Washington, D.C., where he hoped to be admitted to the House and Senate galleries. He listened to

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}.
the speeches of James G. Blaine, Sunset Cox, Daniel Voorhees, Benjamin Butler, Thomas F. Bayard, and Roscoe Cockling. Bourke was disappointed that he did not have the opportunity to hear Charles Sumner. Returning to New York, Cockran went to Cooper Union to hear Henry Ward Beecher.14

Having satisfied his curiosity about American oratory, Cockran was now faced with the practical matter of employment. Apparently he had decided to remain in America, almost at once. Sources disagree as to his first gainful occupation; however, there is agreement that his first teaching position was that of instructor in romance languages at New York's exclusive Catholic day school, St. Theresa's Academy. For more than a year, Cockran led a semi-cloistered life while so occupied.15

Cockran's next position took him to the Principalship at Tuckahoe Public School in Westchester County. In this position, Cockran was afforded the opportunity for an occasional public address. One such speech, "The Moral Influence of the Drama," greatly impressed New York Supreme Court Justice Abraham B. Tappan. The Judge

14 Ibid., pp. 21-24.
approached Cockran at the end of the address and told Bourke that he should consider study for the bar; should he decide to prepare for a career in law, Judge Tappan's private library would be at his disposal. This generous offer was readily accepted. On September 15, 1876, before the General Term of the Supreme Court, Second Department, in the Kings County Court House, Brooklyn, Bourke Cockran was admitted to the bar.\textsuperscript{16}

Cockran opened a law office in Mt. Vernon, New York. Although he successfully defended several clients, his practice was fraught with personal difficulty. First, he contracted diphtheria which took him to death's door before he was nursed to health by Mary Jackson, who later became his first wife. Second, Cockran was as prone to frequent taverns as had been his father. The clients who came to his law office, now located at 178 Broadway, New York City, began to desert him. Bourke's attendance to drinking or debating at the Hyena Club was more regular than his office hours. It was the influence of his alcoholic friend, Ambrose Purdy, that convinced Cockran to renounce liquor. After his self-induced abstinence took hold, his law practice again flourished. Between 1878 and 1885 his legal success required he take on a

\textsuperscript{16} McGurrin, p. 30.
partner, William H. Clark, later Corporate Counsel for New York Mayor Hugh Grant.  

Cockran's oratorical skills and forensic success brought him prominence, a commodity much prized by political parties. Bourke had long been an astute political observer; he followed the assaults upon New York's political machines with keen interest. Devoted to reform in government, Bourke found his views closely aligned with those of Samuel J. Tilden and Tilden's followers at Irving Hall. Between 1878 and 1880 Cockran frequently spoke on behalf of Irving Hall candidates. The 1882 New York State Democratic Convention brought Irving and Tammany Halls into a closer political alliance. The County Democracy, a Democratic Party faction, held convention control. Irving and Tammany Hall speakers were booed and hissed on every occasion. Cockran, rising to second the nomination of Roswell P. Flower, for Governor, gained the convention floor in an avalanche of disapproval. Standing his ground, Cockran soon controlled the unruly audience and concluded his speech to enthusiastic applause. Boss John Kelly was impressed with Bourke's speaking ability and arranged a private meeting at which he invited Cockran to become a member of Tammany Hall.  

17 Ibid., pp. 31-39; 89.  
18 Ibid., pp. 41-50.
Cockran did not accept Boss Kelly's offer until July 23, 1884. This eventual alignment with Tammany Hall involved a three-year political courtship including numerous political favors such as Cockran's appointment as Counsel to the Sheriff of New York County, an office Bourke had not sought. However, Cockran's politics remained his own. He twice deserted the ranks of Tammany and the Democratic Party, although he never affiliated with an opposing political party. George Washington Plunkitt, Tammany district boss who ran his political office from a bootblack's stand, once remarked that education and public speaking were not traits for political success. Rather, Plunkitt believed one only needed men who would support the party at any price. As McGurrin reported, Plunkitt said of Cockran:

...I'll admit he's a grand gentleman and the greatest orator in the land, but take it from me, he's not a dependable politician. He calls himself a Democrat but his heart was never in Tammany Hall. One look at him will tell you that he's as much of an aristocrat as old Lord Salisbury himself. He wouldn't lower his dignity to mix with the boys who work late and early to keep the organization going; and while he was in Congress he never darkened the door of a Tammany clubhouse.

19 Mary Margaret Crowley, "Bourke Cockran: Orator" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Speech, University of Wisconsin, 1941), p. 17.

20 McGurrin, p. 52.
Bourke Cockran achieved a national reputation at
the Democratic National Convention in 1884. As a
Tammany representative to the convention, Cockran opposed
the nomination of Cleveland and the convention rule of
"unit voting." The unit rule required a State Delega-
tion to cast all its votes for one of the nominated candi-
dates. On July 9, Cockran sought recognition to speak
in opposition to the unit rule which would count his
minority vote in favor of Cleveland. After only a few
sentences there were shouts of "platform" but Bourke
remained among the delegates to deliver his stinging at-
tack.

After minor debates over parliamentary procedure,
a vote was taken which retained the unit rule. However,
the New York Delegation was in such confusion they
passed on the first roll call and from the final ballot-
ing it appeared that Cockran had changed nearly one
hundred votes. At the convention's conclusion, Cockran
was as familiar a name as Cleveland.21

Again in the National Democratic Convention in
1892, Cockran opposed Cleveland's Presidential nomina-
tion. When Bourke gained the floor he was greeted by a
hostile audience but his attack on Cleveland was firm.

21 Ibid., pp. 53-71.
He gained the audience's attention by noting that Cleve­
land was a very popular man but before the applause had
died, he added, a very popular man on every day but elec­
tion day. His oration so moved the audience that
Cleveland supporters were providing applause. However,
the convention vote confirmed Cleveland's nomination.22

Few political issues were more hotly contested
than the silver standard. The 1896 Chicago Democratic
Convention resounded with cheers to William Jennings
Bryan's "Cross of Gold." Bourke Cockran was in Rome
when Bryan's most remembered oration became a matter of
record. Bryan chose August 12, 1896 and Madison Square
Garden as the place for his acceptance speech, a speech
that would detail his position on the silver topic.23

Returning from Europe on August 1, 1896, Bourke
Cockran was met at the pier by Major John Byrne, Chairman
of the Honest Money League, and Governor Flower. They
immediately urged Cockran to challenge Bryan's monetary
arguments. Cockran agreed to speak before the Honest
Money League August 18, 1896 at Carnegie Hall. The loca­
tion was later changed to Madison Square Garden because
ticket sales outstripped Carnegie Hall capacity.24

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., pp. 146-167.
24 Ibid.  xvii
Bryan's August 12 speech was mildly received by the New York press. Both delivery and content were below expectation. Cockran's reply, however, was acclaimed as one of his greatest triumphs. It was a decisive victory for Cockran. He had met his equal and had bettered him.25

As Cockran continued his political endeavors, his forensic oratory gained for him a reputation as a leading courtroom advocate. He had been retained by many of the major utility companies in New York City and by the prominent publisher, Joseph Pulitzer. Bourke's conservative tendencies resulted in his selection as defense counsel for Ferdinand Ward, the teenage wizard of Wall Street, who swindled seventeen million from his stockholders. Also, on the side of big business, Cockran defended Jacob "Jake" Sharp who had been accused of bribing New York City aldermen to obtain a franchise to lay surface railroad tracks from the South Ferry to 59th Street. Cockran lost the initial decision but carried the case to an Appellate Court victory.26

On labor's side, Cockran was brought to California to defend Tom Mooney. Mooney had been accused of killing

26 McGurrin, pp. 89-98.

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five people by planting a bomb in the midst of a July 22, 1916 Preparedness Day Parade. Bourke carried his appeal to the President of the United States to prevent Mooney's execution, and successfully gained a change of sentence to life in prison. Cockran also opposed compulsory arbitration of labor disputes and admonished the courts for being too quick to bring injunctions in favor of industry. He believed the courts delayed aid to workers who rightfully deserved compensation for injuries received amidst conditions eventually exposed by the Muckrakers. Cockran's frequent defense of the underdog, his strong opposition to the death penalty, and his constant concern for judicial reform suggest a strong parallel to the forensic career of Clarence Darrow.

Cockran's political and legal success led to financial security and further prominence. By 1895 his income from legal fees was approaching one hundred thousand dollars annually. However, it was this year, 1895, that marked the death of Cockran's second wife, Rhoda Mack. Bourke left law and politics to travel in Europe and attempt to regain control of his shattered life. It was during this period that he was introduced to Jennie

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., p. 95.
Jerome, Lady Randolph Churchill. Jennie was the recent widow of Lord Randolph, Winston Churchill's father. Shortly after Bourke's return to America, he was visited by young Winston. Although Bourke never married Jennie, they developed a close relationship that allowed Cockran to serve as Winston's surrogate father and oratorical tutor.29

Bourke's three Congressional terms and frequent courtroom appearances afforded him the opportunity to speak on a number of issues. He advocated prison reform directed toward rehabilitation, free trade, judicial reform encompassing the recall of judges, and the reporting of all political campaign contributions in excess of fifty dollars. The New York Public Library collection of "The Cockran Papers" contains nearly two hundred speeches delivered by this turn-of-the-century orator. When Cockran succumbed to an apparent stroke March 1, 1923, former House Speaker Joseph G. Cannon eulogized him as, "...one of the most brilliant ornaments of American statesmanship. His great speeches made us think of Burke, Sheridan and Fox in England and of our own Webster, Clay and Calhoun."30

Given Cockran's extensive legal, political, and oratorical career, it is surprising to discover that he

29 Martin, pp. 72-76.
has rarely been the subject of academic research. Two years after Cockran died, 1925, Robert McElroy set about to collect and publish his better known speeches. McElroy deleted much from Cockran's texts, especially those portions intended for specific audience adaptation. Additionally, the collected addresses were presented without a description of the occasion or any contextual material regarding the audience and issues.31

Mary Margaret Crowley chose Cockran's oratory as the subject of her 1941 doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin. Crowley's assessment of Cockran's career reflects a mixture of organizational approaches. First, Crowley was faced with the task of providing biographical data, since no existing work treated his career in detail. Second, Crowley divided Cockran's speeches along the lines of political, non-political, and religious oratory. This last category probably held more significance for Sister Mary than it would for most rhetorical critics. Third, Crowley's utilization of neo-Aristotelian criteria tends to remove Cockran from the historical perspective of his time, separate audiences from speeches, and devotes excessive detail to Cockran's storytelling, reading, and mastery.

of interruption. In total, the undertaking can be judged as an excellent biographical endeavor using primary sources to their fullest but lacking in coherent rhetorical criticism. If any significant weakness exists, it is Crowley's life-long admiration of Cockran. Crowley notes she could not recall when she was not interested in the "mythical figure," Bourke Cockran.32 Her selection of primary sources reveals Cockran as a great American orator without evidence of a single failure; presumably he was the good man speaking well, Cato and Quintilian equated with the perfect orator.

Seven years later, two Cockran biographies appeared. Mrs. Anne Ide Cockran chose biographer James McGurrin to present Cockran's life. His work is eulogistic and lends little new insight. However, Mrs. Cockran did provide personal touches in this work that cannot be found in historical documents elsewhere.

The second 1948 biography was authored by journalist/historian Ambrose Kennedy, a personal friend and associate of Cockran. Kennedy's biography devotes much attention to Cockran's political career but also tends toward the eulogistic.33

32 Crowley, p. i.

In 1965, Robert Oliver included Bourke Cockran among the figures treated in his work, *History of Public Speaking in America*. Oliver's analysis differed significantly from all previous undertakings in that he depicted Cockran as a candidate for "hurrah oratory." Borrowing this terminology from Stoddard, Oliver saw Cockran as a man who inspired audiences but never inspired political confidence. Oliver's brief treatment of Cockran does not attempt to explain the apparent inconsistency between lacking political confidence and Bourke's selection as a trusted political campaigner or his appointments to the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Foreign Relations Committee.

Cockran was again the subject of academic investigation in 1970, when Florence T. Bloom completed her doctoral dissertation, "The Political Career of William Bourke Cockran." Bloom's philosophical perspective was that of political science; she directed her readers to Crowley's work if they were interested in Cockran's oratory. In general, Bloom relied heavily upon Cockran's speeches for primary source material but demonstrated her

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nonappreciation of public address by concluding that Cockran would speak on any subject and was frequently unprepared to speak, since he often delivered addresses extemporaneously. Additionally, Bloom's review of literature neglected Oliver's 1965 analysis and Ambrose Kennedy's biography of her subject.

The most recent work offering an incidental treatment of Cockran is Ralph Martin's *Jennie*. In Volume II, Martin examines Cockran's relationship with Jennie and her son, Winston, drawing the conclusion that Cockran served as surrogate father and oratorical model.

My preliminary investigation of Bourke Cockran's rhetoric reveals four problem areas that warrant further investigation. The first of these areas assumes a dimension beyond the narrow scope of Cockran's public address. The previous rhetorical study of Cockran did not establish or evaluate the importance or function of public address in turn-of-the-century America. Rather, Crowley's study attempted to assess Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness before specific audiences at various points in time. From Crowley's work one cannot gain an adequate understanding of the historical period in which Cockran lived.

35 Bloom, pp. 358-359.
36 Martin, pp. 72-79.
or the importance accorded oratory in that society. Richard Weaver in his essay, "The Spaciousness of Old Rhetoric," argues the oratory which delighted our grandparents was a different sort of communication endeavor than we know today, utilizing uncontested terms and reinforcement of audience beliefs. Beyond Weaver's essay, apparently, only scattered references can be found which discuss the role of public address in late nineteenth and early twentieth century America. In my judgment, it is important to fill this gap, before undertaking a rhetorical analysis of Cockran's work.

A second problem area arises from Cockran's rhetorical stance. During his career, Cockran was variously known as a Tammany Democrat and an Anti-Tammany Democrat, a Bryan Democrat and an Anti-Bryan Democrat, as well as a Democrat who supported Republicans McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Further, Cockran's financial, professional, and social position dictated a close alignment with Mugwumps and Independent Republicans but he attacked both groups with fervor.

Preliminary research suggests that these distinct phases may possibly possess an argumentative consistency. To assess Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness fully and

accurately, a new investigation is warranted on the assumption that his multiple political alignments were interrelated.

A third area requiring investigation involves Cockran's relations with Winston Churchill, this century's greatest orator. The previous rhetorical analysis of Cockran does not consider this relationship. With the exception of Martin's work, histories of both Cockran and Churchill contain only scattered references to their relationship. An investigation to determine the nature of this relationship, particularly the extent to which Cockran shaped Churchill's rhetoric appears rhetorically important.

The final problem area lies in the conflicting appraisals of Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness. As noted above, previous rhetorical and historical studies have approached Cockran from differing points of view. Analysts have used methodologies ill-suited to the historical period in which Cockran lived or the divergent rhetorical stance he assumed. The result has been that McElroy, Crowley, McGurrrin, and Kennedy found Cockran to be without oratorical equal, while Oliver viewed him as no more than a crowd pleaser and Bloom labeled him "rarely if ever a prime mover." Given these diverse

38 Bloom, p. 358
judgments, a new investigation and reassessment of Cockran's effectiveness seems justified.

The following essays are envisioned as comprising the major divisions of the study: 1) American Issues: 1880-1920; 2) Turn-of-the-Century Oratory; 3) Definition and Circumstance; and 4) Rhetorical Effectiveness.

Given the nature of the research questions posed above, it is of prime importance to select a methodology that can offer conceptual integration. Neo-Aristotelian criticism usually results in categorization rather than integration. The separation of artistic means and canons falls short of this study's requirements.

Rhetorical critics who seek an integrated approach usually select material from the writings of Kenneth Burke or Leland Griffin. Burke's pentad approach, conceived in a literary frame of reference, places primary emphasis on psychological aspects of the rhetor, and stresses a message-centered analysis. Hence, such analysis does not seem well-suited to the nature of this study. More recently, rhetorical analysts have chosen the movement study as a means of rhetorical investigation. Griffin in defining the intent of historical movement

studies contends that such research should be concerned with the survey of public address in a movement. For the purposes of this investigation, two reasons preclude the utilization of the movement approach. First, the study is not concerned with the survey of multiple rhetors attempting to achieve the same goal. Second, Cockran was associated with many movements and could not accurately be treated as distinctly a part of one alone.

To meet the requirements of this study, a combination of methodologies is appropriate. First, to evoke the economic, political, and social issues of rhetorical importance between 1880 and 1920, a survey of historical works is required. Through an examination of multiple historical interpretations it should be possible to determine those issues consistently treated as significant.

A second methodology is suggested in Richard Weaver's treatment of arguments from definition and circumstance. Such constructs offer a search model for determining how Cockran analyzed the issues pertinent to his orations and how he determined his rhetorical stance.

Third, a search model is required that can bring forth the transactional relationship of the rhetor, the


41 Weaver, pp. 55-114.
ideas, and communication theorists contend that man communicates to change his environment but is at the same time a product of his environment due to selective perception and selective retention. Applying this construct to this historical/critical study is warranted by the assumption that Cockran was both a product of his past experiences and a change agent within his environment.42 Thus, the transactional context offers the best means of reassessing Cockran's effectiveness. Essentially, this approach is consistent with Wrage's treatment of public address as a study in social and intellectual history.43

Through this combination of methodologies, it is anticipated that a transactional relationship will be revealed. Chapter I of the investigation will evoke the economic, social, and political ideas held by turn-of-the-century Americans, while Chapter II will establish the framework or context in which the oratorical transaction took place. Chapter III will contain an examination


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of Cockran's rhetorical stance which can be compared with the content of Chapters I and II. Thus, Chapter IV will allow for the assessment of Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness.

Additionally, it is anticipated this study will result in three areas of new knowledge. First, it is hoped the study will achieve an accurate analysis of the functions, purposes, and importance accorded public address in turn-of-the-century America. Second, it is hoped that a more accurate determination can be achieved regarding Bourke Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness. Third, the study may reveal influences heretofore unknown regarding Winston S. Churchill's rhetoric.
The year 1880 marked a turning point in the life of William Bourke Cockran. Now, approaching his ninth year as an American, Cockran had achieved local fame as an orator and was fast developing a successful New York City law practice. As an Irving Hall representative to the New York State Democratic Convention, he would soon be contacted by Boss John Kelly and invited to join Tammany Hall. In September, Cockran would be selected to campaign for the Democratic ticket in Maine and a month later, in the Middle West. Bourke Cockran was about to embark upon a course of action that would bring him national prominence as an orator, lawyer, and politician.\(^1\) He would do so amid the hopes, fears, and concerns of turn-of-the-century Americans.

Less than one hundred years ago, there existed a much different sort of American society. For example, on

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January 1, 1880 The New York Times did not report the jubilant celebration of the New Year in Times Square. Instead, the Times reported that State lawmakers were arriving by train in Albany to begin a legislative session and that colored immigrants from the South were reported to be doing well in Kansas. Mrs. Helen J. Ward of Boston was killed by two bullets from a gun that was believed to have been fired by Mrs. Ward's daughter.\textsuperscript{2} Alexander Robertson wrote to the Times Editor, not to offer his views of the new year, but to give his opinions of the Tay Bridge disaster.\textsuperscript{3} For New Yorkers seeking amusement, page seven reported in classified fashion, a circus matinee, "Arabian Night" at Daily's Theatre, and the San Francisco Minstrels, playing the Opera House at 29th and Broadway.\textsuperscript{4} The Times reader who wanted the details of New Year's Eve had to wait until January 2, 1880 and leaf through to page eight to discover that New York's dirt roads had changed to a quagmire due to snow and chilled temperatures while only the "absolutely unruly" had been ushered to the shelter of the station houses.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{2} The New York Times, 1 January 1880, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{5} The New York Times, 2 January 1880, p. 8.
It is easy for even the cursory student of history to note the contrast between the past and the present, but it is quite a different matter to taste the flavor of that past society and grasp the social, economic, cultural, and political issues that engaged the fears and hopes of many Americans. Nevertheless, the historical critic of public address must undertake this task if he is to assess oratorical effectiveness accurately.

Communication theorists argue there is a transactional relationship between man and his environment. As man communicates to change his environment, he is at the same time influenced by his selective perception and retention of present and past conditions. Thus, to criticize Bourke Cockran's rhetoric it is necessary first to understand the context in which Cockran functioned.

The issues of Cockran's lifetime had neither their origin nor conclusion in his lifetime. Broadly speaking, these issues fall into eight categories: the Civil War aftermath; rural-urban conflict; the growth of industrialism and urbanization; political machines and corruption; the growth of the middle class; the development of professions; the emergence of Women's rights; and America's involvement in world affairs.

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The Civil War did not end at Appomattox because the bitter strife that had divided North and South was not allowed to die. That division became a part of postwar politics according to historian Paul H. Buck:

In spite of the handicap of having opposed a war that succeeded, the Democratic party remained a dangerous foe. In the election of 1868, with a strong presidential candidate but with weakness in the platform and the vice-presidential nominee, and running against the greatest living Northern hero of the war, the Democrats polled two million seven hundred thousand votes to the Republican three million. Had it not been for the Reconstruction policy which deprived three Southern states of the right to vote, the extensive disfranchisement of Southern whites and the enfranchisement of seven hundred thousand Negroes which gave the Republicans the vote of six of the Confederate states, a Democrat, Seymour, would have beaten the Republican, Grant, some three years after the latter had stood under the famous apple tree at Appomattox. It was an alarming situation for Republicans....

This was the sword which hung over a Republican party already sorely beset by other worries. Its hold upon the North was precarious and depended largely upon keeping "patriotism" keyed to an emotional fervor of wartime pitch. The party was in constant danger of factional disruption.... Nascent rivalries of personal ambition were developing from the conflicting leaderships of Blaine and Conkling, with reformers growing more critically aloof. To offset these evils the party had one blessing, its war record, and to that it clung instinctively for protection against the enemy outside and the weakness within. 7

As the Democratic "Solid South" was beginning to form, Northern Republicans sought those issues where unity could

triumph. The "bloody shirt" was deemed an appropriate vehicle to accomplish this end. In The Road to Reunion,

The 'bloody shirt' led to the natural conclusion that the good of the Nation required the rule of the party of patriotism. 'Reconciliation,' the Republicans agreed, 'will not result from taking the control of the government from New England, the Middle States, and the Northwest, and giving it to the Southern and border States. The power must remain where it is, because there the principles of the New Union are a living faith.' Or to put it differently, not until the Democratic party was utterly defeated and dissolved could a perfect accord be accomplished. The Republicans thus manoeuvered, at least to their own satisfaction, the Democratic party with its millions of Americans into the category of enemies to the American State.

Time and time again representatives of the 'Grand Old Party' asserted that it contained the 'best elements in our national life...the survivors and the children of the men who put down the Rebellion and abolished slavery, saved the Union, and paid the debt and kept faith, and achieved the manufacturing independence of the country, and passed the homestead laws.' It was a record of proud achievement which drew to the party ranks 'the more intelligent and moral part of the population....'8

With Grant in office, conditions were excellent for the continued waving of the "bloody shirt" and remained that way until the mid 1880's. Both the written and spoken word were used to rekindle the fires that separated North and South. Publications such as Harper's Weekly and Leslie's Illustrated openly editorialized...
promoting this chasm of strife. Cartoonist Thomas Nast continued to depict an untrustworthy South after Harper's had changed its editorial policy in 1877. Republican orators like Robert Ingersoll continued to appeal to zealots who would oppose the former Southern slave holders regardless of issue. The strength of the "bloody shirt" in the mid 1880's can be seen in the conditions surrounding Henry W. Grady's "New South" address. On December 22, 1886 Grady, the Managing Editor of the Atlanta Constitution, quoted the words of Benjamin Hill to proclaim, "There was a South of slavery and secession ---- that South is dead." Grady's pronouncement was delivered following speeches by Reverend Talmadge and General Sherman, in which the first praised Northern armies while the second related incidents which depreciated Southerners. At the conclusion of Sherman's speech, New Yorkers such as J. Pierpont Morgan and Seth Thomas were among the audience that sang, "Marching Through Georgia." Civil War hate and separatism did not die and continues even to this day to be an issue of importance for some Americans.10

9 Ibid., pp. 102-105.

As signs of reconciliation began in time to appear in both the North and South, a different division developed. The American population had been growing at a rapid pace. Immigration, added to an increasing native birth rate, gave rise to two distinct sets of population, the rural and the urban.

Richard Hofstadter in his analysis of the American scene from 1890 to 1940 discusses this division:

The United States was born in the country and has moved to the city. From the beginning its political values and ideas were of necessity shaped by country life. The early American politician, the country editor, who wished to address himself to the common man, had to draw upon a rhetoric that would touch the tillers of the soil; and even the spokesman of city people knew that his audience had been in very large part reared on the farm. But what the articulate people who talked and wrote about farmers and farming -- the preachers, poets, philosophers, writers, and statesmen -- liked about American farming was not, in every respect, what the typical working farmer liked. For the articulate people were drawn irresistibly to the non-commercial, nonpecuniary, self-sufficient aspect of American farm life.\(^\text{11}\)

Although Hofstadter labels the farmer's way an "agrarian myth," there is the strong possibility that many farmers did not perceive their way of doing things as a combination of agricultural business and commercial reality. Rather, the farmer viewed himself as different from the

urban dweller who was involved in industrial capitalism.

Hofstadter writes of farm journal literature thus:

> In the imagery of these appeals the earth was characteristically a mother, trade a harlot, and desertion of ancestral ways a betrayal that invited Providential punishment. When a correspondent of the *Prairie Farmer* in 1849 made the mistake of praising the luxuries, the 'polished society,' and the economic opportunities of the city, he was rebuked for overlooking the fact that city life 'crushes, enslaves, and ruins many thousands of our young men who are insensibly made the victims of dissipation, of reckless speculation, and of ultimate crime.' Such warnings, of course, were futile, 'Thousands of young men,' wrote the New York agriculturist Jesse Buel, 'do annually forsake the plough, and the honest profession of their fathers, if not to win the fair, at least from an opinion, too often confirmed by mistaken parents, that agriculture is not the road to wealth, to honor, nor to happiness. And such will continue to be the case, until our agriculturists become qualified to assume that rank in society to which the importance of their calling, and their numbers, entitle them, and which intelligence and self-respect can alone give them.'

Indeed, rank in society was beginning to change, and the farmer was finding it more and more difficult to maintain the position of importance he had so long held. Additionally, the agricultural community was beset with numerous economic problems which resulted in serious grievances. Numbered among these were increased debts due to inflation, increased cost for credit, inequitable tax burdens, unfair railroad rates, and expensive elevator and storage charges.

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The man in the fields had little appreciation for or understanding of world economic conditions. He perceived the immediate situation as one in which he planted and grew a crop, harvested the crop, paid an excessive storage charge to hold the harvest until time for sale, and then, paid a long haul charge for getting the crop to market. A financial crisis in Vienna which resulted in the recall of European loans touched off the panic of 1873, a shock so severe that Jay Cook's New York bank failed. But, New York banks and foreign loans held little interest for the farmer who analyzed his immediate problem as government and business operating in a conspiratorial fashion against him. The only economic policy immediately apparent to the farmer in the panic of 1873, was the demonetization of silver. Agrarian interests began to suspect conspiracy.

The financial argument behind the conspiracy theory was simple enough. Those who owned bonds wanted to be paid not in a common currency but in gold, which was at a premium; those who lived by lending money wanted as high a premium possible to be put on their commodity by increasing its scarcity. The panics, depressions, and bankruptcies caused by their policies only added to their wealth; such catastrophes offered opportunities to engross the wealth of others through business conditions and foreclosures. Hence the interests actually relished and encouraged hard times...14

14 Ibid., p. 74.
This sort of economic thought was popularized in a number of writings. Ignatius Donnelly's widely read novel, *Caesar's Column*, told of 1988 where the great mass of people would be governed by an inner council of plutocrats. Another popular book, Mrs. S. E. V. Emery's *Seven Financial Conspiracies Which Have Enslaved the American People* depicted the money kings of Wall Street controlling the wealth and happiness of Americans. *Coin's Financial School*, authored by "Coin" Harvey, pictured English Banker Baron Rothe demonetizing United States silver to prevent Americans' power from outstripping that of England.\(^{15}\)

To fight such a conspiracy, it was recognized that a powerful political organization would be needed. That power base was developed through the formation of the Populist Party. The Party encompassed, if not a strange mixture, certainly diverse elements within American society. Prohibitionists, free silver advocates, socialists, old greenbackers, grangers, and the Knights of Labor all found a home here by 1891. Traditionally, American third parties are short-lived and unsuccessful, but the Populists made a more lasting impact on American politics.

For a generation after the Civil War, a time of great economic exploitation and waste, grave social corruption and ugliness, the dominant note in American political life was complacency. Although dissenting minorities were always present,

they were submerged by the overwhelming realities of industrial growth and continental settlement. The agitation of the Populists, which brought back to American public life a capacity for effective political indignation, marks the beginning of the end of this epoch. In the short run the Populists did not get what they wanted, but they released the flow of protest and criticism that swept through American political affairs from the 1890's to the beginning of the first World War.¹⁶

It was an exceedingly hot day in July of 1892 when the Populists filled Omaha's Coliseum to formulate their party platform. One item of business that brought resounding cheers was assembly refusal to accept the notion that the delegates should ask the railroads for reduced fares for convention travel. Republicans and Democrats had been given half fare for their conventions but Marion Cannon argued that the delegates should not go to a corporation with "hat in hand" and expect to be treated fairly. Populist delegates could foot their own expenses.¹⁷

Ignatius Donnelly warned the delegates that corruption dominated the ballot box, the legislatures, the Congress, and the judiciary while the land was being taken by the capitalists and most homes were covered with mortgages.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 60.


¹⁸ Ibid.
Given the following convention resolves, it is not surprising that the Populists did not achieve early realization of their platform. The Omaha Platform read as follows:

First, Money. We demand a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and that, without the use of banking corporations, a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people...

(a) We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one.

