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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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Mason City, Iowa  
Sept. 28, 1956

Dear Iowa Council Members:

As I write this our school year is definitely under way. Your class program for the year has by now been established. My wish for each of you is that you can carry out with enthusiasm and inspiration all those things that you have included in your basic plans.

Fall seems to offer the most activity of our Iowa Council year. First off, this very moment is the time for each of us to be sure we've renewed our membership in both the Iowa and the National Councils for the Social Studies. We need the stimulation and encouragement that comes from association with others in our own area of interest and also the worthwhile literature that will come to us as a result of our membership. This is also the time for us to look around and to interest others in our organizations. Talk to other social studies teachers on your own faculty and among your associates. Let them know of the values you receive and of values

they can receive through membership and participation.

Secondly, these are the days when we are looking forward to our annual Iowa Council luncheon and Area Meeting. For several years we have enjoyed meeting at Callanan Junior High School. On this coming Convention Day, we are going to have our luncheon at the Moose Hall. The officers have received a number of requests through these past few years asking that we go back to a meeting place downtown. Another year we will have to decide whether to move once again to a school site or to remain down town. Let us hear from you, both by your presence at the luncheon and through an expression of your wishes.

The third activity that we as social studies teachers have an interest in and wish to be a part of is the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies at Cleveland over Thanksgiving. Those of you who are members of the National Council will be receiving your program bulletins soon. Dr. Cartwright of Duke University is general chairman and is planning a stimulating program. Among the many events planned, Iowans will be particularly interested in the Iowa Breakfast on Friday morning. We hope that many of you can go to Cleveland and that you and your friends will attend the Iowa breakfast.

Those of you who have received your 1956-57 membership cards within the last month have noticed that a different signature appears on the card. James E. Hayes has consented to take over from Leonard Ralston this very important position of

Secretary-Treasurer. To Leonard, who is now on the "home stretch" in achieving his doctorate at the University of Iowa, we want to express our heartfelt thanks for the time and energy that you have continually exerted on behalf of the Iowa Council. Best wishes to you throughout this year.

I will be looking forward to seeing many of you in Des Moines on November 2nd.

Sincerely,

Wilma L. Tallman  
President, ICSS



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DEVELOPING DEMOCRACY  
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by  
Dr. Vernon N. Mork

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The topic for the Fall Institute programs throughout Iowa could not have been better chosen had we ICSS members selected it ourselves. Surely "The Role of the Public School in Teaching and Practicing Democracy" is very similar to "The Role of the Social Studies in the Public Schools." This does not mean that teaching democracy does not enter into all phases of elementary teaching. It Must. But it seems quite well accepted that the greatest emphasis on this important topic falls in the social studies realm. We seem to have accepted the fact that the first and foremost objective of the social studies is to develop better citizens. And better citizens in our way of life means better democratic citizens.

Unfortunately, too many have the misconception that "teaching democracy" is synonymous with a given course in the social studies area whose title might be "Geography", "History", or "Iowa." In short, there seems to be belief that the "vehicle" is the end in itself. A road is of no value in itself. Nor is "art" for art's sake. Neither is social studies for social studies in itself. I would like to carry this thought further with you.

One of the Teachers College, Columbia University, Studies in Education 1954 is titled "The Democratic Classroom." Miss Lucile Lindberg, the author lists some of

the ways democracy is "taught" in the schools. She states:

A study of the ways democracy is now being taught in the schools shows that in most schools emphasis is not being placed upon a practical use of process. Some teachers are trying to give children practice in democratic living, but there are many misconceptions of how to do it. Some teachers feel that their classrooms are democratic if they have movable furniture, an abundance of art supplies, attractively decorated rooms, evidence of activity, and committee work in process. Some teachers think that children are learning democracy if they are free to express themselves in any manner they desire and if no standards to be attained are in evidence. These teachers often take it for granted that colleagues whose classrooms seem to show little activity, or who work in a closely organized way, are not trying to be democratic. By the same token, some teachers feel that they are working democratically with children if they are making the work interesting.

Besides listing these processes, which in themselves are no assurance of democratic development, she also lists some of the most common "vehicles" which are used to develop democracy in the schools. You will recognize them as the ones we all use. Naturally it is HOW we use them that counts. I shall list some of them and then discuss briefly what would happen if they were merely taught as an end in themselves.

I. CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AND RULES OF CONDUCT. This is too

often based on the belief that our democracy is made up of certain behavior patterns and that there is a behavior pattern for each particular situation. It is usually presented in one of two ways: (1) telling the children the rules and then taking for granted that they will be able to use them without further help, or (2) giving them practice through the use of assigned roles as at a make-believe party.

The results of this type of "teaching democratic behavior" will vary. Some children will merely learn to "accept" authority and be unable to act unless directed. Others may resent the total system and wait only for the opportunity to be free from supervision so they can follow old patterns. In no case, because of the lack of understanding, could it insure developing democratic conduct.

II. CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF OUR DEMOCRACY. This is another "method" listed by Dr. Lindberg. Here we have the concept that our democracy is political. If a child knows the mechanics of our political democracy he will become, automatically, a better citizen. Unfortunately, we fail to recognize that the mere intellectual understanding of political structure does not in itself guarantee the result to be better citizenship. Success in a democracy depends on good human relationships and political structure is merely used to aid that relationship to operate.

III. CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT THE SYMBOLS OF DEMOCRACY. Here we present the various patriotic creeds and songs to the children and have them memorize them. We arrange



patriotic ceremonies in which the children take part. This teaching of symbols is often given a prominent place in the school program because it seems to be assumed that through this one "learns" democracy. How the emotional satisfaction thus gained by the pupil will relate to his understanding of true democratic living is questionable.

IV. CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT DEMOCRATIC TRADITION IN THE HISTORY OF OUR NATION. Here it is often accepted that democracy is an historical tradition. If children have the knowledge of the strife, struggle, and sacrifice of those who were before them and the vigil they kept to continue it then they too will automatically work and live democratically. As for the child himself, there is no action involved -- just the knowledge of what went on before him.

The list is longer than there is room for here. Let me mention one more that is used frequently.

V. CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT DEMOCRACY THROUGH STUDENT COUNCIL OR STUDENT GOVERNMENT. Surely this is an excellent way to develop democratic understandings. But here again comes misconception of learning. Too often Student Government is so closely guided and guarded by a teacher or principal that the child's ideas are not called for or recognized. The children are not given "area" of power within which they make their decisions. He may only "make" those rules which the adult has already decided upon and which the adult wants. Possibly even more damaging than this is the situation where the children make and enforce all the rules thus allowing a few



to dominate the many. The result is that in many a child's mind "democracy" and "dictatorship" are synonymous.

The above "vehicles" as well as the processes mentioned are all included in the threads of a good Social Studies program in the elementary school. They are supposed to weave the pattern of democratic understanding for the child. But before the pattern can be woven, before the child can possibly know what to do with the threads, there is a personal understanding of democracy that he must grasp.

This understanding cannot come by "hearing" ABOUT democracy -- it must come by LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY. Two steps, by far the most difficult but necessary for each of us, must be followed to develop truly democratic understandings. The first starts with the individual child: DEVELOP WITHIN HIM A HIGH RESPECT FOR HIMSELF. Consideration for others, their opinions and beliefs -- the concept of the dignity of man which is the basis of all democratic living, -- can only come after one has dignity of self. We must give him a sense of his own worth, give him credit for what HE does according to his own ability. A thorough knowledge of the background, ability, family, and problems of each child must be mastered by the teacher to carry out this step. The reporting system must be such that the child may receive the feeling of success if he works for it.

We do not want to develop "second class" citizens. There should be as much dignity in working up to one's ability in school, no matter what the ability is, as working up to one's ability as an adult

on a useful job, no matter what that job may be. This the child must understand. Miss Ruth Hutcheson, Assistant Professor of Teaching and 2nd Grade Supervisor, ISTC, invited the fathers of her pupils to come in and discuss the job each held in the community. Not only did the children develop a better understanding of the variety of jobs done in the community (the vehicle) but they were aided in the development of respect for useful labor, whatever level of ability it might demand. Even more important, perhaps, was the influence on the child. Perhaps, for the first time, he saw his own father as an important part of the community and in turn felt himself to be a more valuable member of school and society. Within the "vehicles" in the social studies must be developed the child's feeling of worth in himself -- the first requisite in the understanding of democratic living.

