

Let Me Help You

Sell Your Homework

12-Week Course of Study:

*24 Ways to Write
What You Think*

Lesson 8

THE SPEECH CRITIQUE

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A SPEECH CRITIQUE WHEN YOU HAVE WORDS TO SAY ABOUT WHAT SOMEONE ELSE SAID

Everywhere we go, someone is standing up and preaching.

It may be at church.

It may be at work.

It may be on a corner near the sub-way entrance.

In an election year, candidates by the hundreds stand up to tell people what they think.

Sometimes someone not in the mainstream says something worth reporting. Maybe you were there. We need you to take notes and then write up what was said.

But how do you do that?

It's easy.

Write a lead that summarizes the most memorable thing the speaker said. Do not identify the speaker in the first sentence. Use a common noun.

Say, "A candidate for mayor today charged his opponent with . . .

Say, "The pastor of a local church on Sunday astonished his congregation when . .

Include the date. That is, tell in the first sentence what day of the week the speech was given and put that information immediately before or after the verb. See, above, we put "today" next to "charged" and "on Sunday" next to "astonished."

In the second paragraph, identify the speaker and tell where he spoke and, if it was under the auspices of some organization, tell which.

In the same paragraph tell more of what he said. Tell either more of that initial point or a second and third point he covered.

Then develop the body of the article by alternating statement and quote. Give a paragraph retelling the first point you made once again, making

sure you don't repeat the same words.

Follow that up with a quote expanding on your statement. Don't let the quote repeat the statement. Let it fortify it. It proves that the speaker actually said what you are reporting he said, and you are giving him the opportunity to flesh out what he means.

It's possible to put the quote first and then the supporting statement. But that can be awkward and look as if what he said needs an interpretation.

It's more common—and more natural—to summarize what he said first and then to use a supporting quote that amplifies the essential point the speaker was making.

As you go on into another sequence of statement and quote, you are telling the reader that the speaker has a lot more to talk about.

Don't be afraid to use "said" over and over again but never more than once in a paragraph, if then. The reader sees the "said," but he doesn't see it. He recognizes that it is attribution, but he's not distracted by the way you say it.

Some writers put, "he deduced," "he surmised," "he excoriated," "he emphasized." The reader sees that and instantly becomes aware of how you are writing. That's the last thing you want. You want him unconscious of you the writer and conscious only of what you are writing about. This is writing at its best.

Oh, occasionally you might want to say, "he charged," to lend strength and vehemence to what your speaker is saying; but for the most part, keep attributions simple.

And, because he is the only one speaking, you don't have to put "he said" after every time he opens his mouth.

In the example that follows, note that the writer can use direct quotes and indirect quotes with equal effectiveness. With direct quotes, you plant your comma and begin with open quotes and a capital letter.

With indirect quotes you use no quotation marks. You merely write a sentence, plant your comma and say that he said it.

Sentences, also, can contain only a piece of a quote or pieces. When you do this, don't plant a comma or a capital letter. Simply go on with the sentence and put quotation marks around the exact words of his/hers you are quoting.

Quotes let the speaker give strong opinions. If you were a reporter (which Beth Vogt was in her article that follows) you would only give a rundown of the speech that occurred.

But when you use the speech as a vehicle for critical comment, you have an opportunity to give your opinion.

First, consider this a journalism article. Make it straight news reporting.

Then on a second run, write it, giving your opinion, using the quote/statement

order. Let the speaker make the statement and then you interpret it for the reader using your opinion.

And what about tense? I believe that present tense verbs—"he says" not "he said"—give an immediacy to a speech report. Your article is up-to-date because it has a "now" sound. But this is a decision each writer—and his editor—must make.

Here is a sample speech report, printed in a "Moral Majority Report" newspaper when I was acting editor:

**'GRASSROOTS WOMEN
THRILLED WITH REAGAN,'
LAHAYE SAYS**

By Beth K. Vogt

Special to the Moral Majority Report

**WASHINGTON, D.C.—
President Ronald Reagan's actions
should not be swayed by feminist
cries of "gender gap," says the
president of Concerned Women of
America.**

Notice that the lead begins with what is called a dateline—an all cap naming of the city in which the speech took place. It is followed by the name of the state, printed in upper and lower case. Had the speech occurred in SAN DIEGO, the writer would have written, "Calif."

Notice also that a major point of the address captures the lead.

Notice also that the speaker is identified by a common noun and not by

name. That comes immediately next.

Mrs. Beverly LaHaye of San Diego, Calif., believes the gender gap—allegations that President Reagan is not popular with American women because he is not concerned about their needs—is a hoax that has no bearing on his chances for reelection.

That paragraph gave her name and her home city. It also expanded on the lead sentence. It is written in present tense.

Notice the strong words used throughout the article. There's enthusiasm here.

Notice, also, that "*she* said" is used more often than "*LaHaye* said." Frequent use of the person's name in a speech critique or interview is amateurish.

"The women who are crying 'gender gap' today are not the women who voted for Reagan before and they will not vote for him again," she says.

The author mentioned "allegations" back in the second paragraph of the speech (column one). She then follows it with this quote (above) that identifies the people who are making those charges.

The rest of Beth's article is a series of statements followed sooner or later by quotes.

