I hereby recommend that this dissertation prepared under my direction by John Edward Tapia entitled Circuit Chautauqua's Promotional Visions: A Study of Program Brochures, Circa 1904 to 1932 be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dissertation Director Date

After inspection of the final copy of the dissertation, the following members of the Final Examination Committee concur in its approval and recommend its acceptance:

[Signatures and dates]

This approval and acceptance is contingent on the candidate's adequate performance and defense of this dissertation at the final oral examination. The inclusion of this sheet bound into the library copy of the dissertation is evidence of satisfactory performance at the final examination.
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SIGNED John Edward Tapia
This study is dedicated to Dr. Andrew A. King and also to the men and women who made circuit chautauqua great.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sincere thanks is expressed to all those involved in assisting me in this undertaking. To Dr. Andrew A. King, for his scholarly guidance and inspiring wit, I owe a special debt of gratitude. I am also deeply appreciative of the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Herman Bateman, Dr. Paul Carter, Dr. David Nott, and Dr. David Williams, for their critical reading of the study.

Without the patience, support, and encouragement of my family, Raylene, Carl, Merlyn, Rose, Joe, and, in fond remembrance, Joe and Dorothy Saunders, this undertaking would have been impossible.
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ABSTRACT

This study was concerned with the nature of the promotional strategies employed in program brochures by circuit chautauqua bureaus between 1904 and 1932. Assuming that circuit promoters were concerned with mass fantasy persuasion, this dissertation addressed the following research questions: 1) What was the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua?

The methodology utilized for responding to these central questions was dramatistic. The major characters, scenes, plots, and themes contained within the brochures were identified. The fantasies, portrayed in the form of symbolic dramas, and the motives, embodied within each of these dramas, were detailed in this analysis. The symbolic dramas constructed answered the first research question, and the motives described as being embodied within each of the dramas responded to the second research question.

Five major fantasies were used in circuit chautauqua program brochures created between 1904 and 1932. From 1904 to 1912, the fantasy employed in the brochures was Jeffersonian in nature. Motives for attendance to chautauqua contained within this fantasy included: fear of the agrarian mission failing, and avoidance of guilt and punishment.

The fantasy used in the brochures between 1912 and 1916 assumed that the typical American community was non-conducive to personal
growth and aspirations. It was a place from which the typical American wanted to escape. Within this fantasy, motives for attending chautauqua were the need to redeem oneself from his static environment, desire for a brighter future, and fear of death before being redeemed.

Between 1917 and 1918, the fantasy employed in the brochures viewed the American as a spiritual hero and leader within a context of international upheaval. Motives within this fantasy for chautauqua attendance included: fear of American values not enduring, the desire to be a loyal and patriotic American, and the need to participate in the righteous American mission to save the world.

The fantasy used in the brochures between 1919 and 1925 assumed a paranoid relationship between the American and his environment. Embodied within this drama were motives for attending chautauqua—fears and threats of foreign powers, national and international problems, and the desire for escape or withdrawal.

From 1926 to 1932, the fantasy used in the brochures pictured the American as conspicuously enjoying and adjusting to modern innovations and leisure time. Motives for attending chautauqua contained within this drama were avoidance of maladjustment to a modern age, the need for success, the need for relief from business worries, and the desire for enjoyment for enjoyment's sake.

Each of these fantasies, employed by circuit chautauqua bureaus in the brochures to promote programs, functioned as a coping mechanism in an era of rapid technological, economical, and social change. The chautauqua program was advertised as the agency through which these coping devices could be realized. The fantasies, as well as active
psychological participation in them, protected their participants from the pressures of drastic social change in early twentieth century America.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Between Theodore Roosevelt's election to the presidency in 1904 and Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal promises of 1932, huge brown chautauqua tents visited literally thousands of American communities. At the height of its popularity in the early twenties, circuit chautauqua was journeying to nearly 10,000 communities per season.\(^1\) And in what was commonly known to chautauqua personnel as the "Jubilee Year" of 1924, some forty million Americans attended circuit programs.\(^2\)

By the late twenties, however, due to changing social conditions and the nature of chautauqua programs, the larger circuit companies faced financial disaster and finally oblivion by 1932.

Circuit chautauqua found its greatest popularity in the rural towns of the Middle West, although it operated in other areas of the country as well. For these Midwestern centers, as for other rural areas, circuit chautauqua performed an important social function: season after season, tent chautauquas came into numerous rural communities offering programs which, according to Joseph Gould, "brought to the attention of millions of Americans an impressive


\(^2\) Ibid.
number of new ideas and concepts.¹ And of this institution, Russell B. Nye says that "from chautauqua millions of Americans got their first ideas of tariffs and tax policies, of conservation and currency, of Wall Street and the trusts. It reached an audience touched by no other educational agency. . . ."²

Tent chautauquas offered multi-dimensional educational, cultural, inspirational, and entertaining programs. A typical program might have included drama, elocution, humor, music, opera, and oratory. Developing in an era when radio and motion pictures were in infant stages, and in the days when newspaper circulation was small and transportation slow, circuit programs became a major social event for thousands of small towns.³ "Chautauqua Week," then, for numerous rural centers was the most important five, or six, or seven days out of the entire year. Perhaps circuit chautauqua was, as Theodore Roosevelt once exclaimed, "the most American thing in America."⁴

In retrospect, circuit chautauqua is often viewed as developing and operating in a period of massive social change. Henry P. Harrison, for example, writes,

It is important to realize that chautauqua tents went up at that moment in history precisely half way


between Pickett's Cavalry charge at Gettysburg and the bomb run over Hiroshima. . . . The America that watched the first chautauqua tent rise in an Iowa meadow in 1904 and the America that saw the last tent come down, twenty-nine years later in a little Illinois village, were separated by a period that marked swift changes in people's thinking, in concepts of both humor and morality, in public and private manners.¹

Moreover, circuit chautauqua is also commonly interpreted as being an impetus contributing to this era of rapid social transformation. Raymond and Victoria Case, for example, observe, "beyond computation are the indirect effects of chautauqua's greatest single contribution: the awakening of rural areas to a consciousness of the part they were both entitled and expected to play in the affairs of the nation and the world."²

**Background to Study**

Although circuit chautauquas may have brought cultural, educational, inspirational, and entertaining programs to numerous American communities, for their owners and operators they were commercial ventures. As commercial enterprises, the financial success or failure of chautauqua circuits depended upon mass public consumption of their product—the program. In an attempt to stimulate and assure high participation to circuit programs, chautauqua bureaus spent thousands of dollars each year in creating, producing, and distributing great quantities of promotional materials. The Cases explain that:

¹ Harrison, pp. xvii-xviii.

A month before chautauqua was due the bureau shipped great packages of cards and advertising material and sent an advance man. . . . He tacked up advertising cards on all the fence posts, barns, lampposts, and wooden walls he . . . could gain access to and handed them around generously to be placed in display windows.

Developing in a time when radio and motion pictures were almost unheard of, circuit managers relied greatly on print media as a means of promoting their programs. So important was this type of media to the promotion of his circuit, manager Charles Horner, for example, bought the controlling shares in the Olathe Register of Kansas to enable him to have "sufficient equipment" for his print needs. Even during the late twenties, when the radio was beginning to sweep the country, chautauqua bureaus continued to promote their circuits largely through print media. Advertising via radio, contends Harrison, "was expensive" and "did not attract many paid admissions."

Chautauqua bureaus used numerous types of print media to promote their circuits. Some of the more important forms are described by Hugh Orchard:

... Calendars, street car cards, program folders, herald programs, window cards, window card spreads, large muslin banners, small muslin banners, thirty-six inch pennants, muslin daters, street streamers, automobile banners, windshield stickers, arrow tack cards, for sale cards, lecture window cards, one-sheet posters, circular letters

to underwriters, newspaper chautauqua stories, display advertisements, direct mail advertisements, special display for special attractions, etc.¹

Of all these various types of print media, the standard of circuit chautauqua publicity was the program brochure.² The most popular form of this brochure was similar to that of a modern day road map. It is approximately eleven inches in length and six inches in width when folded, and about thirty inches by twenty inches when unfolded. The nature of the circuit program is detailed on one side of the opened brochure, including commentary about the program, program dates, and pictures of outstanding entertainers. And on the reverse side is a large artistic spread of the talent in costume that would be appearing in that particular program. Copies of these brochures were freely handed out by circuit managers. According to Hugh Orchard, "they served to put the celebrity where he rightfully belonged, and to broaden advance attention upon the whole scope of the many sided offerings the complete program provided."³

**Justification for the Study and Statement of Problem**

Print media played an important role in the promotion of circuit chautauqua. Extant are numerous examples of the types of written materials used in advertising its programs.


². Ibid., p. 134.

³. Ibid.
Justification

Traditionally, however, studies on circuit chautauqua have focused on the nature and quality of circuit programs and their impact on the early twentieth century American outlook. In Victoria and Raymond Case's *We Called It Culture*, for example, at least eighty percent of the book is devoted to the nature, quality, and social impact of circuit programs. Likewise, a similar percentage of space is dedicated to these dimensions in other major works on circuit chautauqua including books such as *Culture Under Canvas* by Henry P. Harrison and Charles Horner's *Strike the Tents*, and the dissertations, "Circuit Chautauqua, A Middle Western Institution" by Donald Graham, and Roy B. Tozier's "The American Chautauqua: A Study of a Social Institution."

Problem

No systematic study has been done on the print materials used to promote circuit chautauqua, a significant aspect of the commercial dimension of this enterprise. In an attempt to investigate this neglected aspect of circuit chautauqua, this study will detail the nature of the promotional strategies employed by circuit bureaus by analyzing promotional brochures developed by them between 1904 and 1932. In detailing the nature of the bureaus' promotional strategies between 1904 and 1932, valuable insights will be attained about how its programs were promoted in an attempt to satisfy the symbolic needs of the market place and how its promotional strategies changed over a period of time. Furthermore, this analysis will also provide
illumination into a market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America.

Theoretical Assumptions

In an attempt to detail the nature of circuit chautauqua's promotional strategies between 1904 and 1932, this study will examine approximately two hundred program brochures developed by various circuit chautauqua bureaus during this period. The program brochures to be studied represent only a small sample of the total amount of advance materials produced by chautauqua bureaus, including talent fliers, posters, banners, newspaper ads, et cetera.

Choice of Program Brochures

Obviously, other types of circuit chautauqua advance materials, besides the program brochures, could be analyzed for the purpose of this study. The choice of the program brochures over other potential materials for study was made for several reasons. Program brochures were used by chautauqua bureaus to advance an entire circuit program; whereas, other major forms of advertising materials focused primarily on one or two aspects of the entire program. In talent fliers, as well as in newspaper ads, for example, usually the nature and quality of top performers to appear on a program were detailed. Through the study of program brochures, one receives a panoramic view of the promotional strategies used for an entire circuit program. Moreover, of all the advance materials employed by
chautauqua bureaus, the program brochures were the most important means for promoting a circuit program.1

Rhetorical Nature of Brochures

Robert L. Scott and Bernard Brock define rhetoric "as the human effort to induce cooperation through the use of symbols."2 From this viewpoint, circuit chautauqua advance materials are rhetorical in nature. These materials were strategically created by chautauqua agencies to affect persuasion in mass audiences. Within the brochures, as in other types of advance materials, discursive and visual symbols were employed in hopes of eliciting a favorable public attitude toward a circuit chautauqua program, in an attempt to persuade attendance.

Chautauqua bureaus had publicity directors who studied those towns scheduled for a circuit program to determine what symbolic strategies would be most appropriate to and persuasive in the advertising materials. Sometimes questionnaires were submitted by the publicity directors to various members of a community, but most often the information was attained via the circuit agents, advance men, and talent. The importance of strategically designed advertising material in terms of developing a favorable symbolic marketing

image for a circuit program is detailed by Hugh Orchard. He writes:

Trained publicity agents begin the study of the quantity, quality, variety and distribution of advertising materials six months in advance of the opening date, and where well handled, every detail is considered and recorded so that the whole scheme of publicity unfolds in a natural and effective way at the appointed time and place for which it is attended.¹

Because in chautauqua advance material symbols were strategically used to induce persuasion in mass audiences, these materials are rhetorical in nature.

**Promotion and Fantasy**

Through massive advertising campaigns, circuit chautauqua promoters attempted to induce the mass audience of readers of these materials to attend circuit programs. As rhetorical documents symbolically designed for this purpose, circuit chautauqua program brochures reflect the nature of circuit chautauqua's persuasive campaign between the years of 1904 and 1932. The promoters of circuit chautauqua were dream merchants. They attempted to sell their product by merging it with the fantasies of their audiences. It was a well-known axiom to those involved with chautauqua promotion that potential chautauqua customers would be motivated to attend a program, if they felt that it would contribute to the fulfillment of their fantasies. Recalling this basic axiom, Henry P. Harrison makes this observation of chautauqua audiences: "and above all, they were hungry for escape from their own flat horizons into the fascinating world that lay

¹. Orchard, p. 235.
beyond. If they could not see it with their own eyes, they could perhaps behold it with that 'inner eye' of the imagination of which the poet speaks."\textsuperscript{1} And circuit programs were promoted as contributing to the fulfillment of fantasies, usually in the guise of culture, education, inspiration, and wholesome entertainment.\textsuperscript{2}

Statement of Research Questions

Circuit chautauqua promoters were also concerned with mass culture persuasion, especially as chautauqua territory expanded beyond the rural Middle West. To sell their programs, circuit promoters, presumably used collective cultural fantasies with which numerous audiences in various geographical and social situations could identify. To determine the nature of the promotional strategies employed by circuit bureaus, as reflected in their brochures, this thesis, then, will address the following research questions: 1) What was the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua?

Statement of Methodology

The methodology to be employed for answering these research questions is dramatistic. The major characters, scenes, plots, and themes contained in the brochures will be detailed and analyzed as

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Harrison, p. 17.
  \item Case, p. 238.
\end{enumerate}
symbolic drama(s) to respond to the research questions posed. The nature of fantasy persuasion and dramatistic analysis will be discussed in chapter three.

**Design of Study**

In order to give the reader a greater understanding of how promotional materials fit into the matrix of circuit chautauqua's ideological climate, the next chapter will briefly review the history and development of circuit chautauqua, stressing its operational, commercial, and social dimensions. The subject matter for chapter three will be a discussion of the nature of fantasy persuasion and further commentary about the dramatistic methodology to be employed. In chapter four, the major characters, scenes, plots, and themes contained within the brochures will be detailed. The concern of chapter five will be to construct symbolic drama(s) from the data presented in chapter four in an effort to determine the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures and how these fantasies induced attendance to chautauqua.

In the final chapter, the nature of the study and results will be reviewed, and conclusions will be drawn concerning how circuit chautauqua bureaus promoted their programs in an attempt to satisfy the symbolic needs of the market place, how its promotional strategies changed over a period of time, and the market place perception of social change in the twentieth century America. Suggestions for further original research on circuit chautauqua will also be detailed which indicate directions other researchers may take.
Sources of Data

The nature of sources to be most used in creating the following chapter on the history and development of circuit chautauqua are secondary. Examples of some of the books to be utilized are *We Called It Culture* by Victoria and Robert Case, Henry P. Harrison's *Culture Under Canvas*, Charles Horner's *Strike the Tents*, Morally We Roll Along by Gay MacLaren, and Hugh Orchard's *Fifty Years of Chautauqua*. A dissertation and masters thesis will also be employed; the dissertation is Donald L. Graham's "Circuit Chautauqua, A Middle Western Institution," and the thesis is "The American Lyceum: A Survey from 1827 to 1948" by Carl V. Wagner. Moreover, several periodical and newspaper articles will also be used. The major works to be used in chapter three for discussing fantasy persuasion and developing the methodology are Robert F. Bale's *Personality and Interpersonal Behavior* and "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality" by Ernest G. Bormann.

The materials that will be dramatistically analyzed in chapter four are, of course, circuit chautauqua program brochures. The brochures to be studied are housed primarily at the State University of Iowa. The largest manuscript collection in the University of Iowa Libraries is the Redpath Chautauqua Collection, which is some 900 linear feet in length. This collection represents the most extensive collection of circuit chautauqua materials in the United States. It consists of the records of the Redpath Chautauqua Bureau of Chicago and was donated to the State University of Iowa in 1945 by Henry P. Harrison, former manager of that agency.
Not only are the business records of the Redpath Chicago Bureau contained in this collection, but also numerous examples of the advertising materials used by this and other agencies to promote their circuit programs. Notes Robert A. McCown,

The Redpath Bureau often had dealings with other bureaus and also kept files on the activities of other chautauquas. Other bureaus that are represented by material in the collection include Associated Chautauquas of America, the Coit-Albert Chautauqua Company, Ellison-White Chautauqua System, Loar International Chautauquas, and The Swarthmore Chautauqua Association.¹

The program pamphlets to be studied that are contained in the Redpath Collection are, therefore, to some extent representative of circuit chautauqua program brochures in general.

Other program brochures to be analyzed are found in the following collections: the Chautauqua Pamphlet Collection at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, the Horner Chautauqua Collection housed at the State University of Iowa, and the Loring Campbell Collection of 319 Chautauqua and Lyceum Brochures held by the University of Arizona. The brochures contained within these collections are representative of those produced by the major circuit chautauqua bureaus that operated in the United States.

Approximately two-hundred program brochures developed by the major chautauqua bureaus between 1904 and 1932, will be studied. These brochures represent only a small sample of the total amount created and distributed by the bureaus. But by examining brochures

created by different bureaus and distributed over a period of time will help control sampling bias and, therefore, will give a hopefully accurate representation of the nature of circuit chautauqua's promotional strategies between 1904 and 1932, as viewed through program brochures.

Chapter five will use the data presented in four to construct the symbolic drama(s) contained within the brochures in an effort to answer the two central research questions of this thesis. Moreover, in an effort to help understand the nature of the fantasies used in the brochures and how they promoted attendance to chautauqua, several socio-historical works will be utilized. Examples of some of these secondary sources are Carl Degler's Out of Our Past, The Response to Industrialism by Samuel P. Hays, Richard Hofstadter's The Age of Reform, and The Search for Order by Robert Wiebe. And for chapter six, conclusions and comments will be based upon the information presented in the chapters preceding it.

Review of Literature and Assessments of the Circuit Chautauqua: Issues in Interpretation

Major works concerning the circuit chautauqua are few in number; approximately a dozen books have been written specifically about it and still fewer dissertations. Numerous articles have appeared on the circuit chautauqua, however, especially in early twentieth century popular periodicals, including American Mercury, New Republic, Outlook, and Scribner's. Another significant source of information about circuit chautauqua are those books studying the educational dimensions of "Mother" Chautauqua, the first permanent
chautauqua assembly and forerunner of the circuit chautauqua. Several chapters in these works are usually devoted to how circuit programs perverted the work of the original assembly. And, occasionally circuit chautauqua is briefly mentioned in recent general American histories and works on adult education. Major interpretations of the circuit chautauqua, however, are primarily found in books written specifically about it and in works on Mother Chautauqua.

Two major issues divide that class of works specifically on circuit chautauqua and the category of books on Mother Chautauqua which devote a section to circuit chautauqua. The first issue concerns the degree to which circuit programs carried on the educational work of the Permanent Institute at New York. And the second one regards the extent to which circuit programs were socially valuable. Those authors who write specifically about the circuit chautauqua argue that, although lyceum was highly influential in its development, circuit chautauqua was implicated with the educational work of the Permanent Institute. The Cases, for example, write: "the tent chautauqua came ... to catch up the [Permanent Assembly] movement. ... Now it was no longer a matter of vacation or home study, but a program of inspiration and culture right at the door step...."1 And Hugh Orchard says, "the modern chautauqua on wheels is the practical means for the universal application of [Vincent's] truly great idea."2

2. Orchard, p. 25.
Authors whose main focus is on the educational dimensions of the Mother Chautauqua, on the other hand, claim that the circuits adopted in name only the tenets of the New York Assembly. With vicious sarcasm, Rebecca Richmond, for example, writes: "the circuit was plainly a long cry from the community in New York State from which it borrowed its name, but friends of chautauqua on Chautauqua Lake still have difficulty in convincing the half-informed that there is no connection between them."\(^1\) Author Bestor, Jr. comments, the circuits were "totally unconnected with the original chautauqua."\(^2\)

More important than this first issue in interpretation, is the analysis of the social worth of circuit programs. Those who make the circuit chautauqua the focus of their work generally argue that circuit programs were educationally, culturally, and inspirationally beneficial to their many audiences. Writes Charles Horner, "real happiness can be found in our reliance upon God, in a life of rectitude, and in the fruits of the labors of our hands, head and heart. I do not believe that it is an assumption to state that such was the chief truth that Chautauqua people tried to . . . teach."\(^3\) Furthermore, the Cases, Horner, Harrison, and Orchard all devote at least several chapters in their books to the social ramifications of the different aspects of circuit music, drama, and humor. And all of


3. Horner, p. 204.
these authors, along with Briggs and MacLaren, argue that the lecturer played the most socially significant role out of all the chautauqua talent.

The positive educational and cultural aspects of circuit chautauqua were a popular theme in many magazine articles of the twenties. In "Is the Chautauqua Worthwhile?," for example, Albert E. Wiggam states, "[Circuit] Chautauqua is a very important and permanent force in strengthening American social coherence, elevating American social tone, and vitalizing American hope."¹

Those writers who concern themselves primarily with the educational scope of Mother Chautauqua, find little, if any, social value in circuit programs with the exception of its orators. Gould, for example, comments:

Aside from the serious political speakers and dedicated reformers, the circuits had relatively little of lasting value to offer. Dramatic offerings . . . were innocuous bits of sunshine or foreshortened versions of Shakespeare. Good music . . . was carefully sandwiched between quantities of rousing band music and familiar airs sung by various kinds of costumed groups.²

Of circuit programs, Morrison observes, "as a social phenomenon, the circuits did their serious work through their platforms."³

Those writers who focus on the circuit chautauqua and those who concentrate on the Permanent Institute generally agree on several

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¹. Albert E. Wiggam, "Is the Chautauqua Worthwhile?" Bookman 65 (June 1927): 400.

². Gould, p. 83.

major points about the history of circuit chautauqua: 1) that lyceum was influential in the development of circuit chautauqua, 2) the circuits benefited from the popularity surrounding the educational programs of the Institute at New York, 3) circuit orators made a social contribution, and 4) due to changing social conditions, as well as the nature of the circuit programs, by the late twenties the era of the tent chautauqua had come to a close. The major disagreements between these two categories of writers center about: 1) the extent to which circuit chautauqua carried on the educational work of Mother Chautauqua, and 2) the degree to which the circuit programs were socially valuable.

