

QUOTATION

BERTRAND RUSSELL ON DISCRIMINATION TRAINING

To acquire immunity to eloquence is of the utmost importance to the citizens of a democracy.

Modern propagandists have learnt from advertisers, who led the way in the technique of producing irrational belief. Education should be designed to counteract the natural credulity and the natural incredulity of the uneducated: the habit of believing an emphatic statement without reasons, and of disbelieving an unemphatic statement even when accompanied by the best of reasons. It should begin in the infant school, with two classes of sweets between which the children should choose: one very nice, recommended by coldly accurate statement as to its ingredients; the other very nasty, recommended by the utmost skill of the best advertisers. A little later I should give them a choice of two places for a country holiday: a nice place recommended by a contour map, and an ugly place recommended by magnificent posters.

From: Russell, Bertrand. (1938). Power: A new social analysis. New York: W. W. Norton.

Contributed by James A. Dinsmoor, Department of Psychology, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47405-1301.