

# “The Day of the Combination is Here to Stay” – John D. Rockefeller

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Born into a modest home, John D. Rockefeller used hard work, vision, and business prowess to become one of America’s richest men. To achieve this success, Rockefeller founded the Standard Oil Company and made it his mission to control every aspect of the oil business. Rockefeller sought to eliminate competition and the chaos it could cause in the market using all available means. In most cases, this was accomplished by Standard Oil’s purchase of competing businesses. Rockefeller would combine the resources of his more productive competitors into Standard Oil and close down his weaker purchases.

Following his retirement from Standard Oil, Rockefeller published *Random Reminiscences of Men and Events* in 1909. *Random Reminiscences* contains his perspectives on wealth, life, and business. The analysis that follows examines the text’s use of the ideas of combination, the common term for Standard Oil’s primary business tactic, and competition, as well as the sentiment associated with these concepts.

*Random Reminiscences*’ seven chapters were separated into fifty-one sections using the text’s headings. As shown in the chart below, words related to “combine” and “compete” were not often used together. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient of 0.048 confirms this independence. Terms related to “competition” are much more common in the middle sections of the text while “combination” appears more frequently toward the beginning and end.

Sentiment analysis of *Random Reminiscences* shows that while the overall tone is consistently positive, there are swings in sentiment values across the text’s sections. The sentiment curve in the chart shows that, perhaps not surprisingly, Rockefeller’s use of language is more positive when he speaks of “combinations” than when discussing “competition.”

Frequency of “Combination” and “Competition” Terms with Sentiment Value Curve