Generally, those authors who have written books specifically about circuit chautauqua were occupationally connected in some way with that institution, either as manager, agent, or performer. Their pre-occupation with the questionable connection between the circuits and Mother Chautauqua and, more importantly, their belief that most aspects of circuit programs were socially healthy, perhaps, suggest a defense of their own occupational worth in the American society. Chautauqua is gone, laments Harrison, "but something has endured, something more than memory remains."\(^1\) The following table not only establishes the occupational link between these writers and circuit chautauqua, but also represents, to be best of this author's knowledge, all of the major analytical books published in America specifically about circuit chautauqua (Table 1). Moreover, this list also reflects those works

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Table 1. Circuit Chautauqua Authors and Their Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author - Title</th>
<th>Author's Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irene Briggs and Raymond DaBoll, Recollections of the Lyceum and Chautauqua Circuits (1969)</td>
<td>Circuit Performers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria and Raymond Case, We Called It Culture (1948)</td>
<td>Journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry P. Harrison, Culture Under Canvas (1958)</td>
<td>Circuit Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Horner, Strike the Tents (1954)</td>
<td>Circuit Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay MacLaren, Morally We Roll Along (1938)</td>
<td>Circuit and Lyceum Performer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Orchard, Fifty Years of Chautauqua (1923)</td>
<td>Circuit Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian Scott, Chautauqua Caravan (1939)</td>
<td>Circuit Performer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
which are commonly used as secondary sources in recent dissertations on circuit chautauqua, especially for establishing interpretations about the social merits of the institution.

Some examples of writers whose theme focused on the educational dimensions of Mother Chautauqua and tangentially on the circuits are Author Bestor, Jr.'s *Chautauqua Publications* (1934), *The Chautauqua Movement* (1961) by Joseph Gould, Jesse Hurlburt's *The Story of Chautauqua* (1921), *Chautauqua* (1974) by Theodore Morrison, and Rebecca Richmond's *Chautauqua: An American Place* (1934). There is no apparent occupational factor linking these authors to Mother Chautauqua, with the exception of Bestor, once president of this institution. This class of writers conclude that there was no link between Mother Chautauqua and the circuits, and the circuit programs were of little social value, except for what the orators who performed on them could provide.

Dissertations on circuit chautauqua are few and can be divided into two general categories: 1) those which focus on a prominent circuit orator, and 2) studies that analyze the circuits from a socio-historical viewpoint. Some examples of the latter category are D. L. Graham's "Circuit Chautauqua, A Middle Western Institution" (1953) and Roy B. Tozier's "The American Chautauqua: A Study of a Social Institution" (1932). Both of these authors trace the growth of circuit chautauqua from the Permanent Institute at New York and claim that most aspects of the circuit programs were socially worthwhile.

Samples of the former class of dissertations include John D. Bartlett's "Bryan, Chautauqua's Orator" (1963), Mary Ann Hartman's
"The Chautauqua Speaking of Robert LaFollette" (1968), and Vonne G. Messciling's "William S. Sadler: Chautauqua's Medic Orator" (1970). All three focus on various rhetorical dimensions of the circuit chautauqua oratory of their respective orator. Although few dissertations have been completed on circuit chautauqua, many have been done on various aspects of the chautauqua institute at New York.

Summary

Circuit chautauqua was popular in America during the early twentieth century, operating between 1904 and 1932. Although it operated in many areas of the country, tent chautauqua was most popular in rural areas, especially of the Middle West. To these areas chautauqua brought a multi-dimensional educational, cultural, inspirational, and entertaining program. Circuit chautauqua was also a commercial venture which depended financially on public attendance to its programs. In an attempt to stimulate attendance to these programs, chautauqua bureaus spent thousands of dollars on the creation and distribution of promotional material.

No systematic study has been done on the extant print materials used for promoting circuit programs, a significant and neglected area of circuit history. This study will analyze promotional brochures created by chautauqua bureaus between 1904 and 1932 in an attempt to detail the nature of the promotional strategies employed by these agencies. Moreover, because circuit bureaus were especially concerned with cultural fantasies for promoting their programs, this thesis will address two research questions: 1) What was the nature of the
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fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua? The methodology to be employed for answering these important questions is dramatistic. The conclusions resulting from this analysis will provide valuable insights into the promotional strategies employed by the agencies in the brochures. Furthermore, these conclusions will also provide information concerning the symbolic nature of the market place, an understanding of how chautauqua agencies modified their promotional strategies over a period of time, and discernment into a market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America.

In major assessments of circuit chautauqua, two major viewpoints prevail. The first, largely held by those authors whose works focus on the circuits, claims that circuit chautauqua carried on the educational work of Mother Chautauqua and its programs were generally socially worthwhile. The other interpretation, expoused by those whose themes revolve around the educational dimensions of Vincent's institute and who devote several chapters to the circuits, argues that the circuits were not connected with the goals of Mother Chautauqua and that circuit talent was not socially valuable, with the exception of the orator. Dissertations on circuit chautauqua are few and are of two general conceptual types, those which focus on the rhetoric of a circuit orator, and studies that analyze circuit chautauqua from a socio-historical perspective.
CHAPTER 2

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIRCUIT CHAUTAUQUA

Promotional materials created by circuit chautauqua bureaus were distributed to those towns scheduled for their programs. In order to give the reader an understanding of the conceptual climate in which promotional materials were erected and a knowledge of the institution itself, this chapter will briefly detail the history and development of circuit chautauqua, stressing its operational, commercial, and social dimensions.

Predecessors of Circuit Chautauqua

Before the actual emergence of circuit chautauqua in 1904, the activities of Reverend John Heyl Vincent's Sunday School Institute, the independent chautauquas, and lyceums prepared the way for its development and acceptance and even influenced the nature of its program offerings. The pursuits of Vincent's Institute and of the later independent chautauquas attached a popular educational, cultural, and inspirational connotation to the term "chautauqua," concepts which later circuit managers would emphasize largely for promotional reasons. And lyceums of the late nineteenth century conditioned American tastes for, as well as stimulated interest in, programs similar to those circuit chautauqua offered in the early twentieth century.
Mother Chautauqua

Reverend John Heyl Vincent established a Sunday School Institute in 1874 for the purpose of training men and women in Sunday school instruction and organization. The site chosen for this institute was at Fair Point, on Chautauqua Lake, New York, and almost from its start, Vincent's Institute was commonly referred to as Chautauqua. Moreover, as other assemblies developed which attempted to emulate this assembly, it became known as "Mother" Chautauqua. The first chautauqua assembly opened in 1874, and "was attended by forty eager men and women" from the twelfth to the twenty-eighth of August.

The first several meetings of Mother Chautauqua were concerned with improving Sunday school teaching. These summer programs included instruction in singing and prayer, Bible reading, Biblical geography, Sunday school organization and management, and recreation. In the ensuing years, however, a regular program of general education and entertainment was gradually integrated into the curriculum to fill idle time after religious studies. Included in this accretion were lectures on culture, politics, and science, instruction in crafts, home economics and literature, and occasionally entertainment in the form of a humorist or impersonator. With these eventual accessions, the concern for Sunday school instruction gradually became subsumed under a general educational summer program.

2. Harrison, p. 41.
As the general educational program of Chautauqua developed, the assembly began to have greater and greater general public appeal, and, as a result, the numbers attending increased. From the original forty persons who had participated in the first summer assembly, attendance had grown to nearly five hundred by the fifth assembly of 1878.¹ And during the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning years of the twentieth, tens of thousands of visitors each year came from all parts of the United States to participate in the summer activities at Lake Chautauqua, New York.²

An important educational activity was added to Mother Chautauqua when, in 1878, Vincent formulated a home study program called The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle. The purpose of C.L.S.C., explains Vincent, was to give men and women deprived of educational opportunities a chance to obtain a college student perspective.³ As the C.L.S.C. developed, notes Author Bestor Jr., "it became basically a four years' course of directed home reading, leading to diploma and graduation."⁴

In 1881, the Chautauqua, a monthly magazine, was founded under the auspices of the C.L.S.C. Published in it were various articles that formed part of the guided reading of the Circle. And in 1898,

³. Vincent, p. 74.
⁴. Bestor, p. 11.
the Chautauqua Press was established which acted as the publishing agency for the C.L.S.C. sponsored book-a-month-club, started in that same year.

The C.L.S.C. in its initial years received massive support, especially from rural communities of the Middle West. More than 8,400 people joined the Circle during its founding year, the majority of them, writes Joseph Gould, "from the new states of the Midwest..."¹ By 1888, the total enrollment of the Circle had climbed to 100,000, and in 1900 was 2,500,000.² Moreover, in many rural communities groups of citizens met on a regular basis to discuss C.L.S.C. readings. Ten thousand "local circles," as these meetings were called, came into existence, according to John Noffsinger, between 1878 and 1898, "25% of these were in villages of less than 500 population and 50% in communities of between 500 and 3,500 population."³

The impact and influence of the C.L.S.C. in American communities is assessed by Gould:

In an incredibly short period of time, nearly every community of any size in the United States had at least one person following the Chautauqua reading program as a member of C.L.S.C... Travelers reported finding train crews on western railroads who had constituted


themselves a Circle, and there were crossroad store keepers who dragooned their cracker barrel philosophers into joining C.L.S.C. . . .

The development of various educational agencies at the New York Chautauqua Assembly rapidly followed the establishment of the C.L.S.C. in 1878. Among some of the more important agencies were the Normal School of Languages and the Teacher's Retreat (School of Pedagogy), both established in 1879, and the Chautauqua School of Theology which was chartered on March 29, 1881. An initial step was taken toward unifying the various educational agencies of chautauqua when, on March 30, 1883, the New York State Legislature chartered the Chautauqua University, empowering it to grant degrees. "During the next few years," Bestor comments, "the various Chautauqua schools were assimilated as departments of this corporate body"—academic subjects were offered by the Chautauqua College of Liberal Arts in summer sessions, through correspondence or, to a lesser extent, by extension lectures, and courses in divinity were administered under the Chautauqua School of Theology.

Independent Chautauquas

The first Chautauqua Assembly at Fair Point, New York, utilized primarily three means to carry on its educational objectives for its adult membership: summer school assemblies, guided reading courses, and study through correspondence. The success of this institute,


especially its summer programs, inspired numerous other communities, often through local circles, to provide summer assemblies similar in nature to those sponsored by the Mother Chautauqua. For their programs these independent chautauquas, as they were referred to, engaged lecturers, announced study classes and workshops, and often proclaimed cultural, educational, and inspirational ties with Mother Chautauqua.¹

The programs produced by the independent chautauquas were generally planned for a populace within a limited area and lasted each summer from several days to a month. Vincent viewed most of the independents as an "extension of Chautauqua work," and sometimes provided them with leadership and moral or practical support.²

By the first decade of the twentieth century there were about 1,500 independent chautauquas operating in the United States, especially in rural areas.³ After 1910, however, the number of independents rapidly declined; by 1914 their numbers were reduced to 600, and during the early twenties, almost all had ceased operation.⁴ The "onslaught of the little Chautauquas," notes the New York Times of July 12, 1914, was due to the rise of the circuit chautauquas which could provide better programs at less cost.⁵

¹ Case, p. 18.
² Vincent, p. 40.
³ "The Chautauqua Liked by Millions is 40 Years Old," New York Times, 12 July 1941, sec. 4, p. 3.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
Prior to the emergence of circuit chautauquas in 1904, the various educational activities of the Mother Chautauqua, the C.L.S.C., Chautauqua University, and the independent chautauquas helped attach a popular educational concept to the term chautauqua and conditioned the American taste for the kinds of programs that several years later were offered on the circuits. The development of the circuit chautauqua greatly profited from the enthusiasm given the first permanent assembly and the independents. As Gould argues, "the manager of the various Chautauqua Circuits never lost an opportunity to identify the enterprise with the original Chautauqua Assembly,"¹ And "the programs of the Independent Chautauqua organizations," explains Graham, "served as a model for the early circuits."²

Lyceum

The acceptance of the circuit chautauqua idea was not only fostered by the popularity and activities of Mother Chautauqua and independent chautauquas, but also through the influence and nature of lyceum programs and operation. Lyceum bureaus entered into the chautauqua field almost as soon as the first assembly was founded in 1874. It was from lyceum agencies that Mother Chautauqua, as well as the independent chautauquas, often booked some of their talent. Eventually, lyceum leaders, in attempting to increase profits by

¹. Gould, p. 85.

improving business efficiency and increasing bookings, became the major impetus behind the development of circuit chautauqua.

The American concept of "lyceum" originated in 1826 when Josiah Holbrook used the term to name his "association of adults for the purpose of education. . . ."  

1 After the founding of this association, lyceum organizations flourished, particularly in New England. By the close of 1834, there were approximately 3,000 communities in which a lyceum group had been founded.  

2 These organizations were concerned with educational objectives; they attempted to "improve schools, organize libraries and museums, [and] provide classes for adults."  

Lyceum organizations gradually declined in the years immediately preceding and during the Civil War. "At the close of the war," however, according to Tozier, "several men capitalizing upon the former interest in Lyceum, established Lyceum lecture bureaus."  

4 Thereafter, lyceum was gradually transformed to mean organized lecture circuits controlled by commercial booking agencies.  

By the end of

1. Harrison, p. viii.


3. Harrison, p. viii.


the century," notes Kenneth Hance, "a half dozen of the largest bureaus were booking more than three thousand lecture dates apiece. . . ."¹

At that time, lyceum bureaus also started booking other types of entertainers—impersonators, elocutionists, musical groups, and more.

By the turn of the century, at least 10,000 communities had an organized lyceum center, or an independent chautauqua, or both.² In the years immediately following the Civil War, it was not unusual for an entire community to sponsor a lyceum program. By the end of that century, however, the spirit of this civic undertaking had waned, and the support for lyceum programs came rather from specific groups, such as literary societies, social clubs, and church organizations.³ These group-sponsored programs were usually scheduled in the winter months, largely in urban areas. But lyceum bureaus also supplied much of the talent for the summer chautauqua assemblies. The best summer programs were often those offered by the assemblies in populated areas because they could support better lyceum programs. Although rural areas also attempted to sponsor major lyceum performers, primarily through their chautauquas, cost frequently prohibited these centers from obtaining high quality programs.

Lyceum programs of the late nineteenth century, sponsored by organized groups and independent Chautauquas, were very similar to the

1. Hance et al., p. 123.
programs presented by circuit chautauqua during the first years of the twentieth century. This is not surprising for lyceum agents were the ones who owned and operated circuit chautauquas utilizing lyceum talent in circuit programs. The circuit chautauqua brought top lyceum entertainers to numerous rural centers at a price their inhabitants could afford. The low cost of quality lyceum talent, plus the rural desire for good lyceum programs for their independent chautauquas, were two primary reasons why circuit chautauqua, at least initially, had its greatest support in small towns.

Keith Vawter and The Early Circuit Chautauqua

The first attempts at organization and integration of chautauqua programs came not from lyceum agencies, but from the managers of independent chautauquas. By the nineties, the novelty of independent chautauquas had subsided, and the costs of operating these assemblies began to impress itself upon their managers. During the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, there were various organizations formed by these managers in an attempt to keep the expenses of independent chautauqua programs within the scope of receipts and yet still attract quality talent.

The managers of independent chautauquas belonging to these organizations, first in 1879, the Western Federation of Chautauquas, then the International Chautauqua Alliance in 1899, and finally the Chautauqua Union of 1913, through cooperative efforts negotiated contracts for talent and tried to arrange program dates so that talent could be used as fully as possible. Each of these organized attempts
failed. The primary reasons for their failure, according to Orchard, were lack of central authority and control, disputes over talent selection, and disagreements over program dates.¹

Keith Vawter, agent for Redpath Lyceum Bureau of Chicago, studied the dissatisfaction surrounding the late nineteenth century organized attempts by the managers of independent chautauquas to reduce costs, yet maintain quality programs. Vawter believed that he could solve this dissatisfaction, as well as make money, by furnishing high quality and low cost uniform programs to independent chautauquas within a limited area, rather than booking lyceum talent for each independent chautauqua separately as had been the traditional practice of lyceum bureaus. With this plan, Vawter reasoned that extra travel and baggage cost could be eliminated and talent utilized more efficiently, resulting in a quality program at less cost for independent chautauquas than the traditional booking system.²

To try out his idea Vawter and Roy J. Ellison, a newly acquired partner, in 1903, contacted independent chautauqua operators throughout Iowa in hopes of persuading them to book their circuit lyceum program for summer chautauqua assemblies the following year. But largely due to the resistance on the part of independent chautauqua managers to allow someone from outside their community to run its

¹. Orchard, pp. 92-106.
². Harrison, p. 52.
chautauqua, only nine independent chautauqua operators contracted for Vawter's program.¹

Both Vawter and Ellison realized that more than nine bookings were necessary if their Standard Chautauqua Bureau, as they named this commercial venture, was to be financially feasible. They foresaw, write the Cases, the distasteful situation of "long hops between engagements, idle weeks of time when talent waited and expenses mounted."² They therefore attempted to book more towns by also offering their services to those communities without an established independent chautauqua.

Vawter sent agents to communities without independent chautauquas, but rather than sell a Standard Chautauqua program to an operator of a chautauqua, these agents sought out community leaders to financially sponsor the program. In six towns, without a chautauqua, prominent citizens agreed to sponsor a Standard Chautauqua in 1904. The nine managers of independent chautauquas who contracted for a Vawter program in 1904 supplied the pavilion in which the program was given. But in those six towns which did not have an independent chautauqua and whose prominent citizens sponsored Vawter's circuit, a circus tent was used. Later circuit managers would generally look to prominent citizens to contract their programs, especially as the independent chautauquas expired. A tent was also used more often than

¹ Orchard, p. 119.
² Case, p. 29.
not on later circuits, primarily because many town pavilions were too small for chautauqua crowds.

Vawter, utilizing Redpath lyceum talent, provided a Standard Chautauqua program for a total of fifteen Midwestern town in the summer of 1904. Also in that same year, under the direction of Sannon White, agent for the Midland Lyceum Bureau at Des Moines, a uniform lyceum program was organized and sold to several independent chautauquas throughout Iowa. The major difference between the White and Vawter plans, according to D. L. Graham, was,

... that under the former the existing community organization was maintained to promote Chautauqua as it had done previously, while under the latter only contract signers were required in each community to guarantee payment to the bureau, and no local Chautauqua association need exist, its place having been taken over by the Central Bureau.¹

Although Vawter's Standard Chautauqua Bureau of 1904 was financially a failure, he did pioneer the beginning of the circuit chautauqua system. The concept of this system, writes Orchard, refers to:

... that practice ... of booking uniform programs of Chautauqua talent through consecutive dates, to a considerable number of communities, and supplying from a central headquarters the equipment, as well as the management of all transactions entering into the building and the delivery of such Chautauquas.²

After modifications primarily in contract arrangements, Vawter in 1907, again attempted to persuade Midwestern communities to book a Standard Chautauqua program. This second attempt by Vawter was financially successful; his Chautauqua traveled to thirty-three Iowa,


2. Orchard, p. 113.
Nebraska, and Wisconsin communities that year. The modifications made by Vawter regarding contract agreements were important to the financial success of his own and later circuits. To sponsor a Standard Chautauqua of 1907, leaders of a community had to sign a contract which stipulated that 1) they would guarantee a $2,000 ticket sale, 2) of the total gate receipts, the manager received the first $2,500, plus fifty percent of everything above this amount (after 1910, managers received all of the gate receipts), 3) the manager provided the talent and was responsible for their travel fare and expenses, and 4) once a chautauqua program date was set, it could not be changed.\(^1\)

Essentially the same contract stipulations were adopted and used by all of the major chautauqua bureaus operating after 1907.

After the success of Vawter's Standard Chautauqua in 1907, other lyceum managers gradually entered into the field of circuit chautauqua. Until about 1913, this initial phase of circuit chautauqua development and acceptance progressed quite slowly, in part, due to the reluctance of the managers of independent chautauquas to yield their programming to an outside agency. In 1910, for example, approximately only six organized circuit bureaus were serving fewer than a hundred communities; whereas three years later the Western Redpath Chautauqua Bureau alone was serving 250 communities.\(^2\) The circuit chautauqua bureaus prior to 1913, moreover, were only serving the

\(^1\) Harrison, p. 26.

\(^2\) Graham, p. 32.
Midwestern area of the United States, especially rural farming communities where C.L.S.C. membership was high.

The gradual success of circuit chautauqua during its initial period is most often explained by chautauqua personnel in terms of socio-cultural needs. Henry P. Harrison, for example, details the socio-cultural function circuit chautauqua played for rural Midwesterners:

Weary of mud-road isolation, they thirsted for knowledge, for exposition of new ideas not accessible to them in the ordinary course of their reading. . . . And above all, they were hungry for escape from their own flat horizons into the fascinating world that lay beyond. If they could not see it with their own eyes, they could perhaps behold it with that "inner eye" of the imagination of which the poet speaks. Lecturers who "had been there" could evoke these exotic scenes for their enjoyment. These were the people for whom Circuit Chautauqua was finally conceived, the kind who supported it with quarters and half dollars, who got the most out of it. . . .

The programs of the independent chautauquas, as previously noted, served as a model for the programs developed by circuit chautauqua bureaus, at least initially. A typical independent or circuit chautauqua summer program of 1910, for example, would have lasted approximately six to nine days. The most popular attraction on the program would have been the lecturers, especially those classified as inspirational. Also included in the program would have been classical musical performances, several elocutionists, and perhaps a magician or humorist. Drama, during the new years of the twentieth century,

1. Harrison, p. 17.
was absent from circuit or independent programs.¹ For many rural Midwesterners, at that time, drama meant "painted women" and "dissolute men."²

Circuit chautauqua programs may well have helped quench "the thirst for knowledge," but its managers also capitalized on this need for commercial interests.³ From the start, circuit managers attempted to associate circuit chautauqua with the, then well-known, Mother Chautauqua and other popular independent chautauquas for commercial reasons.⁴ Through promotional campaigns, managers emphasized, usually falsely, the cultural, educational, and inspirational quality of their programs by comparing them to those offered by Mother Chautauqua and various independent chautauquas. Tent chautauqua, according to the Cases, snatched up the concept of chautauqua "into circuits . . . , cashing in all along the way."⁵

Circuit Chautauqua Comes of Age

After 1913, circuit chautauqua began to sweep the nation and the independent assemblies experienced a marked decline. Fifteen circuit chautauqua bureaus were operating by 1914, serving 2,400 towns.⁶

2. Ibid., p. 51.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 20.
5. Ibid.
In contrast, only 600 independent chautauquas were in operation that year, of which there were once an estimated 1,500. And by 1920, there were twenty-one major circuit chautauqua bureaus serving approximately 10,000 communities, an aggregate population of about three million, and only several independent assemblies in operation.

