

Doc Meiklejohn's Experimental College

A 65-Year Retrospective



**Being the Last Testimony of
Some Surviving Guinea Pigs
On the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary
of the Founding of the Experimental College
University of Wisconsin
1927 -1932**

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The Experimental College

The Meiklejohn Education Association (formerly the Meiklejohn Education Foundation) was established May 26, 1980 by alumni of the University of Wisconsin Experimental College, a unique residential college within the Madison campus, which was based on interdisciplinary and integrated educational principles. The two-year course existed during the years from 1927 to 1932, and enrolled approximately 375 students, altogether.

The Experimental College, as it was called, was led by Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn, a former president of Amherst College, whose educational philosophy was based on the notion that the purpose of education was to create persons capable of intelligent and effective citizenship in the broadest sense. With respect to the specialties and professions, Meiklejohn sought to produce thoughtful persons who would be able and willing to think about the social implications of their later work as specialists.

These goals were to be attained in the Experimental College through the common experience of all its students in the study of the Athenian civilization of the Fifth Century B.C., and, in the second year, the American society of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Weekly readings were assigned, questions were raised, discussion groups organized, and thoughtful papers were expected to be written. Interaction with faculty occurred through periodic individual sessions during which student thinking was stimulated and ideas explored.

So powerful was that student experience, that over fifty years later the Meiklejohn Education Association was formed by alumni and other disciples of Meiklejohn with intent to place his educational philosophy on the contemporary American agenda, and to secure the application of its principles in the process of educational reform.

To this end the Association has arranged publication of a book on the subject, **The Experimental College**, by John Powell, a member of the College faculty. The Association seeks opportunities to present its experience and ideas in various forums of academic and educational professionals where interest may be encouraged and action may be stimulated.

Annual Convocations are held at which topics related to education and public policy have been explored using Experimental College techniques of advance readings, seminar-style discussion, and summarized conclusions.

(continued)

A unique development has been the creation of an intergenerational forum at these Convocations in which high school and college students participate as equal members of the community with college faculty and adults (notably the octogenarian alumni of the Experimental College) who may be attracted to the event.

It should be noted that the intergenerational nature of these events has been of extraordinary importance to the young people who attend; coming, as they do, from various cities and cultural backgrounds, to find their ideas valued by their elders and discussed in an atmosphere of intellectual rigor in the pursuit of understanding and the search for truth. The Association is convinced that it has found, and is developing through these intergenerational events, a potent instrument for the enhancement of education at the level of the secondary school, as well as that of the college undergraduate.

Accordingly, the Association is exploring the possibility of organizing summer institutes at which high school teachers might be introduced to the use of the seminar in their classroom work, and to the value of student exposure to adult minds through systematic interchange in the discussion of issues of concern to young people.

The Association has recently endowed an annual lecture to be held on the Madison campus of the University of Wisconsin to be known as the Alexander Meiklejohn Lecture. The Lectureship is to be administered by the Integrated Liberal Studies Program at the University, and the initial lecture by Dr. Rodney Smolla, on Alexander Meiklejohn and the First Amendment, is scheduled for April 29, 1993.

Doctor Meiklejohn to the Alumni at the May, 1942 Reunion, held on the campus of the University of Chicago.

I wonder if you all realize how unique this alumni reunion is. For forty-nine years I have been attending such meetings. Always, they have seemed to tell of the failure of the college as judged by its fruits. And, especially the ten-year class has come to be recognized as the symbol of our disappointment.

In ten years, it appears, the influence of the college has been shaken off. Men come back belonging to a non-college world. They have learned other lessons. They have acquired a wisdom which is alien to the beliefs and values for which the college stands. In a deep and tragic sense they are barbarians.

But you, after ten years of "living in the actual world," give me no such impression. If I may judge from the wives whom you have chosen and who have chosen you; if I may infer from your words, your attitudes, and, most clearly of all, from those amazing papers that were read this morning, you are still college men."

You are studying the same lessons, grappling with the same problems, attempting to interpret the same principles, pushing forward in the same human undertakings, which challenged us all ten years ago. And that means that the Experimental College did not die. It lives in you. And it will continue to live, in the only sense which is important, so long as the interests to which it gave its devotion continue to be the basic spiritual and intellectual interests of mankind.

Shall I, as the meetings close, try to give you advice? Certainly not. This morning, as I listened to the stories of what some of you have thought and done, my dominant mood was one of humility. You are wiser than I, if for no other reason because you are younger. You know this tragic, bewildering world as I cannot possibly know it. You can come to grips with it as I was trying to do when

I was young like you. And so I offer no counsel. I tell you only of the deep and abiding happiness it gives me to see you marching on. Wherever you go, I shall wish to be with you.

Excerpted from "Learning and Living," the proceedings of the 10th Reunion of the Experimental College alumni, held in May of 1942. It was edited by Walker Hill, Class III.

The 1989 Survey

Over the years three surveys have been undertaken of the 327 students who enrolled in the Experimental College in the years 1927 to 1930 inclusive.

The first was made in 1942 by John Bergstresser, the former Registrar of the Experimental College. It appears in the very excellent booklet, "Learning and Living," edited and published by Walker Hill, Class III, as the proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Reunion of the Alumni.

That survey covered in detail the status of the 166 alumni who responded, being almost every one of the alumni whose addresses were known. It can be concluded from the 10-year survey that the experience of the Experimental College had not been a serious handicap to later academic success, if an obstacle at all. Baccalaureate or higher degrees had already been acquired by 72 percent of the alumni, with several men working toward higher degrees.

One-third of the responding alumni were engaged in governmental employment, education, or social service with private agencies. Another quarter were in business and industry. Others were in the professions, arts, and a variety of occupations, including a few in manual labor and labor union organizing.

The second survey was undertaken by Dr. Robert Havighurst in 1957 at the 25th Anniversary Reunion of the alumni, held in Madison. All of the Havighurst survey materials are deposited in the Experimental College archival collection of the University of Wisconsin.

The third survey, underauspices of the Meiklejohn Education Association in 1989, was sent to the 73 alumni whose addresses were believed known, and who were thought to be still alive. There were forty-four responses, including some from widows of alumni on behalf of their spouses.

The questions posed were intended to elicit an evaluation of the Experimental College as an educational experience, hence, were open-ended and not readily tabulated. For purposes of the 65th Anniversary Reunion of the alumni, each of the responses has been edited into a single narrative format, using the language and style of the original.

The questions were as follows:

1. Do you think of your Experimental College experience as a central element in your education; an irrelevant episode; or something in between? How would you describe the Ex-College's significance to your personal growth?

