I wrote the book.

Charlie Brown:

'WHAH!'

Oh, gee!

To trust Her...

To OMAHA!

Guess you have

Gonna Kick That

Ball All the Way

This Year.

If someone is

Reading a book

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This year, I'm

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THE GROWTH OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION IN AMERICAN SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF NSIEE

Lessons from the cartoon:

1. Some people never learn, even by experience
2. Just because it's in a book doesn't mean it's dependable.

First, this paper is based on a very important premise which I need to make clear at the outset before we begin to look at the growth of experiential education. The premise is that experiential education is a movement. What does that mean? We are a movement instead of what? It means we are not an established institution with a highly developed bureaucratic structure that will perpetuate itself no matter what happens to its mission. We are one year away from extinction. If our members don't pay their dues, or don't come to the annual conference, it is all over. We are a voluntary association. One of the "thousand points of light" that can go out and few people would know it was gone.

Being a movement means that our leadership is not limited to the officially designated or elected leaders. No one person is in control. In fact, it has the earmarks of a floating crap game. Today the action is here, last week it was somewhere else and next week we don't know where it will be. We are held together as a movement not by bureaucratic structure but by shared vision, outlook, perspectives and a commitment to enact that vision. Our life, while not localized in any given place, is marked by mutuality of support and a strong sense of comradarie. It is a community of mutual support and encouragement in which the cause is more important than status, credit for achievements, personal power or ambition. Among us there is a free sharing of resources, practices that work and insights. Our existence is also marked by paradoxes or polarities that would not be tolerated in a straight line
organization which would insist on conformity. Polarities exist side by side among us: There is great variety within our commonality. There is a strong sense of direction to our work and yet flexibility and fluidity. There is a lack of rigidity about our common life. There is unity within our diversity and continuity along with openness to change. We have a sense of identity but not insularity. There is a tendency towards self-righteousness which expresses itself in a we-they attitude towards those who have power and resist change within our institutions. Our life is characterized not so much by commonly held information, or knowledge as much as by a common commitment to valued processes. We, as with other movements, are committed to bring about change in the institutions in which we work.

There is another reason why we are a movement. Some may view it as a negative reason but for myself, I see it as coming with the territory as the nature of the commitment and task we have undertaken. We are prevented, in my judgement, from becoming anything other than a movement by the nature of the institutions within which we work. Educational institutions are organized around subject matter areas and the various established disciplines of knowledge. Experiential Education does not qualify to be easily incorporated into educational structures since our focus tends to be more on process than on content of learning. Also, our ultimate concern is to see experiential educational opportunities incorporated into all subject matter areas and disciplines. We want to infiltrate the whole system and not be shunted off into a pigeon hole in isolation. It is not a discipline, a subject matter area, nor solely a programmatic function of Student Services, therefore, it does not lend itself easily to institutionalization.

So, in effect, we have no other choice but to be a movement. Let's
acknowledge it and be the best movement we can!

NSIEE's Mission statement acknowledges its movement character, "As a community of individuals, institutions, and organizations, NSIEE is committed to fostering the effective use of experience as an integral part of education, in order to empower learners and promote the common good." It is these characteristics that I cherish and would plead with you to hold on to. It is this sense of community, of being mutually involved in something more important than one individual's efforts; this sense of shared history and vision that has been a source of sustenance for me over the years. Don't let go of them.

But, we are only one of many players in this movement. Some of them were here before we got started. The Co-operative Education movement, Antioch College, Berea College's student work program and the Experiential in International Living all existed before 1970. Then, in the 70's there broke upon the scene a number of expressions of the movement; The Society for Field Experience Education (SFEE), founded here on this campus 20 years ago; The National Public Service Internship Program which later joined forces with the Society to become the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education; CAEL, originally known as the Council for the Assessment of Experiential Learning, with concern for the assessment of prior and sponsored experiential learning for academic credit and the assistance of non-traditional learners returning to complete degree work; and the Association of Experiential Educators, rooted in outdoor education, Outward Bound programs, leadership development and personal growth opportunities.

A look at the strengths and emphases of the various players gives a clear picture of why this movement was able over the last 20 to have such a strong impact on education. They each access and impact educa-
tion at very different levels and with very different publics. CAEL has impacted higher education at the highest levels of the institutional life. Its work has been with accrediting agencies, with college and university Presidents, Provosts and Deans and other Vice Presidents and administrators concerned with the granting of degrees and the transcripting of academic credit, with faculty who are trained to serve as assessors as well as with faculty and instructional development offices. The establishment of the credibility of assessment procedures for measuring learning acquired outside of the classroom with accrediting agencies and college and university administrations was a major accomplishment that gave us all better standing in the educational establishment.

