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ABSTRACT

THE PUBLIC RHETORIC OF PRIVATIZATION: THE VALUE SYSTEM OF THE WATER AND WASTEWATER INDUSTRY

by
Claire St. Louis

Politicians involved in the water and wastewater industry invoke core American values in their rhetoric to persuade their audience to support or decry privatization. By weaving these values into their rhetoric, politicians provide moral and social justification for their audiences to support them, whether in election or privatization.

This thesis places these rhetoricians in their historical context. It analyzes the legacy of environmentalism, from the 17th- and 18th-century religious preachers to the 19th- and 20th-century Greenspeak writers to the 21st-century leaders of America's largest cities. It provides a detailed discussion of the American value system as defined by 1960s rhetorical analysts, grouping these values into common iconic clusters. These clusters are then closely evaluated, first on their theoretical basis in environmental literature, and then in their practical application in the privatization arena. Finally, it reaches conclusions about the American value system in privatization and proposes directions for future research.

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THE VALUE SYSTEM OF THE WATER AND WASTEWATER INDUSTRY**

by
Claire St. Louis

**A Thesis
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Master of Science in Professional and Technical Communication**

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APPROVAL PAGE

**THE PUBLIC RHETORIC OF PRIVATIZATION:
THE VALUE SYSTEM OF THE WATER AND WASTEWATER INDUSTRY**

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This thesis is dedicated to
Dr. Robert Friedman, without whose guidance I would have faltered;
and
Barbara and Albert St. Louis, without whose support I would have failed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Rhetorical Battlefield of Privatization

Competition within the water and wastewater industry is essentially a political battle waged under the guise of service to clients and citizens. It is through the rhetoric — discourse — of the players in this field that this battle is lost or won. This discourse takes numerous forms — written, oral and visual — and includes speeches, advertisements, media manipulation, and proposal writing. Through these discursive forms, municipal leaders and their private suitors attempt to persuade their audience to welcome competition and the entrance of a private partner into their communities.

The term for this competition in the water and wastewater industry is privatization. “The term [‘privatization’] was coined in the mid-1970s by Robert Poole, who today runs the Reason Foundation in Los Angeles, a think tank that boasts some of the nation’s best-known experts on privatization” (Goldsmith 1997, 15). By its strictest definition, privatization means the complete transfer of assets from the public sector (e.g., municipal government) to the private sector. However, it is also used interchangeably with the term “public-private partnership,” which is an arrangement in which the public sector contracts out all or part of its services — for example, the operation of its treatment facilities — to a private firm. Some students of privatization define it as the increased reliance on the private institutions of society — i.e., markets — and the concomitant decreased dependence on government (Savas 2000, 105). In this thesis, the terms “privatization” and “public-private partnership” will be used interchangeably to mean an arrangement between the public and private sectors to provide services to the community.

Privatization began its popularity in the United States under Reagan administration and gained momentum in the mid-1990s. Its momentum was due in large part to its universality — it was embraced by both major political parties, as well as across racial and religious divides (Savas 2000, 15-17). However, its implementation in cities across the nation was not universally embraced — either by the public or by the political decision makers. This is where rhetoric comes into play — to bridge the gap between the advocates’ political agendas and their audiences’ reluctance to accept it.

As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, rhetoric relies upon language to deliver its message. Language is not a separate entity that can or should be analyzed as a self-contained universe. “All of our worlds are inescapably contaminated with language” (Ardener 1983, 154). It is inextricably woven throughout the fabric of the society that embodies it, and it is called upon as the primary tool for communication and correspondence, as well as for influence and control. This is why rhetoric is such an integral component of environmentalism, as keenly detected in the privatization movement as it is in the writings of Greenspeak.

1.2 The Rhetorical Tools of the American Value System

In an attempt to determine the elements of political rhetoric that made their orators successfully persuasive, authors Edward Steele and W. Charles Redding each evaluated the speeches of two politicians — Steele analyzed the 1952 campaign speeches of Eisenhower and Stevenson, and Redding studied the 1944 campaign speeches of Dewey and Roosevelt — as the basis of their findings in “The American Value System: Premises for Persuasion.” Although they each studied different political rhetoricians, they found that the common

thread within these speeches — what made them effective as persuasive calls to action — was a core set of uniquely American values. Americans embrace these values, perhaps unconsciously. Therefore, by weaving these shared values into their rhetoric, the politicians gave their American audiences something to which they could adhere and relate. Consequently, the rhetoric provided justification — moral, social and otherwise — for the audience to heed the orators' call to action.

Because the values that Steele and Redding identified are core values held by most Americans, they comprise a major nucleus of the American value system — both in the 1940s and 1950s as well as today. Individual Americans certainly build other values around this nucleus that are unique to their subculture within their environment, but at the center of it all are basic values that tie together American society. The seventeen values that Steele and Redding identified are defined in Chapter 3. Although the values are separated and evaluated in this way, Eisenhower, Stevenson, Dewey and Roosevelt did not invoke them as isolated entities. Rather, they skillfully blended the values into a smooth elixir that the political audiences of their time would find palatable.

It is important to note that Steele and Redding's American values are not monolithic: they certainly were, and are, the mainstream of American culture but are not the only values cherished by American society. As other analysts have found, and as the conclusion to this analysis demonstrates, other values present in the American value system have been equally embraced and defended, both throughout history as well as in present-day America.

The idea of infusing the American value system into politics did not die with the political campaigns of Eisenhower and his contemporaries, however. Decades later, mayors

of major American cities could be observed employing these same rhetorical tools to further their political agendas. Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis and Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta are two such examples. By focusing particular attention on their attempts to privatize municipal water and wastewater treatment systems, one can witness the artful use of every one of these American values.

It is interesting to note that, much like the opposing politicians of the mid-20th century who used the same values against each other, Mayors Goldsmith and Campbell similarly use these belief systems in their rhetoric, even though their approaches are strikingly different. While Goldsmith represents wastewater privatization and has been widely heralded as privatization's champion, Campbell represents water privatization and is philosophically opposed to privatizing. A precipitating event in Atlanta — a major water main break that left the city with the prospect of an exorbitant rate hike — led a reluctant Campbell to seek privatization. In contrast, Goldsmith actively pursued privatization — even though Indianapolis' wastewater facilities were already considered well run by the government. This thesis analyzes how both politicians, from opposite sides of the privatization issue, incorporate the American value system into their rhetoric and how the private firms that seek to partner with the public sector exploit those same values to help politicians make the decision to privatize.

Goldsmith is considered the pioneer of municipal privatization. Municipalities privatize to alleviate societal ills, to transfer risk, and to improve efficiency (Savas 2000, 22). After a history of failed attempts to improve the quality of life for its citizens while avoiding risk and maintaining high levels of productivity, governments have begun to turn to the private sector to achieve these goals.

A more educated, critical, and sophisticated citizenry no longer regards government action as synonymous with the public interest. It has learned to expect unintended, adverse consequences of attempts at social engineering, and it recognizes limits in the state's ability to define—let alone attain—the public good. (Savas 2000, 38)

Goldsmith firmly believed in this philosophy — so much so that he advocated privatization in a city that did not seem to need it. He fought for privatization of many municipal services in order to give his city the best possible service available.

Regardless of their position on the time/space continuum of rhetorical history, this set of values is so central to the American people that they hold fast to them from generation to generation. American rhetoricians from Cotton Mather to Bill Campbell have been effective in incorporating these values into their discourse, in order to both incite and influence and to stir fear or action. As this thesis demonstrates, the rhetorical approaches that these individuals adopt vary widely, but the crux of their message is the same: “I know the values that you, my audience, hold dear, and because of this common bond you must trust me and follow where I lead.”

1.3 Structure of this Thesis

This thesis is not a historical account of the privatization processes in Indianapolis and Atlanta. Its intent is not to condemn or praise the actions of either the political decision makers or the private competitors involved in any of these privatization processes. Rather, it is an analysis of the ways in which these players, both public and private, employ rhetoric in their daily battles to succeed in the privatization marketplace. Moreover, it is an evaluation of how this rhetoric is remarkably similar to that of national political leaders of the mid-1900s in its inclusion of the seventeen American values identified by Steele and Redding. As will be seen throughout this analysis, the values that were revered by

Americans during that time are the same values that are embraced today — and are embraced across cultural, racial, and political lines, from industry to industry.

The following chapter places these rhetoricians and their rhetorical analysts in their historical context and explains the discursive bridge that spans the gap between them. It describes the legacy of political and environmental belief structures that has been handed down from the 17th-century preachers to the 21st-century leaders of America's largest cities.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed discussion of seventeen icons of the American value system. It then groups these values into common clusters of overlapping ideals, to aid the reader in understanding their overarching concepts and application in the privatization arena.

Chapters 4 through 6 break down these value clusters. Each chapter provides the theoretical basis for the values in environmental literature and then evaluates their practical application in the privatization of the water and wastewater industry, most notably in the rhetoric of Mayors Goldsmith and Campbell.

Chapter 7 draws some preliminary conclusions from the evaluation of the American value system in privatization and proposes directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

PREACHERS AND POLITICIANS: THE LINEAGE OF RHETORIC

2.1 Overview

Throughout history, human beings have wondered about their own existence, the purpose of the universe, and where they fit in. As long as humans have written down these speculations, they have provided examples of the rhetorical form known as nature writing. Scholars and environmentalists in the 18th century would eventually apply a term to this nature writing: Greenspeak.

Greenspeak authors have been recognized as far back as the late 17th century. On the surface, it would seem that such discourse began in an unlikely forum: the church. However, upon further reflection it becomes logical that the preachers of that era would incorporate nature writing into their sermons. In fact, dynamic preachers such as Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards used their sermons to comment on their congregations' place in the universe — particularly how their actions were directly affecting the condition of that universe, as well as their own chances for salvation.

Although they took the form of religious sermons, the discourse of these preachers was rhetorically persuasive in influencing their audiences to repent, reform, and help one another to be better Christians. Mather's rhetorical style can best be classified as embedded, because he tended "to merge natural historical information with social/religious exhortation" (Slovic 1996, 86). This rhetorical approach was designed to influence his congregation to repent and follow the path of God. As an example, in his 1719 sermon entitled "A Voice from Heaven," Mather employs a phenomenon in the natural world, the Aurora Borealis, to exhort his audience to reflect on their place in that world:

What Interpretation is to be made of the Aurora Borealis, that Heaven has lately shown unto us? ...No doubt the other Meteors of the Heavens, as well as the Rainbow, are designed for Instructive ones. The Glorious God, who is their and our Creator, (even He, who is also our Savior,) says of us, whom He calls to be the Spectators of them, Surely they will Receive Instruction. (251-252)

Like the nature writers who would follow, Mather did not merely report on environmental events; he felt compelled to find meaning in them, particularly how they related to human existence (Slovic 89).

Edwards also searched for the meaning of humans' place in the universe. However, in doing so, he employed the discrete, jeremiadic rhetorical form, designing his sermons to frighten his congregation into repentance (Slovic 1996, 86). In fact, he called upon concrete images of nature so that his audience will easily grasp the import of his message. In the case of his 1741 sermon entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" — perhaps his most famous sermon — he used the image of fire to graphically depict the fate awaiting those who would not repent on earth:

Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen.... [T]he devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire bent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out.... (154,156)

Edwards' rhetoric was powerfully effective not only because of the terror it infused into the congregation, but because of the inescapably tangible natural images that permeated it.

Mather and Edwards were two of the pioneers of the rhetorical movement known as the American jeremiad. As Sacvan Bercovitch defines it in his book of the same name,

[T]he American jeremiad, a mode of public exhortation that originated in the European pulpit, was transformed in both form and content by the New England Puritans, persisted through the eighteenth century, and helped sustain a national dream through two hundred years of turbulence and

change. The American jeremiad was a ritual designed to join social criticism to spiritual renewal, public to private identity, the shifting “signs of the times” to certain traditional metaphors, themes, and symbols. (Bercovitch 1978, xi)

The attribute of this “ritual” as linking “public to private identity” serves as an appropriate foreshadowing of the privatization that would invade America a decade later.

In its simplest terms, the jeremiad was defined as a political sermon (Bercovitch 1978, xiv). This seemingly paradoxical union of church and state reveals the dual role of preachers such as Mather and Edwards as practical as well as spiritual guides: “in their church-state, theology was wedded to politics and politics to the progress of the kingdom of God” (Bercovitch 1978, xiv). As demonstrated in Bercovitch’s analysis, the American jeremiad provided the inextricable link between religious, environmental and political rhetoric. Moreover, the Progress about which the jeremiahs preached is the same value embraced by Americans centuries later.

Bercovitch’s definition aptly describes the entire lineage of American rhetoric, by providing a historical account of the jeremiadic form of discourse from its infancy through the present. As demonstrated through Bercovitch’s analysis, the American jeremiad was developed through the Puritan rhetoric of the 17th century, adapted for the religious exhortations of Mather and Edwards in the 18th century, used ritually from the American Revolution to the Civil War, reflected in the writings of 19th-century authors, and upheld as a symbol by the key figures of the American Renaissance (Bercovitch 1978, xv).

The essence of the earliest form of the American jeremiad — the form that preceded Mather and Edwards — was not “the Puritan cries of declension and doom” (Bercovitch 1978, xiv), but rather “its unshakable optimism”: rather than consigning its audiences to condemnation, the first-generation jeremiad lifted its audience with “a

promise of ultimate success” (Bercovitch 1978, 7). From its inception, this early American rhetorical form valued Effort and Optimism, and Achievement and Success — values that Americans would continue to embrace in all successive generations.

The American jeremiad provided the link between Puritan morality and political society — both the politics of the day and the politics that have emerged and evolved ever since. The link is that the Puritans of New England established the early American society, “a society that devalued aristocracy, denounced beggary, and opened up political, educational, and commercial opportunities to a relatively broad spectrum of the population” (Bercovitch 1978, 18-19). This society cemented the first foundation for the American values of Rejection of Authority, Value of the Individual, Equality of Opportunity, and Ethical Equality — values that are still cherished in all corners of American culture.

The descendants of these first jeremiahs brought rhetoric down from the clouds and infused it with secular purpose. While “the Puritan jeremiad set out the sacred history of the New World,” their “Yankee heirs” unfettered the concept of salvation “from its religious framework to become part of the belief in human progress” (Bercovitch 1978, 93). This transition from one generation of jeremiahs to the next bequeathed a shift from the sacred to the profane (Bercovitch 1978, 93).

In effect, they [the Yankee jeremiahs] incorporated Bible history into the American experience—they substituted a regional for a biblical past, consecrated the American present as a movement from promise to fulfillment, and translated fulfillment from its meaning within the closed system of sacred history into a metaphor for limitless secular improvement. (Bercovitch 1978, 93-94)

The value of Material Comfort came into fruition here. It became acceptable, even morally justifiable, to seek personal advancement and to fulfill “selfish” goals. This was the birthplace of the political agenda.

This release from the bonds of guilt formerly imposed on those who sought to better themselves and their place in the world helped make possible the development of modern cities. The rhetoric evolved from helping oneself attain salvation in Heaven to the moral imperative to help one’s community on earth. This evolution, in turn, made possible the political careers of Mayors Goldsmith and Campbell. To aid this rise of “secular improvement,” the emergence of America as a symbol became a commonplace tool in political rhetoric. “For leaders of politics and industry in the 19th century, the symbol of America was the key to social control” (Bercovitch 1978, 180).

However, political leaders also saw the power of the environment as a persuasive rhetorical tool. As far back as Mather and Edwards and their predecessors of the American jeremiad, the purpose of these rhetorical forms was to persuade the audience to understand and appreciate their place in nature. The message delivered “a constant awareness of the worldly context of the writer, the reader, and the rhetorical act” (Slovic 1996, 86). This was the birthplace of environmentalist writing, or Greenspeak, and the descendants of this discursive style have carried through these themes up to the present day. One need only look to Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* to observe Edwards’ jeremiadic legacy.

The Greenspeak movement, begun during the 17th and 18th centuries and kept alive today, recognized that “Environmentalism is a powerful moral and political force” (Harré et al. 1999, 176). Further, just as Mather’s and Edwards’ forceful words demonstrate, environmental writers throughout history have acknowledged the power of language in inciting an audience to act. “Language is the instrument through which we acquire

knowledge about the environment and through which we can create, sustain or change attitudes toward it” (Harré, et al. 1999, 173). However, because language is imperfect and continually evolving, there is a gap between humans’ understanding about the environment and the linguistic and rhetorical tools available to express it. “The gap is bridged rhetorically, but not all devices recruited to Greenspeak are of equal value” (Harré et al. 1999, 173).

There is no one position in environmentalist discourse. Rather, there are many differing and divergent viewpoints. Moreover, these varied positions are represented by differing protagonists with differing levels of scientific, historic and political knowledge, agendas and driving forces, as well as differing stances in the environmentalist issue (Harré et al. 1999, 185). This underscores the need for and existence of widely divergent rhetorical modes and discursive devices, as well as varying exploitations of the values that audiences embrace.

These rhetorical forms proved so effective that they soon crossed over from environmentalism into political speech. In fact, political discourse has roots in the jeremiadic preachers of the 17th and 18th centuries: just as Mather and Edwards’ sermons served to join together their congregations and foster in them a sense of communal responsibility, political discourse also “provides a fundamental basis for the creation of social community and the social construction of reality” (Briggs 1996, 5). This trend has steadily gained momentum during the last three centuries, and audiences would be hard-pressed to separate a politician’s rhetoric from his campaign promises. However, the staying power of this form of discourse is its successful formula for inspiring audiences to act in accordance with the speaker’s own agenda, or to act in mindful stewardship of the environment that engulfs them. No matter the angle of the discourse or the direction of

the agenda, rhetoric is omnipresent in politics and the environment. As this analysis will demonstrate, the privatization industry, which combines political savvy with environmental concerns, is certainly no stranger to this discursive mode.

2.2 The American Value System

Before privatization became a common trend in the United States, however, politicians still employed rhetoric to further their agendas. Rhetorical analysts Edward Steele and W. Charles Redding (1962) discovered the omnipresence of rhetoric, and the exploitation of certain values through that rhetoric, in the political speeches of Presidential candidates Eisenhower, Stevenson, Dewey and Roosevelt during the 1940s and 1950s. What they found was a common thread of values woven throughout their rhetoric. Steele and Redding concluded that the universality of these values was what made them so malleable in political discourse. Moreover, it was this universality that made their audiences eager to heed their message and follow their lead.

Steele and Redding identified a total of seventeen values that Americans commonly embrace and personify. These values are as follows:

- Puritan and Pioneer Morality
- The Value of the Individual
- Achievement and Success
- Change and Progress
- Ethical Equality
- Equality of Opportunity
- Effort and Optimism

- Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism
- Rejection of Authority
- Science and Secular Rationality
- Sociality
- Material Comfort
- Quantification
- External Conformity
- Humor
- Generosity and “Considerateness”
- Patriotism

These values are defined and discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

2.3 The Rhetorical Legacy of the American Values

As the evaluation conducted throughout this thesis will demonstrate, these American values are not unique to the rhetoric of the 1940s and 1950s. Present-day leaders incorporate these same values into their political discourse with the intent of persuading their audience to heed their call. They invoke American values as anchors within their message that link them to their audiences. They use these values “as a means of embedding images... and structures of feeling into the very texture of their words” (Briggs 1996, 28).

Private firms, and the municipal leaders they are courting, present their rhetorical narratives — in the form of proposals, marketing materials, advertisements, and speeches and presentations — in ways that best reflect the dominant ideologies: the American values that will strike a common chord and ideally win favor for the successful rhetorician.

Although rhetoric and the language that frames it are malleable, and are unique to their position in history, the values that this rhetoric employs are common from generation to generation. In addition, the values that one culture embraces are passed down to successive generations as well, primarily through discourse:

narratives strengthen social relationships and a general sense of co-membership by providing a medium for illustrating common beliefs, values, and attitudes of tellers and audiences.... Beliefs, values, and attitudes are not so much transmitted from teller to audience as they are *collectively* and *dialogically* engendered. (Ochs, et al. 1996, 109)

Different periods in history witness further evolutions of the use of rhetoric in influencing audiences, framing the global perspective, and tending to the environment.

Briggs maintains that “language shapes—rather than simply reflects—the social world” (Briggs 1996, 14). In conformance with this principle, the rhetoric of municipalities and private firms reflects and shapes the political and social structure of privatization. Briggs goes on to describe these rhetorical ploys as “verbal art” that “provides resources not simply for celebrating shared identities but for discursively defining social and cultural boundaries as well” (Briggs 1996, 14). The use of verbal art is alive and well in the privatization market: private bidders use tools such as proposals, marketing materials, and presentations to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

Some opponents of privatization “see it as an attack on the ideals they cherish: *public* to them denotes brotherhood, sharing, caring, and community, and they interpret *private* to mean abandoning these vital values” (Savas 2000, 300). They often cite the American values as defenses against partnerships with the private sector.