(b) We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than fifty dollars per capita.

(c) We demand a graduated income tax.

(d) We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hand of the people, and hence we demand that all state and national revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered.

(e) We demand that postal savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

Second, Transportation. Transportation being a means of exchange and public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people.

(a) The telegraph and telephone, like the post office system being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

Third, Land. The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs,
and all lands now owned by aliens, should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.¹⁹

Two years later, in 1894, America experienced another economic downturn. The depression-like conditions aided the Populist cause, a cause that had already produced the first third party to carry a state since the Civil War. It was during this period that the Populist movement assumed overtones that bordered on the evangelical.

Never before had the nation seemed so restless. The year 1894 made labor history with nearly 750,000 workingmen out in militant strikes. The leader of the Pullman strikers, sent to jail by Cleveland's liberalism, sat mulling over the situation and came out a full-blown socialist. 'We have been cursed with the reign of gold long enough,' Eugene Debs told wildly cheering crowds, 'We are on the eve of a universal change.' In the clay hills of the South, across the scorched prairies, the farmer's agitation was rapidly becoming, as one supporter described it, 'a religious revival, a crusade, a pentecost of politics, in which a tongue of flame sat upon every man.' It was 'a fanaticism like the crusades,' a Kansas observer added. 'At night, from ten thousand little white schoolhouse windows, lights twinkled back hope to the stars.... They stand...with something of the same mad faith that inspired the martyr going to the stake. Far into the night the voices rose, women's voices, children's voices, the voices of old men, of youth and of maidens rose on the ebbing prairie breezes, as the crusaders of the revolution rode home, praising the people's will as though it were God's will and cursing wealth for its iniquity.'²⁰

¹⁹ The Omaha Platform was printed in numerous publications. However, the most readily available secondary source is: John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt: A History Of The Farmer's Alliance And The People's Party (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1931), pp. 439-444. See also: National Economist, VII (July 9, 1892), 257-258; and Tribune Almanac, 1892, 38-40.

²⁰ Goldman, p. 12.
Not all Populist platform planks produced a crusading unity either within the party or in the broader expanse of American culture. Those who had joined the movement to support free silver were not comfortable with platform planks which appeared to be springboards to socialism. Further, the Populist Party had verbalized hatred for Jews, blacks, and all foreign elements in American society. The Jew was disliked for his involvement in the high finance of Wall Street; the inferior black was deemed fit for common labor in the tropics; immigrants were viewed as the cause of strife and immoral conditions in the cities. It must be realized that Populist anti-ethnic appeals varied in strength according to regional location but it is fair to say that Populist arguments were directed to a middle class society that, for the most part, did not quickly or forthrightly object to ethnic and racial slurs.21

The Populist issues of public ownership, control of corporations, control of financiers, and a free silver currency would not be resolved for many years to come. Evangelical orators like William Jennings Bryan would mount the attack and carry it to the heart of the industrialized East to be fought and fought again.

21 Hofstadter, p. 80.
As agrarian elements looked to a past that esteemed yeoman independency and self-sufficiency, businessmen looked to a past which esteemed individual ownership.

...The business enterprises of the early United States were usually owned by one or several individuals, often bound together by ties of kinship and marriage. This familial aspect of antebellum businesses traced its lineage back to the earliest colonial days, as Bernard Bailyn's investigation of The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century (1955) indicated. Normally the owners of a business were also its managers. The owner-entrepreneurs made all the key decisions about the conduct of their firms. They knew intimately the needs and mode of operation of their businesses. They brought their sons, nephews, or talented in-laws into their firms to learn the details of the business, and when a firm's management changed, so often did its ownership. Almost all antebellum businesses fit this pattern, from the smallest storekeepers to the richest and most powerful families, such as the Browns in Rhode Island and the Hancocks, Lowells, and Appletons in Massachusetts. Because of the intensely personal nature of ownership and control, these early businesses often died with the passing of the owner or the lack of interest or absence of talent among the surviving males in the family.22

A rapidly increasing population demanding increased goods and services ripened conditions for the development of corporations. The corporation giant significantly changed the face of business. The virtual caste system of individual ownership began to fade as businesses assumed multiple locations. A bureaucracy had to be

developed to control the numerous plants within a corporation, so plant managers replaced individual owners. Capital requirements were no longer limited to operating expenses since the corporate business undertakings required both fixed and operating capital. Diversification of products within a business and the tendency to eliminate competing companies resulted in forming of conglomerates or trusts. Through such diversification and combination, J. P. Morgan made his fortune in banking and J. D. Rockefeller reaped huge profits in oil. It was this corporate combination to which the Populists objected. Yet those same trusts were providing rapid economic gains.

...By the end of the century the nation had become far and away the colossus among the world's manufacturers, dwarfing the production of such countries as Great Britain and Germany. The value of manufactured products rose from $1.8 billion in 1856 to $3.3 billion in 1869, $5.3 billion in 1879, $9.3 billion in 1889, and to over $13 billion in 1899. Modern economists estimate that the output of goods and services in the country (the gross national product, or GNP) increased by 44 per cent between 1874 and 1883 and continued to expand, although at a somewhat reduced rate, in succeeding years...

Growth, profit-taking and fortune-building in the oil, steel, and railroad industries were, for the most part,

23 Ibid., pp. 31-71.

unencumbered by government regulation. Competition supposedly advanced the public interest by keeping prices low and assuring the most efficient producer the greatest profit. Up to a point this purist approach worked well, but after 1865 side effects were beginning to be noticed which would be strongly felt in the 1880's and 1890's.

The expansion of American industrial activity and its concentration in fewer and fewer hands caused a major shift in the thinking of the people about the role of government in economic and social affairs. As we have seen, the fact that Americans, strongly individualistic, disliked powerful government in general and strict regulation of the economy in particular, had never meant that they objected to all government activity in the economic sphere. Banking laws, tariffs, internal-improvement legislation, and the granting of public land to railroads are only the most obvious of the economic regulations enforced in the 19th century by both the federal government and the states. Americans saw no contradiction between government activities of this type and the free enterprise philosophy, because such laws were intended to release human energy and thus increase the area in which freedom could operate. Tariffs stimulated industry and created new jobs, railroad grants opened up new regions for development, and so on....

After about 1870 the public attitude began to change. The growth of huge industrial and financial organizations and the increasing complexity of economic relations gave people what Hurst calls 'a new sense of individual helplessness,' yet made them at the same time greedy for more of the goods and services the new society was turning out. To many, the great new corporations and trusts resembled Frankenstein's monster -- marvelous, modern, and powerful, but a grave threat to society...25

The response of the American public to big business and industrial development (the factory system), began to take on a different character than that exhibited by the Populists. The feeling of individual helplessness forced a search for a new means of organizing power. This search resulted in an avalanche of reform proposals. Everyone it seemed now donned the cloak of reform.

The obvious balance to corporate capitalism was organized labor. Unionism had experienced its infant stages during the 1850's. Craft unions for iron molders, printers, and cigarmakers were already well established. As early as 1870, 300,000 workers belonged to such organizations. The Knights of Labor, founded in 1869, achieved a membership of 729,000 in the 1880's. In 1886 the American Federation of Labor was formed, a body which would pursue many of labor's objectives after the demise of the Knights of Labor in the Haymarket Riots of 1893.26

Laborers were willing to join unions to alleviate the conditions which produced the feeling of individual helplessness.

It is difficult to generalize about the actual conditions of laborers in the Gilded Age. In good times something approaching full employment existed; in periods of depression unemployment caused much hardship. Workers in some industries fared better than others. By and large, skilled workers, always better off than the unskilled, improved their positions relatively, despite the

26 Ibid., pp. 109-112.
increased use of machinery. Women and children continued to supply a significant percentage of the industrial working force, always receiving lower wages than adult male workers. About 600,000 boys and girls between 10 and 14 were gainfully employed in 1890 in the United States, over 387,000 of them in the southern states.

For most laborers, the working day still tended to approximate the hours of daylight, but it was shortening perceptibly by the 1880's. In 1860 the average was 11 hours; by 1880 only one worker in four labored more than ten, and radicals were beginning to talk about eight hours as a fair day's work. To some extent the exhausting pace of the new factories made longer hours uneconomical, but employers realized this only slowly, and many workers suffered as a result. In North Carolina, for example, the work day in the textile mills averaged over 11 hours even for women and children who made up well over half the work force.27

The labor force did not find long hours and hard work to be their only problems. The factory laborer was usually housed in an urban area since the growth of business occurred in cities. Leaving the factory behind, many workers would go to dumbbell-shaped tenements to join their families. These buildings were so constructed to accommodate hundreds of residents at the ends with the narrow center containing the common halls, stairs, and toilet facilities.28

The unhealthfulness of the tenements was notorious;

27 Ibid., p. 108.

one noxious corner of New York became known as the 'lung block' because of the prevalence of tuberculosis among its inhabitants — during a five year period in the 1890's the Health Department reported over 100 cases there. In 1900 three out of every five babies born in one poor district of Chicago died before their first birthday. Equally frightening was the impact of such overcrowding on the morals of the tenement-dweller. Under such conditions, sin proved as contagious as tuberculosis or measles. 'The drunkard, the wife or child beater, the immoral woman, and the depraved child infect scores of their neighbors by their vicious acts,' one reformer complained in 1885.29

One fact of American economic life seemed obvious to most laborers; the rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. Feeling helpless, overworked, and poorly housed, workers not surprisingly turned to militancy. The Chicago Haymarket Riots were a case in point. A bomb thrown by an unidentified anarchist resulted in the death of seven policemen; in turn, four of seven labor defendants were legally executed. The affair had a disastrous and ultimately fatal impact on America's largest union, The Knights of Labor noted above.30

In 1892, a violent strike hit the silver mines at Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, and Andrew Carnegie's Homestead steel plant near Pittsburgh saw striking workers attack three hundred Pinkerton Guards, killing several while the

30 Ibid., p. 110.
remainder were subserviently marched away from the plant's perimeter.\(^\text{31}\)

While industrial urbanization was creating problems for the laborer, city life itself was producing unwanted side effects. The urban centers of the 1880's and 1890's witnessed the advent of metro-necessities such as street paving, utility service and mass transit.

Hazen Pingree, Detroit's mayor in the late 19th century, encountered problems that were typical of most metropolitan areas. Upon his election to office in 1889, the reform-minded Pingree told Detroit citizens that nearly one and one-half million dollars had been spent on paving the main roads in Detroit. The paving to which Pingree referred was not cement as we know it today; instead, the paving had been accomplished by laying pine planks on top of dirt roads. During a heavy rain, Detroit dwellers had to step lively to avoid injury from the floating pine that had washed loose from the loam and sandy soil. After an extensive investigation of the contracts existing between Detroit and the paving company, Pingree discovered collusion between city officials and city contractors. It was this revelation that allowed him to embark on a program of cement paving.\(^\text{32}\)

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\(^{31}\) Ibid., pp. 111-112.

Concrete paving did not end Detroit's street problem. Long before Pingree's assumption of office, street companies had been granted the right to collect tolls from travelers seeking access to certain downtown areas. Unable to find corruption or loopholes in the toll contract, Pingree had to find another means to unrestricted thoroughfare access. This he did by paving city-owned streets, one on each side of the toll booths, isolating the toll collector to his sixteen feet of legally contracted land. Shortly after "Pingree's bypass" was constructed, the street companies willingly agreed to municipal ownership at a reasonable price.33

The traction companies provided the first means of mass transit for urban centers. First horse-drawn and later, electrically-operated street cars moved citizens from one metro location to another. In general, cities contracted with traction companies to provide these services by means of long duration contracts. Such was the case when Pingree set out to wage a nationwide battle to maintain the three-cent trolley fare.

The Citizen's Company of Detroit had been granted the right to determine the appropriate fare for streetcar usage. When the Company's management decided that fares should be raised to five cents and transfers would no

33 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
longer be free, they met Pingree's inventions of: 1) the Detroit Railway Company laying tracks in the streets not heretofore enfranchised; and 2) a Pingree-induced boycott which resulted in women and children walking to where they could board a streetcar with three-cent fare and universal transfers.³⁴

Pingree's tactics brought him national acclaim as cities in Ohio and New York followed his lead. The Detroit Mayor also established municipal ownership or control of electric and gas companies. As utilities attempted to reform by reducing services and increasing prices, Pingree countered with more service to more people at a lower rate. These differing approaches to reform, both stressing economy and efficiency, but by different means, represented a good part of the thinking that went into the progressive movement. Both groups identified corruption as their enemy but the structural reformer found his corruption in the laboring masses, political bosses, and foreign elements of the cities, while the social reformer found his corruption in the giant trusts.³⁵

The enormous demand for adequate public services in the 1880's and 1890's seems difficult to comprehend, even when viewed from a historical perspective. This unprece-

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 33-55.
³⁵ Ibid., pp. 157-181.
dented yearning and resulting conflicts between public and private ownership are reflected in Garraty's concise analysis of urban utility development and ownership.

An increasing number of cities built and operated their own public-utility systems. Although privately operated waterworks did not disappear, the larger cities, beginning with New York and Boston in the 1840's, gradually took over the function of supplying water to their residents. Between 1870 and 1890, the number of publicly owned water systems rose from 116 to 806; then it more than doubled in the next six years. By the end of the century, only nine of the nation's fifty largest cities still had privately owned waterworks. Publicly owned gas and electricity companies were far less numerous. Fewer than a dozen municipal gasworks existed in 1890, Philadelphia's being by far the most important. There were many more publicly owned electric-light companies -- about 50 in 1890 and over 350 by 1898 -- but except for the Chicago and Detroit systems, all were in relatively small communities. Urban transportation remained almost entirely in private hands, and was, in general, very inadequately regulated. Seen in historical perspective, the pattern was one of compromise between private and public development of essential services, and probably this was both inevitable and desirable, given the enormity of the task...

The crush of industrialization and urbanization produced numerous "spin-off" effects. A few of these important side effects can be found in the women's suffrage movement, the changing status of the legal profession, the increasing importance of municipal governments, and the eventual development of a wealthier middle class.

The origin of the women's suffrage predated the Civil War. In 1848 Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and several of their women friends met in Seneca Falls, New York to write a "Declaration of Sentiments." This document, modeled after the Declaration of Independence, was the first public protest against women's political, economic, and social inferiority. Both Stanton and Mott were abolitionists, as were a goodly number of suffrage supporters, and, in part, suffrage could be viewed as an outgrowth of abolition, since women were frequently criticized for speaking in public on political issues.\(^{37}\)

By 1869 two organizations had been formed to advance the suffrage movement; the National Women's Suffrage Association and the American Women's Suffrage Association. Mrs. Stanton and Miss Susan B. Anthony founded the NWSA while Henry Ward Beecher and Lucy Stone headed the AWSA. In general, both groups were dedicated to the philosophical principles of equality for women but the two groups were divided regarding the Fourteenth Amendment. Stanton and Anthony argued that the insertion of the word "male" in the Fourteenth Amendment was reason enough for its defeat. Opposing this view, Stone held that if the Negro male could win his freedom but women could not, the amendment should be supported because it corrected at least part

of the injustice. The two suffrage organizations remained separate until the 1890's when it was realistic for the groups to combine in seeking expedient means to their goals.  

The initial approach to suffrage followed the form set in 1848, namely, an issue of principle. Arguments were voiced that women were people and people were entitled to certain fundamental rights. Frequent references to the Bible and the Declaration of Independence were used to back this appeal. Of course, the opposing elements utilized the same sources to support their beliefs. Nevertheless, suffrage gains were made in Kentucky, Kansas, Michigan and Minnesota. And by the mid-1890's, women had another reason to raise their voices in protest.  

[Between 1896 and 1910] changes were taking place that made the later triumphs possible. Women's clubs proliferated, women college graduates were almost becoming accepted as normal, women factory workers increased enormously in number and were beginning to organize, and middle-class women were finding that recent household inventions and changes in living patterns gave them more time for outside activities, while their training was making them dissatisfied with traditional middle-class women's activities. Economic and social changes were drawing the spheres of men and women together; women's political status changed accordingly.

Indeed, the status of women had significantly changed

38 Ibid., pp. 2-3.
39 Ibid., p. 3.
40 Ibid., p. 4.
and the status alteration was reflected vividly in the indus-
trial urban areas. Women were required to work as a means of supporting the family. The woman laborer was sub-
jected to the long hours, hard work, squalid tenements, and the lack of public services and protection just as her male counterpart but there was one important difference. The woman laborer had no voice in the government that regulated her life.

...When Americans were a rural people, when there had been no garbage disposal problem, no disease-causing congestion of populations and when consumers had known the craftsmen who produced the commodities they bought, women had neither needed the vote nor had anything essential to contribute to the government. Although suffragists of course never drew this inference and continued to include statements of the natural right principle in their propaganda, the expediency arguments that dominated that propaganda during the last generation of the suffrage campaign were themselves expedients, tailored to fit the realities of an industrial age. This fact may suggest that woman suffrage came to the East for reasons different from those which brought it earlier to the West...41

Industrialization and urbanization produced an urgency in the demand of women for suffrage. Along with this urgency came a more expedient approach to the issue, party politics. For years those favoring suffrage had asked both parties for suffrage planks, but with the added dis-
plesasures and dissatisfactions of the urban female, a different voice was being heard and it was not the voice of biparty neutrality.

41 Ibid., p. 55.
We are told that we should adopt the plan followed by suffragists in the past, and apparently to be followed by them throughout long years to come, of opposing anti-suffragist Congressmen and supporting those who are suffragists. The difficulty of this plan is that you are not working at the source of power. The individual Congressman is a very frail fighting force. If he is absolutely honest, he can vote for you, but not until your measure has passed many Congressional obstacles in which the party, and not he, is master of the situation. If he is at all subject to pressure, he will find many reasons for believing that a postponement of your question is wise. If he is a henchman of a party which is opposed to suffrage, he will fight you under cover. To seek action from a Congressman and at the same time ignore his party affiliation, is to ignore the most important influence that affects his conduct. 42

Through both philosophical arguments and expedient approaches to party politics, suffrage ultimately became a reality, but not until 1920.

The urban industrial complex also affected the legal profession. Even before the Civil War, the practice of law in America was deemed "special" because of the independent professionalism inherited from British tradition. First and foremost, when law was practiced at its best in settled communities, it was viewed as a learned profession with its own standards of inquiry, ethics, and criticism. Clearly, it was not a profession that just anyone could choose to follow and expect success. Typically, legal success was based on ability in courtroom advocacy, encompassing both forensic skills and masterful delivery. 43

42 Ibid., p. 198.
43 Hofstadter, pp. 156-157.
A second characteristic of the legal profession lay in its power to influence the public. Its specialized nature as a learned profession made it approximate an American aristocracy. Most politicians and statesmen choose law as the starting point for their careers.44

Thus, the lawyer was viewed as more than just a professional held in high esteem. Additionally, he was a public servant. The integrity that made him an officer of the court also gave him a public image of trust and confidence in serving the betterment of public interests. Given such conditions one able to master the demands of legal training was clearly on the road to success.45

All these professional characteristics underwent change when business became corporate and corporations became trusts. The enfranchisement of these trusts by government opened a most profitable avenue hitherto unknown to the legal profession. The need for contracts between cities and corporations, labor-management negotiations, and the necessity of corporations to conform to national and state legislation produced the "legal factory."

This type of firm was headed by prominent and wealthy attorneys who hired bright young lawyers as inexpensive

44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
labor to do their legal leg work. Beyond the "legal factory," there was the still-esteemed private attorney and a number of small partnerships. In this latter category, those unable to find sufficient work took up "ambulance chasing" or working for contingent fees.

With the rise of corporate industrialism and finance capitalism, the law, particularly in the urban centers where the most enviable prizes were to be had, was becoming a captive profession. Lawyers kept saying that the law had lost much of its distinctly professional character and had become a business....Around the turn of the century, the professional talents of courtroom advocacy and brief-making were referred to again and again as 'lost arts,' as the occupation of successful lawyer centered more and more upon counseling clients and offering business advice. General and versatile talent, less needed than in the old days, was replaced by specialized practice and the division of labor within the law firms. The firms themselves grew larger; the process of concentration and combination in business, which limited profitable counseling to fewer and larger firms, engendered a like concentration in the law. Metropolitan law firms, as they grew larger and more profitable, moved into closer relationships with and became "house counsel" of the larger investment houses, banks, or industrial firms that provided them with most of their business. But the relation that was the source of profit brought with it a loss of independence to the great practitioners. The smaller independent practitioner was affected in another, still more serious way: much of his work was taken from him by real-estate, trust, and insurance companies, collection agencies, and banks, which took upon themselves larger and larger amounts of what had once been entirely legal business. 46

46 Ibid, pp. 158-159.
Another tangential effect of the urban industrial complex was felt in municipal government. It was the municipal government that grappled with the citizen's problems. All public utilities and services were handled on the local level. Beyond a few federal laws dealing with working hours and conditions for workers under federal control, the Pendelton Civil Service Act, the Sherman Anti-trust Act, and tariff and currency legislation, the hand of the national government was not clearly visible. Instead, visibility was present in the local political machine that dealt with local problems.47

Any number of reasons can be cited for local machine development but among those that carry significance are national party parity and the intense demand for local services with its resulting avenues to profit. The Gilded Age saw the national Democratic and Republican parties not maintaining a constant structure. Each national convention gave rise to a new national committee. There was not a continually functioning committee in either national party that insured a consistency or order in political relations. Additionally, the Republican and Democratic parties presented fewer and fewer differences in platform as sectional

47 John M. Dobson, Politics In The Gilded Age: A New Perspective On Reform (New York: Praeger Publications, 1972), p. 123. The entirety of Dobson's work questions the success of directing political reform to national politics while political issues were predominantly local.
strife began to dissipate. This phenomenon resulted in a dependency on local issues to determine party separation. The path to the White House was clear. One usually began private law practice, then moved to local politics. If successful, the next step was election as mayor, governor, or senator, and eventually a presidential candidacy.

The party machine was an avenue for both reform and profit. The demand for better living and working conditions coupled with the massive need for public services of all sorts made the machine appear as a reform element since it was the machine that could lead the battle for better lights, more gas service, better mass transit, and a fair wage.

The classic example of the urban machine was the unit of the Democratic party of New York City, with its headquarters at Tammany Hall. The Tammany leaders were attempting to simplify and streamline the processes of candidate selection and election victory. At the same time, they frequently availed themselves of the many opportunities for personal enrichment. The Tammany machine was an amalgam of smaller groups. At the bottom, a precinct captain, frequently in the cozy atmosphere of his own saloon, would gather around him a band of loyal followers or ward heelers. The minor politico would then bargain the support of his group for candidates in higher level caucuses or conventions in exchange for patronage or other rewards. At the top of the machine stood the boss and his lieutenants, overseeing party operations throughout the city as well as deciding which trusted underlings to move into positions of prominence.

48 Ibid., pp. 40-71.
To ensure voter loyalty, the machine provided a number of social services to its constituents, ranging from small financial gifts, through a speed-up immigration or naturalization process, all the way to an important city or party job for a family member. The machine tried to control all city offices, executive, judicial, and legislative, so that it could guarantee policy protection, immunity from prosecution, or a rigged judicial decision -- for a price. In turn, the organization made its money by getting kickbacks from government workers' salaries or by selling franchises and building contracts to the highest bidder and collecting a rebate....49

City machines that had appeared to be agents of reform were often themselves in need of reform. Certainly, it is not necessary to recount all the antics of the dictatorial "Boss" Tweed who was reputed to have lessened New York's coffers of somewhere between $20 million and $400 million, but it is worthwhile to view the thinking that underlay the philosophy of such men. That philosophy can be expressed with no greater clarity than that voiced by George Washington Plunkitt. Plunkitt was a contemporary of Tweed, Crocker, Kelly, and John Murphy. He came from Nanny Goat Hill on Manhattan's upper west side. He broke into politics in the 1850's and remained there until his death in 1924. He died a wealthy man. His political office space was located at the County Court House bootblack's stand from whence he served as Tammany leader of the Fifteenth Assembly District, Sachem of the Tammany Society, and Chairman of Tammany's Election Committee.

49 Ibid., pp. 27-28.
At the same time Plunkitt drew salaries from three of his four positions as Police Magistrate, Alderman, County Supervisor, and State Senator. In addition to all these roles, Plunkitt also engaged in what he termed "honest graft."

'There's an honest graft, and I'm an example of how it works. I might sum up the whole thing by sayin': 'I seen my opportunities and I took 'em.'

'Just let me explain by examples. My party's in power in the city, and it's goin' to undertake a lot of public improvements. Well, I'm tipped off, say, that they're going to lay out a new park at a certain place.'

'I see my opportunity and I take it. I go to that place and I buy up all the land I can in the neighborhood. Then the board of this or that makes its plan public, and there is a rush to get my land, which nobody cared particular for before.'

'Ain't it perfectly honest to charge a good price and make a profit on my investment and foresight? Of course, it is. Well, that's honest graft.'

'Or supposin' it's a new bridge they're goin' to build. I get tipped off and I buy as much property as I can that has to be taken for approaches. I sell at my own price later on and drop some more money in the bank.'

'Wouldn't you? It's just like lookin' ahead in Wall Street or in the coffee or cotton market. It's honest graft, and I'm lookin' for it every day in the year. I will tell you frankly that I've got a good lot of it, too.'

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51 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
It would be incorrect to leave the impression that all political machines were corrupt or that the machines did not ever benefit constituents. The machine operated to provide jobs and services that aided many urbanites. It was a way out of the slums and it was a means to eliminating the slums. Indeed, not all members of the machines were corrupt as was witnessed by the internal reforms of Tilden who exposed Tweed, or Seth Low, who with the aid of the Citizens Committee, disregarded strict political affiliation and used political appointments to place highly qualified persons in office. 52

Political machinery was also subject to reform from external sources. One such source, the Mugwumps, reflected the complex political conditions in the Gilded Age. A Mugwump represented the Nineteenth Century aristocracy, the old gentry. Hofstadter explains why this group was concerned about industrialization, urbanization, and political corruption.

The newly rich, the grandiosely or corruptly rich, the masters of great corporations, were bypassing the men of the Mugwump type — the old gentry, the merchants of long standing, the small manufacturers, the established professional men, the civic leaders of an earlier era. In a score of cities and hundreds of towns, particularly in the East but also in the nation at large, the old-family, college-educated class that had deep ancestral roots in local communities and often owned family businesses, that had traditions of political leadership, belonged

52 Holli, pp. 162-167.
to the patriotic societies and the best clubs, staffed the governing boards of philanthropic and cultural institutions, and led the movement for civic betterment, were being overshadowed and edged aside in the making of basic political and economic decisions. In their personal careers, as in their community activities, they found themselves checked, hampered, and overridden by the agents of the new corporations, the corrupters of legislatures, the buyers of franchises, the allies of the political bosses. In this uneven struggle they found themselves limited by their own scruples, their regard for reputation, their social standing itself. To be sure, the America they knew did not lack opportunities, but it did seem to lack opportunities of the highest sort for men of the highest standards. In a strictly economic sense, these men were not growing poorer as a class, but their wealth and power were being dwarfed by comparison with the new eminences of wealth and power. They were less important, and they knew it.53

To regain their shrinking power base, the Mugwumps launched reform attacks at all three governmental levels seeking to establish the higher business principles in politics. This approach would become even more apparent with the Mugwump-controlled National Civic Federation of the progressive era.54

Initially, Mugwump power was directed to national politics. When a politician reached presidential candidacy status, it was a fairly safe conclusion that his background involved a giant trust, a political machine, or both. Thus, political debts, business obligations,

53 Hofstadter, p. 137.

conflicts of interest, and general corruption were likely traits in the background of most aspiring national candidates. Many Mugwumps, possessing wealth and national reputations, believed the Presidency was the place to initiate change.

The first Mugwump-type revolt came in 1872 with Independent Republican opposition to President Grant's corruptly drunken political record. However, it was the Cleveland-Blaine election of 1884 that clearly depicted the Mugwump rebellion.\(^55\)

After the Republican National Convention had chosen Blaine as the Presidential Candidate, the Democrats were willing to support Cleveland's nomination because he possessed all the qualities Blaine lacked. Cleveland had been elected Mayor of Buffalo where within one year he had freed that city of its corrupt machine and had moved on to become Governor of New York. As Governor, he did little to produce controversy. Cleveland remained in the reformer image through his support of New York Civil Service measures and the few reform bills he vetoed were carefully rationalized on the basis that the bills had been improperly drafted. To add to Cleveland's assets, he did not have Tammany Hall's support. Tammany was not supporting Cleveland because of his reformist inclinations. Rather, they believed that Cleveland had "sold out" to the

\(^{55}\) Dobson, pp. 108-120.
streetcar interests when he declared as unconstitutional and vetoed a bill that would have forced a reduction of streetcar fares.56

In contrast, Blaine was paired with a vice presidential candidate that was a known political boss. To make matters worse, Blaine had been accused of corruptly aiding the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad in gaining congressional favors and in return received financial rewards. Although Blaine eloquently defended his position, the publishing of the Mulligan correspondence weighed heavily against him. Regardless of the multiple interpretations that were drawn from the Blaine/Mulligan correspondence, Blaine's closing directive, "Burn this letter," virtually proved his guilt.57

Given these conditions, the Mugwumps met on July 22, 1884 and agreed to support Cleveland while ignoring Hendricks, his vice-presidential candidate, who was as reprehensible as Blaine's running mate, Logan. Their final pronouncement from the July Mugwump convention was that the issues of the 1884 campaign were going to be moral rather than political. How correct they were!