The second step concerns the classroom: DEVELOP A DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM WITHIN WHICH THE CHILDREN LIVE DEMOCRATICALLY. It seems that this is so obvious that it need not be mentioned. Yet how many of us too often expect children to "learn" democracy with no opportunity to practice it. Although in the long run the democratic method is the best (I hope we accept this) it does take longer to carry out a given assignment in a democratic manner. Dictatorship is often faster and more efficient (and less nerve-racking) for the teacher! To have a democratic classroom does not mean that all will do as he wishes -- that bedlam reigns supreme. Far from it! It does mean that in the development of the child he is allowed gradually to make more and more of his own decisions AFTER CON-

SIDERING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO THE OTHERS IN THE GROUP. At first there are few decisions he may make, Always the decisions are those at his level and ones he must be responsible for.

Miss Lucille Anderson, Associate Professor of Teaching and 7th grade home room sponsor, ISTC, develops her student government in this way. The children know what decisions they may make themselves and what decisions must be left to school authorities. There is no dictatorship from above. The feeling of self-satisfaction and personal success developed here comes from the understanding of both the right and the responsibility to decide and carry out a decision that is within their ability of understanding.

Democratic development moves slowly. We all know that if we continually "super-vise" the children will usually accept that authority but will not grow. Are you still walking down the hall with your pupils to the fountain or out the door for recess? It is still early in the year, I know, but if you would leave them on their own for the first time next Monday they would be no more noisy than if you left them on their own for the first time the next to the last day of school next spring. So, of course, you develop them gradually and democratically in the habit of being responsible for their actions in the hall. Next spring they will be able to move down the hall without supervision. A lot of time and energy and thought will be put into this development by you and a lot of mistakes will be made by the pupils -- but they will grow and develop because of it. The same idea is brought out by the dream



of all of us -- that our classroom will be no more noisy when we are out of the room than when we are in it.

Our objective is to help develop future citizens for a democracy. The Social Studies area gives us the best examples to use as "vehicles" to carry out this objective. The results come slowly and no individual child is on the same level of achievement as another at a given time. It takes more energy, patience, study, and devotion than it seems humanly possible for a selected group of professionals to have. But look at America! We, as teachers, will continue to make each generation even better.

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### THANKSGIVING PLANS!

On November 22-24, the National Council for the Social Studies will hold its annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. Headquarters will be at the Hotel Cleveland and sessions will deal with discussions of subject matter, teaching methods, instructional materials and opportunities for professional growth. The program, under the able direction of Dr. William Cartwright, is keyed to the special interests of teachers at all levels. General sessions will offer outstanding speakers on a number of subjects. Begin to plan now to attend NCSS this Thanksgiving. Arrange to meet your Iowa friends at the Iowa Breakfast and professional friends from all parts of the country at every session of the convention.



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## THIS ELECTORAL COLLEGE--HOW COME?

by

Richard Palmer

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Because our method of electing a President has twice been selected as the national debate topic, Algona Juniors have understandably been rather extensively exposed to this unique institution in their American History class. It is not difficult to get the mechanics across. The questions that invariably arise are "Why did we adopt it in the first place?", "Why do we have it now?", and "Why don't we change to something else?" The something else usually being the direct vote of the people although the proportional and district plans are presented as well. With the added interest of this election year, it might be valuable to briefly review the origins of the college and the proposals for change.

The thinking that went into the adoption of the electoral system was varied and complex. Like our Senate and House it represents a compromise between the large and small states and between those who trusted mass democracy and those who did not. If our students are to understand we must help them to recreate the attitudes and beliefs of 1788. They must appreciate the original lack of political parties and understand the failure to anticipate their development. They must understand that the opposition to direct vote of the people was motivated not only by fear and distrust but also by the practical grounds

of poor communications and inadequate education.

Not as clear is the nature of the compromise between the large and small states. But if we will but think as the founding fathers thought, the compromise is obvious. Without political parties that reached into all sections, it was considered that after Washington, each state or at the best a small group of allied states would present what we would now term a "favorite son" candidate. These several candidates would preclude an electoral majority and hence force the top five (at first) to submit their cause to the House. Under these circumstances, the larger states had the advantage in the College, but the smaller states would hold the balance of power in the House. The intent was then that the large states would nominate but the small states would dictate the actual election from their candidates.