The principal opposition arguments are based on ideology; nationalism; the fear of foreign ownership, minority ownership, and loss of control; ...and concern that privatization will lead to a concentration of wealth, decline in social justice, corruption, private monopolies, and cream skimming. (Savas 2000, 314)

Privatization's opponents embrace this patriotic ideal. Charles Briggs cites the emergence of "the transnational production of public culture," which he attributes to the relationship between "large-scale institutional relations and local cultural forms" (Briggs 1996, 6). In the rhetorical arena of privatization, the entry of foreign players into the water and wastewater market — particularly French and British corporations — has generated precisely this effect. U.S. water companies are now becoming "transnational" companies, with French and British executives sharing the same halls and conference rooms with American employees. The result is accusations from critics that foreign domination of U.S. water management will lead to declining water quality and customer service — the argument being that foreign interests will remain foreign, far removed from the domestic needs of the American consumers.

While politics is the primary tool for enacting privatization, it is also one of its greatest impediments. Rhetoric plays a crucial role in both sides of this debate. Political supporters of privatization use rhetoric to allay the fears of the employees, the public, and the media; political opponents play upon those fears to maintain the status quo.

However, nationalism is not the only defense put forth by privatization's foes. Some opponents cite the dissolution of American values and a threat to the communities that private partners are proposing to serve. In a February 2000 *Boston Herald* editorial regarding the possible privatization of a water and sewer authority in Massachusetts, the author stated,

Being that political discourse in Massachusetts has sunk to such a level that the term 'privatization,' like 'for-profit,' is only slightly less pejorative than, say, 'pedophile,' there will be no shortage of opposition to the proposal. (Chieppo 2000, 20)

The juxtaposition of the words “privatization” and “pedophile” leaves readers with a bad impression of the concept and a vehement repulsion to it — as if they should invoke a type of Megan’s Law to protect themselves against the entrance of privatization into their neighborhoods. Compounding this negative connotation is the term “for-profit” as an implied synonym for “privatization.” The implication here is just as clear: private firms will seek profit at the expense of quality and service to the community.

The success of the privatization initiative relies upon its political advocates — and the rhetoric they employ — to deliver its message to their constituents and to tell its story. The challenge is finding a way to counter the negative images planted by the outspoken opposition. The key is to invoke the same American values that the opponents do, to counter their protests with equally persuasive arguments. Successful advocates will point out that “Utilizing the private sector to satisfy people’s needs is as old as the family” (Savas 2000, 14).

2.4 A History of Privatization Rhetoric

Figure 2.1 on the following page illustrates the position on a historical timeline of the rhetoricians discussed in this thesis.

In evaluating the rhetoricians and rhetorical analysts, several themes stand out regarding the topic of privatization. Conveniently enough, these themes all relate to the American value system that Steele and Redding defined.

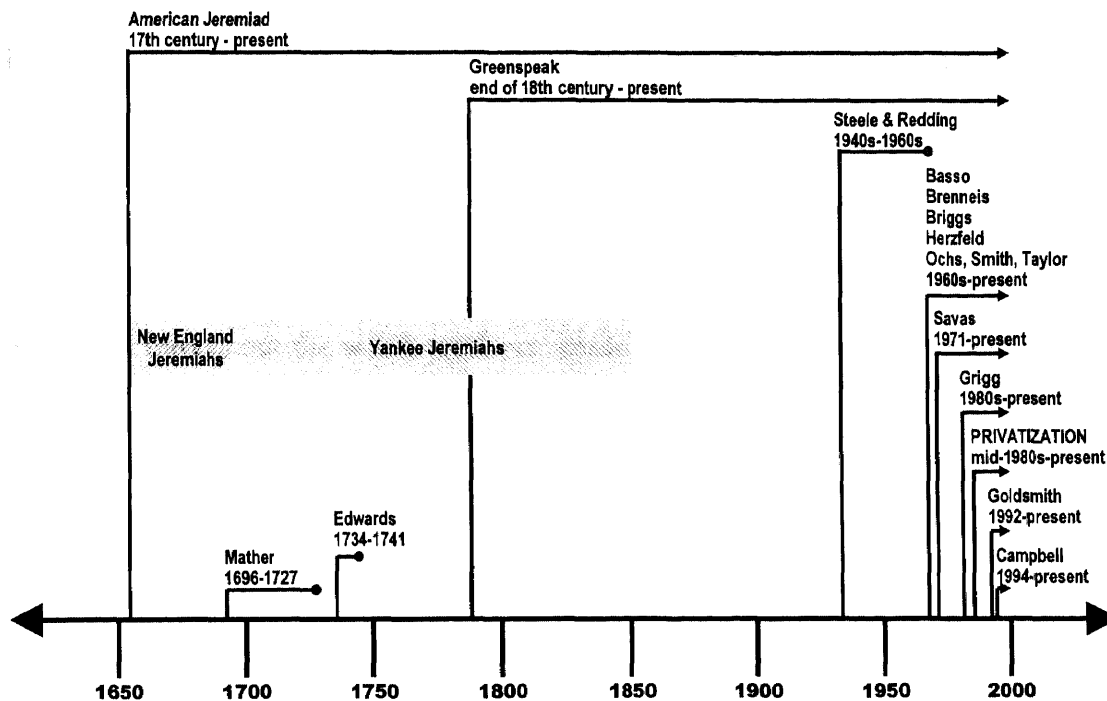


Figure 2.1 Rhetorical timeline — rhetoricians and their periods of influence

As far back as the earliest Greenspeak authors, principles emerge that apply to the water and wastewater industry. For these nature writers, Science and Secular Rationality forms the crux of the environmental argument: “the voice of scientific authority is employed to close the gap between the scientific evidence that is drawn on by the author and the political response he wishes to encourage in his readers” (Harré et al. 1999, 53).

Although Greenspeak assumes various forms and voices, at the core of the environmentalist movement lies a fundamental emphasis on the quality of life, a romantic (18th-century) throwback to the vision of a harmonic and holistic world that respects nature and embraces morality (Harré et al. 1999, 186).

The ultimate value... running through the centuries of ever-changing Greenspeak is aesthetic, the conception of a certain rightness in the way human life must fit in as part of nature.... we do have moral responsibility and rights and duties with respect to the planetary ecology as much as to our own neighborhood. (Harré et al. 1999, 187)

However, environmentalists should “make as much use of scientific knowledge as they can” (Harré et al. 1999, 187). The approach that Greenspeak advocates is to weld the question “How do we wish to live?” to a scientific methodology (Harré et al. 1999, 187).

The analysts of the 1960s, who primarily studied anthropological uses of discourse in cultures throughout the world, would conclude that the underlying issue is control — over water, over employees, over customers and rates.

Just as the relationship between dominant and subordinate discourses is contested and dynamic, social authority emerges through a fluid process of controlling competing claims to power and alternative bases for establishing it. (Briggs 1996, 236)

This issue boils down to a battle between hegemony and ideology: the opposition between the control exerted by the rhetoricians, in this case the municipalities and the private sector, and the values or belief systems of the audience, which consists of the public, the municipal employees, and the ratepayers (Briggs 1996, 10). To use Steele and Redding’s terminology, Rejection of Authority is viewed as the most prevalent American value in privatization.

The findings of the 1960s anthropologists take on more relevance to privatization in what they term “narratives of conflict” (Briggs 1996, 10). These narratives, for the public and private partners, take the form of proposals and presentations, marketing materials and advertisements, speeches and media events. They play out the conflict between the competing private firms, between the public and private sectors, between the citizens and their municipal leaders, between employees and their municipal employers, between proponents and opponents of privatization — the conflicts go on and on.

The most outspoken advocate for privatization in the literature analysis conducted here is E.S. Savas, who released a book in early 2000 entitled *Privatization and Public-Private*

Partnerships. In this text, Savas advocates privatization as a pragmatic strategy for improving government (Savas 2000, xv). Using a series of logical arguments to build his case, Savas demonstrates that when municipalities partner with the private sector, the result is increased efficiency, larger financial savings, improved safety, and technological innovation. His common-sense approach to the privatization defense most steadfastly employs the value of Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism.

Neil Grigg also employs a pragmatic strategy to generate a “new breed” of water managers by training them to adopt an interdependent and collaborative approach to resource management. In his text entitled *Water Resources Management*, Grigg recognizes that water managers in the 21st century need to be engineers, educators, politicians and rhetoricians simultaneously, in order to envision and implement a change in the way this most natural resource is treated, controlled, managed and distributed. Water management is both interdisciplinary and interdependent, and requires coordination and cooperation in order to attend to it properly.

A new paradigm stressing cooperation and coordination is needed for planning and decision making in the water industry.... A new paradigm could enhance coordination in the rational planning process working within the political environment. (Grigg 1996, 106)

Using the labels defined by Steele and Redding, Grigg advocates the value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality.

Grigg’s work, although written in the discursive form of a scientific textbook, is far more rhetorical than scientific. He draws from the legacy of Greenspeak in his call for multidisciplinary water resource managers, pointing to the environmentalist movement as the birthplace of “the complexity and conflict of water management” (Grigg 1996, 4). In

addition, he classifies the field of water management as sociopolitical, more so than scientific:

Since water systems are sociotechnical, we see that the social system, made up of the values, beliefs, and interests of participants, is the essence of the political environment in which water management takes place. (Grigg 1996, 123)

Grigg recognizes how the environmental movement (e.g., Greenspeak) has created a complex culture in the water industry, for which politics and rhetoric are essential tools. Even when presented more as a textbook than as a rhetorical analysis, Grigg's findings point out that privatization is more a political than an economic issue. If it were the opposite, there would be virtually no need for rhetoric!

Building on the examples provided by both Savas and Grigg, Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis uses his rhetoric not only to promote privatization, but to spur the resurgence of the modern-day cities. He calls for urban populations across the nation to work harder and to collaborate in order to win the battle against the suburbs, which are stealing away the best jobs and the wealthiest families (Goldsmith 1997, 12). His rhetoric embraces all of Steele and Redding's American values, but at the core is a mixture of Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism; Effort and Optimism; and Change and Progress. It is a critique of the present governmental policy and a call for change in the future.

In his book entitled *The Twenty-First Century City: Resurrecting Urban America*, Goldsmith writes as a mayor of an urban community but focuses his rhetoric through the lens of a member of that community. He writes from the perspective of an ordinary citizen, who is just as impacted as the next person by the policies that he employs. His approach to limiting government's role is for the good of the entire community, including those who lead it.

Atlanta's Mayor Bill Campbell similarly places himself within the audience to which he delivers his rhetoric. By more often referring to himself as a father and a community member than as a political leader, he subtly sneaks in his political agenda under the guise of family values. His rhetoric is rich with the values of Ethical Equality and Equality of Opportunity, through his continual appeals for enhanced opportunities for the city's minority population. In addition, his repeated return to the theme of community as the source of the city's talent, future direction, and ultimate success is reminiscent of the value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality.

Goldsmith approaches rhetoric from the stance of a businessman, defending his political actions as sound business practices aimed at streamlining government. Campbell forms his rhetoric as if from a pulpit, preaching to his audience more so than campaigning, and invoking values of morality and community in his daily calls to action.

The American value system identified by Steele and Redding is a bridge that has stretched from the bank occupied by the American jeremiahs to the bank occupied by the mayors of the largest U.S. cities. Its span seems to be ever expanding, reaching across the 21st century and beyond.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT WE BELIEVE: THE AMERICAN VALUE SYSTEM

3.1 Overview

When Edward Steele and W. Charles Redding dissected the rhetoric of Presidential candidates Eisenhower, Stevenson, Dewey and Roosevelt in their 1962 work entitled “The American Value System: Premises for Persuasion,” they peeled back the layers of discourse to reveal seventeen core icons. These icons were more than political tools; they were values that their audience, the American public, clasped tightly. What transformed these values into the political tools that the candidates wielded was their universality. Because they were so commonly held and cherished by the American audience, the public could identify not only with these icons, but also with the political message that enveloped them.

The skillful manipulation of American values, which are defined in this section, helped these political candidates to transform themselves from officious speakers to persuasive orators. As Steele and Redding discovered in their research, audiences were drawn to the words of these rhetoricians — not for the promises they made to their would-be constituents, but for the deeply embraced values in which they packaged those pledges.

As this thesis will demonstrate, the American value system that Steele and Redding uncovered in their rhetorical analysis was not unique to the generation of voters in the 1940s and 1950s. In fact, these same values can be observed in the rhetoric of modern-day mayors in large cities across the United States. Their exploitation of these same values is evident in every sector of their political platforms — particularly within the issue of privatization. Privatization threatened many of the values Americans cherish, so to combat

this resistance, municipal leaders returned to these values to justify the trend. When these leaders looked to privatize water and wastewater treatment, the successful use of these values in their speeches became especially critical. The prospect of outsourcing the stewardship of the most basic and precious resource was — and still remains today — a hotly contested issue. So it would be critical for the leaders who advocated it to lean upon the American value system to gain support for the idea.

This section defines seventeen icons of the American value system, as identified by Steele and Redding. In addition, it provides a brief discussion of their applicability to the privatization issue within the present-day water and wastewater industry.

It is important to note that these American values are not intended to be monolithic: the values that Steele and Redding identified certainly were, and are, mainstream in American culture, but are not the only values cherished by American society. As other analysts have found, and as the conclusion to this analysis demonstrates, other values are present that are equally embraced and defended, both throughout history as well as in present-day America.

3.2 The Values Defined

3.2.1 Puritan and Pioneer Morality

There are two sides to the value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality. The first centers on moral actions, or making choices between good and bad, ethical and unethical. This is the value perhaps most closely linked to Jonathan Edwards, who implored his congregation to do the right thing, the ethical thing, or else pay the eternal price for poor judgment. The

corollary to this component of the value is “cooperation as a means to mutually desired ends” (Steele and Redding 1962, 85).

The flip side to this value is that “the American is notoriously competitive” (Steele and Redding 1962, 85). Steele and Redding contend that competitiveness is an intrinsic trait of Americans. However, this value advocates rising above that competitive nature and collaborating to achieve collective goals. Like the moral code promoted above, goals achieved by a group working together are justifiable and ethical; goals achieved through defeating another individual are unethical and should be avoided.

Privatization fully captures this duality of human (American) nature. The winning private-sector firm must compete against other opponents for the prize of operating a municipal water and/or wastewater system. However, public-private partnerships also epitomize the ultimate form of cooperation to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Private-sector firms aim to prove that if the public sector partners with them, their project will achieve greater environmental compliance, lower billing rates to customers, higher savings for the city and the ratepayers, and better wages and benefits for the employees. Underlying these commitments are promises of higher profits for both sides of the partnership if the municipality privatizes the operation of its water/wastewater system.

Neil Grigg, author of *Water Resources Management: Principles, Regulations, and Cases* (1996), embraces this value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality as most crucial to responsible and effective water stewardship. To him, water resources management requires interdependence of both people and disciplines in order to monitor, care for, and distribute this precious resource properly.

3.2.2 Value of the Individual

The Value of the Individual is self-explicit: the “individual’s happiness and welfare are the ultimate criteria for private or governmental policy” (Steele and Redding 1962, 86). Similar to the concept espoused by the previous value, that the quest for personal gain at the expense of others is immoral, the Value of the Individual holds that exploiting others for one’s own gain is “a denial of their integrity and thus of moral purpose” (Steele and Redding 1962, 86).

Private firms frequently capitalize on the idea of respecting individuals by focusing a large portion of their proposals on management and care of the employees. In a public-private partnership, one of the great concerns of the municipal employees is that they will lose their jobs, because the private manager will lay off staff to achieve savings. The private sector attempts to head off these fears through statements such as “our greatest assets are our employees.” The rhetoric in these proposals rarely strays from such language as “We pride ourselves on investing in their careers, giving them the training they need to do their jobs, enhancing their benefits packages ... we care about the employees and their families.”

Another force driving private firms to caring for rather than cutting out employees is the prominent role of labor unions in these privatization deals. A large component of the labor force in the water and wastewater industry is unionized. The unions exist to protect individual employees. Concomitantly, these collective bargaining units protect employees as a class, emphasizing collective strength and communal action as defenses against their employers — cooperative sentiments that relate to the aforementioned value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality. The existence of the unions forces the public and private sectors to recognize and take care of the employees — especially in instances where there is no other motive (profit, recognition or otherwise) for protecting them.

3.2.3 Achievement and Success

Achievement and Success is one of the more observable values in American society. Steele and Redding note that “success in the business enterprise has usually been the ultimate criterion” (Steele and Redding 1962, 86). This value includes the idea of possession as a measure of achievement.

It does not take a review of the historical jeremiadic model to recognize the elements of wealth, size, power and success as the driving forces in business. The water and wastewater industry is certainly no different in this respect. In their proposals to potential future clients, private-sector firms quote the number of projects they already operate. They cite their unblemished environmental record. They subtly (and sometimes blatantly) reinforce their demonstrated performance, which they prove not only by the number of projects they run, but also by the fact that they continue to win contracts. Their rhetoric silently asks the question, “If all these other clients trust us to treat their water, why shouldn’t you?” By underscoring the contracts they have already accumulated, private-sector competitors seek to illustrate that they are the logical choice for this particular project.

3.2.4 Change and Progress

Change and Progress embraces the idea that society is continually moving toward a better future (Steele and Redding 1962, 86). This cultural value dismisses the possibility that the future might mean a step backward; rather, full implementation of this value means reinforcement of the idea that change, i.e. technological development, is good, because it always signifies forward progress and the betterment of society.

The larger private-sector players in the water and wastewater industry tend to use this value as a marketing ploy more frequently than the smaller, domestic-only firms. These larger firms all have at least one international parent company, with a large bank account and vast resources. These larger firms emphasize that the advantage to partnering with them is that they can draw from the worldwide resources of their parent companies to upgrade the city's equipment, facilities, computers, personnel skills, etc. These resources are not just people and technology, but also a seemingly limitless bank account. Through the incorporation of this value into rhetoric, the message is clear: privatization yields progress, because the private firms will necessarily bring about positive change.

Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis incorporates this value of Change and Progress into his rhetoric, as well as the values of Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism and of Effort and Optimism. He defied critics when he pushed for privatization in a city that was enjoying relatively high-quality water and moderate efficiency, maintaining that true progress would be made only if the community reached out to the private sector to benefit from their technology and expertise.

3.2.5 Ethical Equality

This value embodies the principle that all Americans are equal in God's eyes. This equality is bestowed on the basis of humanity and is blind to material wealth, social status, or racial composition. As an extension of this belief, allege Steele and Redding, all Americans have equal rights before the law (Steele and Redding 1962, 87).

"Equality," especially the kind preceded by the word "ethical," is a key premise of most private-sector proposals and marketing efforts. Private firms promise equal or better benefits for municipal employees. They guarantee that they will not lay off any workers;

this “no layoff policy” implies that all workers are of equal value in the eyes of the private managers and therefore are equally entitled to employment. These private firms also attach certain “value-added” programs to their proposals, such as the adoption of a local disadvantaged high school; the idea behind this program is to introduce students to the water/wastewater industry by hiring them as interns in the treatment plants. By learning about the industry in a plant within their town, they are not only gaining pride in their community, but also enhancing their equality to “more advantaged” students in the job market.

Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta rarely separates this value from his rhetoric. In fact, most of his discourse is framed around the concept of equality for all. He is an outspoken advocate of Affirmative Action and the Empowerment Zone and gears his speeches toward the minority groups in the Atlanta community, exhorting them to demand equal rights and a better quality of life.

3.2.6 Equality of Opportunity

The tenet behind Equality of Opportunity is that “each individual, regardless of circumstances of birth, shall have the opportunity to rise in the economic and social system” (Steele and Redding 1962, 87). This value counterbalances the stratification of wealth that is prevalent and pre-existing in American society. Of all of Steele and Redding’s American values, the values of Equality of Opportunity and Ethical Equality contain perhaps the greatest overlap.

Again, the private-sector firms in the water and wastewater industry have embraced this value. Most firms now enter into profit-sharing agreements with their clients; when they achieve a certain amount of savings over and above the contractual amount, the

private manager and the public owner split the profit. Another manifestation of this rhetorical value is a practice that has virtually become a standard contract stipulation: the private manager invests 5% of its pre-tax profit back into the community, to fund school programs, repair roads and bridges, and pay for other underfunded needs in the project city. Still another practice that has become standardized is the cultivation of local minority-owned, woman-owned, and small business enterprises (M/W/SBEs); the private firm must commit a certain percentage (specified by the client) of subcontracted work to these M/W/SBEs in order to ensure ample opportunities for these local firms to maintain a living.