LaHaye doesn't believe Reagan is indifferent to women as feminists charge. She quotes statistics showing that he has appointed more women to government positions than any other president in history.

"I'm not sure he could ever do enough to please the feminists," she says. "They would never be satisfied, no matter how many appointments he made—unless he closed down the system and put them all in power."

LaHaye does not deny that there is discrimination in America. She feels discrimination victimizes men as well as women, minorities and handicapped people.

Rather than insist the Administration produce new anti-discrimination laws, LaHaye urges women to use the laws already established to fight employment discrimination.

"The cry of hysteria" for equal work and equal pay would be silenced, she says, if people utilized such laws as the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972.

"I say, if the laws aren't being used, then let's use them. Let's make the laws of government work for women."

Notice that the statement sections are full of facts. They tell what the speaker said. The following quotes amplify those facts.

La Haye also questions the accuracy of feminists who charge that women make only 59 cents to every dollar men make. Such a comparison is like comparing apples to oranges, she says.

"Investigate the work history of men and women. Women employees include women who enter the work field late, who work part-time, who limit the length of their employment, and who take maternity leave. In contrast, men enter the work field earlier and are longer term employees than women."

She calls feminists merely a vocal minority that excessive media coverage has helped to create the gender gap alarm.

"The feminists have monopolized the voice of women in America," she says. "When they get all the coverage, naturally they cry about discrimination. They whimper about women's rights and how they have been neglected by the Administration."

She believes the majority of women are getting sick and tired of feminists' claims that they speak for every woman.

"Women are not pluralistic; we are not all one voice. Feminists do not speak for the women of America."

Grassroots women across the nation "are thrilled to death to have (a President) who speaks out against

abortion, who speaks out for school prayer, who speaks out against the Equal Rights Amendment,” she says.

The President should not court the feminists’ vote, as he did when he appointed his daughter Maureen to help improve his image with women because Reagan will never woo the feminists to join his platform.

“I think he has been bending over backward to court those women and they are going to stab him in the back in the long run,” LaHaye says.

The author had to use “LaHaye” here to keep us from thinking Maureen said those words.

“He would do far better to develop that spirit of a following and of camaraderie with those women who support his philosophy rather than ignoring and perhaps even alienating them.”

So, how does writing a speech report help you write what you think? Perhaps this is a back-door approach that does two or three things:

Such an article forces you to listen closely and take good notes. Even if your tape recorder picks up speakers a distance from you or if you are fortunate to sit near a loud speaker, take good notes. Use your tape to get down the exact words spoken. If your source ever denies he said that,

you’ve got your proof on tape.

Second, writing a speech critique lets you send to market the words of someone with whom you agree so that those opinions will get a hearing before the public. The speaker may not have had the time to put his thoughts on paper himself and/or he may not know how to write an article.

You do.

Third, they’re a pattern for you to write an article about yourself and your opinions that could get published in your own local newspaper:

MY CITY, My State—A housewife and mother of two children, living at 1234 N.E. 57th Street here, doesn’t believe that President Ronald Reagan should be swayed by feminist cries of “gender gap.”

Tillie Gogoluski believes the gender gap—allegations that the President is not popular with American women—is a figment of . . .

Don’t laugh.

Make it work.

But there’s more to be said first. This same structure—this way of handling the speech critique—can be used to shape an interview article you might write.

In fact, Mrs. Vogt told me she got her material for this article from Mrs. LaHaye over the telephone. Read her article again with this in mind and see how readily an alternating-statement-and-quote structure handles the written interview.

The difference between this kind of interview and a personal interview is that you are not concentrating on the setting or the mannerisms or the gestures and facial expressions of the interviewee.

This speech report centers on the speech itself

When you are writing for a newspaper, you mention where and when and under what circumstances the speech was given. Do this either in your second sentence (it may be a paragraph by itself) or at the end of the article.

Turn a speech critique into criticism by changing your verbs from positive to negative—particularly if you want to go into propaganda—a device used widely by the liberal media.

Instead of writing that a certain senator spoke, write, “he harangued.” See how quickly and easily you can insert venom? An article treated in this fashion becomes an editorial, a commentary or—if carried to extremes—yellow journalism. By the time you’re through, you’ll sound like a television news analyst the night the President delivers a major address.

Think of the company you’re in!

Stay awake for logical fallacies as you go over your notes or listen to your recording of the speech. Just because you are writing a critique doesn’t mean that you become a disciple of the speaker.

You do your reader a greater service by pointing up the flaws in the thinking of the speaker.

If you are going to do a telephone interview or personal interview to get a prominent person’s views on an issue, pre-write your interview by writing out a progression of questions and using the answers as the body of your article. Write it up in a question and answer format, but don’t use the letters “Q” and “A.” They call attention to what you are doing. Instead, isolate your question in a paragraph of its own.

Use the following speech, given by Dr. Jerry Falwell who is among other things chancellor of Liberty University and founder of the “Moral Majority” organization, as your assignment to practice on. This speech takes up eight pages, but it would be the length of a 30-40 minute speech you would probably cover.

Many speakers sum up their speech in the last few paragraphs. Go there first when writing a critique. You may find a table of contents for your speech and a repeated point the speaker wants to be sure the listener understands. Build your article on that.