On the same day the Buffalo press broke the Halpin story. Mrs. Maria Halpin some twelve years earlier had charged

56 Garraty, The American Nation Since 1865, p. 188.
57 Ibid., p. 189.
that Cleveland fathered her illegitimate son. As the episode unfolded, it was apparent that Mrs. Halpin had been on intimate terms with several men, only one of whom was a bachelor, Cleveland. Subsequently, without dramatic gesture, Cleveland told how he had accepted responsibility for the child and how he had arranged for a financially sound family to adopt the boy.\textsuperscript{58}

The apparent result was that individual immorality was somewhat more acceptable than corruption in public office. Cleveland was elected with a fewer than 25,000 vote majority. The election would have gone to Blaine if six hundred more New York votes had been cast in Blaine's favor.\textsuperscript{59} As President, Cleveland continued reforms by increasing the number of civil service posts from 14,000 to 27,000 but before he departed the Presidency, about two-thirds of all government employees were personally-chosen Democrats.\textsuperscript{60} The next national confrontation of Mugwump types and other reformers would be in 1896 and would be fought on the issues enunciated by the Populists, free silver and tariff reform.

While many Americans were directing their attention to the nation's internal problems, reaping industrial

\textsuperscript{58} Dobson, pp. 138-142.

\textsuperscript{59} Garraty, The American Nation Since 1865, p. 189.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
profits, or seeking political advancement, America was becoming a member of the world politic. Internal growth that had directed attention inward was now on the verge of forcing an outward view. Both industrial and agricultural interests were now seeking foreign markets. In 1870 about $450 million of goods and commodities were exported, but by the early 1890's exports were in excess of one billion dollars.61

American trading interests in the Orient made control of the Hawaiian Islands commercially desirable. American merchants used Hawaii as a key refueling point. In time, Americans began to settle in the Islands and to augment earlier missionaries who stressed American ways.62

The McKinley Tariff Act of 1890 granted a two-cent per pound bonus for American sugar cane and discontinued the duty on raw sugar with the result that Hawaiian producers faced substantial losses.63

Within one year of the McKinley Tariff, Hawaiian King Kalakawa died and Queen Liliuokalani came to power. Reacting at once to the tariff, she declared the pro-American constitution null and void and established a

61 Ibid., p. 207.
62 Ibid., p. 209.
63 Ibid.
monarchy based on a movement of Hawaii for Hawaiians.\^III

Reacting to these conditions, United States Minister John L. Stevens staged a 1893 coup. The overthrow was carried out by one hundred fifty marines who disembarked from the cruiser Boston, deposed the Queen, and established a white man's provisional government. The provisional government petitioned to the United States for annexation but it was not until 1897 that annexation occurred after four years of sporadic debate.\^I

Americans were coming face to face with the typical divisions most nations face when they move from isolation to colonial power. They were being torn between a manifest destiny which would lead the rest of the world to America's "truth" or remain isolated without involvement in the outside world.

Hawaii's annexation in 1898 was only one in a series of events that year that would lead America into world affairs. Rebels in Cuba, dissatisfied with Spanish control and hard-pressed by economic depression, began rioting. To protect American citizens in Cuba, President McKinley ordered the battleship Maine to Havana harbor. An explosion resulted in the ship's destruction along with two hundred sixty crew members. Loss of the Maine and of

\^III Ibid.

American lives caused Joseph Pulitzer's New York World and William Randolph Hearst's Journal to push aggressively for armed intervention and Cuban independence. On April 20, 1898, the American Congress recognized Cuba's independence and four days later, Spain declared war on the United States.66

The Spanish-American War was fought first in the Philippines and then in Latin America. The history of the war approaches the ridiculous with Spanish troops fleeing from the poorly-equipped and ill-trained American soldiers. Nevertheless, the resulting American victory left the United States with an empire of sorts and a direct involvement in international affairs.67 Those who favored expansion and those who remained isolationist argued their opposing views for decades, through the preparedness rallies of World War I and even after. In the postwar era, they debated the degree to which swords should be returned to plowshares.

Historians generally refer to the period between the Spanish-American War and World War I as the progressive era. Progressivism, in this sense, should not be confused with the American Progressive Party. To the contrary, the progressive era was anything but politically organized.

66 Ibid., pp. 213-216.
67 Ibid., pp. 217-222.
In a search for general characteristics to describe the progressive era, one is hard pressed to discover more than three: 1) progressives had their origins from multiple sources, e.g., Populists, Mugwumps, etc.; 2) progressives were never unified as a single group with a single objective; and 3) progressives were believed to be for the greatest good for the greatest number of people as opposed to supporting self-interests.

It is easier to describe the type of change progressives sought than it is to describe or understand the individuals involved. The continuing attempt to prevent the corporate giant from swindling stockholders or openly oppressing workers, the further elimination of political corruption, and the continuing efforts to make government efficient were among the principal avenues of action sought in this period. To accomplish these ends, the federal government's role changed to a significant degree. Its functions now became more and more concerned with strong, neutral regulation. From 1910 on, the national government was frequently involved in prescribing the number of hours to be worked, the conditions under which work could be performed, civil service reform, control of interstate commerce, and investigation of price fixing by business monopolies.68

68 Weinstein, pp. 62-91; 172-213.
Although the areas of government regulation and intervention increased and conditions improved, some historians have questioned the "progressive" nature of the reforms. A leader in this group is James Weinstein, who effectively argues that conservative elements of business and government combined to provide a "progressive image" with the true reform groups receiving little more than social recognition.

The changes in the concept of the proper role of government and in the techniques of maintaining political and social stability reflected the end of "free" competition and the rise of a new corporate oligarchy. In the rhetoric of the new liberals, these concepts represented a growing concern for the welfare of the public (and many ordinary liberals and probably some corporate liberals were so motivated). In fact, the increasing centralization of power and the expert management of business and social life by federal and state governments met the needs of corporations whose scale of operation was national and international. Day to day power centered more and more in the hands of administrators and experts who thought primarily in terms of increasing the efficiency of the existing system, were constrained to do so in a manner to win the approval of corporation leaders. Workers, farmers, and small businessmen, in other words, had less and less real power, even though, in a formal sense, they had gained recognition as legitimate social forces.69

According to Weinstein, reforms were both slow and meager. They produced the effect of thwarting the true progressive movement emanating from frustrated workers.

69 Ibid., p. 252.
In short, Weinstein argues, government through its regulatory role reduced progressivism to a matter of conservative structural reform.\textsuperscript{70}

What were the trends present in the 1880-1920 period? First, there was a clear division between North and South as the strife of the Civil War was not allowed to fade. The "bloody shirt" was waved as a constant reminder not allowing racial and sectional divisions to become a part of the past.

Second, a rural-urban confrontation developed. Agrarian interests became less visible as the needs of city dwellers and the corporations grew.

Third, urbanization and industrialization set in motion multiple and overlapping trends encompassing such areas as political corruption, urban overcrowding, the demand for public services, the formation of labor unions, etc. Additionally, a status revolution produced far-reaching effects on professions such as law and upon the more aristocratic elements in American society.

A fourth trend involves American participation in international affairs. Economic growth that surpassed European nations forced Americans into trading in world markets. Such growth also forced confrontation that pleased the imperialists but dismayed the isolationists among us. At the turn of the century America became a

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p. 554.
colonial power, a development which struck many of her citizens as ironic in light of the Revolutionary War.

Finally, the forces that produced national unrest were gradually beginning to be brought under control in the progressive era. Reforms reduced corruption and produced better living conditions. How "progressive" the movement was that led the federal government to act as a strong neutral regulator of the economy is still a matter for debate. But one thing remains certain. Regardless of developments in the progressive age, Americans held an almost unbelievable trust in their leaders and institutions. Only a small minority of radicals suggested changing our form of government. For most, the system was sacred and if it malfunctioned at times, minor adjustments or better personnel seemed the answer.

When one views the totality of these trends and the impact they had, it seems remarkable that the nation survived the extreme stress of rapid change. Historian John A. Garraty in writing his history of the 1877-1890 period reasoned that the title of his work should be The New Commonwealth. He contended that the word "new" was justified because America underwent a basic transformation of such a pervasive nature that it could not be described by any other term. There were two Americas in the short span of twenty years.  

How then did these issues and changes affect William Bourke Cockran, orator, lawyer, and politician? Above all else, Bourke Cockran was an orator. He chose the public platform as his communication channel and he used this channel to expound his views of those issues to which he was committed or believed important. Moreover, he seldom hesitated to use the public platform to speak out on issues the American people deemed significant.

Cockran was acutely aware of the North-South conflicts in America. Black youth and their educational institutions had known of Cockran's generosity. In 1900 he was invited to participate in the "First Conference On Race Relations In The South." At that conference, Cockran caused a nationwide stir when the newspapers carried the word that he had argued for the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment because it was an unenforceable portion of the Constitution. 72

The frequent cyclical fluctuations that produced inflation and depression and were seized upon by Populists

72 This speech and additional references to Cockran's public addresses in this chapter are based upon holdings in the New York Public Library Manuscript Division, "The Cockran Papers." Additionally, references to the speeches and the conditions surrounding their delivery can be found in the sources cited in footnote 1 of this chapter and Robert McElroy (ed.), In The Name of Liberty: Selected Addresses Of William Bourke Cockran (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925).
as the conspiracy of Wall Street against the rural Mid­west led Cockran to numerous presentations of his ad­dress, "The Essential Conditions For National Prosperity." Having become something of an economic specialist, he directed his speaking to trusts and free silver. On August 18, 1896, Cockran, the chosen speaker of the Honest Money League, spoke in Madison Square Garden in answer to William Jennings Bryan's economic arguments favoring free silver. Bryan presented his side of the case some six days earlier during his acceptance speech delivered in New York City. Three years later, the two rhetorical giants would travel to Chicago to exchange views on the question of trusts.

As the urban industrial complex grew, Cockran was deeply involved in the new demands for public services. He was part owner of the Brooklyn Union Gas Company, and he was recognized as one of America's first experts on public utility law. Cockran's status as a public service attorney resulted in his being frequently retained by utility companies and he argued utility cases before the United States Supreme Court. Cockran also was a part of the changing legal profession. Like his peer, Clarence Darrow, he defended militant labor leaders as well as corporate executives.
Urban bossism occupied Cockran's attention also. Both by word and deed he dealt with political machines. He did the oratorical bidding of Tammany Hall, but twice severed all relations with that organization. His 1901 speech on political bossism was reputed to be unequalled for the time in perceptive analysis. Cockran's faith in men and the American system was made clear when he attacked the "Mugwumps" as men without a party. Politically he was aware of the women's problems in society and he advocated suffrage.

As an Irish-American immigrant, Cockran used the public platform to defend foreign immigrants generally and to make their immigration process easier. Having long been a student of world affairs, it was not surprising that Cockran should address himself to international questions as America moved into the world arena. In 1899 and 1900 he was an active anti-imperialist, serving on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. As a member of that Committee he went to the Philippine Islands to investigate and later argued that the natives be allowed to determine their own destiny.

Cockran delivered a number of speeches in favor of progressivism and in 1912, supported the "Bull Moose"
candidacy of Theodore Roosevelt. Simultaneously he used the public platform to denounce socialism. As the World War approached, he advocated preparedness and after the war he argued for disarmament. Indeed, Cockran spoke on virtually every important issue of his time.

Before examining these public addresses, it is necessary to describe the unique place oratory held in the rapidly changing society that was turn-of-the-century America.
TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY ORATORY

Few species of composition seem so antiquated, so little available for any practical purpose today, as the oratory in which the generation of our grandparents delighted. The type of discourse which they would ride miles in wagons to hear, or would regard as the special treat of some festive occasion, fills most people today with an acute sense of discomfort. Somehow, it makes them embarrassed.1

Few contemporary Americans would be excited by the prospect of a two- or three-hour public speech. Fewer still would willingly travel long distances under duress to such an event. Almost no one nowadays would expect to enjoy such an activity. But our grandparents did. Thus, to assess the effectiveness of a speaker such as Bourke Cockran we must understand not only the political, social, economic, and cultural issues of a given period but also the rhetorical situation itself.

Lloyd Bitzer's analysis of the rhetorical situation is worthy of note. Bitzer tells us the,

...rhetorical situation may be defined as a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decisions or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence. Prior to the creation and presentation of discourse, there

are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: the first is the exigence; the second and the third are elements of the complex, namely the audience to be constrained in decision and action, and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience.\(^2\)

Numerous investigations have focused on the exigence producing the situation, and the rhetor's logical, ethical, and emotional appeals. Rhetors and audiences alike have been examined in terms of constraints and motivation. In short, given the basic communication model of circular response among sender-message-channel and receiver, critics agree messages must be treated as a product of their time, rhetors as a product of their past, and audiences as a product of both. Nevertheless, critics of nineteenth century public address often neglect to place the rhetorical situation within its larger oratorical context, to identify the importance of oratory in that society. It is the purpose of this chapter to reconstruct the role of public speaking in Cockran's lifetime, turn-of-the-century America. To attain this goal, it is necessary to investigate the rhetorical training of the day, the conventional conduct of public speakers then, and the expectations of turn-of-the-century audiences.

Public education in the nineteenth century was not altogether American in origin. As early as 1642 Massachusetts Puritans were concerned that children be able to read and understand the principles of religion and the laws of the land. To alleviate this seventeenth century concern, Americans imported the educational philosophies of Locke, Rousseau, and Pestalozzi. About the only educational philosophy that could be claimed as mostly native was the belief that all citizens were entitled to an inexpensive educational opportunity.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the common school, i.e., the elementary school, was of the poorest quality, both in facilities and teaching. Although early colonial legislation required the building of schools, the structures were of the worst sort while the teachers that staffed the meager buildings were young and inexperienced. The curriculum focused on reading, writing, spelling, and sometimes arithmetic. Usually, reading was not separated from spelling and all reading was oral. Thus, spelling, reading, and public speaking were combined under a single heading. Given our strong religious heritage, the Bible or prayer book served as

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Secondary education in the first quarter of the nineteenth century reveals a greater variance in course offerings and the quality of instruction. The influence of European humanism was reflected in the new subjects of Latin, Greek, classical literature and rhetoric. Rhetorical studies were conducted from textbooks such as Ebenezer Porter's nineteenth century work *An Analysis of the Principles of Rhetorical Delivery* or Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 1783. It was secondary education that first separated speech training from oral reading and placed some emphasis on extracurricular programs in debate, disputation, declamation, and drama. Declamations, both original and non-original, were encouraged in some schools because of the growing elocutionary trend in speech education.\(^5\)

By mid-century universal education became an American reality, at least in terms of opportunity. According to Borchers and Wagner this development was a product of the growing urbanism.

During [1825-1865] ...the growth of manufacturing increased the size, number, and importance of cities whose populations then grew more diversified in economic, religious, and social patterns. Accordingly, the country witnessed the beginnings of a change from an agricultural to an urban

\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 279-280.

\(^5\) Ibid., pp. 282-284.
society, and this shift, coincident with the desire for class equality, brought demands from newly formed labor organizations and other groups for a further expansion of educational opportunities and for improved curriculums. The second quarter of the century witnessed the long and successful struggle for a tax-supported schools system -- a struggle which was directly tied up with the battle to eliminate pauper or charity schools and church control over education -- both of which were deemed inconsistent with the national consciousness of equality and of non-sectarianism in a democracy. Such changes in the American scene were of course reflected in the needs of man as an articulate person in his practical world; and they saw man as a citizen speaking as well as reading.6

Curricular changes in elementary education at mid-century were limited to the influence of elocution and the use of discussion and conversation in the classroom. The elocutionary writings of John Walker, Joshua Steele, and others brought oral reading out of its original confines, allowing the teacher to attend to articulation, enunciation, and pronunciation. Discussion in the classroom and the encouragement of social conversation were seen as a means to a more practical education, allowing the student to think on his feet.7

Secondary education in this period reflects further change. Of particular interest in this analysis, courses were now offered in declamation, elocution, and rhetoric.

6 Ibid., p. 285.
7 Ibid., p. 286.
Rhetoric's content was dependent on the nature of the school and could vary from the principles of public speaking to written composition and literary criticism. Extracurricular events usually included musical performances, plays, debates, and declamations. As the demand for rhetorical and elocutionary instruction increased, more classes were developed. This was especially true at the secondary and high levels of education where the elective system developed.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 237-297.}

From the foregoing, conclusions can be drawn about the speech education in Cockran's day. First, speech education did not suddenly spring forth in response to the neglect of the discipline. Instead, its growth stemmed from a stress on the practical, day-to-day needs of the people and a larger school system. Second, education was well developed by the time of the Civil War; almost anyone who attended a primary or secondary school had been introduced at least to oral reading, if not specialized courses in rhetoric or eloquence. Additionally, extracurricular activities of elementary and secondary schools elevated public speaking to an enjoyable as well as an educational endeavor. Thus, the rhetorical critic studying turn-of-the-century oratory should assume
that audiences in that day were familiar with and appreciative of skill in public speaking.

American higher education borrowed heavily from its European counterpart. The first American rhetoric was developed by a Scotch immigrant in colonial America. John Witherspoon, shortly after his arrival as President of the College of New Jersey in 1768, devised and delivered sixteen lectures on eloquence. These lectures rely heavily on classical rhetorical theory. Dr. Witherspoon saw to the encouragement of rhetorical practice not only through instruction but by instituting cash awards for the best student orations delivered at commencement.9

Nineteenth century collegiate speech training followed earlier established patterns and continued on a gradual course of expansion with elocution exercising a strong influence in the middle and latter portion of the period. Bliss Perry's experience at Williams College in the last quarter of the nineteenth century appears to be repre-

9 George V. Bohman, "Rhetorical Practice in Colonial America," in A History Of Speech Education In America, p. 68. See also: John Witherspoon, Works (a four volume set was published in Philadelphia in 1802 and nine volume sets were issued at Edinburgh, 1804-5 and 1815).
sentative. First as a student and later as a teacher, he recalled that rhetorical training was often taught in departments of English. Oratory had a prominent position in colleges throughout the nation, while elocution and forensics were introduced into the curriculum to meet the needs of those students engaged in oratorical and debate competition.\(^{10}\)

The elocutionary movement found its strength in Dr. James Rush's pedagogy that emphasized the scientific aspects of vocal production. Steele Mackaye also aided the movement through the popularization of Francois Delsarte's writings. Delsartian influence encompassed a broad range of subjects including acting and music as well. The "voice" was an important mechanism and was beginning to receive wider scientific treatment consonant with eighteenth century rationalism.\(^{11}\)

The two by-products of the widespread interest in elocution were the emergence of itinerant speech teachers and the development of private schools of oratory and elocution. Itinerant teachers gave lectures and programs of readings as a means of advertising their abilities. If they were well received, the result was establishment

\(^{10}\) Marie Hochmuth and Richard Murphy, "Rhetorical and Elocutionary Training in Nineteenth-Century Colleges," in A History Of Speech Education In America, p. 168.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., pp. 178-202.
of a private school. Such was the case with Russell and Murdoch who founded The School of Practical Rhetoric. Andrew Comstock encountered a similar success in Philadelphia and thereby established his Vocal and Polyglot Gymnasium.\textsuperscript{12}

In an examination of nineteenth-century schools of speech, Edyth Renshaw found scientific instruction in voice and movement with attention being devoted to the positioning of feet and the movement of fingers to accompany appropriate voice qualities. Renshaw tells us,

> The American's passion for education was unique. His public school system was the oldest in the world. He was the first to establish public libraries. He was the first to open colleges to women. Every school, library, lyceum, and chautauqua advertised the American's eager desire for self-improvement.

> The postwar period of self-improvement, of popularization of culture, and of general prosperity was a time ripe for development in a field long popular with Americans, the field of oratory. In fact eloquence -- the art of the pulpit, of the forum, and of the tribunal -- was the only literary art which performed a vital function in the early nineteenth century. Later in the century, oratory (and rhetoric in the classical sense) was to make a place for a new and less original art. It was a re-creative art -- the oral interpretation of literature.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} Mary Margaret Robb, "The Elocutionary Movement and its Chief Figures," in \textit{A History Of Speech Education In America}, pp. 180-181.

\textsuperscript{13} Edyth Renshaw, "Five Private Schools of Speech," in \textit{A History Of Speech Education In America}, p. 301.
For those elite Americans who were able to pursue education beyond the high school, opportunities were readily available for speech instruction. Renshaw's conclusion that oratory had obtained the position of a literary art suggests that public speaking in the late nineteenth century was a different sort of endeavor than we understand it to be today. At least on the surface, oratory appeared to be a genre of expression leading to a sense of self-improvement and fulfillment. Oratory was to be appreciated as well as cultivated for practical purposes. The unique status accorded oratory is perhaps best revealed in the textbooks, periodical literature, and accounts of public speaking of that day.

At the time when Bourke Cockran was about to embark on his journey to political and oratorical success, William Mathews completed his treatise on *Oratory and Orators*. Mathews describes the qualifications that one must possess to become an orator. This lengthy list ranges from the mystical to the mechanical:

> Of all the efforts of the human mind, there is no one which demands for its success so rare a union of mental gifts as eloquence. For its ordinary displays the prerequisites are clear perceptions, memory, power of statement, logic, imagination, force of will, and passion; but, for its loftiest flights, it demands a combination of the most exalted powers, - a union of the rarest faculties. Unite in one man the most varied and dissimilar gifts, - a strong and
masculine understanding with a brilliant imagination; a nimble wit with a solid judgment; a prompt and tenacious memory with a lively and fertile fancy; an eye for the beauties of nature with a knowledge of the realities of life; a brain stored with the hived wisdom of the ages, and a heart swelling with emotion, - and you have the moral elements of a great orator. But even these qualifications, so seldom harmonized in one man, are not all. Eloquence is a physical as well as an intellectual product; it has to do with the body as well as the mind. It is not a cold and voiceless enunciation of abstract truth; it is truth warm and palpitating, - reason 'permeated and made red-hot with passion.' It demands, therefore, a trained, penetrating, and sympathetic voice, ranging through all the keys in the scale, by which all the motions and agitations, all the shudderings and throbings of the heart, no less than the subllest act, the nimblest operations of the mind, - in fine, all the modifications of the moral life, - may find a tone, an accent. The eye as well as the lips, the heaving chest and the swaying arm, the whole frame thrills, melts, or persuades, is the result of them all combined. The orator needs, therefore, a stout bodily frame, especially as his calling is one that rapidly wears the nerves, and exhausts the vital energy....

Besides all these qualifications, there are others hardly less essential to the ideal orator. He must have the continuity of thought which is requisite for a prolonged argument, and the ready wit which can seize and turn to use any incident which may occur in the course of its delivery. Last, but not least, is demanded that commanding will, which, as it is one of the most valuable mental gifts, is also one of the rarest, and is still more rarely found in union with the brilliant and dazzling qualities that are the soul of every art which is to subdue or captivate mankind.

In view of the extraordinary qualifications required for the highest eloquence, it is not strange that it is so uncommon. A great orator, - one who has perfectly grasped the art of bodying
forth to eye and ear all there is in him, and who utter accordingly great thoughts and great feelings, is a most rare and magnificent creation of the Almighty....

Mathews' pronouncement that truly great orators are the rare creations of the Almighty is not far removed from Delsarte's description of oratory as the "ministry of speech:"

Orators, you are called to the ministry of speech. You have fixed your choice upon the pulpit, the bar, the tribune or the stage. You will become one day, preacher, advocate, lecturer, or actor; in short, you desire to embrace the orator's career. I applaud your design. You will enter upon the noblest and most glorious of vocations. Eloquence holds the first rank among the arts. While we award praise and glory to great musicians and painters, to great masters of sculpture and architecture, the prize of honor is decreed to great orators.

Who can define the omnipotence of speech? With a few brief words God called the universe from nothingness; speech falling from the glowing lips of the Apostles, has changed the face of the earth. The current of opinion follows the prestige of speech, and to-day, as ever, eloquence is universal queen. We need feel no surprise that in ancient times, the multitude uncovered as Cicero approached, and cried: 'Behold the orator!'

In the first chapter of his treatise on oratory, Delsarte identifies the constitutes of oratory as an art:


1. To understand the general law which controls the movement of the organs;

2. To apply this general law to the movements of each particular organ;

3. To understand the meaning of the form of each of these movements;

4. To adapt this meaning to each of the different states of the soul.

The fundamental law, whose stamp every one of these organs bears, must be kept carefully in mind. Here is the formula:

The sensitive, mental and moral states of man are rendered by the eccentric, concentric or normal form of the organism.

Such is the first and greatest law. There is a second law, which proceeds from the first and is similar to it:

Each form of the organism becomes triple by borrowing the form of the two others.

It is in the application of these two laws that the entire practice of the art of oratory consists....16

Nine years after Edgar Werner had reprinted Delsarte's evangelical call to a scientific ministry, S. S. Curry, President of the Boston School of Expression, wrote of his search for the principles underlying adequate methods of developing dramatic and oratorical delivery. Although Delsartian in tone, Curry's approach is more nurture-oriented:

16 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
The most fundamental element of expression is the idea of revelation of man's psychic nature through his physical organism. What our fellow-being thinks, feels or is, is shown us by what we see of the action of his body or what is heard from his voice. We see that expression is not of the body but through the body; we feel that there is something mystic and hidden, unseen and unheard by our fellow-men and often only vaguely felt by ourselves; but it is made manifest by the motions and actions of the body, and the tones and modulations of the voice. We feel conscious of something which is called emotion, and find this emotion tends to cause something outward which is motion. We are conscious of an inward condition, of indifference for example, or antagonism, and immediately the actions and positions of the body become expressive of the unseen condition, and, through this expression, the psychic state is seen and felt by our fellow-man. Inward emotion causes an outward motion; inward condition, and outward position. Thus expression is, 'the motion of emotion,' the presentation of a vast complexity of physical actions which are directly caused by psychic activities. The object phenomena are manifestive of subjective experience.

Brander Matthews, Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University, deviated from the belief that oratory was scientific or divinely inspired. It was instead a teachable art.

Perhaps the very first lesson that needs to be learned is that speaking is an art -- an art like reading or writing; and that, like them, it does not come by nature. Some of the addresses we hear are so easy and seemingly so spontaneous that we suppose them to have cost no labour. We envy the speaker his possession of so precious a having, and we little suspect the toil, the resolution, and the energy that lie behind his apparent facility. Whatever an orator's natural

17 S. S. Curry, The Province Of Expression (Boston: School Of Expression, 1891, pp. 24-25.)
endowment, he can excel only when he has carefully cultivated his gift, perhaps by practice alone, perhaps by study of the masters, perhaps by both.... 18

The nineteenth century orator was accorded a position above the common man in society. Those who believed that nature superceded nurture identified him as a part of an "elect" group -- the few endowed by their creator with oratorical gifts. Educators who saw nature and nurture at parity or nurture above nature, viewed the orator as a moral man possessing qualities developed beyond the range of average men. Authors who espoused the "scientific" view similarly placed the orator on a plateau higher than most in society. Ralph Waldo Emerson states the case for oratory in the fervent terms of the true believer:

"Eloquence is eminently the art which only flourishes in free countries. It shows the power and possibility of man. Recall the delight that sudden eloquence gives, - the surprise that the moment is so rich. The orator is the physician. Whether he speaks in the capitol, or on a cart, he is the benefactor that lifts men above themselves, and creates a higher appetite than he satisfies. The orator is he whom every man is seeking when he goes into the courts, into conventions, into any popular assembly. There is no true orator who is not a hero.... 19"


19 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Emerson on Oratory," The Voice No. 2 (February 1885): 19.
The criticism and defense of oratory was a popular and recurring theme in the periodical literature of the 1880's and 1890's. Edgar S. Werner's magazine, *The Voice*, serves as a prime example of this phenomenon. Werner indicated in his first issue that his magazine was devoted to those who stuttered or stammered. He believed it unfair to treat persons with speech deficiencies as mentally retarded, incapable of rational thought or normal participation in society. He asked that readers who had difficulty speaking, forward their names and experiences to the editor.20

Less than ten years later, *The Voice*, still edited by Werner, included the subtitle, *An International Review of the Speaking and Singing Voice, Oratory, Delsart Philosophy, Stuttering, Stammering, Singing and Visible Speech*. As early as 1885, Werner mourned the imminent decline of eloquence. Citing an editorial from the Cincinnati *Courier*, he notes that,

...Instead of the splendid readings of Shakespeare, Milton, and other great poets, we have decended to the excessive vulgarity of 'Punch for Passengers,' and imitations of German and Irish-English, and other stuff. It seems as if the teaching of elocution has of late years become degraded by the examples put into the mouths of its pupils.21


Oratory was a topic of popular interest in many periodicals. Magazines such as *The North American*, *Review of Reviews*, *Nation*, *Harper's Weekly*, and *Bookman* contained articles summarizing orations, reprinting in full certain important public speeches, or presenting biographical sketches of famous speakers and their families. Oratory then was treated in a fashion similar to that of contemporary literature today. The popular literary treatment of oratory at the turn of the century suggests that it was the most available and respected means of communication in the American state. The eminence of oratory is further reflected in the front page coverage given public addresses and in the scrupulous attention given to ceremonial details of the occasion.

Amid the extensive reporting of oratory and orators, a debate ensued. Was oratory in a state of decline? Congressman H. L. Dawes writing in *Forum* in 1894 addressed himself to this question:

...The plain inquiry raised is whether there is as much oratory in the public speaking of the present day as in the past, and whether it is declining in quality or is held up to the standard of the earlier days of the Republic. What is the standard that shall determine that quality? Herein lies the main difficulty.

Whether public speaking which combines oratory and eloquence is in a state of decline or decay is a question of much importance and cannot enlist too much attention. It cannot be doubted that it has undergone great change,
whether compared with the little that has come
down to us from ancient orators, or with what
comes within the memory of those still living.
In the overflow of public speaking of the
present day no one looks for, or would think
of finding, anything which would remind him of
Fisher Ames or Daniel Webster. But would he
not, nevertheless, find very much which is
entitled to live with the imperishable produc­
tions of the past, because, like them, they are
marvellous instrumentalities in producing great
and abiding results? One would hesitate before
he would say that, judged by such a test, ora­
tory or eloquence is moribund. We are thus led
directly to the conclusion that the value of
public speech, and, consequently, of whatever
of oratory or eloquence there is in it, depends
upon its purpose and its adaptation to the ac­
complishment of that purpose. This is what
Webster means when he speaks of a theme which
is 'something greater and higher than all
eloquence,' which causes 'the graces taught in
the schools, the costly ornament and studied
contrivances of speech to shock and disgust
men, when their own lives and the fate of their
wives, their children, and their country hang
on the decision of the hour.' The 'subject and
the occasion' are as essential as the man to the
production of any great and enduring utterance
of speech...'The great orators have appeared and
the great orations have been delivered in revolu­
tionary periods.' These occasions cannot be
created to order, but themselves wait on the
order of the universe.22

Having concluded that the occasion produces great
oratory, Dawes moves to a consideration of pulpit oratory
as a specific example to support his argument.