2. Was there something about the philosophy and practice of the Ex-College which you wish were found more frequently today?
3. Which particular aspects had special value to your student days?
4. What aspects of the College might well have been eliminated.
5. When you arrived at Adams Hall, were you reasonably ready to handle the program which you were about to encounter?
6. What has been the course of your own career?
7. Would you want your grandchild to attend the Ex-College? Is that kind of education relevant to the 21st Century?
8. Any further thoughts?

Herein, the responses are presented in alphabetical order.

Leslie F. Orear, Class III
Editor

THE RESPONSES

Dr. Bonime took his M.D. at Columbia University, became a psychiatrist and medical school faculty member for 41 years. Has published two books and many papers. He says "I fully enjoy my work," and "too busy to write more." He lives in New York City.

Dr. Butts is William F. Russell Professor Emeritus in the Foundations of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University. Now in retirement, but still busy in his field, he lives in Carmel Valley, California.

Walter Bonime, Class I

The College was a central element in my educational experience. It opened an awareness of the forms and dynamics of a culture and history; developed some meaning for the political environment, and expanded a sense of and increased my curiosity about the world of ideas.

There was an implicit respect for individuality and the expectation and fostering of autonomy combined with responsibility. I was eagerly ready for the program, for I had just finished a miserable first year at Cornell.

R. Freeman (J) Butts, Class I

The Experimental College was the central formative factor in my educational life, both as a student and as a teacher for more than 65 years. The reason was not only its more obvious aspects (small size, tutorial methods, lots of discussion, reading and writing, etc.); but also the pervading emphasis on the moral and civic goals of the intellectual and social life of a democratic society.

I especially valued the camaraderie of the spirit in LaFollette House in Adams Hall and the proximity of the faculty. I was reasonably well prepared by my high school studies of four years of English, history, and Latin, and two years of math and science.

My career was indelibly shaped by the Ex-College. In the effort to build on the first two years, I majored at Wisconsin in philosophy for the special degree program for Bachelor of Arts in Humanities. That meant further study in Latin, some French with Sam Rogers, Greek with Doc Agard, and philosophy with Meiklejohn, Carl Bogholt, and Max Otto.

There being no jobs for a humanities major in 1931, I entered Wisconsin School of Education and completed M.A. and Ph.D degrees, with a major in history of education, and a minor in philosophy. My dissertation grew directly out of the Ex-College. It was entitled, "The History of the Elective System in American Colleges and Universities." Alec Meiklejohn and Max Otto were on my dissertation committee.

For many years, I taught courses on the history of higher education at Teachers College, Columbia University. The Ex-College was always there to be studied as a model of collegiate innovation and reform. It also carried over into my courses in the social and philosophical foundations of education.

Meiklejohn or the Ex-College, or both, appeared in

much of what I have written since my first book, "The College Charts Its Course," which appeared in 1939. These include, "The Revival of Civic Learning (1980); "The Morality of Democratic Citizenship" (1988); "The Civic Mission in Educational Reform" (1989); and in a little book of unpublished papers, now published in January, 1993, "In the First Person Singular: The Foundations of Education."

Fred Carr, Class III

Its teaching of "inquiry" was a significant theme in my life. I kept to it, even at great price, and even though I didn't do it very well.

I can't cite the source, but I remember the essence, if not the exact quotation from Socrates, to the effect that the highest of public crimes is to make the poorer cause appear the better. WOW!

Was he right? If he was, what are the consequences of the daily violations on millions of television sets? Can his principle be taught in a society that violates it as a major activity, regardless of consequences? If it cannot, what are the implications for the education of free citizens?

Fred Carr has a graduate degree in social work. His career was with the federal government in welfare administration and group behavioral research. He retired from the Pentagon as a "Research Social Scientist." Fred lives in Oakland, California.

William Chaikin, Class II

The College probably had very little significance to my personal growth, although I made some enduring friendships. I see the Ex-College as a survival of a late 19th Century "Liberal" approach to higher education; its emphasis on literary works with no serious attempt to relate them to the societies under study.

The works we read often expressed "noble" thoughts, but their relevance to their own audiences, and to us were rather like eloquent Sunday sermons on Christian virtues, delivered before a church full of ordinary sinners. This was particularly true of the first year, but remained the essential core, even in the more contemporary second year.

The books, themselves, viewed as literature, were often masterpieces. Close study of these works was obviously educational, particularly to those students who had little exposure to well-expressed thoughts on philosophical and other uncommon ideas. In some cases, this was positively explosive. Consequently, it cannot be said that the Ex-College was a complete waste of time for the students.

William Chaikin took his B.A. at Wisconsin and Ph.D. at University of California, Berkeley. His career began in the federal government. Later he became a factory manager, and finally a winery proprietor. He lives in Northern California.

Dave Connolly lives in Rockford, Ill. where he practiced law until his retirement in 1988. He has been City Attorney of Rockford, an Assistant Attorney General of Illinois under Governor Adlai Stevenson. He is a past president (national) of the Unitarian-Universalist Laymen's League.

Tom Dietrich lives in Appleton, Wisconsin, his home town. Until retirement, he taught art at Lawrence College. Tom is an essentially self-taught artist. His work is in collections and museums. There has also been recently mounted a retrospective exhibition and catalogue of his work, "Views of Our County."

I realize that putting heavy emphasis on the realities, rather than on Plato and Adams, would have carried the College far away from the Oxfordian training of cultivated gentlemen, and would have demanded a very different kind of Advisor.

I do not think the Ex-College was a kind of education relevant to the 21st Century.

David Connolly, Class I

I regard the Ex-College as a central element in my education. I was 16 years old for a week or so after entering, and probably could have profited more from the experience, if I had been a year older.

On the other hand, it enabled me to graduate from law school at age 22, which was helpful. The College gave me a healthy skepticism and, to some extent, standards by which I should later judge various doctrines and situations.

Today's educational standards are much too mercenary.

We enjoyed daily, or almost daily contact with the Advisors. They were an exceptional lot. The College would have had less to offer if it had provided only average faculty members. And, we had the advantage of living with a group of students studying (when we weren't goofing off) the same things at the same time.

Tom Dietrich, Class III

A taxi took him to Adams Hall. He climbed to the third floor in Tarrant House and found his assigned double room. Across the hall a door was open from which came hot jazz like he had never heard before. Around the phonograph were five corduroyed and denim-workshirted men. They asked more about him, than he of them.

They suggested a Chinese restaurant on State Street. He had never been in one. This was new, as was the encounter with five Young Communists.

His room mate was Karl Wasson, son of a Jack London-type writer from Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. A gangley guy with mathematical inclinations, he played solitaire after lunch, and kept accurate accounts of his wins and losses -- came out even at end of the year.

For a small consideration, an upperclassman sold him the remaining classes in a figure drawing course. On a borrowed piece of paper, he sketched a nicely-posed girl model. The instructor, looking over his shoulder, asked

where he had learned to draw like that. He explained it was his first time (and had never seen a naked lady!).