Of course it never really worked as intended. After Washington the closest would be the election of 1824, and to a certain extent the election of 1840. Yet the system was retained and so the question "How come?"

There isn't space to examine here the contemporary plans which have been introduced in the Congress. I would like to note, however, that the charge usually hurled against the College with the greatest impact is that the man with the most votes can and has lost. This is true. But neither the Lodge plan (proportional division of the electoral vote) or the Mundt plan (electoral votes chosen on the

district level) offer any improvement on this point. This can be easily illustrated with actual or hypothetical election statistics to your class. Only the Langer direct vote plan will ensure victory to the man with the most votes.

To clarify the nature of the electoral college, I compare it with a wrestling meet. In a meet, we determine the winner by the number of matches won. The degree of victory within the match doesn't make any difference. Whether it is a decision based on a point score of 2-1 or 10-0, the result is still 3 points. So it is when we elect a President. The electoral college reflects the result of 48 separate elections and it makes no difference if one state was won by a hair or a landslide. It isn't my purpose to defend the electoral college but when our students ask "how come", and consider a change it should be helpful to have the major points offered by those favoring the present system. I have found the best arguments to be:

- (A) Under the electoral college system, each state exercises the same influence in selecting the President as it exercises in the legislative branch of our government.
- (B) The electoral college emphasizes that we are a Federal Union of Sovereign States by maintaining 48 separate elections conducted under the rules of the separate states as authorized by the Constitution.
- (C) The electoral college provides a fair relative relationship between the states regardless of the rules under



which they vote, the number that local issues and conditions bring to the polls, or the age make-up of the populations.

There are other arguments, of course, primarily in refutation to specific points raised in behalf of alternate plans. My experience with this topic has demonstrated that it is indeed debatable.

In this election year, may I suggest that we take time in our classes to re-examine the origins of the electoral college, trace its development through the years, and evaluate its value and the value of the major suggested alternate plans in the light of our political life today? You will find it a fascinating and worthwhile study.





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## THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

by  
Barbara Avery

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The spectator at this summer's national political conventions knows now that the closing of Ringling Brothers hasn't left a complete vacuum--there will always be a highly satisfactory substitute during those hot, August days at least once in every four years!

The writer has been asked to make a "non-partisan comparison of the 1956 Republican and Democratic conventions, and the 1952 Republican convention--a collection of reminiscences, recollections, and impressions."

Just to keep the record straight--should the reader detect slight tinges of partisanship creeping into the story--it's "just what comes naturally." My great grandfather gave up a job with the postal service in 1856 to join the newly organized Republican party. This same great grandfather was a member of the 13th General Assembly of Iowa at the time of his death; my grandfather was a Republican senate clerk in South Dakota for several terms; my father served twenty years in the Iowa General Assembly -- as a Republican; my mother was a Republican county vice-chairman, and I am a present Republican vice-chairman. My uncle served as a Republican member of the South Dakota legislature and my brother was a Republican county attorney. The fact that I was a devoted fighter for the candidacy of Robert A. Taft for the

Republican nomination in 1952 may make it a trifle easier to take an objective approach.

The truly ironical part of my entire experience as a spectator at these three conventions has been to come home to the customary requests for talks, interviews, and articles, and to find the "stay-at-home" has done so much reading and has listened to so many commentaries by the experts, that there's very little to report that the listener and reader can't comment on and discuss with far more authority than the "on-the-spot" viewer! (Especially, I might add, when reporting to such a distinguished group of readers as the members of the Iowa Council for the Social Studies!)

Thus, for the reasons just stated, I shall not try to be profound and to compete with the pundits--nor even clever and witty. I'll merely try to jot down a few trifles of wonderfully interesting memories, of a month and a half ago at Chicago and San Francisco, and of four years ago as a spectator at the GOP convention in Chicago, trying, oh so hard, not to be too frankly partisan.