Along with Ethical Equality, Atlanta's Mayor Campbell relies heavily on this value of Equality of Opportunity as well. By making minority vendor participation a requirement in the water system procurement, he ensured that the local minority population would benefit from the privatization effort.

3.2.7 Effort and Optimism

The value of Effort and Optimism is founded upon the idea that hard work will lead to advancement and success. From the times of the first immigrants to the Protestant work ethic to modern-day sporting events, the hope of rewards for valiant efforts has been the carrot at the end of the stick for Americans, motivating them to strive and work ever harder.

As part of their rhetoric, private firms point out to their public-sector clients that they partner with labor. They train the employees to do their jobs better, to take an active part in exceeding the compliance standards, reducing safety accidents, and instituting operating efficiencies that result in savings to the ratepayers. The stated benefit to the

employees is that they should cooperate with the private firm because they have a stake in the success of the partnership. The underlying benefit to the private sector is that diffusing the labor force at the outset will reduce the time, money and effort spent combating union strikes, grievance resolution, and collective bargaining negotiations later on in the process.

Another application of this value is on the part of the government leaders who promote privatization. In one form of privatization, known as managed competition, the municipal employees are invited to submit a bid alongside the private-sector competitors. If their bid is the most advantageous and guarantees the biggest value with the highest savings, then the public-sector employees will retain responsibility for operation of the system. This opportunity provides employees with an enormous motivation to work diligently in order to construct the best possible bid, because if they are successful then they will not only gain self-confidence, but also retain control over their destinies.

Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis incorporates this value of Effort and Optimism into his rhetoric. Along with the values of Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism and of Change and Progress, he most often employs this value in his discourse, exhorting public officials and municipal employees to work harder to find solutions and yield successes.

3.2.8 Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism

Americans have traditionally been perceived as an active culture. This American value emphasizes the importance of engaging in activity guided by reason. Such reasoned, pragmatic activity leads to “efficiency of business and industrial techniques” (Steele and Redding 1962, 88) and results in practical, competent problem solving. In addition, this

value advocates timely and logical solutions applied to problems as they arise, rather than far-reaching and abstract propositions (Steele and Redding 1962, 88).

This again is where the larger players in the private sector call upon their international backers to gain a competitive advantage. Their rhetorical claim is that, through their global parents, they possess the expertise and the worldwide resources to achieve operating efficiencies. For example, because a certain private firm operates plants all over the country and throughout the world, it can show the municipality how to run a process using only four steps instead of seven — thus saving time and reducing costs. The other advantage that privatization can bring to a municipality is the immediate infusion of capital into the city's infrastructure. Making these investments and implementing improvements at the outset of private operation helps prove to doubters of the partnership that privatization was the most pragmatic and beneficial solution.

Author E.S. Savas points to this value of Efficiency, Practicality and Pragmatism as the most integral to the privatization movement. He contends that privatization is a pragmatic strategy for improving government (Savas 2000, xv). Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis fully agrees with this sentiment; his rhetoric embraces this value in addition to the values of Effort and Optimism and of Change and Progress.

3.2.9 Rejection of Authority

This American cultural value maintains that the “emphasis on rejection of authority creates a tendency to think in terms of rights rather than duties” (Steele and Redding 1962, 88). Americans should receive certain privileges on the basis of being Americans, not for any action they might perform. Moreover, “Americans tend to resent authoritarian relationships between employer and employee, ... and citizen and governmental bureau”

(Steele and Redding 1962, 88). This resentment, combined with the American right to criticize, provides Americans with not only the freedom, but also the obligation, to point out the flaws of their governmental leaders.

This value again forces the private and public sectors not only to “deal with” the employees but to protect and nurture them. As numerous surveys have revealed, employee issues are cited as one of the biggest roadblocks to privatization. The vast majority of municipal employees are unionized. The most powerful national labor union in the water and wastewater industry is the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, or AFSCME. With the advantage of a relatively large budget, generated primarily through union dues, AFSCME has launched national and local advertising campaigns, demonstrations, and media coverage to protest and prevent water and wastewater systems from being privatized. Their protection under federal law enables them to criticize and act against their public-sector employers — a privilege that they hold as a right and wave like a picket sign. This Rejection of Authority is perhaps the single-most critical value that privatization proponents must face, and find a way to incorporate into their rhetoric. Failure to do so can mean failure of the privatization initiative altogether. Firms who have succeeded in quelling this resistance have found that the key to countering it is to involve employees and unions early in the process so that the relationship is cooperative, not combative.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Charles Briggs, editor of *Disorderly Discourse: Narrative, Conflict, & Inequality*, an anthology of international, anthropological analyses of rhetoric, sees Rejection of Authority as the most prevalent American value in privatization. To him, privatization is an issue of control, and those who are faced with losing control or of being controlled are naturally going to attempt to reject such domination.

3.2.10 Science and Secular Rationality

Steele and Redding summarize this value by stating, “Americans assume that they live in an ordered universe in which intelligent beings can continually improve both themselves and their external conditions” (Steele and Redding 1962, 88). It is the predictable nature of life and the universe that provides Americans with a certain level of comfort, because they can trust that calculability (Steele and Redding 1962, 88).

Private firms typically return to the employee relations aspect of their rhetoric to incorporate this value. The rhetorical approach is that through education (which takes the form of tuition reimbursement plans for employees to return to school) and training (in both the technical and safety arenas), these private firms help employees do their jobs better. This in turn helps enhance the efficiency and safety of their facilities and environment. This again ties into the rhetorical strategy of enticing employees to have a stake in the success of the public-private partnership.

The rhetoricians of the Greenspeak movement cite this value as most prevalent in the environmental realm. To them, the calculated and meticulously engineered stewardship of the environment, particularly of water, is critical to the sustainability of natural resources.

3.2.11 Sociality

Since Americans already embrace the value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality, they believe that cooperating with a group is necessary for survival (Steele and Redding 1962, 88). But this cooperation is a double-edged sword: it becomes difficult to discern who is genuinely friendly and who is pretending to get along for the sake of getting ahead. The latter type of cooperator takes on the persona of the stereotypical used car salesman — a superficially

friendly smooth-talker who cannot be trusted. However, since those who are the most outgoing and friendly seem to be rewarded by upward mobility, Americans find themselves needing to cooperate with these salesman in order to survive (Steele and Redding 1962, 89).

Private bidders for municipal partnerships acknowledge the employees' suspicion of them as outsiders who will say anything to gain their trust and their contract. In tandem with involving the labor force early in the privatization process, firms take other actions in an attempt to alleviate the tension and fears of the municipal workers. They distribute newsletters to welcome the employees to their new company. They hold picnics or other social gatherings as the forum for initial employee orientations; typically they invite the spouses to such events as well, to demonstrate their concern for the well being of the employee's family. Most firms also have employee-focused programs for the entire company, such as counseling or assistance programs. The private firms recognize that these municipal labor forces are very much like a community, so they try to implement programs and policies that simulate a community-building environment. The employees often regard these attempts as superficial acts of "friendship," but they also recognize that they are being offered opportunities that had previously not existed, so they are usually willing to cooperate.

3.2.12 Material Comfort

Steele and Redding define this core American value as "undiluted gratification" (Steele and Redding 1962, 89). This need for gratification is seen in the unlimited desire for material accumulations, as well as excesses in leisure and advertising. In the end, Americans believe that whoever collects the most material wealth and possessions is the most successful.

Few arenas showcase the value of material comfort in the water and wastewater industry more than the private sector's marketing materials. From brochures to newspaper and magazine advertisements to web sites, the trend is full-color, high-gloss images that illustrate much and often say little. One private-sector competitor recently countered this trend by deliberately taking a stark, "Puritan" approach. The firm placed a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times*. Unlike the ads of its competitors, which packed as much color and text as possible into the available space, this ad had a black background and one concise paragraph of white text. Through the text, the firm set itself apart from its competitors, in effect stating that "we give it to you straight, and don't snow you with flashy colors and images." Through its simplicity, the "image" was clear: while the other firms are interested in accumulating more material comfort through the operation of the city's system, this firm was getting back to basics, returning to the value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality.

3.2.13 Quantification

The cultural value of Quantification speaks to the "bigger is better" mentality. As Steele and Redding explain, "quantity tends to be stressed and quality becomes secondary" (Steele and Redding 1962, 89). Television and motion pictures illustrate the American thirst for the biggest and the best of everything — from cars to homes to bank statements.

One of the most used — and overused — marketing ploys in private competitors' proposals is to "hit the client with numbers." While rhetoricians often rationalize the use of statistics as scientific reasoning, which would reflect the value of Science and Secular Rationality, what they are in essence doing is appealing to Americans' hunger for chart-toppers. In the water and wastewater industry, this translates into a competition between

quantity and quality. One competitor, for example, might claim to operate an extremely high number of plants throughout the country; since the firm neglects to mention that all of these plants are very small, the figure appears quite impressive. Another competitor might emphasize that although it only operates a fraction of the *number* of plants touted by its opponent, those plants are the largest in the nation. Since these firms are never placed in the same room to debate these facts and figures, they all have free reign to spin the numbers to their fullest advantage.

3.2.14 External Conformity

The value of External Conformity has several manifestations, including “the equality theme.” As Steele and Redding explain, “each has the right to criticize the other for failure to act as an equal” (Steele and Redding 1962, 90). This tenet calls to mind the Rejection of Authority, in that both values bestow on Americans the duty to find fault with those who govern them. However, what distinguishes this value is the bottom-line belief that Americans must cooperate with everyone, even those with whom they do not agree. This idea is reminiscent of Puritan and Pioneer Morality as well as Sociality, with one difference: External Conformity relates to cooperation with authority, rather than fellow community members or “salesmen.”

This philosophy of criticism to effect equality is a popular ploy among competitors. In the water and wastewater industry, this philosophy is known as “creating a level playing field.” The most common strategy of leveling the competitive field is to complain that the process was somehow rigged — obviously this is a complaint lodged by the firm or firms who do not win that particular contract. The unsuccessful firms typically use the media as their vehicle of complaint, feeding them negative publicity about the firm in the lead or

simply making sure the public knows that the leading firm recently had a bacterial outbreak in one of its other plant operations. In many cases, the firms are actually not dealing with a level field; one firm might have a better-positioned lobbyist who is close to the political decision-makers, for example. Of course, the complainants are not truly attempting to create a competitive field where all the entrants have equal footing; in fact, the key strategy in any procurement process is to try to level out the other firm's competitive advantage and tilt the field a little more toward one's own side.

Another manifestation of the value of External Conformity is "subordination to the customs of competitive behavior" (Steele and Redding 1962, 89). Nowhere is this idea more evident within the water and wastewater industry than in managed competition. The employees, faced with the threat of job layoffs or major structural changes, find themselves having to compete with the private sector in order to secure their sustainability.

3.2.15 Humor

Humor breaks down tense environments, opens up communication, and makes everyone a little more human by acknowledging one's own flaws. Steele and Redding comment, "poking fun' at oneself, at the boss, at the officious, at authority, is a leveling influence" (Steele and Redding 1962, 90). By wearing the guise of a comic delivery, Humor can be an effective tool in cleverly delivering some of the harshest rejections of authority.

Public-private partnerships in the water and wastewater industry are serious business, because a great deal of money — not to mention the proper treatment of a vital natural resource, water — is at stake. Humor in this context is not intended to make light of the issue, but rather to call attention to those groups who will be most affected. Editorial cartoons, advertisements, and quotes fed to the media may be couched in

buffoonery, but are really pleas from the public, the employees, and other opponents to have their concerns addressed.

3.2.16 Generosity and “Considerateness”

The value of Generosity and “Considerateness” is somewhat socialistic in nature. It is predicated upon the idea of institutions’ obligations to improve the lives of their citizens, and of citizens to make society better for each other. Steele and Redding describe this value as “American humanitarianism,” or the “determination to bring to the rest of the world the benefits of God’s benevolence as manifested in American economic, political and social institutions” (Steele and Redding 1962, 90).

This moral obligation translates quite smoothly into the water and wastewater arena. Private companies, with their vastly superior technology, resources and expertise, owe it to the municipalities to show them a better way of conducting business. On the flip side, municipalities owe it to their citizens to hire the firm that can provide cleaner, safer, healthier water. Private firms publicly donate large sums of money to political campaigns, school programs, and hurricane-ravaged countries. While they do so under the guise of Generosity and “Considerateness,” in actuality they are seeking to curry favor with a potential future client.

3.2.17 Patriotism

Throughout history, Americans have publicly displayed their pride in the American flag, used such phrases as “as American as apple pie,” and sung the national anthem before a baseball game — our national pastime. This value of Patriotism is frequently summoned as

a defense against “external aggression” (Steele and Redding 1962, 90), particularly in times of war, or during global sporting contests such as the Olympics.

Large private-sector firms capitalize on the vast resources of its international parent companies to win contracts. They use these foreign connections as trump cards, concealing or flaunting their paternity as it suits them. When vying for a contract in a U.S. city that wishes to be an international showcase, these private firms amplify the role and presence of their international parents, promising their full arsenal of finances, technology and personnel. However, in municipalities that are more outwardly provincial, private firms conveniently become “American-born and American-made,” neglecting to mention the resources that are only possible through their foreign owner’s large balance sheet.

From the earliest American preachers through the present-day politicians, Sacvan Bercovitch, author of *American Jeremiad*, views Patriotism as not only the key value, but also the integral component of American society.

Only in the United States has nationalism carried with it the Christian meaning of the sacred.... Of all the symbols of identity, only *America* has united nationality and universality, civic and spiritual selfhood, secular and redemptive history, the country’s past and paradise to be, in a single synthetic ideal. (Bercovitch 1978, 176)

Patriotism, for Bercovitch, uniquely joins together all of the other American values, as well as the Americans who embody them and the whole of their American history.

3.3 Measurable Outcomes: Relating the American Value System to

Other Rhetorical Models

Chapter 2 illustrated the legacy of rhetorical models, starting with Jonathan Edwards, leading to the modern-day rhetoricians of the water and wastewater industry. This section

demonstrates the correlation between some of these rhetoricians and their analysts and the American value system defined by Steele and Redding.

3.3.1 Grigg's Essential Attributes

Neil Grigg advocates a “new breed” of water resources manager — one that combines the interdisciplinary skills of several essential scientific disciplines with a Puritan’s appreciation for cooperation and collaboration. In his 1996 textbook *Water Resources Management: Principles, Regulations, and Cases*, geared toward developing these new managers, Grigg lists fourteen essential attributes that successful water resources management must possess. Table 3.1 provides the reasoning behind these attributes and identifies the corresponding American values of Steele and Redding.

Table 3.1 Relationship between Grigg’s Essential Attributes for Water Resources Management and the American Values They Invoke

Attribute	Reasoning	Corresponding American Values
Coordinated framework principle	A coordinated framework for problem-solving and an organizational structure to coordinate the efforts, and something for the players to identify with are needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Puritan and Pioneer Morality ▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism
Sustainable development Process-based	This is the overarching goal of the process. The framework has within it a decision and implementation process that can be identified and is repeatable, not arbitrary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generosity and “Considerateness” ▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism
Comprehensive	Inclusion principle—requires that the planning and management include the stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Value of the Individual
Integrated	Linkage principle—requires that the planning and management are linked together to optimize the whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Puritan and Pioneer Morality ▪ External Conformity
Collaborative	Voluntary, collaborative requirement—includes incentives for the players to cooperate with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Puritan and Pioneer Morality ▪ Sociality ▪ External Conformity ▪ Effort and Optimism
Action-oriented	The planning and management exercise must lead to results.	
Adaptive	The planning and management process is dynamic, leading to periodic re-evaluation of goals, needs and actions, not to a static plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change and Progress
Effective management practices	Effective management practices, in the sense of total quality control, must be implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism ▪ Quantification

Table 3.1 Relationship between Grigg's Essential Attributes for Water Resources Management and the American Values They Invoke (Continued)

Attribute	Reasoning	Corresponding American Values
Science-based	The impairment to be addressed must be identified and defined by scientific means.	▪ Science and Secular Rationality
Risk-based	Decisions must be taken with a proper perspective on risk, cost, and measures to reduce uncertainty.	▪ Achievement and Success
National policy framework	The federal government must identify and set goals and standards to guide local officials.	▪ Material Comfort
Local control	Authority and decision-making should be devolved to the lowest levels possible to ensure maximum incentive to identify problems and implement solutions.	▪ Patriotism
Capacity building	The framework should allow for creating the next level of effective managers and public officials.	▪ Rejection of Authority
		▪ Value of the Individual
		▪ Ethical Equality
		▪ Equality of Opportunity
		▪ Effort and Optimism

Source: Grigg, Neil S. 1996. *Water Resources Management: Principles, Regulations, and Cases*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 224-5.

By combining this call for an interdisciplinary approach with an emphasis on cooperative stewardship, Grigg deftly brings all seventeen American values to bear on the next generation of water resources managers.

3.3.2 Savas' Influences for Privatization

As discussed earlier, E.S. Savas promotes privatization as a practical approach for streamlining government. In his book entitled *Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships* (2000), Savas identified five influences promoting privatization. Table 3.2 on the next page assigns Steele and Redding's American value system to these five influences.

The value of Change and Progress is the undercurrent throughout all five influences depicted in Table 3.1, as it lies at the core of the privatization initiative: getting municipalities to change the way they have always operated to progress toward an improved way of doing business.

Table 3.2 Relationship between Savas' Influences Promoting Privatization and the American Values They Invoke

Influence	Effect	Reasoning	Corresponding American Values
Pragmatic	Better government	Prudent privatization leads to more cost-effective public services.	▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism
Economic	Less dependence on gov't	Growing affluence allows more people to provide for their own needs, making them more receptive to privatization.	▪ Achievement and Success ▪ Effort and Optimism ▪ Material Comfort
Ideological	Less government	Government is too big, too powerful, too intrusive in people's lives and therefore is a danger to democracy. Government's political decisions are inherently less trustworthy than free-market decisions. Privatization reduces government's role.	▪ Value of Individual ▪ Ethical Equality ▪ Rejection of Authority ▪ Sociality ▪ External Conformity ▪ Humor ▪ Patriotism
Commercial	More business opportunities	Government spending is a large part of the economy; more of it can and should be directed toward private firms.	▪ Equality of Opportunity ▪ Quantification
Populist	Better society	People should have more choice in public services; and be empowered to define and address common needs, and to establish a sense of community by relying less on distant bureaucratic structures and more on neighborhood associations.	▪ Puritan and Pioneer Morality ▪ Science and Secular Rationality ▪ Generosity and "Considerateness"

Source: Savas, E.S. 2000. *Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships*. New York: Chatham House Publishers. 6.

3.3.3 Goldsmith's Competition Defenses

Mayor Stephen Goldsmith emphasizes a combination of Pragmatism, Effort, and Change in his rhetorical approach. His 1997 book entitled *The Twenty-First Century City: Resurrecting Urban America* is an explanation of that approach and how he applied it to achieve great results in his city of Indianapolis. Part of his success came as a result of skillfully defending privatization against those who tried to prevent it. Table 3.3 explains Goldsmith's five defenses of competition and relates them to the American values they invoke.

Table 3.3 Relationship between Goldsmith's Competition Defenses and the American Values They Invoke

Defense	Reasoning	Corresponding American Values
Increased control	Competition increases government control by providing government with more tools to impose fines for poor quality, reward performance, measure progress, and terminate failing contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change and Progress ▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism
Pro-worker	Public employees repeatedly prove themselves capable of competing with the private sector and winning; the self-respect and confidence from competing and winning starkly contrasts with the usual message to city workers that they are inefficient and lazy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Science and Secular Rationality ▪ Puritan and Pioneer Morality ▪ Value of Individual ▪ External Conformity ▪ Effort and Optimism ▪ Ethical Equality ▪ Humor ▪ Patriotism
Fair process	Government agencies actually start out in competition at an advantage, because they do not have to pay taxes or turn a profit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethical Equality ▪ Equality of Opportunity ▪ Science and Secular Rationality ▪ Rejection of Authority
Produces value	Open competition prevents patronage, because it is the bidding that produces the value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethical Equality ▪ Achievement and Success ▪ Sociality
Increases customer satisfaction	Competition creates incentives to produce more efficient procedures that help better meet the needs of people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Value of Individual ▪ Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism ▪ Generosity and "Considerateness" ▪ Material Comfort ▪ Quantification ▪ Change and Progress

Source: Goldsmith, Mayor Stephen. 1997. *The Twenty-First Century City: Resurrecting Urban America*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc. 72-3.

By countering each argument against privatization with a common-sense justification for it, Mayor Goldsmith adeptly called upon each of Steele and Redding's American values as needed to defend his quest for something better for the Indianapolis community. By demonstrating the logic behind outsourcing and the potential for even better results through the private sector, he influenced the skeptics to give privatization a chance.