He went to several more classes, and finally showed his drawings to a sex-starved Adams Hall resident. Soon, a notice was posted in the Gate House: "For pornographic pictures, go to room 305." He went to his room and looked up pornographic in the dictionary. He felt hurt, but had added a word to his vocabulary.

The first writing assignment was an appraisal of Pericles' Funeral Oration. Pericles praises the government, the enterprise, the democracy, the culture of the citizens of Athens. The doubting Thomas wrote a paper suggesting that Pericles was a typical, duplicitous politician.

He does not remember what his adviser, Malcolm Sharp, a professor of law, thought of his paper; but he does remember how patiently, precisely, deliberately, and kindly, Sharp went line-by-line, pointing out errors of syntax, spelling, punctuation, cliches and colloquialisms.

Thereafter, Tom spent more time re-writing and editing his work.

There were the visiting lecturers. He remembers charming Zona Gale, talking about writing; but also to define provincialism. It was her contention that New York's Park Avenue sophisticates might have as narrow an outlook as a middle-American villager.

There were Sunday evening gatherings at the homes of the Advisers. He remembers being at the home of an economics professor, Paul Rauschenbush. He remembers it because he broke his usual silence by suggesting that not all mill owners need be oppressive bosses. Evidently, he had concluded that some of the in-house radicals were not only inexperienced, but also bigoted.

On another occasion at the home of a poet Adviser, he saw his first contemporary European art on the walls; in particular, the startling look of the German Expressionists. He came away puzzled, but with memorable images in his head.

He was most fortunate to have had those two years at the Experimental College. There were specific gaps, but they could be filled by reading and research. The habits of reading, questioning, contemplation, and continuing the education make for a full life.

Recall that massive construction on the sawdust floor of the Stock Pavillion, as the students built the stage for Kimon Friar's production (his own translation) of the Bacchae. Hand sawing the 2x12 bridgeboards and planking to support the Orchesis dancers and the roaming Chorus; the first night audience forced to wait until Tom could finish painting the castle. And how he stood inside with pole in hand to give a plaster corner column a push,

Len Einstein describes his "careers:"

"Without going into the specifics, my career has been (and is) consistent with the variety of the College's liberal education foundation. I have been a retailer, professional musician, air force officer, personnel consultant, college level teacher, administrator of a non-profit organization for the blind, and counselor/psychologist specializing in career rehabilitation, substance abuse, and mental health counseling.

It has been a constant search for satisfaction and self-fulfillment--urged upon me in one of my discussions with Dr. Meiklejohn, himself. Len Einstein lives in the Boston area.

After Air Force service during World War II and six years in social work, Dave Feferman switched to selling automobiles in 1948, and spent the next 41 years in the automobile business. He lives in South Bend, Ind.

to come crashing down when the lightning struck!

There is no right place to end such a recollection. One could never recall all the encounters and exchanges with those who contributed to the education of Thomas Dietrich. He feels forever grateful to have been a part of the Meiklejohn Experiment; and he is not sure he would have survived any other college system.

How lucky to have had a high school teacher who "sent" him to the Ex-College. I doubt that I would have done the things I've done; or, maybe, been asked to do them. At least, I would not have done them in the same way.

It is a modest achievement (teaching, painting, designing, creating, and learning). The marks I have left may not be masterful; but I have left some marks.

Leonard Einstein, Class I

I have always considered my Ex-College experience as a central element in my education's timeless quality. It also helped me to develop a certain self-respect.

The concept that differences of opinion can legitimately exist, and that dialogue about those differences can take place in a peaceful manner and without anger, is something learned in the College, which one wishes were more prevalent now. A healthy respect for each individual's thinking and identity, can go far to ameliorate conflict, and adds to the richness of our lives.

The discussion groups with our Advisors, and the contact with both Meiklejohns were of special value. I had never before experienced such a feeling of rapport. Learning of the relatedness of all knowledge was especially important.

I must say that while the program warmed me personally, I was very anxious as to whether or not I could measure up, and keep pace with the brilliance of the "city slickers."

That educational format is entirely relevant to the 21st Century, if only as a base for further education involving the specialties.

David Feferman, Class III

I feel that the College had a profound effect on my education. The smaller classes and interaction with the high caliber of instruction was more effective than the large typical college courses that we have today. The bull sessions and small discussion groups with the Advisors were a specially valuable asset.

The experiences at the College must have been effective. I got full credit at the University of Notre Dame and graduated Magna cum Laude with a B.A. in liberal arts.

Since I was just an average student, my two years at the Ex-College must have made the difference. I have fond memories of those days.

Irving A. Fein, Class IV

The College helped me to think as an independent person, and not to be limited to the popular opinion. I liked being able to absorb an education, rather than having to memorize data and cram for exams, all of which would be surely forgotten in a matter of weeks.

We might have accomplished more, if we hadn't spent the entire first year on Greece, but it was two years well spent, even though we did a lot of goofing off.

I wrote a novel for my final paper instead of a "Middletown" of my home town, and that helped me get a job in publicity at Warner Brothers. I've been in the entertainment field ever since.

Bob Goldberg, Class IV

My one year at the Experimental College was the single most important year in my personal growth. I would hope that current colleges and universities could be as liberal in thought and expression as was the Ex-College.

I especially appreciate our emphasis on the ability to question and to dig for the "truth". I was absolutely not prepared in high school to handle the Ex-College experience; but, my one year at the Ex-College helped me to think for myself better than any other school, book, or lecture that I can recall.

The influence of Dr. Meiklejohn was tremendous. To have heard him lecture, or converse with him is still an inspiration. Others in the faculty were excellent, but only one Alex.

We were unique, but I do not believe this type of education can be applied to the larger University. The Ex-College did have an influence that still exists. This is fine and may this influence continue at the University of Wisconsin, and elsewhere.

Irving Fein's contribution to the "entertainment field," includes being Jack Benny's publicity director, a tour of duty as VP of CBS for promotion, producer of all Jack Benny TV programs and specials for 18 years. When Benny died, Irv wrote "Jack Benny, An Intimate Biography," published by Putnam (and a best-seller). For almost two decades he has been George Burns' manager, producing all his TV Specials and three films including, "Oh God, You Devil." Irv Fein lives in the Los Angeles area.

Robert Goldberg lives in a Chicago suburb. He has been a salesman of industrial fabrics for most of his career and describes himself as having "led a normal, middle-class life, with liberal leanings."

Eugene R. Grether, Class IV

I had a great wish to become a physician. The Ex-College was a detour, but I didn't resent this. It seemed a chance to broaden the base. Perhaps I was a little naive for such a challenge.

Perhaps, if someone had said something to the effect that we all must spend our lives learning; that methods of study should be found by each of us, so that we could make the best gain in intellectual development; that self-discipline was of paramount importance; perhaps, then, the two years could have had a greater impact.