       Now what is the fact? Has pulpit oratory
decayed? Is it weaker in its presentation
of the great truths it has in charge?—are its
arguments less powerful?—is the language in
which they are sent home to the judgment and

22 Henry L. Dawes, "Has Oratory Declined?," Forum,
October 1894, pp. 146-147.
conscience more feeble, the diction less clear, the imagery less impressive, or the metaphor less striking than in the sermons and addresses of the great divines who have gone before? One would hardly answer these interrogatories in the affirmative. The expounders of religious thought have never spoken in purer or loftier strains of eloquence and power than at the present day.23

Addressing himself to congressional oratory, a subject to which Dawes admits greater familiarity and understanding, he argues that the physical setting of the House, the neglect of the hour rule, greeting all speakers with applause, and the method of handling legislation has resulted in a declining form of oratory. First, the physical setting:

This transfer from the discomfort of the old hall to the luxury of the new proved too radical a change, and some new arrangement became necessary. Several members who went abroad during the summer vacation came back with the conviction that conformity to the plan of the House of Commons, the substitution of benches for the chairs and desks of members, was the remedy; and a penance little short of hair-cloth and spikes was the penalty. Now a member could not even read a speech with any comfort. This was carrying reform to the other extreme, and it thwarted the very purpose for which it was instituted. The members would not fix their attention on the public business by compulsion, and spent more of their time in complaining of their inconveniences than they bestowed upon what they were assembled to transact. When the hot summer months came round, the new close plush-cushioned seats became well-nigh intolerable,

23 Ibid., p. 149.
and they disappeared at the end of the Congress. The House returned to the original plan of desks and chairs, but re-arranged so that 356 members were seated in the space originally occupied by 234. This arrangement still continues.24

Establishing brevity and clarity as essential elements of eloquence, Dawes questions the Congressional neglect of the hour rule.

...The hour rule was in those days an iron rule, and the hammer was as sure as fate to come down on a speaker even in the middle of a sentence. This rule is now so frequently and so easily evaded that it is practically a dead letter. Speeches are now prepared without reference to it, and are spread over as much space in circumlocution, tabulation of figures, and quotations, as time and assistants can command. No man can be eloquent even for an hour, much less for four or five, with 'leave to print' at the end. If a speaker knows beforehand that all he can say must be said within his hour, and that nothing can be added beyond that limit, he will study brevity which is the soul of wit, clearness of statement which is the power of argument, simplicity of language which is the key of speech that is effective, and then will stop. It is said that the writing of telegraphic messages, now so common, has brought about a marked improvement in brevity, conciseness, and clearness of style among business men. The reverse is a habit much more easily fallen into, especially when one imagines that his ability is to be measured by his much speaking.25

Finally, Dawes depicts at length the custom of applause as causing the orator to seek grandeur instead of

24 Ibid., pp. 151-152.
25 Ibid., p. 152.
eloquence while the conditions of managing legislation precludes eloquence.

The habit of greeting speakers with applause, which, in this country and especially in Congress, is of recent origin, is having a marked effect upon the character of the oratory of legislative bodies. It was not tolerated for a moment fifty years ago in the House of Representatives, and is not now in the Senate. But it has come to be the daily food of the orators of the House, and every speaker seems to measure his own success by the volume of it which he is able to elicit. Party friends also are always ready to make sure that he does not, in this regard, fall short of any opponent who has preceded him. The consequence is that the temptation to prepare speeches for this effect is too strong to be resisted, and the orator studies all the arts and methods and tricks of diction most calculated to call forth sudden and unrestrained manifestations of approval. The direct effect has been to bring the speaking of legislators to the level of stump oratory on the prairies, which applause serves to fill the sails of the speaker and toss him about as the wind does a dory at sea. One will look in vain for true and genuine eloquence in any length of oration delivered under such influences, punctuated though it be with parenthetic outbursts of uncontrolled applause all carefully recorded. The effect upon the character of public speaking has been a great increase in quantity, but a failure to elevate or even sustain the standard of the past in any of the qualities which constitute real oratorical power and true eloquence.

Nobody ever hears of the oratory or eloquence of a committee room. Add to this modern method that other invention of recent years, which takes up legislation thus prepared in the committee room, and puts it in charge of another committee of three to determine beforehand when it shall be considered by the bodies who are to pass upon it, for how long a time, and in what shape, and by what number of supporters and opponents, to be selected as prize combatants are selected by the opposing sides in a ring, and the hour by
the clock when such consideration shall cease,—does any one conceive it possible that anything deserving the name of oratory or eloquence can be the outcome of such a contest? Shackled oratory will surely limp and halt and fail, and drafted or pre-announced oratory will fare not better.  

Dawes concludes that the practice of public speaking is sufficient to keep the art alive and should great occasions again arise, orators will be equal to the task.  

Four years later, Arthur Reed Kimball writing in Outlook took a different and more derogatory view of public speaking. Kimball blamed American colleges for the decline of oratory.  

'Were Daniel Webster alive to repeat to-day his orations, would not a good many passages, even from his greatest efforts, strike us moderns as a case of the 'big bow-wow'? The fine phrasing, which means elaboration, perhaps better classical elegance of phrasing if one is to take the illustration from Webster, instead of drawing sighs of delight as in France, suggests to the practical American of to-day a suspicion of pretentiousness, of the 'big bow-wow.' The American is pleased by the great thoughts if put with direct simplicity, in the sense of artlessness, the better pleased the more directly simple or artless the phrasing. The American attitude toward rhetoric as such, largely unconscious, and in many respects a worthy and noble attitude, is well illustrated by what an intimate friend said, after his death, of ex-President Theodore D. Woolsey: that, having once written a sentence, Dr. Woolsey would never change a word in it because another word that suggested itself on re-reading 'sounded better,' provided the first word expressed the intended meaning as clearly....

26 Ibid., pp. 152-153.

27 Ibid., p. 160.
The fact of the case, the passing of oratory (the art of oratory) as a factor in modern life, was recognized by so good an authority as Chauncey M. Depew when presiding at the last Yale-Harvard debate. Mr. Depew said: 'The last twenty years of college history have not produced a single famous orator in the United States. This is seen mostly in our courts, upon our political platform and in the decadence of popular oratory in the Senate, in Congress, and in the various halls of legislation the country over.' Dr. Depew might possibly have made an exception of Mr. Bryan, had he not probably had in mind an orator more of the type of Wendell Phillips. But, without stopping to discuss the omission, or Mr. Bryan's place as an orator, it may be noted, as showing the popular attitude toward oratory, that during the campaign he was charged with being 'a mere orator,' as if that were a disqualification for being President. This popular attitude again, is seen in the gradual displacement of the word oration by the word address. The more usual formula nowadays for the programme of a celebration is that Mr. So-and-So 'will deliver the principal address.' Oration is looked upon as a rather formidable word, suggesting what is tiresome or boresome. A person might 'hear an address' with ready willingness who would pause a long time before deciding to 'listen to an oration.' Oration has come to have a classic flavor of antiquity, so largely is popular usage confining it to college programmes, and especially to Commencement programmes, to refer to those more old-fashioned colleges where the 'Commencement orator' still lags superfluous on the Commencement stage.\footnote{Arthur Reed Kimball, "The Passing of the Art of Oratory," \textit{Outlook}, 29 September 1898, p. 278.}

Kimball arguing from both example and cause to further his analysis points specifically to interest in athletics as far surpassing interest in intercollegiate debate. Colleges being the source of oratory cannot produce
orators, due to a general lack of interest. Further, Kimball contends that poor legislation is the result of poor oratory and that changes in the legal profession have produced a decline in forensic eloquence. Claiming that the masterful lawyer is no longer the one who can deliver great Constitutional orations, he writes:

If too much emphasis seems to have been laid upon the college point of view, it must be remembered that it is to the colleges that we must look for the ideals of the coming generation. In practical life it is generally recognized, as was noted earlier, that the art of oratory is going out. Once the pulpit and the bar were equally regarded as its repositories and preservatories. The phrase 'an eloquent preacher' still remains with us. But how often now does one hear the once equally familiar phrase, 'an eloquent lawyer'? Perhaps, as some predict, though it hardly seems likely, the great preacher of the future will not be a preacher at all in the sense of being an eloquent and moving orator, but the man who preaches through others, the able executive head of a great institutional church, with its widely diversified enterprises and activities. In any case, the great lawyer of the future has already arrived in the person of the modern corporation lawyer, whose differentiating qualities are shrewdness, subtlety in the use of words, expert knowledge of statute technicalities, wide acquaintance with decided cases, quickness of apprehension in applying decisions (rather than great legal principles) to a given case, readiness of resources in bringing in an unexpected way an action that would stand small chance of success if brought in the expected way. The great lawyer of to-day is not he who can deliver masterly orations on great constitutional question—a Daniel Webster. Rather the great lawyer is he who can discover some unexpected sensational application of a supposedly well-settled form of procedure, as in the case of 'government by injunction.'

29 Ibid., p. 280.
Finally, Kimball focuses upon the one area where he believes oratory is still flourishing, the after-dinner speech.

...yet there probably never was a time when the 'after-dinner orator' flourished as he does today. 'Epochs are signalized by their eatings,' somewhere remarks Kenelm Chillingly, the nineteenth century philosopher; and our own is signalized by the bad digestion which waits on oratory a la mode. It is typical of the American way of doing things-just as we play our national game by crowding around a 'diamond' to watch professionals play it for us-that at our dinners we have our talking done for us, if not by professionals, at least by men who make a profession of it. These are the men who, as one of their number wittily described it, are to be found regularly each dining season traveling 'the post-prandial circuit.' They are popular recognized purveyors of this kind of oratory, as distinctly marked as a class as are clergymen or actors. Their ministrations have brought to perfection the art of sameness in public or semi-public dining, and have reduced this form of entertainment to a system which turn out so many speeches of so many words, guaranteed to 'draw' so many parts 'laughter' to so many parts 'applause,' The question always suggests itself whether, as ostensibly, the dinner is given as an opportunity for the oratory, or the oratory is simply an excuse for giving the dinner.\footnote{\textit{ibid.}, pp. 280-281.}

Kimball's less-than-enthusiastic consideration of the after-dinner speaker is confirmed by numerous examples. In part, the conditions of after-dinner speaking came about as a result of societal structures and the literary/artistic emphasis placed on oratory. A cursory survey of newspapers between 1880 and 1920 will reveal to most the unique place of the club in American society. "Club News"
or "Club Notes" are frequent headlines announcing event after event for the plethora of organizations. Although no specific study has been conducted comparing the club and other forms of entertainment, in general, these notices seem to be more prevalent prior to the advent of cinema and traveling stage productions. To the extent this correlation exists, it is probable that both the club and its inclusion of public speaking were a significant form of social intercourse and entertainment.

Richard Weaver, writing about the "Spaciousness of Old Rhetoric," contends that the best method for drawing inferences about oratory is to avoid great occasions since they deflect our judgment by their special circumstances. 31 Given this premise, it will well serve the purpose of the current analysis to observe the oratorical events present in Canton, Ohio between October 1, 1915 and October 15, 1915.

On October 1, 1915, the Canton Repository headlined that one thousand five hundred Moose were expected to attend Saturday's outing. Below the headline, a subtitle told that a pig roast, sports contests and addresses would be included in the program. The planned events were reported as follows:

31 Weaver, p. 168.
Fifteen hundred Moose of Stark, Tuscarawas and Summit counties are expected by those in charge to attend a field day and picnic which the Canton lodge of Moose will hold Saturday in the baseball park at Meyer's Lake.

A pig roast will be the feature of the outing. For this, several of the largest pigs that could be found in the county have been obtained, the entertainment committee announces. The pigs will be served about the middle of the afternoon.

The Moose will begin gathering at the park about 9 o'clock in the morning. The day's program will be opened at 1 o'clock in the afternoon with an address of welcome by Mayor Stolberg. Other talks will be given by Walter S. Ruff, John C. Harmony, A. B. Correll, A. W. Alger, Art R. Turnbull and other Moose at intervals in the afternoon.

The opening event of the sport program which will be begun at the close of the Mayor's talk will be a baseball game between the 'Moose Dubbs' Western Bloomer Girl's team. At 2 o'clock a six round boxing contest between 'Smoke' Smalley and an 'unknown' will be held. Arthur Schlott will referee.32

Assuming the Canton example to be reasonably typical, two inferences are warranted. First, oratory, to a degree and in some instances, was clearly entertaining. The festiveness of the occasion with speeches apparently interspersing sporting events argues strongly in favor of this conclusion. Second, the type of activities involved suggest that people attending the Canton pig roast were neither refined or among the well educated. Based on the assumption that the events, including

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32 Canton Repository, 1 October 1915.
oratory, were planned to appeal to such an audience, it appears that the middle and lower elements of society enjoyed oratorical performances. In fact, a broad spectrum of society probably enjoyed oratorical events. Certainly, this contention appears to be supported by the events in Canton little more than one week after the pig roast, when Bourke Cockran appeared as one of the featured speakers.

Cockran was invited to Canton by the Knights of Columbus to speak at their Annual Founder's Day Banquet. The nature of the event assumes some of the characteristics of contemporary political campaigning, incorporating advance and post-departure publicity, along with continuous coverage of activities while the speaker is in the city. On October 10, 1915, the Canton Repository reported the following:

Practically all the plates for the annual Discovery Day banquet to be held at the Courtland hotel Tuesday evening by Canton Council, Knights of Columbus, have been sold, and indications are fully 350 guests will be seated at the banquet tables. Addresses will be given by W. Bourke Cockran and Senator Pomerene.

Most of the tickets have been distributed among members of the council, but a few plates can yet be secured. The banquet will follow a reception in the hotel parlors from 7:30 to 8 o'clock.

Cochran, former legislator in the state of New York, is one of the leading speakers in the country. He will talk on 'Knighthood.'...
Emerson's orchestra will play during the reception banquet. Columbus day souvenirs are being arranged as place cards at the banquet tables....

The program format began with Reverend Father C. Treiber delivering the invocation which was followed by Cockran's address lasting approximately two hours. Following Cockran's speech on "Knighthood," Ohio's Senator Pomerene spoke on "Hyphenated Americans." The Senator's concluding remarks cleared the way for a vocal solo by Hary Socie who sang, "I Hear You Calling"; he encored with "Mother Macree." Then, Miss Sarah Levin favored the gathering with "Swiss Echos" and encored with a performance of "Sky Blue Water." The events were appropriately brought to a close by the Master of Ceremonies.

Speaking events of this type were obviously prepared for the enjoyment of the better elements in society. The price of the dinner alone ($3.50) would have been restrictive to any but the wealthiest. Additionally, the planning of oratorical programs such as this allowed for a goodly number of socially prominent citizens to receive publicity and to become acquainted with the visiting dignitary. This one speaking event required the Executive Committee, the Committee on the Banquet, Press Committee,

33 Canton Repository, 10 October 1915.
34 Canton Daily News, 13 October 1915.
Ticket Committee, Decorating Committee, Printing Committee, the Committee on Music, and the Reception Committee. Each committee was listed in the newspaper with a report of the Chairman's name and his subordinates. Further, certain of the committees had a specific function that would bring them into direct contact with Cockran. The Reception Committee, for example, met Cockran as he disembarked from the train and took him to McKinley's gravesite where Cockran was given a wreath for appropriate decoration. Then, the committee gave Cockran a tour of the city.35

The day following Cockran's speech, the Canton Repository carried the full text of Cockran's address divided among three pages of the paper along with the details of how Cockran was delivered to Canton by the "Chicago Flyer" of the Pennsylvania Lines. The rare stopping of this train at Canton along with its second stop to retrieve Cockran at 2:38 A.M. was in itself newsworthy.36 Clearly, for some, the rhetorical setting was as important as the oration, if not more so.

In his 1908 work, The History of Oratory, Lorenzo Sears tells us,


Occasional oratory has been defined as the kind of speaking in which 'no defined end is directly proposed, but rather a general impulsion toward noble, patriotic, and honorable sentiments and toward a large and worthy life.' Taking an anniversary, a great historical event of character, a celebration, or occasion of any sort as a starting point, it permits either a close adherence to the original subject or the widest latitude of treatment. 'The field is a broad and inviting one, promising easy success. But the facility of saying something is counterbalanced by the difficulty of saying anything worth hearing.' Many an oration which had great fitness to the occasion when delivered has been so occasional in its character that it could have no permanent value.37

The commonality of occasional oratory to turn-of-the-century Americans cannot be too strongly stressed. For example, The Voice, originally devoted to speech defects, had by 1891 begun to include page after page announcing speaking events and school graduations. The following excerpts reflect society's emphasis on the occasional speech:

Miss Caroline Earnest, graduate of the Emerson College of Oratory, gave a recital on May 19, at Johnson City. Her selections were: 'Pauline Pavlovana,' 'Mother Goose,' 'Tomorrow at Ten,' 'The Ruggleses Dinner Party,' 'The Kitchen Clock,' 'Money Mush.' She does very clever work and is a favorite wherever she appears.38

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38 Werner's Voice Magazine (July 1891): 185.
Fulton and Trueblood's School of Oratory held its commencement exercises June 11, when four graduates received diplomas. They recited, 'The Monster Cannon,' 'Perdita,' in costume, 'The Child-Wife,' 'The Confessional,' 'The One-Legged Goose,' 'The Minuet,' 'The Whistling Regiment,' 'The Law-Backed Car.' A 'Shakesperean Burlesque' was presented by the young ladies, followed by a pantomimic medley consisting of 'The Seven Ages of Man,' 'Douglas, Tender and True,' 'The Torpedo and the Whale,' from 'Olivette.' A number of the alumni took part in the pantomimes. 39

Political speakers who strove to persuade the public were faced with an oratorical situation entangled in ceremony and entertainment. Take for example the reminiscences of B. F. Hughes as recorded in Lippincott's Magazine, November 1890. Mr. Hughes had been an active stump speaker in the campaign of 1878 and according to his recollection had given upward of eighty speeches in each state and municipal election since 1878. The situation he describes places little distance between the stumper and the occasional orator.

When it is intended to have a mass-meeting and a parade on the same evening, the managers are always in a state of great excitement until they have secured the attendance of at least half a dozen speakers, all of whom are bubbling over with eloquence. Then the parade is continued until far into the night, late enough for honest folk to be abed. After great effort, however, a part of the crowd is gathered about the speakers' stand and the meeting organized.

39 Ibid., p. 186.
Before the first speaker gets warmed up to his subject, a brass band, belonging to one of the visiting clubs, begins to play, the members of the club are gathered together, and away they march to the music of the fife and drums. Meantime, to prevent his voice from being drowned by the noise, the speaker is screaming like an eagle, or roaring like a bull of Bashan, according to the quality of his voice. This continues until the crowd had dwindled to a baker's dozen, when the meeting breaks up, most of the speakers not having had a chance to pour forth their bottled-up eloquence, though before the meeting their presence was considered indispensable. I have had experiences of this kind so often, sometime after travelling long distances to reach the meetings, that of late I always advise against anybody being sent to a meeting that is to be preceded by a parade, because every speaker sent is almost sure to contribute one to that most useless and troublesome of accumulations, 'the surplus.'

Additionally, Hughes comments on the "human nature" of the speakers at political meetings. It would appear that the speakers were not above offering criticism to assure that they would become a part of the occasion.

One often sees a good deal of human nature exhibited among speakers at these meetings, especially in their selfish eagerness to be called on first, so as to make the principal speech. This they often prolong to the extent of crowding others out. I have been so disgusted with exhibitions of this kind that of late years it has been my almost invariable rule to ask to be placed last on the list. Once, during a recent municipal campaign, while I was speaking, one of the best stump speakers in the State came into the hall. He had just come from another great meeting, where he had made a stirring address, which he was anxious

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to repeat. On taking a seat upon the stage he asked his neighbor, speaking in his ordinary tone of voice, how long I had been speaking. Presently he said, 'I wonder how long he will keep it up!' A few minutes later he growled, 'He talks as if he had hot mush in his mouth!' Presently he added, 'The audience are tired of him. They want to hear me.' With this sort of a fire of comment going on in my rear, I soon closed, wishing I had his talent, half inclined to covet his self-esteem, and certainly not flattered by the opportunity to see myself as I was seen by this accomplished orator....

The type of oratory resulting from occasional speaking and the entanglements of the stump orator have been aptly described by Richard Weaver. His analysis of the "old rhetoric" of the nineteenth century focuses upon the "uncontested term." Weaver views the oratory of one hundred years ago as the type of speaking in which one could assert, uncontested, that a nation's prosperity is relative to the degree it tills the soil. In general, Weaver pictures the orator as the speaker of grand style who uses high levels of abstraction. Further, he raises the question as to how the orator was accorded this lee-way of the highly abstracted and uncontested term. He finds his answer in the right of "assumption." In other words, a fixed presumption existed that all precedents were valid. Truths such as liberty or morality were fixed by a universal consensus and naivety of philosophi-

41 Ibid., p. 687.
ical inquiry fortified this presumption. Weaver concludes from investigation that the purpose of oratory was to remind the audience of what they knew and to avoid provoking new thought. This situation had the additional effect of giving oratory and orators a judicial right of pronouncement.

... The orator had a sense of stewardship which would today appear one of the presumptions earlier referred to. The individual orator was not, except perhaps in certain postures, offering an individual testimonial. He was the mouthpiece for a collective brand of wisdom which was not to be delivered in individual accents. We may suppose that the people did not resent the stylizations of the orator any more than now they resent the stylizations of the Bible. 'That is the way God talks.' The deity should be above mere novelties of expression, transparent devices of rhetoric or importunate appeals for attention. It is enough for him to be earnest and truthful; we will rise to whatever patterns of expression it has pleased him to use. Stylization indicates an attitude which will not concede too much, or certainly will not concede weakly or complacently. As in point of historical sequence the language of political discourse succeeded that of the sermon, some of the latter's dignity and self-confidence persisted in the way of formalization. Thus when the orator made gestures toward the occasion, they were likely to be ceremonious rather than personal or spontaneous, the oration itself being an occasion of 'style.' The modern listener is very quick to detect a pattern of locution, but he is prone to ascribe it to situations of weakness rather than of strength. 43

42 Weaver, pp. 164-181.
43 Ibid., p. 182.
What was turn-of-the-century oratory really like? For a start, it was familiar to all. Most Americans grew up with it. Elementary, secondary, and collegiate education involved varying degrees of speech training, even though specific departments of speech were a part of university structure until the 1920's. The content of speech education varied from the inclusion of invention-oriented classical rhetoric to the appreciation of literary forms and criticism. Some Americans bent upon cultural improvement or self improvement aided the development of private elocutionary schools. In short, turn-of-the-century audiences were conditioned to accept public speaking as a normal part of everyday life.

Textbooks used to instruct orators were varied as did the types of speech education. However, the consistent feature of the texts was that the orator was not your common man. Orators received their gifts from nature or were nurtured beyond the point of other men in society. Whether the orator was called, as the minister is called, or educated to be the successful professional, he was something special.

As Emerson expressed it, the orator was a "hero." Even those who never read a text on oratory could not escape its influence for popular journals devoted extensive space to the art. Hundreds of pages were given
to the debate about the quality and the quantity of oratory. This alone suggests a high degree of popular interest, a widespread concern about that special "calling."

The development of occasional or after-dinner speaking is reflective of oratory as a popular and entertaining pastime. Social events at all levels of society centered upon the speaker whether he was wedged between sporting contests or the featured attraction at an elaborate dinner. Additionally, stump orators were required to endure the brass bands, heckling by fellow speakers, and by their audiences if they were to win a hearing. (They were a part of a ceremonial rite.)

Congressional oratory was viewed by many as a waning art. However, this oratorical decline was not attributed to the most obvious cause, the growing complexity of the problems facing Congress. Solutions to such problems were seldom found riding the crest of a single speech. Rather, as Dawes noted, the negotiations of the committee room were becoming the center of Congressional persuasion. Only after committee solutions were selected did the parties choose their prized combatants to display their oratorical craft. These contestors were greeted and backed by the socially accepted conven-
tion of partisan applause. Thus, Congressional oratory began to take on a degree of the ceremonial rite that was common to the stump orator.

Turn-of-the-century oratory, as Weaver notes, was based in large measure on generalities designed to remind audiences of what they already knew. Applause could be accorded just as easily for aesthetic correctness as for conventional politeness or effective persuasion.

In short, turn-of-the-century oratory was important because the populace understood the ground rules, enjoyed its performance, and found it useful as a form of entertainment, social intercourse, literary display and personal persuasion. The contention that there were giants in those days is rendered by Mathews' warning that memory's geese are always swans. But, oratory was a most important communication format. Oratory was, as Weaver said, the form of discourse which our grandparents would ride miles to hear. Given this rhetorical context and the economic, social, political, and cultural issues of the day, it is possible now to proceed to an analysis of Bourke Cockran's rhetoric.
DEFINITION AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Donald C. Bryant argues that rhetoric functions to adjust ideas to people and people to ideas:

...This process may be thought of as a continuum from the complete modification or accommodation of ideas to audiences (as is sometimes said, 'telling people only what they want to hear') at the one extreme, to complete regeneration at the other (such perfect illumination that the 'facts speak for themselves'). This continuum may, therefore, be said to have complete flattery (to use Plato's unflattering epithet) at one end and the Kingdom of Heaven at the other! Good rhetoric usually functions somewhere well in from the extremes. There, difficult and strange ideas have to be modified without being distorted or invalidated; and audiences have to be prepared through the mitigation of their prejudices, ignorance, and irrelevant sets of mind without being dispossessed of their judgments....

The process of adjusting people and ideas holds a particular importance for the critic of public address. Albert J. Croft focused on this importance in his article, "The Functions of Rhetorical Criticism:

...Adaptation aims at the modification of certain ideas in the audience by relating them to other ideas. Here 'ideas' must be taken to mean either groups of didactic propositions or, at the other

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extreme, mere sentiments or predispositions. As long as they are statable, they are ideas. Rhetorical adaptation can be dealt with usefully only at the level of ideas, and not at the level of techniques abstracted from their ideational context. If the rhetorical critic were to analyze, report, and interpret ideas, using rhetorical forms as instruments, then valuable historical understandings might be contributed...."2

To establish the connection between ideas and audiences, the search model of rhetorical stance can serve a useful function. For it is the rhetorical stance that best depicts whether the rhetor attempts to adjust his ideas to the audience or attempts to adjust the audience to his ideas. Professor Wayne Booth in his discussion of rhetorical stance argues there must be a balance between the available arguments, the interests of the audience, and the implied character of the speaker. In short, an imbalanced rhetorical stance will be unlikely to produce the desired persuasion.3 For example, if a rhetor sacrifices his ideas to please the audience, he will likely be applauded but will not move the audience to his ideas. Conversely, if the speaker becomes obsessed with his ideas, then it is likely the audience will not


change its beliefs or actions since the rhetor's ideas have not in any way been adjusted to them. These suppositions have been to some degree quantitatively confirmed by Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall in their research on social judgment theory; these authors conclude that audiences tend to classify ideas or propositions into latitudes of acceptance, non-committance, and rejection.4

Although rhetorical stance appears to be a viable tool to analyze the adjustment of ideas to people and people to ideas, it should be noted that rhetorical stance is not a natural phenomenon but rather a product of the argumentative process. Argument in such cases as this refers not only to logically-reasoned statements but also to the realm of emotion, attitude, and past experience that eventually become verbalized to produce a stance.

To analyze rhetorical stance without notice of the argumentative method employed by a rhetor in the development or application of the stance would appear unrealistic. Standard tenets of logical inquiry are not well suited to assess argumentative structure. To classify arguments as deductive or inductive does little to reveal the adjustment between people and ideas. A more appropriate search model is one that can characterize arguments as

grounded either in the essential nature of things or in the circumstances of a given situation. Such characterization at once distinguishes a philosophical inherency from a situational justification.

For the orator who finds his rhetorical stance developed from arguments built upon the essential nature of things, there is little or no room for movement from ideas to people. Adjustment is restricted by the inherency of the orator's reality. His stance is founded in a philosophical principle or "truth" which he is obliged to defend because it alone shapes his reality. The orator who constructs his rhetorical stance upon a situational justification, however, is more amenable to adjusting his ideas to people since the reality he perceives is subject to situational change. This is not to say that orators who build upon philosophical inherency cannot accommodate to an opposing point of view or adapt to audience beliefs, but such adjustments are less likely because the orator's reality had been determined outside the situation and the audience.

Distinctions between philosophical and the situational argument are discussed by Richard Weaver in The Ethics of Rhetoric. Weaver utilized the terms "definition" and "circumstance" to distinguish the philosophical and the
situational, respectively. For Weaver, the argument from definition is one that arises from genus while the argument from circumstance develops from the facts of the particular case.⁵

Rhetorical stance analyzed in terms of argument from definition and circumstance is a search model well suited to an investigation of Bourke Cockran's rhetoric. Cockran was a highly complex man, who assumed divergent rhetorical positions. His supporters termed him a man of principle while at the same time his opponents believed him nothing more than a common political opportunist, availing himself of the most advantageous circumstance. By discerning whether Cockran's political positions were primarily built upon principle or circumstance, and by tracing the direction of his rhetorical adjustments, ideas to people and people to ideas, a more accurate assessment of his effectiveness than now exists appears possible. Thus, it is the purpose of this chapter to analyze the rhetorical stance of Bourke Cockran utilizing argument from definition and circumstance as a search model.