Circuit chautauqua, after its developmental period, became big business, often times grossing hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for the bureaus. In 1914, the fifteen major chautauqua bureaus controlled "one or more circuits of from forty to ninety towns." And in an attempt to reduce competition between the major bureaus and develop a code of ethics, bureau owners organized a business alliance, the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Manager's Association. Operating in a time when big business had a negative connotation for many Americans, and especially for audiences who had heard William J. Bryan and Robert LaFollette denounce big business from chautauqua platforms, bureau managers constantly tried to hide the fact "that Chautauqua itself was now Big Business." Circuit chautauqua's promotional campaigns faithfully stressed its social merits, but never its commercial dimensions.

1. "Chautauqua Liked by Millions," sec. 4, p. 3.
2. Horner, pp. 94, 97.
4. "Chautauqua Liked by Millions," sec. 4, p. 3.
The business and organizational relationship between the larger lyceum bureaus and chautauqua agencies is detailed by Donald L. Graham, using the Redpath system as an example:

Basically, the Redpath system consisted of a number of Chautauqua circuits allied together under a single name, but owned separately. The parent organization, The Redpath Lyceum Bureau, continued to function throughout the period of Chautauqua history as a single corporation. The managers of several Redpath Lyceum offices established Chautauquas as separate corporations and were thus actually operating two businesses simultaneously, Lyceum and Chautauqua. For the privilege of using the corporation name for their own undertakings, the Redpath Chautauqua managers paid a royalty to the Redpath Lyceum Bureau.¹

The promotion, contracting, and scheduling of a circuit chautauqua program had, by 1915, almost become an exact science, a formulary procedure. The custom of circuit chautauqua bureaus, by this time, was to re-book each town for the following year at the conclusion of a program. To those communities which had refused to renew a circuit contract, however, or to prospective new chautauqua towns a circuit agent was sent several months prior to Chautauqua Season, which lasted roughly from June to September. This agent was responsible for contacting community leaders in an effort to persuade them to sponsor a circuit chautauqua program by signing a contract making them financially responsible for a certain percentage of the ticket sales.² If ticket sales lagged below this agreed upon percentage at the close of a chautauqua program, then these community leaders were required to make up the deficit.

¹. Graham, p. 37.
². Briggs and DaBoll, p. 71.
The agent attempted to persuade community leaders to sponsor his circuit program by emphasizing the number of neighboring communities that sponsored chautauqua, the crowds a chautauqua drew into a community, which, of course, stimulated business, the duty of the community leaders to bring the best to their communities, and, most importantly, the educational and cultural merits and benefits of the chautauqua programs. After community leaders of a potential chautauqua community signed a contract or renewed it at the end of a program, an agent would estimate, or already know from previous years, how many days a series of attractions would last in a particular community. After scheduling other towns for circuit programs in his territory, keeping track of dates and places, the agent "merely . . . shuffled the dates into a logical geographical sequence." And once chautauqua dates were set for a community, they could not be changed because the various performances that made up the program followed one another along a circuit with no days lost enroute.

Although circuit chautauqua's contracting system guaranteed that a bureau would not lose money on any given program due to poor participation, a deficit which required community leaders to reach into their own pockets was disastrous for a bureau. A deficit usually meant that community leaders would not sponsor a chautauqua program for the following year and "the loss of one town, unless it could be


2. Harrison, p. 54.
replaced by another in the immediate vicinity, meant a considerable slice out of the profits. If many towns dropped out, there was a serious loss."¹ Moreover, a deficit indicated that the bureau had lost income above the contracted amount from potential gate receipts. The attendance to a circuit program was, therefore, not only important to the sponsoring committee, but also to the chautauqua bureau as well.

"It was good business, obviously, for the bureaus to use part of their profits to set up publicity and promotional machinery which would help sell . . . tickets. . . ."² Chautauqua bureaus, therefore, spent thousands of dollars each year in creating and sponsoring advertising campaigns. The development and delivery of these campaigns were based on the assumption that since the same talent would be on the chautauqua programs of numerous communities, print material and other promotional techniques could be standardized.³ Blanket programs, for example, "could be printed for all, with each town's name and Chautauqua dates afterward filled in. This meant that programs could be printed by tens and even hundreds of thousands, with all the benefits of mass production."⁴

Approximately four weeks before the start of a chautauqua program in a community, a circuit advertising crew would come to put up posters, distribute leaflets, and stir up anticipation for the

¹. MacLaren, p. 274.

². Case, p. 176.

³. Orchard, p. 235.

forthcoming chautauqua. More likely than not, a huge banner was hung over "Main Street," perhaps reading "Chautauqua, August 20-27."

Citizens were given buttons to wear proclaiming, "I'm Going" or "I Bought Mine." Chautauqua posters appeared, nailed on various community buildings or perhaps on the rear of a wagon or two. And also the spectacular program booklets were freely handed out detailing what would be included in the chautauqua program.

About a week before the beginning of a Chautauqua Week, the circuit agent reappeared in the community and usually found advanced ticket sales slow. If sales significantly lagged, the agent "set up a booth near the post office, and staffed it with the prettiest high school girls he could find. Giggling, they insisted that every pedestrian wear one of the 'I Bought Mine' badges."¹ And occasionally, the agent even paid private citizens to solicit from door to door to improve ticket sales.

The morning before an opening program date, tent boys arrived and by that evening had the huge brown chautauqua tent standing in a vacant lot. Finally, the day came when community leaders, men and women, boys and girls, and dogs and cats turned out to greet the arrival of the first circuit talent—probably with the town band blaring in the background. Many of the performers upon their arrival were invited to stay in the homes of various community members, and those less fortunate were forced to lodge at a local hotel. That

afternoon or evening, many community members would experience their first chautauqua performance of the season. Chautauqua Week had begun.

The nature of circuit chautauqua programs after 1914, was different from those of earlier years. Rather than offering nine day programs, as earlier bureaus had, the programs proposed by bureaus after 1914 were usually five to eight days in duration. Moreover, the content of the programs was becoming more oriented toward social issues and entertainment. The popularity of inspirational lectures on earlier programs was displaced by lectures on social issues, such as prohibition, women's rights, capitalism, juvenile delinquency, and, during World War I, talks on the war effort. Musical numbers, although still primarily classical, were beginning to include popular music, such as jazz. And full-scale drama was introduced to circuit chautauqua audiences in 1917.

Although circuit managers continued to emphasize the cultural, educational and inspirational worth of chautauqua programs in 1917, the United States Congress, searching for revenues to finance the war, imposed a ten percent amusement tax upon circuit chautauqua tickets. There was not any apparent "concentrated protest over the payment of the tax during the war," because it could be justified on the grounds the revenue was supporting the war effort. After the war, when the

2. Case, p. 75.
3. Horner, p. 175.
tax was not removed from circuit chautauquas, however, chautauqua sponsoring committees and audiences began to question the social nature and worth of that institution.

Although circuit chautauqua remained popular in small Midwestern communities, after 1914, it became prevalent in other areas of the country, and the average size of chautauqua towns increased. According to the statistics reported by the New York Times in 1914, each of the then operating circuit chautauquas were serving towns averaging in population from 5,000 to 15,000 throughout the nation.¹ Thus the circuit chautauqua which once only visited rural farm areas of the Middle West was now attended by both rural and urban audiences throughout the country. In both Los Angeles and New York City, for example, circuit chautauqua started to experience great popularity prior to 1920. Furthermore, at this time circuit chautauqua also became widely accepted in foreign lands such as Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

There is literary evidence to suggest that before 1920 rural communities viewed circuit chautauqua as educational, cultural, and inspirational; whereas, in the larger urban areas it was interpreted as amusement and entertainment. Writing in 1920, ex-circuit chautauqua lecturer Sinclair Lewis personified his perceptions about circuit chautauqua in the main character of his Main Street, Carol Milford, from Minneapolis, visiting a small Midwestern town. Despite what Carol had read about the circuit chautauqua program from the placecards

1. "Chautauqua Liked by Millions," sec. 4, p. 3.
and banners, writes Lewis, "she was disappointed when she saw the program. It did not seem to be a tabloid university; it did not seem to be any kind of university; it seemed to be a combination of vaudeville performances, Y.M.C.A. lectures, and graduation exercises of an elocution class." Carol's urban sentiments were not apparently shared by the rural townsfolk of Gopher Prairie because "after it, the town felt proud and educated."  

Circuit Chautauqua Epidemic and Decline

Many of the same factors associated with the phenomenal success of circuit chautauqua between the end of World War I and the mid-twenties, were also connected with the decline and eventual demise of the institution. After the war, every state in the union had at least one circuit chautauqua sponsoring committee, and more than one-third of the population participated in Chautauqua Week each season during the early twenties. Moreover, during this time of great popularity, those towns which wanted a circuit chautauqua program had to book it sometimes two or three years in advance.

After circuit chautauqua's biggest year in 1924, known as the "Jubilee Year," however, came the frightening realization for those connected with the circuits that thousands of towns refused to re-book for the 1925 season. Thereafter, circuit bureaus ran into financial

2. Ibid., p. 239.
3. Horner, pp. 94, 97.
disaster and, finally, oblivion. The usual theory for explaining
the demise of circuit chautauqua was that improved means of communi-
cation and transportation destroyed the isolation of chautauqua
communities, allowing the inhabitants to fill social, cultural, and
educational needs in other ways besides circuit chautauqua. But as
Gould notes, "there is no doubt that each of these had an adverse
effect on attendance, but what was essentially an art form would not
have disappeared so rapidly and so completely. . . ."1 The reasons
for circuit chautauqua's decline were primarily long range, starting
with its great rise to popularity after the war.

The massive popularity of the major twenty-one circuit
chautauqua bureaus encouraged the development of a great number of
smaller circuit chautauquas, which were, according to the Cases,
"little more than shoddy carnivals. . . ."2 These little chautauquas
by the mid-twenties drew substantially from the attendance of the
larger circuit chautauquas by offering three day programs at much less
cost than sponsoring a major circuit program. Moreover, the poor
program quality of these little chautauquas hurt the educational,
cultural, and wholesome image projected by the older more traditional
circuits.

Circuit chautauqua by the mid-twenties had become as popular
in urban centers as in rural areas. In urban areas, circuit programs
were sought out for their amusement and entertainment values, rather

2. Case, p. 224.
than for cultural, educational, or inspirational reasons.¹ The significance of this urban attitude toward circuit programs is explained by Gould:

Tent Chautauqua's demise was due to the inability of circuit managers to reconcile two fundamentally opposite goals: they wanted to bring culture to the hinterland, and they wanted to make money. They thought the answer lay in expansion, in more towns on the circuit, a longer season, bigger names. Their once proud boast that no serious issue was ever barred from a Chautauqua platform was forgotten, and they concentrated on hiring crowd-pleasing talent.²

The "entertainment features of the program were blooming and expanding" during the twenties, reports Charles Horner.³ Moreover, the two types of entertainment features most popular at this time, according to Horner, were drama and musicals.⁴ But due to the vast expansion of the circuits, the entering of the little chautauquas into the field, the competitive commercial nature between circuits, and lack of quality performers to supply the circuit demand, the excellence of the programs rapidly dimished. "There were too many saxaphone solos, too many girlish trios . . . too much of the bird whistlers and bell ringers and piano monologues in costume, and singers who drew cartoons and modeled in clay."⁵ Drama was often "innocuous bits of

². Gould, p. 86.
³. Horner, p. 175.
⁴. Ibid.
⁵. Case, p. 48.
sunshine or foreshortened versions of Shakespeare."¹ No longer were classical melodies or the long-winded platform orators central to circuit chautauqua programs. The once ever-popular circuit orator was now "like a candidate without a platform."²

The commercial nature of circuit chautauqua programs acquired during the twenties apparently damaged the popular promotional image of the institution. An article in the March 1927 edition of Outlook Magazine, for example, reports, "commercialism, the desire to attract as many people as possible has degraded the quality and the spirit of many chautauqua organizations."³ Moreover, the amusement tax placed on circuit chautauqua tickets in 1917, reportedly to help the war effort, was not removed during the post-war period which also harmed the social respectability of circuit chautauqua. Sponsoring committees and chautauqua audiences, given the commercial nature of circuit programs and the fact that they were taxed as amusement, soon began to question the social worth of circuit chautauqua. And community leaders, therefore, found it increasingly difficult to justify the sponsoring of a circuit program on cultural, or educational, or inspirational grounds.

The demise of the circuit chautauqua has also been popularly attributed to the swift acceptance of the radio, improved roads, and

¹. Gould, p. 83.
². Horner, pp. 188-189.
mass-produced automobiles, and the advent of the "talkie." Horner explains the effect of the radio and talking picture on chautauqua acceptance: "The radio was something new. Its very novelty dramatized it. Movies were of little consequence . . . until the perfection of the talkie and the comfortable embellishment of the picture theatre. Both really cut into our crowds." And the improvement of "roads and dependable cars," notes Gould, "inevitably doomed the interurban traction companies."

The sweeping popularity of the radio and "talkie" allowed Americans to learn of national events much more efficiently than they might by waiting for Chautauqua Week. Moreover, increased magazine and newspaper circulation, "doubling and trebeling in the twenties," also served, according to the Cases, to displace circuit chautauqua as a news medium. The increased use of automobiles allowed those living in rural areas the ease of going into larger cities where they could participate in musicals, dramas, and lectures at any time of the year. Community leaders who had traditionally sponsored chautauqua also began to compare the ease of traveling to the city for entertainment and the newer popular mediums, such as the radio and talkie, to the circuit programs of questionable social worth which required a cash guarantee.

2. Horner, p. 189
out of their own pockets. And after 1925, getting community leaders
to sponsor a chautauqua was almost impossible.

After selling his circuit chautauqua interests in 1926, Keith
Vawter, founder of circuit chautauqua, reviewed the situation surround­
ing the institution in a letter to Ralph Parlette, dated December 27,
1927:

I now seem to find there are about three types of
attitudes toward Chautauqua. One is the fellow that is
still in the business who seems to me to be kidding him­
selv, absolutely regardless of the facts in the case,
into the idea that the day of Chautauqua's greatest
usefulness and perchance prosperity, is just dawning.
The second group is the fellows that are out fortunately
or unfortunately, more inclined to look on the present
and future a bit pessimistically, and the third group
that I come in contact with is the public, the old local
boosters who again divide themselves into two groups--
the old faithful that are still struggling to keep their
Chautauqua going and the younger crowd in town that feel
they have made an honest effort, haven't succeeded as well
as the effort justifies and are through.¹

Vawter's sale in 1926, writes Harrison, "shocked us. Already
several other outfits, one at a time had stepped out of the parade."²
Charles Horner began to sell his circuit interests in 1926, and by
1928 was out of the circuit chautauqua business altogether. Likewise,
Harrison also started to sell his circuit interests in 1927. Most of
the larger circuit chautauqua bureaus were either sold or went bank­
rupt by the late twenties, although several operated into the beginning
years of the thirties. The depression, however, soon ended any hopes

¹. Keith Vawter to Ralph Parlette, 27 December 1927, Vawter
Chautauqua Collection, Box 150, Special Collections, State University
of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

². Harrison, p. 264.
for the continuance of any circuit chautauqua bureau. The last reported circuit program given in the United States was sponsored through the Peffer Chautauqua Bureau and closed at Alliance, Ohio in August of 1932.

Summary

To give the reader greater understanding of the conceptual climate in which circuit chautauqua promotional materials were created and knowledge about the institution itself, this chapter has briefly detailed the history and development of circuit chautauqua, stressing its operational, commercial, and social dimensions.

The concept of chautauqua at first had a religious character when John Heyl Vincent founded the first Chautauqua Institute in 1874 for the training of Sunday school teachers. Vincent's incorporation of other studies, activities, and entertainment features, however, changed the directional purpose of his summer institute toward that of a more general educational program, which resulted in greater widespread popular appeal. Several outgrowths of the New York assembly, and also the C.L.S.C. and Chautauqua University, helped to spread the educational influence of Mother Chautauqua. Soon after the founding of the original assembly, independent chautauquas developed in various areas throughout the United States. They attempted to emulate the summer educational programs of the first institute.

Lyceum bureaus supplied some of the talent for both independent chautauqua programs and Mother Chautauqua. In an effort to reduce talent costs through cooperative effort, independent chautauqua
managers created such organizations as the Western Federation of Chautauquas, the International Chautauqua Alliance, and the Chautauqua Union. Lack of central control and disputes over talent selection and program dates account for the failure of each one of these organizations.

After studying the dissatisfaction surrounding late nineteenth century attempts to organize independent assemblies, Keith Vawter, an agent for the Redpath Lyceum Bureau, experimented with a plan in 1904 which allowed him to carry around a lyceum bill of fare to towns on a circuit, with or without an established chautauqua to sponsor it, rather than book individual lyceum attractions for each independent chautauqua program. Although financially a failure in 1904, Vawter tried his experiment, with some contract modifications, again in 1907, and this time he was successful. Soon after, other lyceum bureaus gradually entered into the circuit chautauqua field.

The beginning circuit chautauqua programs were modeled from those offered by independent assemblies. Inspirational lectures, classical music, and readers were popular in these early circuit programs. Moreover, initially circuit chautauquas were popular only in the Middle West, usually in rural farming communities.

After 1913, circuit chautauqua began to sweep the country, and became popular in both rural and urban areas. Before America's entrance into World War I, circuit chautauqua had become big business, an image that managers attempted to hide by continually stressing the educational, cultural, and inspirational merits of circuit programs.
Also, the promotional, selling, and scheduling, by this time, had become almost a formulary procedure.

After the war circuit chautauqua experienced phenomenal success; approximately one-third of the nation attended circuit chautauqua each year during the early twenties. But many of the same factors associated with this success also were connected with its decline. After chautauqua's biggest year in 1924, known as the Jubilee Year, came the frightening realization, for those connected with chautauqua, that thousands of towns refused to re-book for the 1925 season. Changing social conditions and the declining quality of circuit programs made circuit chautauqua out of place in modern America and economically unfeasible. When the hundreds of big brown chautauqua tents went into storage at the end of the 1926 season, only a few were unfolded for chautauqua again. The depression ended all hopes of survival for those circuit bureaus that had persisted after 1926. The last circuit chautauqua program was presented in 1932.
Ever since Freud, scholars have realized the significance and importance of fantasy. Our dreams are not inconsequential, but may be powerful goals to action. The symbolic world of a person’s fantasies can affect his perception of reality and motivational structure. A well-known axiom in American advertising, for example, is that people will be motivated to buy a product if they feel that it contributes to the fulfillment of their fantasies. In the pursuit of fantasy fulfillment, thousands of persons each year buy impractical and unneeded red sports cars, sexy lingerie, and even tickets to the local circus.

Modern advertisers recommend their products as a means of participating in contemporary public fantasies. Mass persuaders do not create new fantasies; they merely identify and elaborate the current public dreams. Finally, they attempt to demonstrate the relevance of their product to the realization of the fantasy. In this wise, the recent sales success of products like the bicycle and the backpack, for example, may be explained by their relevance to a powerful public fantasy—the ecology movement. Discourse which invites receivers to fantasize, then, can potentially be very persuasive.

A fantasy is a mental construct which incorporates imaginative, rational, and emotional elements into an unconscious symbolic world, the associations of which are based in varying degrees on the real or the fictive. As Robert F. Bales suggests:

Fantasy is a mode of psychological action not subject to the same restraints as more consciously controlled forms of thought; certainly it is more free than overt behavior. . . . [It] is connected with overt behavior as the unconscious aspects of the mind are with the conscious aspects, that is through many distorting and concealing defenses.¹

Ernest Bormann, extrapolating from the recent theoretical findings by Robert F. Bales² which concern small group communication and fantasizing, has constructed a message-centered dramatistic approach for the rhetorical analysis of fantasy-persuasion in discourse.³ To understand Bormann's approach, and to construct a methodology that will provide answers to the two central research questions of this study, some of the basic theoretical precepts prescribed by Bales' findings need to be briefly reviewed.

The purpose of this chapter is to 1) briefly overview Bales' theories concerning small group behavior and fantasizing, 2) discuss how Bormann used these theories to create his approach to fantasy-persuasion within discourse, and 3) detail a methodology by which

². Detailed in chapter seven of Personality and Interpersonal Behavior, by Bales, pp. 136-155.
³. This approach is developed in "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality" by Ernest Bormann, Quarterly Journal of Speech 58 (December 1972): 396-407 (all footnotes in the following are pertinent to this reference).
the fantasy-persuasion contained in circuit chautauqua program bro- chures can be analyzed. This methodological structure will provide valuable insights into 1) the nature of the fantasies used in the brochures and 2) how these fantasies were used to promote attendance to chautauqua.

**Bales' Theoretical Precepts Concerning Fantasy**

Basic to Bales' theoretical scheme regarding fantasy and group behavior based on his deductions from experimental observations, are how and why "group fantasies" and "group cultures" form. Although each individual of a group has unconscious fantasies, according to Bales, many times these individual fantasies contain similar or related elements which can symbolically interact to create moments of group flight from reality—a group fantasy.¹ A group fantasy develops when

... one or some of the participants presents in his communication symbols which have unconscious meanings for one or some of the other participants. Each tries to control the symbols presented by the other in the way he tries to control his own unconscious fantasies. The control often fails, and the chain reaction begins.²

If this chain reaction of unconscious association by members with various symbolic aspects continues, other members of the group can be drawn in, and the group may enter into a new realm of reality. This new symbolic world is complete with heroes and villains, each with their corresponding environments; it is, concludes Bales, a

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2. Ibid.
psychodramatic world which seems more real than everyday life. ¹

Significantly, this process of building a fantasy chain by free association from one member of a group to another suggests, according to Bales, that it "is caused by the associations that people already have in their minds aroused by some features of the present situation."²

If the fantasy chain is not interrupted, it may become so emotionally powerful that a motivationally coercive power over the participants can develop. "People," writes Bales, "are forced into the roles portrayed by the fantasy, by projection, seduction, or manipulation."³ Moreover, the fantasy tends to be enacted by its participants in an increasingly more complete way until disrupted.

