

DEMOCRACY

The Community Life Institute, held at Camp Rawley in Simcoe county last summer, created much interest. Its purpose was to deal with rural community problems and to provide the inspiration and knowledge to enable rural men and women to do better work in their own communities. Among the topics discussed were health, social and recreational life, rural character, county library associations, co-operation and democracy.

An outline of the lectures on these subjects, with questions for discussion and a bibliography, has been prepared by Mr. David Smith and can be secured from the Community Life Training Institute, Barrie, Ontario, for fifty cents.

The address on Democracy by Mr. Stewart Page, Agricultural Representative, created so much favourable comment that it is being reprinted here with the permission of Mr. Page and Mr. Smith. (Note by Editor).

Democracy Includes Socialism and Capitalism

Democracy throughout the world, is a combination, in varying degrees, of the two economic principles of Capitalism and Socialism. In some democratic countries, the Socialistic principle, aiming at a common ownership by the people of the means of production and exchange, has gained considerable headway, whereas in other democratic countries, the Capitalistic principle, of private ownership and free enterprise, predominates.

In all democratic countries these two principles are combined on more or less friendly terms and each has a very important contribution to make to the national life of the country.

Pure Socialism does not exist in any country although an effort had been made to attain this objective in Russia through the Communist revolution and with disastrous results. Pure Capitalism never has existed as the individual has always been subject to controls of some sort.

Democracy and Naziism

A comparison of Democracy with the totalitarian system of Government shows very clearly that only in a Democracy can such values as freedom, justice, truth, tolerance and kindness attain any expression so far as the individual citizen is concerned. A careful study of the principles underlying the Nazi system of Government, for example, coupled with a close observation of the actions of that Government in recent years, makes clear its belief that such moral values are considered weaknesses, to be stamped out in the interest of the efficiency of the State.

From a materialistic or an economic point of view, the Nazi system can show some definite and immediate advantages due to the complete control and subjugation of the people. This control has made it possible for Germany to speed up war production to the temporary disadvantage of the slower moving democratic countries. A Democracy must wait on public opinion to catch up with the need of the times, whereas a dictatorship can act overnight.

The Immediate Problem

Students of Government are agreed that in time the stifling of freedom, justice and truth, as is now being so thoroughly done in Germany, will destroy any nation. The uncontrolled use of brute force, coupled with a regimentation of the people, has only a temporary advantage but at the moment it is a combination which challenges the very existence of free people. To offset this immediate advantage, we of the democratic countries will be obliged to forego temporarily, at least, many of our long established personal liberties. Above all we have to do voluntarily many things which our enemies are doing by regimentation.

Individual and Local Action

In the final analysis, the effectiveness of a Democracy depends very largely on the degree to which every

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HOW TO GIVE A BOOK REVIEW

This fall and winter several thousand clubwomen all over the country will review books before local organizations. Possibly you are one of them. Nervous? Let me give you a few tips.

First, read your book straight through. Think about it for a few days. Then read it again, this time with pencil in hand. Mark the margins of arresting passages or jot down the page numbers on cards, using separate cards for characters, style, scenes, and so forth.

Let's assume you are reviewing a novel, although the points we take up will hold good, with slight variation, for other classifications of books, too. Here are the steps of your actual review.

1. State the theme of your book in one sentence. Oh, yes, you can do it. "In Mr. Skeffington, by Elizabeth, the author tells with humor and pathos how Fannie Skeffington, forty-nine, divorcee and one-time beauty in London society, solves the problem of life without youth, beauty, or masculine admirers." Something like that.

2. Next, give the setting of your book. Setting, of course, means background—place and time identification. In some books setting is negligible and needs only the briefest mention. In others it is an important and integral part of the story.

3. Now you're ready for the real fun—the plot. Eliminate everything except the actual core of the book. Make it vigorous! Keep it moving! Build up suspense! Choose vivid adjectives. Use action verbs, such as stride, drag, tumble, rush, wait, snap. Avoid "and" and "and-a" between sentences. They are the shortest route to boredom ever discovered. Shape your sentences crisply and definitely. Choose from your notes two or three striking passages; fit them smoothly into your narrative with a brief explanatory remark, and read them aloud.

When you are about two-thirds of the way through the plot and have reached a point where the audience will be hanging on your words, pause a second. Then say something like this: "Well, far be it from me to give anything more away and spoil the book for you. You'll want to read it yourselves."

Of course, your listeners will be ready to mob you for breaking off your story and spoiling their fun; but after all, this is a study club, is it not? You are supposed to pique their curiosity to such a point that they'll rise in a body and sprint to the nearest bookstore.

4. Characterizations. Your author has spent months, maybe years, bringing his characters to life. Are they well drawn? Do they form a vivid picture in your mind? Do they develop and grow during the story? Are their actions consistent with their personalities? Can you point out a well-known character similar to any in your book?

5. Style. Many authors have a style of writing all their own, a special flavor of personality. Others are good, clear writers, lacking an individual touch, but entirely adequate. Which kind is yours?

6. Give the author a break. If he is new and there is nothing about him available in your library, write him or his publishers for some personal information. If he has written other books, compare them with the one you are reviewing.

7. Make an estimation of the value of the book before you read any reviews. Be honest about this. What was the author's purpose? Did he accomplish this purpose? If you find weakness in the general theme, poorly motivated characters, inadequate plot development, or other faults, you are certainly free to say so. On the other hand, if the author has thrilled, inspired, instructed, or entertained you, tell your audience about it, and give the book the praise it deserves.