But think as you go. Is he correct with his recipe for revival? Is there evidence in Scripture that one will come in these times? Just because a friendly man speaks from a pulpit doesn’t mean he has offered absolute truth. Bereans examine what he says

in the light of God's Word. Too many of us accept uncritically whatever a prominent person says.

Edmund Burke said, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

The New Testament writer, James, said, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

America entered the post-war era in 1945, determined that our children would never experience the woes of another great economic depression—as we had—and that our children would never face the horrors of another world war.

We were sincere in our altruism.

We were committed to ushering in a period of peace and prosperity.

We wanted a new world for our children. And a time of unparalleled affluence burst upon the American scene.

We gave our sons and daughters "things" we had never had—money, automobiles, hi-fis, television sets, carpeted rooms, air conditioning, "threads," private and personal telephones etc. etc. . . . "things" we knew nothing about in our youth—but with those things we failed to communicate and transfer to them the "values and principles" which make things have meaning.

And our good intentions produced the wealthiest generation of

young people in human history.

But they were, in reality, given a terrible albatross. They had things without a value system. They knew little of discipline, responsibility, the work ethic, the Judeo-Christian tradition, the free enterprise system, sacrifice—all the principles that our parents had taught us.

And, while America's post-war parents worked furiously and long to maintain the elevated lifestyles of their children, their children were fast being victimized by a social disease called "materialism." And this social disease, as could be expected, began to produce another social disease called "rebellion."

With all of the purest motives, we had created a revolution in the hearts of America's youth—which brought us to the "dark ages of the 20th century"—two decades, the '60s and the '70s, when this nation almost went to Hell.

What did happen to America in the 60s and 70s?

1) A rebellion of young people against the "establishment"—parents, law enforcement agencies, government, school authorities, business, the flag, etc. They left home, burned their campuses and their draft cards, refused to work and defied all authority.

2) A rebellion against moral and traditional values.

The 'live-in' arrangement became prevalent. Homosexuality became

an acceptable and alternate lifestyle. A drug epidemic, wed to a contemporary music subculture, began to sweep across the land. Crime and violence invaded America's schools. Moral permissiveness became a way of life.

"If it feels good, do it" became the philosophy of these 20th century dark ages. Pornography fast became a legal multi-billion dollar annual industry. Patriotism became a forbidden perspective. And with all of this moral decadence, academic deterioration naturally resulted—with the lowest SAT scores in history. Young people were graduating without an education.

Many Americans during those days felt we had crossed the point of no return—that we had had it. The nation was doomed to join the scrap heap of once great societies like the Roman Empire, Eastern European nations and other socialist and Marxist states.

These two decades were indeed "dark days" for our beloved nation. But during those dark days, along with the pessimism in the hearts of many, there arose a chorus of cries to God from other hearts—a cry for a spiritual awakening, a cry for a third Great Awakening.

Many servants of God believed that America's only hope for survival lay in a visitation from Heaven by the Holy Spirit upon this land. These intercessors had

watched as the moral darkness of the '60s and '70s was further compounded by two incredibly horrendous rulings handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1962, the High Court had, in essence, expelled the Almighty God from the halls of our public schools by eliminating prayer from the classrooms. Although some interpreted the court ruling otherwise, the actual result has been the removal of prayer from schools everywhere.

A second ruling in 1973 was even more devastating to the moral and spiritual fiber of this republic—namely, the *Roe v. Wade* decision which legalized abortion-on-demand. More than 30 million little babies have died in our nation since that ruling and the biological holocaust continues at the rate of 1.5 million persons annually.

These two court rulings, in conjunction with the moral tailspin of the '60s and '70s, which I have already described, created the dual dilemma facing our nation today, namely:

- 1) the secularization of America and
- 2) the development of a low view of the value of human life, born and unborn.

For more than 25 years, America's school children have been unable to pray in their schools—in the U.S.—not the Soviet Union. And

during these past years, abortion has become the national sin of America.

The fallout from these two tragedies is obvious everywhere—manger scenes on public property are challenged. The distribution of Bibles to school children by the Gideons is now a court matter. Pages are cut out of yearbooks in high schools if Scripture verses are printed on them. Invocations and benedictions at graduation services are thought illegal.

And little babies born with handicaps—like Downs Syndrome—are allowed to starve and thirst to death because some doctor or jurist or parent decides this is not a quality of life deserving the right to exist. And this Baby Doe-type of infanticide is spreading rapidly.

Euthanasia is not that far away. It is not unrealistic to assume that, before very long, persons 75 years of age and older may be in jeopardy also because of the constant lowering of our view of the value of human life being caused by the massive abortion of little babies and the infanticide being practiced in hospitals everywhere.

Recently, President Reagan stated in his address to the National Religious Broadcasters in Washington, D.C., “I believe no challenge is more important to the character of America than restoring the right to

life to all human beings. Without that right, no other rights have meaning.”

Something must be done. Cal Thomas and I one night were driving through Washington, D.C., about 3 a.m. after appearing on the late night Larry King radio talk show. The beautiful monuments were especially impressive in the dark—all lit up—and paying mute respect to George Washington, the father of our nation; Jefferson, the father of our freedoms; and Lincoln, the emancipator of the slaves.

But Cal commented, “Jerry, notice—there are no monuments for presidents who balanced the budget or reduced bureaucracy.”