The oratorical endeavors of William Bourke Cockran covered a span of more than fifty years. His campaign, Congressional, legal, and ceremonial oratory generated orations numbering well into the hundreds; nearly two hundred orations, excluding strictly legal pleading, exist among his papers in the New York Public Library for example. The voluminous nature of this material is a challenge in itself. The selection of accurate, representative orations presents a special challenge. I have chosen public addresses dealing primarily with those contextual issues discussed in Chapter I. The few exceptions to this practice involve ceremonial orations in which Cockran freely discussed his theory of government. Further, in the selection of these orations I have attempted to utilize those addresses which best reflect Cockran's mature thinking, those which provide the fullest development of his ideas on a given subject.

On December 21, 1889, Cockran was invited to address the Tenth Annual Banquet of the New England Society in the City of Brooklyn. For this ceremonial event Cockran chose as his subject, "Our Constitutional System." Based upon twenty-one years of observation of and participation in the American system of government, this speech represents a fully-developed statement of Cockran's reasoning about
governmental origins and authority. He began the address with a circumstantial adaptation to his audience.

...I have watched with some attention and curiosity the distinguishing features of this feast as contrasted with those of the one at which I was permitted to assist in New York; and I feel bound to add my expression of wonder to the feeling that might fairly be attributed to a returned New Englander, if he were permitted to assist at this banquet tonight. As I watched the color of the liquid in your glasses, I have become firmly persuaded that such is the strength of your devotion to your New England ancestors you have become fully resolved that, until you can return to that spring which the gentleman from Massachusetts described to-night, you will never slake your thirst with water.6

After commenting favorably on the two speeches preceding his own, Cockran began by stressing the importance of argument from definition:

...I became profoundly impressed with the force of that maxim which has been laid down by the greatest of English historians, 'That all human institutions are but phantoms, disappearing at cockcrow; if not at the crow of this cock, then at the crow of that cock;' and that the governments that seem to us the most durable and the strongest are destined some day to disappear in noise, disaster and confusion, into that womb of time in which are engulfed the Merovingian kings, the dynasties that sprung into existence upon the dissolution of the Carlovingian Empire, and all the kingdoms and the principalities that even one hundred years ago covered the face of Western Europe. Now, like all maxims of similar character, this is to some extent sound, and to some extent unsound. Governmental forms are indeed perishable. Nations change their names, their

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6 New York Public Library, Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 21 December 1889. Hereinafter all manuscripts of the collection will be cited as "Cockran Papers."
boundaries, their creeds and their languages. The altars of yesterday are but the curios of today. The temples that have been raised to the worships that have now disappeared from the face of the earth but move our wonder that beliefs so simple and so transparent should have nerved the minds of men to raise such marvels of architecture. But enough creeds and dynasties and languages are ephemeral, the principles of justice are eternal; and this Government, founded and built upon them, will, I believe, last to the end of time.  

Having established his perceived philosophical reality, Cockran continued to develop the theme by defining the abstract term "principles of justice."

...Our Constitutional System consists of the application of the eternal principles of justice to the relations of men to each other under our social compact. In the provisions that no man can be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; that all men shall take an equal part in the affairs of government; that the privilege of habeas corpus shall never be denied; that no private property shall be taken for public uses without proper compensation, you have the essence of our Constitutional System, and you have the principles of justice made the birthright of the American citizen, beyond the reach of any disturbance from any source whatever....

Beyond the philosophical belief that the American system of government was eternal because justice was eternal, Cockran noted that the system provided for two very important operations. First, the strong could not invade the weak and second, wealth and freedom were

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Ibid.

Ibid.
consistent. In short, he rationalized the disparity between the weak and strong and the rich and poor in turn-of-the-century America.

The conclusion of Cockran's address again emphasized the principle of justice inhering in the essential nature of things. The abstract use of this principle closely approximates Weaver's discussion of the "uncontested term" of occasional oratory. The uncontested term is a term which seems to invite contest, but which is not so regarded by the audience in its own context. However, the significance of this oration supersedes its ability to meet the criteria of a previously described genre. Clearly, the address signifies Cockran's belief in the American system of government, a rhetorical stance based on a philosophical inherency or in Weaver's terminology, an argument from definition.

On Valentine's Day 1901, Cockran spoke in Buffalo, New York. His address was an oration in honor of Chief Justice John Marshall. On this occasion he elaborated on his emphatic faith in government and identified one principle that he believed made the American System unique.

...If there be any one capable of disputing that, aside from the establishment of Christianity, the foundation of this republic was the most memorable event in the history of man, we would not be apt to seek him at this board or to find him in this country...

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9 Weaver, pp. 166-71.
...The distinction between our republic and all others -- which has made it a bulwark of liberty and order, while they have generally become engines of oppression and sources of confusion -- is not in the varied extent of privileges promised by them, but in the different means which they provide for their enforcement. Our Constitution was not committed to the 'care of all the virtues,' but to the courage, wisdom and patriotism of an independent judiciary. 10

Cockran's analysis of governmental power is not founded upon any particular case, fact, or situation. Rather, he bases his case on philosophical inherency. His suggestion that the founding of this nation supersedes everything except Christianity, and that the working principle of government is justice through the judiciary demonstrates his priorities: Christianity, Constitution, and judicially-determined justice. Possibly the exclusion of one element from these priorities is more significant than the priorities themselves. The legislature, Congress, is not the heart and soul of the American system. According to Cockran, the final step in the decisional process is held in the constitutional determinations of the courts, which through some unexplained process insures justice. If these are the building principles to which Cockran adhered, then other orations should reflect them.

Although Cockran entered politics as a Democrat, his affiliation with the party was a major concern to

10 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 14 February 1901.
party leaders.\textsuperscript{11} McGurrin contends that Cockran joined New York's Irving Hall coterie because he sought governmental reform and greatly admired Samuel Tilden and his followers.\textsuperscript{12} Within three years Cockran switched allegiance to Tammany Hall and was doing the machine's bidding. More an immigrant than an American, initially poor rather than rich, he was chosen as the Tammany spokesman to oppose the nomination of Grover Cleveland. Tammany's dislike of Cleveland was well known. As Governor of New York, Cleveland ignored Tammany in the matter of political patronage, and vetoed a bill which would have reduced the elevated railway fares, and a bill limiting the number of hours street car conductors were required to work.\textsuperscript{13} On July 8, 1884 Cockran gave an unexpected plea in opposition to the desires of party leaders. At the Chicago Convention he argued in favor of the Grady Amendment that would


allow the polling of state delegations and thus over­
ride the unit rule of voting long favored by Tammany
leaders. His concluding remarks made particular refer­
ence to the philosophical principle that he was not speak­
ing for any candidate but that he was unwilling to let the
recording secretary place upon the records of the conven­
tion a "living lie," a vote cast and recorded but denied
by his own lips. 14 As it so happened, the Grady Amend­
ment was defeated. Cockran's defense of principle was
in this instance unsuccessful.

Cockran was likewise unsuccessful two days later on
July 10, 1884, when he nominated Allen G. Thurman for
president. In his nominating speech, Cockran argued
mostly from circumstance noting that his candidate had
never been accused of favoring corporate influence but
his final appeal was an argument based on principle.
Cockran maintained metaphorically that Thurman's "spirit
breathes from the statute books of the United States." 15
No doubt Cockran saw more of the American system in
Thurman than in Cleveland but after Cleveland's nomina­
tion was confirmed, Cockran addressed Tammany Hall
calling for unity. In this last address, Cockran inti­
mated that the differences were actually situational and

14 McGurrin, pp. 52-73.
15 Ibid.
that had the Party betrayed a principle, he would not have called for unity. 16

The details of the 1884 Convention and Cockran's unsuccessful attempt to prevent Cleveland's nomination in 1892, has been investigated in detail by McGurrin, Kennedy, Blume, and Crowley. These authors agree that Cockran was an excellent orator in these unsuccessful causes. 17 He had done Tammany's bidding but that bidding was done on the basis of principle rather than circumstance.

As Cockran's political and oratorical talents were recognized, he became embroiled in three issue-oriented battles with William Jennings Bryan. The three areas of controversy involved silver, trusts, and prohibition. Two of the three encounters, those issues related to free silver and trusts, hold particular significance because it was Cockran's disagreements with Bryan that took him farthest from the realm of his party, and because these clashes offer the opportunity to measure the now relatively unknown Cockran against the revered orator, Bryan.

Most students of rhetoric are familiar with the fact that Williams Jennings Bryan delivered a famous

16 Ibid.

17 There is little or no disagreement among these authors as to Cockran's excellent oratorical skills but they do differ in their assessments of his effectiveness.
speech at the 1896 Chicago Democratic National Convention entitled, "The Cross of Gold." Less well known are the ensuing events that engaged Bourke Cockran in an attempt to defeat the free silver plank.

After the Chicago nomination, Bryan apparently believed it expedient to make his acceptance speech in the heart of "gold" country, in New York City. Bourke Cockran had not been associated with Tammany Hall for more than a year. He had devoted himself to his law practice until May, 1896, when he fell from his bicycle incurring injuries serious enough to require a month's hospitalization. Having left the hospital, Cockran decided to spend the summer in Europe in recuperation. He was in Rome when he read newspaper accounts of Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech and subsequent nomination.

Not everyone was happy with the "boy orator" of the Platte. McGurrin tells us that

...The correspondent of the Charleston News wrote that in the midst of the delirious excitement that followed Bryan's speech one could hear such exclamations from the despairing gold men as, 'Oh if we only had Cockran here!' and continued: 'The one man who could have exposed the absurdity of the sublimated

18 McGurrin, p. 152.
nonsense of the Cross of Gold exhortation was sojourning in Europe. And what a pity! How the scholarly, golden-tongued Bourke Cockran would have stilled the camp-meeting frenzy produced by the Boy Orator and brought the delegates back to their senses.21

When Bourke Cockran returned to America on August 7, 1896, he was met by a delegation headed by New York's Governor Flower. The group implored Cockran to take the platform against Bryan before a mass meeting of the Honest Money League. Cockran responded that if the League had any connection with the Republican Party or if he were paid to speak, he would not comply with their request. Satisfied that his criteria were met, he agreed to address the League on August 18, 1896, some six days after Bryan's scheduled acceptance speech.22

Bryan encountered more than minor difficulty on his journey to New York. His voice was poor and his train fell behind schedule. Even so, the staunchly Democratic New York Times headlined Bryan's disappointing performance thus: "Bryan Spoke and his Auditors Fled."23

Preparations for Cockran's address were extensive. The Honest Money League first secured Carnegie Hall for the occasion but ticket demands outstripped the build-

21 Ibid., p. 149.
22 Ibid., p. 150.
ing's capacity. Consequently the League obtained Madison Square Garden for the expected fifteen thousand. The anticipated congestion required special traffic regulations printed in advance by the New York press.24

According to The New York Times, Cockran's audience included every important professional, business, and civic person in the city.25 Perry Belmont, prominent New York banker, introduced Cockran as one of the greatest orators of all time. Belmont's introduction was followed by the "Star Spangled Banner." At the conclusion of the anthem, the wildly cheering audience waved American flags firmly clasped in their hands.26 Cockran began his speech circumstantially but moved quickly to the philosophical principles of honest money and government power:

...With the inspiring strains of the national song still ringing in our ears, who can doubt the issue of this campaign? The issue has been well stated by your presiding officer. Stripped, as he says, of all verbal disguises, it is an issue of common honesty, an issue between the honest discharge and the dishonest repudiation of public and private obligations. It is a question as to whether the powers of the Government shall be used to protect honest industry or to tempt the citizen to dishonesty.

...On this question honest men cannot differ. It is one of morals and justice. It involves the existence of social order. It is the contest for civilization itself. If it be disheartening to Democrats and to lovers of free institutions to find an issue of this character projecting into a presidential campaign, this meeting furnishes us with an inspiring truth of how that issue will be met by the people. A Democratic convention may renounce the Democratic faith, but the Democracy remains faithful to the Democratic principles. Democratic leaders may betray a convention to the Populists, but they cannot seduce the footsteps of Democratic voters from the pathway of honor and justice. A candidate bearing the mandate of a Democratic convention may in this hall open a canvass leveled against the foundations of social order, but he beholds the Democratic masses confronting him organized for defense.

...Fellow-Democrats, let us not disguise from ourselves the fact that we bear in this contest a serious and grave and solemn burden of duty. We must raise our hands against the nominee of our party, and we must do it to preserve the future of that party itself....

To Cockran the question of currency was a question of principle founded in honesty, justice, morals, and at the very root of civilized order. He asked fellow Democrats to act against the nominee of their party because of this principle which Cockran believed the greatest challenge to America since the secession movement. Cockran fulfilled his promise of years earlier; when he called for party unity in 1884 he did so on the basis that the nominee, Cleveland, had not offended party principle; Cockran claimed he would not call for unity if principle

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27 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 18 August 1896.
were in question. But it took Cockran little time to move from principle to the arguments of circumstance.

...In the time to which I must confine myself tonight, I can do nothing but examine that one question, which Mr. Bryan himself declares to be the overshadowing issue of this campaign. I am a little puzzled when I read this speech to decide just exactly what Mr. Bryan himself imagines will be the fruit of a change in the standard of value throughout this country—I do not believe that any man can wholly agree with the speech, because if he dissent from one set of conclusions, he has to read but a few paragraphs and he will find another of a different variety....

Cockran moved from his attack on Bryan to an explanation of wages. In this portion of the address he deals almost wholly with circumstance. In general, he argues that wages are that part of a laborer's product that is returned to him for his toil. Thus, the only means to raise wages is for the worker to increase his productivity. In other words, the more the laborer produces, the more compensation he will receive. Cockran's examples omit any reference to a union's ability to increase wages, to wages as an appropriate share of corporate profit, or to supply and demand having any effect on wages or prices. Cockran's placement of labor as a subdivision of industry or corporation did not, at least to his way of thinking, place him in a position of opposing labor, since it was the management that would give rise to the.

\[^{28}\text{McGurrin, pp. 70-72; 150-151. Cockran reportedly told a New York World reporter that the silver movement was an attempt to take property from its creators and give it to its coveters.}\]

\[^{29}\text{Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 18 August 1896.}\]
laborer's eventual achievement of prosperity. Dealing once again with circumstance, Cockran spoke of the metropolitan, the tenement.

...The dweller in the tenement house, stooping over his bench, who never sees a field of waving corn, who never inhales the perfume of grasses and of flowers, is yet made the participator in all the bounties of Providence in the fructifying influence of the atmosphere, in the ripening rays of the sun, when the product of the soil is made cheaper to him every day by the abundance of the harvest. It is from his share in this bounty that the Populists want to exclude the American workingman. To him we say, in the name of humanity, in the name of progress, you shall neither press a crown of thorns upon the brow of labor, nor place a scourge upon his back. You shall not rob him of any one advantage which he has gained by long years of study, of progress in the skill of his craft, and by the careful organization of the members who work with him at the same bench. You shall not obscure the golden prospect of a further improvement in his condition by a further appreciation of the cost of living as well as by a further cheapening of the dollar which is paid to him.30

The conclusion of Cockran's speech finds him returning to his undeniable faith in the principles of the American governmental structure:

...When this tide of Anarchy shall have receded, this tide of Populistic agitation, this assault upon common honesty and upon industry shall have abated forever, the foundations of this Republic will remain undisturbed. The Government will still shelter a people indissolubly webbed to liberty and order, jealously forbidding any distinction of burden or of privilege, conserving property, maintaining morality, resting forever upon the broad basis of American patriotism and American intelligence.31

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
The New York press was quick to declare a victory for Bourke Cockran. Not only did Cockran have local support, as a resident in the heart of the industrialized East, but he apparently outperformed the Boy Orator.

...Madison Square Garden rang with a burst of patriotic enthusiasm last night.

...An audience of ten thousand or more people gathered there and listened to a speech from W. Bourke Cockran, in which he made protest against the candidates and the platform of the Chicago Convention...

...On the very spot where Candidate Bryan had accepted the nomination and declared his allegiance to these doctrines they desired, in the name of real Democracy, to repudiate both them and Mr. Bryan.

...The meeting was a success from every point of view. Few such demonstrations have been seen in the city....

...Mr. Cockran was the chief speaker, and it had been admitted that he would make a reply to Mr. Bryan's speech which had emptied the Garden last Wednesday night, when the Boy Orator had proved such a disappointment.

...The contrast in the two meetings was one of the noticeable and significant facts in the comment of those who were at both....When curiosity had been satisfied last week, the Bryan audience fled, and would not listen to the so-called arguments. But the big audience last night eagerly listened...32

Cockran's second contest with Bryan centered on the issue of trusts. Contextually, silver and trusts had been linked in the avalanche of widely-read Populist literature. The trust was fast becoming the symbol of

conflict between the urban and agrarian interests.\(^{33}\)

The Chicago division of the National Civic Federation thought the issue of trusts so important that a decision was reached to sponsor a three-day public discussion of the question. The event was scheduled for September 13-16, 1899 in Chicago's Central Music Hall.

The initial accounts of Chicago Tribune reporters focused on the governors and other important individuals arriving for the conference, the internal battles of the National Civic Federation, and the confusion that had resulted from sketchy preparations. For the most part, reporters were interested in the unspecified purpose of the conference. As nearly as could be determined from the delegates and visiting dignitaries, the function of the conference was to be educational, although some suggested the National Civic Federation might later adopt a resolution on trusts. The internal conflicts were centered in the Program Committee. Who was to speak, on what aspect of the topic, and in what order had not been determined by the time most of the delegates arrived.\(^{34}\) However, it was certain that Mr. Bryan would be coming to Chicago. On September 14, 1899, the Tribune


\(^{34}\) Chicago Tribune, 12 September 1899.
announced Bryan's departure from Lincoln and further reported that his adversary, Bourke Cockran of New York, would come to the Windy City to contest against him. The Tribune gave page one headlines to the event predicting an "Oratorical Climax Tonight" but the confrontation was never a reality. Bourke Cockran spoke that evening but William Jennings Bryan failed to appear until the following day.

Cockran did not begin his speech with an adherence to philosophical principle as he had done in so many of his addresses. Rather, he assumed the stance of a debater and defined terms within the circumstances of the situation. From there he established his main contention:

...For the purpose of establishing an intelligent basis of discussion, free from terms likely to provoke passionate declamation, I shall define prosperity as an abundance of commodities fairly distributed among those who produce them. Now, this is not to state two separate and distinct conditions, but rather two aspects of one condition. For, my friends, I hope to establish before I conclude that there cannot be abundant production of commodities without an extensive distribution of them in the form of wages whatever industry is based upon freedom. Whether that distribution be as general as we might wish, is a question which we will consider hereafter; meanwhile, we can all agree that distribution can be extensive only where production is abundant.

35 Chicago Tribune, 14 September 1899.
36 Chicago Tribune, 15 September 1899; 16 September 1899.
We must have commodities in existence before we can distribute them in the form of wages or of profits. If this definition of prosperity be correct, it must follow that any industrial organization or system which operates to swell the volume of production should be commended, and any that operates to restrict it should be condemned.  

Moving from his definition of prosperity, Cockran began a circumstantial examination of the facts surrounding government intervention in commerce. He noted that government could interfere through patent laws, tariff laws, and public franchises. It was this last category that allowed Cockran to demonstrate his desire for reform of municipal ownership, a reform that was gaining popularity among citizens displeased with corporations repeating profits from their collective needs without an expansion of service.

...There are many grave obstacles to be overcome before municipal ownership could be reduced to practical operation, even though we should set about establishing it to-day. On what basis of valuation would we compute the interest of the present owners? Should it be fixed on the basis of what these enterprises can earn or on what it would cost to reproduce them? To take them on a valuation fixed according to their present earning power would be a very hazardous speculation. It is exceedingly doubtful if under the administration of public officials they could be managed as economically as they are now under the management of specifically trained experts.  

Just when it appeared that Cockran, the corporate

37 Cockran Papers, M.S. Speech, 15 September 1899.  
38 Ibid.
attorney, was about to don the reformer's cloak to abolish private trusts, he no doubt eased many minds by adapting to the audience and offering a solution of a more conservative nature.

...Can this conference suggest any practical remedy which could be put in for to-morrow, by a legislature that may be in session? My friends, it seems to me there is a very effective remedy and a very simple one. It would not be necessary to frame a law prohibiting special privileges to individuals from public corporations; that is the law to-day. The remedy is simply to prescribe a definite penalty for violation of it, and to provide for publicity in all the transactions of a corporation exercising public franchises. No fines, no judicial rebukes, no denunciations from platforms, no legislative enactments merely declaring things to be reprehensible will eradicate the evil, but a simple statute giving every shipper, every person using a public franchise of any kind, the right to have disclosed to him at any time every contract and agreement made with any other person for a similar service and declaring the grant of a special rate by a corporation a felony punishable by a long term of imprisonment, will cure it effectually. 39

No doubt, publicity was a mild reform when compared to labor violence, the call for abolishment of all trusts, or outright take-over of private industry through municipal ownership. Recognizing the conservative nature of his reform, Cockran now addressed himself to the reasons why he did not share the popular hatred and dislike for trusts:

39 Ibid.
While on the subject I may dwell for a moment on what to many seems an unaccountable phenomenon - the public dislike and distrust of corporations. I don’t share that hatred and dislike, but I understand it. While I don’t think it is wholly justified, yet I believe the history of corporate management in this country explains it. Indeed, I hold it is indisputable that whenever in America a general opinion on any subject is found to prevail, there is always pretty good ground for it.

The distrust of corporations arises not, in my judgment from a general opposition to corporate organizations, but from profound distrust of corporate administration.

You need not look further back than the panic of 1893 and the corporate management which preceded it to find abundant cause for indignation, distrust, and alarm. It is a dreary, shameful story of trusts betrayed, of stockholders deceived and plundered, of corporations wrecked and looted - their treasuries emptied by faithless officers through devices ingeniously fraudulent, until deprived of property, of resources, and of credit, they were driven over the precipice of insolvency in a condition so rotten that their fall was almost noiseless....The worst feature of this miserable story is that all these perfidies, all these frauds, all these infamies, have not brought one hour of shame or punishment to those who perpetuated them. These engineers of ruin are walking the streets to-day, their heads high in the world of finance.40

Clearly, Cockran believed the trust was supposed to function for the benefit of the working man. However, he did not verbally argue a "philosophical truth" in this respect. Rather, that philosophical inherency shaping Cockran’s reality remained unstated economic

40 Ibid.
principle. The only time Cockran displayed his purist economic tendencies was in his analogy that equated economic competition with Bryan's political competition. Bryan, through competition, had established his pre-eminence, i.e., Bryan had become a political monopoly. Whether Cockran truly believed his analogy or he simply could not resist the temptation to equate Bryan with a monopoly will probably never be known.

Having established that trusts were for the benefit of labor, Cockran boldly ventured into an area few conference speakers were willing to address, unionism. His comments left little doubt that he would be associated with the union reform element.

...We have been called to consider the effect on industry of combinations of labor as well as of capital, and yet little, if any, attention has been bestowed on the strike, - that most dangerous form of civil war, - ever threatening industrial communities, - most threatening where prosperity is widest. The disasters of war have at least the compensation that those who suffer from them are brought together in bonds of closer union by the recollection of calamities which they have shared, and by the necessity of cooperating to repair them; but the strike leaves behind it no memories except those of hate and injury, leading to wider distrust, further recriminations and fresh disturbances. War arrays nations against each other, but it draws the people of each nation closer. The strike tends to resolve society into its original elements - each hostile to all others. It is more dangerous than foreign invasion or domestic insurrection, as the cancer which corrodes the vitals is more deadly
than any injury to a single limb.\footnote{41}{Ibid.}

It was Cockran's belief that the only requirement of employers was to openly discuss matters with employee organizations. He could not condone the government setting wages because there was no formula, and should the wages be set too low the laborer would suffer; if set too high, the result would be bankruptcy hurting both employer and employee.

The unstated assumption pervading Cockran's circumstantial reasoning was based on the frequently-stated philosophical inherency of justice. Even though Cockran had ably analyzed the corrupt actions of corporate managers, he still believed that if left alone corporations would function for the benefit of the public as long as the public had access to corporate information. Only in his concluding remarks did he specifically state his adherence to these principles.

...I do not think it is an insuperable or even a very difficult question. Its solution in my judgment will be found by recognizing in our industrial systems, the partnership of man as we have recognized in our political system, the equality, - the brotherhood of man. While the relations of men are governed by the principles of justice and morality which underlie this government, and, indeed, the whole fabric of Christian civilization, - I have no fear of the future. Words cannot disturb me while every fact of history encourages me. This civilization which has created our marvelous prosperity,
will defend it and maintain it. I have no sympathy with those timid souls who see in our splendid growing civilization a dizzy eminence from which the race is in constant peril of falling back into the darkness and ignorance from which it has risen. I prefer to regard man as a reasonable being, pursuing by the light of experience an ever-ascending pathway of progress, proving by what he has done, his capacity for greater deeds, - surveying from the heights which he has achieved, with courage, with determination, and with confidence, the still nobler heights which are accessible.\textsuperscript{42}

According to the \textit{Chicago Tribune}, it was evident that Bourke Cockran had both pleased and antagonized the diverse elements of his audience. There were shouts for Bryan to come to the platform but there was also prolonged and widespread applause. In the reporter's words, "Where he had not produced conviction he had produced admiration."\textsuperscript{43}

Bryan did proceed to the platform but his remarks were brief. He told the audience that it was not until his arrival that he had learned he was to debate Mr. Cockran. He and Mr. Cockran had met privately and both thought it best that a debate not be actualized. Therefore, he would present his remarks the following morning.\textsuperscript{44}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{43} \textit{Chicago Tribune}, 16 August 1899.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
pleased by Cockran's analysis, there was no doubt more displeasure with Bryan's declining attitude.

The next morning Bryan presented his platform and the full text of his speech was relegated to the third page of the Tribune. However, the Tribune devoted its first two pages to the brief encounter that ensued between Cockran and Bryan. Bryan's speech was the last agenda item and was to be followed by a period of open discussion. It was at this time that Cockran questioned Bryan's position: "Monopoly in private hands is indefensible from any standpoint, and intolerable." The report of the encounter is less detailed than is desirable but apparently Cockran accused Bryan of attempting to destroy the entire system rather than coping with the problems of the system. Then, Cockran reasserted his belief in American principles and Bryan immediately left the Music Hall.45

The first two encounters resulted in Cockran's supremacy; but there was a different outcome the third time they met. Bryan and Cockran were members of the Platform Committee at the 1920 Democratic National Convention held in San Francisco and they were at odds on the issue of prohibition. Cockran argued in favor of

45 Chicago Tribune, 17 August 1899.
light wines and beer while Bryan successfully defeated this liberalization. Cockran's defeat on this minor issue was overshadowed by his highly successful nomination speech for "Al" Smith. Cockran was particularly pleased since it had been twenty-eight years since he had addressed a national convention and he found the half hour demonstration exhilarating.46

Cockran's clash with Bryan cost him a high price in those early years with Tammany; his later decision to support Bryan (in 1900) was also costly. Not only was he supporting the man he earlier opposed; he was now opposing McKinley, the man he earlier supported.

Early in 1900, Bourke Cockran came to Boston to support Bryan and oppose McKinley's imperialism. Although anti-imperialism meetings had been concluded the week before, interest remained high in the subject and in Cockran. The Boston Evening Transcript of Friday, February 23, 1900 reported on page one that the weather was to be fair with westerly winds. Immediately below the forecast was written, "Hon. Bourke Cockran due in Boston at 3:00 P.M."47 Cockran's friend, the Honorable Patrick A. Collins, aided Bourke's Faneuil Hall appearance by arranging dinner at the Union Club, and providing


47 Boston Evening Transcript, 23 February 1900.
his home for Cockran's lodging. The Transcript reported that a number of important people were present in the mixed audience but particular mention was reserved for William Lloyd Garrison, son of the famous abolitionist.

Cockran's introduction was short; he moved directly to the philosophical principle that seemed by now to be commonplace:

...Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: No person who has enjoyed the blessings of constitutional liberty can visit the sacred precincts of its cradle without imbibing new confidence in the people on whose virtues it rests. I am gratified beyond measure that I have been invited to contribute a feeble voice to the defence of those great principles of freedom and justice which inspired voices have proclaimed from this hall for more than a century.

...Nobody can deny that the establishment of a colonial empire by this republic would work a radical change in our political institutions. Men may differ as to whether this change would be salutary or pernicious, but all agree that it will be a change - an expansion as its supporters contend, leading through profitable conquest to glory-crowned heights; a perversion as its opponents believe, leading through profitless tyranny to hopeless ruin.

After this brief introduction abstracting justice and freedom, Cockran moved to a consideration of circumstances. Specifically, he noted that had the Philippine

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48 Boston Evening Transcript, 24 February 1900.
49 Ibid.
50 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 23 February 1900.
people quietly relegated themselves to a mercantile transaction of assets, a colonial empire would already be a reality. Further, Cockran suggested that the discussions ensuing from the lack of submission have been clouded and confused. Thus he led his audience to believe that he was both obligated to and capable of removing the confusion. Cockran, having long been a defender of the Catholic faith and placing only Christianity above the American system of government, sought first to remove the cloud surrounding the use of military force and religious instructions as tools of imperialism. He spoke of these circumstances thusly:

...The lovers of liberty and of the gospel were persuaded that our armies were fighting to establish free institutions and to spread the light of Christian morality at the very moment when our flag was unfurled over the harem and the slave-pen and a polygamous slave-driver added to the civil list of the United States.

...If the humanitarian remained unconvinced the money-seeking adventurer and the minister of religion were relied upon to outvote him, and if either of these proved intractable, the other two were expected to overcome his opposition.

...Imperialism has always been a form of piracy, but piratical craft seldom display their true colors while in sight of civilization. This imperialism of ours, while it remained under examination by the American people, tried to assume every appearance of an expedition for the conversion of sinners. The crew used the
language of the hymnal, although the stridency of their voices suggested the boarding-gang rather than the choir...

Obviously offended by American action in these circumstances, Cockran weaved his way to the philosophical realities which dictated his course of action. These realities number four and he began with his lengthy analysis of English colonial policy as related to both Ireland and America.

