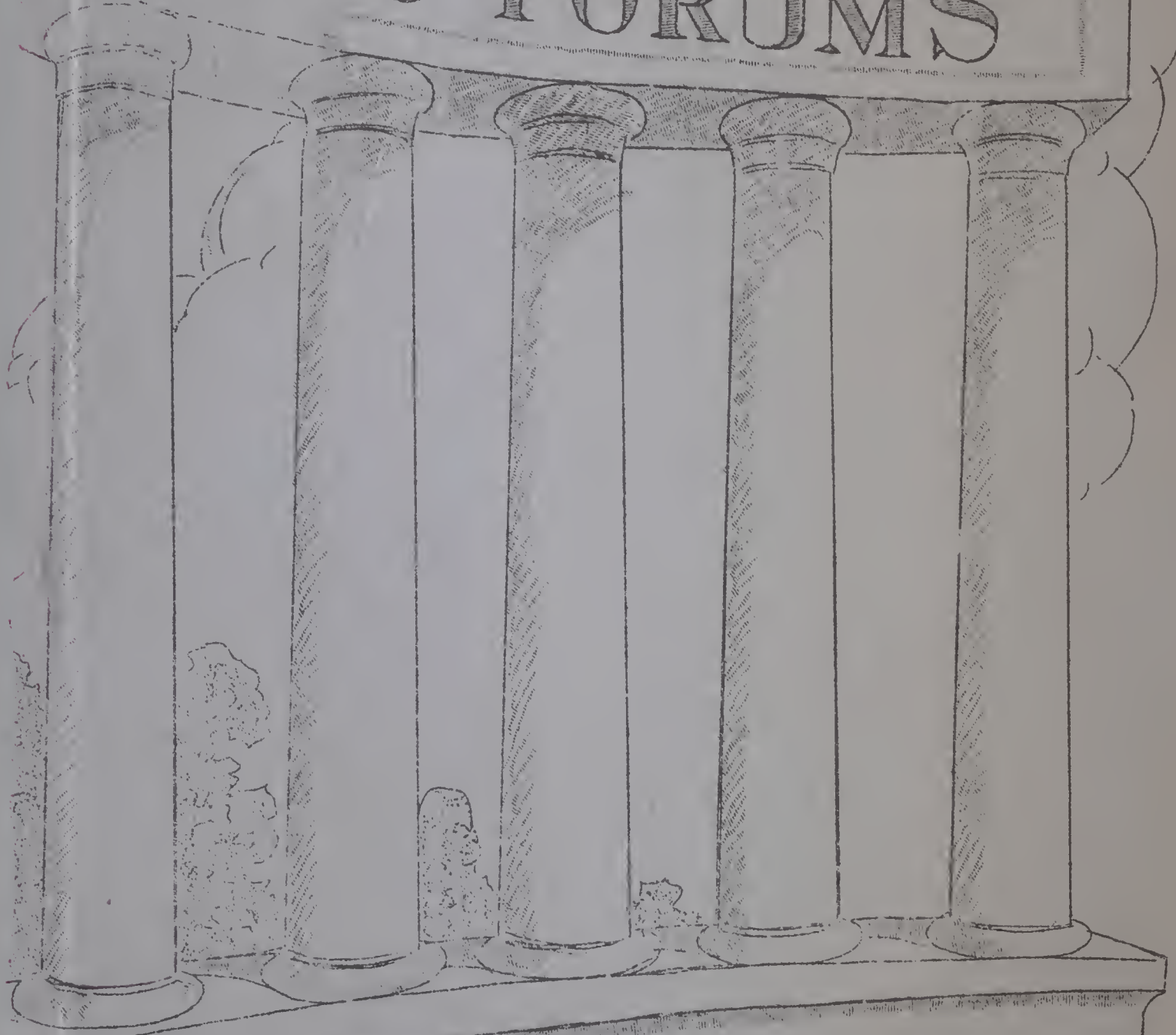


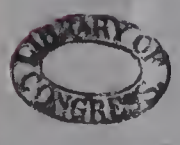
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# PUBLIC FORUMS



# IN CHICAGO









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PUBLIC FORUMS IN CHICAGO

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Compiled by the  
WORKERS OF THE WRITERS' PROGRAM, *Illinois*  
of the  
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION  
in the State of Illinois

Sponsored by  
ADULT EDUCATION COUNCIL  
of Chicago  
1940

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STATISTICAL MECHANICS

ENTROPY AND THE SECOND LAW

LECTURER: JOHN H. COOPER

DATE: 1998







## P R E F A C E

Like all work done in the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, this book is a product of collective effort. In all fairness, however, the major part of the research and writing of "Public Forums in Chicago" was the work of a writer of the staff of the Illinois Writers' Project, Miss Sophia Fagin. She deserves to receive the major part of the credit.

CURTIS D. MACDOUGALL  
State Supervisor  
Illinois Writers' Project



## FOREWORD

The year 1940, critical as it is in our national life, has placed great stress upon forum leaders. Too often the forum platform is being used to promote a particular type of propaganda. This must be guarded against, for, if the forum is to serve a valid educational purpose, which we identify with the process of democracy, then it must be kept from becoming the agent of any "blue print" group.

During the past fifteen years the number of forums throughout the country has increased steadily, yet it would appear that the first blush enthusiasm for the forum has abated.

Indeed, the forum technique appears less important than we once thought it, and becomes in the minds of many merely one of the valid methods of adult education.

The present examination of the forums in Chicago indicates clearly that this judgment is correct. Because of its unbiased approach, it is a welcome contribution to the literature of adult education.

The Adult Education Council is glad to sponsor the publication of this report which it believes will be useful to those who may wish to understand and develop the forum method in a program of continuing education.

RALPH McALLISTER  
Director



PART I

I N T R O D U C T I O N





## CHAPTER I

### F O R U M S T O T H E F O R E

#### Popularity of forums today

A new class of forum fans

The sphere of forum influence

#### Something new and different?

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#### Defining our terms

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Protest forums

Status quo forums

#### A Forum movement?



POPULARITY OF FORUMS TODAY

A New Class of Forum Fans

There was a time, not so long ago, when "forumitis" was restricted to the intellectual underworld. Ambitious high school graduates registered for university extension courses, genteel matrons belonged to cultural clubs, and business men attended their occasional lectures; but forums were for radicals and half-caste dilettantes only.

Today the situation seems to be changing. The federal government sponsors a nation-wide program of "demonstration forums" and calls them "Democracy's Citadels." Churches find a larger turn-out for Sunday evenings forums on international politics than for religious services. Y.M.C.A. secretaries offer "lecture-forums" in the educational routine; and go-betweens from bohemia have upholstered the soapbox and moved it to Michigan Avenue. Sponsors of the "forum movement" ask for mass support and promise huge dividends in good citizenship, in preventing revolutions and fascism, and in forestalling clashes between labor and capital.

An enthusiastic feature article in a business and professional women's magazine exemplifies the current fashionableness of forums.

It begins:

An old associate of mine, Elinor Myreck, and two of her friends have had the forum bee buzzing in their bonnets for about a year. They go to forums, tune in Thursday nights on America's Town Meeting of the Air, and read The New York Times to keep in ammunition for heckling. Although they are courteous and fair, it is a matter of principal with them to rumple stuffed shirts who hope to get by comfortably with banal ideas imbedded in a "ghosted" speech. They've turned their clubs, their dinner parties, and their evenings at home into free-for-alls for discussions.\*

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\* Kimball, A. M. "Forums are Fun" Independent Woman 15:313, October, 1936

IDENTIFICATION OF TOWNS

A New Series of Towns

There are a few, but not many, "towns" in the  
state of New York. The most numerous are  
found in the western part of the state, and  
are generally of small size. They are  
usually of the "hamlet" type, and are  
often found in the vicinity of larger  
towns.

The first step in the identification of  
towns is to determine the location of the  
town. This is usually done by referring  
to the "Township and County Maps" of  
the state. These maps show the location  
of all the towns in the state, and  
are a valuable aid in the identification  
of towns. The next step is to determine  
the name of the town. This is usually  
done by referring to the "List of  
Towns in the State of New York" which  
is published by the State Department of  
Conservation. This list gives the name  
of every town in the state, and is a  
valuable aid in the identification of  
towns.

The final step in the identification of  
towns is to determine the population of  
the town. This is usually done by  
referring to the "Census of the State  
of New York" which is published by the  
State Department of Conservation.

Page 11

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### A New Class of Forum Fans

A similar, though more prosaic, picture of the growing forum popularity is available when we check the number of references under the head, "forum" in the indexes of the American Journal of Adult Education. There is a distinct upward trend, from no references at all in 1929 and 1930, and only four references in 1931, to 17 references in 1937.

### The Sphere of Forum Influence

Does this mean that the entire nation has become forum-conscious? The answer is no. People who work in forums or study forums are likely to lose perspective; they tend to judge others by themselves. From the pens of such as these come the optimistic articles we read concerning the "forum movement." Certainly if the mythical man-from-Mars interviewed the mythical man-on-the-street, he would be more impressed with the affect of the jitter-bug than of the "forum-bee" reputed to be buzzing in our collective bonnet.

What then is the forum's sphere of influence today? What role does it play in modern times and how did it get that way? What hope is there for a forum future?

Unfortunately these are questions that cannot be answered precisely; for even if it were possible to count noses in all forum audiences over a period of time, still it would not be possible to measure precisely the extent to which those who attended have been influenced, the extent to which they have become more informed, or more reasonable, or more democratic.

Therefore we can only hope to give an approximate answer to these questions. But in this hope we undertake a survey of forums in Chicago. We review the most conspicuous examples of forum life in this country. We trace the history of forums - both in the nation and in this city. We visit several local forums and meet the active partisans of the "forum movement." We linger a while among the denizens of the forum world.

Finally, emerging from the forum past and present, we try to



arrive at some fair notion of the forum future - not only from an official point of view, but from the perspective of the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker - all of whom we interview on the subject.

### SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT?

#### The Greeks had a Word for It

Although the forum has become known as "The American Way" of democracy, the origin of the word dates back more than 2000 years to the "Forum Romanum." This was a flat area between the Palatine and Capitoline hills in which merchants sold their wares, the money changers conducted their business, the government had its chambers, and the tribunes addressed the people. Citizens, gathered there to hear their representatives, did not themselves debate; they merely approved in a sort of oral plebiscite. Non-official discussion must have arisen, of course - naturally, informally, and as a by-product of the Forum's function of commercial center.

The Greeks with a similar set-up as the center of their city life, had a different word for it. That word was "Agora."

Down through history, in all countries and times, wherever free speech has been at all possible, informal gatherings as in the Roman "Forum" have been held at market-place, government chambers, or general store. These gatherings have been known by a variety of names.

None of them is the exact prototype of the modern American forum.

#### The American Way

Thus forums are not entirely new on the American scene, either. Forum enthusiasts tell us the idea is as old as the nation, and point to

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the New England town hall, the Lyceum and Chautauqua as the direct ancestors of the modern forum and as the bearers of a tradition of free public discussion.

Investigation shows, however, that no genetic connection exists between these agencies. Nor are they alike in their use of discussion or their exemplification of democracy.

The town meeting had governmental powers, and in ideal cases internally exemplified an active democracy. At the same time a proportion of the townsmen and all the women were disfranchised on grounds of property, religion, sex, or color, and therefore had no part in the meeting.

The Lyceums, founded in the 1820's in New England to publicize the free public education movement, were largely rural cultural societies where several points of view could be heard from the same platform; but audience participation does not seem to have been a regular part of the procedure.

This was also true of the Chautauqua, which in its original form was a Sunday school teachers' training camp. In both of its two present forms, i.e., as a summer school resort for students-at-large with no educational prerequisites and as a traveling show of "culture," entertainment, and education, Chautauqua tends to avoid controversial issues.

However, Town Meeting, Lyceum and Chautauqua may have all been the expression of an intellectual, discussional, and debating tradition to which the public forum is the present heir.

#### Background of the Contemporary Forum

Of course this tradition is not uniquely American. And the French salon, the Czech sokol, the English debating societies are all cousins to the forum.

It seems, however, that before any of these can flourish, cer-

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the plane was the fresh air. It felt like I had been in a cocoon for the last few days. The sun was shining brightly, and the birds were chirping. It was a beautiful sight.

I had heard that the weather was perfect, and it was. The temperature was just what I needed. I had been in a hot country for a while, and this was a relief. The people were friendly, and the food was delicious. I was in luck.

The hotel was just what I needed. It was clean, comfortable, and had a great view. The staff was friendly, and the service was excellent. I was in luck. The room was perfect, and the view was amazing. I was in luck.

The breakfast was delicious. I had heard that the food was good, and it was. The staff was friendly, and the service was excellent. I was in luck. The room was perfect, and the view was amazing. I was in luck.

The afternoon was spent relaxing. I had heard that the weather was perfect, and it was. The temperature was just what I needed. I had been in a hot country for a while, and this was a relief. The people were friendly, and the food was delicious. I was in luck.

The evening was spent relaxing. I had heard that the weather was perfect, and it was. The temperature was just what I needed. I had been in a hot country for a while, and this was a relief. The people were friendly, and the food was delicious. I was in luck.

### Conclusion of the Conference

The conference was a success. We have achieved our goals, and we are looking forward to the future. The staff was friendly, and the service was excellent. I was in luck. The room was perfect, and the view was amazing. I was in luck.

If you have any questions, please contact us. We are here to help. The staff was friendly, and the service was excellent. I was in luck. The room was perfect, and the view was amazing. I was in luck.

tain prerequisites and precipitating causes in the social setting are necessary.

## Prerequisites

### Free Speech and Assemblage

These must be at least legal possibilities; else how could there be developed an active habit of free speech - which is, of course, what the forum implies. While we need not now comment on the claim that forums make for greater democracy, we can recognize that forums as we conceive of them cannot exist under a non-democratic form of government. It is interesting to note that in the particularly non-democratic periods in the United States, agencies of controversy either redirect their energies or go out of business. Thus we learn that

The lyceums as such practically ceased to exist at the time of the Civil War. There were too many distractions and public sentiment was too overwrought for the public discussion of the outstanding moot questions of that trying period.\*

In the World War period, too, the chautauqua institutions found themselves without support, for the substantial citizens were busy selling Liberty Bonds; and the most prominent forum sponsors of this period, who had prior to the war espoused the ideal of presenting all sides of a controversial issue, concluded that the war was not a controversial issue, but that the forum could be of "great aid to the nation in the present crisis." Forums, they claimed "stimulate patriotism" by providing an "intelligent basis for enthusiasm. Without an intellectual understanding, diverse classes of people cannot come together."

Thus American history indicates that democracy is a prerequisite of an active forum movement.

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\* 1. John S. Noffsinger, Correspondence Schools, Lyceums and Chautauquas (New York; MacMillian Co., 1928), p. 113

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## Prerequisites

### Urbanism

In a sense the forum is a product of urbanism, also. For unless life is complex and many-sided, people do not need an expert to interpret for them; rumor and gossip take the place of news. Glenn Frank makes the comparison between the urban "public" which forms public opinion" by reading headlines on the subway train and the public at the village post office which, by informal parliament, arrives at a well-thought-out thorough public opinion. He concludes that we urbanites require a substitute for the informal parliament and that the forum is such a substitute.

The forum may be regarded a product of the contradictions between democracy which makes public participation in politics obligatory and urbanism which makes that participation difficult; it is a corrective for large-scale production and monopoly of public opinion. As the control of the press, radio, moving picture, school system, etc., becomes increasingly centralized, the man on the street becomes further removed from opinion forming agencies. He is expected to participate actively in democracy, but he has little means of such participation. Nation-wide hook-ups and news syndicates have usurped the job of making and discussing policy. His sources of information are partial and unreliable; means of discussing this information are lacking. Then the forum is suggested as a "place for the ordinary citizen" and to counteract the influence of the highly depersonalized and monopolized dispensers of news, and molders of public opinion. In this aspect the forum represents a sort of intellectual back-to-the people and back-to-the-town movement.

## Precipitating Causes

In addition to these general causes there are several factors in our immediate social situation which particularly encourage forums.

### Socialization of the Church

Everyone is familiar with the fact that the churches are no longer so devoted to other-worldly matters as formerly. Sociologists tell us that the church has become "secularized," by which they mean



that the young folks use the church basement for dances, the ladies auxiliary sponsors bunco parties, the children's classes go on hikes, and frequently the entire congregation listens once a week to a forum on fascism or labor troubles instead of to the traditional sermon.

The Current Depression has reached an all-time high of nine years. In times of calm and prosperity the American people do not seem to be so troubled by problems which they must talk out together. Life goes on in the usual, comfortable routine and the each-man-for-himself formula seems to work. Only the radical or social reformer, the man "with a perpetual bellyache," feels that something must be done about it. But the depression sets people to asking questions and to looking for answers. They turn to relief stations, demagogues, and sometimes to public affairs forums. John Dewey points out in his text on social psychology that people do not generally need to think; they can go along on the basis of habit very comfortably until they come up against a difficulty. In our context, the depression is such a difficulty, and its attempted solutions have involved some efforts at group thinking, some forums.

The War Scare, now as always, represents a similar crisis. In the World War, until the time of America's participation - after which free speech was stifled altogether - people were hungry for facts and points of view. Consequently at that time, just as now, certain people were backing a "forum movement." Today, as world conflict continues and as undeclared wars follow each other in rapid succession, the search for a rational way out is further stimulated. The desire to know what's happening over there and the concern for democracy over here becomes more tense. Newspapers carry far more foreign news than ever before. Forum enthusiasts find that the ground is ready for their sowing.

Deliberate Efforts of Adult Educators to support the forum naturally met with success under these several circumstances and undoubtedly account for much of its current popularity. These folk, particularly the current personnel of the federal Office of Education, assert that not only do forums need democracy but democracies need forums, just like





they need schools, courts, and fire departments; and the democracy of the forum is said to lie in its free speech, its heterogeneity, its civic training.

Since the middle twenties professional educators have been impressed with the forum idea as the liberal ministry was impressed by it before the war. Hence as the adult education movement itself was becoming crystallized (along with the recognition that a growing proportion of our population is in the middle age groups and that these people lack current educational opportunity), the forum appeared as a comfortable mean between the conventional methods of lecture-teaching on one hand and the loose informality of discussion techniques on the other. The local adult education councils founded forums of their own and encouraged those of affiliate organizations.

Whether these adult educators merely stressed a trend that had already set in, or whether their deliberate efforts stimulated forum growth independent of any such trend, is a moot question. In all probability the two forces were so interrelated that separate weights cannot be assigned to each.

### Defining Our Terms

Today the term "forum" is variously used in America. Several magazines use it in their titles; some have special departments open to sundry viewpoints, and these departments are called forums. The radio program, The Lucky Strike Hit Parade, calls its song popularity program "the only authoritative forum of our national music taste" and sociological writers speak of "the inner forum of the mind." In legal phraseology the word is similar to "court" or "jurisdiction." Debates, round-tables, discussion groups and lecture sessions are also referred to as forums.

Obviously these usages have little in common with each other. Their only similarity lies in their permitting many and contradictory viewpoints. In this view President Roosevelt has said:

Legislatures and parliaments, councils, con-



ventions and conclaves are simply expansions of local forums. Wherever two or three gather together for an exchange of ideas, whether around the box stove in a rural store, in quick lunch restaurant, or in a pretentious urban club, you have a forum: public opinion in the making, a congress in the embryo\*

But we cannot use the term so loosely; it is important that we have a single, exact definition of the term, for when we set out to survey and evaluate Chicago forums, we must know clearly just what is being talked about. Hereinafter, therefore, when we say forum we shall mean:

a public meeting held in the same place at regular intervals, at which the procedure involves a lecturer's presentation on a controversial topic followed by questions and sometimes discussion from the audience. Over a period of time different viewpoints are presented and a convention of free speech obtains.

### Two Kinds of Forums

Defining our term thus, we still find existing side by side, two somewhat distinct kinds of set-ups both of which we may call "forum." The sponsors of both lay claim to an educational purpose and accomplishment but they may roughly be distinguished as protest forums (the forums of the reformers or non-conformers) on the one hand, and on the other: non-partisan community forums (forums of the conformers.)\*\*

#### Protest Forums

Reformers have always held forums and forum-like meetings.

\* Studebaker, John W. Choosing Our Way, United States Department of the Interior, Bulletin 1937, Misc., No. 1. \*\* These terms are by no means ideal, and may even be misleading. But no more suitable terminology seems available.



Denied the conventional avenues of expression - the pulpit, the press, the government chamber - they have sought a free platform of their own. Hereon tolerance to all points of view is not merely a matter of principle, but good business, for it helps to provide a larger audience than would come to a sectarian pep-session.

Moreover, while the conformists, in the comfortable inertia of habit and tradition, know neither doubt nor controversy, those who challenge the status quo are beset by problems. Discussion is useful, not only in the effort to think out these problems, but also in the opportunity it affords for presenting the solutions to others. And this is true in the realms of religion and morals as well as politics. Consequently among the earliest of forum sponsors, we find the free-thinker, the bohemian and hobohemian, as well as the radical.

Invariably these people are also attracted to forums started by others, but they are the founders of what we have called "forums-for-protest."

## Forums

### Non-Partisan Community

In contrast with these minority-group forums which admittedly have a bone-to-pick, or a desire to talk, there are the more respectable forums sponsored by agencies which for the most part uphold the status quo, with or without minor modifications. To the extent that these attempt to perpetuate democracy as opposed to fascism or communism - and this is their avowed purpose - they, too, have an axe to grind. But they prefer to regard themselves as educational rather than propaganda agencies; for at least theoretically their politics are not made explicit in the content of their program, but rather implied in its form. In the mere procedure of conducting a forum they see benefits to democracy, for they think that discussion is essential to the democratic process and that Truth (on which democracy is thought to rest) automatically triumphs in a situation of intellectual fair play. We are not concerned at the moment with the validity of these claims; we need only comment on our curious psychology which identifies as "propaganda" the opinion of a minority, but as "education," the presentation of beliefs



which the majority share.

Among the leading examples of these forums-for-democracy (we sometimes refer to them as status - quo forums to indicate their allegiance to contemporary democracy) today, we have two large-scale efforts: American's Town Meeting of the Air and the federal government's sponsorship of "demonstration forum centers."

America's Town Meeting of the Air With one outstanding exception the reputation of the American radio audience for frivolity goes unchallenged. That exception is America's Town meetings of the Air. Anyone who wants a complete and readable account of this program can find it in Town Meeting Comes to Town\* but almost everyone is already familiar with this Thursday evening program over a nation-wide hook-up. It is a unique program indeed which exposes us to the ideas of those with whom we disagree, makes us listen, like it and ask for more!

The Town Meeting was formally launched on the air in October, 1935, by George V. Denny, Jr., associate director of the League for Political Education in New York City. He was convinced that discussion could be made dramatic, and democracy real, by the broadcast of symposiums on vital issues by speakers of conflicting viewpoints, whose lectures would be followed by questions from the audience.\*\*

The idea caught fire as soon as the first trial program was heard. Requests for seats at the forum far exceeded the capacity of the hall; fan mail from the unseen audience poured in at an astounding rate that would have warmed the heart of any commercial sponsor; radio committees awarded it prizes for popularity and educational content. The recent innovation of hook-ups to small out-of-town groups who are permitted to put their questions directly to the speakers and have them answered on the air immediately following the addresses serves to heighten the drama of the occasion.

The program seems to be the most enthusiastically received forum in the country. It has its limitations, however. It undoubtedly can

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\*Overstreet, Harry A. and Bonaro W., Town Meeting Comes to Town (New York and London: Harper and Bros., 1938) \*\*The question period is not so thoroughly spontaneous as it appears to the "unseen audience." Directly before the radio program the "seen audience" participate in a discussion of the scheduled topic. Mr. Denny as "Moderator" need not choose his questioners during the broadcast completely at random.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637

TO THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL OF POLYMER SCIENCE  
PART A: POLYMER LETTERS  
I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THE  
ARTICLE BY YOUR CORRESPONDENT  
HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND IS  
BEING CONSIDERED FOR  
PUBLICATION IN THE  
NEXT ISSUE OF THE  
JOURNAL.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD  
OF THE JOURNAL OF POLYMER SCIENCE  
PART A: POLYMER LETTERS  
HAS REVIEWED YOUR  
MANUSCRIPT AND HAS  
RECOMMENDED THAT IT  
BE ACCEPTED FOR  
PUBLICATION IN THE  
NEXT ISSUE OF THE  
JOURNAL.

YOUR MANUSCRIPT  
WILL BE PUBLISHED  
IN THE NEXT ISSUE  
OF THE JOURNAL OF  
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and does stimulate thought; but in and of itself it is not an adequate educational method. Its constructive value is conditional upon the extent to which it is preceded by and followed with a more thorough examination of the subject by the listener. With a maximum of fifteen minutes permitted each speaker, obviously not much more than a journalistic presentation of any topic is possible. Questions which challenge too much can be misunderstood or evaded. It is intended to be not only non-propagandistic, but anti-propagandistic; but it is inevitable that the singing of the national anthem before the program, the incidental remarks of the chairman during the program, and the courtesy with which democratic-minded persons play host to the Town Meeting, all serve to bias the listener in favor of the democratic approach.