And, suddenly, it struck me. Perhaps some night, my children or grandchildren will drive through this city and admire a monument to a president who liberated the unborn by putting an end to convenience abortions. I would challenge our President to be that national hero.

Is there any hope for America?

Yes, there is hope. 2 Chronicles 7:14 is still in the Bible: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

America needs another spiritual awakening. Of course, we need legislative and judicial relief from

some of the moral concerns that are plaguing this nation. And we must render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar—good citizenship performance. And I am doing all a human being can do as a private citizen to change bad laws and effect new and healthy laws and judicial reform. But the real and permanent hope for our land is divine healing similar to those glorious interventions of earlier days.

Let us look at those awakenings.

Many historians agree we have had only two national spiritual awakenings. The first great awakening had two phases. The first phase covered approximately 20 years from 1720 to 1740. George Whitefield said Theodore J. Prelinghuysen, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in New Jersey was the one who instigated it. He stirred his former congregation in the Raritan Valley area. The awakening had begun.

It then moved to a little school in Pennsylvania, dubbed “the log college” when a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian pastor, William Tennent, began turning out a number of ministers with evangelical zeal. From there it visited Virginia under the leadership of Rev. Samuel Davies, another Presbyterian preacher. Shubael Starns, a Baptist leader aided in causing the revival to spread through Virginia and into North Carolina.

Finally, it centered in Northampton, Massachusetts, led by Jonathan Edwards. It began in December of 1734 with the 200 families in his congregation.

Edwards wrote: “There was scarcely a single person in town, old or young, left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world.”

It was not until seven years later that Edwards preached his famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God;” but the pump had already been primed!

The first phase of the First Great Awakening saw approximately 40,000 people in New England alone (out of a total population of 300,000) come to Christ. No less than 150 new churches were organized.

The second phase of the First Great Awakening began as early as 1786 but reached its zenith a few decades later; for by the 1780s, the influence of the first phase had largely been dissipated by the philosophy of Deism. In 1786 a revival began at Hampton-Sydney College in Virginia and soon it spread to the southern states.

One of the leaders was Timothy Dwight, president of Yale. About one-third of his student body professed conversion during the revival.

Then it moved to the great American frontier where many

people had migrated. The old camp-meeting concept was now introduced. The most famous such outdoor meeting was held at Cane Ridge in August, 1801. Hundreds of woodsmen were converted. The entire frontier areas of Kentucky and Tennessee were helped by it, as thousands were delivered from addiction to whiskey, the scourge of Satan in those early days.

This period marked the beginning of the mid-week prayer meeting in churches and also the modern Sunday school movement.

A leader later involved in the Second Great Awakening was Charles G. Finney, who came to the forefront at that time.

Great missionary activities were also carried out. In 1792, William Carey went to India and ushered in the era of modern day missions; and in 1841, David Livingstone traveled to Africa.

The Second Great Awakening was a prayer meeting revival. In 1857 a lay-revival was born in New York through noon-day prayer meetings. It soon spread to the western part of America.

One historian described this spontaneous explosion of prayer as "an unbroken chain of prayer meetings from New York to Denver." Finally, the Confederate Army experienced a revival between the years of 1863 and 1865.

We now desperately need a Third

Great Awakening. And I believe we are on the threshold of such a divine intervention. During these past 39 years, while moral decadence has literally pervaded our nation, God, too, has been at work.

Last year was the first year in 22 years that the divorce rate declined in this nation.

All of this would indicate two significant happenings:

1) our young people are repudiating the social experiments thrust upon them during the '60s and '70s by the social engineers and

(2) the influence of these Fundamentalist ministries I have just mentioned are being widely felt.

That is why I say that now is the time for God's people to look to Heaven for revival—as it has been experienced twice before.

Can this happen again? Or better asked, can God do it again? The answer is an unequivocal and resounding yes.

But I am convinced revival will not come until we meet God's conditions. And I further believe it will not happen until thousands of Americans who know God get serious and truly fast and pray for divine intervention. That is what I said—fast and pray. Not just pray. Fast and pray.

Why do I say fast?

When Jesus returned from the Mount of Transfiguration, a father approached Him concerning his

son. The young boy was a lunatic and, on many occasions, had harmed himself. The disciples had tried to rebuke the demon in the young boy, but they could not cure him (Matt. 17:16).

After Jesus rebuked the devil and healed the boy, His disciples asked Him, "Why could not we cast him out?"

Jesus answered His disciples, "Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you" (Matt. 17:20). Most Americans are like those powerless disciples. They face problems that are beyond their ability to solve. The final words of Jesus regarding the disciples' helplessness are applicable to 20th century Christians: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). Prayer and fasting initiate spiritual power.

Many people in the Bible fasted. Moses fasted on Mount Sinai (Exo. 34:28).

Hannah fasted when she wanted a son from God (I Sam. 1:7).

David fasted on several occasions (2 Sam. 12:22; 1 Kings 21:29).

The entire Israelite nation fasted on the day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27a). Many other occasions of fasting are found in the Old Testament.

But fasting is not just an Old Testament practice.

Jesus fasted in the wilderness (Matt. 4:2).

John the Baptist taught his disciples to fast frequently (Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33).