Perhaps, all this was said, but I didn't catch it! But I did a good bit of reading I've never regretted.

Dr. Grether lives in Alexandria, Virginia where he practiced medicine until his retirement.

Harlan O. Helgeson, Class I

I gained an appreciation of the classics in literature, theatre, art, and music. I found freedom to express ideas and follow through, to face a challenging problem and to solve it.

And, I had three good years playing trombone in the University band and concert orchestra.

Harlan Helgeson lives in Sparta, Wisconsin.

Harold W. Heser, Class IV

I would characterize my exposure to the Experimental College as constituting the most meaningful event of my life. It was a revelation to encounter a new world of ideas, and to be exposed to the best minds in the liberal arts field of education.

The experience made me more caring, more aware, more tolerant, more seeking, more "liberal," and more at home in the intellectual world. That whole concept is still applicable today.

A special "value" was the exposure to the philosophy and values of Dr. Meiklejohn and the Advisors. I enjoyed the bull sessions, and the rapport with others mutually seeking, questioning, and exploring.

I believe that I was basically unready to handle the program, but fairly quickly learned to adjust to the new environment, with so many exceptional students.

I would want any grandchild of mine to be exposed to the Ex-College experience. With modifications, the whole concept of the College is completely relevant and compatible with the approaching 21st Century.

Harold Heser is a CPA, and lives in Kenosha, Wisconsin. His career began as a social worker in the categorical aids program. He was a business economist with OPA, a field agent for the Internal Revenue Service for 30 years, and a visiting professor of Business Administration at the UW-Parkside.

George Harry Hess, Class II

That was a critical period in my "growing up." There was such an informality and freedom to explore various fields with fellow students engaged in the same intellectual endeavor. Education became a personal responsibility.

I had failed in high school and went to summer school to get my diploma. I had to tutor and take a UW entrance examination. The Ex-College was right for me, but it is not essential, or even suitable for many. In my own circle of students there were two failures that I recall. In reviewing the success stories one must also cite the contrary facts in order to be intellectually honest.

As guinea pigs, we were proud of our difference from L&S students. We came to understand that the reason for being at the university was EDUCATION. But some people are self-educated, and the learning doesn't stop after the classroom. I agree that the "experiment" was an intellectual adventure for the participants, if not a verifiably tested project.

George Harry Hess took a B.A. in Zoology, and followed with an M.D. He has been active in professional, civic, and religious organizations, served in executive positions, and was elected to the school board. He lives in Tacoma, Washington.

John Howell, Class III

It was an interesting and stimulating, but not a central element in my education. I was a Montessori child, and had been to various other progressive schools.

The diversity of the student body was of special value, for I had not previously had much contact with Jewish people; and there was the exceptional competence of faculty Advisors. I had Malcolm Sharp, who was great, but others who also come to mind are Agard, Gaus, Powell, Havighurst, and Topchevsky. Of course Meiklejohn!

Today, I am particularly interested in World Citizenship and "Planethood," also teacher education (i.e. Educators for Social Responsibility).

As an active Quaker (served in the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and as Clerk of the New Jersey Friends Council), I now regret the lack of religion or any formal "spiritual dimension" at the Ex-College.

John Howell took his A.B. at UW, did graduate work at the U of C, and a Ph.D. at Yale in educational psychology. He worked in the Tennessee Valley Authority for several years. He was a Foreign Service Auxiliary to Morocco, and in Casa Blanca. Howell was a conscientious objector in World War II.

His principal career was in Educational Testing, including the College Board Research Division. He retired in 1976 from the City College of New York (CUNY), and lives in Hopewell, New Jersey.

Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Class III

We are the last of the Ex-College Mohicans and I want to congratulate the enterprise in attempting to put together a final summation of the observations of the survivors.

The responses will be widely varied and, perhaps, even contradictory; for I am sure that, like the blind

Hindus attempting to describe the elephant, we will have a bit of the truth; but it is doubtful if any will have the whole truth. Our views will be colored by our diverse backgrounds, and what little we experienced in common will be overwhelmed by what has happened to each of us in the many decades that have followed.

However, we are all in a position to make some evaluation of that strange and unique experience in which, in our late teens, we found ourselves. To the astonishment of many, it turned out to be a college in which there were few roll calls, much suggested but little required reading, many Socratic bull sessions, and almost no grades.

Thus, those who had weak academic motivations loved the freedom. Those who were fortunate enough to own cars, drove many thousands of miles (as Dean Goodnight said, acidly, of my brother, Dick) "in pursuit of an education."

Others who had already developed strong idealisms, and even ideologies, wanted to change the world and hoped in the Ex-College to find ways and means of doing so. Thus, it would be natural for the casual and the dedicated to review our experiences at Adams Hall in quite different ways.

Nevertheless, the common grounds we shared did effect the subsequent thinking of us all.

First, there was the heavy steeping in Periclean Greek civilization, its political theory, art, religion and warfare, that should have been, and in most cases was, useful in aiding our understanding of the modern world.

Secondly, there were the Lynds and "Middletown" which examined Muncie, Indiana, in the 1920s. We had a revealing look at what was, then, Middle America.

Thirdly, there was "The Education of Henry Adams," which showed what an inquiring mind can do with a world still suspended, like Mohammed's coffin, between the comfortable assumptions of medievalism and the shocking challenges of the Machine Age.

And, finally, there was the ultimate effort that we called the regional study, ideally focused upon our own home towns.

Tulsa, at that time, had only 140,000 people, but it was too much for me. So, I chose Sapulpa, a city of 13,000 just twelve miles away. During the blistering heat of the summer of 1930, I interviewed most of Sapulpa's politicians, aristocrats, teachers, preachers, and pioneers; not forgetting many black and Indian spokesmen, union leaders, paupers, policemen, and denizens of the drunk tank.

That survey now rests with the Creek County Historical Society, for I can truly say that I know more about Sapulpa of that year than any living man. I am ashamed of its glib and often sophomoric conclusions, not to mention occasional misspellings, but it gave me points of reference that I have often drawn on in trying to explain Oklahoma to myself and others.

So, I personally found the Ex-College immensely rewarding. When, after two years we went on to regular classes on "the hill," we lacked considerable specific information, which two years in the regular curriculum would have given us. But most of the specifics would have been forgotten quickly. The Ex-College launched us as generalists, blessed with new curiosities and a wider picture of the world.

Most of us were, of course, "radical" by the standards of an already liberal university. I learned the words of, "The International," in the Refectory, and I cast the first of my 16 presidential election votes for Norman Thomas, the Socialist. John Scott was my good friend, before he went off to his icewater shower as a shock worker at Magnitogorsk. But Scott was a learner.