When the members of a group unconsciously create and sustain a set of symbols over a period of time, which, when recalled, define another realm of reality for them, they are participating in what Bales terms the fantasy of a group culture. The fantasy created and maintained by the unconscious chaining process of the group is, in fact, the culture. Each participant knows that this realm of reality "does or can surpass him, survive him; which may inspire him or organize him, and which may threaten to dominate him."⁴

The nature, and psychological, emotional, and motivational power of the fantasy of a group culture is clearly detailed by Bales:

1. Bales, p. 142.
2. Ibid., p. 138.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., pp. 151-152.
It is a group in which the individuals have become emotionally involved and have begun to develop a culture of their own. The culture of the interacting group stimulates in each of its members a feeling that he has entered a new realm of reality—a world of heroes, villains, saints, and enemies—a drama, a work of art. The culture of a group is a fantasy established from the past, which is acted upon in the present. In such moments, which occur not only in groups, but also in individual responses to works of art, one is "transported" to a world which seems somehow more real than the everyday world. One may feel exalted, fascinated, perhaps horrified or threatened, or powerfully impelled to action, but in any case involved. One's feelings fuse with symbols and images, which carry the feeling in communication and sustain it over time. One is psychologically taken into a psychodramatic fantasy world, in which others in the group are also involved. Then one is attached to those other members.¹

The fantasy of a group culture is "consistent, continuous, self-sufficient, and complete. . . . [It] is big enough to hold a complete individual life. . . ."² Moreover, it serves as a coping mechanism for man against the vast world of infinite incomprehensible events. Although an individual may independently fantasize to provide a sense of meaning and control over his world, participating in the fantasy of a group culture is perhaps more reassuring for him because he has the supportive companionship of comrades. Bales explains that when man is

. . . suddenly confronted with some aspect of naked nature that breaks through his little world of meaning, [he] immediately interposes a flood of integrating fantasy, a current feeling that is normalizing, reassuring, often inspiring. . . . In this psychological defense of himself, the culture of a group is tremendously helpful . . . perhaps indispensible.³

¹ Bales, p. 152.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p. 153.
Bormann: Fantasy-Persuasion and Rhetorical Criticism

Bormann has provided a valuable and pragmatic link between Bales' theories concerning group fantasizing and rhetorical criticism in his article "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality." Not only in individual reactions to art or in a group's chaining out a fantasy theme are participants transported into a psychodramatic world, argues Bormann, but also in larger rhetorical transactions as well:

The dramatizations which catch on and chain out in small groups are worked into public speeches and into the mass media and, in turn, spread out across larger publics, serve to sustain the members' sense of community, to impel them strongly to action (which raises the question of motivation), and to provide them with a social reality filled with heroes, villains, emotions, and attitudes.¹

A key concept in Bormann's approach is the relationship between what he calls, "rhetorical vision" and "fantasy dramas." This relationship is analogous to the connection made by Bales between group culture and group fantasy chains. A rhetorical vision, explains Bormann, is the "composite dramas which catch up large groups of people in symbolic reality . . . just as fantasy themes chain out in groups to create a unique group culture so do the fantasy dramas of a successful persuasive campaign chain out in a public audience to form a rhetorical vision."² Like group culture, rhetorical vision is

2. Ibid.
constructed from those fantasy dramas that chain out "in all diverse settings for public and intimate communication in a given society."¹

The rhetorical vision, once it has emerged, is a self-sustaining social system, like the group culture, which can be recalled unconsciously through free association with the symbols contained within a piece of discourse. Once the rhetorical vision develops, writes Bormann, "it contains dramatis personae and typical plot lines that can be alluded to in all communication contexts and spark a response reminiscent of the original emotional chain. The same dramas can be developed in detail when the occasion demands to generate emotional response."² Because the viable rhetorical vision is complete and self-sufficient, those participating in it "are not troubled by contradictory evidence from common sense experience."³ It serves as a device for coping with hard, perhaps nonunderstandable, reality. The rhetorical vision as a coping device for its participants serves the same function as the group culture. By adding a dimension of meaning for the individual, the rhetorical vision helps "protect him from the pressures of natural calamity and social disaster . . . [with] the supportive warmth of like-minded companions."⁴

Significantly, the rhetorical vision, as the group culture, is created from associations that members already have in their own minds.

¹ Bormann, p. 398.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p. 400.
⁴ Ibid.
The rhetorical vision, then, is aroused by unconscious symbolic inter­
action with words within a piece of discourse. This suggests, accord­
ing to Bormann, that when a critic analyzes discourse he

... should start from the assumption that when there
is a discrepancy between the word and the thing the most
important cultural artifact for understanding the events
may not be the things or "reality" but the words or symbols.
Indeed, in many vital instances the words, that is, the
rhetoric, are the social reality.¹

The words, then, which recall a vision into the minds of its partici­
pants, create the social reality.

From the symbolic reality contained within the psychodramatic
world of a rhetorical vision, the participants acquire new meanings;
emotional states, and, most importantly in terms of persuasion, motives
and justification for belief and action.² As with the group culture,
the psychodrama of a viable rhetorical vision alters its members'
perception of reality by drawing them into the roles portrayed by the
fantasy. When this occurs, new meanings are procured by members
through interaction with the symbols of the fantasy recalled from
the past, emotions connected with these new meanings also arise, and
the role enacted by the various participants gives them a way of
organizing the meaning of events, a way of systematically interpreting
the past, a set of motives, and a rationale for beliefs and actions.³

For example, by studying dramatistically, writes Bormann, "the internal
fantasy of the [colonial New England] community as revealed in the

1. Bormann, pp. 400-401.
3. Ibid.
sermons of their ministers, we discover the characters of the drama, their emotional values, their actions, and their relationship to an over-reaching supernatural power."¹ Thus participants may be powerfully impelled to action on the basis of the message alone. To a significant extent, explains Bormann, "motives do not exist to be expressed in communication but rather arise in the expression itself and come to be embedded in the drama of the fantasy themes that are generated and serve to sustain them."²

**Methodology**

By analyzing the social reality contained within rhetorical visions when chained out via discourse, the rhetorical critic can gain valuable insights into the psychological structure, symbolic and social attitude, and, most importantly, the motivational factors for those who participate in it. Because the fantasy chains, from which rhetorical visions are constructed, are psychodramatic in nature, a dramatistic methodology is extremely applicable in analyzing the nature of social reality contained within rhetorical visions:

A critic can take the social reality contained in a rhetorical vision . . . constructed from the concrete dramas developed in a body of discourse and examine the social relationships, the motives, the qualitative impact of that symbolic world as though it were the substance of social reality for those people who participated in the vision.³

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1. Bormann, p. 405.
2. Ibid., p. 406.
3. Ibid., p. 401.
After the critic gathers the materials to be used for analysis, he uses dramatic categories to discover and describe the fantasy dramas that chain out in a body of discourse. Then he creatively reconstructs the rhetorical vision(s) "from the representative fantasy chains much as the scholar would delineate a school of drama on the basis of a number of different plays."¹

The dramatistic categories to be used for determining the fantasy dramas contained in circuit chautauqua program brochures, and, consequently, the nature of the rhetorical visions and motives used for promotion are character, scene, plot, and theme. Each of these categories is operationally defined below, and for each is suggested a series of analytical questions to be used when constructing the rhetorical visions(s). The definitions for these basic dramatistic categories are taken from Playwriting: The Structure of Action by Sam Smiley.

The character in drama concerns the personages that enact or reveal human action and motivations.² Thus the critic may ask: Who are the dramatis personae? Who are the heroes? The villains? What motives are attributed to the characters? From where do the characters derive their motives? What values are inherent in the praiseworthy characters? Unpraiseworthy? Are abstractions personified as characters? How are the members of the rhetorical community characterized?

¹ Bormann, p. 401.
Scene refers to where the action of a drama takes place.\textsuperscript{1} Questions here include: In what settings do the dramas take place? Do the scenes have supernatural powers? What power do scenes have over the characters? What is the relationship between the characters and scenes?

The plot of a drama is the structure of action that takes place within it.\textsuperscript{2} The critic asks: What are the typical scenarios? What acts are performed by what characters? Which acts are praised? Which are condemned? What are the praiseworthy life styles? Unpraiseworthy?

Theme refers to the "meanings derived" from a drama.\textsuperscript{3} So, one answers: What meanings are inherent in the dramas? Where does the insider fit into the scheme of history? What emotional evocations dominate the dramas? What motives are embodied in the dramas? Values?

The identification and description of the key dramatistic elements detailed will reveal the content of the fantasies used in the brochures to promote attendance. Because of the very nature of mass public advertising, the author has the expectation that these fantasies will reflect widespread aspirations and goals of the times, fall into a relatively few broad patterns, and reveal a market place perception of social change in America. For the study of rhetorical discourse, explains Ernest Wrage, "provides an index to the history

\begin{enumerate}
\item Smiley, p. 191.
\item Ibid., pp. 41-42.
\item Ibid., p. 104.
\end{enumerate}
of man's values and goals, his hopes and fears, his aspirations and negations, to what he considers expedient or inapplicable."

Summary

Extrapolating from the recent findings by Bales, which concerns small group behavior and fantasizing, Bormann has constructed a message-centered dramatistic approach for analyzing fantasy-persuasion in rhetorical discourse. Central to Bormann's approach, derived from Bales' work, are the notions that 1) fantasies chain out in all forms of rhetorical transactions and are psychodramatic in nature, 2) those fantasies that catch up large groups of people in symbolic reality come together to create a rhetorical vision, 3) the viable rhetorical vision is self-sustaining and helps protect man from reality, 4) the words in discourse alone have the power to create a social reality, a psychodramatic world for receivers, 5) participants in a rhetorical vision acquire new meanings, emotions, and motives, and 6) to discover the rhetorical vision contained within a body of discourse, the critic can dramatistically analyze the fantasy chains within the discourse and reconstruct it.

The dramatistic categories to be used to discover the fantasy chains included within the circuit chautauqua brochures are character, scene, plot, thought, and diction. From this analysis the rhetorical visions and motives used for promotion will be constructed. This

methodology will provide answers to the two central research questions of this study: 1) What was the nature of the fantasies used in the brochures, and 2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua?
CHAPTER 4

A DRAMATISTIC ANALYSIS OF CIRCUIT CHAUTAUQUA PROGRAM BROCHURES

Circuit chautauqua bureaus produced and distributed thousands of promotional brochures each year between 1904 and 1932. The creators of these brochures were dream merchants. They sponsored chautauqua programs as contributing to the fulfillment of mass audience fantasies. The brochures were rich with discourse and pictures which invited their readers into vast symbolic fantasy worlds—worlds of intense drama more real than life. The aggregated dramatic worlds were complete with _dramatis personae_, scenes, plot lines, and themes apart from the everyday experiences of those who read the brochures.

The dramatic elements contained in the program brochures were dynamic. As promotional strategy dictated, they were modified at various time intervals between 1904 and 1932. Thus the heros and villains identified in earlier brochures, for example, were not the same as those suggested in later brochures. Similarly, scenes changed, plots were modified, and new themes emerged in the brochures at various stages in circuit chautauqua history.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze dramatistically a representative sample of the program brochures created by the major circuit companies between 1904 and 1932. Approximately two hundred brochures will be examined to determine 1) who the major characters were, 2) what the major scenes included, 3) what the typical plots
involved, and 4) what the dominant themes might have been. Both the written and pictorial aspects of the brochures will be considered. The results of this analysis will be used in chapter five as the basis for determining 1) the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) the way in which these fantasies were used to promote attendance to chautauqua.

Drama is dynamic because its force is drawn from the inter­relationships among and between characters, scene, plot, and themes. As Jackson Barry suggest, "the structure [of drama] is understood to mean the set of relationships between the parts of a given whole."¹

The interrelatedness of the dramatistic elements to be examined forbids their absolute distinction. For this reason, some of the examples which are used to support one dramatic element in the analysis to follow may be used also to develop another category.

Character

Numerous dramatis personae emerged in the program brochures created by chautauqua bureaus between 1904 and 1932. These characterizations embodied praiseworthy values, unpraiseworthy values, and sometimes both. The purpose of this section is to determine from the brochures who the major characters were.

During the early years of circuit chautauqua, the rural Midwesterner was cast into the role of idyllic hero in the program brochures. Reminiscent of Jefferson's yeoman farmer, the rural

Midwesterner in the brochures prior to 1913 was described as the most independent, intelligent, and moralistic of all citizenry. He personified a praiseworthy model for Americans. In a typical open letter from chautauqua management to its patrons, reprinted in numerous early Horner-Redpath program brochures, for example, the idyllic nature of the rural Midwesterner is developed:

... in these rich states of the middle west developed a sturdy citizenship and a degree of intelligence that are compelling the attention of the nation. ...

The largest percentage of the independent thinkers of the world populate the great prairie states of this nation. [Their] civilization ... is rugged, intelligent and honest.1

This idyllic rural Midwestern persona is again described in numerous promotional statements of specific attractions and symbolized in a great many pictures contained in the brochures prior to 1913. Midwestern spokesmen were a common feature of the earlier chautauqua programs, and statements in the brochures about them not only typify the idyllic nature of the rural Midwestern persona, but also supply concrete examples of that persona. Champ Clark of Missouri, for example, was characterized in an early brochure as "magnificent mentally" and "magnificent morally."2 This example and numerous similar characterizations of nationally known rural Midwestern spokesmen—William J. Bryan, Governor Hoch of Kansas, and Robert LaFollette,

1. "Western Redpath Chautauqua System: Alma, Nebr.," 1910 Redpath-Horner Program Brochure, Redpath Chautauqua Collection, Box 1022, Special Collections, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

2. "Belle Plaine, Iowa: Chautauqua," 1909 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 891 (all first references to each chautauqua brochure are from the Redpath Chautauqua Collection, unless otherwise stated).
for example—serve as specific examples of the moral, intelligent, independent nature of the rural Midwesterner. Moreover, just the name or picture of Bryan or LaFollette for numerous Americans in the early twentieth century symbolized the idyllic nature of rural peoples.\(^1\) And the brochures of this period contained a great many photographs of Midwestern spokesmen, sometimes on the cover, and always within the brochure (Fig. 1). Spokesmen most often pictured were Bryan, Hoch, LaFollette, and Judge Alden of Denver.

Another persona emerged in the brochures prior to 1913 which served as a severe contrast to the idyllic Midwestern image. The big businessman and political boss were usually characterized together in earlier brochures as villains. Whereas the rural Midwesterner was characterized as independent, honest, and moral, the big businessman and political boss were characterized as dependent, corrupt, and lacking in morals.

The character of the big businessman and political boss was established both through indirect implication and explicit exposition. Their character was usually established in promotional statements for Midwestern orators. In a brochure of the earlier period, for example, LaFollette is praised for his struggle against the men who control the "political machinery and industrial combinations."\(^2\) No explanations about why political machinery and industrial combinations were viewed

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Fig. 1. William Jennings Bryan on the Cover of a 1912 Brochure.

Source: "Banner Program, Chautauqua: Mound City, Mo.," 1912 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1021.
negatively is developed in this promotional statement. It simply
assumes that the reader believes there to be something inherently
evil and corrupt about big businessmen and political bosses. Similarly,
in another brochure, Governor Hoch of Kansas is praised for his fight
against railroad magistrates and politicians.1 Again no reasons are
given concerning why railroad magistrates were portrayed in a less
than complimentary way; it is merely assumed in the brochure that the
audience held a negative attitude toward big businessmen and political
bosses.

The nature of the big businessman and political boss persona
was, however, also characterized more explicitly in other promotional
statements. In a brochure of 1912 promoting one Midwestern senator,
for example, the phrases "fraud and folly" are associated with political
bosses, and "special privileges and corruption" with big businessmen.2
And in another brochure of this early period, an advertisement for
Francis J. Heney characterizes big businessmen and political bosses as
"corruptionists," and "boodlers and grafters" who belong in jail.3

After 1912, the idyllic rural Midwestern persona and the
villainous big businessman-political boss persona quickly faded and
were replaced by a new persona which dominated the brochures until 1917.
This new characterization focused on the average American who was

1. "Chautauqua, 1911 Banner Program: Canton, Mo.," 1911
Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1019.

2. "Banner Program, Chautauqua: Lake City, Iowa," 1912
Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 898.

3. "Chautauqua, 1911 Banner Program: Milan, Mo.," 1911
Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 894.
considered to be a basically good, hard-working citizen, but disillusioned by the everyday commonplace experiences of life. The reader of these brochures was constantly reminded that this persona was a social pessimist and fatalist.

In a 1915 brochure under a section entitled "Chautauqua Psalm," the average American persona is characterized:

The ordinary run of life entails many problems. . . . My hands have labored long and steadily. . . . The commonplace experiences of every day incline one to become hide bound and also cultivate ingrowing dispositions. . . . I can't hope to live forever. . . . I . . . feel mightily lonesome by myself.¹

In a 1914 brochure, the reader is reminded that the average American gets "little rest from too steady work."² Moreover, in this same brochure in the open letter section, the reader is reminded of the mortality of humanity: "Time will take you one of these days."³

In promotional statements about chautauqua talent contained within the brochures of this period, the life style of the American persona is also characterized. A statement for Ralph Parlette in a 1915 brochure, for example, reads: "He knows how it feels to trudge the humble path . . . in payless despair."⁴ And in another brochure a


3. Ibid.

promotional statement for Lou J. Beauchamp proclaims that he is aware that "troubles beset you."

Moreover, after 1912, the numerous pictures of rural American spokesmen no longer prevailed in the brochures. And although the disillusioned American was not depicted pictorially in the brochures between 1913 and 1916, there are pictures which very likely symbolically reinforced the typical American's disillusionment with life. There are numerous pictures of romantic foreign places, great bands, and groups of persons enjoying the company of each other (Fig. 2). These kinds of pictures symbolize the typical American's discouragement with hard work and the commonplaceness of his existence. They symbolize that which was missing, that which was devoid in his character. Moreover, these pictures project the image of the future American who uses leisure time with conspicuous skill and aplomb.

With the entrance of the United States into World War I, the disillusioned American was quickly replaced by the patriotic American. This new persona symbolized democratic ideals and represented the heroic by embodying, upholding, and defending traditional American values. The rapid transition from disillusionment to an overwhelming patriotism indicates the sensitivity of chautauqua promotion to the prevailing atmosphere of the country. Moreover, the patriotic persona was typified by the goals and aspirations of the average man. In an open letter from chautauqua management to its patrons, which was

Fig. 2. Community Gathering for Chautauqua on the Cover of a 1914 Brochure.

Source: "Chautauqua, Britt Lyceum & Chautauqua System: Sheridan, Wyo.," 1914 Britt Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1121.
reprinted numerous times in brochures of the 1917 and 1918 era, the patriotic American image is detailed: "The real patriot of today is the man who with calm assurance goes about his business duties, conserving resources, inspiring confidence, building character, upholding community welfare and cooperating with the various war activities to the best of his ability."¹ The patriotic character of the American persona is also developed in another open letter reprinted in numerous brochures at that time: "[Americans] have raised their full quotas by subscriptions to Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, Red Cross and War Camps. . . . All esteemed it a necessary price to pay for the priceless blessing of Democracy."²

A popular attraction in the 1917-1918 period were the speeches given by soldiers. Numerous promotional statements about these soldier-orators helped to develop the American patriot persona and supplied concrete examples of it. Lieutenant H. Gordon Manning, for example, is promoted on the basis of his patriotic service: He was "thrown into the battle of Somme July 16, 1916, . . . discharged last January, will 'join up' again in September."³ Promotional statements of this period on behalf of orators not connected with the military also served as signs of the American patriotic temper. William Farkell, for example,

¹ "Lincoln Chautauquas, Season 1918: Sutton, W. Va.," 1918 Lincoln Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1098.

² "Yankton, S. Dak., June 30th to July 6th, 1918. Chautauqua," 1918 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1073.

³ "1918 Chautauqua: Homer, Nebraska," 1918 Midland Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1022.
is promoted in a brochure as "A Powerful Patriotic Speaker" who "during the Liberty Loan drives . . . addressed more audiences and a greater number of people, in the seventh Federal Reserve district, than did any other speaker."

Numerous pictures in the brochures also symbolically reflect the patriotic American character. Brochures of this period usually included men in uniform on their front covers (Fig. 3). Even chautauqua talent was often pictured in uniform. For the average reader, the man in uniform was a symbol of patriotism and American democratic ideals—a concrete sign of the American patriotic persona.

Another persona also dominated the brochures in the 1917-1918 period. Antithetical to the goals and aspirations of the American persona, was the German persona who represented wickedness to this period. The German was characterized as brutal, violent, and certainly an enemy of the American people. Most of what was considered blame-worthy and of a villainous nature came to be embodied in the German persona. Moreover, this anti-German sentiment reflected the growing wave of anti-foreign sentiment that reached its climax in the early twenties.

Although less space was devoted in the brochures of the 1917-1918 period to developing the German villain than the patriotic American, the German persona was a dramatic contrast to its American counterpart and demonstrated in many ways the difference between good and evil.

1. "Chautauqua: Parker, So. Dak.," 1918 Redpath-Horner Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1073.
Fig. 3. Men in Uniform on the Cover of a 1918 Brochure.

Source: "Redpath Chautauqua Program: Hamilton, Ohio," 1918 Redpath Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1045.
The character of the German was developed both through implication and direct exposition. Moreover, the villainous nature of the German persona was often established in promotional statements for American soldier-orators. Alfred O'Connor, a "Survivor of the Somme" is presented as being proof of the brutal and violent nature of the German: "A German soldier struck him so violently that he was left for dead."\(^1\)

In another brochure, a promotional statement for a Private Lowell mentions that he received "brutal treatment by German guards and German civilians."\(^2\) Furthermore, many of the American soldiers illustrated in the brochures between 1917 and 1918 were shown as wounded. The bandages, crutches, missing limbs, *et cetera*, suggested symbolically to the reader the violent and brutal nature of the German people. In fact, the term "German" itself acquired powerful negative connotations for most Americans during World War I.

When World War I ended, the heroic and patriotic image of the American was rapidly replaced in chautauqua brochures by another aspect of the American character. This persona, developed after 1918, was fearful, threatened, and intolerant of the overwhelming problems which he faced during the post-war period. Nationally, he was "sick of war, strikes, and labor unrest,"\(^3\) and intolerant of anything deemed foreign.

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Americans, explains lecturer George Carlson in a 1919 brochure, are "opposed to any and all 'isms.'" Internationally, the American was portrayed as fearing foreign economic and ideological imperatives, as will be suggested in the characterization of the foreign villain below. And even on a local basis, the American was presented as being intensely discontent and fearful. In fact, dissatisfaction with community life is suggested in the "Chautauqua Psalm" popular in Redpath-Vawter brochures between 1919 and 1925: "The ordinary run of life entails many problems. . . . My hands have labored long and steadily. . . . The commonplace experiences of everyday life incline one to become hide bound and cultivate ingrowing dispositions." Moreover, the wording of this Psalm was identical to that Chautauqua Psalm which appeared in Redpath-Vawter brochures prior to the war.

Other features of the brochures between 1918 and 1925 also reminded the reader of the numerous problems and overwhelming fears which the average American faced. Included in promotional statements were comments concerning labor problems, fear of foreign influence in America, world problems, the cost of the war, and doubts concerning the destiny of agriculture. Edward Trefz in a 1922 brochure, for example, is promoted as discussing "reconstruction problems." In another


2. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 898.

brochure the title of a headline lecture is indicated: "The Grime Glory and the Cost of Flags."¹ And a promotional statement in a 1923 brochure raises doubts about the destiny of farm life: "A successful farmer. Not so easy to find these days."² 

Furthermore, there are also features in the post-war brochures that focus on sensational entertainment. There are sensationalistic promotional statements about foreign places, Broadway plays, and great bands. One play, Broadway Jones, for example, is promoted in a 1921 brochure this way: "Imagine! Spending so much money on Broadway everybody called you 'Broadway Jones.' Going broke on Broadway! Marrying a woman twice your age—and homely as blue Monday..."³ This and other sensationalistic promotional statements perhaps served to intensely contrast for the average reader the difference between the typical American's life—full of overwhelming problems, fears, and frustration—and a life of frivolous fun, humor, and joy. Similarly, many of the brochures created between 1919 and 1924 are crowded with sensationalistic pictures which may have also reinforced antithetically the image of the over-burdened and frustrated American. Pictures of distant lands, for example, comical dramatic scenes, and even great magicians are common in the brochures of this period (Fig. 4).