Some found fault with Jesus' disciples for their failure to fast often (Matt. 9:14-15; Mark 2:18-19; Luke 5:33-35).

Anna served God in the Temple by fasting (Luke 2:37).

Paul fasted following his conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:9).

Cornelius fasted before his vision in Caesarea (Acts 10:30).

The Antioch church fasted when Barnabas and Saul were commissioned for their first missionary journey (Acts 13:3).

Later, on the voyage to Rome, Paul and those on the ship abstained from food for 14 days (Acts 27:33).

Fasting also played a prominent role in the formation of America. The Pilgrims fasted the day before they disembarked from the Mayflower. They were seeking God's guidance to establish a city in the new world.

Many of the settlers in colonial America fasted. Town councils in many New England villages called the entire population to fast when they faced a crisis.

Throughout history, great men

sought the power and blessing of God while fasting.

Luther, Calvin and Knox fasted.

Jonathan Edwards fasted for 22 hours prior to preaching his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

The spiritual influence of that message not only ignited revival fires in colonial New England but continues to spark revival in the lives of Christians today.

Evangelist Charles Finney often stopped revival meetings when he sensed the heart of the audience was cold. He immediately called for fasting and prayer. When God began to warm the hearts of his hearers, Finney continued the meeting.

And you will recall, it was Finney who played a key role in the abolitionist movement which eventually resulted in putting an end to slavery in this country.

Old Testament Israel fasted during days of crisis.

The Founding Fathers of the United States fasted when facing momentous decisions.

The great revivalists fasted in order to receive God's power and blessing.

Today, America faces many crises of her own. Momentous decisions must be made. This is a decade of destiny. Revival must come to America. Because of this, I have called America to join me in a great fast.

America is facing one of the worst crises in her history. Some might question that statement. They would say that during the Depression of the 1930s the nation faced its greatest crisis because of the collapse of our economic structure. But the Depression did not destroy America. In fact, it rallied the spirit of America and inspired her citizens to national unity.

Others might say that World War II was the greatest crisis in the history of America. The totalitarianism of Germany and Japan threatened our national existence. But, again, as disastrous as it was, that crisis served to unite the nation.

The crisis facing America now is much more subtle and dangerous. America seems to have lost her unifying principles. A large segment of our society is no longer committed to the ideals of our Founding Fathers. America has become materialistic, humanistic, and secularistic.

Our crisis is described in Scripture, "but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6).

If America ever needed God's help, she needs it now. We have drifted from our foundation. We face a national crisis of extreme proportions.

Christians in America should fast as a symbol of national repentance and dependence upon God. I believe God would save this nation if

Christians showed the sincerity of their faith by prayer and fasting.

When those who are on “praying ground’ seek the face of God, He answers. If this nation is going to be turned around, it will be because God’s people took the initiative.

Note who is addressed in 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

The condition that brought about national revival was the repentance of God’s people. If Christians will unite in prayer and fasting, this nation, can be saved and brought back to God.

Esther and the people of God faced extinction (Esther 2:1-15). Haman had conspired against the Jews and persuaded the king that every Jew should be slaughtered.

“And the letters were sent by posts into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey” (Esther 3:13).

Israel faced a national crisis. Esther was the one person who could make the king change his

command. She requested of the Jewish believers, “Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish” (Esther 4:16).

Jehoshaphat called a national fast when threatened by Edom. “And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah” (2 Chronicles 20:3).

Ezra proclaimed a fast for protection as God’s people returned to the land: “Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for our substance” (Ezra 8:21).

Joel called a national fast at the onset of a locust plague: “Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD” (Joel 1:14).

There are some who say that to fast is to take severe action. But America is faced with a severe crisis. Radical problems necessitate radical solutions.

We are setting aside Sunday, March 25, as a National Day of Fasting and Repentance. From

sundown, March 24th, Saturday, until the sundown on March 25th, Sunday, we are asking millions of Americans to fast and pray for revival in America. This means missing breakfast, lunch—two meals on Sunday, March 25th. This means spending a reasonable amount of time during those 24 hours in believing prayer for our blessed country.

Will you join me? I sincerely believe one or two million sincere believers, fasting and praying for revival, could very likely be used of God to spark a Third Great Awakening.

Determine to become part of the solution.

Now, in your role of speech reporter or speech critic you've got some work ahead of you. Find, first, his thesis. Try to get what he is saying down to one sentence. Your sentence may have one point, two points, three points. Whatever that sentence contains could well be the outline of your article—whether you are reporting it, supporting it or criticizing it.

Your lead may be a startler—a short, crisp, astonishing statement. It could well include one of your points but doesn't need to.

Then, in your who-what-where-when-why sentence that follows tell that he delivered the speech March 4 to—let's say—the President's Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C.

Then, take off on your first point. Give the meat of it in a repeated statement-and-quote summary sequence. Or a quote-statement order as in "he said," then a critique or "but he didn't say . . ."

Go to point two. More meat in a repeated statement-and-quote sequence.

Point three. More in the same style.

Then go back and flesh out your points. You may or may not stick to your statement-and-quote sequences here.

To end, summarize the speech by reversing the order of the three points. You do not continue the statement-and-quote formula. Say something like, "Falwell believes that three, two and one will solve the problems of America and help it meet the crises of the 21st century."