While I realize that there is nothing quite like a "first" experience, no matter what the subject, I believe most observers would agree that neither of the two 1956 conventions could hold a candle to the 1952 Republican show from the standpoint of intensity of feeling -- both bitterness and joy. What better proof could be found than the mild chuckle resulting from the Joe Smith episode at the 1956 affair compared to the almost hysterical laughter

following the Puerto Rican incident in Chicago in '52. The latter occurred at virtually the most dramatic moment of any convention in recent history, immediately after Senator Dirksen had pointed his finger at Governor Dewey, saying, "Twice we followed you, and twice you brought us down to defeat!" In contrast, Terry Carpenter merely broke the tedium of a too smoothly planned show, geared to such perfection for the benefit of the television audience, that it provided welcome relief to the on-the-spot spectator, as well as to the listener back home.

Again, to relate the two GOP conventions, nothing could surprise me more than my own highly favorable reaction to Governor Dewey's powerful speech in San Francisco. If anyone would have told me on a hot July night in 1952 that I might some day rise to praise his name, I would have suspected him of being mentally ill! And equally surprising was the same favorable comment heard without exception throughout the convention hall--even from the liberals, concerning Senator Knowland's speech.

It's interesting to think back, after a month and a half, to realize how faint is even the memory of the "dump Nixon" movement. It caused hardly a stir, as I remember, in San Francisco. It served as an excuse for many a joke--both crude and otherwise, but other than that, scarcely caused a ripple in the, I repeat--too smoothly arranged display. And here I pause to interject a thought that if there was ever a lesson to be learned by the party planning committees in arranging future television coverage of the conventions, it would be to let nature take its



course and to let the American people see the conventions as they were meant to be seen -- in all their NATURAL color as in years gone by, not prettied up like a Cecil B. DeMille extravaganza.

To a fellow Iowan, there is no greater thrill than the lump in throat feeling whenever Herbert Hoover comes to the podium. His wonderful sense of humor, and quiet dignity never fail to cause a Republican audience to shower him with affection. The Iowa delegation had the added pleasure at San Francisco of having the opportunity to visit for a few minutes with him in his hotel suite at the top of the Mark.

Television viewers lost out on much of the most interesting and only unique part of this year's GOP convention when they missed seeing and hearing the reports of all but one of the cabinet officers, due to the arrival of Eisenhower's plane at that particular moment. It will be surprising to many Iowa readers, no doubt, to learn that Ezra Taft Benson received beyond any question, the greatest ovation of them all!

Readers--if any--of this little piece will be amused to note that I missed the climactic moment in both conventions--the acceptance speeches! I was on my way to San Francisco when Truman, Stevenson, and Kefauver blessed each other, and a mixed up plane reservation made it necessary for me to leave San Francisco at noon of the final day!

My reaction to Truman's bitter experience was not at all like that of most of



my Republican friends--who frankly chortled with glee -- nor even that of most of the Democrats with whom I visited. As a door-bell ringing precinct worker for some twenty years -- sixteen of them during the New Deal hey day, I couldn't help but feel a touch of sincere sadness and sympathy for his complete loss of influence in Democratic party circles. What a bitter pill for such a loyal party worker to swallow! My feelings can be best expressed by repeating those of a spectator who gently touched his shoulder as he left the amphitheater soon after Stevenson's nomination, saying, "Good night, old warrior."

There's something about a Democratic convention that is utterly unlike anything else on earth. The men are more handsome, the women more glamorous, the quarrels more violent, the enthusiasm more contagious. Despite the lack of usual floor fights on platform planks -- except for the slight flurry of opposition expressed by the Georgia delegation, there was still the customary color and gayety not sensed, at least by this spectator, at either of the two GOP conventions. The vice-presidential race, of course, was the only truly exciting moment in either of the 1956 meetings, and with the added interest caused by the lightning-like computations of the electronic counter.

Mrs. Roosevelt was at her best, I thought, in her role as elder-statesman, and adviser to "possible future presidents". It was she, rather than Harry S. Truman, who held the place in the hearts of the Democratic delegates and spectators comparable to that of Herbert Hoover in San Francisco.

Frank Clement was the greatest disappointment of the convention--to friend and foe alike, it seemed to me. Judging from pre-convention notices, one might have expected him to hold the entire convention in the palm of his hand. His performance was far below expectation. On the other hand, Senator John Kennedy, whether in spite of, or because of his defeat, emerged at the forefront of the rising young men of his party.