In contrast, many years later, I spent six hours on a Santa Fe train between Chicago and Kansas City with Norman Thomas. A kinder, more decent human being you would never want to meet, but what amazed me was how little he had learned since his candidacy from the experience of the socialist world.

Had the Ex-College been allowed to continue, and if it had attracted personalities comparable to our own, I have often wondered how it would have reacted to the Sexual Revolution and the Drug Culture.

As to the former, I think the members would have been delighted as we would have been. As to drugs, they might have been somewhat more resistant than the rest of the campus proved to be. We tended to despise fashionable thought and current fads. Drugs are most devastating to the insecure and those who can't resist peer pressure. The latter-day Ex-Collegers who never existed, would, I venture to say, have proven a bit more capable of thinking for themselves.

But they would have been super-susceptible to what Tom Wolfe called the "radical chic." In our day, we were evangelical pacifists, convinced that greedy munitions makers (remember "Merchants of Death"?) made wars. But Hitler proved to be so horrible and the Japanese had so little claim on our sympathies, that I doubt if many Ex-Collegers would have sat out the unpleasantness as conscientious objectors.

Yet, had the College continued into the Vietnam Era, I would bet that most of those members who didn't

flee to Canada, would have been storming down State Street, waving little Viet Cong flags. The sobering up since the christening of Ho Chi Minh City, would have been too painful for some, and maybe the generation of Ex-Collegers who never existed would, like Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda, be pretending that the boat people and the killing fields never were.

All this, of course, is cruel and possibly shaky conjecture.

Was Dr. Meikelejohn's experiment in college education a success? I think the answer to that is found in the fact that in the more than half century since the Ex-College folded, nothing very close to it has been tried.

For an experiment in education to produce sound conclusions, it needs a control group of nearly-identical people who can be fed placebos. There was no such control on the Madison campus. The Ex-College was not composed of every 20th student who lined up on registration day. We were not a fair sampling of the whole. We were very atypical.

But there is a difference between a failed experiment and a futile experiment. There is no question that the influence of the Experimental College tended to change the pickles, pork and pie selections of the academic cafeteria line, and substitute therefore many courses of broader scope and wider cultural value. I like to think that the Experimental College, after all these years, is favorably influencing the curricula on scores of campuses.

This is the best assessment from one of the blind Hindus.

Lawrence Kerstetter, Class II

The Experimental College was basic to my intellectual development, and to my awareness of society and social problems. I think that sort of educational program is still relevant to this day.

Those of us who attended the Ex-College know that it was very far, indeed, from being a "humanities" setup, a "Great Books" project. Its method and intent was what the word anthropology once meant, the study of man. It was an anthropological approach and method, having many similarities to the field work techniques of ethnology. Its use of the Fifth Century Athens as a laboratory model was, I think, a brilliant concept. Its approach to "America as a civilization" was, perhaps, less neatly enclosed, but certainly on the right track.

The typical Humanities approach is, I think, weak. It seeks "reality" in the literate and artistic record, rather than looking within societies for their own reality. More

Jenkin Lloyd Jones was publisher of the Tulsa Tribune until the newspaper was sold in 1992. He continues to live in Tulsa.

Larry Kerstetter has died since writing these observations. After the College, he was involved in radical political movements, at length becoming a high school teacher in West Hartford, Connecticut, where he was a popular social studies teacher for many years. At his death, he left a great many unpublished essays on social questions, anthropology, educational philosophy, et cetera, evidently written simply for his own satisfaction. On retirement, he moved to Embudo, New Mexico, a village near Santa Fe.

Moreover, it is cold fish to students today. We have to act carefully to build on the anthropological method of Alexander Meiklejohn.

Solomon Kobrin, Class II

The experience was important (if not central) in introducing and making meaningful the analytic tool of a comparative perspective for understanding historically anchored cultures. I mean culture in the comprehensive sense, including world view elaborated in philosophy, politics, and art.

I have some misgivings about the failures of the above to go beyond an introduction. The one emphatic value of the program which I would like to see in undergraduate liberal arts education, is one on the tutorials and the requirement for a weekly paper subjected to rigorous criticism to begin separating the men from the boys.

That collection of students, exceptional in its range of personal background and social types, provided still another (unintended?) introduction and foretaste of what the human world "out there" would be like. And each of us college kids could begin to identify our own adult identity.

I thought I was prepared for the College when I arrived, but I soon learned otherwise. It took some time before the heady ideas in Greek philosophy were brought down from the empyrean and placed in a context (logical, moral, ethical, or whatever) that could make them personally meaningful.

I am tempted to fault a lack of structure and discipline in the Ex-College program. That is not its basic problem. The educational philosophy underlying the program was, in my view, excessively idealist in the technical sense. First year students were expected to grasp the historical reality of Athenian civilization by mastering the ideas expressed by its representative philosophers. We could have no notion of what the issues were that the Socratic dialogues were a reflection of, or a response to.

This problem cannot be altogether met by a more careful reading of Herodotus and Thucydides. It would have been highly useful if our Advisors had helped in exploring the relationships between the political and economic conflicts in Athenian society and the issues Plato brought into view.

The problem was forcefully brought to mind recently by I.F. Stone in his examination of the trial in which Socrates was involved in an effort to subvert Athenian

After surviving the Depression, a night shift job in a factory enabled Sol to resume his schooling at the University of Chicago where he earned a B.A. in Sociology. He switched to Political Science for his Masters under Merriam and Laswell.

Finding the sociology of political behavior to be his real interest, he took a job at the Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research where he remained for 23 years, becoming an authority in the sociology of juvenile and adult criminal law.

He then joined the faculty at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles for ten years, until mandatory retirement prompted him to take an appointment as a senior research associate in the Social Science Research Institute on the USC campus, retiring again at age 75. Sol Kobrin lives in Los Angeles.

democracy, suggesting that the Platonic ideas did not exist in a socio-political vacuum.

First year students cannot be unaware that conflicts exist in their own society. These should, initially, be defined and clarified so that the student begins to appreciate the dynamics of a changing, evolving society.

Only then, is it possible to give meaningful content to the universal concern in any society with the problem of truth and justice.

Perhaps, also, the Ex-College was reversed: first American culture and civilization, and then Athenian by way of moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar. It would have been valuable to add the high Medieval and the Renaissance. In an unfortunate way, Meiklejohn may have been ahead of his time. The scholarship of the past 50 years in historical studies and the social sciences have greatly enriched the materials that would have given the Ex-College program both context and content which it badly needed.

Emanuel R. Lerner, Class II

The College was of incalculable value to me. It radicalized my career plans to return to the world of finance, where I had spent two years following high school prior to enrolling in the Ex-College. My original intention was to limit my college education to the first two years, then to complete the apprenticeship which I had left in order to go to the Ex-College.