Note: The careful researcher/writer will look up the references. Errors in details can derail the authority with which you write.

I want to give you another article to practice your alternating statement and quote method on.

This one I wrote when I was senior editor of "Moody Monthly" magazine. My boss, Jerry Jenkins (years before his "Left Behind" fame) sent me to Philadelphia to interview Dr. C. Everett Koop, M.D., surgeon-in-chief of Children's Hospital there. Dr. Koop had not yet been named U.S. Surgeon General.

He was primed for our subject when

I arrived and poured forth a rush of liquid gold. Twenty minutes into our session I glanced at my recorder.

It was on pause.

Dear Friends, ALWAYS check your equipment when you interview. Ever gracious, the doctor went back over what we had covered. My embarrassment continues to this day.

This is the article I wrote:

From doctors to the mothers of more than one million babies a year, it is

Deception-on-Demand

By C. Everett Koop, M.D. as told to
Dick Bohrer

Abortion: The whole issue has been foisted upon us through deception. Its advocates have convinced much of the American public and the courts that abortion concerns a fetus that is not a person in the true sense, that it concerns a woman's right of privacy, and that the issue is political and social rather than personal or moral.

The Supreme Court has championed these views. The secular public has split down the middle. Pro-life groups flex muscle in major cities. But the evangelical church, which should be seething with outrage and storming the nation in protest, still waits in the wings, trying to make up its mind.

Abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia stand before us like dominoes;

the first to fall has been abortion on demand. It is a grave issue. Nothing like it has separated our society since the days of slavery.

The pro-choice faction says that children who result from rape or incest, or who are defective or deformed really never have lives worthy to be lived. And they lead us to conclude that nearly all abortions performed in this country correct one or another of these tragedies.

It simply isn't true. Abortions in the United States for rape, incest, to protect the life of the mother, or to void a defective fetus comprise less than five percent of all abortions. The rest are performed just for convenience. And we're talking about one million abortions a year.

Rape practically never results in pregnancy. Studies in Pennsylvania and Minnesota concerning rape and pregnancy show that as many as five thousand rapes have occurred without a single pregnancy.

Even if a child is conceived through rape, destroying it does not end the trauma. It does not deter the rapes. It does not blot out the woman's memory of the assault. It does not change her degradation in any way.

We must remember that half of that baby belongs to her. It has part of her family no matter who the father was. The woman needs extraordinary care, but we should not add the guilt of killing her unborn

child to all her other problems. Abortion is the same kind of violence as was the rape.

Yes, she has rights. She has the right to an abortion under the law. Even the rapist has rights. The only one with no rights at all is the unborn baby.

Extraordinary relationships develop between the raped woman and her child when the pregnancy is carried to term.

Incest is the most common untalked-about crime in the country. Because this is a quiet crime, the girl is usually very far along in her pregnancy before anybody knows about it.

Most people do not know that the younger the mother is the more likely she will suffer sterility later if she has an abortion. Studies in Canada indicate that sterility is as high as thirty percent among women fifteen to seventeen years old who have had abortions.

If a girl is old enough to conceive, she is old enough to have the baby. We forget that girls in other parts of the world have babies at a far younger age than girls in our Anglo-Saxon culture.

Abortions on young victims of incest are unusually hazardous. We are working not only with a very late pregnancy, with a viable unborn child and with a pre-teen or early teen mother, but also with all kinds of guilt, family-side, because

the unborn has a father who is possibly also his grandfather or his uncle.

Protection of the life of the mother as an excuse for an abortion is a smoke screen. In my 36 years in pediatric surgery I have never known of one instance where the child had to be aborted to save the mother's life.

When a woman is pregnant, her obstetrician takes on the care of two patients—the mother-to-be and the unborn baby. If, toward the end of the pregnancy complications arise that threaten the mother's health, he will take the child by inducing labor or performing a Caesarian section.

His intention is still to save the life of both the mother and the baby. The baby will be premature and perhaps immature depending on the length of gestation. Because it has suddenly been taken out of the protective womb, it may encounter threats to its survival. The baby is never willfully destroyed because the mother's life is in danger.

Infanticide was the second domino, and it fell very silently. Unless you know someone who talks about his work in an intensive care unit for newborns, there is no way the public would know about this. Abortion is legal. Infanticide is murder.

It is still illegal in every state in

the union; yet for some reason when a newborn baby is starved or in some other way allowed to die, the law turns its back. It isn't that the law doesn't know about it because reputable medical journals publish papers where authors acknowledge that they have engineered the deaths of babies under their care.

Surveys by national organizations of their own constituents in pediatrics have indicated that many of these people have a very low view of deformed human life, feeling such youngsters will have lives too difficult, too worthless to live.

Corruptive forces are exerting an influence on medical men and women in this country. Some obstetricians admit that they abort because the patient wants them to, even if it is not medically required.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has changed the definition of pregnancy from "the period from conception to birth" to "from implantation to birth" in order to make the intrauterine device (I.U.D.) more acceptable to American women. The I.U.D. prevents implantation on the prepared wall of the womb.

Zoologists and biologists say life is a continuum from fertilization until the death of the organism, whether earthworm or baboon or fox or pigeon. Is it different for man?