Stevenson's move to throw the vice-presidential nomination open for the delegates choice appeared at the moment to be a brilliant piece of political strategy. Looking back after the lapse of several weeks duration, I can't recall any mention of it being made during these recent weeks of bitter campaign battle. How short are people's memories!

As I skim back over these convention notes, I note with horror that there's not an objective statement in the lot! As you read them, think of them as being written not by one of your colleagues -- a civics teacher, but rather by a ward-healing precinct worker of one of our two great parties, who was never-the-less welcomed most graciously to the Iowa caucuses by the state leadership of the other equally great party. Of such is America made!

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# PLAN TO ATTEND

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Social Studies Area Meeting, November 2nd, at 2:30 at the Veterans Memorial Building (in a Balcony room - it has no number for identification)

Program - Miss Zoe A. Phralls of the University of Pittsburgh, will talk on the topic Geography, the Foundation of a Nation's Life.

Program arrangements have been made by Professor Wilfred G. Richards of Drake University.

Iowa Council Luncheon, November 2nd, at 12:15, held jointly with the Geography Council at the Moose Hall, Price \$1.60.

Reservations are to be sent by October 27th, along with the price of the luncheon to

Miss Irene O'Connell  
1310 7th Street  
Des Moines 14, Iowa

Iowa Council Program and business meeting to follow either at the Moose Hall or at the Memorial Auditorium.



the understanding of the United Nations among members of the community by participation of the students. Preparation for the contest will be under the guidance of a designated teacher of Social Studies. The contest examination will be on a March date to be announced later.

For the coming year the Iowa Association for the United Nations is providing prizes as follows: First prize, \$100 Savings Bond; second prize, \$50 Bond; third prize, \$25 Bond. It is believed that service clubs, lodges and churches will provide local prizes in many school communities.

Other members of the Education Committee are Miss Gladys Horgen, State Department of Public Instruction and Dr. Curtis Page, Drake University -- both of Des Moines.



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## AS READ IN FLORIDA TRENDS

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One of the challenges facing every social studies teacher is "How can I get my students to read worthwhile magazines and newspapers?" The following quotation is the answer, in part, which was given to that question by William T. Nimroth, St. Petersburg, Florida, writing on the "Experimental Program Develops Student Interest in Magazine Reading" in the September, 1956, issue of Florida Trends.

"Often enough, reading of newspapers and magazine articles is set as a course requirement in social studies classes. That is not new. However, the actual content of what is to be read is too often prescribed. Too often collateral reading must relate directly to the subject. In civics the reading is on government and economics; in history, certain events past and present. Why need teachers be so arbitrary? We all know that teenagers do not want to do what we suggest, but rather what they themselves want and feel the need for--wrong as their judgment might be. Let them read within a very wide range! We broadly define social studies as a field wherein the student is made aware of his environment and helped in orienting himself to living in his community. Then why not allow him to read anything that fits into this broad definition? Articles on "Hot Rods" or "Searching for Treasure off the Florida Coast" both fit the definition. What typical teenage boy would not leap at a chance to get "credit" or "extra credit" for reading them? For girls, an equally

wide array of materials presents itself. Soon enough you will find these readers channeling their reading into more closely related subject fields.

"The first essential is to get current reading started. Almost any reading is better than no reading at all. Once you have made this initial move, you as the teacher can begin by example and suggestion to bring about an orientation to reading of better quality and more lasting value. The teacher should mention articles currently in print dealing with class topics. Bring some of your magazines and point out the various articles of interest you found therein. At this same time you can encourage a change in types of magazines read if this seems necessary. It might even help to hold a class discussion on magazine evaluation. This gives the teacher the opportunity to introduce magazines of greater worth than those many previously have been reading. Particularly, this gives the instructor the opportunity to acquaint the superior students with the "higher types" of periodicals. If this influences only a few to raise their level of reading it is certainly worthwhile, since the habits the student is forming now will carry over into adult life.

"By now many questions are rushing into your mind. How to check such reading? Does the quality of reading really improve? How can the teacher continue to encourage a greater diversity of reading without using up great amounts of class time? Let us look at these questions.

"Checking outside reading can be a real bug-a-boo in these days of heavy



student load. To simplify the job, the following report form seems to present complete data in a form readily checked.