Instead, I finished the undergraduate years and a graduate year at the University of Wisconsin in Economics. I was eager to get into the public sector in Wisconsin, but by that time the State had lost many of its key personnel to the New Deal in Washington, where I, too, went to begin a career in government service.

I have never doubted that the Ex-College's impact on my social and political attitudes was instrumental in choosing the public service as a career. I thank John Gaus, in particular, for that.

I would venture to guess that our style of education prevails virtually nowhere, today. As a consequence, thousands of students are being deprived of the most stimulating approach to an education that has both purpose and principle, the great virtues of the Ex-College. The current thinking regarding "core" curriculum still misses those objectives. I find very little evaluation of values.

The give-and-take of our learning relationships helped me learn to think, and then to organize my thinking when

approaching an issue or problem.

There was undue tolerance of misbehavior and failure to accomplish assigned work. A strong remedial program should have been available for those who found the lack of discipline to be a problem.

I considered myself reasonably ready for the Ex-College as a mature 19-year old who had worked in the business sector, before being attracted to higher education (which I had shunned) by the advent of the Ex-College. My values were far from crystallized, however.

I consider the principles and practices of the Ex-College perhaps more relevant than in the 1930s. The Ex-College had a universality in concept that is applicable to the human scene in any situation. Listen to Alec Meiklejohn when he writes: "The aim of education is intelligence. The function of intelligence is to serve men in the creation and maintenance of a social order, a scheme of individual and group living, which will meet the human demands for beauty, strength, justice, generosity and the like." Today, more so than ever.

I shall forever be indebted to the librarian who showed me an article in the Atlantic Monthly, written by A.M. It sparked my interest in going to a college which gave my life purpose and direction.

James Lerner, Class II

I was at the College for only one year, a year financed by working during the day while attending the New York City College evening session, and then finding a part-time job at a newly opened Woolworth store in Madison. This was still, however, insufficient to meet expenses.

With barely a month remaining in the academic year, the University business authorities informed me in April that, since I owed \$54, I would have to leave. Fully intending to earn some money during the summer and return to the College, I took with me the proposed reading matter for the sophomore year.

Although I did find a job delivering high-priced, custom tailored men's suits purchased by Wall Street executives, my earnings had to go to the family budget, as my father had lost his job, an early victim of the Great Depression, arbitrarily dated as of October, 1929 when the stock market collapsed. Part of my education that fall was listening to the executives, waiting to try on their new suits, prophesy how soon there would be a "rebound." Not long after, they stopped buying suits and I lost my job.

But that single year at the College was memorable, strikingly different from my experience at the New York City College. There, the large classes, difficulty of develop-

E.R. (Manny) Lerner lives in the Washington, D.C. area.

His career in the Civil Service took him to the Directorship of a branch in the Federal Government. He left the Civil Service when it appeared that Tom Dewey would succeed Harry Truman, to conduct an economic research and consulting business in partnership with his wife, Polly.

After ten years in that enterprise, he served as president of a small company for another twenty-five years.

In retirement, he has been a volunteer to the County Government, a mediator in the D.C. Small Claims Court, and currently is an arbitrator for the D.C. Bar's Attorney-Client Arbitration Board.

James Lerner writes that "after leaving the College, I devoted myself during the 1930s to assist in the building of a nationwide movement for peace and defense of democracy. I traveled extensively, addressing college students, labor, religious and youth organizations, labor unions, and participated in international conferences of young people here and abroad.

"From 1940 until my retirement in 1984, I was an editor at the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE). The union's activities on behalf of working people, its defense of constitutional rights, and its opposition to militarism and the Vietnam War provided me with the freedom to express my own beliefs through its paper, and in numerous pamphlets."

Jim Lerner lives in New York City.

ing meaningful contact with harassed instructors, fragmented, unrelated courses; all was in sharp contrast with what I found at the Experimental College, where I felt a sense of excitement from the very start.

I will never forget the first meeting I had with my Advisor, Malcolm Sharp. He engaged me in a challenging discussion of my views of society's problems and my opinions on how they might be eliminated.

Equally exciting was the opportunity for close contact with a small group of students from various parts of the country, also attracted by an unusual idea, so unlike the homogeneous student body I had experienced before; the living and studying together; the faculty dedicated to the idealism which Alexander Meiklejohn inspired.

I have compared my experiences, brief as they were, with those of my son, daughter, and granddaughter, all of whom chose to attend the University of Wisconsin, influenced perhaps by my college memories; but I haven't seen in them the excitement I felt at the College.

I have wondered whether devoting a year to Athenian society was the most useful foundation for life in 20th Century America. But, I enjoyed the freedom I had to expand my knowledge of the modern world through extensive reading.

I have felt that the idealism and courage which induced Meiklejohn to set up the College in defiance of the political and educational establishments, makes a survey of his "experiment" a worthwhile undertaking.

In response to a letter I had written him in 1949, expressing appreciation for the courageous stand he was taking in defense of free speech, when McCarthyism was frightening many into silence, or betrayal of the principles of freedom, he replied, "How good to hear from you and to read that you and I, with our differences of experience, are yet sharing a common faith in the rightness of the program of 'Free Speech!' Many thanks."

"Last month, "the handwritten note continued, "I was in Madison, and so I am filled up again with recollections of the Experimental College. It was a crude beginning, but perhaps for that reason it gave us a good experience and a basis for lasting friendship." (April 12, 1949).

In other letters I exchanged with him, and in a discussion with him at his home in Berkeley a quarter of a century after I left Madison, I continued to feel an extension of what excited me at Adams Hall.

My College experience was a brief, but significant contribution to my life. I wish I could have had more time to enjoy its challenges, to develop a greater self-discipline within the freedom the College plan made available to us.

The kind of education which encouraged us to be critical examiners of society more than a half-century ago,

becomes even more urgent on the threshold of the 21st Century as a challenge to those who monopolize the press, radio and television on behalf of corporate political power.

Herman Liveright, Class II

It was surely a central element in my education, but largely in terms of the enormously stimulating range of fellow students and instructors, notably Meiklejohn, himself; than because of the values and virtues of the tutorial approach and the curriculum.

We were encouraged to examine the many facets of a subject, or an idea, rather than coercion to ingest "facts" and spew them out mechanically and "correctly."

The male only setup was regrettable.

I was really too inexperienced and callow to take anything like full advantage of the unregimented intellectual atmosphere.

A new college with many of the characteristics of the Ex-College could be relevant today. Perhaps, such a school should deal more deliberately with the huge social and political issues of this era.

Theron McClure, Class III

I started my schooling as a poor student with a bum memory. I recall that I was the last third (or second?) grader in my room to learn to read the hands of a clock. I don't think I would have passed from elementary school to high school if my dad hadn't been a member of the school board.