### The Federal Government Steps In

Not only through the general educational programs of the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration, but more particularly through the special Public Forum Project of the Office of Education, the federal government has acknowledged its faith in the discussion-method-of-democracy. The initial impetus for sponsoring a forum "movement" came from John W. Studebaker, who became a commissioner of education in 1934, fresh from his leadership of the adult education experiment in Des Moines, Iowa. Here forums had been incorporated into the school system, thanks to a grant of \$125,000 from the Carnegie Corporation.\*

Commissioner Studebaker was convinced that what was good for Des Moines was good for the nation. So, having procured an initial federal grant from the Federal Emergency Relief Appropriation, he called together some of the leading educators of the country, and they proceeded to plan ten "demonstration forum centers" in different parts of the country. These forums were to be conducted under the direction of the local school boards and were not to be federally controlled. Their general staffs were to be locally appointed from among the professional teachers, librarians, and research and clerical workers certified for W.P.A. Their leaders or lecturers were locally chosen from a long list submitted by the federal Office of Education. All in all, the forums were to be, at least temporarily, an integral part of the community's school system, and free from the domination of the federal government.

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\*Since 1938 the forum project has become the full responsibility of the Local Board of Education and taxpayers.



Since this experiment has been more fully publicized than any other single forum venture there is no need here for details. A moment's attention is due, however, to the query: have the government-sponsored forums met with success? If "success" be defined as active local sponsorship of forums after federal funds have been withdrawn, or in terms of greater tolerance and democracy (so that, as Commissioner Studebaker predicts, "It can't happen here!"), we do not have a ready answer. "Tolerance and democracy" do not lend themselves to accurate measurement, and federal funds still subsidize a movement which may or may not be able to stand on its own feet. Evaluation must therefore be postponed as we continue to pay close attention to the affiliates of the Federal Forum Project.

#### A Forum Movement?

Be it a product of the times or of the whims of particular men, we have the contemporary forum. Some say there is forum movement. By this they probably mean that forums have been springing up more frequently of late than in the past, and they probably refer almost exclusively to the liberal status-quo forums rather than protest forums. (The protest forums have been "going strong" and steadily for a generation even when "nobody who is anybody" saw fit to glorify their contribution to democracy.) Mr. Chester S. Williams, assistant forum administrator for the Office of Education, estimates that there are at least 860 forums in the country now.

It was way back in 1859 that the pioneer American forum-for-democracy, Cooper Union of New York City, was founded; Ford Hall in Boston followed in 1906, and by the time of the first World War there were at least three national and international forum councils. From these forum councils we get various and contradictory reports concerning the number of forums in the country. For instance, the President of the International Forum, Inc., tells us in 1918 that during the war the number increased from 340 to 417, although other authorities quote a decline in the same period.

We do not know how accurate are any of these estimates, nor how representative of the years intervening between 1918 and 1928. If a forum movement is assumed today, it is obviously, therefore, not by direct count. Rather in a common sense manner and from the rise of the community, church, and government forums all around us do we conclude a growth of forum consciousness.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work done during the year. It is followed by a detailed account of the various projects and schemes which have been carried out. The report concludes with a summary of the results achieved and a statement of the work planned for the future.

### REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department has during the year been engaged in a number of important projects and schemes. The most important of these are the following:

1. The construction of a new building for the Department, which is now well advanced.

2. The purchase of a new motor vehicle, which has been delivered and is now being used for the Department's work.

3. The carrying out of a number of repairs to the existing buildings, which have been completed.

In addition, the Department has been engaged in a number of other projects and schemes, which are being carried out at the present time. These include the following:

4. The carrying out of a number of repairs to the existing buildings, which are now well advanced.

5. The purchase of a new motor vehicle, which is now being used for the Department's work.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BACKGROUND OF CHICAGO FORUMS

Before the Forum

The Forerunners

    The Sunset Club

    The Anthropological Society

    The Bugs

        The Bug Club

        Bug House Square

    Community Center Forums

        Social Science Club at Hull House

        Free Floor at Chicago Commons

History Shows. . .



### Before the Forum

The oldest forums in Chicago of which any record can be found appear in the 1890's. Before then, lecture and discussion programs were presented by labor unions, foreign language associations, socialistic groups, literary societies, and lyceums.

As early as 1834 we find the Chicago American referring to the Lyceum here as "an entirely successful experiment" in adult education which lent "a kind of cultivated character to our importance abroad."

As urbanization advanced - and a discontented foreign-born working class developed with it - labor unions and socialists groups began to hold regular indoor "agitation meetings" using precisely the technique we call "forum." The public was invited to consider such topics as "The Rule of the Upper Classes," "Science, Handmaid of Capitalism," "Is Society Without Law Possible?" Almost invariably the reports of these meetings indicate that the lectures "occasioned a lengthy and interesting debate."

Outdoor platforms were erected at factory gate, street corner and - the favorite site for Sunday afternoon sessions - the lake front. Labor leaders analyzed the capitalist system, invited questions and proposed concrete measures, like strikes and protest demonstrations. It was at one of these meetings in the depression year of 1886 that the interference of the police resulted in the "Haymarket Tragedy."

### The Forerunners

The earliest free-lance programs of which we have record in Chicago that combined the lecture and discussion procedures are those of the Sunset Club, the Anthropological Society, and the "Bugs." The earliest of such programs presented by a sponsoring agency were those of Hull House and Chicago Commons.

Let us consider each of these nineteenth century pioneers:

### The Sunset Club

This was a social-intellectual organization of business and





professional men. Unlike almost every other forum we know, its members kept archives and today such documentary evidence as year books recording the lectures and discussions of each season are available.

The Sunset Club, founded in 1889, met every other Thursday from 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P. M. Then in 1895 it deliberately suspended activity because, strange as it may seem, "it had discussed practically all the questions that were before the people" and "new questions did not present themselves once in every two weeks. The world did not move fast enough for the Sunset Club, and it had to take a recess to allow the world to catch up."

It was customary at each session to have several speakers, frequently members of the club, prepare twenty-minute addresses on a subject chosen by the committee in charge. Questions and informal discussion followed from the floor. Some years the club boasted over 1000 membership. Attendance at individual meetings seems to have ranged generally between 125 and 200, although over 600 attended on the gala "Ladies' Nights."

The spirit of the Sunset Club can be illustrated by presenting its Declaration of Principles:

No Club House	No Parliament
No Constitution	No personalities
No Debts	No Dues
No Contribution	No Mere Formalities
No Accounts	No Preaching
No Defalcations	No Dictation
No By-Laws	No Dues
No Stipulations	No Litigation
No Profanity	No Gamblers
No Fines	No Dead Beats
No Stealing	No Embezzlers
No Combines	From Foreign Retreats
No President	No Meanness
No Bores	No Vituperation --
No Steward	
No "Encores"	Simply
No Long Speeches	Tolerant Discussion
No Dress Coats	and
No Late Hours	
No Perfumed Notes	Rational Recreation

Professional work. This class may have been held. It is possible that the students who were present were not the same as those who were present at the time of the first meeting.

The first meeting of the class was held on the 15th of the month. It was attended by a number of students who were interested in the subject. The meeting was held in the room which was used for the purpose of the class. The students who were present were very interested in the subject and they were very helpful in their discussions. The meeting was very successful and it was a pleasure to have the students present.

The second meeting of the class was held on the 22nd of the month. It was attended by a number of students who were interested in the subject. The meeting was held in the room which was used for the purpose of the class. The students who were present were very interested in the subject and they were very helpful in their discussions. The meeting was very successful and it was a pleasure to have the students present.

Sunset seems to have enjoyed an unusual heterogeneity in political beliefs between the extremes of which tolerance pervaded. But in economic status, its audience must have been homogeneously above average, as is indicated, for instance by the \$1.50 charge for the dinner which preceded the meeting.

An idea of the club's interests is gleaned from the program for the first years of the club, 1889-1891:

Duties and Privileges of Public Press  
 What Shall We Do with Our Criminals?  
 Party Allegiance  
 Land Taxation as Proposed by Henry George  
 Subsidies and Tariffs  
 Nationalism, as Proposed by Edward Bellamy  
 Municipal Control of Heat, Light, etc.  
 Our Public School System  
 The Sunday Question  
 Pensions: Civil and Military  
 The State: Its Functions and Duties  
 The Uses and Abuses of Speculation  
 Drones and Parasites  
 Money and Its Functions  
 Foreign Trade and Reciprocity  
 The Red Flag  
 The Succession Tax  
 Our Jury System: How Can It Be Improved?  
 What Shall We Do With Our Indians?

#### The Chicago Society of Anthropology

The earliest of today's surviving forums is perhaps the so-called Chicago Society of Anthropology, founded formally in 1895, shortly after the old World's Fair. Some of its oldest members maintain that the impetus for its formation derived from the protest of a southern Negro school teacher against the exclusion of the American Negro from the World Congress of Religions, convening as a part of the Columbian Exposition. This protest by Ida Wells Barnett, they say, had been printed in pamphlet form and distributed widely, then Synapthizers to her point of view united on a permanent basis, calling themselves the "Chicago Society of Anthropologists." As later expressed the Society wished

To provide a forum in which tolerance and liberality are encouraged and a welcome hand extended to every-



one without regard to race, creed or color; giving all views, however widely divergent, a respectful hearing, teaching by example the spirit of brotherly love.

Others claim the the society was simply an outgrowth and continuation of the Congress of Religion.

The founders and earlier members of the society were apparently rather mild-mannered folk with education and community status. They have been described by one of their colleagues as "liberal intellectuals of the middle class." The nature of the membership seems gradually to have changed, however, and we find that, as at most forums, a really free platform has attracted the radicals and the articulate little minorities of all sorts. Gradually the most active members came to include among their number more single taxers than Republicans and Democrats; more militant atheists than mild agnostics; more critics of organized medicine than formal M.D.'s; and more interesting cranks than layman scientists. The type of audience, it seems, depended on the type of chairmanship. Dr. Andrew Gour (who was president of the Society both before 1910 and then again after 1930) reports that the prime founder, Charles J. Lewis, allowed no "isms" to enter into the discussions, and under his leadership the society was "as impartial as the French Sorbonne." Sometime after 1910, however, says Dr. Gour, the "group began to become 'culty' with vegetarians and spiritualists to the fore. It wasn't till after the war that it became really radical."

In 1935 the Anthropological Society combined with the Cosmopolitan Forums, which had previously met on the Northwest Side, and the so-called Anthro-Cosmo Forum resulted.

### The "Bugs"

The "Bugs" is the most common name by which the habitues of the Bug Club and Bug House Square are known. These groups, operating for over 50 years with a forum-like technique, provide our best examples of a non-deliberate, spontaneous development of a discussion institution.

#### The Bug Club

Approximately contemporary with the Sunset Club and continuing



without missing a season to this day is the Washington Park Forum, better known as the Bug Club. There is almost no documentary evidence concerning this group. Nobody knows exactly when it started, for it had no definite beginning. Apparently it, like Topsy, "just grewed." Our information at best, then, is merely a composite of reports of "old-timers." These will testify that about fifty years ago there used to be an old well at 51st Street and South Park Avenue. Centuries ago, says a legend, the Indians used it as a meeting place. At any rate, this well was said to contain a medicinal iron. The old men of the community, idling in the Park, came to drink the water, become acquainted with each other, and stopped to chat about the problems of the day. Gradually, the well became a meeting place for all manner of men who, after work hours and on Sundays and holidays, discussed such subjects as religion, immigration, and women's suffrage. But as times changed, so changed the topics. Ever after the well was closed, the neighborhood custom of meeting there persisted; the crowds grew larger and the discussion more intense. When the people in the residential district near the gatherings complained of the noise and nuisance, the "Well Club" or ("Pump Club") migrated south and east in the park to 57th Street, where it has held its own to this day.

Disintegrating forces have grown up, but none served to destroy the group completely. There was animosity between Gentile and Jew in the earliest years and later on a gang of young Catholic rowdies ("Rogan's Rats" from Halsted Street) caused no small amount of disturbance by ducking a prominent "Bug" in a near-by lagoon. Young neighborhood gangs frequently considered it good sport to visit the club in groups of twenty or thirty to disturb or break up the meetings by heckling. The Catholic Church itself is said to have offered a definite opposition about fifteen years ago, and the moving picture interests of the community held the club responsible for the declining theater attendance. A greater threat to the existence of the Bug Club came, however, in 1921, when the South Park Board issued an ordinance against the assemblage and the speaking of more than two or three individuals. South Park Police disrupted the meetings, beating up many members of the audience. The Bug Club immediately demanded an injunction against such procedure on the ground that it was unconstitutional. Judge Harry Fisher granted their request, and when the case came up at court, a permanent injunction was issued. Now it is unusual to find a blue coat guard at the Bug Club meetings.

Members of the audience represent diverse social, economic, and racial groups, with a probable preponderance of upper working class





elements. During recent years the audience seems on the whole to be less prosperous. Frequently entire families come out together, not the least attraction being the opportunity for social contacts. College students have found the "Bugs" attractive, and more than one has gotten his first practical public speaking lesson on the park rostrum. Out-and-out radicals, actively affiliated with particular propaganda organizations, appear fairly often to harangue, but, for the most part, the "Bugs" are free-lancers, liberals, and unlabeled radicals, with no unified plan for action. One proud "Bug" has summarized the qualifications of his colleagues thus: "There isn't a single subject under the shining sun that some member isn't an expert on. There isn't a country talked about that some one hasn't visited, be it only as a sailor before the mast. And the finest thing is, that wherever you go, in the city, in the country, or in the world, there isn't a corner where you won't bump into another 'Bug.'"

Since about 1919 the forum has continued in the winter season with indoor meetings and social functions.

### Bug House Square

Related to the Bug Club in name and method, and overlapping in personnel, are the meetings at Washington Square, across from the Newberry Library at Clark Street and Walton Street. This site, at the intersection of bohemia and hobohemia, has been a meeting place of those two social worlds - and of several others - for years. Official sight-seeing tours through the city almost invariably stop to watch the several meetings in progress, while the guides deliver "blurbs" like this:

Bughouse Square is the radical center of the city. It is the only spot in Chicago where freedom of speech is allowed at all times. The free thinkers and free speakers - artists socialists, communists - all get up on the soap box and really do their stuff. We never know what we are going to hear when we come down to Bug House Square, for everything from sex to religion comes up for discussion.

Bug House Square is an area of manifold soapboxes, simultaneously in use. It is a place of preachments and panaceas. From its platforms are presented cures for rheumatism, mortal sin, personal failure,

The first part of the report deals with the general situation in the country. It is found that the economy is in a state of stagnation and that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms. The report also points out that the government has failed to address the needs of the people and that the country is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The second part of the report deals with the specific situation in the region. It is found that the region is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the region is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The third part of the report deals with the specific situation in the district. It is found that the district is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the district is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The fourth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the village. It is found that the village is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the village is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The fifth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the hamlet. It is found that the hamlet is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the hamlet is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The sixth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the settlement. It is found that the settlement is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the settlement is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The seventh part of the report deals with the specific situation in the town. It is found that the town is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the town is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The eighth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the city. It is found that the city is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the city is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The ninth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the metropolis. It is found that the metropolis is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the metropolis is in a state of social and economic crisis.

The tenth part of the report deals with the specific situation in the capital. It is found that the capital is in a state of economic decline and that the government has failed to address the needs of the people. The report also points out that the government has failed to implement the necessary reforms and that the capital is in a state of social and economic crisis.

and the capitalist system. It would be a mistake, however, to group all speakers and preachers together, for their motives and methods are not the same. There is, for example, the sword-swallowing fakir who makes no pretense of social motive and swallows no sword until the proper number of coins are thrown into the ring. On the other hand, there is the volunteer agitator or radical who seeks no private revenue, but urges only the sale of his literature. In between these two extremes are the many free-lance speakers, "peddling" sex, or revolution, professing (and often having) social motives, but also requiring some support, for which the hat is passed.

Washington Square was donated to the city of Chicago in 1842 by three gentlemen, Messrs. Fitch, Bushnell, and Butler, who stipulated that it be used as a public square. It was probably not until thirty years thereafter, however, that it became the meeting ground of non-conformists. It is said that the German socialists, after their meeting in the nearby Turner Hall, and after a friendly glass of beer, would amble over to Washington Square and continue their discussion informally. In the 1920's the I. W. W. propagandists monopolized many of the soap boxes; during the early 1930's the Communist-sponsored organizations of unemployed were in greater number; now there seems to be no dominant opinion.

#### Community Center Forums

Some adult educators have complained that "persons speak frequently of the open forum as if it were a special order of initiates, a sort of mecca for long-haired debaters and not a place for the ordinary citizen." If this be an error, it is not a surprising one. At least in the past, forum-going has not been a habit of the typical American citizen. Even when forums started out with an audience of representative men, a selective process occurred; as a rule, only the typical forum habitués - such as those who constitute the nucleus of the Bugs - remain faithful over a long period of time. This process operated clearly in the case of our two early settlement house forums.

While of the most popular locations of forums today is the social service agency, only the pioneers in those fields conducted forums 40-50 years ago. The rise of these forums cannot be traced to any general public demand, for there was no public demand. They owe their existence entirely to the benevolence of a few inspired community leaders.

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the third is the fact that the...

the fourth is the fact that the...

the fifth is the fact that the...

the sixth is the fact that the...

the seventh is the fact that the...

These were liberal fellows, sensitive to the social disharmony about them. They were convinced that the repression of foreign born workers and their economic deprivation were social evils. But they could not support the current radical schemes for revolutionary change. Nor did they have a panacea of their own. In this condition of suspended judgment they felt that the best thing to do was to take it out in talk.

So, here and there, in the settlements which rose as an antidote to the ruthless melting pot forces of the city, and in those churches whose secularization occurred under a liberal ministry, forums were adopted. The purpose of these earlier forums, rising as they did in a period of industrial turmoil, was frequently expressed in terms of the necessity for harmonizing the relationship between labor and capital.

#### The Working People Social Science Club

One of the earliest of this group of forums met at Hull House, beginning in 1890 and continuing for seven years. Jane Addams conceived its purpose thus:

To give opportunity for representatives of various economic theories to modify each other, and at least to learn tolerance and the futility of endeavoring to convince all the world of the truth of one position.\*

The opportunity for free discussion naturally attracted radicals of all political complexions who tended to be among the more articulate members of the audience. These were undoubtedly responsible, at least in part, for the reputation for radicalism under which Hull House labored from its earliest days. The spirit of the club is revealed in this brief comment by Miss Addams:

. . . . The enthusiasm of this club seldom lagged. Its zest for discussion was unceasing, and any attempt to turn it into a study or reading club always met with the strong disapprobation of the

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\* Graham Taylor, *Chicago Commons Through Forty Years* (Chicago: Chicago Commons Association, 1936) p. 125, quoting from Jane Addams

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members. In those weekly discussions in the Hull House drawing-room everything was thrown back upon general principles and all else discarded as an unworthy, half-way measure. I recall one evening in this club when an exasperated member had thrown out the statement that "Mr. B. believes that socialism will cure even the toothache. "Mr. B. promptly rose to his feet and said that it certainly would, that when every child's teeth were systematically cared for from the beginning, toothache would disappear from the face of the earth, belonging, as it did, to the extinct competitive order, as the black plague had disappeared from the earth with the ill-regulated feudal regime of the Middle Ages.\*

#### Chicago Commons' Free Floor

Following closely in the footsteps of the Social Science Club of Hull House was the Free Floor of the Chicago Commons. It too met for seven years, closing when the sponsors feared that instead of serving a community need of neighborhood discussion, it was becoming a rendezvous for fanatics and extremists from all sections of town. In the Commons, as well as at Hull House, the innovation of a forum at a social settlement was not accepted with unqualified enthusiasm. The unorganized workers, the new immigrants, were shy of the unfamiliar procedure. Radicals frequently resented the liberalism which mollified existing evils and seduced the potential converts of radicalism. More articulate and vicious in attacking the forum, however, was the conservative press which maintained that the sociologist and the socialist were one and the same that the social settlement was "first cousin to the anarchist," that dispassionate discussions of social evils entailed tacit approval of these evils, and that the "ignorant immigrant" and his children, guided by "cruel fate. . . . into the socialist precincts of Hull House and Chicago Commons" would be trained in anarchic hostility to American institutions.

Despite these criticisms, the Free Floor thrived. Its founder describes its function and its functioning:

We published the call to our Free Floor in The Chicago Daily News, inviting "all sides to free speech with no favors" every Tuesday evening. From

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\* Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1911) p. 188





a score who came to the first meeting the attendance grew to an average of one hundred and sometimes triple that number. Most of them were men of our neighborhood, few of whom were organized in labor unions and scarcely any in radical groups. Many students and some professors from universities, seminaries, and other professional groups frequently attended. Occasionally a few business men were present. An increasing proportion of the attendance came from other parts of the city, drawn by press reports which far more often sensationally exaggerated some extreme utterance and seldom fairly reported the spirit and purport of the whole discussion.

In accordance with our proposal to make the occasion frankly democratic both in spirit and procedure, the men agreed to limit the opening speech by a speaker of their own choice to twenty minutes and all others participating in the discussion to three minutes, unless these time limits were extended by vote. The only limit to the freedom of speech was that the advocacy of violence would be out of order. The only concession to Chicago Commons was that the chairmanship of the meeting should be filled by myself or by fellow resident, John Palmer Gavit. We held ourselves and were held strictly within the limits of time prescribed from the floor.

The topics for discussion, also proposed from the floor, ranged very widely. They dealt with economic issues such as thrift and spendthrift, wages and hours of labor, profits and trusts, as well as with inter-racial and international relations, peace and war. The ethics of the family, marriage, health and housing, childhood and old age were quite as eagerly and frankly discussed. No topics were more frequently chosen or earnestly debated than those of religion and the church, almost always centering upon the person and teachings of Jesus and challenging his professed followers' loyalty to him or his ideals and aims. For the first two months of these meetings our Chicago Commons group was challenged to define our religion and to attest our loyalty to the example of Jesus.

The speakers representing widely different views were respectfully heard. Yet their opinions were discussed with fearless frankness. . . Men of large yet

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the proposed plan for the construction of a new building for the use of the Department of the Interior. The plan submitted to me on the 10th inst. is being reviewed by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Bureau of Land Management. It is expected that a final report will be submitted to you within a few days. In the meantime, I am sure that you will find the plan satisfactory. Very respectfully,  
 Wm. H. Hays, Secretary of the Interior

The enclosed report contains the results of the investigation conducted by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Bureau of Land Management into the proposed plan for the construction of a new building for the use of the Department of the Interior. It is believed that the plan is feasible and that the building can be constructed at a reasonable cost. It is recommended that the plan be approved and that the necessary funds be appropriated for the construction of the building. Very respectfully,  
 Wm. H. Hays, Secretary of the Interior

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 Wm. H. Hays, Secretary of the Interior

humbled spirit proved themselves to be worthiest by happily meeting fellowmen on a man-to-man equality. Other men, smaller by nature, or self-assertive by habit, did not fare so well. Some judges and clergymen resented contradiction, from which both the bench and the pulpit protected them. . . .\*

In 1903 the Free Floor adjourned for the last time. Today the community seems unresponsive to forums. This may in part be explained by the fact that the Scandinavians who previously dominated the neighborhood were succeeded by Italians who were familiar neither with the English language nor with the discussion technique. Other factors are the prevalent indifference to forums and, perhaps, a lack of inspired leadership.

#### History Shows. . . .

Our review of early forums shows that they have not in the past been sustained by community habit or public opinion. Unless some individual or organization took the entire initiative and responsibility for a forum, it died. The outstanding exceptions to this generalization occur in the case of the Bug Club and Bug House Square which have become city-wide centers for the "forum hounds." They are characterized by their informality and unorthodox method.

Perhaps this apparent lack of forum popularity is due partly to the fact that forums are not a traditional mode of public education and or recreation. Can they become such? Perhaps we will be more competent to answer this question after carefully considering present-day forums in Chicago.

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\* Taylor, Op. Cit., pp. 125-27

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records and the role of the various departments involved. It emphasizes the need for clear communication and the timely submission of reports to ensure the smooth operation of the organization.

In the second section, the author details the specific procedures for handling incoming correspondence and the distribution of information to the relevant staff members. This section highlights the importance of a systematic approach to document management and the use of standardized forms to facilitate the process.

The third part of the document focuses on the financial aspects of the organization, including budgeting and the monitoring of expenditures. It provides a comprehensive overview of the current financial status and offers recommendations for improving cost efficiency and ensuring that all activities are conducted within the allocated budget.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and a call to action for all employees to adhere to the established guidelines and contribute to the overall success of the organization. The author expresses confidence in the team's ability to meet the challenges ahead and achieve the organization's strategic goals.

PART II

CHICAGO FORUMS FOR PROTEST



## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY OF CHICAGO PROTEST - FORUMS

#### Non-conformists in religion

Ethical Society  
Arthur Morrow Lewis  
Percy Ward  
M. M. Mangassarian  
Secular Union

#### Non-conformists in politics

The Socialist Party  
Henry George Clubs  
Anarchists and the Social Science Club  
I.W.W.

#### Non-conformists in morals and folkways

The Bohemians  
    Hulda Potter Loomis's Open Forum  
    The Dill Pickle  
    Followers of the Dill on the Near-North Side  
The Hobohemians  
    The role of Dr. Ben L. Reitman  
    Lecture and Sociological Clinic - 1907, first  
    hobo college School for Social Pathology  
    Other Hobo Colleges

III. SUMMARY

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK

The following is a summary of the work done during the year 1954. The work was carried out in accordance with the programme of work approved by the Council of the League of Nations in 1953. The work was carried out in the following order:

1. The work was carried out in accordance with the programme of work approved by the Council of the League of Nations in 1953. The work was carried out in the following order:

2. The work was carried out in accordance with the programme of work approved by the Council of the League of Nations in 1953. The work was carried out in the following order:

3. The work was carried out in accordance with the programme of work approved by the Council of the League of Nations in 1953. The work was carried out in the following order:

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10. The work was carried out in accordance with the programme of work approved by the Council of the League of Nations in 1953. The work was carried out in the following order:



## CHAPTER III

## HISTORY OF CHICAGO PROTEST - FORUMS

A glance at our table of contents will show that the protest forums and the status quo forums are to be considered in different sections; for although overlapping between categories is sometimes found and the formal procedure is the same, they are so different in purpose, personnel, spirit, and sponsorship as to warrant separate attention

The forum in Chicago owed much of its early stamina to its function as a platform for minority opinions. The forums of the non-conformists in various fields were among the earliest successful ones in this city, and it is these which produced the characteristic "forum type" of personality. The preponderance of radical speakers at the Bug Club and Bug House Square, as well as their articulateness at even the "respectable" Sunset Club, are cases in point.