NAME OF MAGAZINE	:ISSUE : :DATE :	TITLE OF ARTICLE	: PAGES :
:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:

"Usually space for about ten different listings is sufficient. The lower part of the page may be used for further information. It may be good policy to ask the student to pick one or two of the more interesting readings. Have him write a short paragraph telling whether he thought he really gained by reading the article and how he thought it stacked up with any other articles of a similar nature that he may have read. In order to check further, it is a good technique to take one day of class to ask various students to report on the highlights of articles listed on their report forms. This certainly checks on his reading since he will not report things he has not read if he thinks you may ask about them. This also encourages further reading since student curiosity will be stirred in hearing of the wide variety of topics being read by their fellows. This class report system sparks most interesting and worthwhile class sessions.

"It is surprising how rapidly the type of material read will improve. At the end of the first grading period in which this program was used, only 27 per cent of the articles read dealt with topics in close alignment with the course subject matter. The second set of reports showed an increase to 63 percent of such articles.

This progress was generated through the class report day mentioned above, through constant reference to new material during regular class work, and through the use of the bulletin board.

"The amount of class time consumed is entirely up to the individual teacher. Usually, one day of each grading period is sufficient. If the class normally has a current events day, students have an opportunity to mention articles they have read that fit in with the current event topic under discussion.

"Current reading under this program can be set up as extra credit or as a class requirement. Both have been used, but it must be admitted that when the program is set up for extra credit only, some of the weaker students are not active participants in the program. I have found that twenty-five pages of reading per grading period has been a fair amount for the ninth grade level. About forty per cent of the students were soon reporting reading in excess of the requirement. When used as extra credit, two per cent points for each ten pages reported seemed to work well; the majority earned at least two points. A limit of six per cent points or thirty pages was set so that no student could earn a grade solely on collateral reading points.

"The ideas and suggestions presented here are only a beginning, but the plan works and that is the important thing."

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# BOOK REVIEW

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## GOODBYE TO UNCLE TOM

by

J. C. Furnas

Reviewed by Bertha Wellhausen

(This review has appeared in the Sioux City Journal)

J. C. Furnas, a descendant of former slave owners treats the most complicated subject of our modern times, the American Negro, with a great deal of careful study, and presents it to the reader in interesting detail.

Both Negroes and whites may object to some of his characterizations, but he favors the Negro and tries to show impartially the understanding and the misunderstanding of the Negro by the white.

The author thoroughly demolishes the stereotypes of Harriet Beecher Stowe in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and especially the fantastic vaudeville of "Uncle Tom" shows. He censures Mrs. Stowe for her lack of knowledge of ante-bellum conditions.

His attitude toward the work of the Abolitionists is just as critical, but he does have a high regard for the practical work done by the underground railway for run away slaves.



Furnas gives a documented description of slavery itself with all of its ugliness as well as a description of some of the primitive pleasures of the slaves.

Cruel as the condition of the slave was, the author describes the lot of indentured servants as worse. Except in rare cases their physical needs were taken care of better than those of the European peasants at that time.

He criticizes the errors and stupidity of the "racist" who believes that the result of "mongrelization" is necessarily degenerate and who resist the suggestion that lack of cultural privileges might account for the seeming lack of skill of some Negroes.

Likewise, he criticizes the eugenicists, though better educated than the "racists", because they are overaware of the determinism of genetics and choose to ignore its teachings about chance.

Furnas describes the third group in this quarrel as the cultured anthropologist and ethnologist who speak of equalitarian talk and behavior. His criticism of the equalitarian is that he confuses "race" with "caste" and "by denying mental and physical differences he creates a barrier of disillusion between whites and some sorts of Negroes and between Negroes and the whites from whom they seek fair treatment."

He advises this third group to "teach his children--and other people's children, if he is a teacher -- that skin color is a

poor gauge of an individual's personal quality.

In the author's careful study of genetics and sociology he treats the Negro as a human being and as an American. He takes apart many racial prejudices which have led to caste discrimination.

Although he realizes that standard IQ tests are but of little reliable help to an anthropologist, he shows that the range of IQ scores are as wide for the Negro as for the Caucasian.