My high school career likewise was inauspicious. I was good in music, and was not interested in studying. I always checked out of study-hall to go to the library. The only thing I had going for me in high school was that I was a continuous reader. In the library I read all the Sir James Jeans and Eddington they had, until I discovered that an astronomer first had to be a mathematician.

I read all the Mark Twain. Good! Father forced me to sit through four years of Latin. I left high school as a C+ student.

How did this very ordinary student end up after attending Meiklejohn's Experimental College?

Reached the "major league" in Music -- Chicago Opera, Cleveland Orchestra, Hit Parade Radio Orchestra. Organized Symphony Woods summer musical theatre, the Ohio Music Camp, the Ohio State University Opera.

Herman Liveright lives in rural New York. He writes: A great part of my vocational life until 17 years ago, was in one phase or another of "show business", and efforts to accumulate wages ran parallel to fairly vigorous activity as a radical.

Moderate success in TV in the 1950s was halted by a confrontation with Senator Eastland's Sub-Committee on Internal Security. For the last 17 years, my wife Betty and I have been co-directors of a small left-wing center for discussion of controversial social and cultural issues.

Earned a PH.D. and full professorship at Ohio State University. Over 50 published articles, and still publishing. Compiled the Smithsonian's iconography, "A Thousand Viols."

I don't see any other important factors affecting such a sea-change in this student, unless it was marriage with a cum laude graduate from "the Hill," Journalism, Class of '33.

I had, and still have, a notion that a true effect of the College might be found in the contribution to society of the children of its students. I suggested this to Dr. Meiklejohn, and he threw up his hands in mock-aghast.

My own two children: one simultaneously a full professor of Mathematics at Michigan State and an Adjunct Professor of Architecture at the University of Michigan, also Michigan's best Blue-Grass fiddler.

The second son is a member of the Western World's oldest legislative body; it was a hundred and fifty years old when Thomas Jefferson joined it. Roger represents Centerville in Virginia's House of Delegates.

But these fellows would be disqualified. Their mother was off the "Hill." Another Ex-College ex and I, once made a half-hearted attempt at the acme of experimental procedures -- inbreeding. We tried to pair off his daughter with one of my sons.

As to negatives about the College, I think that discipline was not present: we had to supply our own inner-discipline to accomplish anything. I believe that I passed this feeling on to my children. However, it may have made me a poorer music teacher in a field where a more rigid procedure might be desirable. The social isolation of our Adams Hall situation was another negative.

Charles Metzner, Class IV

Chuck Metzner writes: "I kept on at the University of Wisconsin and, while spending a great deal of time trying to find out what I wanted to major in, ended up with a Ph.D. in psychology. After a couple of years at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, I spent several years at the Survey Research Center at Michigan; and then many years in the program of research and teaching in the organization of health care."

He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Experimental College was central to my education. It gave me a good base, procedurally and in content, and demonstrated what could be. It was what I was unknowingly seeking for, and it showed that growth, and not just accretion, was possible.

It got me in the habit of working fairly hard, which was useful, but the non-accepting attitude was very important.

I wish everyone could have such an opportunity for awakening to the academic experience. I certainly think it is very relevant now, largely by contrast to what exists, unfortunately.

Leonard Michaels, Class IV

Being a country boy, I had to grow in all ways. I feel I was a bit premature for the Ex-College. The two-year period before you got a fail/pass grade was not good in my case.

I now believe America has lost much of what is implied by the word "liberal." The 1960s started the failure in our educational and social structure. This is a big subject that needs discussion by legal minds -- not the "left-wingers."

James. A. Munro, Class I

As you can see nothing world shaking;

No massive upheavals;

No scientific breakthroughs;

No new economic system;

No new political theories;

Nothing to replace Plato, or John Dewey, or Alex
Meiklejohn;

But always ready for New Ideas.

Philleo Nash Class I

(per Edith Nash, spouse)

The Ex-College was very important to Philleo's education. Both of the educational enterprises in which he was instrumental in later life were outgrowths of the College; Georgetown Day School, and the Learning Center at American University.

He would have wanted undergraduate education to be more of a residential community than it is at present; one that would bring in frequent visitors with something important to say; an integrated course of study; respect for various learning styles.

Philleo always described himself as extremely resistant to learning in those days; but to me, it was the "collegiality" that shone through the reminiscences. But he found Meiklejohn's readings from "The Crock of Gold" a bore.

Following are excerpts from an article which Philleo

Len Michaels worked in the construction industry. He lives in Northern California.

1932 Married Suzanne Marting.

1932 Self employed real estate broker and fire and casualty insurance business in New Haven, CT.

1943-5 Army Air Corps S/ Sgt.

1945-70 Real estate and insurance business, as above.

1950 LLB Yale Law School.

1970 Retired to Siesta Key, Sarasota, FL.

1988 Moved to Fremont, CA. (to be near daughter).

1991 Moved to Galveston, Tx (as above).

Philleo Nash turned his understanding of Cultural Anthropology to use in government service under Presidents Roosevelt and Truman as an Assistant in the White House, and under Kennedy and Johnson as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the Department of Interior. He then taught at American University. He retired to his cranberry farm in Wisconsin. He also found time to serve as the Lieutenant-Governor of Wisconsin, and as Chairman of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin. He resided in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin until his death.

wrote for the Spring, 1986 issue of Voices of Youth, a magazine sponsored by the Meiklejohn Education Association:

When the Experimental College opened its doors in 1927, I was among the first 120 young men who signed up. But I became a malcontent, received average grades, or worse, concentrated on music and languages outside the College, and dropped out for a semester as soon as the two years were over.

Today, fifty-nine years later, I am an enthusiastic Board Member who voted to keep alive the Experimental College name and idea when we formed the Meiklejohn Education Foundation. What happened in between? In the process of educating others, I became educated.

An essential component of the Experimental College was the comparative study of cultures, with the educational objective of examining social problems and their solutions. The comparison of cultures with scientific objectives is the subject matter of cultural anthropology.

This much of the Experimental College rubbed off on me, and when I returned to the University after three months respite waiting on table in California, I signed up with the, then new, major in anthropology. Other opportunities lacking during the Depression, I went on to graduate school and a Ph.D. in Anthropology. I ended up as a professor in Canada.

By the time the war ended in 1945, I had two children of my own who were ready for school. Washington, D.C. still had racially segregated schools, and four years of war had eroded even that unequal school system. To give our children a good, democratic education, my wife Edith and I, with others, started our own school.

Then, the lessons of the Experimental College really began to come home. Our self-designed school had to be cooperatively organized and operated; it had to be built on respect for individuals and their cultures, and so it had to be truly integrated as to students, parents, staff, and Board; and it had to be based on the belief that learning is a delight, but that it is hard work.