The several kinds of protest forums may be outlined in some such manner as this:

- A. Non-conformists in religion
  - The Freethinkers
- B. Non-conformists in politics
  - Socialists
  - Single Taxers
  - Anarchists
  - I.W.W
- C. Non-conformists in morals and folkways
  - Bohemian
  - Hobohebian

## Non-Conformists in Religion

The freethinkers were among the earliest local intelligentsia. Sometimes they were associated with the political radicals and the bohemians, and sometimes not. Several series of weekly lectures in the 1890's and 1900's represented their point of view.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

SECTION I

The history of the United States is a subject of great interest and importance. It is a subject which has attracted the attention of the world, and which has been the subject of many valuable works of history and literature.

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### The Chicago Ethical Society

This group was founded in 1882 as a "completely non-sectarian fellowship to promote the knowledge and practice of right living." Its Sunday morning lectures, like most others in this early period, tended to be more concerned with religion and more broadly philosophical than is the present trend. The spirit of presentation and the attendance varied with the "Leader." If he was militantly atheistic, like M.M. Mangassarian the lectures took on that color. If he was politically liberal, like the founding Leader, William M. Salter, who (in the face of much opposition, even from his own membership) publicly defended the Anarchists charged with bombing in the Haymarket Riot of 1886, the lectures reflected that bias. In general the audiences then, as now, represented a preponderance of the white-collared elite - lawyers, doctors, teachers.

### Lewis's Workers University

Arthur Morrow Lewis, formerly an English preacher, later converted to socialism, is said to have held spellbound audiences of a thousand at his 'Worker's University.' It met weekly on Sunday mornings for a number of years beginning in 1907. A twenty-five cent admission was charged, and questions were permitted after Mr. Lewis's (or the guest speaker's) presentation. The purpose of these lectures is explained by Mr. Lewis himself:

These lectures attempt something new in Socialist lecturing in this country. Hitherto all our public speaking has been purely of the propaganda order and with a strong campaign flavor. This was justified by the numerical weakness of the movement and the necessity for securing new converts. Nowadays, however, it is different. We have a large army of Socialists which is especially numerous in the cities and this army provides a field for lectures designed to educate Socialists themselves in the full scope of their philosophy.

While all that it is necessary to learn before one votes the Socialist ticket or joins the party may be learned at a single meeting, all students of Socialist philosophy know that its mastery means many years of hard study, and brings with it an excellent general education. These Garrick Lectures are delivered with a view to this latter development and they should not be judged by the

The Scottish Socialist

This article was written as a contribution to the...
The author discusses the political and social conditions in Scotland...

Scottish Socialist University

The Scottish Socialist University is a...
This institution is dedicated to the education and training of the working class...

The Scottish Socialist University...
The author outlines the objectives and structure of the university, emphasizing its commitment to socialist principles and the empowerment of the working class through education.

standards which apply to a campaign propaganda speech.\*

Whereas the Socialist Party officially repudiated these lectures as too violently anti-religious, they were attended by intellectuals and radicals of every school. As one radical put it, "Everyone came to the Garrick Theatre on Sunday mornings. I used to go there to meet people."

#### Dr. Percy Ward

Dr. Percy Ward was active during part of Lewis' career. Coming here in 1910, an ex-Methodist clergyman from England, he has delivered free thought lectures almost regularly up to this date. Ward's repertoire includes such varied themes as "How to Become an Effective Speaker" and "Sex in the Light of Modern Science," but he has most frequently discussed and debated philosophical issues like "Will the Mind of Man Outgrow Religion?" "Nineteenth Century Christianity and Labor," and "Has Einstein Solved the Riddle of the Universe?" Dr. Ward does not call for questions at the end of his presentation because he feels that "Questions make an anti-climax. It's like discussion or amateur singing after a great opera."

#### M. M. Mangassarian

M. M. Mangassarian, a former Presbyterian minister, who became intensely influenced by Robert G. Ingersoll, lectured weekly from about 1904 to 1914, generally, on themes of religion and ethics. His oratory has been praised by friend and critic alike. One speaks of him as a "pyrotechnic." Another comments that while Dr. Lewis excelled at smashing idols, Mangassarian alone was capable of pulverizing the broken bits. His audiences were composed more of the economic elite; as his politics were extremely conservative, radicals seldom visited his programs.

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\* Arthur Morrow Lewis, Ten Blind Leaders of the Blind (Chicago: C. H. Kerr and Co., 1909), preface.



## The Secular Union

The first free thought organization, however, which conducted a weekly lecture-discussion program that truly fits our definition of "forum" seems to have been the Secular Union. Let us get our view of this group through the reminiscences of Seymour Stedman, veteran of Chicago liberal and socialist movements:

Fifty years ago there was a public forum on the West Side known as the Secular Union. It was founded on the "Nine Points" of the Secular movement then very strong in the United States and Canada, which included such demands as taxation of church property and the right to testify by affirmation rather than by oath. Active participants in this movement in Chicago included Clarence Darrow (who came here unacquainted and without a practice, and who started his career in the Union), Lucy Parsons, widow of the anarchist martyr of the Haymarket Riot, Lyman J. Gage, president of the First National Bank (who was a wealthy man, but noble, and with a deep sympathy for the poor). There was also General M. M. Trumbull, who wrote the amendment to the constitution freeing the Negro slaves. Among the most faithful, there were many young men of 16 or 17, who were fervent about Kant and Darwin. And the group also included a great many workmen. All political views were represented, although no conservatives participated actively in the management. (We met at the same time as the church service.) All subjects were discussed: astronomy, biology, tariffs, philosophy and municipal government.

### Non-conformists in Politics

#### The Socialist Party

Socialist Party Forums as such hardly existed, but Mr. Stedman, one of the founders of the party, is well able to comment on its early educational work:

When the Socialist Party had its early headquarters at Washington and Wells, it had one room open all hours of the day and night. (This was called "Section Sidewalk" in derision of the Socialist Labor Party, which called its branches, "Sections.") Every man who landed in town and





wanted to talk came there. Every crank and anti-crank would come to speak whenever he felt like - much as at the Bug Club today. There was no admission - just a collection plate at the entrance.

### Henry George Clubs

Attracting large audiences of single tax advocates among the more genteel folk, Henry George Clubs were organized in the early 1900's in both Loop and neighborhoods. Lectures were delivered by liberal and free-thinking orators, as well as by Single Tax disciples of Henry George. Whatever the topic, however, - the club sponsors could generally manage in the discussion period to show that it too (like all else) was in some way related to the Single Tax.

### The Anarchists and the Social Science Club

In the early 1900's some of the "Anthropups" and others who attended their 3 o'clock meeting in the Masonic Temple (later called the Capitol Building) would, after the session had adjourned, continue the discussion informally at Thompson's restaurant; then at 8 P.M. they would re-open forum proceedings in the same building this time under Anarchist auspices. The Anarchist forum was the Social Science Club; the story of its founding and its point of view is told in the Anarchist newspaper, Free Society:

Emma Goldman's vigorous campaign in behalf of freedom has brought into existence the Social Science Club, which meets every Sunday, 2 P.M. at Hall 913, Masonic Temple.

The principal object of the Club is to gather the scattered fragments of the American liberals who singly have been unable or disinclined to do very much towards spreading the truths they feel, and from the amount of interest manifested in the first meeting, the future prospects of the Club are very encouraging.

The ablest representatives of all progressive ideas will be given opportunities to lay their grievances before us, we reserving the right to disagree with them, and that in as plain, emphatic and forceful

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Henry George Club

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language as we choose to imply. Discussion will be as free as political promises at election time.

It is proposed that the members descend occasionally from their sublime philosophical heights and meet in social tete a tete with song, dance, ice-cream, etc., thereby cultivating both sides of their natures in about equal proportion.

For some years back, American comrades have not been as active in the propoganda as they might, the work devolving mainly upon the foreign element, thereby necessarily confining it largely to the continental languages. In their work among Americans, they have had to meet a certain amount of race prejudice, as well as the difficulty of expression in the English language, requiring a considerably greater expenditure of energy to perform a given quantity of work than were it done by natives.

These obstacles are, however, fast disappearing, first, because of the increasing number of foreigners who are mastering the language, and secondly, because of the increasing number of Americans who are mastering economic and political science.

This group aspires, with the aid of our foreign-born comrades, to push the educational work among the English speaking races and invites all who would see the flame of liberty blaze from the English tongue to assist us in our endeavor.\*

#### Forums of the I. W. W.

Since its formation in this city in 1905 the Industrial Workers of the World has continually conducted its open-air soap box meetings and its indoor "propaganda meetings." The spirit of these early meetings is indicated by this press notice:

We keep pounding the gospel of the I.W. W. into the workers and they seem to like it, for our meetings are well attended every Friday, and we are taking in on the average of four members per meeting. . .\*\*

\* "Social Science Club," from Free Society, V(May 28, 1899). \*\* Daily People, January 17, 1906

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Outdoor programs systematically planned at strategic places, were also recruiting sessions although a forum-like technique was used.

In more recent years the I. W. W. forums have been broadly educational. In the absence of adequate agitators to drive home the "gospel" of industrial unionism, eclectic programs are arranged. The saving hope of the sponsors is that in every discussion period, regardless of the subject scheduled, the I. W. W. point of view may be informally presented.

### Non-conformists in Morals and Folkways

#### The Bohemians

In the synopsis of this section, bohemians were defined as "non-conformists in folkways and mores," people who disavow both the routine and the sacred of the society around them. Conscientiously and with flourish, they do not merely those things which the respectable do do, and conceal. Generally they may be said to be radicals, but "their Socialism is more academic than barricadic" (as Albert Parry puts it in *Garrets and Pretenders*). They are enslaved to nothing but their own "emancipation" which in many cases has but one aspect: the sexual. This is an easy emancipation, a sort of common denominator for those who want to be free and creative without too much effort. It is, moreover, what interests the "substantial citizens" who constitute the paying guests at their forums. In short, they are largely an "intellectual proletariat" characterized by their freedom from convention, their artistic taste and aspirations.

In the Chicago of 15 to 25 years ago, the bohemians concentrated in two areas of the city: first the 57th Street Art Colony, and then the near north side. The former location was convenient for its closeness to the city's intellectual center, the University of Chicago, to the lakeshore, and to transportation lines. Here lived intellectuals, literati and artists, many of whom are today well-known. They met on 57th Street or in the Loop in their early discussion groups, like the Vagabonds, the Questioners, the Fabian Club, the Cheese Box, and those continuous informal gab sessions which characterized Schlogl's restaurant.

Outdoor workers... (mirrored text)

In some cases... (mirrored text)

Generalization in Logic and Philosophy

The Inductive

In the process of the... (mirrored text)

In the process of... (mirrored text)

The near north side area, known as Towertown, became a bohemian community a short time before the war. The district is one where the richest residences were formerly located. These have been turned into rooming houses, and their garrets, basements, and garages are choice studios. Low rentals and convenient location make them desirable as homes for the bohemians. Thus - and it will be interesting to remember this later - the bohemian area is, in the ecological set-up between the Gold Coast and the slums, a sort of buffer group. Moreover it is bordered on one side by the "main stem" of the intellectual hobo - North Clark Street.

It is about 1913 that Chicago bohemianism began. Discussion is the bohemian's "meat." Discussion groups and clubs are indigeneous to "bohemia." There have been so many of these that cannot even be named, much less definitely distinguished as forum or non-forum. There were perhaps no forums, pure and simple, for informality and "atmosphere" defied and modified, cut and dried procedures of any sort.

#### Hulda Potter Loomis's Open Forum

Probably the earliest attempt at bohemianism in forums was the Open Forum of Hulda Potter Loomis. One cannot find out precisely when the Open Forum began. One knows only that some time after the Anarchist Social Science Club stopped meeting at the Masonic Temple on Sunday evenings, Miss Loomis, a genial lady who had attended the Anarchist lectures as well as those of the Anthropological Society, opened her own series. Miss Loomis was a fortune teller by profession. In her earlier years she claimed to be a "philosophical anarchist" although the local anarchists did not recognize her as one of their own. In her later years, she was a Theosophist. She is best remembered, however, for her declarations of sexual emancipation - public recitals wherein words were not minced nor gory details omitted. Her forum was attended by the local radical fringe, the hoboes and bohemians; in short, the prototype of the modern "forum man."

#### The Dill Pickle

It is said by some that the Dill Pickle - the most fortunate and famous of bohemian forum resorts - was inspired by the Open Forum, that Jack Jones, its founder, observing Hulda Potter Loomis's success, decided that forums could make money. There are at least a dozen other stories about the formation of the Dill Pickle, which have now become

The next North side area, known as Bostwick, shows a collection of small lots, many of which are vacant. The Bostwick area is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings. The area is bounded to the north by the Bostwick area, to the south by the Bostwick area, to the east by the Bostwick area, and to the west by the Bostwick area. The Bostwick area is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings.

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### Public Housing in the Bostwick Area

Public housing in the Bostwick area is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings. The Bostwick area is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings. The Bostwick area is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings.

### The Hill District

It is said by some that the Hill District is the most important area of the city. The Hill District is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings. The Hill District is a typical example of the urban fringe, with its small lots and scattered buildings.



legend, and half of them perhaps were circulated by the founder himself. The most likely of these seems to be the following: the Radical Book Shop at 817 $\frac{1}{2}$  North Clark Street was run by a blind Anarchist woman, Mrs. Udell, and was Chicago's informal radical center. Around 1915 the Udells opened their home on Sunday evenings to those "comrades," "fellow-workers," and "friends" who wished to participate in discussions of current problems, in art, politics and almost every other field. These gatherings were to Chicago what the Liberal Club was to Greenwich Village in New York. Before long, the numbers who came exceeded the accommodations of the Udell home. Jack Jones, one of the participators, then agreed to open a more public meeting place better to continue the Sunday evening meetings. He had been an active and effective union man, and was one of the near-pioneers of the I. W. W. His motives were simple and idealistic. After three or four months' meeting in an old barn, the cheapest, most convenient place he could find was the dilapidated hall whose formal address is 858 North State Street. In history it shall forever be known however, as it was in its own day, as "Thru the Hole in the Wall, Down Tooker Alley to the Green Lita Over the Orange Door," and parenthetically, "Step high, Stoop low, leave your dignity outside!"

The Dill Pickle started out, then, as a more or less serious labor forum. Guest speakers addressed a biased but sincere audience, and learned to take it on the chin. The original admission fee was low, and the original audience was composed of intellectual radicals and radical intellectuals who were at least as familiar with Bug House Square as they were with any salon.

Then came prohibition, and the Whoopie era, and perhaps Ben Reitman, which added up to the unexpected popularity and monetary success of the Dill. Jack Jones found it far more creative to cater to the night club element out on a slumming tour with bottles of gin on their hips or cash for same in their pockets. They were the paying guests at 99¢ per. The dingy alley, the dark entrance, the unwashed proprietor (Jack Jones cultivated his hair and his untidiness deliberately as part of the atmosphere-producing stunt), bootleg gin, and the mad artists (or reasonably exact facsimiles of same) were for the most part, what they paid for. A lecture and discussion were thrown in at no extra cost. As bohemia and her forums became commercialized, a double standard of attendance set in - the passive and the active, the Phillistine and the bohemian, and the former frequently outnumbered the latter.

Some of Jack Jones' confreres and star performers envied his success; they yearned to satisfy the starving-poet-in-the-garret complex with which the Dill's fans seemed to have been afflicted. So they

The first part of the report is devoted to a general survey of the situation in the country. It is found that the country is in a state of general depression, and that the people are suffering from want and distress. The cause of this is attributed to the war, and the consequent destruction of property and the loss of life. It is also stated that the government has not done enough to relieve the suffering of the people, and that the people are entitled to demand more from the government.

The second part of the report is devoted to a detailed account of the operations of the government during the year. It is found that the government has not done enough to relieve the suffering of the people, and that the people are entitled to demand more from the government.

The third part of the report is devoted to a detailed account of the operations of the government during the year. It is found that the government has not done enough to relieve the suffering of the people, and that the people are entitled to demand more from the government.

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found their own barns and cellars on the near north side, and from 1919 to the repeal of prohibition bohemian "forums" sprang up profusely.

Some of these forums were dives, first and foremost; others included amateur experimental theaters; still others (like the well known Grey Cottage) were simply tea rooms where one could sit and talk uninterruptedly.

An alphabetical list of names and addresses (whenever addresses are available) of bohemian forums within the last two decades serves more than a cataloguing function, for these names are picturesque ones which imply the "atmosphere" of the groups they represent; and their addresses indicate their concentration in one small area. The most popular location is Rush Street within an east-west radius of a block.

The north-south range is four blocks:

Art Colony  
 12½ West Delaware Place  
 Blue Fish  
 1004 North Rush  
 Blue Goose Club  
 Coal Scuttle  
 Copper Kettle  
 Dill Pickle  
 858 North State Street  
 House of Blazes  
 House of Correction  
 883 Rush  
 Grey Cottage  
 Phalanstery  
 915 Rush  
 Seven Arts Club  
 Rush and Grand  
 153 East Erie  
 75 Walton Place  
 55 East Superior  
 437 Rush (Riccardo's Restaurant)  
 Wind Blew Inn

Vital statistics about any of these are, however, non-existent\* Neither epitaph nor coroner's report is left to posterity. We know only that none except the Seven Arts Club survived for any length of time. Leases were not made, or made only to be broken; mobility and turnover were great. At any rate, the Dill's supremacy was never seriously challenged.

\* The present writer requested an accurate history of these efforts from

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\*Footnote Cont'd.

one of the "old-timers" who had been associated with several near north side forums. His reply is interesting, not only for the facts he fails to give, but for his style, which is clearly reminiscent of the background which he cannot accurately reconstruct:

DATELESS DATA, OR REMINISCENCES OF "BOHEMIAN  
FORUMS" IN CHICAGO

Leander swam the Hellespont on the night of October 12, 234 B. C. at 9:30. This bit of misinformation has no connection with the above subject, except that the date I give is as reliable as any date in the history of the hobohemian and nearbohemian forums of Chicago. We know that the aquatic Greek had a romantic motive, he being young and feclish, but there the resemblance to the impresarios of the forum business in Chicago stops - these bozos were mostly fools, but they were practical enough to be unromantic lovers of nickels.

Amorous some of the tramps and ex-tramps who fathered forums in Chicago certainly were, some to the point of lechery, but none that I know of ever swam the Chicago River to get to a Helen; there was no need - the dumps they maintained in damp cellars drew females as flies are drawn to molasses, and a forum proprietor with an extreme case of testicular excitation had only to indicate his condition to one of these predecessors of the tavern bitches of the present day. However, long years on the bum and in jail had done for these mostly old tramps, and a female with vaginal disturbance found out that she would have to pick out a Lothario from the audiences on the joint. Sex-starved males awaited the nod, and a slattern or even a virago with a trace of femininity could be sure that her bottle of gin would be duly sucked up to the accompaniment of much clack about adult education, free speech, and other shibboleths that go good in "forums." Sweet-voiced males made a "meet" with other queers, while the girls from the Isle of Lesbos were always sure of a "chicken" sans inhibitions by the anesthesia of noon-shine whiskey. Many a lass was initiated into the mysteries of life in Y. W. C. A. dormitories from contact with lesbians in the so-called forums of Chicago, in many of which the subject was frankly inversion and perversion disguised as a lecture purporting to explain the theories of Freud, Havelock Ellis, Marie Stopes and Margaret Sanger.

Bigger and better orgies took place, history informs us, in the Elysian Fields, and in the forums maintained



## THE HOBONEMANS

The intellectual hoboes are not a negligible section of the nucleus of bohemian forums. It is they, plus the artists and the radical fringe, who produce the "atmosphere" that is called "bohemia" and that the cash customers buy.

But the hoboes have also indigeneous forums of their own; these, for the most part, are called "hobo colleges." James Eads How, the "Millionaire Hobo," founded the first hobo college in 1907.

Visitors at the hobo forum cannot be divided generally into two classes of performer and spectator as is true of most bohemian groups. The people who attend (except for occasional sightseers) belong to the same universe of discourse. Intellectual horse-play is prevalent, but it is not usually directed toward a gallery.

The forum schedules in their wording, and the general tone of the meetings, impress one as a burlesque of formal learning. The title "Dr." or "Prof." embarrassed many a modest college student making his lecture debut. It is an almost routine term of recognition for five-minute speakers, while the extravagance of "purfessor" is reserved for the mighty.

In Chicago there have been perhaps a dozen of these hobo colleges, most of which owe their origin to Dr. Ben L. Reitman, "King," "Friend," popularizer, and sometimes exploiter of the hobo. That he is not the only man in town who has conducted hobo colleges is true. (Her-

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\*Footnote Cont'd.

by the Emperors Galba and Caligula on the isle of Capri, but considering the hampering effect exercised by the Methodist Board of Temperance and the prohibition agents of the time, the Entrepreneurs of the forum business in Chicago managed, with the aid of a lecture by an unaware professor from one of the universities, a smutty one-act "play" or two, some alleged music, and dim lighted dance floors, to give diverse bums from the lodging houses and oldish maidens the thrill of their lives, price 50¢. (Vicarious, of course, nothing could take place in the joint - but contacts were made, and that is the big idea in the case of a lonesome old maid and a homeless bum.)

On reading over what I have written I preceive that I have betrayed a too complete knowledge of the seary side of these forum seances, and that a reader could be excused from concluding that all this degradation was not exactly foreign to my moral fibre. I do not remember! . . . .





man Goul, John Lughman, Jack Macbeth, and Dave Tullman are several other leading spirits in this work.) That he is personally responsible for the founding of more hobo colleges than any other single man, and has gotten more publicity for the hobo than all men in all places, is also true.

In fact, a complete and intimate understanding of Chicago hobo colleges is impossible without a similar insight into his biography. We should know more than the formal facts of his ten-year association with Emma Goldman, the anarchist lecturer, as her manager and companion; his career as a venereal disease doctor and his services in that capacity for the City Health Department, Bridewell Jail and the prostitution houses of the city's most powerful vice syndicate; his own imprisonment for preaching birth control; his conversion to Christianity, and his frequent function as a liason between the underworld and the "World" proper. But we have room here only to say that Ben L. Reitman is a gentleman whose personality defies scientific categories. He is a man characterized (as he himself likes to say) by a "big soul" which embraces with equal fervor, Christ, Salvarsan, Anarchism, Hobodon - and last, but not least - all ladies within embracing distance. It is exceeded only by a still greater ego which embraces Dr. L. Reitman, and any cause with which he may be momentarily identified.

Every institution Dr. Ben L. Reitman founds cannot but be a lengthened shadow of the man. Ben L. Reitman is just that kind of a man. He is not ascetic for the Cause. He waxes fat and happy on publicity, and from time to time the hoboes have had the good fortune, perhaps, to be within the orbit of that publicity. For them it has meant: recognition, free lodgings, holiday dinners, and a long series of hobo colleges.

In 1907 Ben jumped off a box car into St. Louis and was there inspired by a speech by "Brother" How. He returned to Chicago where he gave a spectacular banquet for the 'boes at the Windsor-Clifton Hotel, and founded on May 31, 1907 the Lecture and Sociological Clinic of the Brotherhood Welfare Association (the hobo alliance). It was based on How's idea of education for the wandering homeless man, and supported largely by gifts. The meeting place of Reitman's Clinic was Handel Hall; its creed "Kindness and no red tape"; its method a lecture by Dr. Reitman (or a substitute of his choosing), followed by "interesting cases" selected from the audience and discussion from those who felt so moved. The solution offered for hobo problems was an eclectic conglomeration of such items as "An appropriate building with free rent," "more faith in men," "that you be a little more kind."



A year after his entrance into hobo welfare work, Dr. Reitman heeded a stronger urge to leave the hobo college and to tour the country as business manager for the anarchist lecturer, Emma Goldman. In his absence, hobo colleges waxed and waned under the guidance of such temporarily local talent as A. W. Dragstedt ("the hoboes' Poet Laureate"), John X. Kelly (who is said to have inserted the "X" in his name to avoid confusion in getting his mail at general delivery windows throughout America), Mike Walsh (famed for inducing Mary Garden to sing at his forum, then naming a hobo college after her; for his presidency of the Bug Club; and for his candidacy for democratic senator from Illinois), and later, Herman Gaul (who conducted the plebian college in the basement of his rooming house), and David Tullman, talented professional soap boxer who supported himself through school by forum and street speaking.

Some of the addresses at which these forums were located are:

107 South Halsted Street  
 711 West Harrison Street,  
 133 South Green Street, and  
 914 West Washington Blvd.

Each of these groups was similar to the other, and personnel was almost completely overlapping.

Those individual differences that did exist were conditioned largely by the personality and purpose of their sponsors. Dr. Reitman's partiality toward the spectacular is to be compared with Jack Macbeth's flare for scholastic, or with Herman Gaul's pedantic, methodical approach, or with Slim Brundage's efforts at ballyhoo and burlesque.