¹. "Chautauqua 1922: Savannah, Mo.," 1922 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1020.

². "5 Big Days, Chautauqua, Redpath-Vawter: Winnebago, Minn.," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1004.

A Pair of Sixes—The Ace of American Comedies

Fig. 4. Scene from a Comic Drama in a 1922 Brochure.

Pictorially uncommon, however, are scenes depicting the problems and fears connected with international, national, and local concerns.

The other major persona which developed in the post-war period was that of the foreigner. This persona emerged as someone to be feared—a threat to American ideals and aspirations; he embodied attitudes and values that were antithetical to those held by Americans. The villainous nature of the foreigner was usually engulfed in promotional statements for various orators. A 1920 brochure reads, "Bolshevism is a real problem in the United States."¹ And in another brochure, lecturer H. Richmond Mills "brands Bolshevists 'a hound dog from hell, released from his stagnate [sic] kennel..."² In a brochure of 1923, it is explained that the Communist people in Russia "tolerate imprisonment, persecution, and execution without trial."³ Moreover, in this same brochure the Chinese people are described as becoming an industrial "rival" to other nations.⁴ And in a promotional statement found in a 1925 brochure, the Mexican people are described as having "strained relations" with the United States.⁵


². "Benson Chautauqua," 1921 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1003.


⁴. Ibid.

⁵. "Chautauqua: Canton, Mo.," 1925 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1019.
The turbulent, threatening nature of the foreign persona is also reflected, to some extent, pictorially in the brochures. In one brochure of the early twenties, for example, Russian soldiers are pictured shooting a prisoner. This picture, as well as similar ones, symbolized the cruelty of foreign peoples which perhaps, for the average reader, suggested a threat to personal aspirations and democratic ideals.

A new persona came to dominate the brochures between 1925 and the final days of circuit chautauqua. This persona might be called the modern American, typified as adjusting to the modern life style afforded him by recent innovations. A 1926 brochure, for example, under the heading of "Your Leisure Time," states, "modern inventions and shortened working hours have made a problem of how best we may spend our leisure time." Modern Americans, explains a brochure of 1928, are fun-loving, but also successful in their endeavors: "'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' . . . [People] have found that they can make as much money and achieve as great a professional success if they stop now and then to play."

Many of the lecturers, as advertised in the brochures of this later period of circuit chautauqua history, reflect the image of the modern American. In a 1926 brochure, for example, the title of Geoffrey

1. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
2. "Chautauqua: Canton, Mo.," 1926 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1019.
Morgan's lecture is the "Problem of Leisure Time." This title reminded the reader that the typical American was adjusting to a modern age. The play, The Detour, promoted in a 1929 brochure, reflects how an American family adjusts to its ever-changing surroundings—the modern world.

Although the modern American was difficult to portray pictorially, there were subtle hints of the new image in illustrations. The dark suits and stern faces of earlier chautauqua patrons presented in the brochures were replaced by patrons dressed in summer suits and straw hats (Fig. 5). This modification suggests a significant change in the image of the American persona.

The dominant dramatis personae that emerged in circuit chautauqua program brochures between 1904 and 1932 were 1) the idyllic Midwesterner who predominated the brochures between 1904 and 1912, 2) the selfish and corrupt big businessman and political boss persona, 1904-1912, 3) the post-war depressed American, 1913-1916, 4) the patriotic American, 1917-1918, 5) the violent and brutal German, 1917-1918, 6) the post-war fearful American, 1919-1925, 7) the threatening foreigner, 1919-1925, and 8) the modern American, 1926-1932. The modifications in character development suggests that the nature of circuit chautauqua's promotional image was not static.

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Fig. 5. Modern Americans Heading for Chautauqua on the Cover of a 1928 Brochure.

Scene

The dominant scenes created in brochures between 1904 and 1932, like the characters, were not static. The various modifications in the backgrounds for dramatic action reflected changes in the promotional attitude of chautauqua public relations personnel which were revealed through the images of the world they constructed within the brochures.

Inherent in the scene created in the early years of circuit chautauqua history is a juxtaposition between country life and city life. The countryside was praised for the fundamentalism inherent in its life style, for the moral and spiritual power of its people, and for the naturalism of its setting and fashions. The big city, on the other hand, was condemned for those characteristics that were antithetical to the countryside; it was denounced for its immoral fashions, corrupt administrations, false ideals, and unnatural life style. In fact, the cause of major internal problems in the United States, according to the brochures, was often attributed to evils associated with the city.

Praise of rural America and condemnation of big city life is evident within the brochures in both the open letters to chautauqua patrons from its management and in the numerous statements about lecturers. In one open letter reprinted numerous times between 1906 and 1912 in Redpath-Vawter program brochures, the rural and big city scenes are characterized this way:

The greatest industrial problem of this country today comes from the congestion of population in the great cities, and the corresponding scarcity of labor on the farm.
Every year thousands of young men and women leave the quiet natural life of the farm and the country town and flock to the great cities, and there, generally speaking, land in the lowest stratum of the city's working class, and far too often of the city's criminal class.¹

In another open letter circulated in a Horner-Redpath brochure of the same period, the inherent virtues of rural life are contrasted to the vices of the big city. Citizens of the prairie states, it explains, have hewed out a civilization that is rugged, intelligent, and honest. Already their statesmen, their preachers and their educators are occupying large places in the public eye. . . .

The lure of the city with its false ideals of rapid wealth and easy honor should be exploded before [one] has had time to establish fictitious ideals of life. He must be taught that "the groves were God's first Temples," and that "The country was made for man but man made for the city."

One of the profoundest social problems of today is the congestion of population in the big cities.²

Numerous lecturers were also promoted on the basis of their arguments against the evils of big city life. Lecturer Hugo P. J. Selinger, for example, was billed in a 1909 brochure as having had personal contact with the problems of the cities: He is a "slum worker in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago."³ In a 1911 brochure, the advertisement for George B. Mangiold ran this way: "He has devoted his life to problems of living as found in the crowded

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² "Western Redpath Chautauqua System: Alma, Nebr.," 1910 Horner-Redpath Brochure.

districts in the great cities and his portrayals made rural life all the more interesting and desirable."¹

Pictorially, the brochures distributed between 1904 and 1912 emphasized rural backgrounds. It is interesting to note that chautauqua chose to place itself (its tents and its crowds of patrons) pictorially in rural settings. The front cover of a Redpath-Vawter brochure of 1909, for example, shows a background of trees and farmlands characteristic of rural America, and the great chautauqua tent appears firmly in the foreground.² A chautauqua tent set in a forest of trees is the cover for a 1911 brochure.³ And on the cover of a 1910 Horner-Redpath brochure, there is a beautiful wreath of wheat, symbolizing the productive and natural virtues of the rural Midwest (Fig. 6). Obviously absent in these early brochures of circuit chautauqua are any illustrations of city life.

The distinction between the rural areas and great cities faded after 1913 and was replaced with a more general emphasis on the American community. It is the scene of immense community effort, interest always in progress, and, of course, tradition; it is also, however, the scene of boredom and frustration for nearly everyone. The importance of community effort and tradition is emphasized on the


Fig. 6. Wreath of Wheat on the Cover of a 1910 Brochure.

front cover of a 1915 brochure:

We believe in our Community.

We believe in its Past—in the men and women who have lived before us whose toil made the land productive, whose foresight founded our schools, whose devotion builded our churches.

We believe in the Present—in the men and women and children about us. We believe that there is nothing for the good of our town which working together we cannot accomplish.

We believe in its Future—in the men and women who will come after us. We believe that out of our hopes and labors now will grow a Community, democratic, prosperous, and strong, an honor to our State and to our Nation.1

And in a Britt Chautauqua brochure of 1914, there is another illustration of the emphasis placed on community effort: "Harmony of action has always been the key which has unlocked many a barred door to the citizens of this Community. Every individual has had his share in the progress."2

The tedium of day-to-day routine was also expressed in the brochures. In an open letter from management to chautauqua patrons, printed in a 1913 Redpath-Vawter brochure, life within the community is described as "ordinary," and "commonplace;" it is a setting where one can "cultivate ingrowing dispositions."3 A 1914 brochure characterizes


conditions of the general American community by claiming it is a place of "too steady work." And in a letter to patrons from chautauqua management published in a 1915 brochure, the community life is said to be marked by "daily routine."

The types of entertainment advertised in the brochures between 1913 and 1917 also reflect the emphasis on community life. This was especially true with the introduction at this time of a new kind of lecturer—the community expert. Edward Trefz, according to a 1913 brochure, for example, is "to address the citizens of this community on the issues facing it." In a 1915 brochure, Douglas Mallock is described as a "community expert." Charles Zueblin is promoted in another 1915 brochure as a man concerned with "this new civic spirit of community obligation and responsibility." And in a 1915 brochure, Nels Darling is described as the "community expert and town doctor."

The image of the community is also reflected symbolically in the pictures presented in chautauqua brochures between 1913 and 1916.

5. "Alkahest Chautauqua and Festival Circuit: Madisonville, Ky.," 1915 Alkahest Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1003.
6. "Lincoln Chautauquas: Sheldon, Ill.," 1916 Lincoln Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1042.
An illustration of a community gathering, for example, is sometimes drawn in the brochures of this period with a chautauqua tent integrated evenly into the background, fitting nicely into the symbolic community (Fig. 2).

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the community scene presented in the pre-war brochures was discarded and replaced by a background of national and international turbulence. The United States is now a place marked by patriotism, but also a part of the war-torn world where basic democratic principles and ideals are tested.

Communities were often described in the brochures of this era as working in unison toward the war effort. An open letter from chautauqua management to its patrons published in 1917-18 Redpath-Vawter brochures, for example, states that the "community is an integral part of the nation" in making the "world safe for Democracy. . . ."¹ A spirit of national cooperation permeates the scene in these brochures as suggested in another open letter of 1917:

Cooperation is the keynote of whatever success has been achieved by either side in the great struggle. Without this cooperation at home by the women, as well as the men remaining, any success in the field would have been impossible. . . .

So as a matter of loyalty, every community owes it to its citizens and to the government under which we live and enjoy so many blessings. . . .²


The image of a cooperative national effort of communities in
time of war is also reflected in promotional statements for chautauqua
talent. Frank Waller Allen, in his lecture, "Personality Plus," accord­
ing to a 1918 brochure, defines "the character of a community, a firm, a nation" as "units intelligently serving a higher common end."¹

Turbulence also marked the scene of a war-torn world during this era—a turbulence which deeply affected America and actually threatened its ideals as suggested by the 1918 promotional statement for the
lecture "Hour of Democracy" by Raymond B. Tobert:

The great war has shaken society to its foundations. While the guns at the front were churning up the soil of France, they were also upheaving the social and industrial structures of the nations. Out of this war is to emerge a new social order. The strength of democracy must stand further tests. We must understand the forces at work, the forces that are bringing such changes to pass, and then apply intelligent political and industrial action.²

In a Lincoln Chautauqua brochure of 1918, an open letter explains that these are "stirring times of patriotic responsibility. . . .³ Lieutenant Lester Collier is presented, in a 1918 Standard Chautauqua brochure, as knowing the "awfulness of war as an eye witness."⁴ Frank W. Holstag, a 1918 brochure explains, "knows the war in all its misery and horror;

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terrible scenes of fighting and of slaughter..." These quotes suggest a scene of immense national and international turbulence.

The brochures of 1917 and 1918 are rich with pictures which reflect turmoil. Motion pictures or slides depicting the war was a new, popular attraction to circuit Chautauqua, and samples of these scenes were presented in the brochures. For example, in a 1918 Midland Chautauqua brochure, a sample of the war pictures to be offered on the program dominates almost an entire page (Fig. 7). Photographs to be offered in this feature, according to this brochure, are of "torpedo boats, submarines, calvary, fire, gas, etc., in action on the battle lines..." A 1917 promotional statement for a "photo travel talk" is accompanied by photographs of the U.S.S. Pennsylvania's turret guns. Such pictures present symbolically the turbulence and fear which marked the scene for this era.

Brochures of the post-war period also reflect an intense uneasiness on the American scene. There especially was fear of foreign ideologies and power, great concern over numerous internal and international problems regarding the United States, and an insecurity about individual goals within the community setting. Fear and concern about America's diverse internal social problems is evident in the lecture topics suggested in the chautauqua brochures between 1919 and 1925.


2. "1918 Chautauqua, Homer, Nebraska," 1918 Midland Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1022.

Fig. 7. War Scenes in a 1918 Brochure.

Source: "1918 Chautauqua: Homer, Nebraska," 1918 Midland Brochure.
Some of the more popular lectures were the "Problems of Peace" by Charles Midbury, William E. Wenner's "The Hand at the Nation's Throat," the "Pending Perils and Problems" by Frank B. Willis, Robert S. MacGown's "The Individual and Society," John M. Dean's "America's Tomorrow," and "Lawlessness" by Frank Dixon. Promotional statements about lectures and other talent also reflect the fear and discontent perpetrating the America scene. In one brochure, a promotional statement concerning chautauqua talent in general implies that the atmosphere of the community is a hindrance to personal growth and ambitions; it claims that life in the community is static—a place where one "cultivate[s] ingrowing dispositions." H. C. Boblitt is promoted in a 1922 brochure as being concerned with the "many farm problems."


7. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.

David Vaughan, according to a 1921 brochure, discusses "America's greatest problem—the Americanization of large groups of foreigners congested about our big industries." Other social concerns on the turbulent American scene of the post-war period are reflected in a promotional statement for lecturer J. Campbell White, who is described as discussing "individual, home, industrial, social, national, and international" issues. 

Implied in promotional statements found in brochures of the post-war period, furthermore, was the intense fear that foreign ideologies and power might be gradually incorporated into the American scene. Foreign aspirations and ideals were viewed as a threat to the American ideological image and capitalistic power. In a 1920 brochure, for example, H. Halbert's lecture on the "Eastern Question" is said to detail the 

... struggle between nations and between races for dominance of territory and trade. ...

... you can understand Shantung, the China Eastern Railway situation, the Siberian situation, and China, Japan, and Korea in their relation to the United States and to world politics and commerce.

A 1920 promotional statement for a lecture on the United States' southern neighbor describes Mexico as "something of an enigma. We know that new regimes were created and overthrown in a day ... and


that some of our boys fell while trying to unravel the tangle."¹ In
the same brochure, Russia is described as "an acknowledged riddle and
enigma. . . ."² The evils of bolshevism became a favorite lecture
topic during the 1920-1924 period. Lecturer, H. R. Mills, according
to a 1921 brochure, maintained that bolshevism was an enemy "of Ameri-
canism and the American home."³ And there are pictures which symboli-
cally reflect the corrupt and evil nature of foreign places. One
picture in a brochure, for example, presents an American impression of
Russia: One of Russia's citizens is being shot by Russian guards.⁴

The spirit of democratic idealism and power is also an impor-
tant part of the scene presented in the brochures of this period.
Again, the titles of lectures can be most revealing. Governor Charles
Brough, according to a 1920 brochure, for example, gave a lecture
entitled "America's World Leadership."⁵ Lecturer Granville Jones
defines Americanism as "just liberty, the love of it, just union, and
the practice of it, just reverence for Good and the confession of it."⁶

The cover of a 1923 Swarthmore Chautauqua brochure approaches the

1. "Ellison-White Chautauqua: Elko," 1920 Ellison-White Pro-
gram Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1023.
2. Ibid.
4. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success, Marion, Iowa," 1923
Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
5. "Redpath-Vawter Chautauqua, 1921: Canton," 1921 Redpath-
Vawter Brochure.
6. Ibid.
spirit of democracy this way: "1. Democracy Solving the Housing Problem. . . . 2. Democracy and International Relations: Cooperation versus Competition. 3. Democracy Overcoming Industrial Conflict: Human Ends versus Dividends." Emphasis on democratic ideals and Americanism is also suggested pictorially. In the post-war period, lectures by ex-soldiers occasionally were featured on the circuits. They are almost always pictured in full uniform, which undoubtedly reminded the reader of the recent war, and the great need for patriotism and sacrifice in furthering American ideals in a time of turmoil (Fig. 8).

The mid-twenties brought a new American scene: modernization and American's adjustment to leisure time. "Modern inventions and shortened working hours," reads a promotional statement for a lecture in a 1926 brochure, "have made a problem of how best we may spend our leisure time." A 1928 brochure indicates the great influence of modern inventions on American life: "Golf and good roads, radio and the picture show, the women's clubs and the men's conventions are adding years to the lives and decades to the enjoyment of the American people." And a brochure of 1929 offers suggestions for adjusting to leisure time: "Seeing the movies, going fishing, collecting old


Fig. 8. Lecturer in Uniform in a 1920 Brochure.

antique furniture, reading novels, listening to the radio. . . ."1

The bonus of leisure time was a contribution provided by modernization and definitely part of the scene in the brochures between 1925 and 1932. A background of turbulence and unrest was replaced by modern progression.

Illustrations in the brochures after 1925 are symbolically modern and expressive of a spirit of leisure and modernization. Scenes from humorous dramas and clowns are often presented; adjustment to the concept of leisure time has made much entertainment acceptable. Sporty cars, the products of a modern age, often appear pictorially. In fact, after 1925, science fiction began to be widely publicized pictorially in the brochures—futurism personified (Fig. 9). These pictures are symbolically modern when compared to those used in brochures of the early chautauqua period or even those of the immediate post-war era.

Five scenes were dominant in the brochures between 1904 and 1932: 1) the idyllic rural life versus the corrupt city scene, 1904-1913; 2) the community plagued by boredom, yet outwardly progressive, 1913-1917; 3) the scene of turbulence brought on by war, 1917-1918; 4) the scene of unrest and great fear in the post-World War I period, 1919-1925; and 5) America modernized, 1925-1932. The dynamic nature of the scenes indicate, once again, that circuit chautauqua's promotional image was never static.

Fig. 9. A Scene from *Message from Mars* in a 1927 Brochure.

Plot

The actions of the major brochure personas within the context of the various scenes reveal the basic plots developed between 1904 and 1932. In fact, chautauqua programs themselves were part of the plot in the sense that they were an agency through which the basic actions could be carried out. In this section, the basic plots contained within the chautauqua brochures are detailed.

During the early years of circuit chautauqua history, the actions and attitudes of the rural Midwesterner toward big businessmen, political bosses, and city life reveal a plot which centers around a kind of evangelism—a missionary zeal on the part of many to purge the country of corruption, evil, and that which was deemed unnatural. The role of the self-righteous protagonist was assumed by the rural Midwestern persona. Midwesterners, notes a brochure of 1910, are "working out the fullness of [their] destiny to the immeasurable betterment of this and future generations."¹

Drawing strength from his environment, the Midwestern persona sought to fulfill a God-sanctioned mission. The Middle West, proclaims one brochure, exposes "the skeletons of the civic and social unrighteousness as they exist and thrive in the seats of the wicked."² Specific signs of a successful mission were indicated by the accomplishments of rural Midwestern spokesmen. Their actions provided a context of struggle against the antagonistic forces—big businessmen,

². Ibid.
political bosses, and the urban way of life. LaFollette is praised for his struggle against "political machinery and industrial combinations" in a 1909 brochure. In a 1910 brochure, M. Kramer is given recognition for reforming politics within his state, "he took cognizance of the deplorable conditions of civic affairs in his state; his vigorous attacks launched the reform wave that demolished political machines and made honest men governors and majors." Governor E. W. Hoch of Kansas is complimented for being "the chief force in the 'Boss Buster' campaign in Kansas that put the machine out of business." And in 1912, Senator Joseph L. Bristow is described as driving business and political corruption from his state: "He took his hammer and tongs. He refused to sit listlessly by and wait for the so-called repining process; and jumped into the fight from the first day."

The struggle to cleanse the society from corrupt politics and business was not only the mission of Midwestern spokesmen, but very much the duty of the people who populated the Middle West. It is in the "great middle west," reads an open letter from management to patrons in a 1909 brochure, "that reforms find a beginning, and from the agricultural community comes the first demand for improvement in

national affairs.""1 The Midwestern conscience, according to a 1910 brochure, was a major factor "in bringing about improved conditions."2

The institution of circuit chautauqua was presented as part of this plot in the sense that it became an agency through which the Midwestern persona could fulfill and fortify his mission. A 1910 brochure reads, "the Chautauqua claims its part and demands due credit for its share in crystalizing the new thought of the virile west. From a hundred platforms in Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, and Wyoming this summer, eloquent and authoritative speakers will expose . . . civic and social unrighteousness. . . ."3 Another brochure of this early period, in reference to civic reform brought about by Midwesterners, reads: "The Chautauqua has had its part in bringing about this condition of affairs, and in perpetuating them, it has become a necessity."4

Moreover, photographs of the many well-known rural Midwestern spokesmen symbolically suggest the plot of a Midwestern protagonist struggling against civic problems brought about by corruption in politics and government (Fig. 1). Bryan and LaFollette, at that time, were well-known for their struggles against corruption in government and politics, and their praise of the solace of rural life.

3. Ibid.
The scenario of the Midwestern protagonist purifying the society from corruption faded after 1912 and was replaced by a new plot. The average American was presented as searching for an escape from the boredom of routine. In a 1913 brochure, under a section entitled "Chautauqua Psalm," this action is detailed:

The ordinary run of life entails many problems. The Chautauqua is built for joy; and joy is a good thing for my family.

My hands have labored long and steadily. I will give them a little rest at Chautauqua. At the same time I shall get the brain tonic of the wholesome enthusiasm there.

All my friends and neighbors will be there. It is a wonderful place for sociability. It is a picnic a week long; and I need the picnic . . .

The commonplace experience for everyday incline one to become hide bound and also cultivate ingrowing dispositions. The chautauqua shakes us up and shakes us loose. I want to be so shaken.\(^1\)

This quote also demonstrates that the chautauqua program was an inherent part of the plot. It was itself an agency by which the action could be carried out. This fact is also emphasized by a 1914 brochure which states, "THE COMING OF THE CHAUTAUQUA affords you the best possible chance to get a little rest from too steady work and to fill in the gap with five days of wholesome and profitable enjoyment."\(^2\) A 1915 brochure, in a letter from management to its patrons, suggests a similar plot:

This program will furnish inspiration and courage for meeting personal problems; it will help broaden the horizon and give a higher point of view; it will provide wholesome diversion and a good time.

You owe it to yourself to take a short let-up from the daily routine. That in itself is a good thing. When that relaxation can be used for getting a new stimulus, it is a doubly good investment.