3.4 A Cooperative System: Value Clusters

As these tables reveal, the American values Steele and Redding identified a generation ago are the same ones that Americans embraced during the previous century. Moreover, they are the same values that, today, rhetoricians employ and Americans revere. However, as the

definitions above demonstrate, these American values are not self-sufficient entities. There is a great deal of overlap and commonality among each of the seventeen values. Similarly, effective rhetoric does not employ these values separately, but rather blends them into a palpable fabric to which the audience can cling.

The chapters that follow evaluate the American value system of Steele and Redding in the real-world context of water and wastewater privatization. For ease of illustration and understanding, these seventeen values have been grouped into common clusters, so that their principles and application can be more readily demonstrated.

The common clusters of American values are as follows:

- *Values of Cooperation*
 - Puritan and Pioneer Morality
 - Sociality
 - External Conformity
- *Values of Equality*
 - The Value of the Individual
 - Ethical Equality
 - Equality of Opportunity
- *Values of Attainment*
 - Achievement and Success
 - Change and Progress
 - Effort and Optimism
 - Material Comfort
 - Quantification

- *Values of Reason*
 - Efficiency, Practicality and Pragmatism
 - Science and Secular Rationality
- *Values of Obligation*
 - Generosity and “Considerateness”
 - Patriotism
- *Values of Rebellion*
 - Rejection of Authority
 - Humor

These values have been grouped into clusters that naturally overlap and borrow strength from each other. In that interdependency, each gains momentum for its own influence as well as passes on that momentum to the other values in the system.

CHAPTER 4

VALUES OF COOPERATION AND EQUALITY

4.1 Values of Cooperation

The Values of Cooperation are founded on the basic premise that cooperation is essential to survival. This cooperation stems from a variety of motivations, ranging from moral and ethical to social and political. The American values that fall within this category are Puritan and Pioneer Morality, Sociality, and External Conformity. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

Puritan and Pioneer Morality is centered on the belief that good works will lead to salvation, and that cooperation is chief among these good deeds. As discussed in Chapter 3, the twofold components of this value are cooperation and competitiveness. While Steele and Redding admit that competition is part of human nature, the crux of this value is the suppression of that combative spirit for the higher purpose of achieving mutually advantageous ends. E.S. Savas, on the other hand, exalts competition, because it leads to citizens' ability to choose the option that is best for them. Therefore, the cooperation that is inherently necessary in public-private partnerships is a means to an end, because it results in choice, efficiency, and an improved society.

Sociality leans more toward collaboration with superficial adversaries as a necessity. In its simplest terms, this value could be subtitled "The Used Car Salesman." Americans like to buy — as will be seen during the discussion of the value of Material Comfort — but they like to buy what they want, rather than be told what they should purchase. The Value of Sociality captures this mistrust of "the slick, smooth-talking bureaucrat."

External Conformity represents somewhat of an overlap between the other two values. It recognizes the competing Values of Rebellion, which are discussed in Chapter 6, as very real attributes of the American psyche. However, this value calls Americans to rise above their tendency to criticize those who govern them, and cooperate — even if only outwardly — in order to maintain equilibrium within their society.

4.1.1 The Values in Theory

Rhetoricians throughout history have immersed their rhetoric with the Values of Cooperation. Briggs observes that one important objective in persuasive discourse has traditionally been “maintaining emotional detachment from personal goals in successfully dealing with conflict” (Briggs 1996, 9). This sort of detachment is essential to cooperation, particularly when the parties involved are normally adversarial or combative.

Savas, in turn, seeks to define the collaborative goals that a functioning society should pursue. One of these goals, he concludes, is the identification of common needs, which he maintains should be carried out within the cooperative community, with less reliance on the external governing bodies:

People should have more choice in public services. They should be empowered to define and address common needs, and to establish a sense of community by relying less on distant bureaucratic structures and more on family, neighborhood, church, and ethnic and voluntary associations. (Savas 2000, 6)

This idea is one of Savas’ populist influences promoting privatization: better society.

Savas’ emphasis on the ability — or more accurately, the right — of citizens to choose what is best is an integral component of privatization, which he defines as “a formal collaboration between business and civic leaders and local government officials to improve the urban condition” (Savas 2000, 106). When public agencies and private

operators join together in this mutual collaboration, the result is not just a business arrangement. The partnership becomes a career developer, an educator, and a community participant (Savas 2000, 106). The avenue toward achieving such a partnership is competition, which goes to the very heart of consumer choice, “a revered principle in democratic societies” (Savas 2000, 94). Savas further underscores the necessity of competition in achieving communal goals:

Introducing competition requires a conscious strategy of creating alternatives and fostering a receptive climate and attitude in favor of providing options for public goods and services.... Without choice and flexibility, the ultimate consumer of public services, the citizen, is subject to endless exploitation and victimization. (Savas 2000, 123)

In other words, a society in which citizens are not afforded their inalienable right to choose is a society without purpose or future.

One approach in facing opposition to privatization lies within this American value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality: developing “supportive coalitions” to overcome the overpowering hand of government. These coalitions can be “amalgams of civic associations seeking better government, neighborhood groups dissatisfied with poor services, disgruntled taxpayers, trade associations of private-sector providers, and business groups” (Savas 2000, 194).

Ironically, the very nature of competition can be used to overcome opposition to privatization. One form of privatization is managed competition, which allows the municipal employees to submit a bid alongside their private-sector rivals. “Managed competition has several advantages over pure privatization, because it... allows an agency’s operating management to work together with labor against a common rival” (Savas 2000, 196). Faced with the potential of losing their jobs, or having to increase their workloads, many employees become actively involved in the competitive process, motivated to

construct a winning bid that will preserve their way of life. In the process, it provides labor with an incentive to work with the municipality rather than do battle with it.

This idea of collaboration is perhaps most clearly invoked by Neil Grigg in his textbook for a “new breed” of water managers, *Water Resources Management*. Grigg maintains that proper water resources management requires a delicate balance between being a “command and control” activity and being completely privatized — he calls for a mutually collaborative arrangement between both public and private interests (Grigg 1996, 4). This system of checks and balances is the crux of the Values of Cooperation: collaboration between two parties to achieve mutually desirable ends.

In the twenty-first century, water managers will deal with complexity and conflict. They will have to confront this complexity by analysis that enables them to unravel interdependency of systems and they will have to confront conflict with cooperation, coordination, and communication, especially with the public. (Grigg 1996, 3-4)

Grigg further maintains that organizations — namely governments — must take on the social responsibility to promote cooperation when tending to the stewardship of their natural resources or the welfare of their citizens (Grigg 1996, 230). This sentiment combines the Values of Cooperation with the Values of Obligation, which are discussed in Chapter 6.

But what happens when the citizens reject government’s efforts to tend to their welfare? Political rhetoric aimed at garnering support for initiatives such as privatization is often received by the public audience as a thinly veiled attempt to reduce services, raise taxes, and/or further individual agendas. Even though, in its purest form, privatization actually *reduces* the role of government by placing more responsibility into the hands of private companies, many citizens view this move as a ploy to generate profit for foreign corporations and to fatten the already overstuffed pockets of the political leaders. As Savas

explains, government is “an evil to be endured, a horde of self-aggrandizing officials and civil servants” (Savas 2000, 11). He proposes privatization as a solution to this evil horde: “Government is too big, too powerful, too intrusive in people’s lives and therefore is a danger to democracy. Government’s political decisions are inherently less trustworthy than free-market decisions. Privatization reduces government’s role” (Savas 2000, 6). This idea is one of Savas’ ideological influences promoting privatization: less dependence on government.

However, citizens are fickle in their expectations from their government. As Savas notes, communities “instinctively abhor privatization and are unremittingly suspicious of the private sector; ...they fan public hostility toward successful entrepreneurs and recognize market forces only as an evil to be subdued” (Savas 2000, 299). This rather schizophrenic interpretation of government’s actions by the public leaves its leaders in a precarious situation, with no solution that will clearly please everyone. There is hope, however. Citizens are more likely to cooperate if they feel that the politicians who represent them are honest and have their interests in mind, rather than self-serving bureaucrats who utter empty rhetoric (Grigg 1996, 101).

The following section illustrates politicians who have attempted to do just that: reflect the interests of the people they serve. At least rhetorically speaking, Mayors Stephen Goldsmith and Bill Campbell have incorporated the common good into their agendas, and have set as one of their primary goals the betterment of the societies they lead.

4.1.2 The Values in Practice

If anyone can pose for a poster of cooperation, it is Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis. After all, he supported privatization in a city that was widely regarded as

relatively well run and efficient in the hands of the municipality. And by the time he finished his argument, he gained the cooperation he needed to enact it. Goldsmith espoused the Values of Cooperation through their correlating tenet: competition. Recognizing Steele and Redding's finding that Americans are by nature competitive, he capitalized on this trait to achieve unprecedented efficiencies and success in his city. This notion of competition is so central to Goldsmith's rhetoric that he used the term "competition" in lieu of "privatization." He encouraged private firms to compete against each other, and against public employees. In fact, his experiments in competition proved so successful that his rhetoric eventually incorporated the primary sentiment of Puritan and Pioneer Morality: cooperation to achieve mutually desirable ends. In 1996, the public employee union teamed with the private bidder on the successful proposal to privatize the city's wastewater collection (Goldsmith 1997, 53).

Atlanta's Mayor Campbell masterfully exploits the Values of Cooperation as well. Throughout his rhetoric, he both praised the public for their efforts in improving the quality of life in the city of Atlanta and incited them to continue to fight for more — more opportunities for their careers, more progress for their communities, more value for their money, and more results from their government. In doing so, Campbell sparked a competitive spirit not only within Atlanta, but throughout the nation. By bringing the concept of public-private partnerships to the city, he influenced its citizens to rethink the traditional municipal mindset and demand more efficiency and results. By successfully completing the largest water system privatization in the history of the United States, he also influenced other large cities to study his example and implement its model in their own municipalities, with the purpose of seeking out and gaining even greater savings, efficiencies, and service.

Evidently a student of both Savas and Grigg, Goldsmith not only advocated cooperation among political leaders to achieve increased efficiencies, but also praised what he observed as a “new breed” of politicians who embraced an interdisciplinary and bipartisan approach to municipal government: “The traditional lines between Republican and Democrat have blurred at the local level, with remarkable agreement among a new breed of mayors about the importance of tax-cutting in reviving urban economies” (Goldsmith 1997, 78). This “new breed” embodies the Values of Cooperation to improve the urban condition.

Goldsmith went on to encourage local leaders to continue the trend of crossing party lines to address common problems, rather than following the lead of their federal counterparts. “What the federal government has yet to figure out, mayors of both parties have long known: The values associated with civility and reverence are far more essential to helping the inner cities than bigger government” (Goldsmith 1997, 192). By including both parties in this statement, Goldsmith sent a strong message to both his audience and the federal government: cooperative focus on a common goal — that of the collective good — is far more important than personal agendas and governmental control. Goldsmith called for Generosity and “Considerateness” — which will be discussed more fully as part of the Values of Obligation in Chapter 6 — as well as for a Rejection of Authority through the decreased role of government. This latter call to action is perhaps the most dominant theme in Goldsmith’s rhetoric, and is presented in greater detail in the discussion of the Values of Rebellion in Chapter 6.

By dissolving the lines between Democrat and Republican in large cities across the country, Mayor Goldsmith embodied the Values of Cooperation throughout his rhetoric. He called for the bipartisan unification of mayors to work for better solutions for their

cities, without growing dependence on the federal government or an interest in furthering its national agenda.

A new breed of mayors now occupies city halls across America. With a deep understanding of the need for smaller government, and determined to attain a better life for citizens in tough urban neighborhoods, these new mayors have blurred the lines between Republican and Democrat.... In many respects, they have more in common with each other than they do with some of their respective parties' national leadership. (Goldsmith 1997, 194)

Goldsmith took a bold step with his discourse, by not repeating the traditional rhetoric of other politicians — the traditional rhetoric that maintained that more government is better government, more money leads to better solutions, and local government should reflect national government in its partisan, combative leadership. Instead, he took the unpopular route, proposing smaller government, less financial support from Washington, and cooperation across party lines. What he found was greater support from his audience, the citizens of Indianapolis. And that audience eventually grew to be the rest of the nation, and the rest of the world.

Goldsmith took this cooperation ideal one step further by encouraging communities to bind together into organizations that support, and eventually *replace*, many of the services and functions that municipal governments traditionally provide.

No amount of government reform will save cities... without the support of active neighborhood-based organizations.... Reducing government intrusion while increasing core services can help revitalize neighborhood leadership. (Goldsmith 1997, 197-8)

By encouraging his constituents to organize, he was empowering them to do for themselves. The end result not only fit in nicely with his agenda — self-reliant citizens make happy voters, and happy voters mean re-election — but also capitalized on the core American Values of Cooperation.

Atlanta's Mayor Campbell amplifies this ideal of Cooperation by deftly weaving it throughout his political rhetoric as well. His agenda is often a call for unity: for his constituents to join together for the betterment of their city, to cooperate to pursue the common goal of an improved quality of life.

If we hold fast to those things we know—the values we learned in church, the goodness of God, the power of our community—if we remember these truths, we can endure anything, conquer any problems, face any challenge. The fact that we are all here together means that there is hope, because we are willing to put our hearts and minds together. (Campbell 1996, 6)

This hope speaks to the Values of Attainment and Accumulation as well, which will be discussed more fully in Chapter 6.

Community is a theme that Campbell would return to again and again. In fact, he titled his 1999 State of the City Address “A Return to Community.” In that speech, Campbell emphasized this return to community, which he defined as “not just a physical place, but an inner place, a spiritual place, from where we draw our identity and affirm our common ties as part of the human family” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 2). Campbell's agenda here was to incite the citizens of Atlanta to join together and continue to work hard, as a community rather than as individuals, to build a safe, secure, and affirming city: “There is no greater honor than that of serving community” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 2).

Campbell built upon this image of a community working together to achieve real progress later on in his address, when he discussed the role and purpose of municipal government as fortifying the community, and of the community reciprocating this strength:

The community does not replace the parent, it supports the parent.... [C]ommunal life allows us to do that which we cannot do alone. Human history has shown that people can survive without one another, but they cannot reach their full potential without one another. (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 2)

Campbell reinforced this interdependence by stating, “Key to our approach to bettering the community is the realization that government alone cannot conquer the conditions” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 2). Acknowledging the limitations of government, Campbell helped strengthen the bonds with his audience, through his admission that government, like the citizens it serves, is imperfect. His rhetoric is a call to the citizens of Atlanta to work with him to improve their community.

In their efforts to promote community and cooperation, both Goldsmith and Campbell had to overcome the reluctance of their audience to heed them on the basis of their positions as politicians. As discussed earlier, Americans do not trust people who are outwardly slick and smooth-talking, who are blatantly trying to sell them something. Goldsmith embodies this sentiment in his call for less involvement on the part of the federal government in municipal affairs. “Mayors do want more programs, or bigger federal checks. They want a marketplace that works and produces wealth because it is free of misguided government interference” (Goldsmith 1997, 92). Goldsmith seeks to reduce the control of government over its people, and he wants to start with the highest levels — taking the power tossed about by the federal and state governments and putting it in the hands of the local leaders, and consequently placing more local control in the hands of the community. The trick to this tactic is that Goldsmith employs it in his argument for privatization, which he elsewhere touts as a vehicle to give municipal governments more control. However, he cloaks this agenda in subtle rhetoric that vows, “I’m not going to sell you anything you don’t want to buy.”

What makes the reluctance of Goldsmith and Campbell’s audiences so difficult to overturn is that the public has a preconception that their mayors are indeed trying to sell

them something. Where privatization is concerned, the item they seemed to be selling was employees. Many opponents of privatization feared that the private operators could only achieve savings and efficiencies through massive layoffs. This phobia translated into a large resistance to the initiative. In the case of the Indianapolis wastewater privatization, the union that represented the municipal employees was the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) — the largest collective bargaining unit in the country for this industry. They mounted a strong opposition to the privatization effort. However, when it became evident that this privatization would in fact occur, they made the bold decision to cooperate with the successful private bidder, an entity that it had been vehemently opposing since the beginning of the competition process. The Executive Director of AFSCME's Indianapolis chapter, Steve Fantauzzo, summarized this cooperation aptly when he stated, "The negotiation process has convinced both of us it's in the mutual interest of the company and employees to have a cooperative and constructive joint relationship, and we're willing to pursue that with them" (Heikens 1994, 36A). Not only did AFSCME pursue a cooperative relationship; they cemented it three years later when they *teamed* with the private firm on the winning bid for operation of the collection system.

Mayor Campbell adeptly overcame the American resistance to "smooth-talkers" by adopting an "I'm just like you" tone in his rhetoric. By downplaying his position as a political leader and reinforcing his membership in the community of Atlanta, he spread a message of unity between himself and his constituents: "I am so very proud of how we pulled together to show the world the true character of our great city.... Together, united, we are stronger, more able to achieve the greatness predestined for us" (Campbell 1997,

“1997 State of the City Address” 2). Campbell skillfully emphasized that cooperation between leaders and citizens is essential to their mutual survival.

However, Campbell did not have a smooth road to privatization either. When faced with the prospect privatizing the water system, the municipal employees in Atlanta also resisted the idea. They opposed the concept of partnering with a private firm, with its corporate mentality and suit-clad salesmen. However, as that prospect of privatization grew into inevitability, the employees came forward and expressed their willingness to cooperate for the good of their community: “Employees want to be part of the solution.... As a labor union, we oppose privatization. However, we are Atlantans and want what is best for Atlanta” (Peeples 1997, F3). While Indianapolis’ labor contingent eventually came forth in support of privatization, Atlanta’s labor force made it clear that they were cooperating with the private operator and the municipal leaders of Atlanta because they had no other alternative.

Even the private-sector competitors jump onto this bandwagon of protest. Their protest typically comes in the form of blaming another bidder of having an unfair advantage, whether through inappropriate political connections, disproportionate access to information, or some other means. Rhetorical analyst Charles Briggs identifies this carping as disentanglement — the apparent attempt of participants to gain “equal access to modes of waging conflict” and achieving consensus, “even when these are the very tools used by the powerful to *limit* access to conflict talk and to advance their own agendas” (Briggs 1996, 13). Briggs aptly describes the common ploy among private-sector competitors to create a “level playing field”: by raising a complaint about some perceived, pre-existing advantage of one firm over another, the other competitor is employing the outward

rhetorical approach of tilting the scales back toward a balance among all competitors; but in actuality, that competitor's true agenda is to tilt the scales toward its own favor.

The very nature of competition in the privatization arena is predicated on the Values of Cooperation. Goldsmith knew this and capitalized on it; Campbell downplayed it in order to gain support for the initiative. Privatization means that public-sector security — or bloat, as some have called it — is threatened by the influx of private-sector capital, innovations, and management, which might render traditional municipal policies, procedures, and even employees obsolete. The issue quickly turns to survival, and once the municipal employees realize that they cannot stop the procurement process, they are faced with two choices: cooperate with the municipality by either submitting a competitive bid or disclosing information for the competitors' due diligence; or team with a private bidder in the hopes of having a louder voice in the outcome. Privatization yields efficiencies and financial savings, and usually better training and benefits for employees. However, it also yields Cooperation, whether reality or pretense: if those opposed to privatization are outvoted, they must join the competitive fray in some capacity in order to survive. Steele and Redding observed this reluctant involvement in the process as “subordination to the customs of competitive behavior” (Steele and Redding 1962, 89).

In the privatization context, this “subordination” to competition is manifested in the occurrence of municipal employees teaming with private-sector firms on privatization bids. Their feeling, and the private firms' argument to support it, is that by working together, they can ensure their own job security, increased wages and benefits, and career advancement. This concept, which began in Indianapolis when the public employee union joined forces with the private bidder to win the wastewater operations contract, relates closely with the Values of Cooperation to achieve mutually desirable ends.

4.2 Values of Equality

The Values of Equality draw heavily from the fundamental Constitutional rights afforded to American citizens. These values recognize the worth of individuals, as well as their basic human rights to equal access to justice, opportunity, and respect. The American values that fall within this category are the Value of the Individual, Ethical Equality, and Equality of Opportunity. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

The Value of the Individual is aimed at preserving the rights of each individual citizen — the right to privacy, the right to pursue happiness and wealth, and the right to be represented by government. This value maintains that all individuals are equally worthy of these rights, and that collectively they must be cared for by the government that serves them.

Ethical Equality takes individual value and extends it to every *group* within society. It contends that all groups, regardless of race, ethnicity, financial status or social prominence must have equal access to the benefits and services provided by government. In other words, rich sections of a city do not deserve any more funding or attention than poor neighborhoods, and white votes do not carry more weight than African-American votes. Savas' concept of racial equity is synonymous with this value: "equality of treatment without discrimination on grounds of race, color, or creed" (Savas 2000, 97).