When Ben Reitman again returned to Chicago, he started the School of Social Pathology in October 1925. Headquarters at 641 West Washington Blvd. were open from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. daily. Its letterhead explained:

The Hobo College is a Service Station, -  
 Clearing House and Educational Institution for  
 Homeless Men.

A Laboratory for the Study of Unemployment  
 and all other factors which tend to make Men  
 "Down and Out."

A Clinic for Students and Social Workers to  
 Study Clinical Sociology.

We specialize in all types of unemployed and  
 Social Outcasts, including Tramps, Hoboes, Bums,

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work done during the year. It is followed by a detailed account of the work done in each of the various departments. The report concludes with a summary of the work done and a statement of the results achieved.

The following table shows the results of the work done in each of the various departments during the year.

Department	Work Done	Results
...	...	...
...	...	...
...	...	...
...	...	...

The following table shows the results of the work done in each of the various departments during the year.

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Ex-convicts, Drunkards, Drug Addicts, Handicapped, Psychopathic Vagrants, and Incompetents.

As usual, Dr. Reitman rounded up an advisory committee of awe-inspiring names: Professor Arthur Holt, Chicago Theological Seminary; Professor E. W. Burgess, University of Chicago; Joel Hunter, United Charities; Ed. Hammond, Chicago Federation of Labor; Wilfred S. Reynolds, Council of Social Agencies; F. Emery Lyon, Central Howard Association; Anna Martindale Reitman; and Herman Adler, State Criminologist. His faculty was likewise enviable, and divided into seven departments:

### F A C U L T Y

#### Psychiatry & Mental Hygiene

Dr. Herman Adler  
Dr. F. J. Gerty  
Dr. Alex Herschfield  
Dr. Sidney Kuh  
Dr. Clarence Neyman  
Dr. Charles F. Read

#### Religion & Social Ethics

Prof. F. C. Beck  
Roy Franklin Dewey  
Prof. Arthur E. Holt  
Prof. Fred Merrifield  
Prof. Theobald Smith

#### Social Service & Employment

Charles Boyd  
Joel D. Hunter  
Wilfred S. Reynolds

#### Music, Art & Drama

Richard Bennett  
Florence Brinkman  
Margaret Lester  
William Lester  
Prinzie Sisters

#### Philosophy & History

Sam Ball  
Dr. Martin Bickham  
Prof. R. H. Leavell  
Prof. E. L. Schaub

#### Public Speaking

Rev. Preston Bradley  
Prof. G. G. Davis

#### Psychology & Sociology

Prof. E. W. Burgess  
Prof. James Field

Meetings (alias "classes") were held three times a day, and as the program advertised: "All lectures in plain language that any bum can understand." Here were discussed such pointed themes as: "Will the Coming Christ be a Hobo?" and "Is there Room on the velvet for All?" One of the weekly courses was the "Drunk Clinic," at which the staff psychiatrist explained the evils of alcohol to a student body nominally restricted to habitual "boozers-bums." Dr. Reitman claims (in a questionable combination of truth and extravagance) that so popular was this session that the laziest tramps would rise early to go down town to pan-handle enough for a drink so that they might be properly equipped for

Department of Health, The Ministry of Health,  
General, Department of Health, The Ministry of Health

As stated in the letter of the 11th inst. the following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various committees and sub-committees of the Department of Health, The Ministry of Health, and the various committees and sub-committees of the various departments of the Government.

Committee A

Committee A - Sub-Committee 1

Mr. A. B. C.  
Mr. D. E. F.  
Mr. G. H. I.  
Mr. J. K. L.  
Mr. M. N. O.  
Mr. P. Q. R.

Committee A - Sub-Committee 2

Mr. S. T. U.  
Mr. V. W. X.  
Mr. Y. Z. A.  
Mr. B. C. D.  
Mr. E. F. G.  
Mr. H. I. J.

Committee A - Sub-Committee 3

Mr. K. L. M.  
Mr. N. O. P.  
Mr. Q. R. S.  
Mr. T. U. V.

Committee B

Mr. W. X. Y.  
Mr. Z. A. B.  
Mr. C. D. E.  
Mr. F. G. H.  
Mr. I. J. K.  
Mr. L. M. N.

Committee B - Sub-Committee 1

Mr. O. P. Q.  
Mr. R. S. T.  
Mr. U. V. W.  
Mr. X. Y. Z.

Committee B - Sub-Committee 2

Mr. A. B. C.  
Mr. D. E. F.  
Mr. G. H. I.  
Mr. J. K. L.  
Mr. M. N. O.  
Mr. P. Q. R.

Committee C

Mr. S. T. U.  
Mr. V. W. X.  
Mr. Y. Z. A.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various committees and sub-committees of the Department of Health, The Ministry of Health, and the various committees and sub-committees of the various departments of the Government.

the "Clinic."

The School closed at its first convocation on March 21, 1926; over 100 graduates each received a mimeographed document strangely reminiscent of a Boy Scout oath:

D I P L O M A

B E I T K N O W N T O A L L T H E W O R L D

THAT

---

has been a student at THE HOBO COLLEGE and has attended the lectures, discussions, clinics, musicals, readings and visits to art galleries and theaters.

He has also expressed a desire to get an education, better his own conditions and help build a world that will be without unemployment, poverty, wars, prostitution, ignorance and injustice.

He pledges himself to try individually to live a clean, honest, manly life, and to take care of his health and morals, and abstain from all habits that undermine his health and better nature. He agrees to cooperate with all people and organizations that are really trying to abolish poverty and misery and to work to build a better world in which to live.

SIGNED

---

DIRECTOR

The traditional 1118 West Madison location was opened in 1927 by Herman Gaul as the Hobo Forum. Mr. Gaul explained that it was renamed the Plebian College Forum when the original title proved offensive to one of the tenants. After a little more than a year, Gaul dissociated himself from the group, and by May, 1929, Dr. Reitman caused to be distributed all down the main stem, a leaflet reading:

"Let me enjoy the earth no less because  
the all-exacting might,  
That fashioned forth its loveliness, had  
other aims than my delight!"

THE HOBO COLLEGE  
1118 West Madison Street

Will Re-Open

Saturday, May 11, 1929

THE CHAIRMAN

The Board of Directors of the Corporation has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

ARTICLE

OF THE BY-LAWS

1907

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall have the right to make, alter, amend, repeal, suspend or reinstate any of the By-Laws of the Corporation, subject to the approval of the stockholders at a regular or special meeting.

Section 2. The Board of Directors may also make such other By-Laws as may be necessary or proper for the management of the business of the Corporation, and may also make such other By-Laws as may be necessary or proper for the management of the business of the Corporation.

Section 3. The Board of Directors may also make such other By-Laws as may be necessary or proper for the management of the business of the Corporation, and may also make such other By-Laws as may be necessary or proper for the management of the business of the Corporation.

ARTICLE

SECTION

The Board of Directors of the Corporation has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

Very respectfully,  
The Board of Directors

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary



Dr. Ben L. Reitman,  
Educational Director  
Phone, Dearborn 3837

GRAND OPENING ENTERTAINMENT  
and  
FREE LUNCH at 6 P.M.

The following will participate in the Program:

Richard Bennett Noted actor (and company)	Al Dunlop President Press Club
Jim Tully, Author	Prof. E. W. Burgess, Sociologist
John Landesco, Criminologist	Prof. F. O. Beck, Social Pathologist
Dr. David Rotman, Psychiatrist	Charles Boyd, Ill. Free Employment Bureau

The Hobo College is dedicated to the study of the outcasts - "Unfriended, Melancholy, Slow" - the submerged and the seared.

LECTURES EVERY TUESD'Y, THURSD'Y, SATURD'Y, SUND'Y NIGHTS

As usual, Dr. Reitman used his access to other worlds to procure for the hoboes such an array of respectable speakers as any up-and-coming Y.M.C.A. forum would have been delighted to have.

This history of hobo forums take us up to the latter part of 1929, when the Hobo College at 1118 West Madison became the Liberal Science Institute under the deanship of Jack Macbeth. Mr. Macbeth has since moved from the old address and has become the Social Science Institute, which is operating in good form today.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
5700 SOUTH CAMPUS DRIVE

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637  
TEL: 773-936-5000  
FAX: 773-936-5000

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF FACULTY

1100 EAST 58TH STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637  
TEL: 773-936-5000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEAN OF FACULTY  
FROM: [Name]  
SUBJECT: [Subject]  
[Detailed text of the memorandum, including dates and specific details, is present but illegible due to the image quality.]

[Additional text at the bottom of the page, including a signature line and possibly a date, is present but illegible.]

## CHAPTER IV

### PROTEST-FORUMS IN CHICAGO TODAY

#### Individually sponsored forums

Thomas Paine  
Anthro-Cosmo  
Seven Arts Club  
Montparnasse  
Hyperboreans  
Social Science Institute  
Knowledge Box

#### Forums sponsored by radical or liberal organizations

Illinois Workers Alliance Forums  
Mid-City Workers  
West Woodlawn  
Monday Night Labor  
Free Society  
Central Loop  
Book Review

#### Summary comments



In January, 1937, we were able to find sixty-two active forums in Chicago. Of these, thirteen (not counting Bug Club or Bug House Square) might be called protest forums. Protest forums tend to locate near the Loop, because they generally draw their audience from the entire city or from an area near the center of the city. The three exceptions to this rule are the result of unusual circumstances. Two (West Woodlawn Forum and Monday Night Labor Forum) are sponsored by unemployed organizations which obviously need a neighborhood base. The third is the forum of the one active Anarchist group in town, most of whose partisans live near its location.

From the point of view of sponsorship, these protest forums may be divided into two categories: (1) those held under individual auspices, and (2) those held under the auspices of some organization. Those under individual auspices are responsible to no one, and are characterized by an eclecticism generally tinged with some "ism" - like bohemianism, spiritualism, or vegetarianism. The organization-sponsored forums are generally radical, have a definite agenda and a more consistent program.

### Individually Sponsored Forums

The Eclectic forums, individually sponsored, are all within a mile's distance from the Loop. As we visit them let us talk with their directors, observe their audiences and comment on their peculiarities.

#### Thomas Paine Forum and the Anthro-Cosmo Forum

Meeting on Sunday afternoon at the same time and both within the Loop area we find the Anthro-Cosmo Forum and the Thomas Paine Forum. The former has a long and honorable history, which we discussed in Chapter II. The Thomas Paine Forum is the last of a more or less continuous series of atheistic organizations under different names and sponsorships. Ten years ago, the earliest of these forums limited its discussion almost exclusively to atheism. In fact, when Dr. A. G. Coplon took over the organization in 1935, naming it after Thomas Paine and featuring current events, many "devout athletes" left in protest. Its present audience as well as that of the Anthro-Cosmo includes a bloc of dyed-in-the-wool forumites whose summer forum routine is at the Bug Club or Bug House Square. While the general tone of the audience is "liberal in the left sense of the word," the weekly newspaper advertisements bring a number of outsiders too miscellaneous to warrant generalization. A small admission charge is made at both places to defray minimum expenses, although the speakers volunteer their services.

#### The Seven Arts Club

On the near-north side we find the ultra-bohemian Seven Arts

In January, 1957, the first meeting of the Council was held in the basement of the office of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the work of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council.

January 1957 - Council Meeting

The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council.

Work of the Council in 1957

The work of the Council in 1957 was to discuss the work of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council. The meeting was held in the basement of the office of the Council.

The Council in 1957

On the question of the Council in 1957

Club, the neo-bohemian Montparnasse, and the hobohemian Social Science Institute, and the Hyperborians (which has not operated since 1937.)

Carrying on the tradition of the Dill Pickle, the Seven Arts Club now holds forth "loudly and lewdly." The director, Eddie Clasby is a glib and well-poised chairman, whose vulgarity is the wittiest of any on the near north side. Mr. Clasby acknowledges his main aim as entertainment. If, perchance, people happen to become better informed or educated at his forum, he does not object; but he insists that the pill be sugar-coated.

Since 1924, he and his colleagues have held forth in about ten different halls. They first met at 5721 Cottage Grove as an off-shoot and winter version of the Bug Club. They came to include not a representative group of the Bugs, but those of the members who appreciated a racier, sexier program.

Mr. Clasby has referred to his group as "the near intellectuals of the near north side." Actually that component is considerably diluted by recruits from all parts of the city. (In Mr. Clasby's large mailing list, composed of names of people who have attended his forum, many are from the Hyde Park, South Shore, or northwest side areas, but few are from the near north side.) In the audience, white-collared proletarians and professionals predominate, while the great number of dentists, compared to other occupational groups, is apparent to the director. As to sex, the audience is about equally divided, and there are more young people than at most forums. Thus, as it is overtly and boisterously declared, "The Seven Arts is a good place to come when on the make."

Those who come may be described politically as unaffiliated liberals and radicals. But the main concern of the patrons of the Seven Arts seems to be SEX, in its "scientific," artistic or personal aspects. Regardless what subject is billed, sexual references are capitalized upon. They are the stuff of which the cleverness of the group is fashioned.

### Montparnasse

Montparnasse is the newest addition to the individually sponsored forums. It was founded in February, 1936, by Monte Randall, the "white-haired boy" of the Seven Arts Club and other forum cliques. He had some new ideas about forum-ing, not only about commercializing discussion, but about making of it a "big business." From the point of view of publicity, attendance, eminence of lecturers, and financial returns, he has had phenomenal success.

Saturday night at Montparnasse is not the conventional forum procedure. From 8:30 to 9 P.M., Montparnasse, meeting at the swank Vas-

The Commission on the Status of Women, established in 1946, was the first of its kind. It was created by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to study and report on the status of women in all countries.

The Commission has since held several sessions, and its work has been instrumental in the development of international instruments for the advancement of women. The most significant of these is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979 and entered into force in 1981.

The Commission has also been instrumental in the development of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. This document sets out a comprehensive agenda for the advancement of women in the twenty-first century.

The Commission has also been instrumental in the development of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted in 2000. The MDGs are a set of eight international development goals that were agreed to by 189 countries at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000. The goals are to be achieved by 2015, and they include eradicating extreme poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, and reducing child mortality.

The Commission has also been instrumental in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted in 2015. The SDGs are a set of 17 international development goals that were agreed to by 193 countries at the Sustainable Development Summit of the United Nations in 2015. The goals are to be achieved by 2030, and they include eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, and reducing inequality.

### Conclusion

The Commission on the Status of Women has played a vital role in the advancement of women in the United Nations system. Its work has been instrumental in the development of international instruments for the advancement of women, and it has been instrumental in the development of the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Commission's work is a testament to the commitment of the United Nations to the advancement of women and to the achievement of a more just and equitable world.

The Commission on the Status of Women is a permanent body of the United Nations, and it continues to work for the advancement of women in all countries. Its work is a testament to the commitment of the United Nations to the advancement of women and to the achievement of a more just and equitable world.



sar House Tea Room, "strides the airlines" as Mr. Randall introduces three eminent persons (one of whom is the evening's lecturer). Each of these speaks before the microphone for six or seven minutes on a subject of his own specialty. A short intermission follows in order, according to Mr. Randall, to give the radio audience whom he has just invited an opportunity to get down to Montparnasse. Then follows the speaker's presentation, questions, and a discussion period described thus in the weekly announcements:

Your chairman will expect forensic palaver from the floor. . . anyone is invited to speak. . . three minutes allowed for each speaker . . . longer if the audience keeps its thumbs up . . . Absolutely no opinions barred . . . this forum is for the man who is wrong as well as the man who is right . . . During the unpredictable period of the evening, you will enjoy many a cerebral explosion and rapier thrust of unpremediated utterance!

There follows at 10:30 P.M. some novelty entertainment until at 11 P.M., the assemblage adjourns, for cocktails, dancing, or informal conversation.

This program attracts weekly (at an admission charge of 75¢ an audience of 150-250 people, composing several different social groups. Mr. Randall notes a Lake Shore bloc and he caters especially to middle class Jews, maintaining that they are the *sina qua non* of every successful forum. The interested observer cannot fail to distinguish here also a set of "girls" of that age when the struggle against spinsterhood is likely to assume desperate proportions. Their conspicuous little gestures and giggles during the discussion period betray their eagerness for attention from some of the eligible males attending on a similar mission. Among those also present are the "forum hounds," colorful creatures from another world, who are deliberately solicited because it is they who stimulate (if not monopolize) the discussion period and keep the respectable audience amused.

#### HYPERBOREANS

Although some of those same "forum hounds," inspired discussion at the Hyperboreans also, the rest of the audience here is not typical of any forum. Residents of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments and their friends - substantial folk of a professional sort - compose the bulk of those in attendance, although "Fellow Hyperboreans all over the world" are invited in the following announcement:

The earliest Hyperboreans were a mythical people . . . Far to the North they dwelt; in a region that was north even of the origin of the "North Wind."

The above is a copy of the letterhead of the ...  
 This letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

The letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

The letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

The letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

APPENDIX

The letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

The letter is dated ...  
 The letter is addressed to ...  
 The letter is signed by ...

The rigors of their arctic climate cooled their blood and the heat of all their sensuous passions was in consequence chilled and dissipated. . .

Their hopes, despairs, aspirations, disappointments and desires were at all points solely intellectual. They sought for and attained the ideal of the "intellectual absolute" and this meant, of course, that they were privileged to enjoy perpetual happiness and eternal youth.

We, in all modesty, have adopted the "intellectual absolute" as our ideal. That this particular "absolute" like all "absolutes" is unattainable to us is not of the slightest importance. It still serves for our ideal. We are the modern reincarnation of the earliest known intellectual myth men. We are the Hyperboreans.

All who can read this card with sympathy and understanding are our brethren.

Fellow Hyperboreans all over the world! We rejoice at your initiation and with open arms we welcome you.\*

Actually the audience in regular attendance (about forty persons) bore no startling earmarks of abstract intollectuality. Their homogeneity, as well as the failure to import professional bohemians, was probably responsible for the inertia during the discussion period, although vital and frequently sensational topics were chosen. (The forum director passed away in the summer of 1937. Subsequent attempts to revive the forum under different auspices have proven unsuccessful.)

#### The Social Science Institute

The Social Science Institute is the most successful hobo forum in this city. It has been located since 1934 on North Clark Street (first at 439; now at 708) the locale of the so-called "intellectual hobo." Jack Macbeth, the director, explains why he moved from the original meeting place at 1118 West Madison, which is in the general area of all previous hobo colleges: "The old location became unsuitable; it contained too many rooming houses, gambling joints and prostitutes - and those in no way helped our forum." The regular audience of approximately seventy-five persons is by no means limited to the neighborhood hobo and unemployed. Especially on Saturdays and Sundays there is an outside crowd of "occasionals," who appreciate both the intellectual and social values of the Social Science Institute. "I have solved the problem of attracting people who really want to learn," claims Mr. Macbeth, as he proceeds to describe his audience: "They are not respectable, they are colorful; they are socially and economically unstultified and hence freer for thought. They have not had a real schooling, but they are intelligent people who come here in large part for information."

The way up to the institute is by a dark and dingy stair, and

\*A rival forum leader explains, however, that the name was intended as pun: Hyper-bore (ans).



one will find a collection plate when one gets up there, if one comes on Saturday or Sunday. For on the week-end Mr. Macbeth foregoes the routine of passing the hat, but makes the more dignified and equally lucrative gesture of placing a tin at the entrance. "Of course, I must have someone to watch it," he adds.

### The Knowledge Box

Occupying the original home of the Social Science Institute and the traditional headquarters of Chicago's hobo colleges was the short-lived Knowledge Box, which lasted only one season. Its audience of about sixty men was much like its predecessors, although the more serious could go to the Social Science Institute on North Clark Street. Its spirit is evident in the flourish of program blurbs. Thus a mimeographed announcement card reads:

Extra.. Extra.. The Ghost will walk on Madison Street...Sat. Feb. 13th..Professor Leroy P. Parker will roll back the curtain of the beyond and let the stiffs talk to their buddies who are now residing in the High Rock Candy Mountains. How would you like to have a Ghost whisper in your ear, "Buddy, can you spare a dime?" . . . Admission 10¢

But man does not live by words alone; and the hobo college also concerned itself with its students' more elemental needs. Above the pencilled signature of Slim Brundage the following plea was sent to the "sucker list" of the Knowledge Box:

K N O W L E D G E B O X  
(The New Hobo Forum)  
1118 West Madison St.

An Educational Forum Where the Unattached, the Homeless, the Hungry, the Rebel, the Maladjusted and Misfit May Endeavor to Find a Better Way of Life and a Useful Niche in the World.

OPEN FROM NOON TILL MIDNIGHT

Lectures Every Evening and on Sunday at Three P.M.

SLIM BRUNDAGE  
Director  
A. W. DRAGSTED  
Treasurer

LOUIS SCOLA  
Custodian -

Chicago, Jan. 27, 1937

one will find a collection of these specimens...  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

THE SPECIMENS

Containing the names of the Social Science Institute  
and the following specimens of the collection...  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

[The following is a list of the specimens...]  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

[The following is a list of the specimens...]  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

THE SPECIMENS  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

[The following is a list of the specimens...]  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

THE SPECIMENS

[The following is a list of the specimens...]

[The following is a list of the specimens...]  
[The following is a list of the specimens...]

Dear Sir:

We are in financial difficulties. The average collection at meetings is two cents a head. That will not pay rent and buy coal. Madison Street wants this forum but cannot support it sufficiently.

We want to start a lunch room where the hungry transient may be fed whether he has money or not. Grocers and bakers are helping us some with food and bakery goods but we need money for equipment.

Enclosed are some tickets to our "Fiesta For Forgotten Men." We would appreciate it if you would sell them to your friends and mail us the proceeds as soon as possible.

Our shows are worth fifty cents of anybodies money. A quarter ticket should not be hard to dispose of. We will thank you for any help you can give in this direction and return you the blessing of a hundred thousand homeless men.

Yours for a Better World

(Signed) Slim Brundage

Director.

Two weeks later, The New York Times carried an Associated Press article, "Hobo College Send S O S For Rent Money" which contain a friendly resume of that Chicago institution:

The Knowledge Box - decorated with murals, (alumni art) of Karl Marx, Mark Twain, Ingersoll, Darwin and others - holds seminars, clinics and forums "every night at 8 sharp." The lecturers next week include a Presbyterian minister, a surgeon, a former alderman, a retired attorney, a dentist, a physical culturist, and a former law partner of Clarence Darrow.

FORUMS SPONSORED BY RADICAL OR LIBERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Illinois Workers Alliance Forums

The Mid-City Workers Forum

Dear Sir:

It is a pleasure to hear from you and to learn that you are still active in the field of research. The work you are doing is of great interest to me and to many others in the field.

We are interested in your work on the effects of stress on the immune system. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with a copy of your latest paper on this subject.

I am sure that your findings will be of great value to the scientific community. We look forward to receiving your response and to discussing your work in more detail.

Very truly yours,  
[Name]

Your sincere friend,  
[Name]

(Please) [Name]

[Name]

The work you are doing is of great interest to me and to many others in the field. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with a copy of your latest paper on this subject.

We are interested in your work on the effects of stress on the immune system. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with a copy of your latest paper on this subject.

Very truly yours,  
[Name]

Your sincere friend,  
[Name]

[Name]



The Mid-City Workers Forum, the first radical-sponsored forum which we shall consider is sponsored by Branch 31 of the Illinois Workers Alliance, whose leadership is communistic. Located in the neighborhood of the Knowledge Box, it attracts men of similar economic conditions but of a different political outlook. Their discussion period is not a competition private witticisms, but a chorus of mass slogans. They are not facetious, but serious and eager. They do not arrange fiestas when funds are low; they picket the relief stations. They not only imply a criticism of the capitalist system in their general bearing; they make this criticism explicit in protest demonstrations. There is, as we have said, a partial duplication of the Knowledge Box audience, but here there are more foreigners from the slum area, family men or men who once had families, "depression stiff" rather than the professional American hobo. The articulate members of this forum (they are relatively few) are Communists or Communist Party sympathizers. Moreover only those speakers are invited who are judged - as the chairman put it - "as asset to civilization." Hence, the question period tends to be more popular than the discussion period. For the last few years the forum has met four times a week (with an audience of about thirty in a hall which is shared during the rest of the week by the International Labor Defense and similar organizations.

#### West Woodlawn Forum

Local 19 of the I. W. A. sponsors the West Woodlawn Forum, located on the south side close to the colored district. One of its aims is summarized in the slogan "Black and White, U-nite!" The regular audiences (of about thirty persons who amble in much beyond the opening hour and at different times throughout the meeting) are about equally divided between white and Negro. They are persons of low economic status, on relief or close to it. The more faithful forum members belong to the I. W. A. or some Communist Party "mass organization."

#### The Monday Night Labor Forum

When Local I of the I. W. A. initiated their forum in the fall of 1936, they sought the cooperation of other community organizations, and the program speaks hopefully of these "affiliated groups":

The forum is not simply the creature of the Worker's Alliance. It is a cooperative venture in which labor unions, churches, community clubs, settlements, unemployed organizations, cultural and sport groups are invited to participate. A Committee composed of representatives of such groups guides the conduct of the forum. New groups and interested individuals are urged to join the Committee.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who were members of the Board of Directors of the Illinois State Bank and Trust Company, during the year 1900. The names are given in alphabetical order, and the names of those who were elected in 1900 are marked with an asterisk. The names of those who were elected in 1901 are marked with a dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1902 are marked with a double dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1903 are marked with a triple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1904 are marked with a quadruple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1905 are marked with a quintuple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1906 are marked with a sextuple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1907 are marked with a septuple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1908 are marked with an octuple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1909 are marked with a nonuple dagger. The names of those who were elected in 1910 are marked with a decuple dagger.