...It is the system which England tried to establish in this country, and which she succeeded in establishing in Ireland, when, to gratify English producers, she forbade the Irish people to engage in the manufacture of cloth, prohibited the exportation of cattle and horses from Ireland to England, and destroyed the rapidly growing Irish shipping trade by exempting Ireland from the operation of the navigation laws. It is the same system which raised these colonies in successful revolt against her, and arrayed the Irish people in bitter hostility to her. It is the system which she was compelled to abandon at the beginning of this century from a sense of self-preservation. It is the system which has blighted the progress of civilization wherever it has been enforced, and ruined irretrievably the country applying it. It is the system on which Spain always administered her colonies, and which corrupted her government, degraded her people, undermined her power, and shattered her empire.

...It is a tragedy of history that such a system should be proposed to the American Congress. The contribution of the United States to the civilization of the world is the principle that

51 Ibid.
the only proper basis and justification of govern-
ment is the consent of the governed, or, in other
words; the welfare of the governed; for it is
not conceivable that man would consent to any-
thing which operated to his own injury. 52

The second principle which Cockran used to support
his position has not heretofore received exposure in his
philosophy of just government; namely, that government
cannot be operated for profit:

...The administration of government cannot be
profitable unless it be dishonest. If more
revenue be exacted from a people than is
returned to them in some form of service, the
excess is tribute. If history teaches any one
lesson, it is that tribute has always proved
vastly more pernicious to the country exacting
it than to the country paying it. The moral
law which binds nations does not differ from
the moral law which binds men. Individual ex-
perience shows that in commerce nothing is so
stupid as dishonesty. History shows that in
nations nothing is so stupid as pillage. 53

Third, Cockran found imperialism philosophically
opposed to the Constitution.

...Imperialism is not the spread of our con-
stitutional system, but the restriction of it.
It is the establishment and administration
in distant countries by this government of
another government totally distinct from our
constitutional republic, and utterly repugnant
to it. Between the civilizing expansion of
Jefferson and the brutal imperialism of
McKinley there is a difference wide as the
difference between the men. 54

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52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
Cockran's final belief was that imperialism, for all practical purposes, would result in the President becoming a king. Although it could be supposed that Cockran employed this definitional argument as a scare tactic, his development of the concept suggests, to the contrary, that he believed this to be a natural condition of reality.

...If this imperialistic policy be adopted a kingship will not be the worst, but the best, fruit that it is likely to bear. For this government to exercise power over anybody independently of the Constitution is to establish a system capable of becoming the most absolute despotism conceivable. Unless the limitations of the Constitution apply to all officers of this government wherever they may be, there are no limitations on them whatever. Civilized society has never seen a government without some limitations, theoretical or practical. Limitations may be purely moral, incapable of enforcement, easily evaded, but they are limitations at least in theory. A king may be able to violate his coronation oath with impunity, but in taking it he acknowledges an obligation to respect the promises that it embodies.

...Obedience and protection are mutual obligations, none the less reciprocal because one can be enforced, and the other is beyond control. But in the administration plan of government for these islands there is neither limitation nor obligation. These subjects will not even be protected by the oath of their ruler. The only oath taken by the President or any other officer of the United States is an oath to support the Constitution. But in these territories he will be bound not to support, but to exclude the Constitution.  

55 Ibid.
The Transcript reporter apparently expected Cockran to arouse his audience more than he did. His summary concluded that Cockran had a mixed audience — mixed in every sense save one — they were all firmly anti-imperialist. The audience was enthusiastic at times but there was no cheering. Rather, the audience offered Cockran frequent, loud, and prolonged hand clapping.56

Cockran's reversal of political position had little effect on the campaign of 1900. In the post-campaign period, Bryan wrote to Cockran thanking him for his support while admitting they had been badly defeated.57 It is likely that the prosperity the McKinley administration offered was of more importance than imperialism when the decision was rendered at the polls. However, Bourke Cockran continued actively in politics. In 1901 he supported Edward Shepard, Tammany's mayoral candidate, and by July 4, 1902 Cockran was again in the Wigwam delivering the main address.58 And there were other issues to which Cockran would offer his eloquence.

56 Boston Evening Transcript, 24 February 1900.

57 Cockran Papers, General Correspondence, letter from William Jennings Bryan to William Bourke Cockran, 10 November 1900.

58 All New York newspapers for the month of October and the first week of November 1901 detail Cockran's support of Shepard. New York Tribune, 18 June 1902, reported Cockran's invitation to deliver the main address.
Cockran would attempt to aid the solution of the race problem, offer his suggestions for judicial reform, and promote free trade.

May 10, 1900, nearly three months after Bourke Cockran extolled the privileges and protection of the Constitution in Faneuil Hall, he spoke in Montgomery, Alabama as the principal speaker at the First Annual Conference of the Southern Society for Study of Race Conditions in the South. His speech created a storm of controversy throughout the country and, in general, produced an unsatisfactory result.

Cockran's approach to the race problem was distinctly different from most of his addresses because he choose almost wholly the circumstances of the situation to dictate his analysis. He was apparently faced with a topic that did not clearly lend itself to an easy solution based on his frequent abstractions of justice and moral law. In the opening portions of his address he attempted to relegate race to a question of economic law:

...As we think of our nation's history since the Civil War, one thing becomes conspicuous, and that is the terrible cost of shifting the industrial system of a country from a basis of slavery to a basis of free labor. It is the heaviest that can be imposed upon a nation. Except the Southern States of America, I know of none that has ever borne it without the disorganization of its industry and the ruin of its prosperity. It must be remembered that the Southern people have met this test not under circumstances specially favorable to its solution, but under every
conceivable circumstance that might easily have aggravated its difficulties. It was not an evolution of prosperous peace, but a penalty of disastrous war. It was not begun at a period of great prosperity, with accumulations of capital, available to meet any losses that might be entailed by it; but it was undertaken at the close of a devastating conflict, when all the capital of the country had been dissipated, when all its resources were exhausted, when literally the last blade of grass had been trampled under the feet of contending foes.... When it seemed that the only prospect of escape from utter ruin lay in conferring authority and imposing responsibility on the highest intelligence, the broadest patriotism, the most extensive information to be found in its entire citizenship, at that moment the political power in each State was taken out of the hands of the intelligent and placed in the hands of the ignorant. Men who had never shown a capacity to live in a state of freedom were suddenly equipped with full control of the Government, and four million ignorant blacks were metamorphosed in a night from slaves to sovereigns.59

Continuing his analysis of economic reallocation of slave to free labor, Cockran contended that although the South had experienced success they were some distance from a complete resolution of the problem. He said there was still a wide chasm, "to be bridged painfully, slowly, laboriously, over a bridge of sighs." Noting the gravity of the situation he turned to the circumstances that posed for him the single question that would lead to a solution of the problem.

...The experience of thirty-five years has convinced the people of the South of two things which, in considering the Negro problem, must always be borne in mind. First, the abolition

59 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 10 May 1900.
of slavery was not an injury to the South, but a benefit to it, since its industrial system is to-day sounder and its prosperity greater than they have ever been in all its history. The freedom of the Negro is, therefore, absolutely secure. No one in all the South would undertake to disturb it. On the other hand, the industrial prostration which marked the existence of what is called carpet-bag government, and the industrial revival which followed its overthrow in every State, have convinced the Southern whites that while the freedom of the Negro is conducive to their welfare, his domination would be fatal to their prosperity and even to their civilization. The white people of the South, determined that their civilization should not be imperiled by the political domination of the Negro, have succeeded in excluding him from the suffrage and have refused to tolerate him on a plane of political equality with themselves, notwithstanding the provisions of the Constitution adopted at the close of the war. The result has been that his constitutional status is different from his actual status. While the Constitution has assigned him to one place in our political system, public opinion has assigned him to another, and the position which he actually occupies is that fixed by public opinion. The Negro question, then, I think, may be stated as the problem of how to reconcile the actual status of the Negro with his theoretical status.60

At this point in the speech it can be supposed that Cockran would argue for the application of Constitutional justice as he had done in so many speeches. However, no such argument was offered and his reasoning continues to delve into the circumstances of the situation. For example, Cockran reasoned that the black has

60 Ibid.
shown his ability to work but his inability to govern. When the black traveled North he was given political equality but not industrial equality; receiving such treatment he returns South to gain his industrial equality at the expense of his political inequality. Further, Cockran argued that the Constitution could not impose on States a means by which they must act particularly if the actions called for were in opposition to public opinion. One of Cockran's stronger arguments in this area centered on the punishment for crimes. He argued that the black individual would be better off if universally and consistently discriminated against in legal penalty. This was true for Cockran because if the black were given stronger penalties under the law, at least the black would receive consideration in the courts where that stronger penalties for blacks were prohibited by the Constitution; the result was the settlement of matters outside the court, often in the form of lynching. Given all these conditions, Cockran again focused upon the black's capacity for work as an area of mutual agreement.

...While the white people deny the capacity of the Negro to exercise control over government in the South and are determined to exclude him from a system of universal suffrage, there is one point on which blacks and whites are agreed. The black man has a capacity for work and the
white man wants him to work. Here, let me say again that the capacity of the Negro for work completely refutes the theory that the Negro is a barbarian, incapable of civilization, and certain in a state of freedom to develop irresistible tendencies to savagery. The test of capacity for civilization is the capacity for voluntary labor. Whenever a race has met civilization and failed to perish, that fact proves that it is not absolutely and irredeemably barbarous. Civilization met the Indian, and he has perished. It has met the Negro, and he lives, increasing in numbers, in capacity and in possessions. Against that fact all theories are worthless. I do not care for any philosophical formula or any diagram that you could draw upon a blackboard. Against formulas and blackboards I place that gallery with its occupants well dressed, well behaved, intelligent, and capable. 61

To reconcile the actual and theoretical status of the black, Cockran argued for repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment.

...A constitutional provision which cannot be enforced hangs like a dead limb on a tree, endangering the life of the whole body. My suggestion is merely to recognize actual but inevitable conditions, and to substitute for irregular nullification of the Constitution the orderly procedure of amendment and repeal.

...We have, then, certain propositions which may be accepted as fundamental and indisputable.

...First, Certain existing constitutional provisions cannot be enforced.

...Second, No amendment is possible without the concurrence of both races.

...Third, No constitutional provision can be enforced in any State against a unanimous public opinion.

61 Ibid.
...Fourth, The only agency by which either law or Constitution can be put in operation, under our form of government, is the State.

...Fifth, Everybody, black and white, North and South, is in favor of preserving the citizenship of the Negro inviolate forever.

...Sixth, The Negro is fully and freely admitted to equal rights with the whites except in two respects: he is not allowed to participate in universal suffrage; and when accused of a certain crime he is frequently deprived of life without due process of law. To place the actual political status of the Negro in harmony with his theoretical status, the only amendment of the Constitution necessary would be a provision restoring control of the suffrage to the State, and one authorizing the State to prescribe such penalties as it might deem proper for crimes committed against white women by black men....

Reaction to Cockran's racial views were warmly received in the South. The Atlanta Constitution reported on page one that, "Bourke Cockran Gets An Ovation: Makes Great Speech At Negro Problem Convention." The Constitution reporter emphasizes that Cockran was applauded for five minutes before he began to speak and that after advocating repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment at the close of the speech he was given a standing ovation of ten minutes duration.

Northern reports of Cockran's position were less favorable. For example, The New York Times buried

62 Ibid.
63 The Atlanta Constitution, 11 May 1900.
Cockran's advocacy in the sixth paragraph of an article that mentioned the conference by headline but did not mention Cockran.64 Booker T. Washington who was present at the conference wrote to Cockran to tell him he, Washington, would weigh carefully all his arguments because Cockran had for some time been known as a friend of the Negro. It was Cockran's strong support of black education that pleased Washington. Additionally, Washington said that he would not fail to take advantage of Cockran's invitation to visit him the next time Washington was in New York.65 Cockran had apparently analyzed the circumstances of racial conditions correctly. Nevertheless, he delivered an address that did not advance the philosophy he intended to support.

Some six years before Bourke Cockran opposed imperialists and spoke out on the racial question, he added to his oratorical merits in the debate on the Wilson Tariff Bill. William L. Wilson, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, reported out of the Committee on December 19, 1894 the compromise bill that bore his name and pleased neither free trader nor protectionist.


65 Cockran Papers, General Correspondence, letter from Booker T. Washington to William Bourke Cockran, 12 May 1900.
Later known as the Wilson-Gorman Tariff Bill, the measure was debated vigorously through the first two weeks of January. On January 13, 1894 the debate reached one of those typical Congressional climaxes when the chief combatants were chosen by the parties. Bourke Cockran came to his desk and arranged the numerous books and notes in a manner that allowed him easy reference to the material. His one and one-half hour speech began thus:

...A low tariff will not only increase the revenues of the government, it will increase the opportunities of American labor. For every dollar that goes into the Treasury hundreds of dollars are collected by the process of consumption and trade all over the country, so that the amount contributed for the support of the government is but a mite of this system of taxation which this will inaugurate.66

Thrusting himself fully into the circumstances of the situation, Cockran drove home an attack on Nelson Dingley of Maine. He declared that the Republicans had raised two objections to the bill: one claimed that it would injuriously increase business; the other, that it would injuriously decrease business. He then remarked that he had heard both arguments advanced by the same gentleman! Cockran, once free of House debate, was quick to move into oratorical format to expound the economic principles that underlay his arguments.

...The only result which your tariff can accomplish, conceding to it now all the beneficial effects ever claimed for it, is to induce men to embark in industries which they could not maintain without such protection. It encourages men to engage in trades that they can not carry on in equal competition with the rest of the world: and since there are other trades in which they can defy competition the adoption of a protective policy operates to divert capital from the regions where it is most productive to the regions where it is less productive. (Applause on the Democratic side.) Instead of having the aggregate of production which God Almighty invites this nation to create and enjoy we find production artificially restricted by a system of laws which operate to rob us of the blessings of nature and to place us in the same condition as if our climate had grown harsher or our soil less fertile. (Applause.)

...I have stated what I conceive to be the nature and effect of your policy. What, then, is our position? We believe that the true policy is to have the largest production, and therefore the greatest wealth that the natural conditions of this country will permit us to have. In order to have this largest production we must allow people to produce freely that which they can produce cheapest and best. If they want other commodities than those which they produce they will then have abundance of goods to exchange for them in the markets of the world; while the growth of production here will give the widest occupation to the labor of this country.67

Cockran's conclusion allowed him to move from his purist economic principles to those abstracted philosophical principles which had served him so well in the past.

...The conquest which we seek is not a conquest of oppression or of destruction, but a conquest of civilization and progress.

67 Ibid., p. 16.
...In seeking to find the freest markets for our products, we seek the welfare of the whole human race, we seek to establish a commercial system which will make this land the fountain of civilization - this people the trustees of humanity - which will make the flag of freedom in the air above us the emblem of freedom on the earth beneath us - freedom in our mines, freedom on the seas, freedom through all the world, for all the children of men. (Loud and long-continued applause on the floor and in the galleries.)

...The CHAIRMAN. The Chair must remind visitors in the galleries that they must not participate in the demonstrations of applause: such disorder is tolerated only on the floor.68


...Members of the House and people in the galleries cheered him for ten minutes, followed by cries for the 'vote' - several Representatives put themselves in the way of his arguments and lived to regret it - many speakers for tariff reform.

...WASHINGTON, Jan. 13. - When W. Bourke Cockran addressed the House in the extraordinary session in favor of the passage of the Repeal bill, his friends declared that he had surpassed all his previous forensic efforts. To-day, upon the conclusion of his speech in support of the Wilson bill, which had consumed an hour and a half, as he stood near his seat shaking hands with the scores of Democrats and Republicans who crowded each other in their desire to congratulate him, and listened to the cheers and hand clappings of the galleries, it would have been strange indeed if Mr. Cockran had not indulged the thought that he had won fresh laurels.

...Certain it is that the House to a man recognized this fact. There have been some very able speeches delivered thus far in the tariff debate. It remained for Mr. Cockran to rouse the House and its visitors to a pitch of excitement rarely reached within the confines of the chamber.

...It was nearly ten minutes from the time he ceased speaking until a semblance of order could be restored. Three times the people in the galleries broke into cheers, and the services of the Sergeant at Arms and of his assistants were required to curb the enthusiasm which ran riot. It was a remarkable tribute to a remarkable speech.69

The year following his tariff triumph, 1895, was a year marked with personal tragedy for Bourke Cockran. His wife, Rhoda Mack, died suddenly placing Cockran in a state of depression. Leaving law and Congress behind, he traveled to France where he met Jennie Jerome, widow of Lord Randolph Churchill. Cockran quickly developed a close friendship with Jennie which led not only to romance but to the gaining of an important ally in later free trade encounters.70

Bourke Cockran's introduction to Jennie was at a casual dinner in the Jerome home. Relatives had arranged


this meeting because they believed Bourke and Jennie shared many common interests. Jennie had been a widow little more than a year. During that first meeting they discussed world affairs related to China and Japan, the Dreyfus case, and Ireland.\textsuperscript{71} Ralph Martin, biographer of Lady Randolph Churchill, described the similarities he perceived in Bourke and Jennie.

\textquote{...'Leonine' was the best word to describe him [Cockran]. Particularly when he was speaking, he truly looked like a lion ready to spring.... But he moved with grace and energy, and his presence radiated charm and power....Cockran and Jennie were so much of the same cut. They had the same sparkling wit, never barbed for injuring, and they were both generous givers of themselves - their time, their money, and their strength, and most of all their spirit. They both had penetrating intelligence, inner fire, and titanic vigor.\textsuperscript{72}}

The likeness of their "inner fire" provided for both the attraction and the separation of Bourke and Jennie. After barely a year, their affair was ended. Nevertheless, they corresponded for many years and in time of hardship depended on each other for support.\textsuperscript{73}

How Winston S. Churchill, Jennie's son, met Bourke Cockran is a matter for conjecture. Ralph Martin

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{73} Ibid., pp. 155-56.
\end{itemize}
concluded that it was Jennie who bridged the gap:

...It was Jennie who was the most influential factor in the development of her son Winston. Besides the courage, spirit, and drive she instilled in him, besides shaping his mind through their constant discussions and correspondence, besides introducing him to the people who helped determine his future, besides her own maneuvering for him in every area in which she could protect his interest and further his ambition - besides all of those things, at a crucial stage in his life Jennie provided Winston with the only real father figure he ever had [Bourke Cockran], the one man who was vital in helping him develop the greatest of all his gifts.74

In contrast to Martin's view, Anita Leslie, niece of Bourke Cockran and cousin of Sir Winston, claimed that Cockran himself initiated the arrangement with Winston.

...Jennie talked a great deal about Winston to Bourke Cockran who, having no son of his own, wistfully enjoyed helping the young to find their feet. It was not Bourke, however, who advised her to write suggesting "Supply of Army Horses" as a suitable special study! 'No, my dearest Mama - I think something more literary and less material would be the sort of mental medicine I need!' protested Winston.

...When Bourke returned to America, he casually asked Jennie to send her son, should he ever visit New York, to stay in his apartment. If Winston was interested in politics he could give him a few tips. She promised to keep the eventuality in mind, for indeed she did not want Winston to forget his American heritage.75

Regardless of how the arrangement came about, in 1895 Winston and his friend, Reggie Barns, arrived in

74 Ibid., p. 37.

America. Martin, drawing from his conversation with those who knew of this visit and from the fragments of manuscripts in the "Cockran Papers" has been able to reconstruct, in part, the events that transpired during Churchill's visit.

...Bourke was at the dock to meet Winston on his arrival in New York, and took him to his home. He had a spacious apartment at 763 Fifth Avenue, 'beautifully furnished and fitted with every convenience.' The chairs were soft and deep, the library was large, and Bourke served the best brandy, the finest food, the longest cigars. It was one thing for Winston to weekend at the country homes of his mother's British friends; it was quite another to live in the apartment of a brilliant aggressive American, a man's man. 'Mr. Cockran is one of the most charming hosts and interesting men I have met,' Winston immediately wrote his mother....

...They talked until very late almost every night. Bourke not only unwrapped the breadth of his experience and depth of his mind, but he taught Winston how to use language. 'What people really want to hear is the truth - it is the exciting thing - speak the simple truth.'

...Avoid cant, he said, avoid mannerisms, invective, egotism. The two men analyzed their mutual admiration for the great English orator of a previous century, Edmund Burke. 'Burke mastered the English language as a man masters the horse,' Cockran said. 'He was simple, direct, eloquent, yet there is a splendor in his phrases that even in cold type reveals how forcibly he must have enthralled his visitors....How I should have loved to have heard him.'

...Winston wanted to hear Cockran speak, and he persuaded him to read some of his speeches. What was so memorable to Winston was Cockran's
titanic vigor, his poetic vision, the fire without frenzy. There were phrases of Cockran's that Winston never forgot....76

Following this visit, Churchill and Cockran corresponded frequently. In a November 20, 1895 letter, Churchill thanked Cockran for his hospitality and indicated he had "learned much."77 In February of 1896 Churchill sent Cockran a copy of his _Saturday Review_ article pertaining to Cuba, and in an April 12, 1896 letter, he noted his disagreement on the Irish question as well as offering his assessment of Cockran's oratory.78

...I read with great interest both your letter and speech....It [the speech] is one of the finest I have ever read. You are indeed an orator. And of all the gifts there is none so rare or so precious as that. Of course — my dear Cockran — you will understand that we approach the subject from different points of view and that your views on Ireland could never coincide with mine.79

76 Martin, pp. 71-72.

77 Cockran Papers, Churchill Correspondence, letter from Winston S. Churchill to William Bourke Cockran, 20 November 1895.

78 Cockran Papers, ltrs Churchill to Cockran 24 February 1896 and 12 April 1896.

79 Cockran Papers ltr Churchill to Cockran, 12 April 1896.
On April 27, 1896, Cockran wrote to Churchill to tell him they disagreed more in words than substance regarding the Irish question. Cockran suggested Churchill study more sociology and political economy.

...And now let me congratulate you on the good temper, the acuteness and excellent judgement which pervaded your whole letter. I do not think you and I are very far apart in our conviction. We differ more in phrases than in principle....But whatever may be the ultimate outcome of the Irish agitation I hope you will allow me to assume the privilege of my years and advise you strongly to take up the study of sociology and political economy. These two subjects are more closely interwoven than most people ever believe. They are considered dry and uninteresting by those who are not familiar with them, but they are the two branches of inquiry which in the future will bear the most important fruits to the human family. With your remarkable talent for lucid and attractive expression you would be able to make great use of the information to be acquired by study of these branches. Indeed I firmly believe you would take a commanding position in public life at the first opportunity which arose, and I have always felt that true genius either makes or finds its opportunity.80

Not long after Cockran's suggestions for study, Jennie began sending reading material to Winston. Among the works she sent were Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, twelve volumes of *Macauley*, *Plato's Republic*, *Aristotle's Politics*, *Darwin's On the Origin*...

80 Cockran Papers, ltr Cockran to Churchill, 27 April 1896.
of Species, Malthus On Population, Pascal's Provincial Letters, Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, and the entire twenty-seven volumes of the Annual Register. Although no specific link can be established between Jennie's action in forwarding the reading material and Cockran's suggestion, her action appears to be more than coincidence.  

In all, there are fifteen letters exchanged between Cockran and Churchill, preserved in the Cockran Papers. Almost without fail, each letter contains references to exchanges of speeches between the two and frequent passages are related to oratory. Typical of this correspondence is a brief note Churchill sent Cockran, June 10, 1897:

...Will you come and dine with me tonight at Willis' Room at 8.15. I beg you will not refuse unless compelled to - or I shall think you have not forgotten how badly I behaved last time you were to have dined with me. I am looking forward to seeing you and hearing some account of your rhetorical successes, so much that it makes me feel quite tired to wait.  

Also typical of the correspondence is Churchill's letter to Cockran dated October 7, 1900. In this letter Churchill projects the image of a proud student reporting

81 Martin, pp. 91-92.

82 Cockran Papers, ltr Churchill to Cockran, 10 June 1897.
to his teacher or a proud son relating to his father:

...I daresay you will have learned from the newspapers that I have been returned to Parliament as representative of almost the greatest constituency in England, containing 30,000 thriving working men electors; and this victory happening to come at the outset of the general contest, was of great use and value to the Conservative party, as it gave them a lead and started the movement. Moreover since the win involved turning over 1,500 votes previously hostile - and recorded against me only a year before - it was something in the nature of an achievement. At any rate, I have suddenly become one of the two or three most popular speakers in this election, and am now engaged on a fighting tour, of the kind you know - great audiences (five and six thousand people) twice and even three times a day, bands, crowds, and enthusiasm of all kinds.83

In 1900 Winston Churchill returned to the United States to conduct a lecture tour on the Boer War. He encountered strong opposition because of America's sympathies with the underdog. Nevertheless, Cockran worked diligently to make the tour successful. Winston wrote to his mother that he had stayed with Bourke Cockran and that Cockran had given a large dinner party at the Waldorf to aid his tour.84

During the period in which Cockran corresponded with Churchill, Cockran changed his political views. One of

83 Cockran Papers, ltr Churchill to Cockran 7 October 1900.

the first announcements of his new political orientation came from Montgomery, Alabama on the same day he spoke on racial conditions. The New York Times allowed Cockran's political comments more coverage than his Montgomery address.

...It has been said that I shall support Bryan if he is the Democratic nominee for President...

...That depends, I say frankly, upon the Kansas City platform and the spirit in which it is submitted to the American people. If that platform is only a reiteration of the platform of 1896, I shall not support it or the nominee.

...I am unalterably opposed to the McKinley policy toward our new possessions. I oppose militarism. I oppose imperialism. I oppose trusts. If the platform takes a decided stand in opposing these things, and the spirit is in favor of making these questions predominant, I shall support it and do all I can in my State for the ticket. Otherwise I shall not. I consider these questions the issues of the campaign.85

No clearer explanation of why Bourke Cockran was now opposed to trusts can be found than in his speech, "The Conditions of National Prosperity," delivered before the Liberal Club, London, July 15, 1903. The greater portion of the speech is devoted to free trade. His willing student, Winston Churchill, was unable to attend the address due to political commitments. Even as Cockran spoke, Churchill was prepared to embrace the principle of free trade and change his party allegiance.85

Cockran began his speech by declaring the topic of discussion was one of hope for advancement and peace among nations. Additionally he defined for his audience the term "prosperity." That definition was the same used earlier at the Chicago Conference on Trusts:

...It is an auspicious sign of the opening century that the minds and discussions of men are turning not on extensions of conquest, but on extensions of commerce; not on methods of injuring other countries, but on plans for improving social conditions in their own. In considering the conditions under which a nation is most likely to become prosperous, it will tend to avoid confusion of thought if we begin by defining just what we mean by prosperity.

...Prosperity I should define as an abundance of commodities fairly distributed among those who produce them. I do not think an increase in a country's prosperity necessarily means higher prices for speculative securities or additional millionaires enriched by stock operations, but it must always mean more houses and healthier people occupying them; more clothes and shoes with stronger limbs wearing them; more schools with wider instruction imparted in them; more hospitals with better attendance to the sick provided in them; larger parks with greater numbers of cyclists and pedestrians enjoying them - more food, more books, more wages (earned in shorter hours), more leisure to enjoy all that increased earnings can buy....

Yes, Bourke Cockran gave the same definition of prosperity he used earlier but he added to his original thoughts by becoming more specific. Cockran was well aware of the demand for social services by the great

86 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 15 July 1903.
masses of people. His arguments, although dealing with circumstance, were founded in economic principles. Cock­ran set about in this manner to equate protection and the silver movement.

... Protection is essentially the same, in its object, and in the forces which sustain it, as the silver movement. The real force of the silver movement was a desire to confiscate one-half the debts due to creditors. Protection can have no other object than the plunder of the vast body of consumers for the benefit of a few producers; but its real purpose is disguised from its advocates as well as from its victims under a number of phrases quite as extravagant as those which sustained the silver movement, and very likely to produce the same effect on the minds of well meaning but over-enthusiastic men. Anyone who reflects for a moment on the conditions of human society must see that Government has no capacity for benevolence whatever. Any scheme of benevolence by Government, whether it be called protection to domestic labor, subsidies to home industries, fair trade, or retaliation against a foreign enemy for alleged maltreatment of domestic producers, always masks a scheme of plunder....

...Since Government of itself can create nothing, it can have nothing of its own to bestow on anybody. It can not, then, be both just and generous at the same time, for if it be generous to some it must be oppressive to others. If it undertake to enrich one man, the thing which it gives him it must take from some other man. If it have a favorite, it must have a victim; and that Government only is good, that Government only is great, that Government only is just, which has neither favorites nor victims.87

Cockran, having now equated justice and free trade, began a more fully developed consideration of the

87 Ibid.
relationship between free trade and trusts.

...The essential difference between Free Trade and an industrial system based on Protection is, that under a system of Free Trade the excellence of the product is the only means by which it can secure a market; while under Protection an inferior article can dominate the market through the aid of legislation. The necessary effect of Free Trade is, therefore, to encourage efficiency in production, while the necessary effect of Protection is to encourage skill in corruption. 88

Treating trusts in a more situational fashion, Cockran went on to assure the English that American trusts would serve America's disadvantage under a free trade system.

...The organization of the Trusts, then, far from being a danger to English industry, is a heavy handicap to American competition. The fact that Trusts are of recent creation only shows that until recently the full capacity of a tariff system for plunder had not been developed. While manufacturing was widely distributed, the competition of producers largely prevented them from abusing the tariff laws to the spoliation of the people. But whenever all the producers in one field became combined into a single concern, the extinction of competition left their promoters free to exact from the public the full tribute permitted by the tariff. As they were capitalized, not on the basis of property, but of revenue, it soon became clear that their chief source of revenue was not their efficiency in serving the people by cheapening commodities, but their power to exact from the people enormous prices for their products. This was actually capitalizing the power of plunder.... 89

88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
In the conclusion of his oration, Cockran again returned to his equation of free trade and justice.