The realm of work for Co-operative Education has mainly been in the fields of engineering, business and technical fields and has not sought, for the most part, to establish academic credit for learning acquired in the workplace. It has expanded dramatically over the last twenty years. Prior to 1965 there were 65 Co-op Ed programs. Today there are over 1,000.

NSIEE's arena of influence has been with faculty, teachers, program directors, Student Service Personnel and administrators in secondary schools and in the full spectrum of college and university departments. Liberal Arts Colleges have been a special area of interest and influence. It's emphasis has been on the application of theory in practice and the integration of knowledge through internships and practicumms; cross cultural learning, career exploration, personal and professional growth and development, community service and citizenship education. Its concerns have been with quality assurance, the granting of academic credit for college level learning, the incorporation of experiential learning
within secondary school curriculum and departmental courses and the strengthening of existing programs.

The Association of Experiential Educators has worked extensively with secondary and postsecondary education personnel. This is an association of outdoor educators, wilderness survival instructors, environmental study teachers, and leadership training people who use challenging environments, reflection and self-assessment for personal and professional growth and development. They are not concerned about academic credit for their activities but with the life transforming and enabling power of affective domain educational experiences for people of all ages. They also have a special interest in the value of experiential education as it relates to juvenile delinquents, and handicapped individuals in building self confidence, self esteem and teaching important coping skills.

All levels within the educational establishment, both secondary and post secondary, have been impacted by the various players in this movement. Their different emphases, interests, resources and strength have complimented one another as they have worked for enhancing experiential education's role.

What has been the role of NSIEE?

1920 - 1960: The Forerunners:

University of Cincinnati Co-op Education Program

1921 Antioch College

Berea College Student Work Program

The Experiment in International Living

1934 Mao Tse-tung Essay on Practice

1938 John Dewey, Experience and Education

1967 Peace Corp Training: "The Design of Cross Cultural Training:}
The Formative Period: The 1960s

During the 1960s some students became very disillusioned with the lock-step nature of education and pushed for educational experiences that would have greater relevance to a world in turmoil: demanding an education that would equip them to be participants in a society marked by the Civil Rights Movement and the protests against the Vietnam War. Individual faculty members responded with independent study and political internship opportunities. Some colleges and universities responded with residential colleges, volunteer service programs, cross-cultural learning opportunities, community research projects, wilderness survival and personal growth and development challenge programs like Outward Bound.

It was a period marked by campus unrest, protests, demonstrations, and sit-ins. It was a time of very heady ferment. It was a radical change from the docility of the 1950s. Many of our programs got their starts during this period.

The Developmental Stage: 1971–1980

This was the period of the founding of organizations, the development of expertise, resources and literature. It was an outstandingly productive period in which much literature was produced that provided practical guides for practitioners and a greater degree of academic credibility within halls of academia.

Jim Finney and the Lingle Foundation were a catalyst that provided the opportunity for widely scattered and diverse practitioners to come together and create here in 1971 the Society for Field Experience
Education; a forum for sharing common concerns. Morris Keeton
with his vision, network of influence in Higher Education, the aid
of several of the larger Foundations, and a Board of movers and shakers
in Higher Education created CAEL, then known as the Council for the
Assessment of Experiential Learning. The Colorado Outward Bound School
and Dick of the College of Education of the University of
Colorado in Boulder became the focal point for the organizing of the
Association of Experiential Educators.

Richard Ungerer, Bob Sexton and Bob Sigmon formed the National
Public Service Internship Program in Washington, D. C. at this time.
Their interest was in providing undergraduates opportunities to do
internships in local, state and national government agencies and with
political representatives. Part of the purpose was to encourage
students to consider careers of public service as elected officials or
in government agencies. NPSIP grew out of work of the Southern Regional
Education Conference with the TVA and very well developed and articu-
lated state government internship programs in North Carolina, Kentucky,
and Georgia. It was largely out of their work that the Service-
Learning emphasis developed with equal emphasis being placed on the
service and on the learning whether for academic credit or not. The
publication of SYNERGIST by ACTION at the National Center for Service
Learning, was in large part a reflection of the emphasis of
this program. In order to prevent redundancy and conserve resources the
NPSIP joined with the Society for Field Experience Education to become
NSIEE.
1980 - 1990 Outreach Period and the Establishment of a degree of Credibility and Acceptance:

In this period I want to concentrate on the work of NSIEE because it is during this period that Society has in a sense, come of age. In 1980-81 with a grant from FIPSE and assistance from Tom Little, then a Field Representative for CAEL, PANEL, Peer Assistance Network in Experiential Learning, was founded and developed as a self-help network and resource bank of expertise available through NSIEE for the mutual strengthening of Experiential Education programs. This became a major tool of the society not only for mutual self help but as a basis for developing a Consulting Service.