First National Bank

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Anyone familiar with the list of sponsors which appears on the same program will recognize their similar, somewhat radical nature, and their possibly interlocking directorships:

#### SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Metal Polisher's Union, Local 6  
 Workman's Circle, Branch 132  
 Illinois Worker's Alliance, Local 2  
 Nature Friends (Sport Club)  
 Community Youth Club (of Humboldt Park)  
 Humboldt Park Consumer's Cooperative Club  
 Illinois Worker's Alliance, Local 1  
 Workman's Circle, Branch 451  
 International Worker's Order, Youth Branch  
 International Worker's Order, Branch 1  
 Humboldt Park Br. International Labor Defense

When the more representative and "respectable" community organizations failed to respond to the forum, it became the exclusive charge of the I. W. A. The Monday Night Labor Forum meets in the basement of the parish house of the Humboldt Park Community Methodist Episcopal Church. Reverend W. B. Waltmire the pastor, has long been an active sponsor of unemployed organizations. He accepts the responsibility of getting the speakers because he has greater contacts and easier access to them. The audience is of the lowest income, middle-aged, and of several nationalities. Rev. Waltmire describes those who attend as belonging to either of two classes: (1) people who want to do what they can to help the unemployed; (2) the disqualified, who are unacceptable elsewhere. He regards the forum as not merely a means for dispensing general information, or an opportunity for certain people to get things off their chest, but as a method to organize thinking and to orient it toward proper action.

#### The Free Society Forum

A short distance away from the Monday Night Labor Forum is the anarchist-sponsored Free Society Forum. The two audiences are only slightly overlapping although their points of view are somewhat similar. The Free Society Group is not concerned with providing a broad general education for the population of Chicago's northwest side, though it accepts this as one of the by-products of its forum. Its main concern is to have a platform from which its ideas and ideals may be presented, even if this presentation is largely limited to the sale of literature and to five-minute speeches by members (among numerous other counter-acting five-minute speeches). The forum represents, moreover, a meeting place for the anarchist old guard, and a sort of public testimony of their continued solvency. Despite these aims, political opponents are not discriminated against. Anarchist lecturers are an almost in-

Agents handling with the list of members which appears in the last page  
will receive their share of the total amount of the fund  
as soon as the fund is liquidated.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

- United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- International Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America
- International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
- International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
- International Union of Shipbuilding Workers of America
- International Union of Shipyard Workers of America
- International Union of Shipyard Workers of America
- International Union of Shipyard Workers of America
- International Union of Shipyard Workers of America

The purpose of this fund is to provide a source of financial aid for the members of the fund in the event of their becoming disabled or in need of financial assistance. The fund is managed by the Board of Trustees, who are elected by the members of the fund. The Board of Trustees has the honor to acknowledge the generous contributions of the members of the fund and to express their appreciation for the support and cooperation of the members of the fund. The fund is a valuable asset to the members of the fund and it is the hope of the Board of Trustees that the fund will continue to grow and provide financial aid to the members of the fund in the future.

### The Fund Society Board

The Fund Society Board is the governing body of the fund. It is composed of representatives of the members of the fund and is responsible for the management of the fund. The Board of Trustees has the honor to acknowledge the generous contributions of the members of the fund and to express their appreciation for the support and cooperation of the members of the fund. The fund is a valuable asset to the members of the fund and it is the hope of the Board of Trustees that the fund will continue to grow and provide financial aid to the members of the fund in the future.

significant percent of the lectures scheduled. Protagonists of all isms are invited to speak. Political sophisticates compose a large portion of the audience. In the discussion each of these is likely to articulate his own sectarian moral no matter what is scheduled. Each individual's viewpoint is a matter of public knowledge even before the person rises in the regular discussion period. The oft-repeated complaints and panaceas are predictable; they are the "constants" of every forum meeting. While there may be a 50 per cent turnover from meeting to meeting, the audience varies only slightly from month to month. It is composed of people of several nationalities, the majority of whom are Jews. They are working people whose very limited formal education has not satiated their desire for learning - or for controversy. Intellectually they are self-made men. For them the forum is in truth a "workingmen's university." What it fails to offer in a well-rounded liberal education it makes up for in its advanced social sciences. It is a free education, except for the voluntary contribution taken up at each meeting to defray expenses.

#### Central Loop Forum

Nothing like the same diversity of political opinion is represented in the communistic Central Loop Forum sponsored by the Chicago Workers' School. The school is an "authoritative Marxist-Leninist" educational institution which aims to equip its students "for service in the labor movement and in the broad, progressive peoples' movement against fascism, reaction and war." (1) "Workers' Education is Workers' Power" is the slogan of the school. Its Central Loop Forum has been meeting on the premises since 1935 under the auspices of the Friends of the Workers School. Here "noted leaders and fighters in the working-class movement discuss important events and current problems of the day" to an audience composed largely of members or sympathizers of the "movement."

#### Book Review Forum

Conducted also under somewhat left-wing auspices, although officially unaffiliated, the Book Review Forum opened in 1936 its program of lectures on recent books of "social significance." The mailing lists of such organizations as the Teachers' Union, the Technical and Research Employees' Union W.P.A. workers), etc., from whose ranks "progressive" professionals may be recruited were used in publicizing the programs. The sponsoring group was composed of writers formerly associated with the short-lived literary magazine, the Midwest Review, and sympathetic in general to the Communist Party.

#### Summary Comments

So, as we have described in bird's eye view, these are Chi-



cago's "protest forums." Perhaps a different observer, with different notions of what is "protest" or "liberalism" would offer a different category. We defend our own only because we find it useful. It has helped us to see how some folks who find the status quo radically wrong, and belong to pressure groups or other organizations, find the forum a means of propaganda and recruitment. On the other hand we can see - especially in eclectic forums - how people who have a "kick coming," but who prefer to talk about it rather than to do something about it (or who think talking is the only thing that can be done at the present time) find forums useful.

The forums seem as important socially as they are intellectually. They give people a sense of importance, a sense of belonging. This is particularly necessary in the Loop and among the bohemians or hobohemians where the ordinary social groups, like the family, the church and the club do not exist.





CHAPTER V

"THE FORUM WORLD"



It has already been seen how extremists from all parts of the city were attracted to the early settlement house forums, intended as neighborhood organizations, and made the group their own. Some of these came seeking an education which had been denied them in their youth; some sought a critique of current events. To others, the forum's major attraction was not the opportunity to gain knowledge, but to dispense it. The radical or the reformer who has, a perpetual axe to grind, or hobby to ride, eagerly seizes upon the free forum platform. Others use the free platform, (one forum director said) "to decorate egos." They are those to whom discussion is a form of recreation, a sort of intellectual jag. They discuss - as some folks play golf - to relax, or - as some folks get new-model cars - to show off. They may be concerned primarily with the ideas they are articulating or with the very process of articulation itself, and with the audience it commands. But whether they start out by having something to say, or by having to say something, they eventually develop a great mental hinterland, and a comparative facility with words. They are the "intellectual virtuosoes" out of whom successful heckling is made.

They are the habitual forum hounds - the typical "Bugs," the regulars at most of the protest forums, and the occasional visitors at the more respectable forums. Every time a forum free-lancer opens shop in the Loop or on the near north side - whoever he may be or whatever his purpose - his crowd of "first-nighters," the nucleus of members, seems to be about the same, and the regular lecturers are practically identical. (Dr. Ben L. Reitman can be counted on to officiate at every opening and to bring a "Sociological Tour" or two with him; the other frequent speakers include John Laughman, so-called "King of Soap Boxers"; Bertie Weber, his colleague in "Christ Killing"; and Sam Ball, conscientious and popular self-made historian. "Professor" Frank Midnoy, Reuben Menkin, and Dave Tullman are also among the regular home-talent lecturers.

Cranks and psychopaths also abound at these forums, because they are given an opportunity for self-expression and are tolerated here more than elsewhere.

These forum habituees - the truth-seekers, the truth-tellers, the rag-chewers, the cranks, and all the others whom we have not discussed - come to develop, because of their mutual interests and frequently because of their lack of contact with the more conventional social groups, a "world" of their own.

The forum world emerged out of the common bond of protest of the sundry non-conformists. A major characteristic, then, of its founders is their criticism of the status quo, though individual members vary in the method and direction of their criticism. But just as the early intellectuals of the New York socialist movement were identified with the bohemians of Greenwich Village, so were these groups marginal to



each other in Chicago. Cross-fertilization of ideas also occurred between free-thinkers and the radicals who were attracted to their lectures. This "world" is characterized by a distinct set of habits of talk and attitudes of mind. Every member of this world is likely to know, or at least know of, most every other member-in good-standing. Many are identified by nicknames or by the "line" they are accustomed to "spout." In the life organization of each, the forum is important. They may depend on it for the satisfaction of their wishes for response and recognition; it may take the place of the family, the occupational association, the "cultural" organization or the recreation group.

Even superficial acquaintance with this world reveals a universal infatuation with words. Discussants seem more concerned often with words fitting each other than in their fitting the situation. Epigrams, epithets, alliteration and metaphor, wit and wisdom are the avenues to greater glory. While an independent vocabulary does not yet exist in this world, its vernacular is composed of a number of hackneyed puns and peculiar bromides. Thus one rarely hears of the Tribune or the Saturday Evening Post; one hears regularly instead "Spittoon" or "Saturday Evening Pest." A characteristic forum slogan directed at visiting professors of the "Standard Oil University" is "There are fibs, lies and statistics." An abstract love of knowledge is often coupled with a disregard of the distributors of it. A respectable person who is held in utter disrespect by the forum entrepreneur will be invited to speak because of the opportunity for backfiring. Glittering generalities are popular for their glitter, rather than their exactitude, for forumites step in where academicians fear to tread.

Positions of status based on skill in discussion exist although there is no unanimity concerning individual merits. Nevertheless such statements as "Eddie Clasby is the best master of ceremonies in Chicago" have been made even by his competitors. The elite are emulated by the neophytes so that it has been said, "M. tries to imitate the robust manner of the big he-man, like John Loughman" or "The speech B. gives is notoriously written by Bertie Weber" or "Macbeth gave a speech at some swank fraternal order and took S. along to rattle his chains."

Heckling is legitimized in a discussion period which no forum patronized by the denizens of the forum world is without. Given a pet notion which is sufficiently ingrained - be it concerning vivisection or single tax or Christ - a forum hound will attempt to show its relevance to every other subject in the world, with particular reference to the subject scheduled for the evening. Those who are not "so far gone" also have a point of view which is not likely to change significantly over a period of time. Dr. Percy Ward concludes after thirty years experience with forums that "Lecture fans do not read." Nevertheless there is a tendency to quote authoritative writers or speakers, though distorting their meaning to prove ones own point. Five-minute speakers want to appear authoritative themselves, and Ben Reitman's attempt in this regard has earned him the reputation of "the great hobo a-

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. The text also mentions the need for regular audits to ensure the integrity of the financial data. Furthermore, it highlights the role of the accounting department in providing timely and accurate information to management for decision-making purposes.

In the second section, the document details the various methods used for data collection and analysis. It describes how primary data is gathered through direct observation and interviews, while secondary data is obtained from existing sources. The text explains the process of organizing and summarizing the collected information to identify key trends and patterns. It also discusses the use of statistical tools to analyze the data and draw meaningful conclusions. The final part of this section focuses on the importance of presenting the findings in a clear and concise manner, using appropriate visual aids like charts and graphs.

The third section of the document addresses the challenges faced during the research process. It identifies common issues such as limited access to data, time constraints, and potential biases in the sample. The text provides practical suggestions for overcoming these obstacles, such as establishing clear communication channels and using multiple data sources to cross-verify information. It also stresses the importance of maintaining a high level of ethical standards throughout the entire process.

The final section of the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and their implications. It reiterates the significance of the research and offers recommendations for future studies. The text also includes a brief acknowledgment of the support and assistance provided by various individuals and organizations. Finally, it expresses the hope that the information presented in the document will be helpful and informative to the reader.

mong sociologists; the great sociologist among hoboes."

Despite all this, ideas are subject to an intellectual vivisection such as would offend the sensibilities of any but a native of the forum world.

Thus the visit with the denizens of the "forum world" is terminated. Of course not all those who attend protest forums fit the descriptions presented above. Nor is it intended to imply an intellectual flippancy to all programs. Quite the contrary is frequently true, and our picture is more descriptive of some forums than of others. No group, however erudite, is held together by disembodied intellectuality alone. Least of all is this true of the forum world.

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PART III

NON-PARTISAN COMMUNITY FORUMS IN CHICAGO

Chapter VI Pre-War History of Non-Partisan Community  
Forums in Chicago

Chapter VII Non-Partisan Community Forums in Chicago Today

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## CHAPTER VI

### PRE-WAR HISTORY OF NON-PARTISAN COMMUNITY FORUMS IN CHICAGO

Community Center Forums

at Olivet Institute

at Jewish People's Institute

Church Forums

Sinai Forum

Fred Atkins Moore and Three Pre-War Forums

Forums of Civic and Semi-Social Organizations

Swedish Educational League

Men's City Club

Summary Comments



## CHAPTER VI

PRE-WAR HISTORY OF NON-PARTISAN COMMUNITY FORUMS  
IN CHICAGO

There are three main sources of non-partisan community forums in Chicago:

1. Settlement houses and community centers
2. Churches and synagogues
3. Civic organizations

Community Center Forums

## Olivet Institute Forum

We have already considered the pioneer settlement house forums—the Social Science Club at Hull House and the Free Floor at Chicago Commons. A more recent pre-war forum of the same sort was that of the Olivet Institute, a Presbyterian mission located at various addresses on the near north side (and now at 1441 Cleveland Avenue). Here, by about 1910, the Public Welfare Club was established. It was not known as a forum until at least five years afterward, but it used the forum procedure all along.

Reverend Norman Barr, the director, believes firmly in free speech and democracy. To him these are operational concepts to be defined by the forum method. Accordingly, the significant aspects of his forum philosophy and practice are:

- (1) The transfer of forum leadership to someone in the community:

Dr. Barr himself is present at his forum meetings, whenever possible, but he feels that chairmanship and directorship should be delegated to the local citizens for whom the forum is conducted.

- (2) A discussion period, wherein members of the audience may contribute impromptu few-minute addresses on the scheduled subject: To follow the speaker's presentation only with questions is to emasculate the meeting, he maintains.

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
IN SENATE  
January 10, 1911.

REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE  
IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
LANDS BELONGING TO THE STATE

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- (3) Welcome and tolerance to an unlimited public, including social pariahs:

As seems to be universally true, the more liberal of the community were attracted to the forum, while the reactionaries were not. Moreover, radicals from all parts of the city are drawn to a free platform as bees to honey. When socialists came to Olivet, they received a respectful hearing from the community audience (composed of immigrant workingmen of northern European nativity), but anarchists were somewhat taboo. Dr. Barr attempted to treat all guests - regardless of political complexion - with equal impartiality.

- (4) Constructive community action on the basis of forum discussion:

The early forums were concerned mainly with domestic economic questions and community problems. In the latter field, on issues like saloons, prostitution and elections, the forum groups found ample opportunity for post-discussion projects.

But the Reverend Mr. Barr believes in pacifism as well as free speech and democracy. So when the first Olivet Forum was organized in 1915 the new (and present) headquarters \* the war in Europe was freely discussed from all points of view; it never ceased to be a controversial issue, even after the United States had entered. (Mr. Barr propagandized his pacifism on pulpit, forum, and street corner despite the threat of prosecution.) But since the neighborhood at that time was German, and its residents feared being suspected as pro-Kaiser, they shied away from discussion. Conscientious objectors to the war, however, welcomed the opportunity to articulate their protests at the Olivet Forum.

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\* (1) Part of the congregation remained at the old location (Halsted and Vedder Streets), but the new sponsors were unable to continue the established forum for very long. Apparently they lacked the knack of forum-conducting; moreover, the Italian people (who were fast moving into the neighborhood) were here as at Chicago Commons not very responsive to the discussion technique.





The war brought a realization of an international interdependence to which America was no exception and foreign affairs began to assume prominence on forum programs. Then after 1929 depression came, the community seems to have developed a greater response to forums and to have had more time to devote to them. By 1933, it was possible to have three forums a week, the audiences of about thirty-five at each session. by 1936 there was a forum an evening, and a regularity of topic for each evening of the week. Thus the schedule ran:

Monday:	International Affairs
Tuesday:	Economics, Industry, Government
Wednesday:	Lectures of the Series Type
Thursday:	Ethics, Philosophy, Morals, Religion
Friday:	Biography, History, Travel
Saturday:	Arts, Literature, Sciences

These programs were in the charge of six volunteers, each responsible for one day of the week. These special chairmen, invited by Mr. Barr from among the audience, frequently did not live in the immediate community, but were forum habitués from the neighboring hobo or other areas. They conferred with Mr. Barr every Monday concerning the next week's program.

The local audience was composed largely of foreign (German, Italian, Hungarian) middle-aged workers (or unemployed) in the low income or relief groups. There were always some irregulars, however, who happened to be interested in a particular evening's program. Undoubtedly the fellowship available at the forum was one of the attractions, as it is anywhere. Some of the less idealistic probably came "to kill time." Mr. Barr characterizes them for the most part as "seekers after rather than promoters of ideas." At any rate, they did not seem eager to participate in the discussion periods, although they attended several nights a week. \*

#### Forums At the Jewish People's Institute

The present Institute Lecture Forum was launched in 1911 as the Chicago Hebrew Institute's lectures series. Neither in name nor in method was it originally a forum. It was not until 1927 that meeting announcements read "Open Forum Discussion will follow lectures." The

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\* When Mr. Barr left the Institute in May, 1937, the forum began to dwindle. In the summer months, it was reduced to one meeting a week, and it never completely revived. The present management is seeking to initiate an entirely different forum program in November, 1938, with the assistance of the Adult Education Program of the W.P.A. and the Board Education.



lecture program was originally similar to a University Extension Course. But by 1917, lack of wide support made it necessary to change the program to a more popular sort "for the benefit of those who are not quite ready to take advantage of the type of course" formerly presented. Since then a wider public has been sought.

Most of the early speakers were professors from the University of Chicago. All of them were well known people. Still individual lectures were only 10¢.

After nine years' lapse, the Wednesday program was reopened in 1927 as the University of Chicago International Relations series (emphasizing political and controversial rather than cultural themes). In 1928 it became the Institute Lecture Forum. Although first in its area, this forum must compete today with numerous other neighborhood lecture and discussion groups. Assisted by the Adult Education Council, the Institute secures leading local lecturers "with an expert point of view." The present admission charge is 25¢ although the majority of the audience hold season tickets.

Most regular and persevering of the many other forums which have been established at the J. P. I. in the last ten years is the Sunday Five O'clock Forum. It is a smaller more sociable group than the Wednesday Institute Forum, with a longer discussion period. Originally it devoted all of its sessions to topics of Jewish interest, but the trend is away from an exclusively Jewish agenda. Almost without exception, the members of the audience are Jewish, however, and from the neighborhood - as is the express intention of the sponsors. Of the 150 or so who come; about 75 per cent are very regular. The values different people seek from this forum are roughly categorized by the director thus:

1. Warmth - Homeless drifters, roomers in the neighborhood who especially appreciate the social atmosphere.
2. Dispute - Paole Zionists vs. Zionists, Communists vs. conservatives, Trostkists vs. Stalinists.
3. Recognition - "Intellectual snobs" who want it known that they attend a forum.
4. Education - Those to whom becoming further informed is a major concern.

#### Church Forums

Religious agencies in the city of Chicago do not seem to have sponsored forums till just before the war. It is interesting (and unusual) however, that an Evanston Church led the way by about ten years.

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SECRET

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Frank McCulloch, a member of long-standing of this forum briefly summarizes its history (in a personal letter to the author):

The Forum of the First Congregational Church of Evanston was started about 1916, then under the name "Current Events Class." It was continued for many years just after the morning preaching service. In the beginning the topics were as indicated by the name of the Class—mainly about current events, political, industrial and social.

Then during the war period they took up various questions of war, conscription, conscientious objectors, foreign relations and industrial conditions. During this period they used the same "Sunday Noon Forum." Later they adopted the name "Town Meeting" and have continued to use that to the present time, discussing various social, economic and political questions.

Recently they have moved the meetings to the Public Library Building in Evanston to accommodate some people who seemed to hesitate to come to a church building.

There has been a continued interest all these years but a considerable amount of work is required to provide suitable programs and to secure and maintain proper leadership.

#### Sinai Forum

Lecturers under synagogue auspices came early in Chicago's intellectual history, but Sinai Temple was the first to present a regular forum program. It has been emulated not only by local synagogues but by varied organizations from all over the country, some of them have written to Sinai's director for guidance. Its pioneer work, and its continued success, are due largely to the inspiration and perseverance of its executive director, Mr. S. D. Schwartz. The history of the forum is perhaps best told in his own words:

I came to Sinai as assistant to the superintendent in 1914, right out of the University of Chicago. Sinai was a flourishing Temple then, with many physical attractions, including, I remember, a large swimming pool. I felt that something should be done in as attractive manner for mental development. So, in November, a month after I came to the Temple, we began our forum. Of course it was highly discouraged by the old timers. . . . At that time forums were prac-



tically non-existent. There were of course, extension lecture courses, that offered a sort of "pretty evening," and women's clubs. (As a matter of fact the forum movement came, in many respects from the women instead of the men. Most forums, if they go back approximately 15 years, deal with "feminine," "cultural" themes. Today they take the broad cultural base for granted, and try to develop in their members perspective as citizens of the World.) International issues seem much more important now, as exemplified by the fact that the Daily News devotes two pages to foreign news but never did so before the war. Local problems are much less popular as forum topics. For example, it is hard to interest over 600 people in such an important question as the city manager plan.

Our institution has a liberal tradition. It is the only congregation that has not had a Saturday service, and this has been true for 64 to 65 years. During the war, the Rabbi was "under a cloud." He was accused of being pro-German. I steered clear of propaganda at the forum, however, concentrating on such programs as talks by University professors in specialized fields - geography, literature, etc.

In the beginning the men would come only to escort their ladies to the door and to call for them after two hours. Gradually, some stayed for the program, and those who "came to scoff remained to pray." We charged only \$2.00 for 20 lectures then; yet our highest attendance in the first few years was 100. However by 1920 the assembly hall with its capacity of 600 was found inadequate and the sessions were moved to the adjoining large Temple auditorium seating 2200 people. The price of the season ticket is now \$3.75 for eight sessions, but we realize approximately 150% more than the cost of the program.

Now since the area around the Temple is largely a colored one, all our audience come from a greater distance, some from as far as 30 to 40 miles. Perhaps about 30% of those who attend are gentile.

The early audiences, like those of today, included rather homogeneously, people in the middle economic brackets. In politics they were - and are - liberals. We used to have more of those who disbelieved completely in the intellectual status-quo; but not so now. We don't encourage the habitual "aginnners," the "anti-minds."

#### Fred Atkins Moore and Three Pre-War Forums

Under guidance of Fred Atkins Moore (known for the founding of and long association with the Adult Education Council of this city),

The first part of the document discusses the general principles of the proposed system. It outlines the objectives and the scope of the project, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to the problem at hand. The text highlights the importance of collaboration and communication among all stakeholders involved in the process.

The second part of the document provides a detailed description of the system's architecture and components. It explains how the various elements of the system are interconnected and how they work together to achieve the desired outcomes. This section includes a thorough analysis of the data flow and the processing mechanisms, as well as a discussion of the system's scalability and flexibility.

The third part of the document focuses on the implementation and deployment of the system. It details the steps involved in the installation and configuration of the system, as well as the necessary resources and personnel. This section also addresses the potential challenges and risks associated with the implementation and provides strategies to mitigate them.

The fourth part of the document discusses the evaluation and monitoring of the system's performance. It describes the methods and metrics used to assess the system's effectiveness and efficiency, and provides a framework for ongoing monitoring and improvement. This section emphasizes the importance of continuous evaluation and the ability to adapt to changing requirements and conditions.

The fifth part of the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It reiterates the main points of the document and provides a clear and concise overview of the proposed system and its potential benefits. The text also offers final thoughts and suggestions for further research and development in this area.

Prepared by the Research and Development Department

This document is confidential and its contents should not be disclosed to unauthorized personnel.



three new forums were launched by 1917.

Mr. Moore came to Chicago in 1914 from Boston, where he had been inspired by the example of Ford Hall Forum, and George W. Coleman's missionary attitude toward it. Then, as Minister of the Universalist Church of the Redeemer, Mr. Moore opened a forum there "for the discussion of live issues." This neighborhood (around Warren and Damen) was then a degenerating middle-class one. The two elements that composed the audience were (as in the case of the settlement forums we have discussed): (1) the ordinary people of the community; (2) the radical fringe. The latter, Mr. Moore explains, "came to ride their hobbies. They were the more aggressive type, and would therefore demand as much attention as could be given to them." Although there was an interested audience for several years, the forum automatically collapsed when Mr. Moore left the church and the ministry in 1918.

The other two forums Mr. Moore founded - the one in Lincoln Center with the help of its dean, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, and that at Lane Technical High School with the help of its principal, the late Superintendent of Schools, William J. Bogan - met on Sunday afternoons and Saturday evenings respectively. These continued only a short while, definitely closing at the time of the war.

#### Forums of Civic and Semi-Social Organizations

The third and final category of early forums includes those of civic organizations whose programs, though nominally open to the public, are in practice generally attended by members only. Hundreds of civic organizations in the city have had at one time or another special programs involving lectures followed by questions from the audience. Many of these have conducted such programs over a period of time. (For instance, the local Business and Professional Women's Clubs, founded in 1919; now has eight branches in the city, each with a monthly program on topics designated by the international office. But these are not included in our list because for the most part they are attended by members only; questions from the audience, though frequent, are not the rule; and the place of meeting varies from month to month.) It would be difficult, therefore, if not impossible, to list all the marginal cases of near-forums which were sponsored at one time or another by some civic group.