...The process of persuasion may be difficult and tedious, but it would be worth a generation of effort; for it would result in an Empire which promoted human brotherhood by giving each man within its limits free access to all the fruits of the earth; an Empire which placed the whole World under tribute, but instead of impoverishing, enriched all its tributaries; an Empire aiming not at the plunder of any country, but serving all, through the beneficent operations of commerce; an Empire built on freedom - freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom of trade; an Empire whose beneficence would be universal, whose duration all Christendom would wish to be perpetual, for its foundation would be immovable justice, and its fruit boundless prosperity.90

The London Times reported that at the house dinner of the Liberal Club, Bourke Cockran was greeted with cheers. Selected portions of Cockran's oration were quoted with frequent notations of "laughter," "cheers," and "hear, hear," interjected in the text.91

Almost four months later, November 11, 1903, it appeared as though Winston Churchill had borrowed from his tutor. The title of his address given in the Town Hall, Birmingham was "Free Speech and Free Trade." Additionally, Churchill's main contention was stated thus: "... The Free Trade plan is quite simple. It is that every Englishman has a right to purchase what he lacks whenever

90 Ibid.
91 The London Times, 16 July 1903.
and wherever he chooses, without let or hindrance or discouragement by the State." If such borrowing had occurred, it was not taken directly from Cockran's Liberal Club speech as is evidenced by Winston's letter to Cockran of December 12, 1903.

...I was glad to get your letter and also to read in the 'Democratic Campaign Guide of Massachusetts' your excellent Free Trade speech....I have never received a copy of your speech at the Liberal Club. I wish I had been able to get hold of it. It would be very useful....I wish you would send me some good free trade speeches that have been made in America, and some facts about corruption, lobbying and so forth.

"The Financial Campaign" was the title Churchill gave his December 21, 1903 speech made at the Free Trade Meeting in Halifax. Near the mid point of his oration, Churchill, for the first time, began to pose some of the same sort of questions Cockran had asked in his free trade address. Additionally, Churchill began to incorporate American examples.

...Does Protection assure the workmen of Germany better food, better wages, better houses, healthier conditions, shorter hours, more constant employment, than the people get under Free Trade? The returns of the Board of Trade prove conclusively that it does not. Does Protection assure


93 Cockran Papers, ltr Churchill to Cockran, 12 December 1903.
the Americans against panics, dislocations of industry, bankruptcies, short times, reductions of wages? I see that the Democratic Party in America claims that panics are the outcome of the tariff and of the mad speculation that accompanies it. - (Hear, Hear.) I see that the great steel trust is tottering on the verge of bankruptcy. I see that the trust securities in the United States have declined in two years by hundreds of millions of pounds. I see that wages have risen there more slowly than England and are now being much reduced. I see that production is being curtailed; that men are being dismissed; that furnaces are being blown out; that mills are being closed even more during the present trade depression in young, rich, scientific America than they are over here in poor, benighted, ruined little England....

Again on February 10, 1904 in the House of Commons Churchill spoke with authority regarding the American experience with trusts. Speaking of dumping, he said:

...Free-traders and protectionists alike would condemn that form of commercial piracy. But it was not only practised by foreigners against Englishmen, it was practised by German against German, Frenchman against Frenchman, and, above all, by American against American....He asked hon. Members not to imagine that a free-trade Government would not be able to deal with great trusts. Why! that was the only Government that could deal with them. President Roosevelt, the powerful head of the American Executive, had been particularly powerless in dealing with the great combinations which supported the Republican Party....

June 19, 1904 Churchill again corresponded with Cockran. In the text of the letter Churchill noted that

94 James, *Churchill's Complete Speeches*, 1, pp. 235-38.

95 Ibid., pp. 246-53.
he and Cockran were engaged in a worldwide cause in which Cockran's thinking had strongly influenced his course of action. Additionally, Churchill told Cockran that he intended to make use of the speeches Cockran had sent him regarding the free-trade issue.

...You are in some measure responsible for the mould in which my political thought has been largely cast, and for the course which I have adopted on these great questions of Free Trade. It is pleasant to me to think that in different spheres we are fighting on a common cause, and there can be no doubt that a democratic victory in America resulting in the reductions of the tariffs through the deliberate convictions of the American people, would utterly smash once and for all the Protectionist movement here....

...And I have also to thank you for the two copies of the Congressional Record together with a pamphlet you have been good enough to forward me. I have read the speeches with great interest and I shall make free use of the arguments contained in them - many of them will be most useful to me - ....

October 10, 1904 marked Churchill's next free-trade speech. In effect, the speech was intended to gain support for Mr. Lloyd-George. Barely three paragraphs into the speech, Churchill alludes to America, among other nations, as suffering from corruption as a result of protection and trusts, a condition also emphasized by Cockran.

96 Cockran Papers, ltr Churchill to Cockran 19 June 1904.
...Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain are pursuing the same course, and the victory of either or both will mean the establishment of a complicated tariff and the erection of that self-same system of protection which hampers the industry and corrupts the Governments of America, Germany, and France....

In later public speeches and in his writings, Churchill made specific reference to Cockran's influence on him. One such reference was made in a public address at the University of Rochester, New York, in April of 1954.

...I remember when I first came over here, in 1895 I was a guest of your great lawyer and orator, Mr. Bourke Cockran. I was only a young cavalry subaltern, but he poured out all his wealth of mind and eloquence to me. Some of his sentences are deeply rooted in my mind. 'The earth,' he said, 'is a generous mother. She will provide in plentiful abundance food for all her children, if they will but cultivate her soil in justice and peace.' I used to repeat that so frequently on British platforms that my wife very strongly advised me to give it a holiday, which I have done for a good many years. But now, today, it seems to come back with new pregnancy and force, for never was the choice between blessing and cursing more vehemently presented to the human race.

...There was another thing Bourke Cockran used to say to me. I cannot remember his actual words, but they amounted to this: 'In a society where there is democratic tolerance and freedom under the law, many kinds of evils will crop up, but give them a little time and they usually breed their own cure.'

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97 James, Churchill's Complete Speeches, 1, pp. 368-69.
98 Ibid., VIII, pp. 8560.
Some years earlier on March 5, 1946 in his famous "Iron Curtain Address," Churchill had made virtually the same reference.

...I have often used the words which I learned fifty years ago from a great Irish-American orator, a friend of mine, Mr. Bourke Cockran. 'There is enough for all. The earth is a generous mother; she will provide in plentiful abundance food for all her children if they but cultivate her soil in justice and peace.'

Writing in Amid These Storms, Churchill attributed the formation of his ideas to two men, his father and Bourke Cockran. In a letter dated July 20, 1965 addressed to Randolph Churchill, Winston's son, Anita Leslie reported that in a conversation with Adlai Stevenson she learned that Winston identified Bourke Cockran as his oratorical model.

...It is just a week since I was sitting in the pavilion at Syon with Adlai Stevenson.... Learning I was Winston Churchill's cousin he suddenly started to reminisce about his last meeting with him in the early 1950's. He said: 'I asked him something I'd always wanted to know - I asked on whom or what he had based his oratorical style. WSC replied 'It was an American statesman who inspired me when I was 19 and taught me how to use every note of the human voice like an organ.' 'You'd never have heard of him' said AS. 'He wasn't a great statesman, just an Irish politician with the gift of the gab, but Winston called him a statesman - his name was Bourke Cockran.'

99 Ibid., VII, pp. 7288.

couldn't help interrupting with 'He married my mother's sister Anne and darling Uncle Bourke left us every penny we have!' AS looked amazed and said, 'Well he never said there was a family connection, how strange....101

Four years after the bulk of his correspondence with Winston Churchill was past, in 1908, Bourke Cockran was invited to address the Ohio State Bar Association at Put-in-Bay, Ohio. Little is known of the actual events surrounding his address but the oration represents one of the fullest developments of Cockran's thoughts on law, government, and social conditions in the United States. The development is, in part, a result of the oration's length, thirty-five pages when reprinted in law journal form. In the introduction of this July 8, 1908 address Cockran remarked about the title of his oration, "The Law's Delay", and moved directly to the main philosophical reality of government.

...The title I have chosen has long been a commonplace of literature and public speech but the task which I have undertaken presents an aspect of it which in my judgment is entirely new - a recent result of conditions without precedent in the experience of mankind.

The law's delays have been subjects of complaint in every country at all times ever since civilized men have attempted the settlement of disputes peaceably according to fixed

rules which could be applied and enforced only by men of sufficient learning to understand them, as distinguished from the period when disputes were settled more readily but more roughly by rude warriors entirely unlettered—untrained in any profession except that of arms. I do not mention these delays merely to deplore them—they have already been deplored in every age, in every tongue and in every clime—but to point out certain reasons for believing that owing to the dominant position occupied by the courts they constitute a peril to our system so serious that they must be ended if this Republic is to survive.

...The main object of government and civilization is the administration of justice. There has never been a state of society without some judicial system however crude or inadequate it might be. 102

Launching into the history of his subject, Cockran traced for his audience the history of French jurisprudence and English Common Law. In the middle of his historical discussion he interjected his remark that the law's delays were common to every civilized community but in the United States they were assuming,..."a peculiarly sinister aspect owing to the dominant position occupied by the courts under our form of government."

Having completed the historical portions of his speech that set out the philosophy of the courts to enforce justice, Cockran moved to the circumstances of the situation.

102 Cockran Papers, MS. Speech, 8 July 1908.
...Even so late as twelve years ago criticism, in a party platform of a judicial decision reversing by a majority of one the position taken unanimously by the same court on an identical question some years previously provoked such a storm of protest that it was held by many to have explained the catastrophe which subsequently overtook the party adopting it.

...Now, all that is changed. The courts recently have been criticised freely, in some instances condemned openly. These criticisms are no longer confined to the reckless, the obscure, the degraded, or the rejected of the people. They have been voiced by many men in high position including among their number an official no less exalted than the President of the United States. And far from suffering a loss of popularity in consequence, we have actually seen him within a few days exercising extensive—some say decisive— influence over the convention called to nominate his successor, which at his suggestion (as is generally believed) embodied in its platform a declaration amounting in effect to criticism of judicial deficiency. And all this amid demonstrations of approval, popularity, and attachment which no other incumbent of his great office ever enjoyed at the opening, much less at the close of his term.

...Moreover it is undeniable that the object of mentioning the courts was to satisfy a large body of voters whose attitude toward the judiciary for many years has been one of outspoken complaint and undisguised distrust.

...Now it is easy to decry these criticisms and denounce them as mere evidences of a tendency to anarchy and disorder. Nonetheless they are so widespread that both parties embodying at least three-quarters of the population feel impelled to re-echo them, and this remains a fact portentous and conspicuous, a fact that can not be denied, that no sane man will undertake to ignore, which lawyers and judges are especially bound to measure and meet.\footnote{103 Ibid.}
Further expanding on the philosophical reality of an independent judiciary, Cockran called the audience's attention to the fact that he believed the court criticism to be so widespread that should corrective measures not be undertaken, the American system of government would be lost -- a position much removed from his earlier oration that foretold of the American system's eternal life.

...The judiciary is then the sanctuary in which the ark of our political covenant is deposited - the instrument by which the powers of government are not merely interpreted and defined, but the one through which they are enforced - made effective for the protection of all citizens, never allowed to be misused for the oppression of anyone among them. ...We must entrust the final protection of our government to an independent judiciary or we must abandon that form of government. There is no other alternative. Either the judiciary must be maintained in the position established for it through the evolution of our system, or else we must abolish the system itself. In the last analysis, the alternative before us then is preservation of the courts with the powers they have, or collapse of this Republican government as it has been evolved through operation of our Constitution. 104

Cockran sought to state the thesis of his speech when he contended that the judicial delays had caused criticism and that if the delays were removed the legitimate ground for criticism would disappear.

In his 1899 address on trusts, Cockran had argued

104 Ibid.
that publicity was the solution to the trust problem. Likewise, he argued in that speech that unions resulted in conditions worse than war. Now, some nine years later, the courts were supposed to be the neutral regulators in this regard and Cockran analyzed the situation as less than neutral, a condition that offended his principles.

...Everone knows that it has proved impossible for striking laborers to support their demands by the slightest threat of violence open or veiled, without coming in conflict with an injunction order, and wherever violation of its terms could be proved, punishment swift and severe had inevitably followed.

...It is equally notorious that although stupendous crimes have been perpetrated by officers of industrial corporations against property entrusted to them, not one has been prevented, impeded or embarrassed by writ of injunction. Not a single criminal of that class has been prosecuted, much less sent to prison. Hardly one has even been driven from the trust he has betrayed. The concerns shown to have been looted are still administered by the very same persons who have despoiled them....

After a lengthy discussion of the proper application of temporary restraining orders, Cockran turned to the subject of just compensation for industrial injuries.

...Not merely are our cities growing more rapidly, but agencies for transporting men and materials are more extensively employed in them than anywhere else in the world. In these great hives of industry accidents are every day growing more frequent - some of them

105 Ibid.
undoubtedly manifestations of Providence; most of them results of greed or carelessness. The wretched victims of negligence are promised by the law such compensation as money can give, but owing to the law's delays, this remains a mere promise that encourages hope rather than a reparation that brings relief. Wherever a street car or other means of transportation operates through an industrial community, wherever a population reaches sufficient numbers to make public franchises valuable and their operation extended, there we find steadily growing numbers of families of persons who have been killed; men, women and children wounded, maimed, rendered helpless by the neglect of men operating some public utility; their right to recovery of damages practically defeated. And now is justice withheld from them? By the very courts organized to do them justice.

...Were I myself consulted by the victim of an accident due to gross negligence, though I felt perfectly confident that a verdict of $5000 would be rendered by any jury to which the cause would be submitted, yet face to face with the delay of three or four years which can be imposed by the tort feasor, and measuring all the chances of error in the various steps through which such litigation must pass, I would advise that unfortunate creature to accept $2,500 or even $1,000, if such a sum were offered in settlement....

Bourke Cockran had become aware of the rapidly growing metropolitan areas and their problems. The handling of those problems did not accord with his beliefs. This was particularly true regarding Cockran's contention of earlier years that wealth and freedom had found consistency in America.

106 Ibid.
...Passing from the weakest and most helpless elements of the community and the manner in which they are often deprived of justice, let us see how the law's delays are employed by rich and powerful men to defy, obstruct and defeat the government itself.

...Some years ago a man, at the head of a great railway company, was examined by the Interstate Commerce Commission - a body empowered to investigate the operation of such corporations. Some of the questions touched the manner in which he had administered his great trust—whether he had administered it according to the rules of common honesty for the benefit of the stockholders and the public or to despoil it for his own benefit? He refused to answer. The commission applied to the court for an order compelling him to answer. The court granted the application but the question remains unanswered.

...These judicial proceedings have been pending some two years. The judgment of the lower court may ultimately be sustained by the highest court, but it will not be until the century has grown so much older, that the answer will fall upon the ears of a generation which has forgotten the whole transaction.107

To bolster his contentions, Cockran offered his audience two further examples of delay and injustice, one was related to the gas companies and the other to the traction companies.

...Three years ago in the City of New York the gas companies were charging for their product one dollar per thousand feet. The State Legislature passed a law compelling them to reduce the price to eighty cents a thousand and prescribing certain penalties against failure to comply with its directions. Instead of obeying the law the companies applied to the United

107 Ibid.
States court for a permanent writ of injunction restraining the state officers from enforcing these penalties and for a temporary or interlocutory injunction pendente lite. These recalcitrant consumers were threatened with discontinuance of their gas service, whereupon they applied to the state courts for injunctions restraining the companies from removing their meters or refusing to supply them with gas at the rate fixed by statute, and these applications were granted. These litigations are still pending.

...Let us return to the tragedy of the traction situation in New York City. When the complete rottenness of the company operating that franchise was made clear, what course do you suppose was pursued by the men who had looted it? Did they betray any fear of the judges? Did they avoid and shun the courts as dreadful precincts inside which the sword of justice must smite them? Oh, no! On the contrary they sought the courts, evidently regarding them as asylums where they would not only be secure from any criminal pursuit but where they would be afforded facilities to retain control over the companies they had robbed and looted.108

Given the horrible conditions cited by Cockran, what proposal would he advance as a solution? Cockran's proposal does not take the form of more appropriate regulation of trusts or bold moves that would bring about the alteration of the workers' feelings of insecurity, rather, Cockran returned to his principle of justice and his unaltered, but shaken, faith in the principles of the American system. Apparently Cockran believed decisions would be changed and justice would be done if matters

108 Ibid.
could be settled within three months.

...For this abuse there is it seems to me, a remedy, ample and complete - a remedy so simple that its very simplicity probably explains why it has not been long since applied. At the last session of Congress I introduced a bill providing that the chief justice and the senior associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States - one a democrat, the other a republican - and two circuit court judges - Gray, of Delaware, and Morrow, of California - each of different political affiliations, together with five other members, to be appointed by the President of the United States, be constituted a commission to consider and report whether it be possible by modification in the law, reorganization of the courts or otherwise to establish a system of procedure under which every action, proceeding or controversy begun in a court of the United States could be terminated within three months from the service of initial process. It must be clear that decision of a cause, however strictly in accordance with law and right, if it be rendered only after a period of three or four years is not justice but a denial of justice.

...Unless our political system can be made to effect settlement of controversies in some such limit of time as that fixed in this measure submitted by me to Congress it can not be said to maintain justice, and a system which fails to maintain justice, full and complete, is doomed to destruction.\(^{109}\)

Bourke Cockran would not live to see his proposal taken as the basis for judicial reform. That action would come about after 1923. Toward the end of his career, Bourke Cockran tended to migrate toward the more liberal or "progressive" reforms. By 1912 he was a

\(^{109}\) Ibid.
supporter of Theodore Roosevelt and his Bull Moose Party. Cockran had moved from the trust defender to supporter of the trust buster. Cockran's occasional piece of oratory, "Abraham Lincoln," was reworked and became "Abraham Lincoln the True Progressive." Additionally, Cockran adopted a rhetorical stance based on principle that led him to advocate issues about which his audiences had little understanding or interest. He advocated the reporting of all political campaign contributions in excess of fifty dollars, the control of pollution in navigable waters, and the return of federal revenues to the States to meet their unique requirements. Those familiar with the legislation of the 1960's and 1970's will recognize these issues finally assuming a political reality.

Bourke Cockran's rhetorical stance was a mixture of argument from definition and argument from circumstance. Moreover, it was the argument from definition that was most important to Cockran. His entry into the national political arena was predicated upon the basis of Tammany's circumstantial opposition to Cleveland but Cockran's appeals were based on principle. His occasional orations clearly set out his established priorities of Christianity, Constitution, and Justice. The principles which Cockran defended, for the most part,
were more than the guarantees of the Constitution. He
found his principles inherent in a more profound moral
law. These principles he believed would endure until
the end of time. Cockran's orations and debates center-
ing on silver, trusts, and tariffs were founded in purist
economic principle. Only his racial views were circum-
stantial in origin. It is likely that Cockran could
not rationalize or find consistency among his philosophi-
cal realities to allow him to approach the racial question
in any other respect. This may account for that parti-
cular oration not serving the purpose he hoped to
achieve.

Bourke Cockran's adherence to principle gave to his
oratory an inconsistency to the extent that he supported
numerous political parties and factions. Nevertheless,
he was consistent in his views of the moral and the just.
These beliefs took precedence over party affiliation.
This heavy reliance on argument from definition suggests
that the real key to understanding Bourke Cockran can
be found in his Christian and legal training. From the
laws of God and the laws of the land, Bourke Cockran
interpreted and applied the laws as though he were judge
and jury. Clinging to this sort of stance allowed him
a narrow-to-moderate latitude in adapting ideas to people.
Cockran required of himself the adapting of people to
ideas.
Cockran developed a close and personal relationship with Winston S. Churchill. He undoubtedly influenced Churchill in his oratory and Churchill's change of party allegiance suggests that Cockran's adherence to principle may have likewise had its effect. Nevertheless, the question of Bourke Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness remains to be answered. Was Bourke Cockran rhetorically effective in the context of his time?
RHETORICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Was Bourke Cockran an effective speaker? This question has been answered both affirmatively and negatively by other investigators. For example, two years after Cockran's death Robert McElroy edited and published certain of Cockran's orations. In his work entitled In The Name of Liberty, McElroy asserts his belief that good orations result from a combination of both nature and nurture. McElroy believed that nurture held the upper hand; good orations, he claimed, were usually the result of laborious preparation. Bourke Cockran, McElroy tells us, was one of America's most gifted orators: he would be remembered as long as one of his auditors lived because they would never forget his "matchless voice and his marvelous diction." Beyond this, Cockran deserved to be remembered, McElroy declared, because of the permanent value of what he said.¹

Sixteen years later, Reverend Mother Mary Margaret Crowley chose Cockran as the subject of her doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin. Crowley's rhetorical study appears to have been the first comprehensive appraisal of Cockran's oratory.

Conceiving of the orator as "a public man whose function it is to exert his influence by speech," Crowley attempted to determine Cockran's public impact. Her analysis of Cockran's influence was prefaced with the allegation of a "fickle public." Crowley argued that few public servants, even Abraham Lincoln, were enshrined in the hearts of Americans. Her notation that most public men suffer eclipse either "periodically or permanently" suggested that eighteen years after his death, Bourke Cockran was one of America's forgotten public servants. Crowley claimed that men with "smaller minds and less persuasive tongues" surpassed Cockran in political fame but that this was the price Cockran paid for his independence (or as his opponents termed it, inconsistency). Crowley found Cockran most influential in the defense of the gold standard and in his more private persuasive efforts regarding Ireland, and Roman Catholicism. Further, Crowley stressed Cockran's claims to oratorical innovation.

...We have Mr. Cockran's word in his speeches that he attributed to himself the credit for the public oratorical initiation of certain

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2 Mary Margaret Crowley, "Bourke Cockran: Orator" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Speech, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1941), pp. 322-29.
movements in America. He claimed to be the first public man to have spoken in the following causes: Cuban independence, anti-imperialism, control of trusts through publicity, reforms of elections through publicity of campaign funds, improvement of the judiciary through the elimination of the law's delays, peace through universal disarmament.3

Crowley's final assessment of Cockran was based on what she termed his "fourfold power:"

...his power to move men had a moral, aesthetic, intellectual, and psychological basis: an inner conviction and sincerity; a voice and personal attraction that were immediately compelling; a penetrating intellect and unusually retentive memory; an extraordinary vocabulary and an understanding of human nature that enabled him to match his ideas with those of his audience, and in the process, to be continually diverting or recapturing their attention by variety of expression, beauty of sound, and clarity of thought.

Finally considering the diversified types of speech which he used effectively and diversity of the audience that he palpably moved; the importance of the movements with which he was associated, the unanimous contemporary opinion of his listeners as to his superb oratorial power; the high seriousness of his aims as seen in the moral and intellectual level of his aspirations for his American audiences, and the eloquent example of his own virtuous life, I think that Bourke Cockran deserves a place among the great orators of America.4

3 Ibid., p. 330.
4 Ibid., pp. 331-332.
Seven years after Crowley offered her enthusiastic appraisal of Cockran's oratory, two biographers added their assessments. Ambrose Kennedy, at one time a Congressional peer of Cockran's, revered him as one of America's greatest orators. James McGurrin, the official biographer chosen by Cockran's wife, had an equally favorable opinion:

...It was his extraordinary gift of oratory that first lifted Bourke Cockran to fame and enabled him to play a part in the public life of America which, at times, recalled the role of Edmund Burke in the politics of England during the latter part of the eighteenth century. His admirers liked to compare him not only to Burke the orator, but also to Burke the scholar, the logician and philosopher, the herald and prophet of lost causes....

It was a new and rare type of oratory that Bourke Cockran brought to the American forum and it appealed immediately to the popular taste. It combined the Doric simplicity of Wendell Phillips with the profound erudition of Charles Sumner and united the qualities of a deeply analytical and philosophical mind with a complete mastery of the purest diction.

His language, never abstruse or pedantic, was adequate to every necessity of argument, every excursion of fancy, every sentiment of poetry. His skill in construction, in antithesis, in balancing periods, in leading up to the lofty climax which crowned the whole, was that of a finished literary craftsman. No one can read his speeches today without being struck by the stately grandeur and

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lavish richness of his style. Indeed, his best speeches contain passages which are not unworthy to rank with the noblest utterances of Burke and Grattan.⁶

In contrast to these glowing testimonials, Robert T. Oliver chose to label Cockran a "hurrah orator." Oliver's terminology was borrowed from Henry L. Stoddard's contention that "there should be established a category of eloquence known as 'hurrah oratory,' to designate the splendidly impressive speakers, who arouse great admiration and enthusiasm but somehow never receive the kind of confidence that gives them genuine leadership."⁷

Oliver discusses several of Cockran's orations and the movements with which he was associated. His only firm conclusion is that Cockran was difficult to classify as either a liberal or a conservative.⁸

Bourke Cockran's political career was the subject of Florence T. Bloom's 1970 doctoral dissertation. Although


Bloom's expertise lay in the field of political history, her conclusion that Cockran was never a "prime mover" at once takes on rhetorical overtones.

...Despite an involved and active life Cockran never filled the role of a prime mover. An advisor, formulator of resolutions, platforms, legislation, he was the man behind the scenes of major political decisions. As an expert on constitutional law, economic theory and corporate law, he was often called upon for advice, but did not determine the resulting policy decisions. While his most important intellectual activities belong in this realm his popularity stemmed from his role as a publicist. As perhaps the most outstanding orator of his day he was most often the keynote speaker at major events, such as political rallies, conventions, and peace crusades. His party frequently called upon Cockran to persuade an unconvincing audience, or to act as a public educator defining and explaining political policy, ideology, and motives. In a time when communication depended primarily upon books, the press or word of mouth, the oratory of Cockran filled an indispensable political role. Perhaps this is where his greatest weakness as well as his greatest strength lay. He loved the platform, the sound of his own voice and debate for its own sake. While he always assailed power as a corrupter he savored the thrill of persuading and controlling the emotions of a large crowd and the resulting adulation....

Cockran's auditors also commented on his rhetorical abilities. Although their reaction was mixed, for the most part their comments were favorable. For example,

Cockran's speeches on trusts, the gold standard, and

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imperialism, even his speech on racial conditions in the South, all brought praise from the press. Among the more sophisticated journalists to assess Cockran's rhetorical abilities was T. P. O'Conner, himself long considered an eloquent member of the British House of Commons.

I have long held that Bourke Cockran was the most eloquent orator of his time among the English-speaking peoples, if not of all nations - more eloquent than Gladstone or Bright, more eloquent than Gambetta.  

President Taft also commented on Cockran's skill as an orator. After listening to Cockran speak at the Peace League Dinner on December 18, 1910, Taft remarked to his military aide, Archie Butt, that since Butt had heard Cockran he now knew the difference between declamation and oratory. President Taft declared that Bourke Cockran was the greatest living orator to use the English language.

Bourke Cockran's oratory was the topic of discussion at a weekly meeting of The Town and Gown Club at Madison, Wisconsin, March 4, 1899. President Charles Kendall Adams of the University of Wisconsin, a leading historian of the day, held the floor. The Club reporter described the scene as follows:

10 London Chronicle, 7 March 1923.

...After supper Adams, by special request, gave his impression of Bourke Cockran as an orator. He had recently attended a meeting in Chicago at which Cockran was the chief speaker, and had been profoundly impressed with the power of the man, the clearness and force with which he expressed himself, the contrast and orderly march of his sentences, the choice and elegant phraseology in which his ideas naturally clothed themselves....

Bourke Cockran's letterbook contained many testimonials to his oratory. Typical are letters from Homer Cummings and Edward S. Dore. Cummings wrote,

...It is rare that a speech which was very effective when delivered fails to be rather disappointing when read in print. But that is certainly not the case with this one, which leaves me in doubt whether it will not prove even more impressive, eloquent and convincing as a document, than it was as a spoken address.

Dore explained how Cockran's oratory influenced his education:

...Ever since my Professor of Rhetoric in 'Old 16th Street' used your speeches, together with those of Burke, Cicero, and Demosthenes, as models of oratory, I have been a very sincere admirer of your oral and written expression.

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13 New York Public Library, Cockran MSS, Letterbook, Homer Cummings to William Bourke Cockran, 22 April 1922.

14 Cockran Papers, Letterbook, Edward S. Dore to William Bourke Cockran, 15 February 1922.
The press comments that followed Cockran's death in 1923 compared him to Robert Ingersoll and some claimed he was the greatest orator of all time. In contrast, a revealing article in the *New York Sun* suggested that Cockran's oratory was inappropriate for the time.

...The oratory of Bourke Cockran made all things seem as he saw them, even as the touch of Midas turned all things to gold. In another time a man with so rare a gift would have met almost no limits to his progress. Like Burke or Patrick Henry, he might have upset governments or turned the course of peoples. He lived among men who had stuffed their ears against the magic that made one speaker always victorious. But he remained a Merlin, a magician to the last, who could have cast his spell on any that listened.

The foregoing estimates do not in themselves provide a reliable assessment of Cockran's effectiveness. The preponderance of claims favor the eulogistic and affirmative but the careful analyst of public address cannot rest his conclusions on this sort of evidence only. Rather, he must appraise an orator on the basis or rhetorical theory, practice, and criticism that combines knowledge of the rhetorical art along with specific performances of the orator.

At the outset of this study it was noted that neo-Aristotelian criticism, Burke's pentad, and the movement

15 *Philadelphia Record*, 2 March 1923.

16 *New York Sun*, 2 March 1923.
approach were not well suited for an analysis of Cockran's rhetoric. What was needed was a search model that could illuminate the transactional relationship of the speaker to his society and to his oratorical situation. To accomplish this end, Chapter I was devoted to an analysis of political, economic, and social issues in turn-of-the-century America. Chapter II dealt with the specific oratorical situation at the turn of the century. Chapter III investigated Cockran's rhetorical stance as related to its application and argumentative origins. Now, a transactional examination of Cockran's rhetorical endeavors can be attempted by comparing Cockran's rhetorical stance with the more general trends of American thought. Likewise, a transactional examination can be attempted by comparing Cockran's oratorical skills with requirements of the oratorical situation in turn-of-the-century America.