Equality of Opportunity relates very closely to Ethical Equality. It holds that all of these groups, which must be afforded equal access and representation, must also be afforded equal opportunities for advancement. At times, certain disenfranchised groups must be given a head start in order to compensate for their disparate foothold in society.

Minority and small businesses, in particular, are beneficiaries of this value, because it demands for them a fair chance to compete with the larger, richer players.

4.2.1 The Values in Theory

The rhetorical analysts evaluated in this thesis acknowledge the lack of equality and individual respect in government, and particularly in the privatization arena. As Savas charges, “government greatly affects the level of equality, for better and for worse, by taking from some and giving to others” (Savas 2000, 10). Briggs builds upon this sentiment by identifying the exclusionary trait of government:

[P]ublic spheres are constituted as much by the way they *exclude* particular social groups, discursive forms, and issues as by their imagined openness and equality; ...we should think in terms of multiple, competing public spheres rather than one monolithic and homogenous arena. (Briggs 1996, 205)

Most of these rhetorical analysts prescribe the same advice: the secret to persuasive discourse is treating the audience with respect, and responding to their needs. This respect comes in many forms, but the most discernible is honesty — the polar opposite of the smooth-talking sales pitch of Sociality, discussed in earlier in this chapter.

No matter how well it is treated, the public may sometimes seem unreasonable. People respect credibility and honesty, however, and if they are given straight answers, and they believe that management has their interests in mind, they will cooperate. (Grigg 1996, 101)

Responsible government should seek to respond to all of the issues involved in society. However, “individuals do not always agree with the best common actions, so conflict management is required” (Grigg 1996, 102).

Big government embodies the smooth-talking persona that individuals loathe and represents a potentially serious threat to the individual rights that Americans cherish (Savas 2000, 10). However, Grigg advises that government should take advantage of its position

of leadership to assume a more responsible role in caring for the individuals it serves. “If water service providers and regulators can take on, in addition to their principal roles, extended ‘citizenship’ and ‘stewardship’ roles for the greater good, the water industry will be better coordinated” (Grigg 1996, 230). By assuming these guardianship roles, government can gain the public’s trust by actually listening and responding to their needs.

Employee groups are also hesitant to place trust in their municipal employers, particularly when those employers start to consider privatization. They often use rhetoric to ward off the initiative. “The strongest arguments they raise publicly are the specter of corruption and the assertion that private, profit-seeking contractors are not as devoted to the public interest as they are” (Savas 2000, 210). Managed competition is a palatable alternative to traditional privatization, because it shows the public employees that the municipal government respects their rights as individuals by permitting them to participate in the bidding process. It also quietly opens the door to privatization by giving the employees an active voice in the result.

Privatization, as Savas points out, is a way out of the cycle of preferential treatment and cronyism, particularly if the public sector constructs a contract that outlaws such practices. In addition, contracts with the private sector can mandate the inclusion of minority team members, which affords those groups far more opportunities than they had previously: “Privatization affords ambitious members of minority groups the opportunity to start their own businesses and to prosper” (Savas 2000, 98). This idea of entrepreneurial opportunities for the marginalized members of society lies at the core of the Values of Equality.

Another advantage that privatization serves for fostering Equality is the increased availability of government funds that privatizing makes possible. Since minority groups on

average have lower incomes and are thus more dependent on government assistance, they have an even higher stake in making sure that private partners enhance efficiencies: efficient operations lead to financial savings, which means that governments can afford to offer even more assistance to those who need it (Savas 2000, 100). This concept — that privatization helps government to take better care of its citizens — extends to the Values of Obligation as well, which are discussed in Chapter 6.

Savas provides a rather revolutionary perspective on Equality, by putting it into business terms:

Discrimination cannot be condoned and it results in economic harm, for it deprives a country of the full utilization of all its citizens, squanders talent, and wastes productive resources. Discrimination on grounds of race, color, creed, sex, or national origin is not good for economic development. (Savas 2000, 304)

Some may criticize Savas for thinking of minority workers in terms of the work they produce or the dollars they generate, but the analogy to fiscal terms makes the worth of all groups within a society much easier for monetary- and business-focused audiences to appreciate.

Perhaps even more fundamental to the subject of privatization is the fact that outsourcing initiatives open the doors to enhanced opportunities for the private sector as well — doors that had heretofore been closed to them. Public-private partnerships are designed to equalize access to services (Savas 2000, 96). The nature of privatization is that allows for equal opportunity among private firms; this is the essence of competition. Advocates for privatization argue that if governments learn to contract out some of their services, they will help create a better society by helping “the private sector to reach its full potential” (Moe 1987, 60). In fact, as Savas contends, private firms are as entitled to government attention and funding as the general public: “Government spending is a large

part of the economy; more of it can and should be directed toward private firms” (Savas 2000, 6). This idea is one of Savas’ commercial influences promoting privatization: more business opportunities.

4.2.2 The Values in Practice

Mayor Goldsmith of Indianapolis and Mayor Campbell of Atlanta both embrace the Values of Equality in their rhetoric. For Goldsmith, showing respect to individual citizens and providing them with equal access to advancement gives them the self-confidence necessary to make them more productive members of society. “Making workers responsible for their own destiny sent a clear message that for the first time in ages management recognized that the men and women who do the job know better than anyone what it takes to get it done” (Goldsmith 1997, 21). By fostering competition and inviting the public employees to take part in that competitive process, Goldsmith and his decision-makers made it apparent that they respected the individuals who were working for the city. By not writing them off as public and therefore lazy or bureaucratic, Goldsmith got the city employees to work harder, because they felt valued. “We took the shackles off these guys. We tapped their knowledge and experience instead of telling them what to do” (Goldsmith 1997, 21).

“Focusing on customers—not the rules that substitute for customers—encourages creativity, which increases efficiency and reduces costs” (Goldsmith 1997, 55). Goldsmith contends that competition not only results in better customer service and efficiencies, but also in a respected and empowered working class: “city workers are no longer asked to park their brains at the door when coming to work” (Steve Quick, quoted in Goldsmith 1997, 55). Goldsmith challenged the traditional notion that public employees, by definition, were

lazy and mindless, and instead called upon them to lead the way to innovation and progress. This concept of “employee empowerment” (Goldsmith 1997, 59) was revolutionary not only for municipal leaders, but for their employees as well — they were now asked for their opinion, and they felt motivated to provide it.

As for the general public, Goldsmith rallied support for his privatization initiatives by showing them that municipal attitudes of status quo suggested that conditions in their community were good enough — “the motto was not ‘the customer was always right’ but ‘beggars can’t be choosers’” (Goldsmith 1997, 40). Goldsmith gained support from his audience by playing up the government’s traditional disregard for the individual and got his citizens to loudly call for better rights through privatization.

Mayor Campbell also incited his constituents to demand privatization. “Let us resolve to work together to put the public good above politics, to put principle above pettiness, to put the people of Atlanta above personal agenda” (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 16). The message of his rhetoric was that privatization would give the citizens of Atlanta the quality, service, and rates they deserved, rather than settling for the conditions under which they had been living.

In an editorial defending his decision to pursue privatization for the city of Atlanta, Campbell used his rhetoric in an attempt to allay the fears of the municipal employees by acknowledging both their concerns and their value: “the lives of those who work in these departments are important and have been considered. I personally met with many of the workers to explain our dilemma. We have worked to build protection for our work force” (Campbell 1998, “Why I believe privatization is the right thing to do” 2). Campbell reinforced his personal commitment to protect those members of the community most threatened by this initiative, thereby recognizing their value as individuals.

Goldsmith incorporated this idea of individual rights into his fight for better equality for all sectors of the city of Indianapolis.

As tends to be the case in such urban dramas, it is the poorest city residents who lose the most from this common trend of tax hikes, poor service, and oppressive federal regulation. Lacking the resources to buy services in the private sector, these citizens are at the mercy of a series of government monopolies that refuse to pay attention to their wants and needs. (Goldsmith 1997, 5-6)

These “government monopolies” administer on the public’s behalf, claiming to act in their best interest. “Government... often proceeds on the assumption that professional civil servants know how to promote the public good better than taxpayers themselves” (Goldsmith 1997, 67). The term for this representation is known in Greenspeak as “vicarious advocacy,” which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The added danger of such advocacy is that it is often improperly allocated: it is less arduous for government decisionmakers to simply assume that they know what the public needs, rather than actually go out and ask them. The result is underrepresentation and disparate policies.

Instead, Goldsmith called for a refocusing on the needs of the poor in the communities that mayors served, rather than a presumption about what would be best for them. He emphasized this idea of Equality — that all of his constituents were equal regardless of their economic status or their social standing — and urged his fellow political leaders to help ensure the equality of service to the disenfranchised: “mayors are acutely aware of their moral and economic responsibility to care about the residents of poor neighborhoods” (Goldsmith 1997, 195). This revolutionary concept in political rhetoric diverged from the tenet of vicarious advocacy: It said that mayors not only have a responsibility to represent their citizens, poor and rich alike, but that they had an *obligation*

to ensure their survival. As Goldsmith stated, “poor neighborhoods should be safe, too” (Goldsmith 1997, 195).

Mayor Campbell echoed this sentiment, fighting for the cause of the minority populations in the Atlanta community. In a speech advocating Affirmative Action, Campbell stated,

We know that even today, the playing field is not level, that the obstacles are real, the stories true. The struggle for equal opportunity and justice continues to this very day. I believe that race remains the single most defining issue in American society. And the gap of understanding between the races remains the single greatest threat to the safety and welfare of our nation. (Campbell 1996, 2)

Campbell again incorporated the Values of Equality into his rhetorical approach to privatization when he defended the initiative on the grounds of rate stabilization. He expressed his concern that without privatizing the city’s water system, he would be forced to raise the citizens’ water rates. “Given our city’s large percentage of senior citizens and low-income residents, such an increase would be unacceptable, not to mention immoral” (Campbell 1998, “Why I believe privatization is the right thing to do” 2). Campbell deftly employed the moral imperative to justify privatization, sending the clear message that without privatization, the most dependent citizens would suffer.

One of the largest efforts to demonstrate Campbell’s commitment to Equality was the Atlanta contract stipulation regarding the Empowerment Zone (EZ), which is a federal designation assigned to disadvantaged areas of urban communities. The Atlanta water privatization led to the development of several concrete plans for development in the EZ, and led to a sharp increase in support for Mayor Campbell. One EZ resident stated,

So many people have left this community..., because they believed the City was going to go down.... But they apparently don’t know this Mayor. Look at all the flak he got for making sure that water contract could help the little

people. He didn't have to do it, but I'm glad he didn't abandon us. And I'm glad I stayed. (Simama 1998, 3)

Building on the momentum that this support initiated, Campbell added,

During this long and difficult process, it has been easy to lose sight of the real significance and meaning of privatization. We have come [here] because... citizens like [this EZ resident] remind us of what our partnership... is all about. [He] never gave up on his neighborhood. And neither should we. (Simama 1998, 3)

By reinforcing his role in bringing monetary support and attention to the Empowerment Zone, Campbell used his rhetoric to gain support in those EZ communities.

Campbell capitalized on the core ideals of the Empowerment Zone in his 1999 State of the City Address, during which he incorporated the Values of Equality in recounting the communal efforts of Atlanta's citizens to break down barriers blocking the disenfranchised from their goals:

[W]e have fought to remove racial, gender and economic barriers blocking individual achievement. We have fought to enable the full and equal participation of every single citizen. We have invested in our human potential, enabling the individual to grow and prosper and, in turn, replenish the timeless cycle of community. (Campbell 1999, "A Return to Community" 2)

Through reminiscing about the progress his community had made over the course of 1998, Campbell further strengthened the bonds not only between the city's various ethnic groups, but also between those groups and the city's political leaders.

In the privatization arena, the comparable buzz-phrase to embody the values of Equality, particularly among the private-sector competitors, is "creation of a level playing field." Competing firms use this ploy frequently during the procurement process, not only to remove any "unfair" advantage of their opponents, but also to tilt the scales slightly (or heavily) in their favor.

Many privatization competitions encourage the use of minority vendors as part of the private-sector bids, to achieve the goal of Equality. Minority businesses often start at a lower foothold because of disadvantages in the marketplace. Campbell campaigned for a large minority participation requirement in the Atlanta contract in order to create opportunities for local businesses.

On the federal and local level, there is much we can do to assist minority businesses in achieving effective and equitable participation in our nation's free enterprise system. I am firmly committed to creating and promoting economic opportunity for minorities. (Campbell 1996, 3)

Private bidders have capitalized on this local and minority business cultivation by touting their records in opening up the marketplace to these types of vendors. Not only do these vendors thrive under these conditions; they welcome the invitation. A small chemical distributor in Indianapolis, for example, received a substantial amount of business as a result of the wastewater privatization: "They came to town and did some innovative things that allowed a company like mine to compete on a level playing field" (Wills 1996, 33A). This vendor did more than compete; the firm is now a national chemical supplier.

Mayors use this "level playing field" approach as well, albeit in a more subtle application. Mayor Goldsmith, for example, calls for less intrusion by the federal government in municipalities, in order to restore urban areas to their former glory as attractors, rather than deterrents, of employment and wealth. "Long-term success depends more on continuing to eliminate government-created disincentives. Once the playing field is leveled cities will again naturally grow and produce opportunity" (Goldsmith 1997, 94).

This idea as promoted by Goldsmith is twofold: reduce the presence of government and empower citizens to do for themselves; and create competition with the

private sector to expand opportunities for savings and efficiencies. But the road to opportunity is paved with barriers.

Mayor Goldsmith called for the removal of barriers imposed on the private sector that prohibited them from access to public services. "...the opportunities for improving service through competition are as boundless as the free market itself" (Goldsmith 1997, 43). Goldsmith's implication is clear: by opening up all municipal services to competition and the *possibility* of privatization, not only will both public and private sectors work harder to achieve success, but the resultant benefit to the overall community will be greater.

Goldsmith also called for the removal of barriers for public employees to compete in the same marketplace with the private sector, in order to maximize these same benefits: "When union workers are given the freedom to put their own ideas into action, they can be as innovative, effective, and cost-conscious as their private sector counterparts—and they can prove it in the marketplace" (Goldsmith 1997, 46).

Goldsmith further fought for the removal of barriers erected by excessive regulation — regulation that, as he put it, "kills the urban economy with a thousand pinpricks" (Goldsmith 1997, 86). His commentaries on federal, state and local regulations tend to be the most enflamed, as evidenced in his reference to "the accumulated regulatory sludge that clogs the economic engines of cities" (Goldsmith 1997, 87). In juxtaposing his discussion of regulations with images of painful pinpricks and clogging sludge, Goldsmith clearly makes his point: regulations impose unnecessary barriers to opportunities for cities to right themselves and win back their place of status from the suburbs.

The issue of Equality played a dominating role during the Atlanta privatization process as well. From the outset of the procurement, critics ranging from City Council members to business leaders to the media accused Mayor Campbell of cronyism, claiming

that he had already hand-picked the winner and was skewing the bid process in order to cast that firm in the most favorable light. The newspapers kept releasing any information it could find about past contributions donated by the competing firms to Campbell's campaign fund in order to demonstrate the mayor's favoritism: one councilmember accused the mayor of having already chosen "the city's favorite son" and "lining up the appropriate votes" (Scheer 1998, 30). To counter this media frenzy, Campbell's administration released interim ratings and rankings of the competitors at every stage to prove that they were running a fair and transparent process. In addition, they used the media to rebut the accusations: a spokesperson for the mayor was quoted in the same article saying "The city is taking great pains to ensure its fairness. The accusation of cronyism is absolutely false" (Scheer 1998, 30).

Mayor Campbell took advantage of the accusations of cronyism by infusing his rhetoric with a mixture of utmost propriety and wounded outrage:

It is unbelievable that given this degree of openness and public input that [anyone] would have the audacity to cast doubt upon the process or prejudge the outcome.... Their actions are irresponsible, outrageous, misguided, politically motivated. (Harvey 1998, 1)

Campbell again used his discursive skill to ally himself with the citizens of Atlanta, situating himself among his constituents and across the dividing line from anyone remotely tainted by favoritism. In addition, he hurled an accusation back on his critics, charging that their real agenda was to undermine the minority participation aspects of the project (Harvey 1998, 1). Once more, Campbell expertly scripted the Values of Equality into his rhetoric: since the process was so heavily considerate of the minority population, anyone who criticized that process was obviously seeking to take away opportunities for that population to improve their lives.

In the Foreword to *Atlanta: A Vision for the New Millennium*, a photographic overview of the city, Campbell reinforced the Values of Equality by reflecting on the past and looking ahead toward the future. He recalled the city's integral role in the civil rights movement and its commitment "to ensure that the flame of justice, freedom, and equal opportunity burns bright in our city" (Fraley 1996, vii). As he did with most of his rhetoric, Campbell focused his audience on the future growth and evolution of the city, which lay in the hands of the community to secure it: "The best part will always be the people, their neighborhoods, and the sense that Atlanta is a good city, a city whose bounty and promise are open to all" (Fraley 1996, vii). Not only did Campbell reinforce the Equality afforded to his citizens, but he also opened the doors to those outside of Atlanta to come to a place where they would enjoy this same level of opportunity.

CHAPTER 5

VALUES OF ATTAINMENT AND REASON

5.1 Values of Attainment

The Values of Attainment relate to the principles of goal setting, advancement, forward motion, and status. These values advocate not only innovative thinking but also hard work, and maintain that the attainment of these goals paves the road to self-reliance. The American values that fall within this category are Achievement and Success, Change and Progress, Effort and Optimism, Material Comfort, and Quantification. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

Achievement and Success is one of the more measurable values in American society, particularly in politics. Successful mayors can point to the achievements they have brought to their cities. Successful mayors get re-elected. Successful mayors win the public's trust by delivering on what they promise. In the business world, the same rules apply. Companies demonstrate their achievements through their financial statements, their client lists and their political connections. This value touts the accumulation of material goods as supporting documentation to one's achievements.

Change and Progress embraces the idea that society is continually moving toward a better future (Steele and Redding 1962, 86). The successful implementation of this value lies in demonstrating that change always signifies progress, rather than even the slightest risk of a backward slide. Successful arguments for privatization emphasize this idea of progress, because private partners, with their financial and technological resources, will necessarily bring about positive change.

Effort and Optimism is founded upon the idea that hard work will lead to advancement and success. Rooted in the Protestant work ethic, which says that hard work will lead to salvation, the promise of rewards for deeds well done has served as the motivation Americans need to work even harder.

Material Comfort is the value of “undiluted gratification” (Steele and Redding 1962, 89). This need for gratification is seen in the unlimited desire for material accumulations and is manifested in luxurious marketing campaigns. It is a rudimentary belief in American society that “whoever has the most toys wins.”

Quantification is the value that maintains the “bigger is better” mentality. In the privatization arena, the most common expression of this value is the use of facts and figures to demonstrate a private firm’s qualifications for a particular contract. The successful exploitation of this value lies in the artful spinning of the truth: a firm with many small projects will emphasize the *number* of contracts, while a firm with a few large projects will stress the *size* of those facilities.

5.1.1 The Values in Theory

Throughout history, rhetoricians have focused a great deal of energy on persuading their audiences to accept, and even solicit, change. Charles Briggs observed that the “narrative performances” of the tribal cultures he studied “provide important contexts for socializing children and adults with respect to ways of responding creatively to social change” (Briggs 1996, 9). The rhetorical environment of the water and wastewater industry is no different: here, the politicians assume the role of the adults, who attempt to acclimate the children, their constituents, to social and political change.

The value of Change and Progress is the undercurrent throughout all five influences Savas identifies as promoters of privatization (see Table 3.2 in Chapter 3). It lies at the core of the privatization initiative: getting municipalities to change the way they have always operated to progress toward an improved way of doing business (Savas 2000, 6). This improved operation can be found through the innovation that the private sector offers, as a cure to stagnation and inefficiency (Savas 13).

The self-reliance that Attainment can bring will naturally lead to a decreased dependence on government. “Growing affluence allows more people to provide for their own needs, making them more receptive to privatization” (Savas 2000, 6). In fact, “with their growing economic capacity, a substantial number of citizens can manage for themselves,” since they can now afford to hire private service providers rather than rely on government to supply what they need (Savas 2000, 7-8). This idea of less dependence on external leaders is one of Savas’ economic influences promoting privatization. Grigg defines this ability of a community to pull together to solve its own problems as “a measure of its ‘social capital’ or ‘civic infrastructure’” (Grigg 196, 19-20).

5.1.2 The Values in Practice

Mayors Campbell and Goldsmith both firmly believe in empowering their citizens to become more self-sufficient. While Campbell focuses on building up society through strong community organizations who develop a more active voice in public policy, Goldsmith proposes stripping down government to its essential functions and putting more control into the hands of the people. But regardless of which side of the street each mayor starts from, both rhetoricians espouse public empowerment. In their eyes, an

empowered citizenry translates into self-confident voters — voters who will re-elect the leader who gave them that confidence in the first place.