In the summer of 1982 we joined with CAEL and AEE to respond to the report of the President's commission for the study of education entitled, A NATION AT RISK. We prepared, published and circulated our response to the findings of that commission, clearly setting forth our objections to the solutions proposed in that study and making the case for a larger role for experiential learning in public and private educational reform. (summarize and comment)

In 1981, Synergist, the Journal of ACTION and the National Center for Service Learning reported, "NSIEE is initiating a discussion to identify principles and practices that assure quality in experiential education. Last Spring the Society's newsletter opened the discussion with seven criteria of good practice and invited discussion and debate." Synergist asked five secondary and post-secondary experiential educators to give their views, published their comments and invited response.

This discussion became part of the basis for a FIPSE proposal to
fund the NSIEE Consulting Service which was an extension of PANEL, the self help network and resource. Over the seven year period from 1983 through 1991 NSIEE, through its Consulting Service, has assisted approximately 500 colleges and universities. This assistance included 50 two to three day site visits and the preparation and publication of the manual: "Strengthening Experiential Education Within Your Institution," which has enjoyed wide distribution and use.

In 1985 when 100 college and university Presidents created Campus Compact as a way to support and encourage undergraduate involvement in community service, much of the leadership for developing and implementing this program was drawn from NSIEE. We as a society were ready with the expertise and resources to serve this new thrust in higher education and to make sure that the service being encouraged was linked to learning. The refined purpose of Campus Compact, as reported in the January 1988 Chronicle of Higher Education, is "that public service become an integral part of a college education. We believe that public service by college students should be viewed in the context of each college's broader educational purpose...While classroom, laboratory, and library are at the heart of a college education, learning does not stop at their boundaries...There is much to be learned through experience, as well as formal instruction."

The leadership of NSIEE and Campus Compact arranged for and planned the 1989 Wingspread Conference: Principles of Good Practice in Combining Service and Learning. The Conference published and circulated its findings in a document of the same name. (list and elaborate on the principles). During this same period the Society, under Jane Kendall's leadership and editorship, published the three volume work, COMBINING SERVICE AND LEARNING: A RESOURCE BOOK FOR COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE. The third volume is a comprehensive annotated bibliography of the
current literature on experiential education which was put together by a

team of NSIEE members.

So, we have come of age. I have the feeling we are more
"mainstream" than we have ever been before. So, where do we go from
here? Is there a danger in our being so comfortable? I am reminded of
a statement Jim Feeney made during the closing moments of that first
conference 20 years ago. "One of the things we don't want to do is hire
a staff person for the society. He or she will take us where we don't
want to go just to get funding to support the organization and staff."
Well, we eventually did hire a staff or, better said, inherit them from
the NPSIP; Dick Ungerer and Jane Kendall, and they were good! They did
not take us were we did not want to go, but his concern is still a
legitimate one. Can we be faithful to our mission and not get caught up
in institutional maintenance? Can we continue to be participants in a
movement ev en though we have come of age? One of the biggest hassles
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had in the Civil Rights Movement was with
the NAACP with its long successful history which made it resistant to
t change. We don't want to become the NAACP of the Experiential Education
Movement.

Tim Stanton expressed a similar concern in a letter to me in 1986.
"At Cornell, over my last few years there, we put a huge amount of
energy into trying to mainstream our program. Part of the emphasis for
this work came out of survival needs. We had developed an extraordinarily effective program, which
'irregular' in the eyes of the dominant academic culture. That culture
was fighting back...and we were thus forced...to seek to strengthen our
niche through a strategy of institutionalization...