A century ago, Melville J. Herskovits showed that three out of four American Negroes had some non-Negro ancestor. From this study Curt Stern forecast that by 1980 hardly a single Negro could claim a purely African descent. Furnas states that, mathematically considered, one in every five, or least one in every ten Americans must have some Negro ancestor who had "passed". Obviously then the whole problem becomes a caste problem rather than a race problem.

The author quotes Gunnar Myrdal's conclusion in his study of these matters, "the status accorded the Negro in America represents a century long lag in public morals. In principle the Negro problem was settled long ago; in practice the solution is not yet effectuated."

The author agreed that the Supreme Court's recent action, state and local F. E. T. C., and the integration in the Armed Forces are all good omens of our beginning to discontinue the crime against the American Negro.

America is the loser when our caste society robs us "of the full abilities of the few or many Negroes with an IQ above 135, the indispensable leaders in research and the arts, of whom no society has ever had enough."

To deny educational opportunities to the below 90ers causes this group to "either become public charges or clogs in the economy."

There is as much difference "between George Washington Carver and the chuckle-headed, chicken stealing original of the funny paper stereotype--who really existed and still does--as there was between George Washington and the verminous English pimps transported to the Virginia plantations."

"Uncle Tom", the boot licking, servile type of Negro is not admired by either the Negro or the white. The only decent way to treat the Negro or any individual is to let him find his own level according to his ambition and the genes that chance gave him. The author states that to do anything else amounts to the "silliest of blasphemies, trying to play God."



## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The 1956 County Institute theme is the Role of the Public School in Teaching and Practicing Democracy. The following bibliography is in part, that arranged by the Institute Workshop Committee. It is hoped that social studies teachers, implementing the theme in their individual classrooms will be able to make use of some of the suggested materials. Editor.

### Teacher Reading

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2. Crary, Ryland W., editor. Education for Democratic Citizenship. Twenty-second Yearbook. Washington, D. C., National Council for the Social Studies. 1951.
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7. How To Do It Series, National Council for the Social Studies. Washington, D. C. This is a set of sixteen eight-page leaflets, each one explaining "how" to handle a different problem in teaching and in handling such things as motion pictures, newspapers, group discussion, and oral reports.
8. Pierce, Truman, et al., Community Leadership for Public Education. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. 1951.
9. Willing, M.H., et al, Schools and Our Democratic Society. Harper and Brothers, New York. 1951.

#### Films for Teachers

10. How to Conduct a Discussion, U-3673, 22 min. sd; \$2.50. This film outlines some of the principles which discussion leaders use in order to develop effective discussion groups.
11. How to Organize a Discussion Group, U-3672, 22 min. sd; \$2.50. This film shows various steps to be taken by a discussion group.
12. Defining the Problem and Gathering Information, Using the Information to Solve the Problem. These new films show an actual social studies class at work using the problem method.

films for Students

13. Democracy, U-2115, 11 min. sd; \$1.25. Defines and describes two characteristics of democracy -- shared respect and shared power.
14. Despotism, U-2116, 11 min. sd; \$1.25. Defines and describes two characteristics despotism -- restricted respect and concentrated power.
15. Political Parties, U-3471, 22 min. sd; \$2.50. Explains how political parties operate.
16. Pressure Groups, U-3458, 22 min. sd; \$2.50. Explains how pressure groups, when democratically used, are a necessary instrument for decision-making in a democracy.



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# OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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BARBARA AVERY, ICSS's most politically active member, brings to the readers of the Councilor a bit of the spirit of the two major political party conventions which she attended during the summer.

VERNON MORK, Chairman of the Social Studies Department at Iowa State Teachers College, writes particularly for the elementary teacher in his article on "Developing Democracy."

RICHARD PALMER, Algona, presents "This Electoral College--How Come?" A most timely discussion.

WILMA TALLMAN, ICSS President, is planning to meet each one of you at the annual meeting. See the "President's Letter."

This issue's book review is from Sioux City and was prepared by BERTHA WELLHAUSEN.

Wouldn't you like to see YOUR NAME in this column? Just send your pet teaching suggestion, a favorite story from your classroom experiences, or that article you've been thinking about for so long to the editor, Marguerite Skilling Hartley, 1415 Southeast Linn St., Boone, Iowa.

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