Mayor Goldsmith starts his campaign of stripping down government by affixes the blame on the federal government for cities' failure to achieve success: "Not only are cities on skids, but in most cases government itself has been the grease that hastened the pace of decay" (Goldsmith 1997, 7). He then turned to the inefficiencies of municipal government, maintaining that its very structure is self-defeating because it does not provide its employees with the tools required to succeed: "a system that does not clearly communicate performance goals to its workers is one that virtually prohibits them from succeeding" (Goldsmith 1997, 54).

For Goldsmith, an empowered citizenry had to begin from within the municipality, and more specifically with its public employees.

In order for city employees to succeed in the competitive marketplace, they must be free to carry out their tasks in the manner they see fit. Increasing decision-making authority and freeing workers from narrow job descriptions also allow managers to hold these employees accountable for the results they produce. (Goldsmith 1997, 59)

Goldsmith fought to give the employees a voice in municipal decisions and urged them to question the way they had always done their jobs to strike out and develop better, more productive approaches.

Goldsmith was an atypical politician not only because he invited employees to raise their voices, but also because he openly risked actions that were politically unpopular in order to benefit his city. A prime example was his decision to privatize operation of the city of Indianapolis' two wastewater treatment plants — even though a study, which his office commissioned, concluded not only that the facilities were already being run at their optimum levels, but also that privatization would achieve 5 percent savings at best

(Goldsmith 1997, 202). He went through the privatization exercise anyway, convinced that the study's conclusions could only be validated by playing them out.

We decided the most that could be lost by putting the facilities into the competitive marketplace was a little bit of dignity and perhaps some good political capital. Had the marketplace verified that we were as good as existing management claimed, we were prepared to celebrate that success. (Goldsmith 1997, 203)

If privatization proved successful, then Indianapolis and its citizens would benefit through increased savings and better quality of service. If it proved the study's findings that municipal operation was better, then the city would be bolstered by increased confidence and reinforced community. Goldsmith knew the exercise was a win-win proposition, regardless of the outcome.

Part of what made Goldsmith's rhetorical strategy so successful was his ability to include his audience in the celebration. An achievement for the city was made possible by the support of its citizens; a success for the municipality was gained through the effort and contributions of its constituents. Goldsmith made sure that he not only communicated these achievements and successes to his citizens but also ensured that they reveled in the benefits. In reporting on the savings yielded during the first five years of the Indianapolis wastewater public-private partnership, Goldsmith commented, "The deal... has proven to be a major victory for all Indianapolis taxpayers" (Loughmiller 1999, 1).

Mayor Campbell understood the importance of including the community in any celebration of the city's achievements. In his remarks during the Atlanta privatization contract signing ceremony, Mayor Campbell exalted the landmark contract as a testament to the efforts and achievements of many sectors, including the political decision makers, the private partner, the municipal employees, and the public:

We brought together the finest professionals in the private and public sectors to find a way. As we celebrate today, I am mindful that our success results not from today's final step, but all that came before.... Working in unison, we will make Atlanta's future soar. (Campbell 1998, "Privatization Contract Signing Ceremony" 1-2)

By acknowledging the efforts of many groups to achieve the successful privatization agreement, Campbell adeptly implemented the values of Attainment.

In the Foreword to *Atlanta: A Vision for the New Millennium*, a photoessay on the city, Campbell provided an overview of the achievements and successes of the city of Atlanta, which he attributed to the efforts of its citizens. He called Atlanta "a city of dreamers, a place of visionaries and idealists," and looked to the past as detailing "a distinguished record of accomplishment and, at times, storybook success" (Fraley 1996, vii). The book was released in the shadow of the Olympic Games that the city had hosted earlier that year and summarized that international event as the best symbol "to recognize the achievements of Atlanta's past and the incalculable promise of its future" (Fraley 1996, vii). True to his rhetorical pattern, Campbell bestowed credit on his main audience, his constituents, for building the city of Atlanta into a showcase of its talents, resources and successes.

This celebration in Atlanta culminated a long and trying journey for Mayor Campbell, who had more than his share of resistance to the idea of privatization. Ironically, although he pushed for the privatization of the city's water system, Campbell remains "philosophically opposed" to the idea — because it is a reflection on the government's inability to operate in an efficient and streamlined manner (Ramage 1998, 24A). Due to the overwhelming evidence that privatization was the only answer to Atlanta's crumbling water infrastructure and impending rate increases, Campbell was forced to change with the times and adopt the privatization trend.

Resistance to change is so ingrained in human nature that it often takes a catastrophic event to lead municipalities to consider privatization. Such events include aging infrastructure that will require major capital investments to repair or replace, dominating and troublesome employee unions and labor unrest, environmental compliance violations, and the need for a drastic increase in rates for the customers. Often it is a combination of two or more of these events that leads to the eventuality of privatization. For the City of Atlanta, a major water-main break led to the largest water system privatization in the United States (Savas 2000, 178).

While Atlanta's Mayor Campbell was forced to change the status quo, Mayor Goldsmith of Indianapolis actively fought to do so. The irony of Goldsmith's privatization initiative was that the City's facilities were already considered well run under municipal operation; in fact, a major consulting firm hired to evaluate the economic feasibility of privatizing concluded that only nominal savings could be achieved. Goldsmith countered these findings by again attacking the federal government and the bureaucracy it instills: "When reform-minded public officials and government managers seek to improve these services, the federal government and a deeply entrenched bureaucracy are there to enforce the status quo" (Goldsmith 1997, 6). Goldsmith insisted that a competitive bidding process, not a feasibility study, would be the true measure of privatization's success in his City. Through his rhetorical strategies and political actions, Goldsmith got his audience to reject that status quo and acknowledge that they could do even better:

Had we simply accepted that our plants were run better than most government facilities of their kind, and allowed 'good enough for government work' to be our standard, we would have lost millions of dollars in savings and substantial technical improvements. (Goldsmith 1997, 35-36)

Where rhetoric was not enough to sway his opponents, Goldsmith put forth the indisputable numbers: the private operator had achieved 44% savings, improved the quality of the effluent, and reduced the number of employee accidents and grievances, even though the employees still belonged to the same union as before privatization (Savas 2000, 179). This drastic illustration demonstrated to the whole country that privatization could mean progress for any municipality.

Mayor Campbell had a much more arduous task in winning over the municipal employees in Atlanta, however. Their main concern, not surprisingly, was the fear of losing their jobs. However, Campbell set as one of his goals the protection of all of the water system employees, and made it a contract stipulation that no employees lose their jobs because of the transition to private operation. The president of the successful private bidder faced the challenge of an admittedly bloated workforce with optimism: “It depends on how fast we can get people to absorb change” (Ezzard 1998, A13). In adding that “a few employees will leave because they aren’t used to working hard their whole shift” (Ezzard 1998, A13), he echoed Savas’ sentiment that employees who have grown accustomed to the status-quo mentality of municipal employment fear increased workloads and more demanding supervisors.

Another fear exploited by opponents of privatization is loss of control. However, Mayor Goldsmith maintains that he has greater control over contractors than he did over his in-house operators: he can terminate a private partner for lack of performance but cannot do much to penalize a municipal department for the same transgression. The result is an *increase* in control, rather than the opposite (Savas 2000, 285). As Goldsmith stated, “The only control politicians lose is the ability to hire workers on the basis of patronage instead of productivity” (Goldsmith 1997, 71).

Not only does competition breed productivity and efficiency, which leads to savings and better customer service, but it also renders patronage and passivity obsolete. “The pressure exerted by customers and the threat of losing out to competitors are what spur innovation and overcome the natural bureaucratic resistance to change in public or private institutions” (Goldsmith 1997, 19). It is a catalyst for progress and an improved quality of life: “Competition is like fire. It is an energy source, driving innovation” (Goldsmith 1997, 41).

As Goldsmith stated, “The opportunity for positive change and progress in America’s cities is greater today than at any time in the past thirty years” (Goldsmith 1997, 196). Goldsmith saw these opportunities through the portal of privatization and competition — “To do more with less” (Goldsmith 1997, 196). He called for the removal of municipal government’s stronghold on its citizens, for it is through the loosening of this grip that true progress would be obtained: “Breaking up government monopolies will bring a new focus on outcomes, spawn innovation, and produce better services for customers” (Goldsmith 1997, 196).

In his book *The Twenty-First Century City*, Mayor Goldsmith recounts the process that he and Indianapolis followed in implementing this progress known as privatization. He also provides examples of other efforts across the country to do the same. He envelops these success stories in a hope for the future rebirth of all cities that have witnessed a decline in recent years, “a hope that troubled neighborhoods can succeed, and that cities can once again be the pride of the nation” (Goldsmith 1997, 12). The implication in his rhetoric is that with hard work and a concerted effort toward improving themselves, cities everywhere can enjoy the same success that his city has achieved.

Goldsmith found that challenging public employees to compete with the private sector provided them with the impetus to work harder, knowing that if they did so they would have a chance to be successful, and more fundamentally, to keep their jobs. “Traditional notions of government workers as bureaucratic and even lazy led us to believe that public employees faced an uphill battle in competing with the lean, mean private sector” (Goldsmith 1997, 20). As he would discover, “Competition empowers workers and inspires an entrepreneurial spirit in city government down to the front-line employee level” (Goldsmith 1997, 54).

One reason that Goldsmith’s rhetoric has been so effective in influencing his audience to embrace privatization is because it disguised the concept under a more easily accepted term: competition. “Privatization,” for many, carries with it the implication that the service in question will certainly be outsourced to the private sector. “Competition” raises the possibility that the public sector will continue to be needed, by not precluding them from participating in the process. By promoting a policy of competition for better service and a better quality of life, Goldsmith got everyone excited about the prospect of competing and improving government. And motivated citizens make for a happier community — and happier voters. Goldsmith’s message to municipal employees was clear: their success lay in their hands; through hard work, they could achieve, but through passivity they would meet with failure. This discourse challenged the unions to work harder not only to ensure their survival, but to improve their opportunities for upward mobility (Goldsmith 1997, 196).

In his 1999 State of the City Address, Mayor Campbell commended the citizens of Atlanta for voting for change in the November 1998 election: “The people spoke with their votes and their message was: We want positive, forward-looking leaders who

articulate a vision of a better and united Georgia and Atlanta” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 3). Campbell appealed to the Values of Attainment, as he echoed his audience’s desire to embrace change, pursue progress, and make a better life for itself. He called Atlanta’s citizens to “embrace the politics of common ground... to build partnerships and to work with hope for a greater Atlanta” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 3).

One year later, in his 2000 address, Campbell returned to this theme of partnerships to improve Atlanta: “By building effective ‘partnerships for progress’ and valuing the unique and diverse contributions of all of us, we will go even farther in the years to come” (Campbell 2000, 1). He carried this theme through the duration of his speech, reinforcing the sentiment that effective partnerships had achieved great progress for Atlanta, and would continue to do so far into the future if the community maintained a commitment to change and cooperation.

In the Foreword to *Atlanta: A Vision for the New Millennium*, which is predominantly a photoessay on the city and its residents, Campbell revisited these values. He stated that “Atlanta is continually creating its future” (Fraley 1996, vii). In that statement, he empowered his audience to control their own fate by working together for positive change.

Later in this book, Campbell discussed what he felt was the unique characteristic of his city, and the greatest attribute to its forward progress: “It is no accident that Atlanta is so remarkably successful. In a multiracial and ethnically diverse environment, Atlantans share and nurture a single-minded commitment to progress and prosperity for all, which is seldom found elsewhere” (Fraley 1996, 2). Demonstrating again that the American values in combination form stronger rhetoric than values employed separately, Campbell adeptly invokes the Values of Attainment.

Campbell carries this theme of attainment throughout his rhetoric. During a speech to a largely African-American collegiate audience, he stated, “we must and can take care of ourselves and of each other.... [W]e are in control of our future, and... we can achieve success now and in the next millennium through education, hard work and moral consciousness” (Campbell 1996, 2). Campbell challenged the next generation of leaders to keep the torch of diligent endeavor brightly lit, and to make that light accessible to all members of their community. Campbell infused confidence and an optimistic spirit into his audience by emphasizing the sentiment that “together, we can do anything.”

In addition, Campbell charged his young audience to be forever mindful of the generations that would follow: “As we face the 21st century, let us all work together to ensure a brighter future for our children” (Campbell 1996, 8). This parting message to the African-American community in Atlanta challenged Campbell’s audience to work harder and strive for more — if not for themselves, then for the next generation.

Often preferring to lead by example, Campbell frequently infused the principle of “actions, not words” into his discourse. In his 1997 State of the City Address, Campbell effectively used repetition in his speech to reinforce his underlying message: action is the key to strong leadership, and his actions over his first three years as mayor had proven him to be a strong leader (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 1). In the opening remarks to his speech, he punctuated every paragraph with “Action, not talk,” as a brief commentary on the statistics he quoted (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 1). This concise reminder was effective in underlying his strengths as a political leader and as a man of action, not rhetoric. He concluded the executive summary to his speech by extending hope to the community, but reminding them that more hard work lay ahead as a necessary prologue to success: “There is cause for optimism, even as we continue to roll up

our sleeves, and face without hesitation or wavering the continual challenges of modern day urban living” (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 2).

Two years later, Mayor Campbell addressed the city again, this time pointing to the record voter turnout at the recent election as his audience’s exercise of their freedom of choice: “Remember how proud and empowered you felt? There was a sense of passion and determination in the air that I had not felt or seen in a long time. It was one of my proudest moments in my life as a public servant” (Campbell 1998, “A Return to Community” 3). Campbell assumed almost a paternal role here, figuratively patting his audience on the head for performing their duty as citizens by participating in the election. He called his audience to take the momentum of that citizenship exercise and turn it into positive action for their community.

This concept of positive community partnering pervaded all of Campbell’s rhetoric. In *Atlanta: A Vision for the New Millennium*, a “newcomer’s guide” to the city, Campbell billed Atlanta as the self-fulfilling prophecy of its citizens, who had worked to build the city into a hub of achievement and progress: “Atlanta is a city that has always attracted the best and the brightest, and anyone who has even walked through the streets of downtown Atlanta sees and feels exactly how such talent and promise are manifested” (Fralely 1996, 66). Campbell’s rhetoric reflects the ethnic and moral makeup of his public audience, much as he describes the city of Atlanta as reflecting the character and contributions of its residents.

Campbell never forgot to turn back to his community and thank them for their eventual support in the privatization initiative. Relying more on the rhetoric of community building rather than quantification, Campbell often used the example of the privatized water system to rally his audience’s self-confidence. However, when it suited his purpose,

he also backed up his rhetoric with quantifying figures — such as the \$400 million in savings that the private firm guaranteed over the life of the 20-year contract.

This citation of financial savings is perhaps the most evident use of the Values of Attainment for the purposes of accumulation. In Indianapolis, Mayor Goldsmith frequently touted the impressive results of the wastewater privatization: \$250 million in savings over the life of the contract, the virtual reduction in employee grievances and accidents, and the numerous compliance awards bestowed on the facilities. Just as Campbell bestowed praise on his community for the successful privatization, Goldsmith showed his appreciation by reinvesting the savings into other programs, such as the rehabilitation of failing city infrastructure, the revitalization of the city in order to lure residents back from the suburbs, and the refocusing of resources into the public school system.

In Atlanta, Campbell took great pains to reinforce to his constituents that the improvements his administration was implementing would cost the citizens nothing. He pointed to the state-of-the-art sports arenas, which the city built or revitalized at no cost to taxpayers. He emphasized the presence of these “luxuries” as material comforts to which the citizens of Atlanta had a right, and which they deserved to enjoy without having to go bankrupt to afford them (Campbell 1999, “A Return to Community” 7).

The value of material comfort often overlaps with quantification, as competitors race to accumulate the largest number of impressive statistics. Competitors claim to operate “hundreds” of facilities in order to appear more qualified and possess wealth of expertise; they use this rhetorical method to hide the fact that almost all of these facilities are so tiny as not to offer much relevant experience to a larger municipality. This manipulation of technical data is what Harré et al. term “scientific” discourse, which is a

rhetorical approach used to influence one's audience with technical-sounding, but groundless, language (Harré et al. 1999, 65).

Positioned as a scientist, one's claims are prefaced with an implicit "trust me...." To use scientific language may or may not be scientific, but using it is to position oneself as a reliable and trustworthy person with a certain authority on matters of fact. (Harré et al., 1999, 85)

Goldsmith took a positive spin on quantification when he justified his choice of private bidder for operation of the city of Indianapolis' two wastewater treatment plants. His argument was simple: the private sector had more expertise, by far: "...the companies comprising the partnership employ more PhD civil engineers than the city of Indianapolis has employees" (Goldsmith 1997, 35). In addition, Goldsmith pointed to the numbers, which told a bigger story: "Through its superior technology and management practices, WREP [the private partner] reduced our operating costs by 44 percent, or \$65 million over the five-year contract" (Goldsmith 1997, 35). And in case the skeptics were still not convinced, Goldsmith again hit them with size: "Best of all, WREP's partners possess enormous assets that allow the company to guarantee these savings, ensuring that the city will reduce its costs" (Goldsmith 1997, 35). The result of these statistics is that Goldsmith's chief opponents — including several on the City-County Council, "have become believers" (Goldsmith 1997, 35).

On the first anniversary of the contract between the city of Indianapolis and its private-sector partner, Goldsmith addressed those new believers on the city council to report on the successes that competition yielded for their city. Rather than dancing around the subject with abstract rhetoric, he demonstrated this success, again, through large-scale quantification:

We have water quality that is better now than it was ever before. We have capital programs in the plant that are unmatched in terms of capital reserves

and restoration. We have employees with salaries and benefits better now than they were with the city... If you add these things together, we have one of the most extraordinary competition success stories in the world. (*Privatization Watch* 1995, 1)

His audience came up with the same arithmetic, not only accepting privatization but also encouraging its further application in the future. As the council president stated,

The [privatization] has worked beyond our fondest expectations so much that folks from distant places are coming to see and believe with their own eyes what is happening. I think the council is behind this and we look forward to new victories on this front. (*Privatization Watch* 1995, 2)

Mayor Campbell, too, called upon quantification to support his rhetoric. This approach is evident in his handling of Atlanta's major local newspaper, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, with which the mayor has a less than amicable relationship. During an interview with the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* shortly after the water system privatization had been awarded, he criticized the *Journal-Constitution* for not giving him due credit for his accomplishments. To quantify these accomplishments, he cited several recent events:

"I have not been given credit by them for some pretty remarkable achievements," he said, and then listed downtown's "renaissance," an increase in construction permits, a lower crime rate and property tax cuts. "I'm having a great year," he said. (Ramage 1998, 24A)

In his 1999 State of the City Address, Mayor Campbell recounted the accomplishments that he and the citizens of Atlanta had achieved over the past year. He quoted many statistics, thus employing the value of Quantification, but did so in a mask of rhetoric that made these figures come to life, rather than resound as a flat history report:

- An Olympic legacy that has improved the quality of life for the people of Atlanta... at no cost to taxpayers: Turner Field, \$90 million in infrastructure improvements, 37 works of public art;
- A downtown revitalized by more than 3,000 loft rehabs and new apartments;
- Privatization of the City's water system, the largest of any city in the country;

- We are one of only 6 cities in the nation to be awarded an Empowerment Zone.... Since we launched the Zone, more than 1,000 jobs are being created, new housing developed and businesses brought into our Zone neighborhoods. (Campbell 1999, “A Return to Community” 1-2).

His continual efforts to link these statistics with a tribute to some group or component of the public reinforced his rhetorical message. The strength of this rhetoric lay in his ability to weave together the American Values of Attainment.

5.2 Values of Reason

The Values of Reason relate to those elements in rhetoric and society that can be proven and are tangible. These values tend to carry greater weight because of their less debatable nature; they are derived from common sense, so they are more easily comprehended by the rhetorician’s audience. The American values that fall within this category are Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism; and Science and Secular Rationality. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

Efficiency, Practicality, and Pragmatism is perhaps the easiest value to defend in rhetoric because it is most guided by reason. Its traditional delivery is “this proposition makes the most sense” — whether in economic, moral, productive terms. Because this value supports timely and accurate problem-solving, it is easy for rhetoricians to gain support for its implementation.

Science and Secular Rationality is based on the premise that the universe is orderly and rational and therefore possesses a certain level of predictability. As demonstrated in the discussion of Change and Progress earlier in this chapter, humans have a natural resistance to change, so they tend to value anything that affords them

reliable stability. Scientific language, whether in the form of statistics or technical discourse, provides a certain level of comfort, because “numbers do not lie.”