Hence we shall be concerned here only with the two representatives of this category on our list (i. e., in operation in January, 1937). These are the Swedish Educational League (Lake View Forum) and the Men's City Club Luncheon-Forum.



The Swedish Educational League  
(Lakeview Forum)

Among the few early forum groups in Chicago which have grown rather than diminished with the years, is the Swedish Educational League. Notwithstanding its "policy of strict political and religion neutrality," its liberal nature is revealed in the choice of speakers and subjects on its recent programs. Since the depression, the topics have been predominantly political, although they were more consistently cultural before that time. A concise history of the organization, from the pen of its founders, is the small brochure, Twenty Years of Educational Pioneering (published on the occasion of the opening of the 1935-6 season). This so adequately explains the origins and background of forums for the Swedish people, that it is worth quoting in large part:

The Swedish Educational League was organized by a group of Swedish working people who, before their arrival in America, had been active in the temperance and labor movements in Sweden. It is patterned after the famous lecture societies in Sweden which exist in particaly every city, town, and village of that country. . . .

During the first years lecturers using the Swedish language were given preference. It soon became increasingly difficult, however, to obtain Swedish speaking lecturers, able to cover the great variety of subjects demanded by the audience. It was then decided to attach less importance to the language, a change of tactics which soon brought its own reward in the form of a substantial increase in attendance. Now, even the Swedish speaking members do not like their own language but because they seem to prefer English, not because they found that a lecture in English is doubly beneficial in that it also adds to their knowledge of that language and gives them a better understanding of its correct use.

Owing to its character as a public forum The Swedish Educational League does not concentrate on any specialized study or any one school of thought. Professional and trade schools are available in every part of the city for those who wish to train themselves for an occupation or profession. Followers of political, religious or philosophical creeds can also easily find associations to their liking, where only their own particular line of thought is dwelled upon. The Swedish Educational League, therefore, does not limit itself to any certain kind of teaching in its educational activities. Although it only functions a few months of each

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON

The history of the city of Boston is a subject of great interest and importance. It is a city of many centuries, and its history is full of events and incidents that have shaped the city into what it is today. The city was founded in 1630, and since that time it has grown and developed in many ways. It has become one of the most important cities in the United States, and its history is a testament to the strength and resilience of the American people.

The city of Boston has a rich and varied history. It was founded in 1630, and since that time it has grown and developed in many ways. It has become one of the most important cities in the United States, and its history is a testament to the strength and resilience of the American people. The city has a long and proud tradition of education, and it is home to many of the most famous universities in the world. It is also a city of great cultural and artistic achievement, and it has many beautiful parks and landmarks. The city of Boston is a city of many firsts, and its history is a testament to the strength and resilience of the American people.

year, it is endeavoring as best it can to keep its members informed about world affairs in general, such as the advancement of science, outstanding achievements in literature, causes of national and international changes and upheavals, and last but not least, it tries to give as close an account as it possible can of the efforts that are being made to bring the world out of its present chaotic economic and political condition and into a new system of society, based on justice and true human brotherhood.

To gain this end The Swedish Educational League maintains a forum where any problem of importance can be discussed fearlessly and honestly. It believes that no man should form an opinion on any important question until he has studied it from every side, and to aid in such study is really the chief mission of this organization. Consequently, no man is denied a hearing because his views are radical. All that is expected of a lecturer is that he is able to enlighten his audience on a subject upon which a wide awake citizen should be informed and that he can do this briefly and interestingly.

In our opinion the need of forums of this kind is obvious. Not even during the difficult years of America's participation in the World War did the interest slacken, and as the years went by it became more and more evident that a forum of this kind had an important mission to fill among the Swedish people of Chicago. . .

This is not a huge group; generally no more than 100 attend the forum. Publicity is light; fees are conservative (25¢ for single lecture, \$2.00 for season book of fourteen and the programs are not sensational. Still, the consecutiveness of attendance and the sobriety of this 20 year old enterprise give fair ground for predicting continued success. Well over half who attend are Swedish. The sale of family season tickets (\$3.00 for two), and the fact that each season a session is devoted to a membership meeting and one to a lecture in the Swedish language, seems to indicate the homogeneity and the personal relationships in the audience. The tone of the meetings is distinctly liberal, for, as its president explains, "although our organization is non-political, our audiences are chiefly made up of co-operators, liberals and radicals, and naturally we have to see to it that the majority of our speakers are sympathetic to these groups." People do not come to the forum to have their minds changed. "They come here to be informed about things - just as the would read a trade journal or a newspaper." And expert speakers - many of them from the Univer-

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sity of Chicago - help the group to accomplish this end.

### Men's City Club Forum

In sight into the City Club's forum is to be had through an understanding of the Club itself, which like the Swedish Educational League, began with a "mission" to perform. It is officially declared that:

. . . The City Club was born not as the idle or theoretical whim of a group of men who simply sat down at ease and comfortably speculated, "Let's have another club," or who even altruistically tried to think up some useful form of civic institution. On the contrary, it was born of the heat and clash of Chicago's greatest political war of the 19th century, in a five-year continuous battle to free our city from the domination of the "Gray Wolves" in the City Council and their corrupt counterparts in the legislative halls of Springfield. As a consequence of this struggle, a group of men banded themselves together in a permanent organization to insure watchful vigilance on the sole behalf of a defenseless public.

We do not know when the forum itself actually began. The minutes of the Directors' meetings tell us however, that in January, 1907, it was voted that the guest speaker's time be cut down to thirty minutes so that the audience might be permitted to participate with questions and discussions.

Despite its broad civic purpose, the City Club - and hence its forum - has been composed almost entirely of business and professional men, and of none in the lower economic brackets. "We have many labor men" says a Men's City Club executive recently; however these turn out to be not laboring men themselves but professors or professionals with broad sympathies for labor.

At the City Club, lectures are noticeably more concerned with local problems than at other forums. There is a definite, practical tone to the topics as well as to the content of the discussion period.

### Summary Comments

There emerges from this history of pre-war non-partisan community forums as there does from our previous review of protest forums a recognition that as a technique of public discussion forums have





been a matter of relative indifference to Chicagoans. If this were not so there would be a much smaller lapse of time between forums, and a greater number of forums at any one time.

The first non-partisan forums were established in the wake of social turmoil when liberal pioneers of the new settlement movement sought a safety valve for social antagonisms. Here, they hoped, workers with grievances could get things off their chests, and the clash of opinions could be substituted for the clash of physical forces. (Capital and labor itself seldom met on the forum floor although the substantial citizens paid their private respect to the theory of social harmony at their own forum, the Sunset Club. Radical thinkers among the more prosperous and professional came to Sunset regularly volunteering as proxy for their laboring brethren who could not afford the \$1.25 luncheon. Radicals ridiculed the notion that weekly forums could fundamentally affect basic social evils and regarded the settlements' efforts as "the good which is enemy of the best." They nevertheless took advantage of the opportunity to discuss and proselytise - so much so, in fact, that these settlement forums were closed by their sponsors on the grounds that they were becoming city-wide rendezvous for radicals rather than community institutions. The cultural or educational idea which frequently motivated forums is exemplified at Sinai Temple and at the Jewish People's Institute where the forums start as a sort of ladies' literary society or university extensive course. Public affairs and controversy come to these forums not by prearrangement or blueprint, but as a sort of by-product of the times.

When talk about democracy is in the air, the forums may constitute themselves its guardians; they illustrate its possibilities by their own use of the democratic privileges of free speech and assemblage. Sometimes their zeal for democracy borders on propaganda, and the boast of the forums that they are unbiased, and merely educational, is open to challenge.

from a variety of religious institutions in the country. It is also true that  
the country would be a more united one if the common people, and a  
greater number of leaders of the people.

The first and foremost thing that should be done in the way  
of social reform is the removal of the social barriers which  
stand in the way of the masses. The masses are the backbone  
of the nation and it is only by their support that the nation  
can progress and prosper. The masses are the source of  
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## CHAPTER VII

### NON-PARTISAN COMMUNITY FORUMS IN CHICAGO TODAY

Community Center Forums

Forums of Religious Organizations

Church

Synagogue

Forums of Civic and Professional Organizations

Forums of Community, Forum Groups

Government Sponosred Forums

Summary and Comments

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The first part of the book is devoted to a general history of the United States, from the discovery of the continent to the present time. The second part is a history of the individual states, and the third part is a history of the federal government.

In addition to the three historic sources of forums, there are several more recent kinds of forum sponsorship. (1) federal government and (2) community groups, formed specifically for the forum purpose.

When we were becoming acquainted with the protest forums in Chicago today, we were able to review each of them individually. But since there are more than three times as many status-quo forums, space does not permit our doing here. Let us approach these groups instead, in terms of their sponsoring agencies, and mention individually only their peculiarities.

### Community Center Forums

First in time, and therefore first on our list, are the forums under the sponsorship of social agencies. Their location can explain their existence only indirectly for they are handed down to the community from above, existing in it, but not rising out of it. This distinction between forums which are native to their neighborhood, and those merely "planted" there is complicated by the fact that a forum originally founded "for the people" may become an enterprise of the people and by the people.

There are (January, 1937) about a dozen social service agencies which sponsor forums in Chicago. These are Aedus Community Center, Archer Road Community Center, Association House, Englewood Y.M.C.A., Lincoln Centre, Jewish Peoples Institute, Lawson Y.M.C.A., North Larabee Y.M.C.A., Olivet Institute, Peniel Community Center, Hyde Park Y.M.C.A..

Most of these forums are conducted by a paid staff-member, as a part of the educational program. The Y.M.C.A.'s for instance, have traditionally had some form of discussion in their routine.

Generally such programs concern public affairs, but sometimes a particular interest or point of view of the agency may influence the choice of speaker and subject. Thus the Lawson Y.M.C.A. Forum, adapted to the interests of the business men who are its residents, find that topics of special practical interest rather than of broad significance (like capitalism or fascism) are the most popular. In fact the largest audience the forum ever drew (125) came to hear Mr. Clyde Bydell of Marshall Field and Company ("Caleb" in the Tribune) discuss "Seven Keys to Retail Profits." The original plan of the Sunday Evening Discussion Group at Lincoln Centre was to present constructive lectures on local problems. But this was impracticable. It is apparently difficult to stir up interest in purely local problems; moreover the speakers sent as representatives from the various local organizations were frequently incompetent as lecturers. Aedus and Peniel Community Centers are Hebrew Christian missions, supported by the Presbyterian Board. They seek Jewish converts to Christianity and regard their forums as means toward this end. Consequently, typical topics are "Can a Christian Be An Anti-Semite?" or "Do Modern Scientists Believe in God?" Their motto is

It is noted that the above mentioned matters of law, have not  
been fully resolved and the Government (1) should consider  
and the Ministry of Law, should specifically be the law.

There are also several matters of law which are pending in  
the Ministry of Law, and it is suggested that the Ministry  
should consider these matters and take appropriate action.  
The Ministry of Law should also consider the possibility of  
amending the law in order to deal with these matters.  
In view of the fact that the Ministry of Law is the  
responsible authority for the law, it is suggested that  
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### Conclusion

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"There is an answer to every problem and a remedy for every evil" and since they feel sure of both the answer and the remedy, they carry on, despite small numbers, and despite the bold young agnostics who come to heckle.

Speakers at social agency forums are for the most part Chicago men, who for some reason of civic interest, propogandism, or personal pride generally volunteer their services.

The audiences vary with the neighborhood. A polyglot area or simply a foreign one is hard to activate, although there seems to be some exception in the case of the Swedes, the Bohemians, and particularly the Jews who have had some tradition of discussion. When a Y.M.C.A. has hotel accommodations, the residents compose the bulk of the audience. In those areas where human "driftwood" live or linger, they are bound to be well-represented in any forum which will tolerate them.

Recently several of these forums, particularly the ones appealing especially to the young folks (e.g., Archer Road Community Forum at Goodwill Center) and the Association House Forum have accepted the proffered aid of the National Youth Administration Community Forums Program in selecting speakers, mimeographing programs, and sometimes in providing personnel.

### Forums of Religious Organizations

#### Churches

The church forums in Chicago are those of the Avondale Methodist Episcopal, the First Unitarian, the New England Congregational, the Third Presbyterian, the St. James, the Bryn Mawr Congregational churches and the Society of Friends and Quinn Chapel. They do not seem to differ significantly from those of the community centers, except that there may be a greater bond between those who attend. Outsiders are welcome, but seldom come. Only infrequently do these forums concentrate especially on religious subjects, as the People's Open Forum of the Third Presbyterian Church did. (This venture - like Peniel and Aedus - was sponsored and financed by the Presbyterian Church Extension Board.) Poor, unattached men of the rapidly deteriorating neighborhood in which the church is located were offered salvation by Rev. L. H. Aronson, well-known in certain circles as the Jew who entered the forum world an atheist and emerged a Christian. His purpose in conducting the forum is, of course, a missionary one. Toward this end, he delivered a good number of the seasons' lectures himself, scheduled like-minded speakers at other times, and devoted most of the remaining sessions to such civic items as fire protection and anti-narcotism.

There is one Negro church forum, that at Quinn Chapel, found-

The first part of the report is devoted to a general survey of the situation in the country, and to a description of the various departments and their respective functions.

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Table of Contents

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There is no other part of the report.



ed in 1936 by the minister and "a group of my intellectuals" and enduring but a brief season. The forum had a two-fold purpose: (1) to induce evening attendance at the church, which is inconveniently located for most of the congregation, and (2) to attract the "intellectual group that were not attending church as they should." Cultural and literary topics predominated at Quinn Chapel, as they do at several other church forums.

In October 1937 the New England Congregational Church Forum merged with the Chicago Forum, which continue to meet together at Thorne Hall of the Northwestern University (Chicago Campus). Their advisory board is now composed of representatives of the four sponsoring organizations: the Chicago Forum, the New England Church, Northwestern University, and St. James' Church.

### Synagogues

The synagogue forums are the most homogenous single group of forums in town. They may be summarized together in general terms. Jews - regardless of political complexion or religious leanings - seem to be the most forum-going nationality in the city. Forums fit in well with their tradition and folkways of scholarliness and talk. Among the Jewish organizations which have such forum activity, the temples and synagogues are outstanding examples. Theirs are the most completely organized, well-attended set of forums in the city, the most apparently professional, with speakers arranged for long before the beginning of the season, season books systematically sold, and a comparative stability through the years.\*

In January, 1937, there were fifty-six Jewish organizations listed under the classification "Churches" in Chicago's Classified Phone Directory. Of these, eight (or one out of every seven) had active public forums. The following table presents a further description of this set-up:

<u>Kind of synagogue</u>	<u>No. in phone book</u>	<u>No. having forums</u>
Conservative	9	1
Independent	1	1
Orthodox	32	2
Reformed	14	4

\* Since the Jewish people have been the most successful pioneers in the business of conducting popular public affairs forums they are the object of much criticism as well as credit. Such criticisms must not be interpreted as in any way anti-semitic; they would be directed toward anyone else who sponsored forums of similar quality or quantity.

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In October 1957, the ...  
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In January, 1957, ...  
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Year	1954	1955	1956	1957
...	1	1	1	1
...	1	1	1	1
...	1	1	1	1
...	1	1	1	1

\* Since the ... of the ... and ...  
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Of the forums operating in January, 1937, only two were founded before the depression. Their years of origin are:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1914	1
1928	1
1933	1
1934	2
1935	0
1936	3

None of these "just happened." They were all deliberately begun and - with the exception perhaps of the very first one - for similar reasons. Forum sponsors, speaking for purposes of publication, elaborate on the role of the temple (or synagogue) as "a cultural and intellectual center of the community." This may be the truth, but it is not generally the whole truth. The forum is also important in providing publicity for the sponsoring organization. Prestige and popularity accrue to the temple which conducts a successful forum and to the individuals directly responsible. It is a means of increasing membership and getting revenue. Off the record, a director may say, "The forum is a business proposition, pure and simple. It must be built up like a business. We pay what we must for 'big names' to attract an audience, and then try to accomplish truly educational functions by other methods."

Competition between synagogues for status has grown up; in this competition, the conducting of a popular forum is a positive item. Sometimes this competition is evidenced by overt statements of invidious comparison. Sometimes it is more subtle. But generally it exists, and cannot be overlooked in explaining the recent enthusiasm for forums on the part of the several synagogues at the same time. To judge by this and by the growing number of less pretentious forums, foruming may be a synagogue fad, just as crossword puzzles were once a newspaper fad. Will it be as long-lived as the latter?

These forums seem to prosper more when the responsibility and credit for their conduct are in the hands of a paid executive rather than a volunteer committee. In the latter case, rivalries often develop which split the group - and the forum. Moreover - as many lay-directors have found - the bulk of the work generally falls upon one person for whom the demands of time and effort prove too exacting.

Publicizing techniques of all these temple and synagogue forums are similar: neighborhood placards, brochures, mailing lists, community and city newspaper items and advertisements. Ticket sales are in the hands of various affiliated organizations, especially the women's auxiliaries who sometimes become so involved in the competition among each other that they seem to lose sight of the purpose for which the



tickets are sold. Admission fees vary slightly, as the following chart indicates:

<u>Single Admission</u>	<u>No. sessions in 1936-7 season</u>	<u>Season Book</u>
\$ .35	4	\$1.00
.35	6	1.50
.50	8	2.50
.50	10	2.50
.50	12	2.50
.50	14	3.50
.50	18	3.75
.75	6	2.50

During a given season the lecturers at one forum constitute a partial duplicate of the lecturers of other forums - especially those forums of similar budgets.

The audiences are so similar that separate descriptions do not seem necessary. True, they range in size from about two hundred to ten times that number. But in composition, they may all be said to represent various sub-groups of the ill-defined category which we call the middle class. They are in the main (but not always) Jewish and middle-aged. Getting young people is a recognized problem in most cases, except where the forum is well-established in the community and in the synagogue's organizational life. Politically, their directors like to speak of them as "liberal."

From forum to forum the reasons for attending are similar. In many cases, it has become here as in other middle class organizations, the "thing to do." An intellectual prestige is often involved as in overtly appreciating "good music."

An entirely impressionistic account of one of these synagogue forums in operation is furnished in the following observation:

The forum meets in the main hall of the synagogue, a large auditorium, beautifully furnished in light wood with rich religious hangings behind the pulpit. At 8:05 P.M., it is filled almost to capacity (1500); at 8:15 P.M. (the time when the lecture is scheduled to begin, but about ten minutes before the meeting actually opens) the less desirable seats are also occupied, and some people stand around the sides and the back of the hall. The audience seem very much at home, and chat with each other energetically but sporadically between greetings to friends and side-glances at strangers. The major portion of them are middle-aged and overweight. They are well dressed, well-groomed, 'substantial people,' comfortably set for a two

... the following chart

Season	No. seasons in 1937 season	Single Season
1.00	4	2.50
1.25	6	3.00
1.50	8	3.50
1.75	10	4.00
2.00	12	4.50
2.25	14	5.00
2.50	16	5.50
2.75	18	6.00
3.00	20	6.50

The following table shows the number of one form seasons ...

The number of one form seasons ...

From 1937 to 1940 the number of one form seasons ...

An entirely representative sample of one form seasons ...

The form was in the form of the ...

hour cruise down the royal road to learning. . . . There are present, also, a good many of the 'younger set' - sophisticated, schooled and well able to pay for their weekly installment of culture. Some teen-aged youngsters have come with their parents; here and there a person sitting alone plays at reading a book and shifts uncomfortably in his seat; an occasional duet or trio of Gentile faces with their own peculiar expressions (perceptibly but inexplicably different from most of the other faces) looks expectantly at the speaker's rostrum. . . .

At 10 P.M., the questions are cut short by the chairman and the meeting adjourns. There is at once a rising buzz of laughter and excited talk. People who have taken down technical words use them indiscriminately on their friends. The general feeling seems to be, 'This is an evening well spent; isn't he a clever man!'

The individual difference between synagogue forums are in degrees of orthodoxy, in choice of subject, and in the extent to which outsiders attend. There is some opportunity for personal preference to be exercised in the choice of male-millinery, however, for though a man is at liberty to wear his own hat, he may, if he wishes, accept a little black "yalmicke" to which is attached a small white card which says:

OUR CUSTOM REQUIRES THE WEARING  
OF HATS IN THIS TEMPLE

. . . P L E A S E . . .

THESE SKULL CAPS ARE STERILIZED  
AFTER EACH USAGE BY  
THE ABC CLEANING COMPANY, etc.

The synagogue which reports that its greatest drawing cards are those who promise the best entertainment (when performer - speakers like Cornelia Otis Skinner or Robert Ripley are billed, almost everyone who has a season ticket uses it) is not unique.

#### Forums of Civic and Professional Organizations

Most of the forums of special non-radical organizations have located in the Loop. They are Chicago Forum and those of the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations, the City Club, the Cook County League of Women Voters, the Progressive Lawyers' Club, the Swedish Educational League, and the Women's City Club. The bulk of their attendance is that of members and their friends (except in the case of the Chicago Forum) although they are nominally open to the public. All of these, except the Progressive Lawyers' Club which rose during the last presidential campaign, have been in existence for over ten years.





The Chicago Forum, founded by the Chicago Adult Education Council\* has been the model for many subsequent ones in the city, who, incidentally "stole its thunder." When someone versified the spirit of the forum as follows the sponsors liked it so well that they printed it on the front page of their Third Annual Prospectus:

#### THE CHICAGO FORUM

You who have known the peace  
 of English lanes, and you  
 From Nippon's shore -  
 White man, black man,  
 Christian, Jew -  
 Cynic, student, cynosure,  
 Man of Irak, Slav and  
 Hindu - are you faithless?  
 Skeptic - sore?  
 Have you grievance,  
 Festered - swollen?  
 Bring it here - to death - or cure!

The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations has consistently had a more wealthy membership than most forums. It was founded in 1922 by well-to-do Chicagoans who had been abroad and were interested in foreign affairs. Since then the trend of membership has been upward as far as numbers are concerned and downward through the economic brackets. The forum meets in the Palmer House at approximate two-week intervals, generally for Saturday luncheons. Some other day of the week is occasionally chosen instead of Saturday if a desired speaker is not available for a Saturday talk. Lecturers here are not the usual forum perennials. Only outstanding authorities on foreign affairs are selected, and only headline news is featured. Thus the season's program cannot be arranged in advance. Children of families in the Social Register join the Council when they come of age, and social interest is one of the attractions of the forum. (The local society reporters are there to comment on the costumes of the ladies, for the meetings are society page news.) Mr. Clifton Utley, director of the Council, notes that in some cases the Forum serves to cover up a social interest with an intellectual exterior; in other cases it works in just the opposite direction.

The forums of the Cook County League for Women Voters and the Women's City Club are usually not coeducational. They are both composed of women in the middle income brackets, frequently of middle-age.

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\* The 1936-7 season was the last of the Chicago Forum as such. In the fall of 1937 it re-met, in combination with the New England Congregational Church Forum, as the Sunday Chicago Forum at Thorne Hall of North-



The League notes among its members more wives of professional men than those of business men. The Women's City Club boasts that the leading women-with-a-career have shared actively in its program. Both groups seem to represent a middling point of view in politics, although originally the League grew out of a militant woman-suffrage organization, the Chicago Political Equality League.

#### Forums of Community Forum Groups

Bug Club and Bug House Square fall into the category of community group forum as nearly as they fall into any category. But they differ from other forums of this sort particularly in that they were not deliberately planned or formally enacted.

To the person seeking signs of a spontaneous up-from-the-people forum movement, autonomous neighborhood forums should be the most cheerful aspect of the Chicago situation. Of course, even these forums do not involve the participation of the entire community. It seems consistently to be true that the more educated, those higher in the economic scale, are more interested than the others. The sponsors of the Garfield Park Community Forum complain of this very problem as they present the history of their organization. The forum is an outgrowth of the United Citizens Councils. In February, 1936, these Councils set up committees to see that elections in the community were conducted honestly. Local branches of the Citizens School Committees whose function was to educate and agitate for the proper upkeep of the school and teachers were also established. Those active felt that the best way to integrate and develop these programs and others along the same lines, was through a regular, consecutive public forum. An early mimeographed program included an introductory note to the citizens of the community, which reads in part as follows:

Dear Neighbor:

In the belief that there were many who were interested in a place to become acquainted with one another and with one another's ideas regarding public issues of ALL kinds, this forum was recently established by citizens of this community representing practically every community organization . . .