Now for the introduction, which we waived for the moment. Your opening words are important; you wish to

create at once a favorable impression. Never apologize! You are not professional, of course; but you are prepared, conscientiously and intelligently. Don't be humble. Humility is in bad taste; besides, it breeds faint scorn. Don't chatter on about the wonder of it all that you were selected to speak.

As to the content of your introduction, there are no definite rules to follow. Let it express you. Perhaps you can find a sparkling little incident in the book to use as an attention-getter. Jump right into it, then slide back to your natural order.

Whatever course your introduction takes, remember these points: make it interesting, keep it brief, and state clearly the title, author, and classification of the book. Holding up a book that has a bright jacket printed in bold type is a visual aid to your audience in retaining the name.

Now for some rehearsing! Your review is on paper, in its final, well-organized form. Go off to your room and shut the door. Take an easy stance before the mirror, feet close together, one slightly ahead of the other, weight on the front foot. Read your introduction aloud, looking up occasionally into the mirror. Read it aloud three times; then try it without referring at all to your paper. Don't attempt to have it word-perfect—it would seem wooden—but see that it contains every point you wish to bring out and is well expressed.

Take up your theme and setting, and read them aloud three times. Now try them with the introduction and without your paper, forcing yourself to get along as well as possible.

Take some file cards from your recipe box, one card for each of these first three sections of your review. Write down the key words or cue phrases that will make your thoughts follow along smoothly and logically.

Then begin again, this time clapping, not gripping, your cards. Run through the same three sections. Refer casually, not frantically, to your cards when you're stuck.

Next day, take up the plot in the same manner, and the following day the remaining sections, which, fortunately, are short. Remember to make cue cards for each division. You will carry these cards the day of your talk and hold them inconspicuously but not furtively.

Now put it all together, and time yourself. Half an hour or so is plenty. Sound enthusiastic, no matter how you feel by now. Look at your phantom audience; swing your gaze from left to center, to right, and back—never to ceiling or floor. Eliminate any annoying mannerisms your mirror may disclose. Strike a suitable tempo, neither maddeningly slow nor nervously fast.

If you find yourself sounding stiff and parrotlike, slip in some little conversational expressions, such as: "you see," "of course," "I presume." Work in the title and author's name several times. Practising twice daily for three or four days will probably be ample for acquiring familiarity with your review.

Now The Day has arrived. Run over your talk once if you wish! No more, though. Dress carefully. Wear something smart but simple.

At the clubroom, if a business session comes first, listen determinedly. You can do it. Keep your thoughts off yourself! After being introduced by the program chairman, lay your book on the table, hold your cue cards lightly, and face your audience. Leisurely. Pause eight or ten seconds. Look them over. Give late arrivals time to tiptoe to their seats and get settled.

You're off, calmly, confidently. You move smoothly into your introduction and can feel it "clicking". . . Theme . . . Setting . . . Why, this is fun! Lots more fun than talking to space at home. . . Plot. . . Watch them lean forward. How absorbed they look! And so on to the close, casually consulting your cue cards from time to

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EDUCATION

Education should be designed to teach us the art of living with ourselves and with others (no matter of what colour, creed, nationality or social system) so that we may adjust ourselves through youth, maturity and old age to that ever-changing thing, modern life; and that the world may be a better place for our having lived in it. Character building based on a true spiritual background is its aim.

The home is the strongest factor in the education of the child; it is the workshop in which the character of the child is being moulded into the person he or she will be in adult life. The child is influenced both by the planned training he receives and by the less intentional factors that surround the learning process. That "Example is better than precept" is true for children are apt imitators. Who has not heard the small child make such remarks as, "Mother does that" or "That is what father says"? So let us continue our study of child psychology and family psychology, or the fine art of living together, so that the picture of our words and deeds, reflected in the mirrors around us (our children) will be the best. This branch of study will bear fruit not only now but in future years when the present children become the leaders of our country.

Study of Art

Barrie says, "Art opens the eyes of those who wish to see beautiful ideas and things". Institute women during the past few years have been developing an appreciation of art by the study of the lives of great artists and their paintings. As a hobby, an Art scrap book would give an outlet for this. We might turn into pleasing and educational assets many of the copies of master paintings we receive yearly on our Christmas cards.

"Beautiful art can only be produced by people who have beautiful things about them and leisure to look at them, and, unless you provide some element of beauty for your workmen to be surrounded by, you will find no element of beauty can be invented by them".—Ruskin. We, in Ontario, are surrounded by nature's beauty—trees, streams, flowers and birds. We can all participate in creative, as well as appreciative, art. If not with brush, pen or pencil, how? By arranging our furniture and interior decorations to give aesthetic pleasure; by the selection of good design, colour and suitable material for rugs, quilts and needlecraft; by arranging the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers so that we view, especially from our kitchen windows, beautiful landscapes.

The School System

The new programme of studies in our schools has received the attention of almost all our Institutes. Another subject relating to our schools is the larger unit of administration—The Township School Board. It would be well for us all to study this subject from the viewpoint of the well-being of our boys and girls and voice our approval or disapproval before, rather than after, it becomes law.

A helpful source of information on many educational subjects is the radio. Let us make it an educator as well as an entertainer by listening to the educational broadcasts.

(Contributed by Mrs. J. S. Gordon, Provincial Convener of Education.)

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time and occasionally shifting your gaze as suggested.

You have finished. Enthusiastic clapping fills the room. Sweet music to your ears! You have worked hard; but you are feeling well repaid. How much easier it will be next time!

For if you follow these instructions, your community will see that there is a next time—and soon!

By Winnifred Inglis Baumgartner. (From Good Housekeeping Magazine and printed with permission of author and publishers.)