I don't at all question what we did, and we were successful. The
program is in good hands, it has a new and more comfortable niche. But from a distance and the comfort of Stanford I find myself wondering about the struggle and about the idea of leaving the margins for the mainstream in general. Increasingly, I find research-based and philosophical underpinnings for the kind of community oriented education I believe in, which makes me feel/realize that there is indeed something there. And those underpinnings explain so eloquently why the work I do is necessarily marginal in traditional higher education. The dominate epistemology of knowledge, which informs higher education is based on a sense that replicability is the final test of truth, that knowledge is analytical, abstract, and logical. The task of education is the distribution of knowledge, or the banking method. (Therefore in the domain of higher education) random experience is (seen as) inadequate as a means to knowledge. We are taught to distrust personal experience as a guide, to identify universal truths from logical, preorganized, abstractions. (All of this runs counter to the epistemology that informs experiential learning.) This conflict raises fundamental questions about taking a marginal form of education founded on very different principles than the dominate epistemology of education and trying to mainstream it. There exists a conflict or at least tremendous and fundamental difference in operating paradigms of teaching and learning. Is it even possible to mainstream programs based in a paradigm that values perception in a system that devalues perception in favor of abstraction? What is gained? What might be lost? My reading on the underpinnings of these two different forms or definitions of knowledge and understanding has brought home to me full force why certain forms of experiential learning are marginal; it is no accident and made me wonder about what we should be doing vis a vis the mainstreaming question. We assume that mainstreaing is good for our programs. Is it?
I leave you with this question: We have been and are a movement. Should we strive to continue as a movement rather than become a part of the educational mainstream?

But the issue that, for my money, should demand our attention in the years to come is the issue of the inclusion of both epistemologies; both ways of knowing, within the education system. The issue of the place of the Right Brain or the Hebraic way of knowing in education will not go away. Here are the contrasting descriptors for the two ways of knowing.

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They have a lot of similarities to the contrasts Harrison and Hopkins identified in their Peace Corps Training Program in 1967, the contrasts between traditional university education and effective cross-cultural preparation.

So, already in 1967 there was awareness of a radically different kind of knowing that was needed for people to function effective, especially in other cultures as change agents. In 1977 Theodore Gochenour of the Experiment in International Living in response to the CAEL publication, COLLEGE SPONSORED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: A CAEL HANDBOOK, felt that the book did not clarify or advance our underlying understanding of
experiential learning processes. He made a case for exploring our bi-modal consciousness, especially the ways of knowing of the right brain, as a potential basis for distinguishing the unique province of experiential education. In 1987, Alan Guskin, President of Antioch College in a speech before the National Commission for Cooperative Education acknowledged the legitimacy of many of the criticisms of undergraduate education. He felt the problem lay in our assumptions about undergraduate education... "We have accepted a conception of undergraduate education based on a model of intelligence and learning that focuses almost solely on rational modes of problem solving and knowledge acquisition.... The reason for the lack of acceptance in higher education (of experiential learning) is that the conventional conception of what constitutes legitimate undergraduate education is focused primarily on the accumulation of information and on rational intellectual analysis; on a conception of intelligence and intelligent behavior based primarily on analytic thinking or information processing skills. Only tangentially does undergraduate education emphasize the more intuitive and more holistic forms of learning which relate to an understanding of how one plays the game of life in organizations and society generally." He goes on to point out that there are three different types of intelligence that have been identified: Analytic, Creative, and Adaptive the later two being related to the right hemisphere of the brain.

Parker Palmer in his 1987 address at the meeting of the American Association of Higher Education which was reprinted in Change Magazine, made the point that epistemologies, the way we know, carry very specific values with them. And the University's emphasis on the rational,
analytical, conceptual way of knowing to the exclusion of the more holistic and personal mode of knowledge has meant the destruction of community within academia because the analytic, objectivism of that way of knowing turns persons into objects, leads us to withhold ourselves from involvement in life, and excludes the warmth of intuition and personal knowledge.

The future role of Experiential Education as a movement in education is to insist on and provide the means for the inclusion of all ways of knowing in academia and to participate in the recreation of a community of learning.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS:

The most powerful impact of our work has not been on the institutions of education but on people. I would like to close by sharing three stories with you: At a men's breakfast group the other morning a friend told me the following incident: He said, "I was in an instructional development faculty seminar at the College the other day. We were asked to name a teacher who had had an important influence on our lives and tell what that was. One of my colleagues," he said, "mentioned you. You had encouraged her to do her field study with the Catholic Workers in New York City and it had changed her life." Story #2 A former student of mine, a local photographer, had a special exhibit in the Lansing Art Gallery. The exhibit was entitled "Meetings with Remarkable Men." I found my own photograph among famous local and national celebrities—Bobby Kennedy, Henry Kissinger, Paul Simon, Garrison Keeler, Harry Chapin, Bob Hope, Elton John to name but a few. His explanation for my appearance in the exhibit was that his experience in the College had made a tremendous difference in his life and he used
This is an opportunity to acknowledge it. The third story is about a person I currently work with. He is the Executive Director of the non-profit housing development corporation of which I am the President. He is a successful grassroots organizer in our community who claims he learned how to learn on his own through the field study program of the College. The focus of his organizing efforts is on empowering people to take charge of their own lives and communities.

Finally, this poem by Chuang Tzu, translated by Thomas Merton is for me a metaphor of this annual meeting.