Postwar bitterness continued to prevade the nation after Appomattox. Well into the 1880's the "Bloody Shirt" was employed by the Republican Party to remind voters which party contained the "best" elements of society. This rekindled hatred served as a lever of political strength. Nevertheless, Bourke Cockran was not a part of this phenomenon. Although Cockran entered
politics in the early 1880's, there is no record of his waving or denouncing the "bloody shirt." In fact, it is strange that a man who was politically and oratorically active for more than fifty years devoted only one speech to this major American issue. Possibly, this situation can be explained by the fact that Cockran as a recent immigrant chose to be an American. He did not ally himself with either North or South but with the country as a whole.

Cockran's only address on race was ineffective. In that oration he relied almost wholly on argument from circumstance. Cockran supported black schools and black charities, both verbally and financially. He recognized the black's ability to work as the key to his future success. This conclusion provided no real solution to the race problem nor did Cockran's call for repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment, though it obviously rallied Southern support at the expense of Northern sympathy. Cockran's call for repeal was his way of encouraging justice. Actually, Cockran opposed the extensive lynching of blacks; he believed that by allowing more stringent legal punishments for the black, the application of the law through the courts would become a reality; no longer would Southern blacks be illegally deprived of life and property.
Cockran suffered from the same contextual problems as most other Americans. He could not rise above the conflicting human, economic, political, and cultural issues. There was an ultimate conflict between that which was just and that which was reality. His ideas were shaped by circumstances above which he never arose.

Cockran's handling of economic issues met with greater success. In particular, his 1896 defense of the gold standard and his 1899 defense of trusts established his reputation as a most able orator. America had undergone severe and rapid economic change. As Hofstadter noted, America was born in the country and moved to the city. The power base and prestige of agrarian elements were considerably weakened. In 1896 when William Jennings Bryan set about to advocate the silver standard, Americans found themselves in a strange situation. The public clung to those principles which supposedly made America great. The independence of the yeoman farmer, the single owner of a small business that would base his good name and family reputation on his product, the moral honesty of business and labor, all these were at the core of the American way. But reality included crowded cities, horrid living conditions, deplorable, dangerous, even deadly working conditions. The farmer had little power

or prestige but he was not short of hard work and indebtedness. It was this sort of cultural dichotomy that set the stage for Cockran's best efforts.

In 1895, some twenty-four years after Bourke Cockran arrived in America, his estimated annual income from industrial retainers approximated one hundred thousand dollars. Cockran found financial success in the industrialized East which supported the gold standard. Cockran had first set foot on American soil in New York. It was in New York that he rose from a penniless, unknown immigrant to a politically and financially prominent citizen. His contact with agrarian America was minimal.

Cockran's confrontation with William Jennings Bryan in 1896 was one of his greatest rhetorical successes. Although Bryan and Cockran were separated by seven days in the delivery of their speeches, it was clear that Cockran was the victor. That victory resulted from a combination of factors. A brief examination of the contributing factors will help place Cockran's rhetoric in perspective.

Bourke Cockran believed that the gold standard lay close to the heart of the American governmental system. The system of currency we use provides the basis

18 McGurrin, p. 95.
for a civilized and just government, he said. Cockran defended the gold standard as a matter of principle, as though it were the very core of democracy. Those who opposed the standard, Populists and "rebel" Democrats, were to Cockran nothing more than anarchists seeking to destroy the government.

Second, Bourke Cockran viewed the silver standard as dishonest. To him, the cheapening of currency was nothing more than an attempt by debtors to pay their creditors half the sums rightly owed them. Such practice offended his moral sense.

Third, Cockran argued that the only way for a man to earn more was for him to produce more. It defied natural law he said for a man to be able to reduce his debts or better his status in the economy through a dishonest manipulation of currency. Cockran feared the laborer would suffer from this defiance of "economic law."

Cockran's economic convictions aided him in his defense of democracy, honesty, and justice. However, there were additional contextual elements that aided his position. In particular, Cockran had a "home court" advantage. Bryan was in "gold country," Cockran country. It would be natural for the local press to favor a fellow New Yorker. Additionally, Cockran had the advant-

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19 Ibid., p. 150.
age of replying to a speech that had already been judged by the press as a failure. Bryan, his voice strained, his train behind schedule, and his spirit fatigued from campaigning was in no condition to cope with the demands of his New York engagement or the refreshed Cockran just back from a European vacation.

The homogeneous audience that listened to Bourke Cockran on August 18, 1896 also provided him with a special advantage. He was speaking to a select body of prominent leaders in the world of finance. How Cockran would have fared with a more heterogeneous audience is a matter of speculation but it can be surmized that he would have been less effective. As noted in Chapter I of this study, few Americans really understood economic crises such as bank failures, recessions and depressions. With a less sympathetic audience of this sort, Bourke Cockran's purist economic arguments might have fallen short of their mark.

Cockran's clash with Bryan in 1899 resulted in success for the Easterner. At the Chicago Conference on Trusts, he faced a less homogeneous, but not a less sophisticated audience. The National Civic Federation invited to the meeting a wide range of delegates each of whom dealt with and understood economic matters. Again,
it was easy for Cockran to defend the trust with arguments from principle. It was the trust that made America great. Corporation power was viewed by Cockran as a natural phenomenon, not a conspiracy to oppress the agrarian interests. The combining of production was for the benefit of all men, not just the rich, because it was a process of "natural law" or "natural selection." The power of the trust would function to benefit all by making production efficient and thereby lowering prices. Cockran's belief, purist in an economy of scale, led him to condemn labor militancy which he feared would split the nation more severely than war.

At the Chicago Trust Conference, Bryan avoided direct confrontation; his speedy departure from the conference the following day lent further support to the impression of a Cockran victory. Although neither speaker found himself on home ground, Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness must again be tempered because his audience possessed a specialized knowledge of the subject matter.

One year later, in 1900, Cockran fared differently. He was rhetorically ineffective in his support of Bryan against President McKinley's policy of imperialism. Cockran's lack of effectiveness can be traced to three factors, the first of which resides in the saliency of the
Since the Civil War, virtually every American had been concerned with economic recovery and prosperity. In 1900, McKinley in office meant a degree of prosperity, a fact that probably dictated more votes at the polls than the public reaction to imperialism.

A second element of saliency was the fact that the average American possessed little knowledge of foreign affairs. His concern was with immediate problems at home - the need for better working and living conditions, the need for better streets, more gas and electricity, etc. It was probably difficult for most Americans to conceive of a foreign people living in the Philippines, of how a constitutional system of government or lack thereof would alter the living standard of those people.

Third, Bourke Cockran entered politics as a Democrat, only to later bolt his party to support McKinley on the gold standard. Now, Cockran opposed McKinley and supported Bryan, the man who opposed the gold standard. By remaining consistent to his principled beliefs, Cockran sacrificed political credibility. To be headlined as the orator in support of the cause did not materially aid in its success.

On free trade, Bourke Cockran was rhetorically effective, if judged by immediate audience reaction.
After one and one half hours of economic argument, Bourke Cockran had silenced the opposition and had thrown the House of Representatives into a state of Pandemonium. He was congratulated by Republicans and Democrats alike while the gallery cheered wildly. However, the Wilson-Gorman Tariff Bill, the bill under debate, was amended to such a degree in the Senate that Cockran was obliged to vote against the measure in its final form.

In retrospect, Cockran's tariff oration fulfilled the role of Congressional advocacy as prescribed by one prominent observer. Henry L. Dawes saw Congressional debate as not much more than a display of programmed eloquence with the orator selected by the party and applauded by party members. It was certain that Cockran was chosen as the prime combatant. His initial appearance was greeted with applause and his party applauded him throughout. However, Republican congratulations and gallery support suggest that Cockran did more than custom required.

Cockran's defense of free trade at the Liberal Club in London was likewise rhetorically effective if one judged by the immediate audience reaction. Nevertheless, the ultimate effect the American had on the outcome of British policies would appear minimal unless one added

20 Henry L. Dawes, "Has Oratory Declined?" Forum, October 1894, pp. 146-160.
Winston Churchill's rhetorical endeavors (which Cockran apparently influenced).

Bourke Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness appears to fall into a distinct pattern regarding subject matter, audiences, and argumentative approach. Apparently, Cockran was at his strongest on economic issues. His effectiveness in defense of the gold standard, trusts, and free trade are all grounded in a defense of *laissez faire* economics. The audiences to which Cockran spoke were, in general, sophisticated in regard to such subject matter. Almost without exception, the argumentative foundation of his rhetorical stance on these issues arose from a position of principle, of philosophical inherency which shaped his reality and, in turn, the reality of his arguments. Being tied to this principle allowed Cockran little movement in adjusting his ideas to the ideas held by others. But, adjustment was not necessary in these instances since the audience was already biased in his favor. It was an issue such as racial strife that gave Cockran the greatest difficulty. In situations such as this, he could not relegate subject matter to economics and could not establish arguments from definition. There was no homogeneous audience and no specialized knowledge on which to rely.
In Bourke Cockran's later speeches, especially his oration, "The Law's Delays," a growing knowledge of and concern for the division between the rich and the poor in turn-of-the-century America is apparent. Cockran fervently believed that increased production would bring not only prosperity but was also better living and working conditions, better health, and greater personal happiness. However, the rhetorical success of "The Law's Delays" required judicial not social reform. This result was not realized until after Cockran's death. Again, a sophisticated or specialized sort of effectiveness was the end result.

Beyond such specialized rhetorical effectiveness, it could be argued that Cockran's later speeches had a broader appeal to turn-of-the-century audiences because he firmly addressed himself to the problems that plagued most Americans. Such an hypothesis is not justified for Cockran tended toward structural rather than social reform. Bourke Cockran did not set out upon bold new social programs to feed the hungry, clothe the ragged, or heal the sick. He did not initially argue for the destruction of monopoly, only for publicity about the evil men who controlled monopolies. Cockran did not call for more stringent controls on industry, controlled
working conditions, or just compensation for work-related injuries. Rather, he argued for the structural reform of more rapid court decisions in these matters. He was an economic conservative not attuned to the social demands of the American public. He retained an undying and, from today's viewpoint, almost naive faith in the goodness of our governmental system.

Given Cockran's specialized rhetorical effectiveness, it seems only just to question his frequently assigned title as one of America's greatest orators. Rejecting this title is not justified, however, because of yet another contextual element in turn-of-the-century America. That contextual element was the institution of oratory itself.

Most turn-of-the-century listeners received training in public speaking, oral reading, elocution, or some other form of rhetoric and public address. The public speaker was accorded a special place in American society. It was a time when mass communication was carried on primarily by the printed page of book or pamphlet, or by word of mouth. In such circumstances the orator was considered above all other men, a "hero" as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it.²¹

²¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Emerson on Oratory," The Voice No. 2 (February 1885): 19.
From the periodical literature of the day, it is clear that oratory and orators were the subject of both academic and popular writing. Elocution took the form of a literary art. It was a sign of cultural attainment and/or social improvement to be skilled in the oratorical art.

Oratory, as Richard Weaver argued, was often the principal entertainment of a social gathering. Whether it was a pig roast, political rally complete with social clubs and bands, or a formal dinner meeting, oratory was a sine qua non. In turn-of-the-century America oratory was not just persuasion, it was a matter of art and appreciation.

Cockran was unmistakably effective within this persuasion/appreciation duality. He possessed many of the qualities that were admired in an orator. From the numerous press accounts and testimonials regarding his speaking ability, it is certain that Cockran had a good speaking voice of wide range, an impressive to overpowering appearance, exceptional vocabulary, and graceful gestures. Further, Cockran's large number of occasional orations and his crowded speaking schedule suggest that he was much in demand as a public speaker.

Possibly, there is no clearer reflection of this persuasion/appreciation duality than Cockran's 1884 and 1892 convention orations in opposition to Grover Cleveland's presidential nomination. In both conventions Cleveland's selection was a foregone conclusion. Yet, Bourke Cockran received ovations in his attempts to defeat the party favorite. The ovations he received and the resultant publicity Cockran was given were not so much for what he said as for how he said it. Champ Clark put it unforgettable: "I have nearly blistered my hands applauding William Bourke Cockran when I dissented from everything he said." In the oratorical context of the day, Bourke Cockran was indeed a success.

There is yet another yardstick that can be applied to measure Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness. That is the orator's impact on other orators. Contextually, this is important because in turn-of-the-century America almost all textbooks on public speaking were built around famous orations. Declamation and imitation were in vogue as a means of speech instruction. "Treasuries of oratory" acquired during this period can still be

located in countless college, university, and public libraries. Many of these collections of public speaking contained the orations of Bourke Cockran.

Of course, it is pure speculation to assume that Cockran's published orations had a wide-ranging influence but there is the correspondence of one student, Edward S. Dore, to indicate Cockran influenced him in this manner. More impressively, there are the reported statements of Winston S. Churchill that Bourke Cockran significantly influenced his thinking and that Cockran served as his oratorical model. Thus, utilizing the measure of influence of one orator on another, it appears that Cockran was rhetorically effective.

Before turning to a final conclusion regarding Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness, one further look at the persuasion/appreciation duality seems warranted. Richard Weaver argues that the use of glaring generalities and issues in the abstract was one of the accepted conditions of the "old rhetoric" that so offends modern sensibilities. This sort of "spaciousness" leads to embarrassment among modern audiences, Weaver claims.

24 Cockran Papers, Letterbook, Edward S. Dore to William Bourke Cockran, 15 February 1922.

25 Weaver, p. 164.
Occasional oratory because it is uncontested can be classified as in the epideictic genre. It is not the confrontation of the law court or the clash of ideas in the assembly. Being uncontested, this speaking genre has been considered outside the realm of persuasion. This is particularly true if the critic employs neo-Aristotelian standards that evaluate rhetorical effectiveness in situations where rhetors set goals and then achieve them, as reflected in immediate audience reaction. However, the fact that a rhetorical situation is uncontested and epideictic in nature suggests a converse or reverse sort of persuasion. In other words, rhetorical events of this kind are persuasive in that they reinforce already held social values. Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca clarify this point of view, thus:

...The epideictic genre of oratory thus seemed to have more connection with literature than with argumentation. One result is that the division into oratorical genres helped to bring about the later disintegration of rhetoric, as the first two genres were appropriated by philosophy and dialectics, while the third was included in literary prose....

Our own view is that epideictic oratory forms a central part of the art of persuasion, and the lack of understanding shown toward it results from a false conception of the effects of argumentation.

The effectiveness of an exposition designed to secure a proper degree of adherence of an audience to the arguments presented to it can
be assessed only in terms of the actual aim the speaker has set for himself. The intensity of the adherence sought is not limited to obtaining purely intellectual results, to a declaration that a certain thesis seems more probable than another, but will very often be reinforced until the desired action is actually performed ....

The very concept of this kind of oratory - which in Tarde's phrase, is more reminiscent of a procession than of a struggle - results in its being practised by those who, in a society, defend the traditional and accepted values, those which are the object of education, not the new and revolutionary values which stir up controversy and polemics. There is an optimistic, a lenient tendency in epideictic discourse which has not escaped certain discerning observers. Being in no fear of contradiction, the speaker readily converts into universal values, if not eternal truths, that which has acquired a certain standing through social unanimity. Epideictic speeches are most prone to appeal to a universal order, to a nature, or a god that would vouch for the unquestioned, and supposedly unquestionable, values....

Bourke Cockran, a conservative, a structural reformer, and by 1895, a wealthy man, wanted to reinforce the values in the system that had given him success and, in turn, shaped his reality. He established his priorities of Christianity, Constitution, and judicially determined justice. He spoke about these issues on hundreds of occasions to thousands of auditors. The reinforcement of these values were not reported in the press because they were not news. Rather, these values remained the

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uncontested terms that in reality resulted in unnoticed but significant persuasive reinforcement.

In the final analysis Bourke Cockran was an effective speaker. First, he was effective in a specialized and sophisticated sense regarding the economic issues in turn-of-the-century America. His defense of the gold standard and corporate trusts are reflective of this effectiveness. He was at least as effective if not more so than William Jennings Bryan, the best known orator of the day. Although Cockran never achieved his economic goal of free trade, his Congressional oratory reveals his effectiveness in support of lower tariffs.

Second, there is no doubt Cockran was admired as an exemplary orator. He possessed elocutionary qualities that placed him in constant demand as a speaker/entertainer. He was the headliner, the main attraction in a society that placed the polished orator above other men.

Third, if Cockran's rhetorical effectiveness is judged by his influence on other orators, he must again be judged effective. Clearly, he influenced the political thinking of Winston S. Churchill and served as Churchill's oratorical model.

Finally, it would appear that Cockran, through his occasional oratory, significantly reinforced the larger
social values in turn-of-the-century America. In the final analysis, Bourke Cockran was more than a "Hurrah Orator." For many Americans he served as the reinforcer of the conservative social values. In this regard, he was rhetorically effective.

In the course of this study, areas of new knowledge have been revealed broader in scope than the question of Bourke Cockran's impact as a speaker. Certain of these areas warrant comment, and further investigation.

First, historical/critical studies can gain much from the transactional theories of communication. By attempting to reconstruct the historical and oratorical contexts and interweaving these with the oration and orator, the circular transaction of sender, message, channel, and receiver are brought together in a more meaningful whole. Additional studies of this nature should be attempted to test this conclusion.

As a corollary to the transactional concept, the use of argument from definition and circumstance appears to be a viable approach to analyzing rhetorical stance. However, there are limitations to this search model. It is difficult to distinguish arguments of definition from arguments of circumstance. Distinctions between the two types of argument can be made on the basis of the rhetor's claim that he is using one type of argument or
the other, or on the basis that the argumentative scope of the rhetor is broader than the contextual scope of the issue. In this latter instance, an argumentative scope that is broader than the contextual scope can be assumed to produce an argument from definition since the argument possesses a breath beyond the circumstances. But, both these approaches are less than finite. The critic must be aware that a rhetor's attempt to rationalize his rhetorical stance can produce the effect of making circumstantial arguments appear as though they arise from definition. Likewise, a rhetor's selective perception and selective retention obscure the argumentative division. In short, one rhetor's reality may not be another rhetor's reality producing the result that one man's definition may be another man's circumstance.

Tentatively it can be assumed that arguments from definition arise in deductive reasoning patterns while circumstantial arguments arise from the specific nature of the inductive process. Quite likely the division of definition and circumstance is reflected in Perelman's distinction between the universal and particular audiences -- a concept warranting further investigation. Nevertheless, once the rhetorical stance has been evoked, it serves as an effective search model in approaching both the historical and oratorical dimensions of persuasion.
Further, rhetorical stance allows for a transactional judgment in the realm of comparing and contrasting ideas. As previously noted, such comparisons, according to Wragge, Bryant, and Croft, are the most fruitful results of historical/critical methods.

Third, this study has resulted in new knowledge regarding the rhetoric of Winston Churchill. From Churchill's correspondence with Cockran, his own writings, and his speeches, it is clear that Bourke Cockran served as Churchill's oratorical model. A more detailed examination of this relationship is warranted as part of an in-depth investigation of Churchill's oratory.

Finally, this study reveals a persuasion/appreciation duality existing in the oratorical context of America at the turn of the century. Further investigation of this duality is warranted as well as investigations to determine the oratorical contexts for other historical periods. It would seem unsafe to draw conclusions regarding rhetorical effectiveness without first possessing the knowledge of the place rhetoric held in the society of the day. Likewise, more research is required on the epideictic form of persuasion and the reinforcement of social values. At present, this construct appears to be relatively unexplored. Additional research might reveal that what critics heretofore believed ineffective, did indeed possess rhetorical significance for the time.
APPENDIX A

The following is a chronological compilation of public addresses given by William Bourke Cockran. Excluded from this compilation are his numerous Congressional speeches and the forty-five undated and/or fragmented speeches that remain among his papers.

Address, "The Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of Tammany Hall Society." Tammany Hall, July 4, 1889.

Address, "Remarks On The Quadracentennial Celebration On The Discovery Of America." January 11, 1890.


Address, "Opposing the Nomination of Grover Cleveland for the Presidency," Democratic National Convention, Chicago, June 25, 1892.

Address, Church and State: Influence of Christianity Upon the Progress of the World, Academy of Music, United Catholic Association for the Benefit of the Employment Bureau. (Pamphlet) Baltimore, 1892.


Address delivered under the auspices of The Honest Money League of Maryland, Baltimore, September 26, 1896.


Address at the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Boston Merchants Association, Boston, January 15, 1897.

Address in support of Seth Low, October 29, 1897.

Address given at the Grant Monument Association Dinner, Waldorf Astoria, New York, April 27, 1898.

Address, "Celebration In Honor Of Archbishop Corrigan." Metropolitan Opera House, New York, May 5, 1898.


Address, "In Honor of Joseph Choate." Union League Club, February 17, 1899.

Address, Expansion and Wages. Student Lecture Association of the University of Michigan, February 4, 1899. (Pamphlet) Michigan, 1899.


Address, "Imperialism." Delivered during the McKinley-Bryan Campaign, 1900.


Address in favor of Edward M. Shepard's Candidacy for Mayor, October 26, 1901, Carnegie Hall. The Independence Citizen's Committee of One Hundred of Brooklyn, Brooklyn, 1901.

Address given as recipient of the Laetare Medal, Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana, December, 1901.


Address given at dinner in honor of Rochambeau, Washington, D.C., May 29, 1902.

Address, "Cuba." Faneuil Hall, Boston, Massachusetts, June 27, 1902.

Address delivered at the National Convention of United Irish League Of America, October 20, 1902.

Address protesting the tariff on Cuban products, (1903).

Address delivered at the Fourth of July Celebration, American Chamber of Commerce, Paris, 1903.


Address in support of George B. McClellan's Candidacy for Mayor of New York, November, (1903).

Address in support of the "Coal Plank," Maine, 1904.

Address delivered during the Roosevelt-Parker Campaign for the Presidency with references to the disposition of the Philippine Islands, 1904.
Address, "Women's Suffrage." Brooklyn Academy of Music, January 12, 1904.


Address accepting the Democratic nomination to the House of Representatives, October 3, 1904. New York, 1904.

Address, "The Church and the Eastern Question." Manila, 1905.

Address, "Thomas Jefferson." April 13, 1905.

Address delivered at St. Ignatius College, San Francisco, California, October 16, 1905.

Address against socialism, Carnegie Hall, New York, October 23, 1905.

Address during the Mayoral Campaign of George B. McClellan and William Randolph Hearst, Carnegie Hall, Irish Municipal League, November 4, 1905.


Address on the Philippine problem, 1906.

Address in support of William Randolph Hearst against Charles Evans Hughes for Governor of New York, New York, 1906.


Address delivered at the Memorial Exercises for Michael Davitt, June 23, 1906.

Address, "In Honor of Anthony Hope." October 23, 1907.

Address, Church and State. The First American Catholic Missionary Congress. (Pamphlet) November 18, 1908, n.p., 1908.


Address on tariffs delivered to The Economic Club Dinner, Hotel Astor, New York, May 5, 1909.


Address delivered at the unveiling of a bust of Orestes A. Brownson, November 24, 1910.

Address delivered at the St. Patrick's Banquet, Montreal, Canada, March 17, 1911.

Address in support of international peace delivered at the Metropolitan Temple, New York, November 19, 1911.

Address delivered at the Chicago Bankers Club, Chicago, Illinois, December 20, 1911.

Address delivered in honor of Cardinal Farley, Hippodrome, New York, January 21, 1912.

Address delivered to The State Bar Association of Connecticut, February 12, 1912.

Address, "Socialism" delivered at the Schoolmaster's Dinner, April 13, 1912.

Address delivered in behalf of the survivors of the Titanic disaster, April 24, 1912.

Address delivered to the graduates of Fordham University, New York, June 19, 1912.

Address delivered in honor of Hon. Frank Moss, January 25, 1913.

Address delivered to The Hibernian Society, Savannah, Georgia, April, 1913.

Address delivered at a political rally for Norman H. White, Boston, April 11, 1913.

Address on the Hugenot in America, June 27, 1913.

Address, "Meagher of the Sword." Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana, March 4, 1914.

Address delivered to The University Forum of America, Hotel McAlpin, New York, March 17, 1914.

Address delivered to the Citizens Meeting, Carnegie Hall, New York, March 20, 1914.

Address in behalf of The Catholic University of America, Hotel Savoy, New York, April 15, 1914.


Address delivered to the graduates of All-Hallows Institute, Waldorf Astoria, New York, May 27, 1914.

Address delivered to The Knights of Columbus, Carnegie Hall, New York, October 11, 1914.

Address, "The Cost of the War and Preparedness." Knights of Columbus Meeting, December 25, 1914.


Address prepared for campaign speaking, 1916.


Address delivered to the prisoners at Sing Sing, April 21, 1916.

Address delivered to the Knights of Columbus Communion Breakfast, Shanley's, New York, April 3, 1916.


Address in behalf of widows and orphans of Irish martyrs, Metropolitan Opera House, Philadelphia, May 31, 1916.

Address in support of the Irish Relief Fund, Madison Square Garden, New York, June 10, 1916.

Address at commencement exercises of St. Johnsbury Academy, Vermont, June 15, 1916.


Address prepared for the Fourth of July Celebration, Rutland, Vermont, July 4, 1916.


Address delivered in regard to the Celebration of 700th Anniversary of Founding of the Dominican Order, November 19, 1916.

Address delivered at The Golden Jubilee of St. Ignatius Church, New York, November 27, 1916.


Address delivered on Washington's Birthday Celebration at the Eastern District High School, 1917.

Address delivered to a mass meeting in Chicago to investigate irregularities during the trial of Thomas Mooney, Chicago, 1917.

Address, "Monasticism." The Celebration of the Founding of the Marist Order, 1917.
Address delivered to the Society of Illustrators, April 17, 1917.


Address in behalf of the Knights of Columbus Fund, Hippodrome, New York, March 14, 1918.


Address delivered to The United War Work Campaign, Madison Square Garden, New York, November 3, 1918.

Address prepared for Memorial Day, 1919.

Address delivered to the Democrats of New York County, 1920.

Address delivered at the Banquet of The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, Hotel Astor, New York, March 17, 1920.

Address to nominate Al Smith, National Democratic Convention, San Francisco, June 30, 1920.


Address delivered at the United Tertiary Effort of the 3rd Order of St. Francis, The Coliseum, Chicago, October, 1921.

Address delivered in behalf of Mayoral Candidate Hylan, October 30, 1921.

Address prepared for Columbus Day, 1922.
I. Manuscript and Public Documents

One of the most valuable sources to this research undertaking was the "Cockran Papers" deposited at the New York Public Library. In general, this collection includes fifty-six boxes of un inventoried speeches, legal documents - including case briefs, newspaper clippings, government documents, twenty-two letterbooks, general and political correspondence as well as numerous unidentified materials.

This collection should be considered invaluable to anyone undertaking research in areas of New York machine politics, turn-of-the-century imperialism, or the rhetoric of Winston S. Churchill.

For the student of rhetoric and public address, the "Cockran Papers" are particularly valuable because more than two hundred of Bourke Cockran speeches have been preserved among his papers. Most of the speeches appear to have been retyped from stenographic records or from Cockran's handwriting. Cockran was very particular about the reprinting or retyping of his speeches as is evidenced by his attaching wrapping paper to newspaper accounts of his speeches and then, correcting the wording in the stenographic newspaper report.
The Presidential Papers of Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft are excellent sources for determining Cockran's involvement in the Progressive Movement. The McKinley Presidential Papers are likewise helpful in regard to Cockran's role in the Cuban Crisis of 1897. Most disappointing among the Presidential Papers were the Cleveland and Wilson collections. Cleveland's papers were of little use beyond establishing that he and Cockran maintained a personal friendship and respect that might not be suspected. President Wilson referred all of Cockran's correspondence to his Attorney General. Hence, no direct correspondence between Wilson and Cockran is revealed in the collection.

The Congressional Record is also a valuable source in determining Cockran's ability as a debater. The following issues are relevant to this investigation.

II. Newspapers:

The Atlanta Constitution, 11 May 1900.

Boston Evening Transcript, 23 February 1900.

Boston Evening Transcript, 24 February 1900.


Canton Repository, 1 October 1915.

Canton Repository, 10 October 1915.

Chicago Tribune, 11 September 1899.

Chicago Tribune, 12 September 1899.

Chicago Tribune, 13 September 1899.

Chicago Tribune, 14 September 1899.

Chicago Tribune, 15 September 1899.

Chicago Tribune, 16 September 1899.

London Chronicle, 7 March 1923.

The London Times, 16 July 1903.

New York Sun, 2 March 1923.

The New York Times, 1 January 1880.

2 January 1880
14 January 1894
9 October 1894
15 August 1895
1 May 1896
13 August 1896
15 August 1896
17 August 1896
18 August 1896
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12 September 1899
The New York Times, 13 May 1916
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15 January 1919
30 June 1919
27 September 1919
14 December 1919
11 January 1920
19 January 1920
20 January 1920
26 March 1920
1 July 1920
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3 July 1920
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21 August 1921
24 August 1921
13 April 1922
17 April 1922
27 August 1922
15 October 1922
16 October 1922
23 November 1922
17 January 1923
11 February 1923
21 February 1923
2 March 1923
3 March 1923
4 March 1923
5 March 1923
6 March 1923
7 March 1923
8 March 1923

New York Tribune, 9 June 1902
18 June 1902
19 June 1902
20 June 1902
21 June 1902
III. Periodicals:


"Bourke Cockran." Bookman, June 1905.


"Chicago Conference on Trusts." Review of Reviews, October 1898.


Dawes, Henry L. "Has Oratory Declined?" Forum, October 1894.


Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Emerson on Oratory." The Voice No. 2 (February 1885): 19.


"Long Speeches." Nation, 27 May 1897.


National Economist, VII, July 9, 1892.


Werner's Voice Magazine (July 1891): 185.

IV. Secondary Works:


Crowley, Reverend Mother Mary Margaret. "Bourke Cockran: Orator." Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Speech, University of Wisconsin, 1941.


Depew, Chauncey M. My Memoirs of Eighty Years. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1924.