Take this week for getting more heart into your work, for getting a greater vision.¹

And in a 1917 brochure entitled "Why Chautauqua?" the action of the typical American searching for escape or rest from routine existence is strongly suggested: "YOU OWE IT TO YOUR WIFE to give her a Chautauqua vacation from the routine of housework. . . . YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF to get recreation, the entertainment, the inspiration, the broadened horizon which comes from attending a VAWTER CHAUTAUQUA."²

The promotional statements concerning specific talent also reflect the average American's search for escape from the fullness of everyday life. In a 1915 brochure, for example, a promotional statement for an attraction called the "University Girls" reads: "As the Name Suggests, the University Girls will bring to Chautauqua the atmosphere of the college campus."³ This statement implies that there is a desire on the part of the American public to experience that which is out of the ordinary, and chautauqua attractions themselves functioned

². "Chautauqua: St. James, Mo." 1917 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1021.
to transport its patrons to an atmosphere less *ordinare*. The Elaine Duncan Company was promoted, for example, with these words: "To be present at an entertainment by the Duncan Company is akin to a spin in a fine motor car. You dismiss your troubles, just sit tight and drink in the cool air of the evenings."¹

The attractions highlighted in pictures during this period are those which cannot be readily identified with routine existence. There are numerous pictures of great bands, foreign places, and dramas (Fig. 10). Symbolically such photos emphasize chautauqua as an agency of escape—a means of transport into worlds not consistant with ordinary life.

With the onslaught of World War I, a new plot erupted. In this scenario, the American patriot struggled and sacrificed toward triumph against the foe. As protagonist, the American had a righteous mission to halt the German enemy who threatened the peace of the world. In fact, the responsibility for victory fell directly on the shoulders of the American. As one brochure states rhetorically: "Have you heard the command? Are you marching in step? Is your shoulder under the burden?"²

The American persona acted unselfishly; he sacrificed with steadfast patriotic spirit in defending American ideals against the Germans. In a 1918 Vawter-Redpath brochure under a section entitled,


Fig. 10. Alpine Singers and Yodlers in a 1915 Brochure.

Source: "Chautauqua, Britt Lyceum & Chautauqua System: Livingston, Mont.," 1915 Britt Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1022.
"Let's All Pull Together," are these words:

Here is a town that not only refuses to stand still, but insists on going forward.

As is the case everywhere, many calls have come to the people here. They have raised their full quotas by subscription to Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, Red Cross and War Camp Community Service. Many have given sons, brothers or sweethearts to their country's service and shown the full measure of devotion.

In the performance of these heroic sacrifices, few have been heard to grumble or complain. All esteemed it a necessary price to pay for the priceless blessing of Democracy.¹

In a 1918 Lincoln Chautauqua brochure, not only is the mission of the average American patriot praised, but also stated is the fact that chautauqua was considered an integral part of that mission:

The real patriot of today is the man who with calm assurance goes about his business duties, conserving resources, inspiring confidence, building character, upholding community welfare, and cooperating with the various war activities to the best of his ability. Churches, schools and Chautauqua are confronted with the opportunity for real service at this time and are a part of the National defense.

Then let us all resolve to be real patriots with an unselfish devotion to the cause of our country. Let us make the Lincoln Chautauqua in your town a recognized factor for the promotion of patriotism and the propagation of higher American ideals. To mold the sentiment of the public along lines that will make the people better citizens and, need be, better soldiers and to arouse all to the fuller sense of their duty, what greater mission could we have than this.²

In the promotional statements concerning talent are concrete examples of specific actions taken against the enemy. Lieutenant


H. Gordon Manning, a lecturer, is described in a 1918 brochure as being "hurried down and thrown into the battle of The Somme, July 14, 1916, where he 'lived a lifetime in two months'—gassed and dangerously wounded with shrapnel [he was] discharged last January..."¹

Lecturer Sergeant Wayman is promoted in a brochure this way: "Three times he threw up the rank which he had gained by his efforts in the field, in order to get into close and constant touch with the enemy."²

Such actions taken against the enemy were practical examples of the American mission to defeat the foe at any cost.

The brochures of the 1917-18 period are rich with illustrations symbolic of the American war mission. A Lincoln brochure of 1918 has on its cover a picture of the American flag being carried forth by soldiers dressed in American uniforms (Fig. 11). The mission was being carried forth. Common to the brochures created by most chautauqua companies during 1918, is a replication of a letter sent by Woodrow Wilson to the President of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association. The letter praises chautauqua for its patriotic contribution to the American war mission (Fig. 12).

The mission of the American struggling and sacrificing with the hope of defeating the German enemy was discarded as a plot in the brochures after 1918. The typical American of the post-World War I period was presented in the brochures of 1918-1925 as a being searching for

¹ "1918 Chautauqua: Homer, Nebraska," 1918 Midland Brochure.
Fig. 11. Soldiers Carrying Forth the American Flag on the Cover of a 1918 Brochure.

Fig. 12. Woodrow Wilson and His Letter to Mr. Flowers in a 1918 Brochure.

escape from thoughts of numerous problems and intense fear. Chautauqua again was the way through which this action could be realized. In a 1920 brochure, for example, a motivated sequence revealing the basic plot is developed as follows:

REASONS WHY I am going to take my car and drive over to chautauqua this summer

Because

I am sick of war, strikes and labor unrest. I want to hear, to discuss, to decide how to act.

Because

I want to get out of the rut. As in running my car, so in running my life, I do not want to get stuck on the road because of "low clearance." I want to take in the relaxation that refresh and refine and inspire me to fuller speed ahead

Because

I want the sociability of it all—old neighbors to chat with—new friends to shake hands with—human things of human interest, that happen in human's lifes to talk about.

Because

I can imagine nothing finer for a cool, summer evening, than to drive over to Chautauqua.

The action lines suggested in the promotional statements for individual talent also reveal a propensity toward the American plight for escape from the problems and fears of everyday life. Of Jerome K. Mora, one brochure reads: "Some of the illusions are created for laughs and nothing else." The Orchestral Troubadours and George Tack are promoted as making "you forget cares and worries in the joy of


being alive."¹ And Jess Pugh is advertised as keeping his audience "in one continuous uproar."²

The foreign threat was a problem particularly emphasized by the brochures of the post-war period, which added to the intense need and search for escape. A 1920 brochure suggests, "Bolshevism is a real problem in the United States. It has permeated our laboring classes. ... Its victories in Europe demand action. ..."³ In another brochure several years later, China is viewed as a potential industrial rival: "The China of tomorrow is going to be an industrial rival of other nations and a power to be considered in national and international affairs."⁴

Pictorially, too, the brochures of the immediate post-war period suggest the average American's propensity for escape. The pamphlets offer numerous pictures of life outside common experience. Romantic scenes of distant islands are common in the brochures. Pictures of great moments in drama are also offered. The problems of foreign threats are imprinted pictorially and serve as one more reminder that the American was under intense and fearful pressure from which escape was needed (Fig. 13).


². Ibid.


⁴. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
Fig. 13. Treatment of Citizen by Foreign Government in a 1923 Brochure.

Source: "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
After 1925, a new plot emerged and dominated the brochures until chautauqua tents were no longer unfolded. The typical American in the latter half of the twenties was portrays in the brochures as adjusting to the conveniences of a modern society and its new advantages of leisure time. As one brochure of 1926 explains, "Modern inventions and shortened working hours have made a problem of how best we may spend our leisure time." An open letter in another brochure of this period reveals,

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." It also makes Jack's dad and mother a dull pair. Everywhere people are now determined as never before not to be dull—to enjoy life as they go along. They have found that they can make as much money and achieve as great professional success if they stop now and then to play...

... For fine fun, rubbing elbows with one's neighbors away from business cares, the delight of untangling mental snarls, listening to great religious and poetical and educational prophets, hearing unusual music and attending worthwhile drama, Chautauqua is matched by nothing else in America. And chautauqua, of course, became an agency through which the plot can be fulfilled.

Adjusting to great leisure time and new life styles brought about by modern innovation was also very much part of the plot promoted in the brochures. Advertisements for the increasingly popular drama especially reflect the adjustment of modern America to its leisure hours. One play, Skidding, concerned itself with such modern issues as these: "Should the Judge yield to the inevitable? Should a woman run for Congress? 'Old Maids' and discontented wives. Is this

generation 'Skidding?' In another drama, The Patsy, the heroine, "Patsy, the adorable flapper--Cinderella," suggests a significant acceptance of the then modern-day woman. Numerous lectures, such as Geoffrey Morgan's "The Problem of Leisure Time," also concerned themselves with America's adjustment to modern inventions and improvements, modern concepts and attitudes.

In the last five or six years of chautauqua history, the creators of brochures chose to make their appeal primarily through pictures rather than discourse. The dress, appearance, and actions of those photographed or illustrated in these brochures are more like those pictured in advertisements of today. The formal pictorial poses and clothing of earlier years gave way during these years to more informal posture and dress. Pictures of the black Model T Ford are replaced in these brochures by an assortment of models and colors (Fig. 5).

Five major plots dominated the brochures at different times during the history of circuit chautauqua: 1) the mission of the rural Midwesterner to purge his country of evil and corruption, 1904-1912; 2) the average American's search for escape from the common and the problematic, 1913-1917; 3) America's mission of sacrifice to defeat the German enemy at any price, 1917-1918; 4) America's search for

escape from the problems and intense fears of the immediate post-war period, 1919-1925; and 5) America's adjustment to modern innovations, 1925-1932.

Theme

The term theme, when applied to discourse, generally refers to central ideas or inherent meanings basic to the whole. In drama, as in other types of discourse, "theme" suggests central insights or truths which emerge from the interrelationships between and among characters, scene, and plot. For this reason, many of the examples which support the following analysis of the various themes emerging in chautauqua brochures have been cited in the preceding section of this chapter.

In early circuit chautauqua history, a major theme emerged in the brochures which assumed an inherent relationship between man's nature and his environment. As has been demonstrated in other sections, rural life, at that time, was viewed as natural—even fundamental to the "good citizen." Thus, the theme that the rural Midwesterner was the "best citizen" recurs in these early brochures. It is repeatedly stated and implied that the rural Midwesterner is endowed with greater intelligence, sense of morality, and resourcefulness; it was thus considered natural thematically that he lead American society and purge his country of sin and corruption. Chautauqua, in fact, presented itself as the agency through which the Midwesterner might participate in the holy mission of righting the world: "I particularly appeal to you to join hands with us in this Chautauqua crusade of 1910. Let us form a partnership that will have for its reward the ultimate
betterment of the community and consciousness that we have done our part in bring about improved conditions.\textsuperscript{1}

Numerous promotional statements, provided earlier, concerning the Midwesterner's struggles against the evils of city living and the vice of political bosses and big businessmen, as well as the many pictures of such men as Bryan, Clark, and LaFollette supply sufficient evidence that the relationship between environment and citizenship and action was a powerful one thematically. In fact, a 1913 brochure contains an illustration of a horn of plenty from which flow the bounties of the rural Midwestern world (Fig. 14). And, of course, the audience for those early brochures is once again reminded that the rural Midwest is considered the ideal of American society.

After 1913, new themes emerged in the brochures and endured until 1917. Man's need for escape from the commonplace and monotonous routine recurs as a major theme in the brochures of the pre-war period. And again, the chautauqua program itself is repeatedly presented as the agency through which man could escape into a world unlike his own: Chautauqua affords man "a change from the daily grind of care."\textsuperscript{2} Attractive pictures of faraway places, romantic scenes, important celebrities, famous bands, some of which have been cited earlier, support the theme that chautauqua, in one sense, existed as an avenue of escape from the ordinary. Another theme expressed in the brochures

\begin{enumerate}
\item "Western Redpath Chautauqua System: Alma, Nebr.," 1910 Redpath-Horner Brochure.
\item "Chautauqua: Slayton, Minn.," 1913 Redpath-Vawter Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1004.
\end{enumerate}
Fig. 14. Horn of Plenty from which Good Things Flow in a 1913 Brochure.

of this period was that renewal and refreshment accompanied escape from the *ordinaire*. And it was through chautauqua that one could "renew the purpose of getting the best out of life."¹

The beginning of World War I brought to the chautauqua brochure thematic reflections of the turbulence of a nation at war. One of the major assumptions of the brochures of the 1917-1918 period was that American ideals and aspirations are being tested. Moreover, because it was thought that American values were being threatened, it is also assumed in the brochures that Americans have a duty—a patriotic mission to guide a troubled world in the struggle against the enemy. "During these stirring times of patriotic responsibility . . .," reads one brochure, "every loyal citizen is called upon to serve the flag and country. . . ."² Numerous promotional statements concerning the sacrifices of young soldiers and photographs of wounded Americans exist as examples of the intense patriotic theme that emerged at that time.

Chautauqua, always defining itself in terms of the spirit of the times, became an agency through which America could be served patriotically. A 1917 brochure, in typical fashion, indicates the relationship between chautauqua and patriotism:

During these stirring times of patriotic responsibility, when every loyal citizen is called upon to serve the flag and country, it is with the fullest realization of their opportunity for genuine patriotic service that the Lincoln Chautauqua enters upon this season. There comes to the

2. "Lincoln Chautauquas: Rochester, Minn.," 1917 Lincoln Program Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1004.
Lincoln Chautauqua organization a feeling of exaltation in entering upon this year's work, because of the greater importance of chautauqua endeavor at this time, and of the patriotic significance which will be placed upon the Lincoln Chautauqua program. ... 1

Illustrations of the American flag, photographs of the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, and of soldiers marching forth to battle, all common to the brochures of the war years, symbolize the struggle and hopes of a nation at war. Each also emphasizes the fact that threat and duty were the constant themes during this time. Within the context of some of these pictures, symbols of chautauqua—tents, crowds, banners—were included, which demonstrated chautauqua's role in the struggle and loci in the themes (Fig. 3).

The problems of the immediate post-World War I period are thematically reflected in the brochures distributed between 1919 and 1925. One theme of the 1919 to 1925 period concerns man's relationship to his environment. The average American persona was presented in the brochures as being engulfed in a world of overwhelming problems and intense fears with little hope of doing something about them. The other theme developed in the brochures of this period was that the American desired flight from his problematic and threatening life style. Chautauqua, too, was suggested as the means by which one might escape his environment: After you have attended chautauqua, you "will have been entertained out of your personal troubles and worries." 2


Moreover, the types of program offerings suggested in the brochures of the post-war period emphasized these two themes. The nature of the promotional statements either tended to emphasize the tremendous and fearful problems the everyday American faced or entertainment which would allow him to completely forget his problems. Similarly, the pictures in the brochures of this period stressed the tense and fearful (Fig. 13) or the clown and comic (Fig. 4).

After 1925, dominant themes in the brochures were modified. Again the relationship between man and his environment is the basis of one of the major themes in the 1925 to 1932 period of circuit Chautauqua history. "Modernism" is a thematic concept; Americans of the era are repeatedly portrayed as living a modern life style which affords them greater leisure time, but also requires of them some important adjustments in their attitude and activity. A second theme involves the innovations of modern life and the nature of the modern life style in terms of how man utilizes his leisure time. Chautauqua, moreover, presents itself as one of the finest modes of leisure: "Chautauqua ranks so high in the pleasure of so many millions of the best type of Americans. It is pure enjoyment while it lasts, with its friendly picnic atmosphere for the whole community...."1

The program offerings and pictures indicate emphasis was placed on attractions that would provide entertainment and enjoyment for those leisure hours. There were more comic dramas than before, more clowns and humorous lecturers. Dunbar's Singing Bell Ringers, for example,

were the headline attraction in a 1927 program.¹ Pictorially, talent featured in the brochures, appeared, more often than not, in comic costumes and poses (Fig. 15). Man's adjustment to a modern age, and the concept of leisure time, then, were the major themes of this particular period.

Summary

In this chapter a representative sample of the brochures created by the major circuit companies between 1904 and 1932 was dramatistically analyzed. Two hundred brochures were examined to determine 1) who the major characters of the period were, 2) what the major scenes involved, 3) what the typical plots included, and 4) what dominant themes emerged. Both written and pictorial aspects of the brochures were considered. The data presented in this chapter will be used in chapter five for determining 1) the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) the way in which these fantasies were used to promote chautauqua attendance.

¹ "DeLuxe Redpath Chautauqua, Charles City, Iowa," 1927 Redpath Program Brochure, Chautauqua Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa.
Fig. 15. Swiss Bell Ringers in a 1927 Brochure.

Source: "De Luxe Redpath Chautauqua: Canton, Mo.," 1927 Redpath Brochure, Redpath Collection, Box 1019.
CHAPTER 5

CIRCUIT CHAUTAUQUA Rhetorical Visions: What And How

In chapter four, two hundred program brochures created by the major circuit chautauqua companies between 1904 and 1932 were analyzed dramatistically. Through this analysis the dominant characters, scenes, plots, and themes contained within these brochures were detailed. The purpose of this chapter is to use the data gathered in chapter four to determine 1) the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) how these fantasies were used to promote chautauqua attendance. Moreover, because this study is focusing on persuasive materials produced by a money-making organization, it will also reveal a market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America.

An examination of the data presented in chapter four indicates there are five dramatic patterns of advertisement fantasy reflected in circuit chautauqua brochures between 1904 and 1932 (Table 2). Although these dramatic patterns are not always clear-cut and occasionally even overlap, they do indicate that the nature of the fantasies used to promote chautauqua attendance was modified over a period of time. In the remainder of this chapter, the nature of each of the five dramas will be examined in terms of how it would induce chautauqua attendance.
Table 2. Nature of Dramatic Patterns of Advertising Fantasy Used in Circuit Chautauqua Brochures Between 1904 and 1932

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>Idyllic Agrarian</td>
<td>Dissatisfied and lost American</td>
<td>Patriotic American</td>
<td>Paranoid American</td>
<td>Modern American</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corrupt Businessman and Political Boss</td>
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<td>German Enemy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scene</strong></td>
<td>Tension between the natural rural life and unnatural urban life</td>
<td>Static and dull community life</td>
<td>World turmoil juxtaposed to American unity</td>
<td>World of numerous local, national, and international fears, threats, and problems</td>
<td>Modern America of new time saving devices, leisure, and joy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plot</strong></td>
<td>Missionary duty on the part of the agrarian to purge the country of corruption and evil</td>
<td>Dissatisfied American searching for escape from the boredom of community routine</td>
<td>Patriotic American struggling and sacrificing to achieve victory against the German foe</td>
<td>Paranoid American searching for solace from his world of fears, threats, and problems</td>
<td>Modern American adjust to and enjoying the conveniences of a modern society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td>Natural life is the best life</td>
<td>Dissatisfied American needs to redeem himself to get more out of life</td>
<td>American values and goals are being tested</td>
<td>American living in a world of problems, fears, and threats which affect his outlook on life</td>
<td>Modern environment dictates that the American must be modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Those who live the natural life have a duty to guide the destiny of America</td>
<td>Once the American redeems himself, he can better cope with his life style</td>
<td>American has a patriotic mission to save a troubled world</td>
<td>American cannot overcome his world of fears, threats, and problems and therefore must coalesce in flight</td>
<td>Modern innovations allow the modern American to enjoy a life style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Pastoral Fantasy Vision: 1904 to 1912

Prior to 1913, circuit chautauqua bureaus, as noted in chapter two, were servicing only the Midwestern area of the United States, especially rural farming communities. These rural communities, according to Robert Wiebe, were the "great casualty" of the changes brought about in America by the industrial hiatus of the late nineteenth century. Rural persons fought, however, these fundamental and irreversible modifications in their society. "They responded by striking out at whatever enemies their view of the world allowed them to see. They fought, in other words, to preserve the society that had given their lives meaning. But it had already slipped beyond their grasp."2

Although rural agrarian aspirations had been made antiquated by the triumphant introduction of the machine age in America, the Midwesterner or small rural centers had an internal fantasy life of mighty grandeur and complexity. The pastoral rhetorical vision, as reflected in brochures of the 1904 to 1912 period, defined the rural Midwesterner's enemies, outlook, and gave his life grand purpose. Moreover, the motivations embedded in the vision made attendance to chautauqua programs an absolute necessity if he were to fulfill the grand purpose of his mission in life.

The central persona in the drama of the pastoral vision was the rural Midwesterner. He was the idyllic citizen and natural leader of the American society, who drew his astute independent, intellectual,

2. Ibid.
moral, and civic powers from the naturalness of the agrarian environment. "The largest percentage of the independent thinkers of the world populate the great prairie states of this nation," states a 1910 brochure, "[their] civilization . . . is rugged, intelligent and honest."¹ And in the same brochure it is also explained that the rural Midwesterner always leads "in bringing about improved conditions."²

As the natural leader and custodian of the American destiny, the Midwestern hero had the awesome responsibility of purifying and guiding the nation. And, in fact, the plot for this period has about it some of the characteristics of self-righteous evangelism. Midwesterners were America's missionaries. They zealously sought to purge the country of villains and all that which they deemed unnatural. The villains in the pastoral vision were big businessmen and political bosses--the men who were "corruptionists" and perverted the society and belonged in "jail."³ These were the enemies of the agrarian destiny for America.

The cleansing of society did not just involve throwing the villains in jail; it also meant exposing life styles inconsistent with that of the rural Midwestern American. If agricultural life was considered the natural life from which all good flows, then competing life styles had to be unnatural and, therefore, inevitably enervating

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² Ibid.
³ "Chautauqua, 1911, Banner Program: Milan, Mo.," 1911 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
and corrupt. A popular target was the big city, "the lure of the city with its false ideas of rapid wealth and easy honor should be exposed." In fact, one brochure pictures a horn of plenty from which numerous Midwestern bounties flow (Fig. 14). Symbolically, such a configuration suggests a central assumption of the agrarian missionary plot: It is from the agrarian areas that all good things flow.

The numerous pictures of and commentary about Bryan, Clark, LaFollette, and numerous other Midwestern leaders, as suggested in the brochures of this period, symbolically represent the struggle on the part of the heroic protagonist against the villains in society and the unnaturalness of the modern city life style. And although these specific examples of Midwestern folk heroes demonstrate the importance of rural Midwestern leadership, the vision also gave meaning to the individual, each perceiving himself a heroic leader within the movement. Midwesterners, proclaims one brochure, are "working out the fullness of [their] destiny to the immeasurable betterment of this and future generations."2

The chautauqua program itself was part of the plot in the sense that it was the agency through which the Midwestern hero could realize his evangelistic mission to stamp out corruption, evil, and villains. As one brochure requested of its audience: "Let us form a partnership that will have for its reward the ultimate betterment of this community and consciousness that we have done our part in bringing about improved

2. Ibid.
Moreover, the rhetoric of the pastoral rhetorical vision contained powerful pragmatic motivations for attending chautauqua. Awe was the predominant emotion which the vision evoked. The focus was upon the future with its high potential for ecstasy or for terror. If the Midwestern hero failed in his mission to purify and cleanse America of its villains, unnatural life style, and false ideals, then the whole destiny of America would be anti-progressive from this Midwesterner's moral, social, and civic point of view. Future generations would fail to be immeasurably better. Fear of failure, then, became a powerful motivation to carry out his mission which, of course, could be accomplished by purchasing a chautauqua ticket.