Pregnancy begins with fertilization, not with implantation! The change in the definition by the college lacks integrity.

We're just smoke-screened to death.

The medical profession must not let itself be pushed by society and by our social planners into the role of social executioner. For as the medical person becomes and abortionist, he becomes the social executioner of the unborn.

As he allows infanticide in his intensive care unit, he becomes the social executioner of the unborn. In days ahead, he may well be required to commit euthanasia and become the executioner of the elderly.

Pennsylvania's legislature passed a law that said that if an unborn baby was viable—had the ability to exist outside the womb on its own—the physician should select that technique of abortion most likely to produce a living child. The Supreme Court struck it down.

The Massachusetts legislature passed a law that said if a minor child was to have an abortion, her parents were to take part in the discussion to see whether or not it was in the minor child's best interests to have the operation.

That law was also stricken down.

Every opportunity the Supreme Court has had to back off its position of 1973, it has not taken. Every

new decision concerning abortion has compounded the original unfortunate decision.

Parental rights are gone. Spousal rights are gone. The rights of the baby are gone. Legally, a minor child may now have an abortion without her parents' knowledge; but, technically, she cannot have her ears pierced for earrings without parental consent.

Abortion is an atrocity changing the whole thought process of our country. More than a million unborn lives a year cannot be violently terminated without taking its toll on us as a nation.

Japan has records of more than fifty million legal abortions since World War II. That country is less than one percent Christian. Here in America we will destroy a larger number than that in the same amount of time, and we're supposed to be a Christian country.

Even though you and I know that that is not a true description of this country any more, we do have a Judeo Christian heritage. We do have a memory of a Judeo-Christian consensus. We have an extraordinary number of people who claim to be evangelical, Bible-believing Christians; but they don't believe what they read about the sanctity of life.

Of all people, the evangelical should best know that man is unique because he has been created

in the image of God and is precious to Him.

I have spent thirty-six years in the practice of pediatric surgery, longer than anybody else now practicing in this country. I deal primarily with the correction of congenital defects and I know what these "defective" children become.

But the verse that really gives me great courage to do what I am doing is Exodus 4:11, where God speaks to Moses at the burning bush when Moses doesn't want to plead with Pharaoh.

God says, "Who made man's mouth? Who made the deaf or the dumb or the seeing or the blind? Have not I, saith the Lord."

Like it or not, God makes the imperfect. And you and I as His stewards have no more right to destroy the imperfect than we have the right to destroy the perfect.

Many times, when I am struggling with a newborn baby with many defects, I think about that verse and that this is as much God's business as anything else.

I recently went to a celebration in the home of a boy who had been operated on forty-five times. He's a great kid. He wants to spend his life working with handicapped people. His whole family came to Christ out of the circumstances surrounding his difficulties and are outstanding believers now.

I've seen this happen so many

times that I just can't help be thankful that I'm in the field I'm in. God is sovereign. He has His own reasons for giving families deformed children.

I have never had a family come to me and say, "Why did you try so hard to save the life of our child?" nor have I ever had a grown child come to me and say, "Why did you try so hard to save my life?"

These youngsters become loved and loving children. They become productive members of society.

Nothing I have ever done to preserve human life leads me to believe that it isn't the right thing to do.

I've tried to figure out why evangelicals are so undecided about abortion. Do they figure that their citizenship is only in heaven? Are they more concerned with their life in the hereafter than they are with the here and now?

Don't they realize that God left us here so that we could be the salt "of the earth" and the light "of the world?"

Do they think talking about abortion is dirty? It's not dirty. There is another reason.

So many evangelicals are afraid of the social gospel that, when you talk about the social action which this issue demands, they think it is something they shouldn't get mixed up with. But if evangelicals aren't concerned with the abortion of man who is created in the image of God,

what issue are they going to espouse?

In my opinion, this is the most important issue the church has ever faced, and it has change my life. I am not longer just a pediatric surgeon. God has given me a tremendous opportunity to take this view of the sanctity of the unborn life to the Christian public.

I am convinced that this is the most important thing God has ever given me to say.

If you believe the universe came about by chance, that you and I evolved from primordial ooze, then there is no unique dignity to human life. Why worry about it?

But if you believe that man was created in the image of God and that he has total, unique, specific specialness, then he should be protected to the best of our ability for all of his lifetime.

In general, I get the feeling that the evangelical church is not responding. Some raise Exodus 21 as a proof text that God doesn't regard the unborn child in the same way as He does the newly born child. But if you read the text carefully, you will find it says that if a man in an argument with another man *accidentally* strikes a woman and she has a premature birth, there is to be a fine. Nothing here is premeditated.

But if any further mischief is done—and I take that to mean a de-

formity of the baby or the death of the baby—then the old law applies of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Francis Schaeffer checked the exegesis of these verses with five Hebrew scholars and was convinced that God means just that, and in no way does He mean to downgrade the worth of the unborn child.

The story of the incarnation leaves no room for doubt. The angel told Joseph, “That which is conceived in her is of the holy Spirit.” From the moment of conception God had entered human life.

The soul that I am has also existed from the moment of conception and the fetus that became me was God’s method of enclosing the soul so that it could become incarnate. I am a soul. I inhabit a body. I have a spirit. The story of the incarnation confirms this.