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#### \* Footnote Cont'd.

western University, downtown campus. Some of the reasons given by its sponsors for the waning of the Chicago Forum are: (1) Since 1925 it stimulated the development of numbers of other forums through the city, which drew upon the original Chicago Forum devotees. (2) The Communist Party in its expanded educational program grafted away the radical fringe so vital to any forum. (3) The depression, while increasing the number of

The first part of the report is devoted to a general survey of the situation in the country. It is followed by a detailed account of the work done during the year. The report concludes with a summary of the results and a list of recommendations.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

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The second part of the report is devoted to a detailed account of the work done during the year. It is divided into several sections, each dealing with a different aspect of the work. The first section deals with the work done in the field. The second section deals with the work done in the laboratory. The third section deals with the work done in the office. The fourth section deals with the work done in the library. The fifth section deals with the work done in the museum. The sixth section deals with the work done in the printing house. The seventh section deals with the work done in the bookshop. The eighth section deals with the work done in the bookbinding shop. The ninth section deals with the work done in the book repair shop. The tenth section deals with the work done in the book storage room. The eleventh section deals with the work done in the book display room. The twelfth section deals with the work done in the book sale room. The thirteenth section deals with the work done in the book exchange room. The fourteenth section deals with the work done in the book donation room. The fifteenth section deals with the work done in the book collection room. The sixteenth section deals with the work done in the book preservation room. The seventeenth section deals with the work done in the book conservation room. The eighteenth section deals with the work done in the book restoration room. The nineteenth section deals with the work done in the book repair room. The twentieth section deals with the work done in the book binding room. The twenty-first section deals with the work done in the book printing room. The twenty-second section deals with the work done in the book publishing room. The twenty-third section deals with the work done in the book distribution room. The twenty-fourth section deals with the work done in the book retail room. The twenty-fifth section deals with the work done in the book wholesale room. The twenty-sixth section deals with the work done in the book import room. The twenty-seventh section deals with the work done in the book export room. The twenty-eighth section deals with the work done in the book trade room. The twenty-ninth section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The thirtieth section deals with the work done in the book market room. The thirty-first section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The thirty-second section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The thirty-third section deals with the work done in the book market room. The thirty-fourth section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The thirty-fifth section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The thirty-sixth section deals with the work done in the book market room. The thirty-seventh section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The thirty-eighth section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The thirty-ninth section deals with the work done in the book market room. The fortieth section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The forty-first section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The forty-second section deals with the work done in the book market room. The forty-third section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The forty-fourth section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The forty-fifth section deals with the work done in the book market room. The forty-sixth section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The forty-seventh section deals with the work done in the book industry room. The forty-eighth section deals with the work done in the book market room. The forty-ninth section deals with the work done in the book sector room. The fiftieth section deals with the work done in the book industry room.

APPENDIX

The first part of the appendix is devoted to a list of the names of the staff members who have worked during the year. It is followed by a list of the names of the donors who have contributed to the work. The appendix concludes with a list of the names of the institutions and organizations that have supported the work.

The second part of the appendix is devoted to a list of the names of the books that have been published during the year. It is followed by a list of the names of the authors and editors of the books. The appendix concludes with a list of the names of the publishers and distributors of the books.

Systematically a complete roster of officers and directors was elected in which business men, teachers, lawyers, doctors - the wives of these - homebodies and representatives of civic organizations were included. Jew and Gentile co-operated effectively. Every attempt is made to involve the unskilled working people of the area, and they like anyone else are exposed to the placards in the shop windows, the pluggers, the local (and sometimes city) newspapers. Several age groups are represented in the audience, especially since a teacher at Austin High School gave students special credit for forum attendance.

Unlike the Garfield, the Woodlawn Forum did not start out with an urgent community problem. It rose in December, 1936, as part of the educational program of the Woodlawn Recreation Committee. It operated under the joint sponsorship of the Woodlawn Business Men's Association and the Associated Clubs of Woodlawn. Its lecture program included several strictly local community as well as municipal topics. It was financed solely by membership pledges of \$1.00 or more from interested individuals in the district. (The program explicitly states: "All who attend may participate in the discussions. There is no admission fee and no offerings are taken.") The head librarian at the Woodlawn branch of the Public Library co-operates by maintaining a special shelf of books pertinent to the current week's discussion.

The audience was so completely a community one that when (early in 1937) the meeting place was changed (from the MacCormac School of Commerce to the near-by Wilson School of Music, Dramatic Art and Dancing,) the only mention necessary was in the community newspaper, the Woodlawn Booster. About fifty persons attended weekly, largely native Americans, school teachers, and sundry white collar workers. There were more women than men. The more dependable forum-goers seemed to be the busier people who had already organizational affiliations or leadership. The forum's Board of Directors was composed of nine persons. Four of these were ladies active in the women's clubs of the district. There were two ministers (a Catholic and a Protestant), one real estate man, one lawyer, and one school teacher. It was on the latter, however, that practically all of the work falls despite the close community tie-up, the large voting membership and the forum committee.\*\* The general tenor of the forum was civic - rather than liberal. Controversy was not sharp. The motto of the forum (as it appears on the

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\*Footnote Cont'd.

free forums, cut short the life of paying forums. (4) Intro-organizational factors also contributing to the demise of the Chicago Forum include lack of time on the part of the Council for adequate attention to the forum and lack of financial support. \*\* Homer J. Coppock, who had been responsible for the forum programs, resigned at the end of the first season. No successor could be found to the position of "Chairman of the Board of Directors," and although it was agreed that the forum had served the community well in arousing deeper interest in public affairs and in making people better (or at least bigger) readers, it was never re-convened.



program) was simply: "Let There Be Light."

Similar in some ways to the Woodlawn Forum was the South Side Liberty Forum. It too got the co-operation of neighborhood organizations, such as high school glee clubs and women's clubs, particularly in the musical portion of its program. However, no official connection between the forum and these other organizations existed. Mr. Frank Martin, president of the Townsend Club of the Second Congressional District, and a group of friends founded the forum because "people are getting too far away from American principles - liberty, freedom and representative government." The program, calculated to "get people tuned up not only in mind but also in the heart" began with a pledge of allegiance to the flag and the singing of America. The pressure group feature of this forum is illustrated by the fact that whereas there were regularly two speakers on every program, one was always a Townsendsite. Questions were not invariably called for, for the chairman wished to avoid a lot of controversial matters: "People bring up non-essential things when they discuss," he said. Besides, "brevity is a blessing, "and the meeting was planned so as to not only begin promptly but to end promptly."

The John Toman Library Forum has an attendance more completely representative of its community than any other forum in town. It seems to be the most ideal of community forums, having rounded up for forum duty a host of local citizens such as never went foruming before. It seems firmly rooted in the South Lawndale Community although it was founded only in 1931. At that time a Bohemian Arts Exhibit was held at the John Toman Branch of the Chicago Public Library, which, among other things, proved the possibility of getting 600 people actively interested in a community enterprise. This was a period when no new books were being bought for the library, due to depression finances, and the sponsors of this exhibit came to feel that a forum would meet the problem of keeping people informed. So a lawyer, a metal worker, and the head of the neighborhood department store constituted themselves a forum committee; the library offered its housing facilities; and the community came.

The first year the forum's average size was around seventy-five. Those involved declare that people have begun to regard going to this bi-weekly forum as a citizen's duty to community and city. It is now in the charge of an enlarged committee of local people. These include:

- 2 lawyers
- 2 librarians
- 2 journalists (editors to community papers)
- 1 minister
- 1 art collector
- 1 upholsterer

With few exceptions they - and the regular forum attendance - are Bohemian. Originally the program involved Czech cultural topics exclusively. At the end of the second year, however, a questionnaire submitted to the audience indicated there is a greater demand for political topics. The





audience represents a full range of age, income and political distribution, yet all impress one as coming to this forum principally to learn. An objective check on this impression is the increase in library cards issued and books drawn out after the forum discussion.

### Government Sponsored Forums

In the last few years, federal government funds have helped to finance forum undertakings through the N.Y.A. Community Forums Project and the W.P.A. Adult Education Program. An effort is made to establish forums in just those areas where forums are not likely to develop on their own - and where the community is judged to be in direct need of such an organization.

Of this nature was the On the Lips of the World Forum in a part of the Lakeview Community area, where, as the N.Y.A. forum sponsor, put it, "The people think it a crime to finish high school."

In 1936 the National Youth Administration set up its Chicago Community Youth Forum Project whose purpose was to service (through a Speakers' Bureau, leadership training, subject selection, promotion and sometimes personnel) and set up forums. Either the staff of an existing organization was given assistance in arranging and conducting its education program, or said workers (chosen from those certified for W.P.A.) were assigned to assume this responsibility. Of such a nature was the government sponsorship of the above-mentioned On the Lips of the World Forum and the three forums in the South Side Negro area in active operation in January 1937.

The latter three-(Young Peoples Forum, South Side Forum, and Douglas Community Forum) were started in the fall of 1936. They emphasized the special problems of the Negro. Their average audience approximated thirty-five. Advertisement was provided by the N.Y.A. office in the form of neatly mimeographed leaflets. Frequently, however, the sponsors got free publicity in the community newspapers. An effort was made always to gain through advisory committees or chairmanships, the co-operation of truly local agencies, so that when the government subsidies were withdrawn the forums might be able to continue on their own. On several occasions, however, which may serve as test cases, the forums automatically discontinued after the initiative and assistance of the N.Y.A. directors were withdrawn. Despite deliberate efforts to develop community responsibility in their upkeep, these forums do not as yet seem vital to the people they seek to serve.\*

W.P.A. sponsored forums in January, 1937, were the Fuller Park, Humboldt Park and Civic Forums. At one time the Fuller Park Forum seemed to have a chance of being successful despite heavy odds. It was started

\* Since the time of these forums the N.Y.A. forum program expanded and strengthened its bond with the local communities, concentrating more on the function of clearing-house and speakers bureau than on that of supply personnel. But more of this in the next chapter.

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in January, 1936, by a W.P.A. worker who had been sent out to the district and left much to his own discretion. He regarded forums as the best means of integrating existing local organizations; he set up a forum committee with representatives from such agencies as church, park and press. The monthly lectures scheduled were informative and practical with emphasis upon local community problems. Despite this, cooperation was lacking. Over half the people here were on relief, conservative, and Catholic. They never heard the word "forum" before. A local priest expressed a widely prevalent sentiment when he said, "We have been here fifty years; we have had a regular routine that has always been satisfactory, and we see no need to change it now." Existing organizations felt that any new undertaking might deprive them of members, and the community newspapers were not interested in giving publicity to discussions with which it disagreed. Moreover, the W.P.A. was resented as an unreliable innovation which, though here today, might be gone tomorrow. The forum director's summary is "The people here are like a stone wall." Accordingly, when he was transferred from the community in March, 1937, the forum was discontinued and even the already scheduled meetings were cancelled.

The Civic Forum meets in the County Building at 6:30 P.M. weekly. Its W.P.A. sponsors had hoped that this time and place would facilitate attendance on the part of the Loop workers heretofore unacquainted with forums. Only to a limited extent was their expectation realized, however, for at least half the audience is composed of elderly fellows who live in one of the areas bordering the Loop, and who regard the forum as a good, cheap form of relaxation. The remaining fifteen or twenty-five members of the audience may have been attracted by the particular subject or speaker announced in newspaper or circular.

Least successful of these several government sponsored groups was the Humboldt Park Forum. In order to be housed in a public school building, it had to meet in the middle of the day; this inconvenience of time limited attendance largely to women; and in this poor foreign neighborhood of mixed nationalities, few women could afford to take time off for education, especially in the middle of the day. Hence only a handful of local housewives took advantage of the full program of lectures and tours offered.

#### Summary And Comments

Thus we see that non-partisan community forums have come to be established in Chicago under five different auspices, social service agencies, religious organizations, special non-radical associations (civic or professional), community groups, or federal government. The auspices under which the forum is held influence the nature of the meetings. But locality and size of audience are at least equally important. Thus certain forums (e.g., those of business and professional organizations) must locate in the center of the city. Obviously audiences as large as those of the typical synagogue forum cannot actively participate in the program



to the extent of those at smaller groups, and the tenor of the question or discussion periods is different. The entire theatrics of the meeting be different.

Attendance at status-quo forums as well as at protest forums indicates a desire for other values besides information and discussion. Still, as we have said before, to attribute a forum's popularity or any individuals' attendance to a single cause is inexact and unjust. The desire for fellowship is a universal explanation of all kinds of groups, regardless of their specific purposes. The desire for information does not exist in a vacuum, but is related to the method by which the information is acquired and the purpose for which it is to be used. Successful adult education is rarely fashioned along strict academic lines.

Of the more recent forum-sponsoring agencies in Chicago the federal government does not seem to justify our faith in mass forum enthusiasm while community group forums betoken a real popular interest in forums. In only a few cases, however, is the responsible leadership so vital to forum initiation and survival continuously available; consequently community forums which require consistent direction are few and far between.



PART IV

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CHICAGO FORUM SCENE

CHAPTER VIII. Bird's Eye View of the Chicago Forum Scene





## CHAPTER VIII

### BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CHICAGO FORUM SCENE

#### Geography of forums in Chicago

- The Loop

- Areas Bordering the loop

- Jewish neighborhoods

- In and near the university community

- South Side Negro area

#### The Forum Life Span

#### Speakers

#### Topics

#### Pro-Forum Organizations

- Adult Education Council

- National Forum

- N.Y.A. forum program



We have taken our subject of contemporary 1937 forums in Chicago apart and analyzed the individual parts. Let us put it together again, and try to get a picture of the entire pattern.

### Geography of Forums in Chicago

To look at the map first: where do forums seem to concentrate? We find them especially in the Loop and the bordering areas, in the Jewish neighborhoods, the University community and its environs, and in the Negro neighborhood. Why is this so? What forums are associated with what areas?

#### The Loop

As we have intimated before, in the Loop are found forums which (1) expect to attract a city-wide audience rather than a community one; (2) have week-day meetings for a membership employed in the Loop; or (3) have Loop headquarters or sufficient income to pay the higher rental of a centrally-located hall. Hence this area is the home of the civic, eclectic, and some liberal-radical forums.

#### Areas Bordering On the Loop

The near north side and bohemian colony we find to be the natural habitat for certain eclectic forums. Not only do the directors of these reside in the area, but they take advantage of its lurid repute to attract outsiders, curiosity seekers, who make up for their failure to supply atmosphere by their ability to supply funds. Moreover this is psychologically the correct locality for forums. Not only is it close to the center of town, but it is the area where people with no "sacred cows," no strong loyalties to conventional institutions, are likely to live or congregate. When nothing is sacred, everything is subject to discussion. And discussion has become a habit as vital to the denizen of the near north side as gossip to the housewife or "bull sessions" to the collegian.

But the "colony" and the "main stem" are not the only components of the near north side area. There is also the Gold Coast, the apartment hotels, and the slum in which may be found "the greatest concentration of poverty in Chicago." Where there are poverty and slums, there may also be found community centers and settlement houses, to which agencies, forums are likely to represent a moral value. They represent intellectual uplift and political democracy. Settlement house forums for the dwellers of the slums exist side by side with hobo colleges for the transients and homeless men.

On the near west side a similar combination of factors has



led to the establishment of several kinds of forums for the homeless man or for the more attached "ill-clad, ill-housed, and ill-fed." Again as on the near north side, forums may be popular in large measure because they represent the full extent of the social life of the men who attend them. Whether the forum sponsors are inspired by religious or the revolution, or simply amused by a cynicism striving hard to be clever, they present an opportunity for companionship rare along West Madison Street. Like-spirits from different parts of town frequently visit, and intellectual interaction is not rare. At the very least, the forum represents a place to keep warm and kill time. Talk is cheap and the forum is not only less expensive but more interesting than the movies. Small wonder that this area has not been without the forums for 30 years!

### Jewish Neighborhoods

The Jews have always specialized in the "manipulation of symbols"; this is true not only of those who have gained distinction on that score, but of almost all the Jewish people. The wide-spread stereotype of the Jew who is interested only in "money, money, money" seems highly fallacious. For most Jewish paupers and business men alike - regardless how successful, or destitute - are likely to want their sons to be eminent in the professional world, or at least, well-educated.

In its less genuine form, the tradition of being intellectual is today expressed in the desire to seem intellectual, e.g., to put in one's appearance at a forum mainly for appearance sake. People who make a business of forums capitalize on this culture trait of the Jews and cater particularly to them.

Among radical Jewish people, as well as among their more conservative brothers, the urge and habit to articulate and the prestige of intellectuality are great. Consequently, their non-conformists - be they Christians or anarchists - tend to be forum activists. Despite their missionary zeal, they not only tolerate, but invite opponents. Here people who were too under-privileged to have a formal education, attempt to make up for this lack through a forum education. People who are unheeded elsewhere, eagerly seize the opportunity to address a ready-made audience. Often forum "cranks" rise regularly - regardless what the subject - to sing the same tune for no apparent social "cause"; while sometimes there is a method in this madness - a method that has to do with preparing for a supernatural millenium or a scientific revolution. At any rate, the Jew contributes disproportionately to the success of forums in Chicago.

### Forums in and Near the University Community

The forum concentrations we have just observed in the Hyde Park Woodlawn areas cannot be entirely attributed to coincidence. Prox-



imity to the University has probably stimulated intellectual interest not only in churches immediately adjacent to it, but in the near-by residential communities. University professors are more conveniently available for local lectures. Moreover, among the people who are active in the community forums are several with University of Chicago connections of some sort. Here is a district where there is not only interest in public affairs, but a potential leadership for institutionalizing the discussion of public affairs.

#### South Side Negro Area

The clustering in the south side Negro area is not due to primary community factors, but partially to the choice of this area for intensive forum cultivation by the N.Y.A. forum project and by other ameliorative agencies. It is also due to the remaining in an area of institutions even after their constituencies have moved away. It is obvious that there has not been much spontaneous independent leadership among the colored people for public affairs forums. The Negroes themselves do not seem to be seeking the discussion way out of their peculiar problems; at any rate they are not using the forum method to do so.

#### The Forum Life Span

The forums active in Chicago in January, 1937, vary in the number of years of their existence. The following chart describes the sixty-two forums listed in the study. The strong predominance of 1, 2 and 3 year old forums is probably a function not only of recent rise of forums in general, but of the short life span of individual forums.

<u>No. of seasons</u>	<u>No. of forums</u>
1st	20
2nd	7
3rd	6
4th	4
5th	1
6th	2
7th	0
8th	3
9th	2
10th	3
11th	0
12th	1
13th	1
14th	0
15th	1
16th	2
17th	2
18th	0





19th	0
20th	0
21st	0
22nd	1
23rd	0
24th	1
25th	0
over 25	5

The short duration of most forums may well indicate that they do not meet any enduring definition of the wants of the majority of the people.

As we have intimated there has been no consistent history of public discussion in this country. Democracy in both its formal and informal aspects has always been confined to a limited number of the "People." American myths to the contrary notwithstanding, it has never been a comprehensive pattern. Governmentally dominant power groups have always found good reasons for excluding others from the democratic process which they shared among themselves. Witness, for instance, the disenfranchisement of a large portion of the population in the halcyon days of the "pure democracy" of the Town Meeting.

Extra-governmentally, forums have appealed largely to "Special publics" who use the slogan of democracy to present their private views to a wider public. When such an interest group assumes the responsibility of sponsorship, a forum may continue over a long period of time with great audience participation.

Other long-lived forums include (1) those which offer a sort of intellectual jag, opportunities for discussion, to forum habitues; (2) those sponsored by inspired staff-members of settlements and churches.

In what might be called the struggle for existence of community institutions, the public forum seldom survives. At the beginning of the century, it might have been popular if for no other reason than its being "something to do," a way to solve the "Sunday problem." Today forums are just one more demand upon time; they must compete with the tavern, night school, the political unit, and the informal social group.

These groups - one and all - offer the opportunity to learn and talk. There seems to be no spectacular, unique contribution of the small local forum.

On the other hand, the best known forums, the most substantial ones, tend to be those which can afford to buy the most costly speakers in the market; programs tend to be built up around the "lure of big names." Then as the size of the audience increases, the direct participation of the average listener is reduced. These forums may grow more popular, but only at the expense of those values which alone distinguish them from the ordinary lecture series. In following the bid of the box



office, they may find themselves in the uneviable position of the modern lyceum, which has degerated into a largely commercial venture.

The explanation for the popularity of these large forums (like that of the lyceum) may become the "communal ennui" of their patrons rather than their intellectual curiosity or political interest. Not only are large forums unwieldy, but they are threatened with the intense heterogeneity which Lord Bryce acknowledges as causing the destruction of the town meeting.

Despite these unfavorable prospects for local forums, there seems to have been a large number which commenced activity in the 1936 season. If we attribute to historical accident those whose origin we do not fully understand, there remain two major explanations for this accelorated growth; government sponsorship of forums, and the election campaign.

The entrance of the government and government funds into forums has had two direct effects: (1) a sort of artificial respiration is provided for those forums which were feebly attempting to stand alone; (2) a stimulus is furnished for the formation of new forums. The government may also be credited with publicizing the forum idea; thus, people vaguely aware that they wished to talk over their common problems found in the forum a definition of this situation, a cultural pattern. These government - sponsored and government - inspired forums are the newest ones in Chicago today; but they may be hothouse products, for we already have a number of empirical examples of their inability to survive when outside support is withdrawn.

In periods of crises and social unrest, forums would be expected to increase in number; people's routines have been upset, old ideas are being challenged; new definitions of the situation must be found. This is what happened in the early years of the depression. Forums also grow in times of an election, for elections represent the process of social change institutionalized. Here, unrest is kaleidoscoped into the conventional limits of a campaign, and the forum proves valuable not only as a political platform for partisans, but as a clearing house of ideas and issues for the interested layman. The presidential campaign in the fall of 1936 heightened the general interest in public problems and propaganda came to the fore; decisions had to be made; the forum, along with other methods of assenbly and communication, enjoyed a sudden rise in popularity. The Progressive Lawyers Club and the South Side Liberty Forum are only two examples of forums which were founded avowedly to meet the election issues. Others rose on the wave of heightened political consciousness. Then after the election, when the excitment died down, they began to disappear, so that by January, 1937, there was barely a trace of them.

The threat of war may lead to the rise of forums, but our participating in the war will very likely cause them to be gagged or



modified beyond recognition.

As we have indicated in this chapter, there is not only a time but a space correlation between forums and unrest, with indigeneous forms most likely to occur in areas of great mobility (like the central business district, the hobo's "main stem," the bohemian "colony" and the Jewish neighborhoods.) This relationship is being upset, however, by the growing respectability of forums. As the forum idea gains the sanction of adult educators, or trickles down from the pariah on the soap box to the man on the street, it is likely that an opposite correlation might develop between forums and social organization (as in the Woodlawn community in Chicago.) Those areas which have the most intensive local organization may come to regard a forum as the ideal expression of neighborhood unity.

### Speakers

Our acquaintance with forums has made us particularly eager to know whence come the lecturers on various levels? Why do they offer their service to forums? What do they "get out of it" in terms of monetary, social, or personality values? Is the forum regarded by some speakers as a means to advance from one level of prestige in their profession to another? Unfortunately we are not prepared fully to answer these questions. But some comments would not be out of order.

Someone has accused the forum of having a personnel similar to that of the traveling chautauquas which in their decline are described as lacking professional standards (anyone can be a lecturer) and constituting a refuge for misfits (especially in the teaching and preaching professions) and the commercial minded - the "professional entertainers of the lecture platform" - as well as a show place for celebrities (people with legitimate reputations in other fields, but without either the mentality or the art to be good lecturers.)

This statement is not without its ounce of truth; nor is it an accurate account of the situation. An occupational survey of lecturers at Chicago forums of every kind was made by the present writer in 1935. It posits a rough classification of speakers into three groups: (1) those who volunteer their services or accept negligible stipends - almost always local men with few if any Who's Who ratings; (2) low priced lecturers (under \$50) who are usually of local origin and local repute; (3) high priced lecturers (over \$100) supplied by nation-wide bureaus - almost always out-of-town men with frequent Who's Who ratings. It finds that local lecturers, found in the less prosperous non-paying forums, are frequently laymen, but associated with some political or civic organization whose cause they are eager to publicize. In these same places there is a noticeable number of attorneys who offer their service gratis. Civic-mindedness, the enjoyment of lecturing, the pleasure of having an audience, the opportunity to become better known, are probably all factors in their willingness to volunteer time and



talent. Teachers and ministers also speak frequently. But they, like the doctors who are not scheduled as often, tend to be not the average of their occupation, but, to some extent, dissenters or revisionists.

The Chicago Council on Adult Education supplies low-priced mostly local speakers to organizations with moderate budgets.

A number of booking agencies with headquarters elsewhere as well as in this city, provide high-priced lecturers to such forums as those of the synagogues. They offer statesmen (or politicians), scientists, celebrities, newspaper men, and a number of that new class of professional lecturers. Rarely are they Chicagoans, for their very distance lends enchantment. Booking agencies try to arrange for their speakers to fill all engagements in one city around the same time, so as to economize on traveling expenses and time. Thus speakers are in season in the intellectual resorts of the city, much as strawberries - or artichokes - might be in the best fruit markets. Moreover, their individual prices might vary in inverse proportion to the amount already bought and paid for. Thus one forum at one extreme of town was happy to get a very popular speaker at \$400, because that speaker had to make a trip to Chicago anyhow, and had one \$500 engagement already. Under these circumstances he is likely to give the same talk at both forums, but to phrase their topics differently. Thus the lecture, "Stalin and Hitler" becomes, for duplicate purposes, "Is Russia Going Fascist?"

### Topics

In almost all forums the declared purpose is presented in such terms as "citizens," "democracy," "collective," "human brotherhood," etc. In political forums, however, the aims are not so general. They prescribe not "human brotherhood" at large, but a particular approach to human brotherhood; not just "citizens" but a particular type of "citizens." Their aim is more immediate. Their methods of achieving it are less vague than "social education." Under these circumstances it can well be expected that there is a difference from forum to forum in the selection of topics and the arrangement of programs. Some groups systematize their offerings around a central problem. Others dramatize their variety and the novelty of each presentation. Lecture titles may strive to be dignified or to be spectacular. Attendance may be urged on the grounds of the urgency of the problems presented, on the amount one gets for one's money at the forum, or on the desirability of democracy, education, and civic literacy.

A government survey of American forums reveals that the most popular discussion topics in 1934-5 were (in order of their importance:) international situation, economic recovery, fascism and war, new deal legislation, and liberty and democracy. In general our observations show that current political and social problems are by far the greatest concern of forum leaders, with, as we have said before, national and international issues more popular than local ones. Whether this is be-





cause, as Commissioner Studebaker feels, the problem of local interest "can be understood rather satisfactorily by people without the help of organized discussion groups," or because of local affairs it is too easy to step on important toes, or because home problems are not so inspiring, we cannot say.