Other powerful motives contained within the contest of the drama are avoidance and reduction of punishment and guilt. Because the rural Midwesterner assumed the image of the idyllic hero in the mission, not to live up to this role would result in a denial of his superior moral, intellectual and social outlook, and the naturalness of his way of life. Between the heroic image and its rejection is a great potential for devastating punishment and guilt. In a sense, the participation of the Midwesterner in the mission defines the nature of his heroic role. If he chooses not to participate in the mission, then he must reject his role as heroic protagonist. Moreover, when he rejects this part in the pastoral fantasy vision, the Midwestern must live out his life in a state of purgatory—a punishment and constant reminder of his guilt for denying idyllic agrarian naturalness and sanctions.

As one brochure warns: "Every year thousands of young men and women leave the quiet natural life of the farm and the country town and flock to the great cities, and there . . . land in the lowest stratum of the city's working class, and far too often of the city's criminal class."\(^1\) Participation in the mission, which guaranteed a heroic image for the Midwesterner and a sanction of agrarian directives, again, could be achieved by attending chautauqua.

Within the context of this vision, undesirable qualities and situations included: economic and political imperatives, the unnatural, the easy, urban inactivity and apathy. Agrarianism, the natural, the independent, the moral, the civic, duty, participation, and success were all positive qualities and values. The positive values constitute the basis of the two fantasy themes expressed in the pastoral vision. The first assumed a fundamental relationship between the Midwesterner's unique moral, intellectual, and civic position in life and his agrarian environment. The second involved the notion that because the Midwesterner held a unique position in society, he had a natural right to be custodian of the American destiny and the duty to purge and protect the country of those evils and villains that stood in the way of his ideal. The first emphasized the tie between the agrarian and the natural, the tie between the Midwesterner and the independent, moral, and civic citizenry; the second emphasized the relationship between agrarian citizenry and duty, participation, and success. A simple wreath of

\(^1\) "Belle Plaine, Iowa: Chautauqua," 1909 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
wheat on the cover of a 1910 brochure, therefore, symbolizes a powerful culture of fantasy (Fig. 6). Chautauqua, of course, remained the vehicle through which these fantasy themes could be realized.

Although by the early part of the twentieth century the rural agrarian destiny was being replaced by triumphant new attitudes and outlooks given birth by industrialization, for the Midwesterner who participated in the pastoral rhetorical vision, the real destiny of America was agrarian. Moreover, he was the hero in a society whose mission was predicated by his station in life. Attendance at chautauqua was an important agency through which he could fulfill his dreams of grandeur and purpose.

The Redemption Fantasy Vision: 1913 to 1916

After 1912, the influence of circuit chautauqua spread out from the rural Middle West. It became popular throughout the United States, serving both rural and urban areas. The pastoral vision based on agrarian percepts, however, apparently was not viewed by chautauqua management as a viable promotional fantasy for this new national audience. Rather another fantasy, labeled here as the redemptive vision, was incorporated into chautauqua brochures between 1913 and 1916 for promotional purposes.

The average American, during the first part of the twentieth century, was experiencing fundamental and irreversible changes in his society. Historian Samual P. Hays observes:

The American of 1914 could contrast, in his own experience, the old with the new. Looking backward scarcely more than forty or fifty years, he fully recognized that his country
had changed rapidly and fundamentally. He had personally experienced the transition from a society relatively untouched by industrialism to one almost transformed by it.¹

Many Americans were, for the first time, adjusting to an impersonal society which severely suppressed individual goals and aspirations and to a community style which gave life little individual meaning.

For the American, however, participating in the redemptive fantasy vision, as reflected in the circuit chautauqua brochures between 1913 and 1916, the individual was the center of a great drama of struggle. He was a tragic hero who survived in a hellish world of psychic boredom and intense monotony. His fantasy world was one of overwhelming problems, pressure, and stasis—a world non-conducive to cultivating personal goals and growth. Explains one brochure of 1915, "the ordinary run of life entails many problems. . . . My hands have labored long and steadily. . . . The commonplace experiences of every day incline one to become hide bound and also cultivate ingrowing dispositions. . . ."² Tragic because of his circumstance, the American persona also had heroic qualities: He sought and struggled hard for redemption from his living hell.

The scenario places each individual in the role of a protagonist suffering almost helplessly in a community life so devoid of action that his outlook is one of complete despair. One promotional

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statement by a community expert reads: Ralph Parlette "knows how it feels to trudge the humble path . . . in payless despair." But the plot also provides hope for those who really desire redemption from their fantasy life style. As one brochure of this period suggests:

This program will furnish inspiration and courage for meeting personal problems, it will help broaden the horizon and give a higher point of view . . .

You owe it to yourself to take a short let-up from the daily routine. That in itself is a good thing. When that relaxation can be used for getting new stimulus, it is a doubly good investment.

Take this week for getting a greater vision. Thus, the chautauqua program became the way to salvation, a chance to get beyond the static action of everyday life within the community.

Chautauqua as an agency for escape from the day-to-day purgatory, within which the American suffered, was especially developed pictorially. Brochures between 1913 and 1917 used numerous promotional statements about and pictures symbolic of places, persons, and things outside the frame of experience of the average American. Attractive pictures of distant lands, romantic scenes, great celebrities, and famous bands were all used to emphasize chautauqua as an avenue of escape from the ordinary (Fig. 10). The rhetoric of the redemptive fantasy vision also contained other powerful motivations for chautauqua attendance. Redemption from a life of static purgatory via chautauqua promised the individual renewal of outlook. Although the commonplace

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experience of everyday life may incline one to become hide bound and cultivate ingrowing dispositions, explains one brochure, "chautauqua shakes us up and shakes us loose. I want to be so shaken."¹ A trip to chautauqua, suggests another brochure, gives one "new stimulus" and greater vision."² The renewal itself, brought on by attendance to chautauqua, also has further significant ramifications for the individual participating in the vision. Renewal holds out the promise for the participant that he will be better able to cope with his life in the community. Chautauqua, explains one brochure, "will furnish inspiration and courage for meeting personal problems" and help you get "more heart into your work."³ The need for redemption focused on the present sufferings of the persona and renewal focused on the promises of a brighter future.

The need to escape from everyday life was also based on the assumption that suffering is redemptive and enlightening. Within the context of the scenario, work, for example, is an aspect of the hellish stasis. One brochure notes that people are engulfed in the monotony of "too steady work."⁴ If one works hard, suggests the fantasy, however, one deserves to be redeemed and, therefore, renewed by attending chautauqua: "My hands have labored long and steadily. ... I will

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³. Ibid.
give them a little rest at Chautauqua. At the same time I shall
get . . . brain tonic. . . ."¹ By suffering with tedious work, the
American persona deserved to be redeemed and enlightened.

Another motive for chautauqua attendance, which is developed
within the context of the drama, centers around a preoccupation with
fear of death and desire for renewal and enlightenment. The scenario
reminds the individual of his own morality and evokes a fear that
unless he acts immediately, he may never experience redemption and
enlightenment, at least in this world. "Time will take you one of
these days," explains one brochure.² Another brochure reflects the
belief of the persona: "I can't hope to live forever."³ By not attend­
ing chautauqua, suggests the fantasy, a persona may never experience
that beyond his own static life and, therefore, never know the spirit
renewal of chautauqua.

Within the context of the redemption fantasy, renewal, escape,
new experience, coping, acting, and striving were positive qualities
and values. Community life style, apathy, inactivity, stasis, dis­
satisfaction, and the promise of death were undesirable. These posi­
tive and negative qualities formed the basis of the two major fantasy
themes expressed in the redemptive vision. The first assumed a rela­
tionship between the intense dissatisfaction on the part of the

¹. "Chautauqua, Banner Program: Savannah, Missouri," 1913
Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
². Ibid.
1915 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
American persona with his everyday life style and his need to redeem himself from this purgatory. And the second expressed the hope that man, after he had redeemed himself, could better cope with his life style. The first theme emphasized the relationship between apathy, stasis, dissatisfaction, mortality, and escape, new experience, and strife. The second theme expressed a relationship between redemption, escape, acting, renewal, coping, and hope.

For the typical American of the early twentieth century, many social, political, economical, and technical changes had occurred within his own lifetime. Moreover, these changes led to new and significant inconsistencies in the American's thinking about his role in society, value system, and the American destiny. "Industrialism," explains Hayes, "opened vistas of vast human achievement, yet it produced a restless and strife-torn society..."¹ Americans realized that they were losing control over their lives, writes Wiebe, and "knew only that decisions made somewhere else pushed them about like so many cattle."² Although individuality and the personalized community were becoming rapidly antiquated for the American participating in the redemptive fantasy, the individual was a central figure in an attempt to perhaps reject the newer impersonal community. Chautauqua was a significant means through which he could fulfill his dreams of surviving with some degree of happiness in a world he experienced but could not understand.

1. Hayes, p. 3.

2. Wiebe, p. 47.
The Righteous Patriotic Fantasy Vision: 1917 to 1918

The national popularity of circuit chautauqua continued throughout the years of World War I. After the United States had entered into the war, however, bureau managers attempted to utilize another fantasy to sponsor chautauqua programs. This fantasy, called the righteous patriotic vision, concerns attitudes about the American ethical and moral responsibility during times of war. Although the majority of Americans did not directly participate in fighting the enemy overseas, numerous Americans led an internal fantasy life of extreme tension and mighty heroic grandeur. This fantasy, used for chautauqua promotion between 1917 and 1918, defined the American's enemy, and his moral and ethical outlook in such a way that it placed him upon a pedestal of self-righteousness.

The hero of the patriotic fantasy drama is the American persona who finds himself in a situation where his ideals, aspirations, and values are being tested and threatened by the German enemy. Significantly, the image of the heroic patriot is not developed in terms of actual war heroes. Rather the hero is the average everyday loyal American citizen. Explains one brochure: "The real patriot of today is the man who with calm assurance goes about his business duties, conserving resources, inspiring confidence, building character, upholding community welfare and cooperating with various war activities to the best of his abilities."¹ The image of the heroic American persona

is strengthened by the nature of their willingness to sacrifice for what he believes in. A brochure notes:

They have raised their full quotas by subscription to Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, Red Cross. . . . Many have given sons, brothers or sweethearts to their country's service and shown the full measure of devotion. In the performance of these heroic sacrifices . . . [a]ll esteemed it a necessary price to pay for the priceless blessing of Democracy.¹

As the plot emerges in this fantasy drama, the American hero has, as one might guess, a mission to stop the brutal, violent enemy, which includes the "German guards and German civilians."² This mission, however, takes on even greater significance for the American persona when he realizes that it also includes saving the entire world from the enemy. "The world must be made safe for democracy," was a common phrase used in the brochures of the 1917 and 1918 period.³ Within the context of the scenario, the mission of the American persona took on a self-righteous aspect. The United States was saving the world from the German foe, and the crusade was clearly American, "let us all resolve to be real patriots with an unselfish devotion to the cause of our country."⁴

A scene of international turbulence and disunity, notes lecturer Raymond Tobert, prevailed: "The great war has shaken society to its


2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

foundations."¹ But within the world context of disunity is the Ameri-
picture of patriotic unity. The American "community" explains a 1917
brochure, "is an integral part of the nation[al]" effort in making the
"world safe for Democracy."² Although unified American cooperation
meant strength within the context of the scenario, each individual
within the movement is placed firmly in the role of protagonist. Reads
one brochure: "Every loyal citizen is called upon to serve the flag
and country."³

The brochures of the 1917 and 1918 period were all symbolically
rich with pictures which instill a sense of mission, patriotism, con-
flict, and righteousness. On the cover of one brochure is a picture
of American soldiers in uniform carrying the American flag (Fig. 11).
Moreover, pictures of battlefields, men in uniform, battleships, all
helped develop a symbolic world of conflict, mission, and the need for
patriotic participation. Men in uniform, for example, helped supply
concrete examples of the American patriot persona (Fig. 3).

The chautauqua program itself was also part of the plot in the
sense that it was the means for fulfilling fantasy expectations and
aspirations. In fact, chautauqua was described in a letter by Woodrow
Wilson, reprinted in numerous brochures, as a "patriotic institution

¹. "Chautauqua: Parker, So. Dakota," 1918 Redpath-Horner
Brochure.

². "Yankton, S. Dak., June 30th to July 6th, 1918. Chautau-
qua," 1918 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.

³. "Lincoln Chautauquas: Rochester, Minn.," 1917 Lincoln
Brochure.
that may be said to be an integral part of the national defense."¹

Another brochure explains the importance of chautauqua to the reader as an agency for living out his patriotic mission: "During these stirring times of patriotic responsibility, when every loyal citizen is called upon to serve the flag and country, it is with the fullest realization of their opportunity for genuine patriotic service that the Lincoln Chautauqua enters upon this season.² By entering a chautauqua tent, the average American becomes a heroic protagonist in a struggle against evil for the preservation and spreading of world-wide democratic institutions. He fights the enemy as does the soldier overseas; he is a central aspect in the patriotic self-righteous American mission. He too makes heroic sacrifices.

The rhetoric of the patriotic self-righteous vision contained powerful inducements for chautauqua attendance. The focus of the vision is both upon the present and the future with an intense promise for hope or destruction. If the American persona failed to succeed in his patriotic mission to win the war, then democratic ideals and aspirations would fail the test and be condemned. Moreover, the scope of the American's mission also added additional emphasis for the need to succeed. If he failed, the whole world would be unsafe for democracy. Fear of failure and the all encompassing nature of the American's

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² "Lincoln Chautauquas: Rochester, Minn.," 1917 Lincoln Brochure.
mission became powerful motivational factors to carry out his patriotic responsibility, which he could realize by attending chautauqua.

Another powerful motive concerned the need for patriotic loyalty. Within the context of the drama, moreover, loyalty meant patriotism; it is the "loyal citizen," as one brochure suggests, that is "called upon to serve the flag and country" during these times of "patriotic responsibility." Thus to serve the country patriotically by attending chautauqua, for example, meant that the individual was a loyal American. And to be a loyal American suggests that a person must also be patriotic. For the price of a chautauqua ticket, the American could be inspired with a renewed sense of loyalty and patriotism.

One last significant motive for attendance requires mention. This motive engulfs a multitude of American heroic concepts including loyalty, democracy, and world leadership, and it can be termed an impulse of evangelical righteousness. American goals, ideals, and values were being challenged in a scene of world turmoil. "The strength of democracy must stand further tests," explained a promotional statement for one lecturer. Chautauqua is presented as a rallying point for this mission of righteousness:

Let us make the Lincoln Chautauqua in your town a recognized factor for the promotion of patriotism and the propagation of higher American ideals. To mold the sentiment of the

public along lines that will make the people better citizens and, if need be, better soldiers to arouse all to the fuller sense of their duty, what greater mission could we have than this.¹

The drums of symbolic righteous mission and duty were echoed in the brochures: "The world must be made safe for Democracy."² The "war must be won at any price."³

For those participating in the righteous patriotic rhetorical vision, undesirable concepts included: apathy, German, threat, inactivity, disloyalty, unpatriotic, failure to win the war, the undemocratic. Positive virtues suggested were loyalty, action, patriotism, mission, democracy, victory success, world-wide safety of democratic ideas, and righteousness. These negative and positive qualities are fundamental to the fantasy themes expressed in this drama. The first assumed that American values and ideals were being tested during the war years; the second involved the notion that because the American held a righteous position, he had a duty—a patriotic mission to guide a troubled world in the struggle against the German enemy. The first emphasized the tie between failure, the undemocratic, the German, threat, and the need for success, victory, democracy, and world-wide safety. The second theme suggested a relationship between apathy, inactivity, failure, that which was unpatriotic and disloyal, and the concern for duty, mission patriotism, loyalty, and victory. Chautauqua between 1917 and 1918

¹ "Lincoln Chautauquas: Rochester, Minn.," 1917 Lincoln Brochure.


³ Ibid.
remained the rallying point for fantasy involvement in the mission for patriotic success during a time when American ideals were being tested.

During the war the majority of Americans did not actually participate in the fighting. Through the righteous, patriotic fantasy vision, which chautauqua used for promotional purposes, however, the average American could assume the responsibility of a patriotic war hero. Moreover, he was participating in a righteous mission in which he was proving to the world that democratic ideals were the best. This vision reflects hints of the Wilsonian view of American's involvement in World War I. Hofstadter notes that Wilson attached "America's role in the war . . . exclusively to high moral considerations and to altruism and self sacrifice,"1 two significant aspects of the promotional fantasy used by chautauqua during the war years. Furthermore, the almost constant pictorial presentation of Woodrow Wilson in the brochures created in 1917 and 1918 suggests a significant promotional relationship with Wilson's outlook on the war (Fig. 12).

The Conspiratorial Fantasy Vision: 1919 to 1925

Immediately after the battles of World War I ended, chautauqua bureaus utilized another fantasy to sponsor their programs, the conspiratorial vision. In the brochures of the 1919 to 1925 period, the typical American is viewed as being confronted with overwhelming local, national, and international problems. Most of these problems are characterized as both intense and threatening to American cultural values

and aspirations. So great was the fear of threatened danger for the participant in the conspiratorial vision that this fantasy drama took on characteristics of what Richard Hofstadter terms the "paranoid style." The paranoid style, he explains, is one in which "the feeling of persecution is central, and it is indeed systematized by grandiose theories of conspiracy directed against a nation, a culture, a way of life whose fate affects . . . millions of [persons]."¹

The scene of the conspiratorial fantasy vision is one of overwhelming problems, violence, danger, and fear. On a local basis, there is an insecurity about personal growth and happiness within the community. It is described as entailing "many problems," said to be commonplace,"² and a place of static boredom—"I want to get out of the rut."³ Although local community life discouraged personal aspirations, so too did national issues. Nationally, America was a sea of turbulent social problems which are reflected by circuit chautauqua in dominant lecture topics and promotional statements. David D. Vaughan, according to a 1921 brochure, is an expert on "America's greatest problem—the Americanization of large groups of foreigners. . . ."⁴ Another lecturer is concerned with the negative influence of foreign thought on the


². "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.


American culture: Bolshevism is an enemy "of Americanism and the American home." Agriculture is another important national issue. One lecturer in a promotional statement proclaims, for example, that "a successful farmer [is] not so easy to find these days." Another lecturer explains that there is a "crisis in the farming industry." Other important national issues are reflected in issues discussed by J. Campbell White: "Individual, home, industrial, social. . . ." Not only within the community was life full of fears, dangers, and problems, but also on a national level.

Internationally, the dominant problem from the American viewpoint was foreign. Foreign policies and aspirations were considered in conflict with American cultural beliefs and goals. Internationally, one of America's major aspirations is reflected in the popular lecture entitled "America's World Leadership." As indicated above, bolshevism is viewed as a threat to American cultural values. Foreign threat to American power was more than just ideological, it was also economic. There is, explains one promotional statement for lecturer H. Halbert, a "struggle between nations, and between races for dominance of

3. Ibid.
The dominant scene in the conspiratorial fantasy vision is that of numerous social and economical problems and fears on a local, national, and international level. On the local level, there is fear concerning individual goals; on the national level, there is doubt and concern about the national destiny of the American society; and on the international level, there is fear concerning foreign ideological and economical power. All three phases represent a problematic, fearful America.

Within the context of the scenario, two major personas are developed—a villain and a victim. The villain is, as one might assume, the foreigner both within and outside the United States. As the embodiment of evil he is naturally blamed for many of the problems described in the scene. The bolshevist is described in one brochure as "a hound dog from hell, released from his stagnate [sic] kennel. . . ." Moreover, he is blamed for threatening and troubling American cultural aspirations, as noted above. China is described as becoming an industrial "rival" to the United States, as well as to other nations. Mexicans are viewed as troublemakers. And Communists are viewed as perpetuating

robberism, imprisonment, persecution, and execution without trial. Moreover, there are pictorial sketches in the brochures of the post-war period suggesting the awesome nature of the foreign menace (Fig. 13).

The victim, within the context of the scenario, is the American persona, who is viewed as fearful, threatened, and intolerant of the situation in which he finds himself. Intolerance of this national situation is suggested by one brochure: "I am sick of war, strikes, and labor unrest. . . ." He is fearful of what his life within the community will do to his own aspirations. "The commonplace experiences of everyday incline one to become hide bound and also cultivate ingrowing dispositions," reads one brochure. As suggested above, the American is also intensely afraid of foreign influence—ideologically and economically. And, in fact, he becomes intolerant of foreign ideas of any kind. Governor George Carleson, for example, explains that Americans are "opposed to any and all 'isms'. . . ."

For the American participating in the conspirational vision, life was one of overwhelming problems, fears, dangers, and threats. He was being punished by foreigners, national issues, and even by his life


style within his community. He was persecuted by tangible villains and situations. The feelings of frustration, fear, danger, threat for one participating in the vision must have been unbearable. As one brochure promised him, however, you "can't hope to live forever."¹

For those individuals involved in the conspiratorial drama, a means for coping with his intense situation became absolutely necessary. Significantly, there are no means suggested in the drama by which the American persona might conquer his problems, fears, and foes. Rather he is presented as a victim of circumstances and foreign enemies, a protagonist wandering aimlessly and helplessly in a world of intense paranoia. And as the plot develops, his only hope is that of complete withdrawal from his world of intense fear, danger, and problems. One brochure stereotypes the needs of the American persona this way: "I want to get out of the rut. As in running my car, so in running my life, I do not want to get stuck on the road because of 'low clearance.'"² Another brochure suggests that "the ordinary run of life entails many problems. The chautauqua is built for joy, and joy is a good thing for my family."³ The American persona is offered withdrawal from his paranoia while attending to the joys and pleasures which chautauqua programs are promoted as supplying.

¹. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
³. "20 Years of Chautauqua Success: Marion, Iowa," 1923 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
The nature of chautauqua's promotion of talent in the brochure is another indication of the American persona's propensity for escape and flight from his world of fear and problems. Although there are talent programs that create the world of fear, danger, and threat for the American persona, the major emphasis concerning talent in the promotional statements of this period is on its pure entertainment value. In promoting Jerome K. Mora, for example, one brochure reads: "Some of the illusions are created for laughs and nothing else."¹ The Orchestral Troubadours, once considered educational, are now promoted as making "you forget cares and worries. . . ."² Moreover, much of the talent presented in the brochures of the 1919 to 1925 era were sensationalistic. One play, Broadway Jones, for example, was promoted in a 1921 brochure as follows: "Imagine! Spending so much money on Broadway everybody called you 'Broadway Jones.' Going broke on Broadway! Marrying a woman twice your age— and homely as blue Monday. . . ."³ Pictorially, too, there were sensationalistic pictures of romantic lands, dramatic comedy, and even great magicians (Fig. 4). Chautauqua implicitly and overtly reminded its brochure audience that it was an agency which could provide escape from a world of fears, danger, and threat.