I have always been interested in the fact that when the preborn John the Baptist leaped in Elizabeth’s womb because of the present of the Lord in Mary’s womb (Luke 1:41, 44), He—the Lord—was a very tiny Baby. He would not have been discernible as an individual at that time, but He certainly was a Person.

We evangelicals have already lost too much by being indecisive of these issues. Secular people are the ones who have organized “Birth-Right,” “Life Line,” “Americans United for Life,” “Heart-Beat,” and

pregnancy crisis centers.

The Roman Catholic church has been so vocal that pro-abortion forces tell our politicians that abortion is a religious issue. “You can’t have one church forcing its morality on the rest of the nation,” they say.

But this is a human rights issue. It’s a legal issue. It’s a sociological issue. It’s a Christian and moral issue. Thank God that at least the Catholics are fighting it.

When I was first a Christian, I noticed the disdain the evangelical church had for unmarried pregnant girls. It is possible that had we shown the love and compassion that we should have, the need to change the abortion laws may never have come about.

Our churches must get educated. That means they’ve got to find somebody who can talk to them about the origin of life. Many of our people don’t realize that by the twenty-first day—before most women even know they are pregnant—the baby’s heart demonstrates its first feeble beats.

By the sixth week the adrenal gland and the thyroid are functioning. A child’s fingerprints are indelibly in place by the twelfth week. Abortion kills a developing human being! No matter how old or how large the organism is when he/she leaves the womb, that emergency—by whatever means—is still a birth.

Churches have to recognize that there are two alternatives to the present state of affairs. One is political involvement and one is personal involvement.

We must learn how our state and federal government works. We must become educated in the political process.

We must vote for the candidates who will stand for what we want them to stand for, and we must watch them later to make sure they do.

We've got to push for a human life amendment that will guarantee to any unborn child the right to live.

Evangelical churches should have crisis pregnancy services. They should cultivate families in the church willing to provide refuge to a pregnant woman who doesn't want to be.

They should have Christian lawyers who could arrange adoptions if necessary. But it has to go further than that.

Some married women wonder how they will be able to cope with a pregnancy, and I think the church has to say, "We will stand by you. We will provide baby-sitting. We will help any way we can."

Too often, the unsaved show more compassion than the saved. This is to our shame.

An orthodox Jewish law student gave up a year of his time at Boston

University to go to Akron to fight legislation through the courts. He sought passage of an ordinance requiring that a woman know what the unborn child she is aborting looks like by having the physician show her a picture of a fetus of the same gestation he thinks her child is.

The ordinance passed also asked that the woman not have the abortion until twenty-four or forty-eight hours have gone by after she has signed the papers for operative permission.

But the pro-abortion forces do not want the pregnant woman to know what she is aborting and they don't want her to have the time to think it over.

This idea is contrary to everything happening in this country; there is a tremendous movement now for informed consent. Legally, if you bring a child to me for a hernia repair, I can't tell you that he should be operated upon or even schedule him for admission unless I tell you all of the possible good and bad results from that hospitalization.

With abortion, the counseling is not done, and the clinics do not tell you about alternatives to abortion; but worse yet, the pro-abortion people get terribly upset if somebody pushes for informed consent.

So we are really up against an irrational, unfair group of people,

lacking in integrity because they are demanding for other types of operations certain medical protocol which seems legal and right; but when it comes to abortion, they don't want knowledge and they don't want time.

Unless the evangelical church adds its immense weight to the pro-life forces seeking a human life amendment to the Constitution, giving us once again a national respect for human life, born or unborn, certain things will come that you don't have to be a prophet to anticipate.

I believe that infanticide, now practiced illegally behind closed doors, will become legal and eventually, for certain types of deformity, may be mandatory.

I believe that through the Living-Will, passive euthanasia will become so much a part of our culture that after we've had it for five years or so we will adopt active euthanasia.

I believe it might well be illegal for an obstetrician to deliver a baby with a congenital defect if that defect could have been detected before birth and the baby aborted.

I believe that in ten years it could be difficult for a Christian physician to practice medicine in this country as a matter of conscience.

So, what will be next?

The parallels that can be drawn between Germany with its Holo-

caust and America here and now are frightening. We are too close to the abyss.

We are right at the edge.

The same recipe for reducing a speech to an alternating statement and quote format applies to expository prose.

You begin by pulling out an explosive statement or its most telling point. You couch that in a declarative first sentence.

You paragraph and identify whose opinion it is and where you found it. There you also add supporting matter.

Your third sentence will be your thesis statement in which you summarize the intent of the whole article you are condensing or reviewing. In it you will present the three points that will form the skeleton of the article.

Then develop each of the three in turn, giving each a number of paragraphs.

Once through, go through them again, adding more information but now of less compelling significance.

Still, you want to hold your reader and you want now to build to a climax where you can make your final charge or protest or declaration.

Then end by reversing the order of the three points.

Don't just read the recipe now. I have a fear that unless I am standing at your shoulder, ruler in hand to snap your knuckles if you don't write, that

SELL YOUR HOMEWORK: A SPEECH CRITIQUE

you won't write. You won't practice,
practice, practice.

These lessons are not here for your
slight amusement.

If you are going to succeed, you

must write.

Next lesson we'll consider persua-
sion, a fine art in itself

Professor Dick