Topics of theoretical social sciences - explanations of money or tariffs or slums - seem to be the next most prominent group of subjects (although they represent less than half as many lectures as those on current events) in Chicago forums.

Lecturers on psychology are currently in vogue. Somewhat less popular are topics of general medicine, religion, travel, and literature.

Debates and symposiums heighten interest as do novelty performances by believe-it-or-not men or actors, so that one is lead to suspect that like the audiences of chautauqua, a good many forum fans appreciate lectures which "are diverse, not too serious, calculated to entertain as much as to enlighten, and yet not depreciated to a mere crowd appeal."

#### Pro-Forum Organizations in Chicago

Among the local agencies interested in general forum promotion are the Adult Education Council, the National Forum and the N.Y.A. forum program.

#### The Adult Education Council of Chicago

The Council has since 1925 been sponsoring a clearing-house agency for all forums of adult education - literary, musical, and vocational. until 1929 it operated under the name of Chicago Forum Council, "for the promotion of inter-group understanding and good-will, and free discussion of public questions from all angles." It was supposed to be "deliberately non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-propagandistic." The present name was assumed when it merged with the Adult Education Conference, continuing the same program but with added features.

At the present time it counsels forum leaders, operates a speakers' bureau, and until recently, conducted the Chicago Forum. Its bulletin, "Educational Events in Chicago" is a monthly calendar of what its name indicates. It is supported by membership dues as well as larger subsidies and affiliated with the national organization, the American Association for Adult Education.

#### The National Forum

This is a new organization, still in the experimental stage,

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
5708 SOUTH CAMPUS DRIVE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637

TO: [Name]  
FROM: [Name]  
SUBJECT: [Subject]

RE: [Subject]

[Text block containing details of the communication]

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

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perhaps, which seeks to service forums everywhere with visual aids to discussion. Born in Chicago in 1936 of "poor but honest" parents, it has had to struggle for existence and financial solvency. Formerly it served as "a non-partisan organization for civic and social education: to build forums; to provide speakers; to publish materials." Today it concentrates largely on the latter function, while working in close cooperation with other forum-building agencies and speakers bureaus.

Its visual materials appear in 3 by 4 feet hand-painted charts, in slides and films and in booklets entitled, Economic Problems Visualized, Cooperation Visualized, Health Problems Visualized, International Problems Visualized, Health Problems Visualized, and Special Problems Visualized.

The spirit and program of the organization is declared in the introductory paragraphs to Social Problems Visualized (a compilation of materials from all preceding booklets):

This book presents in simple and graphic form the more important facts, viewpoints, and problems of our social life. With the aid of picture and color it gives the findings of scholars and of institutions of research.

Following the usual policy of public forums, in some instances the pictorial and discussion materials present contrasting points of view. These are, of course, not to be interpreted as being the points of view of the editors themselves.

The effort is herein made to present the facts and issues of social life so interestingly and clearly that the average young person and adult will be challenged to serious thought and intelligent action.

#### N.Y.A. Community Forum Project

The activity and scope of the N.Y.A. community youth forum work has increased enormously since the 1936-7 season, despite the fact that several of the forums started under N.Y.A. personnel did not continue beyond one season. Its affiliates are neighborhood forums throughout the city, which number well over a hundred now.

In line with the policy of integrating the forum into community life, the N.Y.A. Community Youth Forum Project was superseded in January 1938 by the Chicago Community Forum Service, sponsored by the National Forum and the Adult Education Council, and supported largely by N.Y.A. funds.

The Announcement of reorganization explains:

The necessity for this reorganization was brought about by the desire of the officials of the National Youth Adminis-



tration of Illinois to have the sponsors of the Project assume full responsibility for the program in name as well as in fact. Consequently, the new set-up is designed to place complete control and responsibility in the hands of local agencies. This is a wholesome step toward a forum movement which is privately operated and financed. However, the National Youth Administration remains vitally interested in aiding the development of group discussion and education on public affairs and social problems, and it will continue to assist the sponsors in their endeavors with the same staff and services as it provided the N.Y.A. Forums.



PART V  
EVALUATION

CHAPTER IX. Evaluation





## CHAPTER IX

### EVALUATION

- What do they get out of it?
- The claims for forums - a criticism
  - Forums as discussion
  - Forums as democracy
  - Forums as adult education
  - Forums as unity and community
- The future of forums
  - In times of turmoil
  - In times of calm
  - The radio
- Conclusion



### What Do They Get Out of it?

What is the upshot of this all? Where do all these forums "get us" Who is benefitted? Unfortunately the methods of measuring forum effect are limited and subjective. Counting noses gives little indication of forum influence. Moreover, forum sponsors who almost invariably exaggerate, are the only source of data on average size of audience. It has already been recognized however that forum constituencies vary, and that to different ones the forum represents different values and satisfactions. The main attractions of a forum may not be the same to all comers, and we can analyze forum effect in terms of the peculiar reasons different kinds of people have for attending forums:

(1) The people of the forum world to whom forums are life itself, or a major portion of life, seek not only intellectual enlightenment, but social companionship, and the opportunity for personal expression (which may vary from individual exhibitionism to missionary duty.) In the case of the "forum addict," an intellectual dissipation, a gloating over words yields an almost sensuous pleasure.

(2) The well educated who are platonically attracted to things intellectual, appreciate particularly the expertness of speakers available at forums. To them, the latter is merely one way of many by which they continue their academic pursuits and retain their amateur standing in the ranks of the intelligentsia. A less charitable view of such well-balanced liberals comes from one of their type:

There's quite a tribe of us at large in the world - fair-minded citizens who understand the cries of the underdog, see through the greed and stupidity behind injustice. And who can't for the life of us feel anything. We hover on the sidelines of all passionate events, and entertain ourselves with discussion . . . . Talk. Talk. Talk. We're always on the right side of discussions but never on any side of the barricades. We're vocabularies hanging over all the battlefields,\*

Some of these are cultural radicals to whom proletarian art and revolutionary culture are dearer than the revolution itself.

(3) Much more passionately involved in discussion are the radicals to whom the forum rostrum is close cousin to the soapbox and just one step removed from the barricade. In the forum sponsored by their own organization they find comradeship and morale for continued agitation.

(4) Then there are people who chance to come to forums as they might to any kind of a function their organization or community backed.

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\* Ben Hecht, *To Quito and Back* (New York: Covici and Friede, 1937), p. 59



This they do out of loyalty to the organization, to be a "good fellow" or an intellectual fellow, or simply through appreciation of the peculiar values of a forum. Generally they do not go to forums to be sentenced to an hour of hard mental labor. They go to be intellectually stimulated, and incidentally to relax: or to relax and incidentally to be intellectually stimulated.

Of course between these several extremes, people with varying degrees of the foregoing incentives constitute the bulk of forum patronage. They find in the forum the opportunity to hear an expert point of view expressed by a speaker whose personality they may watch as they listen to his words. They have some opportunity - more or less limited, directly or by proxy - to challenge these views, and to be part of the excitement of the interchange of ideas between the rostrum and the floor. Important also is the rhythm (appreciated by churchgoers and club members and all humans who "belong" to groups) of seeing the same faces at regular intervals in a place where one feels at home. As in all human gatherings, people seek social contact, fellowship, and recognition.

Certainly forum activity can be found which is the product of the sincere urge to be informed, and to participate intelligently in this thing called democracy. These intellectual civic drives do exist; but they have been over-emphasized by rhetorical forum supporters - frequently to the exclusion of equally important but less "noble" factors. Any comprehensive study which is neither solely idealism nor solely muckraking must include both the rational and non-rational factors in attending public forums in Chicago.

#### The Claims for Forums - A Criticism

It has been seen that the picture of forums as community centers where ordinary citizens of all classes and background come together, check their prejudices and emotionalism at the door, and grow civically robust in the air of tolerance and objectivity - is a highly idealized one - and one which does not square with the facts. Which then, of the fond hopes and claims for forums have been realized? Some of these can be delusioned or substantiated by logical or historical considerations; others, by reference to the foregoing study of forums in Chicago. A systematic review of claims and counter-claim follows.

#### Forums as Discussion

Some forum enthusiasts look upon open discussion as a sort of crucible in which prejudices and falsehoods disintegrate and a residue of truth and fact remains; it is said to serve as adult educational function by providing for "creative group thinking," and a democratic function by permitting all to share alike in this process. Sophisticated writers compare social discussion to the inter discussion of the mind which John Dewey calls "reasoning."



"The average human being can distinguish between truth and falsification if given all sides of the matter" it is declared while the first lady of the land asserts that

Real democracy and understanding of our government may be furthered by free discussion. I hope forums will grow in popularity throughout the country and that young and old will discuss the problems of the day and methods by which they may be solved.

Anti-forumists maintain, however, that "Discussion can stir up a lot of froth, but not make butter."

The real fallacy in the forum idea concerning the social panacea of discussion seems to be the assumption of a single truth in controversial affairs, which if ably presented by experts, will achieve unanimity based on rationality. Most social truths are really relative to the thinker; a question with only two sides would be a dull one indeed for any forum. If a forum is to be effective from a rational point of view, it must succeed in breaking down the private stereotypes of those who attend regularly. Yet while it is common for numerous opposing stereotypes to be aired simultaneously at forums, few people relinquish their pet prejudices. Intellectual conversions do not occur or occur only rarely. At best, a qualified forum man tells us, "hearing the other side of the argument makes it possible for an element of doubt to creep into your own convictions, even if you do not recognize this at the time of the meeting." The one contribution in this regard which lies clearly within the province of the forum is to convince people that those who disagree with them are not ipso facto mean and vicious. Disagreement - even on vital issues - becomes good manners. In the process some degree of tolerance must arise as a modus vivendi, a minimum essential for further discussion. This is no small value.

#### Forums as Democracy

Forums promote democracy, it is further claimed, through the encouragement of free trade in the various types of propaganda. Moreover, information presented by experts provides guidance for intelligent citizenship. Moreover, it is alleged, forums serve as a preventative against fascism, because "it can't happen here" if people are kept in constant training for democracy. Forums are the "eternal vigilance" which is the "price of liberty." "The forum is giving back to America the town meeting of which the growth of cities robbed it" says one commentator. "We need an agora, a forum, a folk-moot, a town meeting. The task remains of producing national policies that will go between and beyond the caveman politics of the Bourbon and the Cubist politics of the Bolshevik" says another.

It has been argued, that not only do forums need democracy but





democracies need forums. The democracy of the forum is said to lie in its free speech, its heterogeneity, its civic training. But observation reveals several important limitations to this democracy: (1) social and economic opposities do not meet in the forum audience; and (2) those generally regarded as most in need of democratic training - the foreign and underprivileged - usually do not come to forums. Moreover, forum directors frequently exercise a prejudice in the selection of speakers, in terms of their own standards of political decency. Free speech is a glorious slogan whose various meanings might be arranged along some such continuum as this:

1. Free speech for all those who agree with us (generally for all those who support the status quo).
2. Free speech for all who agree with us or have "understandable differences."
3. Free speech for all, including social pariahs.
4. Free speech for all social pariahs, almost exclusively.

At one end there are the conservatives or "liberals" who in their respectable forums accept free speech as a good, but fear "too much of a good thing"; at the other end there are the radicals, whose forums exist to articulate the protest of the underdog. Be these things as they may, the forum's possible contribution to democracy cannot be denied. It stands for free speech, discussions, an informed public opinion - and all these terms are practically synonymous with democracy.

#### Forums As Adult Education

The forum is hailed as the "educational innovation of the twentieth century," rising from the need of this ever more complex world for constant schooling in social problems and in contemporary history. Just as the previous era saw the introduction of tax-supported public education for children, say the forum enthusiasts, so must the present day see the introduction of public adult education. "Share the intelligence" is the name of an article by Commissioner Studebaker advocating forums. Such phrases as "It may be fun to be fooled but it's more fun to know" or "forums are essentially an experiment in mass education for civic literacy" illustrate this point of view.

The need for adult education in these changing times is hardly a moot question. That the forum can be a method of adult education is equally clear. It is also clear that the forum alone, without a follow-up of small subsidiary discussion groups and reading assignments, is highly inadequate. Dean Curtis Reese of Lincoln Center neatly expresses this limitation: "I'm very skeptical of these intellectual automats where you put in your quarter and get your hour's worth of intellectual stimulation." Listening to a forum lecture requires in and of itself no sincerity of purpose; the lecture can be enjoyed and the few questions can be asked without rumpling the intellectual calm of the participators. Rote learning in public affairs is hardly less of an im-



possibility than rote learning in regular school subjects. It seems that some way must be found of linking forum activity with other phases of the community and of intellectual activity if it is to have a penetrating effect.

#### Forums as National Unity and Community

The forum by permitting the airing rather than the stifling of differences is said to give rise to a sense of community. It has already been noted that forums rise in times of crisis and unrest. At such times national unity is threatened, either through war, revolution, or industrial strife. Forum enthusiasts recommend discussion as a solvent of ill-will between opposing forces within the nation. Social therapy is anticipated when the several parties to a conflict can be induced to "getting their feet under the same table." Labor and capital (they hope) will, when put in the same room, be forced by the compulsion of proximity to resolve their difficulties. Likewise in time of war, dissenting groups will give up their separate quarrels to discuss for the common welfare. An example of the functioning of the forum in this regard is seen in the following letter:

George Creel, Chairman  
The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of War  
The Secretary of the Navy

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION  
Washington, D.C.

February 20, 1918

Mr. A. Lyle DeJarnett,  
International Forum Ass'n., Inc.,  
10 West 11th Street, New York City.

My dear Mr. DeJarnett,

"Please let me thank you for your copy of outline for the War Community Forums. Always, and especially since the entry of the United States into the war, have I had the belief that the gathering of people into deliberative bodies would prove the solution of most of the troubles that beset us. I like the forum idea, just as I like any other idea that brings the citizenship of the United States together to consult for the common good. In this war, we are asking nothing for ourselves that we do not ask for all, and the purity of our purpose is not stained by a single ignoble motive. The more we can have them discussed the better for the country. Most of the outcry against public assembly springs from

responsibility for the situation is placed on the shoulders of the Government. It is not the responsibility of the Government to provide for the needs of the people. It is the responsibility of the people to provide for their own needs. The Government is only there to provide a framework for the people to work within.

### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Government is responsible for the situation in the country. It is not the responsibility of the people to provide for their own needs. The Government is only there to provide a framework for the people to work within. The Government is responsible for the situation in the country. It is not the responsibility of the people to provide for their own needs. The Government is only there to provide a framework for the people to work within.

The Secretary of the  
The Secretary of the  
The Secretary of the  
The Secretary of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
Washington, D.C.

February 25, 1966

Mr. A. J. ...  
International ...  
The ...

Please ...  
For the ...  
I am ...  
The ...  
as I ...  
The ...  
could ...  
that ...  
you ...  
we ...  
that ...

a distrust of democratic common sense.

Sincerely

(Signed) George Creel, Chairman.

It seems ambiguous to claim that in times of foreign wars forums provide "an intellectual basis for national unity." As the official "Committees on Public Information" of every war-time government recognized, patriotism is hardly a matter of rationality, objectivity, or tolerance - or any of the virtues normally associated with the forum. The forum ideology of this country must have been equivocal indeed at the time of the last war to permit such a double standard of democratic ethics: questioning of the war before the United States became involved; unconditioned support of it afterwards. Apparently forums then had no tradition of the sacredness of controversy and free speech - and to that extent failed in their purpose. No basis exists for assuming that a thoroughgoing sensitivity to propaganda has been developed, or is being developed by the present day forums, either. Respectable forums seem universally to have one bias i.e., the bias in favor of "democracy." From the homage paid to democracy as the essence of the forum creed it is not a far step to the slogan "my democracy, right or wrong." Forums are a non-propagandistic method of propaganda for democracy.

Moreover, forums fail to promote a direct personal harmony between rich and poor, employer and employee. Even if the economic problem could be fundamentally approached by establishing a personal relationship between labor and capital, the forum would be quite impotent to do anything about it. For, the vertical mobility of our society is not free; the elite prefer - or happen - to pay their respects to the theory of communal oneness in the privacy of their own cliques. For similar reasons, it is highly doubtful whether forums would be "safeguards against revolution," when revolution is actually imminent, except insofar as talk always tends to postpone acting.

#### The Future of Forums

If we attempt to get a less sophisticated point of view concerning forums by approaching the man-on-the-street and asking him inquiring-reporter-questions, we are likely to be disappointed. The butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker are not forum fans. Indeed few of them are familiar with the term "forum." All the pretentious efforts to promote "democracy by discussion" fall short of their goal as long as the very people who are supposed to be benefitted from forums do not know what they are all about.

#### In Times of Turmoil

The depression and the most recent presidential election have

A History of the American People

Introduction

(Signed) Henry Ford, Chairman

It is our intention to issue this book in order to provide a new and more complete history of the American people. The present volume is the first of a series of books which will cover the entire history of the United States from the beginning of the world to the present time. The first volume covers the period from the beginning of the world to the discovery of America. The second volume covers the period from the discovery of America to the present time. The third volume covers the period from the present time to the future. The fourth volume covers the period from the future to the end of the world. The fifth volume covers the period from the end of the world to the beginning of the next world. The sixth volume covers the period from the beginning of the next world to the end of the next world. The seventh volume covers the period from the end of the next world to the beginning of the next world. The eighth volume covers the period from the beginning of the next world to the end of the next world. The ninth volume covers the period from the end of the next world to the beginning of the next world. The tenth volume covers the period from the beginning of the next world to the end of the next world.

The history of the American people is a story of struggle and achievement. It is a story of the triumph of the individual over the collective, of the free man over the slave, of the citizen over the tyrant. It is a story of the growth of a great nation from a small colony to a world power. It is a story of the development of a new and better way of life for all people. It is a story of the realization of the American dream. It is a story of the American people's quest for freedom, justice, and peace. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world.

The history of the American people is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world.

The history of the American people is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better life. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better future. It is a story of the American people's quest for a better world.

introduced social problems which seem to require community attention and action. Many a forum came in on the wave of this increased public interest, and some of them have gone out when this public interest subsided. The depression is no longer the exciting phenomenon it used to be; it may still be current history, but not news. However, the almost daily crisis in international affairs and the heightened tempo of domestic politics provide incentives for discussion such as did not exist ten years ago. Heretofore American democracy has often been no more than a national heirloom to be ceremonially removed from the lavender on the Fourth of July and the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Recently, however world events have forced it upon our attention as a moot question.

Under these special circumstances it is possible that whatever there is in our history of an intellectual, discussional and public debating tradition may be recruited for public forum service. Whether or not the forum reaches the man-on-the-street is partly dependent upon our professional adult educators (in the government and outside of it) who plant forum seeds in areas where the soil has never given forth forums before, or who offer artificial respiration to forums which have not been flourishing so well. It is dependent upon the diffusion of a culture pattern of forums in a period when the social situation seems favorable.

#### In Times of Peace and Prosperity

There seems, moreover, to be an opportunity, in times of calm, to develop a habit pattern of discussion which could provide resistance against the impacts and imperfections of the social order. Whether the forum will take advantage of this opportunity is yet to be seen.

#### The Forum and the Radio

Our view of the contemporary forum cannot be complete without a consideration of the important role of the radio. Time was when "forum" denoted a definite place of meeting. Now, in numerous popular programs of which the Town Meeting of the Air is perhaps the most outstanding, we find the forum technique simulated over the radio. The forum no longer necessarily implies a place; it may be a vicarious experience of an uncountable unseen audience. The future of discussion and of the forum in this country may rest no more on the popularity of the large public assembly than it does on the informal gathering at the corner grocery store - but rather on the increasing versatility and freedom of the radio. Whether the radio can fully substitute for the "personal appearance," the community discussion group, and the protest forum is, however, highly doubtful.





## Conclusion

Despite its undeniable virtues - information, discussion, democracy, adult education - the "forum movement" has been noticed only by those few who wished to notice it, and support it. At least in the Chicago area which we have studied intensively, its affect is limited to only a small section - by no means a cross-section - of the population. This small section includes many who have derived significant benefits from the forums they have attended; an intellectual interest, a stimulus to study, an opportunity to express unpopular ideas or to become acquainted with them, an appreciation of people on the other side of the fence, a wholesome personality outlet of self-expression, and a heightened awareness of the world around them. It is likely that these inspirations have come from the forums of the pariahs at least as much as from those under more conventional sponsorship.

Just as more study of existing forums (including those over the radio as well as those protest forums which have been overlooked by the zealots of the "forum movement") is necessary, before forum theory can have an empirical base, so also is more experimentation necessary before forum practice can be made attractive and servicable to the masses of the citizenry.



A P P E N D I X



FORUMS IN CHICAGO

January 1937

1. Adis Community Center  
4918 North Troy
2. Anshe Emet Synagogue Forum  
Pine Grove at Grace
3. Anthro-Cosmo Open Forum  
Fine Arts Building  
410 South Michigan Avenue
4. Archer Road Community Forum  
Goodwill Center  
3334 South Paulina
5. Association House Forum  
Wilson Memorial Hall  
2150 West North Avenue
6. Avondale Forum  
Avondale M.E. Church  
George and Spaulding
7. Beth Hamidrash Hagodol Men's Club Forum  
460 1/2 North Lawndale Avenue
8. Book Review Forum  
431 South Wabash
9. Bug Club  
Washington Park
10. Bug House Square Forum  
Clark and Walton
11. Central Loop Forum  
Chicago Workers' School  
330 South Wells, Room 610
12. Channing Club  
First Unitarian Church  
57 and Woodlawn Avenue
13. Chicago Forum  
32 West Randolph Street
14. City Club of Chicago Forum  
College Inn, Hotel Sherman  
Randolph and LaSalle



15. Chicago Council on Foreign Relations  
Palmer House  
State and Monroe Streets
16. Civic Forum  
County Building  
Clark and Washington Streets
17. Cook County League of Women Voters Forum  
225 North Michigan Avenue
18. Douglas Community Forum  
Olivet Center  
3115 South Parkway
19. Englewood Y.M.C.A. Forum  
6545 South Union
20. Free Society Forum  
1241 North California Avenue
21. Friday Morning Forum  
Lincoln Center  
700 Oakwood Boulevard
22. Fuller Park Forum  
4500 Princeton Avenue
23. Garfield Park Community Forum  
Garfield Park Administration Bldg.  
100 North Central Park Boulevard
24. Humboldt Park Forum  
Yetes School  
Richmond and Cortland
25. Hyperboreans  
Blackhawk and Sedgwick
26. John Toman Library Forum  
4003 West 27th Street
27. Jewish Peoples' Institute  
3500 Douglas Boulevard
28. K.A.M. Temple Forum.  
53rd Street at Drexel Boulevard
29. Knowledge Box  
1118 West Madison Street
30. Lawson Avenue Y.M.C.A. Forum  
30 West Chicago Avenue





31. Mid-city Workers Center Forum  
Illinois Workers Association #31  
777 West Adams Street
32. Monday Night Labor Forum  
Illinois Workers Association # 1  
1717 North Fairfield
33. Montparnasse - The Midwest Forum  
Diana Court Building  
540 North Michigan Avenue
34. New England Cong'l Church Forum  
Thorne Hall  
Lake Shore Drive at Chicago Avenue
35. North Avenue - Larabee Y.M.C.A. Forum  
1508 Larabee Street
36. Olivet Institute Forum  
1441 Cleveland
37. "On the Lips of the World" Forum  
Hamlin Park Field House  
Barry and Damen
38. Progressive Lawyers Club of Chicago  
Old Town Inn, Hotel Sherman  
Randolph and Clark
39. Quinn Chapel Forum  
Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Church  
2401 South Wabash Avenue
40. St. James Methodist Church Forum  
4611 South Ellis Avenue
41. Seven Arts Club Forum  
55 East Superior
42. Sinai Temple Forum  
4622 South Parkway
43. Social Science Institute Forum  
708 North Clark Street
44. Society of Friends Religious Forum  
1174 East 57th Street
45. South Side Forum  
Wabash Avenue Y.M.C.A.  
3763 South Wabash Avenue



46. South Side Hebrew Congregation Forum  
7359 South Chappell Avenue
47. South Side Liberty Forum  
Hotel Hayes  
64th Street at University Avenue
48. South Side Town Hall  
Gladstone Hotel  
62nd Street at Kenwood Avenue
49. Sunday Discussion Group  
Lincoln Center  
700 Oakwood Boulevard
50. Sunday Evening Round Table Club  
Bryn Mawr Community Church  
7000 Jeffery Avenue
51. Sunday Five O'clock Forum  
Jewish Peoples Institute  
3500 Douglas Boulevard
52. Sunday Fireside Hour Forum  
Hyde Park Y.M.C.A.  
1400 East 53rd Street
53. Swedish Educational League Forum  
3206 Wilton
54. Temple Beth Israel Men's Club Forum  
4850 Bernard
55. Temple Sholom Forum  
3480 North Lake Shore Drive
56. Thomas Paine Forum  
Capital Building  
159 North State Street
57. University Church of Disciples of  
Christ Forum  
5655 University Avenue
58. Washington Boulevard Temple Forum  
25 North Karlov Avenue
59. West Woodlawn Forum  
Illinois Workers Association #10  
6251 Champlain Avenue
60. Women's City Club  
6 North Michigan Avenue
- 61.
61. The Woodlawn Forum  
MacCormac Hall  
1170 East 63rd Street
62. Young Peoples Forum  
Michigan Boulevard  
Gardens Apartments  
62 East 47th Street

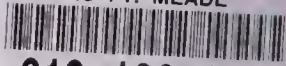








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