5.2.1 The Values in Theory

Savas promotes the Values of Reason as the primary justification for privatization. “Privatization is routinely accepted as a pragmatic tool to improve government. Throughout the world it has been adopted... as the key to a vibrant economy and, ultimately, a better society” (Savas 2000, xiv). He writes with the tone of a geometric proof, with each statement serving as a logical progression into the next. In this way, he constructs a logical and defensible argument for privatization. The aim, he says, is to reduce government. A smaller government means a more efficient government; therefore, privatization leads to efficiency (Savas 2000, 5-7).

If this common-sense approach is not sufficient to sway his audience, Savas backs it up with a plea to his audience’s desire for a better life: “privatization, properly carried out, generally leads to large increases in efficiency while maintaining and even improving the level and quality of public services” (Savas 2000, 7). He further adds that “In a world of finite resources, efficiency is... an important societal goal.... Efficiency is good because it produces a higher standard of living. Just as freedom and justice are menaced by an overly powerful government, so is efficiency” (Savas 2000, 10).

However, Savas returns again and again to the compelling and logical argument that privatization leads to efficiencies, which yield financial savings. “Privatization is popular and growing throughout the world for purely pragmatic reasons. When carried out sensibly, it leads to greater productivity and better economic performance” (Savas 2000,

147). Moreover, “The benefits of competition are well known: lower costs, lower prices, greater innovation, increased investment, and better service” (Savas 2000, 248).

In addition, privatization makes good business sense. Municipal government is plagued by inefficiency, bureaucracy and patronage; as a result, even if operations in the public sector are failing, political leaders often find it impossible to get rid of anyone, and the government solution to inefficient spending is to enlarge the budget. In the private sector, however, failing businesses simply go out of business (Savas 2000, 112). Therefore, privatization quite naturally improves efficiency, because private firms have every incentive to be productive. Efficiency leads to cost savings, which means that politicians can use that money elsewhere — such as for higher-profile social programs that promote the public good and garner support for the politician’s re-election campaign.

Again, Savas supports this argument with an appeal to Americans’ thirst for something better: “Inefficiency is the route to impoverishment, not development. Rich countries may be able to afford inefficient and ineffective government services, but they, too, are wasting resources that could be put to better use by society” (Savas 2000, 289). This idea translates into the rhetorical argument that the United States has an obligation to maximize efficiencies in order to free up more money to care for its citizens.

Rhetoricians use scientific discourse in tandem with pragmatic arguments to further gain support from audiences seeking logical solutions. Proponents of privatization argue that since the scientific evidence supports their rhetorical claim, privatization is the logical, reasonable, pragmatic choice. This use of science and scientific language “is employed as the voice of authority in Greenspeak... the use of certain rhetorical characteristics of scientific discourse in general reappear as familiar devices for canvassing rhetorical support in environmentalist claims and debates” (Harré et al. 1999, 52).

Science provides both understanding and a resource for shaping public opinion (Harré et al. 1999, 53). However, audiences need to discern the difference between *scientific* discourse and *scientistic* discourse: the latter only sounds authoritative, but is actually not grounded in fact (Harré et al. 1999, 65). This manipulation of scientific-sounding language is often seen in the rhetorical Values of Attainment, which were discussed earlier in this chapter. When the rhetorician positions himself as a scientist, he prefaces his claims with an implicit “trust me.” “To use scientific language may or may not be scientistic, but using it is to position oneself as a reliable and trustworthy person with a certain authority on matters of fact” (Harré et al., 1999, 85).

5.2.2 The Values in Practice

Mayor Goldsmith of Indianapolis agrees with Savas’ contention that smaller government is better government and that efficiency and pragmatism will lead to a better society. “We implemented a comprehensive approach to city management based on a belief that smaller government is just plain better” (Goldsmith 1997, 65). What makes this a shocking belief is that Goldsmith is a member of the very government he seeks to reduce: rather than promote the status quo — and the status quo in Indianapolis happened to be pretty good, with relative low taxes, a lean public workforce, and a healthy balance sheet — he actively pursued efforts to apply strategic privatization where it makes sense (Goldsmith 1997, 9). Goldsmith applied reasoned principles to his governing approach “to prepare cities for the twenty-first century through an explicit policy of reducing the size of government, creating wealth through the marketplace, and rebuilding civility by giving authority back to families, churches, and neighborhood associations” (Goldsmith 1997, 11). His logic-based,

pragmatic approach to government unifies the Values of Reason as much as it unified the citizens of his city.

Today's local officials "must concentrate on efficiency and performance if they are to continue providing the services citizens have come to expect from government" (Goldsmith 1997, 14). As Goldsmith contends, "Taxpayers will tolerate some level of inefficiency and unresponsiveness from the government, but as taxes continue to rise, their patience wears thin. Citizens demand better value from those they elect" (Goldsmith 1997, 15).

Goldsmith goes on to say that the concept of privatization "is simple: just because government has a duty to ensure that citizens receive certain services does not necessarily dictate that government must produce those services itself" (Goldsmith 1997, 15). Goldsmith assumes a common-sense tone here, implying that the concept of privatization is so patently beneficial and *simple* that politicians and communities would be foolish not to implement it.

Goldsmith carried this "basics" approach to privatization throughout his rhetoric. His advice to other city managers considering privatization is to "Do what is easy.... The easy stuff will not turn a city around tomorrow, but it is a start" (Goldsmith 1997, 27). Perhaps the most "scientific" argument Goldsmith made in his discourse was through the "scientific experiment" he called "the Yellow Pages Test." He employed this test to determine which services to privatize. The methodology was simple: take any service the city was providing — for example, printing shops or tree nurseries — and check the Yellow Pages to see if there were at least three private vendors listed who offered the same service. If at least three providers already existed, then chances were that a sufficiently competitive market existed in the private sector, which signified that the city should not

participate in those markets (Goldsmith 1997, 27). This approach was one that the public could easily grasp and apply for themselves, and it helped Goldsmith to gain acceptance for his privatization initiatives. Government, after all, was a business, and if the municipal government could not compete in certain markets, it should stay within those markets where it can offer added value (Goldsmith 1997, 25). He approached privatization with this market mentality, choosing to have certain government services “go out of business” if they could be done more efficiently and economically in the private sector (Goldsmith 1997, 25).

Goldsmith adeptly employed the Values of Reason to spur the city employees to work harder, question the way things had always been done, and achieve efficiencies. “Simply empowering these [public] workers transformed them into efficiency experts overnight. They became incredibly creative in imagining how they could do their work more cost effectively” (Goldsmith 1997, 21). Through this empowerment, Goldsmith learned a valuable lesson about his municipal employees: they were not lazy and stupid, and they know more about how to do their jobs than the mayors do. “The problem is that they have been trapped in a system that punishes initiative, ignores efficiency, and rewards big spenders” (Goldsmith 1997, 22).

Goldsmith changed the prevailing attitude toward privatization by getting his audience to think in terms of competition: “the ideal situation occurs when the most efficient private sector service provider goes head-to-head with a government division operating at its most efficient level” (Goldsmith 1997, 22). He privatized services when it made sense, and maximized the efficiency of those services that he kept in the public sector.

Mayor Campbell privatized services in Atlanta when it became a necessity, when the only alternative was an exorbitant water rate hike. In addition, he was coerced to explore privatization by his own interest in streamlining government. “Now the focus is to make government... leaner.... We have looked at every aspect of government to see where we could do more with less” (Campos 1998, JH1). Campbell maintains that he was always “philosophically opposed” to privatization, because it reflects government’s inefficiency: “Privatization is a government’s admission of failure.... Government ought to be able to accomplish projects as efficiently as business” (Ramage 1998, 24A). Having studied Mayor Goldsmith’s privatization success story in Indianapolis, Campbell had witnessed the benefits of outsourcing services to the private sector. By 1998, the tone of his rhetoric had drastically changed from anti-privatization to pro-competition. This change was not all of his own doing: several of his political opponents had openly criticized the incompetence and inefficiency of his government, charging that the citizens of Atlanta deserved better.

However, Campbell’s chief concern during the procurement process was to build into the eventual contract a requirement for substantial minority business participation. While this clause was applauded by many in the Atlanta community as a move to increase the Values of Equality, opponents criticized it as blatant favoritism. As several critics noted, mandatory involvement of minority firms was not only reverse discrimination, it was also a guarantee of higher prices — all of which would contribute to a grossly inefficient private operation. As one editorial in *The Atlanta Journal* stated,

[I]n its bid process, the city has devised a point system that makes a mockery of those two elements [qualifications to do the job and the best cost for performing it]—allocating three times more points for compliance with minority contracting requirements than for performance, and twice as many points for the bidder transferring city water department employees to its payroll as for past performance. Never mind that making minority contracting the dominant factor is bound to drive up costs. Never mind that

a recent study showed the water department has 300 more employees than it needs. And never mind that savings from private contracting of water or sewer in other cities have largely come from a leaner, more efficient work force. (Martin 1998, A8)

The citizens of Atlanta, particularly the media, had studied the Indianapolis example enough to discern that the approach Campbell was taking thus far was widely divergent. The rhetoric in the media was a call for the Values of Reason exemplified by Mayor Goldsmith — efficiency, fair competition, and smaller government.

As evidenced above, Goldsmith based his rhetoric primarily on these Values of Reason, promoting smaller government. In contrast, Campbell's rhetoric was far richer in spiritual and motivational images, leaning more heavily on the Values of Cooperation and Equality. However, even Campbell employed the more pragmatic and scientific values in his rhetoric, mostly in a supporting role for other, more widely prevalent values.

Campbell's science dealt more in the natural sciences than in business administration. During his 1999 State of the City Address, he supplied his audience with statistics to demonstrate that the privatization of the city's water system was proving to be the right decision. He quoted the projected overall savings, the improved water quality, the influx of jobs into the Empowerment Zone, and the very real presence of a minority partner on the private operator's management team. But rather than use statistics to support his rhetoric, Campbell used rhetoric to support his figures. He cinched up all of the numbers with a drawstring of environmental legacy: "let it be known that this administration refused to pass the buck to future generations. This privatization is an act of preventive investment.... we will take full advantage of opportunities for... environmental responsibility" (Campbell 1999, "A Return to Community" 5). Campbell deftly oscillated between quantifying statements and rhetorical arguments to demonstrate to his audience

that privatization was the right thing to do, in every way — it made fiscal, environmental, political, ethical and moral sense.

Privatization is now so mainstream a concept that proponents no longer need to lean so heavily on ideology and American values to garner support; the “value” that they leverage is the pragmatic approach: privatization just makes sense:

[M]ore than one hundred countries have officially endorsed privatization and more are considering it... It is no longer a partisan or ideological issue but a pragmatic and increasingly routine approach to governing and to managing public services. (Savas 2000, 315)

CHAPTER 6

VALUES OF OBLIGATION AND REBELLION

6.1 Values of Obligation

The Values of Obligation are primarily concerned with self-pride and national pride, as well as defense against oppression and injustice. They center on both government's responsibility to care for its citizens, and citizens' responsibility to defend against external aggression. The American values that fall within this category are Generosity and "Considerateness," and Patriotism. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

Generosity and "Considerateness" shares common ground with socialism in its purest form. It is based on the idea that institutions have a moral responsibility to improve the lives of their citizens and that citizens are equally obligated to make society better for each other. The translation of this ideal into the privatization arena is a smooth one: private companies, with their wealth of financial and human resources, owe it to the municipalities to show them a better way of conducting business. The corollary to this ideal is that municipalities owe it to their citizens to provide them with the cleanest, safest, healthiest water possible.

Patriotism invokes images of apple pie, baseball in the summer, and fireworks on the Fourth of July. In the context of privatization, patriotism translates into a dogged defense against foreign-owned companies entering American soil and taking over operations of their water systems. With the inescapable presence of French and British parent companies in the water and wastewater market, Patriotism becomes the last line of defense between American pride and external domination.

6.1.1 The Values in Theory

Even Savas, who promotes logic and reason as the prime justifications for privatization, cites these less tangible Values of Obligation as necessary tools. “The purpose of privatization is to improve government performance and thereby improve the lives of those most dependent on government, while saving money and improving services for all taxpayers and thereby improving their lives as well” (Savas 2000, xiv). He adds, “privatization can be profoundly passionate and humane..., can provide more benefits, greater dignity, more choice, and a greater sense of personal responsibility than government programs” (Savas 2000, 300).

Savas takes the stance traditionally held by Mayor Campbell here in promoting the sustainability of the community through privatization:

The two elements of the populist position are that people should have greater choice in public services and they should be empowered to define their common needs and address them without undue reliance on cumbersome bureaucracies.... The process of formulating common needs, and working through traditional local institutions to satisfy those needs, will reinforce a much-needed sense of community. (Savas 2000, 14)

He maintains that public administrators have a responsibility to oversee the privatized enterprises in order to ensure that they are adequately providing “services that directly affect the social and economic well-being of citizens” (Savas 2000, 320).

The term “service” or “public service” refers to broad range of functions, including “defending a nation against external threats” (Savas 2000, 5). As will be seen later in this chapter, this concept of fighting off external (i.e., foreign) influences is a card that is often played in the privatization field. Savas even goes so far as to accuse government of being a form of external aggression, claiming that it is too big and too intrusive in people’s lives, and threatens the very democracy it has sworn to uphold (Savas 2000, 6). Big government,

in effect, threatens citizens' freedom (Savas 2000, 8). This idea is one of Savas' ideological influences promoting privatization: less dependence on government.

Savas confronts this fear of external, foreign takeover: "A common argument raised against privatization is based on nationalism, and it arises in various guises. One is national security, the last refuge of antiprivatization forces" (Savas 2000, 303). He approaches this threat with a reasoned, logical argument, as is more common to his discourse: "The best defense is a strong economy, and privatization can strengthen an economy" (Savas 2000, 303). In addition, he urges municipalities to welcome foreign involvement in the water and wastewater industry, because these foreign entities bring with them extensive "capital, experienced management, technical knowledge, and access to new markets" (Savas 2000, 303). His conclusion is that communities should be wary of external threats but that their own expanding and dominating governments pose a much larger threat than the influx of foreign corporations.

6.1.2 The Values in Practice

Neil Grigg maintains that "...the public should be part of the decision process, but their full involvement is best expressed by local government representatives" (Grigg 1996, 100). Briggs echoes this sentiment in his reflection on tribal dispute mediations, which limit participation to adult males (Briggs 1996, 10). The term for this in Greenspeak is "vicarious advocacy," where certain speakers assume the roles of representatives on behalf of others who are in some way disadvantaged (Harré et al. 1999, 182). This paradox threatens the Values of Equality as well.

Similarly, participation in the privatization decision is limited to the municipality, its decision-making council, and the private bidders, who are the "vicarious advocates" of the

remaining affected pool. The employees and ratepayers are for the most part excluded from the process, even though they are directly affected by the outcome: employees may lose their jobs, and water rates may rise while quality may decline. Mayor Goldsmith cites this exclusion as one of the problems with urban policy today: “the growing difference between the urban poor and the leaders that claim to represent their interests” (Goldsmith 1997, 2).

However, Goldsmith cautioned the government against monopolizing the role of do-gooder for urban communities. He held government accountable for exacerbating the problems found there when it tried to take the place of traditional institutions such as family and religion:

When government attempted to acquire a monopoly on the provision of good deeds in inner cities, it both created and filled a void. Instead of communities, congregations, or kin bonding to provide care for the needy and enforce responsibility, the government wrote checks—seemingly limitless checks—transforming charity into an intergenerational entitlement. (Goldsmith 1997, 183)

Salvation in these urban areas no longer came from the home and the church, but from the government’s purse strings. And those strings eventually cordoned off the communities from the institutions that, according to Goldsmith, could truly save them.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Goldsmith has incorporated into his rhetoric a sense of “moral and economic responsibility to care about the residents of poor neighborhoods” (Goldsmith 1997, 195). This revolutionary concept in political rhetoric diverged from the tenet of vicarious advocacy: it said that mayors not only have a responsibility to represent their citizens, poor and rich alike, but that they had an *obligation* to ensure their survival. By meeting this obligation, municipal leaders could instill a sense of confidence and self-worth into their urban citizens, which would lead to their own efforts to better themselves and

the communities in which they lived. “Smooth streets and sidewalks and functioning sewer systems in even the poorest neighborhoods send the important message to urban residents that the city cares about them and will support them” (Goldsmith 1997, 197).

In addition to government’s responsibility to its constituents, Goldsmith emphasizes his citizens’ duty to help each other: “All able-bodied members of society, for their own benefit and for the benefit of their community, should be productive participants in the economy” (Goldsmith 1997, 97). This concept of citizens’ obligations to work for the betterment of themselves as well as their community is reminiscent of the Protestant work ethic, which promised salvation through hard and productive labor.

Atlanta’s Mayor Campbell also urged his audience to take an active role in their destiny.

It is incumbent upon us all to remain politically active, to vote, to monitor our elected representatives and to communicate with them, to serve as a voice of conscience in our companies, our churches, our community organizations, to build bridges among all people of good will, until one day, we won’t need affirmative action anymore. (Campbell 1996, 3)

This discourse represented a call to Campbell’s audience, the African-American community of Atlanta, to act as moral leaders in their community, to give of themselves in order to improve the quality of life in their city — in terms of both opportunities and tolerance.

Campbell frequently returns to the theme of his political obligation to help the community he serves.

As Mayor and an elected representative, my most important work lies in rebuilding our communities so that the children can be safe, and grow and succeed in life. That means creating an environment free of violence, with economic opportunity, quality education, and quality youth programs. It means supporting parents, so they can support their children. And it means we must all work together to help create that environment. (Campbell 1996, 6)

In his 1998 State of the City Address, Mayor Campbell again employed repetition as an effective rhetorical means of reinforcing his core message: that of caring for the community of Atlanta. One more than on occasion during his speech, Campbell stated, “Our vision is rooted in the principles of caring for and serving people. Our vision is inspired by the prudent and wise investments we seek today for Atlanta’s social, cultural and infrastructure systems so that we ensure a better tomorrow” (Campbell 1998, “Moving Atlanta Forward” 2). Through this effective use of repetition, he delivered a clear message of civic and social stewardship. It is through this careful stewardship that he and his community have realized the accomplishments he cited in his speech. Again, he urged his audience to be continually mindful of those who will inherit their community. “Today, we are not a perfect city, but a great city—undeniably better than before, and that should always be our standard.... [W]e must leave our children a better world than the one we inherited” (Campbell 1999, “A Return to Community” 1).

A year earlier, when delivering his 1997 State of the City Address, Mayor Campbell expressed the pride that he felt in having this great City of Atlanta host the Olympic Games during the previous summer. He emphasized that the citizens of Atlanta should feel pride as well, because they “pulled together to show the world the true character of our great city” (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 2). This image of the Olympics invoked a patriotic spirit in two ways. First, the Olympics are perhaps the most significant showcase of national pride and talent in the world, where athletes compete for their country and their country competes vicariously through them. Second, Campbell invoked patriotism within the community of Atlanta as well, calling his constituents, in effect, to showcase themselves and their city to the rest of the world. He continually refers to the Atlanta community as “home,” which reinforces this idea of unity against outsiders,

and particularly against critics. “Atlanta is the heart and soul of our greater metropolitan region. We’re the spice, we’re the pulse, we’re the core. This is our home. We will face the challenges together. And we will never give up on it” (Campbell 1997, “1997 State of the City Address” 15).

Campbell’s predecessor, Mayor Andrew Young, added his voice to the privatization issue in a letter to Atlanta’s *City Beat* publication. In that discourse, he skillfully infused the values of Ethical Equality and Equality of Opportunity with that of Patriotism when he discussed the pride of the minority population during the Olympics held in Atlanta in 1996.

I hope the tradition of minority participation in Atlanta is maintained. It was this tradition that helped us win the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games.... Atlanta’s joint venture and MBE programs have helped us grow economically and fulfill our mission as a world-class city. (Young 1998, 2)

Even though Young began his letter by stating that he would not second-guess the sitting mayor, he tacitly demonstrated his support of Campbell by advocating the minority requirements of the project. By invoking the image of the Olympic Games, Young called the Atlanta community to join together in celebration not only of being Americans, but of being Atlantans.

This “hometown pride” was captured again later in 1996 with the release of *Atlanta: A Vision for the New Millennium*, a celebration of the city of Atlanta to both natives and newcomers. The book is filled with images ranging from the opening ceremonies of the Olympics to downtown business centers to medical and educational facilities to the diverse faces that call Atlanta home. The book reinforces the motto that promoters had been using prolifically for years: Atlanta was “hometown of the American dream” (Fraley 1996, 1). When Atlanta was chosen to host the Olympic Games earlier that year, citizens considered it a dream that became reality (Fraley 1996, 1). The book, as well as Campbell’s

Foreword and the rest of the discourse surrounding the photoessay, served to reinforce the patriotic spirit of Atlanta — again, for being both American and Atlantan.