¹ "The Evening Star Chautauqua: Mound City, S. Dak.," 1920 Evening Star Brochure.

² "Redpath-Vawter Chautauqua, 1921: Canton," 1921 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.

³ Ibid.
The rhetoric of the conspiratorial rhetorical fantasy vision contained powerful motivations for attending chautauqua. Fear, threat, danger, and an overwhelming number of problems formed the background for the conspiratorial nature of the scenario. Within the community there is fear and concern about personal growth. Nationally there is fear and danger growing out of many important social issues. Internationally, competition from foreigners, both ideologically and economically is considered a danger and something to be feared. This fantasy world full of fears, threats, and problems closed in upon the American persona, forcing him to seek escape, the type of release chautauqua could provide. "It is a picnic a week long, and I need the picnic. . . ."

The vision primarily focuses on the here and now and offers little hope for the future. And chautauqua offers an immediate answer to threat, dangers, and problems.

Within the context of the conspiratorial fantasy vision, fear threat, danger, problems, and the foreigner were all undesirable qualities. Safety, democracy, escape, involvement, were all positive values and qualities. These qualities and values constitute the basis of the two fantasy themes reflected in the conspiratorial vision. The first assumed a fundamental relationship between the American's fearful, threatened and overwhelming problematic outlook and his little narrow world of paranoia defined by community, national and international dangers, villains, and problems of an overwhelming scope. The second

involved the notion that because the American lived in a conspiratorial world from which he could not conquer himself, he found solace in flight and escape. The first theme emphasized the relationship between fear, fright, and overwhelming problems, and community, national and international dangers, foreigners, and problems. The second theme focused on the tie between fear, anger, and threat, and safety, escape and involvement. Chautauqua remained the agency through which the fulfillment of this fantasy could be realized.

The vision reflected in chautauqua promotion between 1919 and 1925 incorporates aspects of what has been historically known as the Red Scare. This period, notes Robert K. Murray, was one of exaggerated dangers and socially destructive intolerance. Those Americans who participated in this fantasy lived in a conspiratorial world. They felt persecuted, believed that a conspiracy was directed at their cultural aspirations, and grew intolerant of any idea or person who did not radiate Americanism. Moreover, the vision portrays a conspiratorial drama from which persecution comes not only from foreign villains, but also undesirable situations and environments.

The Modern American Fantasy Vision: 1926 to 1932

In the late twenties and early thirties the popularity of circuit chautauqua began to fade due to such factors as improved roads, the sweeping popularity of the radio, the advent of motion pictures, and the decreasing quality of programs themselves. From 1925 to 1932,

chautauqua agencies used a fantasy for promotional purposes that engulfed the American in a modern world. This fantasy is called the modern American vision. Although the day-to-day existence of the American in the late twenties was not significantly different from his lifestyle in the early twenties, those who participated in the modern American rhetorical vision, as sponsored by chautauqua, lived in a world of ease, fun, and leisure. They were modern Americans in a modern America.

The American was the central persona in the modern American fantasy. He was characterized as fun-loving, but also successful in his professional and financial endeavors: "'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' . . . [People] have found that they can make as much money and achieve as great a professional success if they stop now and then 'to play.'" Within the context of the scenario, the American persona is utilizing time afforded him by modern innovations for fun, relaxation, and play. Suggestions for utilizing leisure time are suggested by a 1929 brochure: "Seeing the movies, going fishing, collecting old antique furniture, reading novels, listening to the radio. . . ."2

The American is presented as living in a fast-changing, modern setting in which adjustment is necessary. "Modern inventions and shortened working hours," reads a 1926 brochure, "have made a problem

of how best we may spend our leisure time."\footnote{1} To emphasize the image of modern America, the illustrations used in the brochures after 1925 are symbolically modern and expressive of a spirit of leisure. Sporty cars are common in the brochures of this period, science fiction began to be publicized pictorially—which created an image of futurism, and the tan straw hat and striped sports coat had replaced the more conventional dark business suit (Fig. 5).

The modern American, as the plot of this drama reveals, is the victim of his environment. He is modern because his environment insists that he is modern. To work all the time, for example, makes one "dull" in this modern world which affords him leisure. Thus, as one brochure notes, "everywhere people are now determined as never before not to be dull—to enjoy life as they go along."\footnote{2} Within the context of the scenario, the inability to adjust to the modern life style creates problems for the individual. If he cannot adapt to his new environment, then he is considered antiquated and dull.

Chautauqua, moreover, is presented as a modern form of leisure time. It is an agency through which the American desire to enjoy life can be realized, and, thus, be a well-adjusted modern persona living in a modern age. "For fine fun, rubbing elbows with one's neighbors away from business cares . . .," reads a 1928 brochure, "Chautauqua is matched by nothing else in America."\footnote{3} Chautauqua presented itself as a

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{1} "Chautauqua: Canton, Mo.," 1926 Redpath-Vawter Brochure.
\item \footnote{2} "Chautauqua: Charles City," 1928 Brochure.
\item \footnote{3} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
fun, merry-making form of entertainment. Dunbar's Singing Bell Ringers were the headline attraction in 1927. More comic dramas, clowns, and humorous lecturers were provided for in the programs after 1925. Pictorially, talent featured in the brochures appeared, more often than not, in comic costume poses (Fig. 15). Modern life dictated a fun-loving life style for the American and chautauqua offered him one.

Other motivations contained in the modern American rhetorical vision include desire for success, and the need for relief from business life. By rejecting the notion of the work ethic, chautauqua sought to encourage attendance by promising its reading audience that people "can make as much money and achieve as great a professional success if they stop now and then to play."¹ What this quote suggests is that constant work reaches a point of diminishing returns and that success can be also realized through play. Obtaining pleasurable relief from modern business tensions is another modern need which chautauqua promised to satisfy. Chautauqua allows the busy person enjoyment "away from business cares."² For the person who participates in the vision and felt the need to escape the turmoil of modern life, relief from it would have been welcomed.

Within the context of the modern American fantasy drama leisure, enjoyment, relaxation, and modern life are all positive values and situations. Dullness, the work ethic, and the archaic are all undesirable qualities. Moreover, these positive values and situations form

¹ "Chautauqua: Charles City," 1928 Brochure.

² Ibid.
the basis of the two fantasy themes expressed in the modern American fantasy drama. The first theme suggests a fundamental relationship between the innovations of modern life and the modern life style. The first theme emphasized the relationship between modernism, leisure, and relaxation, enjoyment, and excitement. Chautauqua was suggested as an agency through which fantasy fulfillment could be realized.

Those who participated in the modern American fantasy vision lived in a world of new innovation, enjoyment, fun, and leisure. It was a vision which rejected a traditional notion of the work ethic, which advocated the harder a man works, the quicker he will advance. Moreover, this vision suggested that man lived a significantly different life style than had his predecessors. He was the modern man. Chautauqua was the modern man's form of pleasure. Aspects of this vision are reflected in what is historically known as the Jazz Age. An age in which, explains Thomas Bailey:

Materialism was an unloving offspring of cynicism. Men bowed down and worshipped at the altar of the goddess Success, while seeking quick something-for-nothing riches. "Only suckers work" was a common sneer, while the horse-and-buggy virtues of earnest labor and cautious savings were often greeted with jeers.†

Summary

The two central research questions of this dissertation are
1) What was the nature of the fantasies used in the brochures, and
2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to Chautauqua?

The construction and analysis of the fantasy dramas contained in circuit chautauqua brochures, as suggested in this chapter, provides answers to these important questions. Each of the five fantasy dramas constructed answer the first question, and the motives described as being embodied within each of these fantasies respond to the second question. Moreover, each of these fantasies and the motivations they embody provide valuable insights into a market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America.

In chapter six, the nature of these five fantasies used for chautauqua promotion and the motives contained within each will be further discussed. The nature of chautauqua's market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America will also be analyzed further in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the nature of the study and results will be reviewed. Conclusions will be drawn concerning how circuit chautauqua bureaus promoted their programs in an attempt to satisfy the symbolic needs of the market place, how their promotional strategies changed over a period of time, and what a market place perception of social change in early twentieth century America involved. And, finally, suggestions for further original research on circuit chautauqua will also be detailed in this chapter.

Nature of Study

Circuit chautauqua was both a social institution and commercial venture. In the United States, circuit chautauqua became a social force by providing numerous communities with a multi-dimensional educational, cultural, inspirational, and entertaining program. And as a commercial venture, chautauqua bureaus depended financially on public attendance to their programs. In an attempt to stimulate attendance to these programs, bureaus spent thousands of dollars each season on the creation and distribution of promotional material. The most popular, and apparently the most effective, form of promotional print material was the program brochure.
Up until now, no systematic study has been done on the print materials used for promoting circuit programs. In an attempt to investigate this neglected and significant aspect of circuit chautauqua, this study has focused on the nature of the promotional strategies employed by circuit bureaus in program brochures—the most important means for promoting chautauqua. Moreover, the promoters of circuit chautauqua attempted to sell their programs by merging them with their audiences' fantasies. To determine the nature of the promotional strategies employed by circuit bureaus, this study addressed the following research questions: 1) What was the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures, and 2) How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua?

The methodology employed to answer these two research questions is dramatistic. The major characters, scenes, plots, and themes contained in brochures were detailed in chapter four. Moreover, both the discursive and visual aspects of the brochures were considered in this analysis. From the data collected in chapter four, the rhetorical visions or symbolic dramas contained within the program brochures were constructed in chapter five, and motives embodied within each of the dramas were also detailed. The visions constructed answered the first research question: What was the nature of the fantasies employed in the brochures? And the motives described as being embodied within each of the visions responded to the second research question: How were these fantasies used to promote attendance to chautauqua?
Results of Study

There were five major fantasies used in circuit chautauqua program brochures created between 1904 and 1932 to promote attendance to chautauqua programs. They included: 1) the pastoral fantasy, 1904 to 1912, 2) the redemptive fantasy, 1913 to 1916, 3) the righteous patriotic fantasy, 1917 to 1918, 4) the conspiratorial fantasy, 1919 to 1925, and 5) the modern American fantasy, 1926 to 1932. And each of these symbolic dramas contained, for their participants, powerful motives to attend chautauqua.

The first fantasy, the pastoral, portrayed an agrarian vision for the destiny of America. Its hero was the rural agrarian whose mission was to purge the nation of corruption and evil perpetuated by businessmen, political bosses, and unnatural life styles. The purpose of his mission was to build a better America for future generations.
The agrarian, within the context of the scenario, held a unique moral, intellectual, and civic position in the American society from which he based his claim as custodian of the American destiny.

Fear of the agrarian mission failing future generations of Americans, and avoidance and reduction of punishment and guilt were strong motives within the fantasy for attending chautauqua. If the agrarian mission failed, it was firmly believed that future generations of Americans would become increasingly degenerative. Moreover, if the participant in the fantasy assumed the role of heroic protagonist in the mission, then failure denied his unique calling in life. Between the image and its rejection was great potential for devastating guilt. The vision also promised punishment to those who faltered in the mission;
their lives, they were warned, would be limited by low social status. They even risked becoming members of the criminal class. Chautauqua promised the participant a symbolically active and heroic role in the agrarian mission for, of course, the price of a chautauqua ticket.

The American persona was viewed as a tragic hero within the scenario of the redemptive vision, tragic because of his environment which was non-conducive to personal development and aspirations. The persona was also heroic in the sense that he struggled valiantly to escape his personal hell. For the participant in the fantasy, the focus was on the here and now, although there was hope for the future if he could redeem himself.

Contained within this vision are strong motivations for the participant to attend chautauqua: the need for redemption, desire for a brighter future, and fear of death before having the opportunity for redemption. The need for redemption from the static community scene is reflected through the actions taken on the part of the central persona in the drama. Moreover, the vision promises its participants that if they achieve redemption, they will have a renewed and brighter outlook on life. The need for redemption and renewal was also based on the assumption that suffering itself is redemptive and enlightening. Thus if the persona suffered enough, he deserved to be redeemed and renewed. One last motive embodied in the vision was the fear of death before redemption and renewal. Constantly the reader was reminded that the persona had only a limited number of years to live and that his time might be up before the next chautauqua season. For the participants in this fantasy, chautauqua would guarantee redemption and renewal.
The righteous patriotic vision pictured the American persona as a hero within the context of international upheaval. The world controversy, in which the persona was engulfed, was testing his American ideals and aspirations. The major enemy within the scenario was the German. As the plot developed in the drama, the American persona was presented as making heroic and patriotic sacrifices and fighting to prove that American values could withstand and endure the struggle. He was making the world safe for democracy.

Embodied within this fantasy were motives that make attendance to chautauqua almost an absolute necessity for its participants. These motives included: fear of American values failing to endure, the desire to be a loyal and patriotic American, and the need to participate in a righteous mission proving the worth of democratic ideals. Fear of American values failing to endure was developed through the scope of what was at stake and the chronological focus of the vision. If American values failed to endure, the scenario suggests, then the whole world would be unsafe for democracy. Moreover, the vision focused on the present conflict with promise for hope or devastating destruction depending on the outcome of the war. The need to be a patriotic and loyal citizen also was a motive because, as the fantasy suggested, the time was one of loyal and patriotic responsibility and service. And, last, the desire to participate in the righteous patriotic mission was developed within the fantasy. It engulfed a multitude of concepts including loyalty, democracy, patriotism, and world leadership, which served to propagate higher American ideals. For the price of a
chautauqua ticket, the participant in this vision could symbolically take part in the righteous patriotic mission.

The American persona in the conspiratorial fantasy lived in a world of intense fears, threats, and overwhelming problems. The persona was characterized as paranoiac; he was intensely fearful and threatened by local, national, and international problems and all foreigners become an enemy. The persona was a victim of his environment and foreign actions. As the scenario developed in this vision, the American persona was presented as having no viable means to struggle against his fears, threats, and problems. Thus, he sought complete withdrawal and escape from his world of paranoia.

For the participants in this fantasy, his symbolic world of paranoia closed in around him and made the desire for escape and withdrawal all the more intense. Fears and threats growing out of powerful foreign ideologies and aspirations, as well as overwhelming local, national, and international problems, were all motives for escape and withdrawal. The vision focused on the present and offers little, if any, hope for the future. Complete escape and withdrawal from the problems and fears of a conspiratorial world, for participants in this vision, could be realized by attendance to circuit chautauqua programs.

In the modern American fantasy, the American persona was characterized as living in a modern world, and conspicuously enjoying and adjusting to modern innovations and leisure time. As the modern man, the American persona sought to enjoy life, but remain materially successful. Leisure time was to be spent enjoying modern pastimes, giving
the persona needed relaxation from business affairs. Within the context of the scenario, enjoyment of leisure time and material success were not polar opposites but complimentary of each other.

Motives embodied in this fantasy that would induce its participants to attend chautauqua included: avoidance of maladjustment to a modern age, the need for success and relief from business cares, and the desire for enjoyment for enjoyment's sake. Within the fantasy, those participants who could not adjust to the modern age were viewed as antiquated and dull. The need for success and relief from business cares were complimentary within the vision. Working toward material success, for participants, reached a point of diminishing returns. If the persona took time occasionally from work to play, however, he would better succeed at his chosen profession. And, finally, there was a desire on the part of the persona to enjoy life because he simply wanted to enjoy it. During the final years of circuit chautauqua, chautauqua presented itself as the modern man's form of enjoyment. For the participant in the modern American fantasy, chautauqua was the agency through which he could realize his dreams.

Discussion

The rhetorical visions employed by circuit chautauqua bureaus in the brochures to promote programs functioned as coping mechanisms for their participants. And the chautauqua program itself promised to be the agency through which these coping devices could be realized. The visions, and active participation in them, protected their participants from the pressures of social change, turmoil, and disaster.
The agrarian destiny of America had been triumphantly exploded by the rise of industrialization in the late nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, the rise of the powerful businessman, big government, mechanization, specialization, and increased community dependence on industrial items served to displace increasingly the assumptions upon which the agrarian destiny for America had been founded. For the farmer and citizen of the rural community, the changes brought about by industrialization threatened his traditional agrarian outlook.

For those who participated in the pastoral vision reflected in chautauqua promotion between 1904 and 1912, however, the rural agrarian was the custodian of the destiny of America. It was a vision that reflected an outlook expounded by Jefferson and his followers, commonly known as the agrarian myth. The vision was a safe symbolic world, for those increasingly feeling the impact and power of industrialization. Moreover, this vision was utilized by chautauqua bureaus while they were primarily servicing rural areas of the Middle West.

After 1912, the popularity of circuit chautauqua began to spread beyond the rural Middle West into urban and rural areas throughout the entire United States. From 1913 to about 1916, another fantasy, the redemptive vision, was employed in the brochures by the bureaus in an attempt to promote programs. At this period in American history, the typical American could, in his own lifetime, contrast the old with the new. He was adjusting to and confused by a society that was rapidly becoming impersonal and give the individual little recognition.

The redemptive fantasy, however, made the struggle of the individual toward redemption and enlightenment of central importance
for its participants. It focused on the individual's struggle for personal achievement and recognition in a static world, and promised the individual a better and brighter future. The vision symbolically helped its participants cope with an impersonal society by focusing on the individual and promising hope for the future.

In 1917 and 1918, when America was actively participating in World War I, chautauqua bureaus adopted another fantasy in the brochures, the righteous patriotic vision. During the war years Americans were forced to make material sacrifices and work hard toward the war effort. These hardships, however, were compounded by concern for loved ones overseas and the overall outcome of the war.

The righteous patriotic mission made these unusual hardships more readily acceptable for its participants. Within the symbolic scenario, the participant assumes the role of heroic protagonist against the enemy. He was expected to make supreme sacrifices, for, as the hero, the American persona was dedicated to making the world safe for democracy at any price. The mission of the hero, then, overshadows any doubts about sacrifices, hard work, concern over loss of loved ones, or the outcome of the war.

The conspiratorial fantasy, used in chautauqua program brochures between 1919 and 1925, gave its participants an explanation for the numerous problems and issues that beset America after the war. At the close of the war there were numerous internal American problems, many brought about by the escalation of production for the war effort, as well as international issues concerning peace settlements, costs of
the war, boundaries, and so on. Moreover, many of these problems and issues were of such a complex nature that quick solutions could not be found.

For the participants in the conspiratorial fantasy, however, an explanation for these problems and issues was readily found. The persona was the victim of a conspiracy directed against American aspirations. The forces of the conspiracy consisted not only of foreign villains, but also of unfair and undesirable situations in which the persona found himself. Within the context of the scenario, the persona disassociated himself from any claim to post-war problems and issues by being a victim of a situation over which he had no control.

After 1925 and until the demise of circuit chautauqua in 1932, the bureaus employed another fantasy for promotion. Americans, especially after the war, were experiencing the effects of modernization. They had greater amounts of leisure time, for example, due to time-saving devices. And the age itself was significantly more tolerant of fun-making compared to the years preceding the war.

The modern American fantasy helped its participants cope with the new tolerance of the age for conspicuous fun by allowing them to disassociate themselves from the more traditional views on work and recreation. His symbolic world was one in which working all of the time was frowned upon and leisure was considered a necessity for a happy life and material success. The vision allowed the participant to partake in the innovations and leisure afforded him in a modern symbolic world, without feeling guilty about traditions left behind.
Chautauqua bureaus in an attempt to satisfy the symbolic needs of the market place were very sensitive to the emotional attitudes of the country. They employed cultural fantasies that allowed the participants to cope with modifications in the American experience by attending chautauqua programs. Thus the actual promotional strategy of chautauqua bureaus did not change. Rather they modified the fantasies used in the brochures in an attempt to attract as many persons as possible to programs, based upon marketing analysis.

The fantasies employed by circuit chautauqua also give insights into a market place perception of social change in America. The fantasies reveal a relatively rapid transition period in the American experience. The vision between 1904 and 1912 reflects the remnants of a Jeffersonian America in an increasingly industrialized nation. Between 1913 and 1917, the fantasy suggests the attempts of man to retain his individuality in a mechanized and standardized social system. The vision in 1917 and 1918 indicates a moral and altruistic justification for the sacrifices made by the American. Between 1919 and 1925, the vision that occupied the brochures hints at the frustration on the part of the American with the numerous problems in the post-war period and his unwillingness and inability to confront them. The last vision employed suggests that the American was willing to accept a modern lifestyle, but felt guilt about traditions being left behind.

The nature of the fantasies employed by chautauqua suggests a plausible explanation as to why those who worked in chautauqua viewed it as a socially valuable movement; whereas, those outside the chautauqua experience tended to label it as having little social worth.
Assuming those connected with circuit chautauqua, either as managers or talent, were engulfed in the fantasies sponsored by chautauqua bureaus, then their outlook would tend to emphasize the cultural and social symbolic worth of circuit programs. Writers not connected with circuit chautauqua and not participating in the fantasies connected with circuit chautauqua, however, would be making judgments about circuit chautauqua's social worth on the basis of the program offerings alone. Thus the outsider, in terms of the fantasies connected with chautauqua, would have a different perception of the social significance of circuit programs when compared to those participating in the fantasies.

Suggestions for Further Research

Like the ancient tradition of the use of topoi for generating ideas for rhetorical discourse, working with the materials found in various chautauqua collections has inspired this writer with suggestions for further original research on circuit chautauqua for those in speech communication. The researcher concerned with rhetoric and public address, perhaps could attempt a more traditional canonical analysis of extant promotion materials used in circuit advertisement. Such a study might suggest, for example, the dominant logical, emotional, and ethical appeals used in the promotion of circuit programs. For the person interested in organizational communication, the organizational structure and communication patterns within the large circuit chautauqua bureaus has, to date, been ignored. By utilizing the Redpath business records housed at the State University of Iowa, one could presumably reconstruct and gain understanding about the
communication network within a large early twentieth century business. An expert in mass-media studies could apply the knowledge of his field to circuit chautauqua promotion and program materials to probe the nature of an early twentieth century mass-media agency. For the person in oral interpretation, the program brochures and promotional material contain valuable information on various readers who performed on the circuit platform. Perhaps a researcher might focus on the nature of oral interpretation on the circuit platform using these materials. And for the communication empiricist, an empirical study formulated to probe the nature of chautauqua program offerings is possible given the representative body of program brochures found at The State University of Iowa.

These are but a few suggestions for further original research in speech communication. For other disciplines, too, there are areas to be found in the Redpath-Chautauqua Collection at Iowa City that need to be researched. Often times the argument that there is a limited amount of original ideas to be researched in this modern age is used by those searching for potential dissertation or thesis topics. This researcher has, however, discovered that the wealth of original research in this area alone is vast and offers fascinating possibilities for research to those who will choose to study circuit chautauqua.
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