6.2 Values of Rebellion

The Values of Rebellion are perhaps the most cherished value cluster for Americans. The very idea of being afforded the freedom — and the right — to criticize and poke fun at one's political leaders is seldom found anywhere else in the world. Not only are these values embraced by Americans as their inalienable right, but they are also necessary to the survival of the system as a whole: they provide audiences with sanctioned outlet for expressing frustration and disapproval. The American values that fall within this category are Rejection of Authority and Humor. Each is described more fully in Chapter 3.

Rejection of Authority, put simply, sets out to reduce the role of government, whether in actuality or in the audience's perception of that government's power. This value bestows upon Americans the right to criticize, providing Americans with not only the freedom, but also the obligation, to point out the flaws of their governmental leaders. In the privatization arena, this right to criticize also extends to the private sector; municipal employees, ratepayers, and the media have free reign to regulate the private operator by openly criticizing its performance.

Humor alleviates tension, breaks down barriers, opens up lines of communication, and acknowledges the flaws of human nature. Humor can cleverly conceal the harsh criticism through its less serious form of delivery but nonetheless delivers its critical message. By assuming a deceptively lighthearted form, humor affords the general public and the municipal employees — who might be afraid to criticize authority in a more serious venue — with an avenue for airing their concerns.

6.2.1 The Values in Theory

To Charles Briggs, the Values of Rebellion are the most prevalent American values in privatization debates. The underlying issue is control — over water, over employees, over customers and rates. “Just as the relationship between dominant and subordinate discourses is contested and dynamic, social authority emerges through a fluid process of controlling competing claims to power and alternative bases for establishing it” (Briggs 1996, 236). Briggs emphasizes this conflict between three participants:

- *Hegemony*: the municipalities maintain ownership and therefore control of the system;
- *Ideology*: the private firms invoke the American values in their rhetoric to win the municipalities’ trust and eventually the contract; and
- *Resistance*: Employees, ratepayers, and citizens resist public-private partnerships, often invoking these same American values. (Briggs 1996, 10)

It is this last concept, resistance, which most fiercely ties privatization to the Values of Rebellion. Even if the employees and customers do not have a voice in the process, they can express their opposition through other means: the employees can quit once the contract is signed; the customers can use the media to air their complaints; the citizens can vote for the mayor’s opponent in the next election. All of these tools at the disposal of the “silent voters” influence the municipality’s decision to privatize, to select a particular bidder, or to retain operation of the facilities.

The crux of these American values, within the privatization context, is the idea of less government. By contracting out more services to private firms and thus taking those services out of the hands of the municipalities, those governments have less power, which means less control over their citizens. This makes government a little less frightening, giving its constituents more courage to criticize them.

Emboldened by this trend toward reduced government, the public becomes a deafening critic of municipal policy and the status quo: “complaints about poor government performance are... conventional and culturally obligatory grumbling and ridicule” (Savas 2000, 111). In fact, “the public seems to want less government” (Grigg 1996, 162). This fosters what has appeared as a strong argument throughout much of the environmental rhetoric in favor of privatization: it reduces the power of government, hence providing its citizens with the opportunity to reject the authority that so strongly controls them.

The empowered, critical public is not the only source of criticism and mockery. The role of the trickster throughout cultural folklore is no less present in modern-day rhetoric and is certainly not absent from the privatization forum. Briggs notes that the trickster “provides an embodiment of disorder and conflictual social relations for... audiences” (Briggs 1996, 8) and that this character “models both effective and ineffective strategies for creating and reacting to aggression” (Briggs 1996, 9). Surely, the water and wastewater industry is not without its tricksters, placing traps along the paths of those seeking to privatize it. These traps take many forms, from literary satires — most notably in the form of editorial cartoons, which will be discussed later in this chapter — to more concrete barriers, ranging from labor strikes and media mudslinging to operational sabotage. These efforts to undermine public-private partnerships embody this disorder of which Briggs writes, as both creators of and reactors to the perceived aggression of municipalities in their bids to team with private firms.

Tribal storytellers use the trickster

in teaching their listeners to perceive alternative strategies for producing and receiving discourse by paying attention to deceit and disorder.... the apparent

meaning of what is seen and heard is likely to be an illusion that is created by one part to further his or her own interests. (Briggs 1996, 18)

The trickster in the privatization story calls similar attention to misleading tactics by its competitors, by the media or by municipalities to warn its audience that the story being told should not necessarily be taken at face value. The trickster, historically as much as now, plays a valuable role in discourse by encouraging audiences to listen carefully and to educate themselves about what they hear.

6.2.2 The Values in Practice

Mayor Goldsmith of Indianapolis is an atypical bureaucrat in his active efforts to *reduce* the role of government in the lives of its citizens. He has pioneered the effort to privatize water and wastewater treatment, among other services. To help rally support from his constituents for such a radical concept as privatization, Goldsmith incorporated the Values of Rebellion into his rhetoric — utilizing the tactic of unifying the local government against the oppressive federal government:

[T]he federal government all but prohibited us from implementing an innovative solution.... As is all too often the case for local governments, improving service in Indianapolis required us to find a way around a series of obstacles imposed by the federal government. (Goldsmith 1997, 4)

Goldsmith used a unique tactic to incite his public to embrace change: he juxtapositioned the “malicious” federal government as preventing his community from achieving success and progress. This rhetorical strategy can be likened to a form of Obligation: unity against external barriers and aggression.

Many opponents of privatization, particularly government and regulatory agencies, regarded partnering with the private sector as a slap in the face — a rejection of their authority, which heretofore had never been questioned. When Indianapolis began

considering outsourcing operation of its wastewater treatment plants, for example, the state agencies interpreted it as “a criticism of their historic leadership and management” (Goldsmith 1997, 201). By questioning the way things had always been done in his city, a way that by many standards was highly acceptable, Mayor Goldsmith was flying in the face of traditional government, established leadership and proven policies. He was, in essence, rejecting authority. However, by doing so, he was challenging that authority to be even better, by comparing itself to private professionals and their depth of experience and resources.

The privatization of Atlanta’s water system confronted Rebellion along every step of the process. This rejection came in two forms: Mayor Campbell rejected the authority of his own City Council (e.g., fast-tracking procurement, criticizing Council), while the City Council and Campbell’s opponent during the mayoral election rejected him. In addition, the Metro Group, “a self-appointed watchdog group devoted to better government metrowide” (Hairston 1999, C1), openly criticized the mayor for everything from inefficiency and incompetence to corruption and bribery. Formed during the early stages of the procurement process, the Metro Group did not let up on Mayor Campbell even after the privatization went into effect. In one article in the local Atlanta newspaper, the group accused Campbell’s administration of prolonging negotiations with a construction firm to protect a close political ally of the mayor, as well as costing taxpayers millions of dollars because of “not having moved expeditiously to deal with the problem” (Hairston 1999, C1). Throughout his mayoral career in Atlanta, Mayor Campbell was barraged with criticism, sometimes for taking what opponents felt were inappropriate or misguided (or allegedly illegal) actions and other times for not taking action at all. His fiercest critics undermined his authority at every turn. In response, Campbell used rhetoric to call the

citizens of Atlanta to join together and support him, a citizen just like them, in making the city great once again.

Political cartoons are a chief means for privatization advocates and opponents to express their Rebellion. Figure 6.1 depicts one of the many pictorial commentaries on the impending Atlanta water privatization.



Figure 6.1 Editorial cartoon on Mayor Campbell and the Atlanta water privatization

Source: Luckovich, Mike. February 22, 1998. Editorial cartoon in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. F4.

The idea of poking fun at this country's political leaders is perceived as an American right and cherished as an inherent value. Mayor Goldsmith recognized this practice and took it seriously: "Americans have always joked about the inefficiency of their

government.... There is an important issue underlying these jokes. Private enterprise and government share patrons. Customers to one are taxpayers to the other” (Goldsmith 1997, 14-15).

Figure 6.2 illustrates the common public perception of the differences between Mayors Goldsmith and Campbell in terms of their views and handling of privatization.



Figure 6.2 Editorial cartoon on Mayor Goldsmith and Mayor Campbell

Source: Rhinehart, William. May 1998. Editorial cartoon in *Public Works Financing*, 1.

Goldsmith employed humor in exhorting the government and the citizens of Indianapolis to change. He described the antiquated policies and regulations that he faced on his first day in office as comical — laws such as those “requiring licenses for shooting pigeons and milking cows within the city limits” (Goldsmith 1997, 87). By adopting a light-hearted approach to obsolete municipal practices, he forced his constituents to see that by not changing with the times, their city was becoming a laughing-stock. He demonstrated that humor, strategically embedded into rhetoric, is a powerful influence.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

7.1 Rhetoric in the Water: Preliminary Findings

The American values of today are the same ones that Americans cherished a generation ago, and they are the same ones that Americans embraced a century earlier. Regardless of time or context, successful rhetoricians have known that the secret to effective persuasion resides in the artful exploitation of the American value system.

7.1.1 Privatization's Spokesmen: Mayors Goldsmith and Campbell

Mayor Goldsmith applied privatization to the city of Indianapolis so successfully that his city has served as the model for other cities across the country. He has led seminars and written books, conducted tours and welcomed delegates from around the nation who want to bring these same success stories back to their own communities. Goldsmith used rhetoric effectively by disguising it as pragmatic policy, and the result was not only enormous financial savings but also unity among his constituents. Through his rhetoric, he influenced his audience not only to change, but to seek out and usher in progress. And that audience has never looked back.

Mayor Goldsmith left office in early 2000. Now that his mayoral tenure is over, it will be interesting to note where his successor takes the legacy he left behind in Indianapolis. Whatever the direction, Goldsmith is not likely to pursue retirement quite yet. Having witnessed how his role in the privatization arena has impacted the rest of nation and the rest of the world, Goldsmith will undoubtedly continue to promote the advantages of competition, perhaps on a more global scale.

As for Mayor Campbell, it is still too early to tell whether the lessons of privatization in Atlanta will be a positive legacy of his political career, as it has certainly been for Goldsmith. The next few years of Campbell's tenure will certainly speak to the longevity of his contributions to privatization.

Both Mayor Goldsmith and Mayor Campbell have adeptly employed all of Steele and Redding's American values in crafting persuasive rhetoric that furthered their political agendas and endeared them to their audience. However, they have succeeded in doing so from completely opposite ends of the issue. While Goldsmith is privatization's biggest advocate, Campbell remains "philosophically opposed" to the concept because of what it says about the performance of municipal government. Goldsmith successfully privatized the city's wastewater system, while Campbell had perhaps a larger challenge because he needed to gain support for privatizing the treatment of water — a more valuable and exhaustible resource. Goldsmith is a white member of the Republican party; Campbell, an African-American Democrat. Goldsmith has completed his mayoral career, leaving behind a legacy of bold and successful privatization initiatives; it remains to be seen how Atlanta will remember Bill Campbell, so early into the 20-year privatization contract. Finally, Goldsmith attacked the issue of privatization primarily from a businessman's perspective, employing the Values of Logic and Reason; Campbell infused his rhetoric with impassioned pleas, enveloping his rhetoric in the Values of Equality.

7.1.2 Distilling the Rhetoric

As should be obvious from the discussions of each of these American values, particularly as they are put into practice in modern-day political rhetoric, there is a great deal of overlap among values — in terms of both their common undercurrents and their collaborative

application in the hands of the skilled rhetoricians. The value of Puritan and Pioneer Morality shares common threads with Sociality and External Conformity. The value of Achievement and Success borrows strength from Effort and Optimism, and lends credence to Material Comfort. The logic of Science and Secular Rationality is the same basis for Efficiency, Practicality and Pragmatism. And on and on. Even when one clusters these common values into interdependent enclaves, it can be observed that even these clusters borrow from one another.

There is no pure American value that stands isolated from the rest. The reason for this is simple: these values do not exist in a vacuum. Nor should they. Values should not be partitioned into neat little cubbyholes; only through their artful blending by the rhetoricians who breathe life into them are they used most effectively. Moreover, the Americans who embrace these values are not automatons living in cookie-cutter communities. The makeup of these communities, and the application of the values inherent to their citizens, are as diversified as the approaches used by the political rhetoricians to exploit and manage them.

7.2 Beneath the Surface: More American Values

Analysis of these modern-day rhetoricians has highlighted their widespread and skillful employment of American value system. However, as mentioned at the outset of this thesis, the values that Steele and Redding identified are not monolithic: as this analysis and the findings of other researchers have revealed, several other American values exist that are equally exploited by politicians and cherished by their constituents. This analysis has identified two of these other values as Freedom and Family.

7.2.1 Freedom

Perhaps Steele and Redding did not identify Freedom among their seventeen values because freedom has historically been accepted as a right rather than a privilege. But if the very real legacies of slavery, domestic violence, wrongful imprisonment and sweatshops have not been sufficient in underscoring Freedom as a coveted and cherished American value, perhaps the lessons of privatization will be the final straw. As Savas, Goldsmith and Campbell have demonstrated, municipal governments no longer need to be enslaved by bureaucracy and inefficiency. Public-sector employees can be unfettered from the status quo and seek to improve the way they operate treatment plants, spurred on by competition. Private firms can be free to propose innovative approaches and shared savings programs to municipalities. Minority business owners can take advantage of equal opportunities to compete and grow their businesses. And communities can have a real voice in the decision-making process, leveraging their voting power to influence the politicians who represent them.

Mayor Goldsmith recognized this value of Freedom and employed it masterfully through his privatization rhetoric. “Indeed, the crucial factor in a free market is not fear but freedom, the freedom to do your best and use your creative energies to provide better service” (Goldsmith 1997, 53). By invoking the value of Freedom, Goldsmith challenged his audience to embrace other American values as well — such as the Values of Attainment and Rebellion, to name a few. Goldsmith urged his city — and continues to urge other cities — to give their municipalities, as well as its public employees and private citizens, the *freedom* to compete.

In order for city employees to succeed in the competitive marketplace, they must be free to carry out their tasks in the manner they see fit. Increasing decision-making authority and freeing workers from narrow job descriptions

also allow managers to hold these employees accountable for the results they produce. (Goldsmith 1997, 59)

Goldsmith challenged the public sector not to look at competition from the angle of fear, but rather from the perspective of freedom — freedom to change the status quo to achieve greater success (Goldsmith 1997, 53).

7.2.2 Family

Another value woven into the fabric of latter-day rhetoric is that of the Family. As Mayor Goldsmith stated, “The family is the fundamental unit of every successful society” (Goldsmith 1997, 173). It is hard to find a politician who does not espouse “family values,” the importance of the nuclear family and the need to rehabilitate the dysfunctional family. Family is held as one of the primary institutions, along with religious and education, that are central to the survival and sustainability of the community. In fact, Goldsmith incorporated the institutions of family and religion into his rhetoric to further reinforce this community concept: “Communities of faith can do more to help strengthen families than any government agency can hope to accomplish” (Goldsmith 1997, 181).

In fact, as mentioned in the discussion of the Values of Obligation in Chapter 8, Goldsmith held government accountable for exacerbating the problem when it tried to take the place of these institutions: “When government attempted to acquire a monopoly on the provision of good deeds in inner cities, it both created and filled a void” (Goldsmith 1997, 183). According to Goldsmith, family, community and religion, *not* government, are the keys to survival — a sentiment that aligns closely to his other commonly fired weapon, Rejection of Authority. He capitalized on this idea to further ally himself with his audience, stepping closer to them as he criticizes that very government of which he is a member: “for

the past thirty-plus years, government has consistently undermined this source of public virtue” (Goldsmith 1997, 173). By holding up Family and displaying it as a “source of public virtue,” Goldsmith etched it into the list of values that Americans hold so closely to them.

However, Goldsmith did more than frame Family as a value to be cherished; he called upon it to help his and other governments to build better cities. “Vibrant twenty-first century cities... need just enough effective government, but can only succeed if healthy families instill positive values leading to opportunity and a good life” (Goldsmith 1997, 198). Without the value of Family, government alone cannot succeed in adequately caring for its citizens.

Mayor Campbell brings the concept of Family directly into the homes of his constituents, focusing primarily on the Black Family. He frequently holds up this ideal as a value to be cherished, to be nurtured and to be revered. During a speech to a predominantly African-American audience in 1996, Campbell stated,

If there is one thing we know it is the strength of the Black Family. We have endured the separations of slavery, the hardships of discrimination, segregation, and poverty. We have prevailed against all odds and what has sustained us is our deep and patient faith in God who gives us faith in ourselves. (Campbell 1996, 6)

By bringing the Family back into the homes of his citizens and combining this value with the institution of religion, Campbell reinforces a strong undercurrent present in all of his rhetoric: he is just like his audience — not a politician, but a struggling, morally conscious, African-American male seeking better opportunities for himself, his family and his community. His approach delivers a strong message and is effective in its call for unity.

7.3 The Public Rhetoric of Privatization

The reality is that privatization is a political issue. Political leaders are rhetoricians by nature and by necessity because they have been elected to positions of power as representatives of the larger masses they serve. All political writing, and all writing that seeks to influence its audience, is rhetoric.

The water and wastewater industry is no oasis from this rhetorical atmosphere. Competition for private operation of water and wastewater assets is a political struggle as much as it is a showcase of who is most qualified. In a procurement battle between fairly comparable contenders, the winner is often determined by which firm makes its rhetoric easiest to swallow.

7.4 Looking to the Future: Suggested Directions for Further Research

7.4.1 The Future of Privatization

In light of the common disdain for the term “privatization,” many advocates have endeavored to come up with different labels, in an attempt to sneak in the initiatives under the radar. Such alternate terms, some of which have been mentioned in this analysis, include:

- Public-private partnership
- Delegated management
- Comprehensive asset management
- Managed competition
- Contracting out

- Marketization (a term coined by Goldsmith)
- Outsourcing

This last term, “outsourcing,” is a concept that the private sector has embraced for awhile now — a sort of “private privatization.” Private firms are increasingly outsourcing functions ranging from information technology to cafeteria service, from printing and advertising to payroll administration, from benefits administration to customer service. And they are reaping the same benefits that municipal governments have enjoyed when they outsource: “When done properly, this does not ‘hollow out’ the corporation; it reduces internal bureaucracies, flattens the organization, and affords greater strategic focus” (Savas 2000, 318). Increased privatization initiatives draw upon all of these American values: they enhance opportunities, foster equality, respect the individual, provide avenues for achievement and success, improve the quality of society by caring for more of its members, encourage cooperation and productivity, and so on.

With the increasing involvement of foreign corporations in the privatization arena, Patriotism will start to play an even more active role in the rhetoric used to protest and defend it. When dealing with such a basic, vital resource as water, it would be hard to imagine a day when this external influx is welcomed with open arms. However, Americans will have ample opportunity to find out: several international companies are currently competing in procurement processes across the United States, and there seems to be no waning of this trend.

Another recent development in the industry is the speculation that, in the very near future, water will be traded as commodity — just as gold is currently traded. It will be interesting to witness whether this “Change and Progress” will enhance the care shown to this vital natural resource, or whether water will become another asset to be coveted. This

move shifts the perception of water from a precious resource to be tended to a resource to be coveted. Moreover, it puts those who control it on a higher rung of power. Perhaps the present-day environmentalists are sage in their prediction that “The Next World War Will be about Water.”

Future research might consider analyzing the effects of foreign involvement in the management of water resources. In addition, it should certainly pay close attention to the impact of treating water as a commodity on the customer service aspects of the industry. A survey of water customers at various stages of privatization — under municipal operation, during the procurement process, throughout transition to the private sector, under private operation, under private *foreign* operation, and finally as stockholders in the commodity — would yield insights into the long-term effects of this changing perspective on one of the world’s most vital natural resources.

7.4.2 The Future of Rhetoric

Ample opportunity also exists to evaluate the evolving forums for rhetoric. The analysis herein has already witnessed the transformation of rhetoric from religious sermons to environmental treatises to political agendas. The forums for rhetoric have varied from oral diatribes to written exhortations. Most recently, Mayors Stephen Goldsmith and Bill Campbell have seen the rise of yet another forum: electronic communication. The emergence of web-based media, i.e. the Internet, has enabled Goldsmith and Campbell to reach a worldwide audience. Consequently, it has placed their privatization initiatives on a global stage. The long-term effects of this global communication media are an important basis for additional research and analysis. It will be interesting to discern whether this electronic rhetoric ultimately embraces the global community or further alienates it.

Perhaps within the context of the water and wastewater industry, as water becomes a coveted commodity, researchers will witness the evolution of ratepayers into stockholders and municipal leaders into power brokers.

Regardless of the direction this new rhetorical media takes its audience, it is abundantly clear that rhetoric is the common thread throughout history that has tied influential leaders with their audiences. Whether its purpose has been a pursuit of divine salvation, environmental conservation, or political domination, rhetoric has always been the weapon of choice — and the battle will continue far into the future.

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