Norbert F. Noie, Class I

I think of my Ex-College experience as something in between central and irrelevant. It certainly increased my need to know and understand, and it improved my reading ability and the need to read.

For me the best part was the feeling of a "unit" --

the close association of the student and the instructor, with the availability of counsel if needed. But there was too much stress on Greek Civilization.

I doubt that a new Ex-College would be relevant to the 21st Century.

Harold November, Class

III

I do believe the Ex-College was central to my education. It furnished the foundation for my future learning. The breadth and depth of the curriculum in the study of two civilizations was significant. It contributed to life-time friendships among students and with advisors.

The Monday morning lectures, the readings and book reviews were stimulating, especially when given by Dr. Meiklejohn.

I felt quite unprepared to handle the program, and never mastered the work; but I did profit greatly, in my opinion. I would be pleased to see my grandchildren attend a school like the Ex-College. I suppose some modifications would be in order.

I regret that we did not take more advantage of Alexander Meiklejohn's presence when we could, and that we waited so long (fifty years) before establishing the Meiklejohn Foundation.

I prepared myself to teach, but due to the Depression this never materialized. I worked in government for several years, but this was not entirely satisfying. Finally, I went into business for thirty years, then retired.

I have two major interests; the promotion of adult education in my Congregation, and efforts on behalf of the Meiklejohn Education Foundation.

Reynolds Olsen-Tjensvold, Class IV

The Ex-College was the most pervasive influence on my academic career and, in turn, on my life. In addition to being a personnel professional, I was motivated to teach, to write, and to be a better student of the world around us, and thus become involved in the broader affairs of the community.

More might have been added to the Ex-College (coeducation, for example), but NOTHING deleted.

When I arrived at Adams Hall, I had only the

Norbert Noie lives in Kaukana, Wisconsin, where he was the personnel manager for a paper company until retirement in 1973.

Harold November lives in Arlington, Virginia.

Reynolds Olsen-Tjensvold lives in Mequon, Wisconsin. After the College he majored in Sociology at UW, got a civil service job

the U.S. Employment Service, took advanced degrees in Industrial Sociology (Ph.D.) and Adult Education (M.S.). He became a personnel executive in industry until retirement; then taught at UW-Milwaukee, wrote and published in the field of personnel, became a consultant to manpower managers.

"Doc" Olsen to his students, is past president of the Industrial Relations Association of Wisconsin, a member of the American Management Association's All-AMA Planning Council. He was co-chairman of the Wisconsin Region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and a Board Member of the Milwaukee Urban League.

Les Orear left college after the second year. It was the Great Depression! He found work as a laborer in a Chicago meat packinghouse, where he became instrumental in the organization of his union, the United Packinghouse Workers of America, during the CIO period of the 1930s-40s. Later, he became the editor of the union's national newspaper.

In retirement, he is president of the Illinois Labor History Society. He has served a three-year term as a member of the Illinois Humanities Council, a grant-making agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities. He has also been a Trustee of the Illinois State Historical Library.

slightest clue as to what lay before me. However, it turned out to be my brave new world, and I loved it!

Indeed, I would send a grandchild to the Experimental College. My granddaughter in her second year at Missouri University is agonizing over changing her initially selected major. How much better it would be for her to sit at the smorgasbord of an Ex-College, and after sampling the delights of the liberal arts, could THEN decide which area merited the full-meal treatment. It just can't be done with the big school structured programs.

Most meaningful to me in the Ex-College were my continuing contacts with people! There was my dearest friend and fellow classmate, David M. Bullowa. We claimed to be closer to each other than we were to our own brothers (until his untimely death in 1953). And among others who left their mark were: J. Butts, Bob Havighurst, Dave Parsons, Malcolm Sharp, Kimon Friar, Jimmy Gerber, Gene Grether, Mel Pitzele, the Rau twins, Paul Rauschenbush and his wife, the Master, and particularly Doc Agard.

Leslie F. Orear, Class III

I had been a thoughtful and curious child, very inquisitive but never brilliant. The College reinforced that inquisitiveness and focused on the search for Truth. It was, surely, central to my education.

The best part of the College, and what I fear is missing in undergraduate education, is the effort to see things whole. One great thing about my College experience was the association with faculty and peers. I was introduced to a philosophical way of looking at things, and there was the exposure to detail in the Lynds' "Middletown," to the search of Henry Adams, the righteousness of Lincoln Steffens, and the universe of Eddington.

I was really unprepared for the College, had never been in a discussion group, had probably never been asked in a serious way about my opinion. I had read extensively, but hadn't learned to think critically and to write it down.

When it came time for my children to choose a college, we could find nothing similar to the Ex-College. We settled on Antioch College as the next best thing. All three attended in turn.

The College was great for its focus on social and intellectual values. The approach to problems was penetrating and total, rather than trendy and superficial.

One has a lifetime to read magazine articles and watch TV documentaries.

We were immersed (however briefly) in Greek aes-

thetics and had to wrestle with both Socrates and Sophocles. Being introduced to the Sophists was a true landmark. I've tried not to make the worse appear the better cause, and to look in the mirror without shame. Although I have sinned in this regard, it was because of my failure to seek and acquire the truth, as I should have done had I learned my lesson from the College properly.

Merlyn S. Pitzele, Class IV

The Ex-College was of first importance in my intellectual (and political) development. This is not separable from personal growth.

I would wish that contemporary institutions of higher education would replicate the type of student-teacher relationships and the focus of the body of students on the same issues at the same time.

The mix of students (rural, cosmopolitan) had a special value, and the intellectual camaraderie with faculty and Meiklejohn were of great value; but I would eliminate the "Regional Study" requirement.

The biggest failure of the College was its lily-white student body and faculty; no black, latino or non-white students unfit us for life in our mature years. In neither the Classical nor American studies did we encounter an ethnic issue.

Basically, the College was elitist.

Merlyn S. Pitzele is a psycho-therapist. He and his wife, Zerka Moreno, are widely sought on the professional lecture and seminar circuit. He lives in Beacon, New York.

Oscar M. Prusow, Class I

I was enrolled in the first class of the College in 1927 at the age of 17. Much has occurred in my life since leaving the Experimental College in 1927.

When I left I was groping into Infinity. I was not ready for the type of learning provided and never clearly understood the goals of the College. My experience at the College didn't prepare me in my career planning.

I had been preparing for a career in medicine. When I completed my two years, I had no credits in science or corresponding subjects. It took me an extra year to complete my pre-med subjects. In the end, I had a major in science and a minor in education from Lawrence University.

While sorting through my confusion, I became interested in the field of education and went into teaching. After several years, I was hired as the principal of an elementary school in Milwaukee County.

Oscar Prusow lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

John Ruenitz has been in the practice of law for over 50 years. He lives in Windom, Minnesota.

James Sachs's career led him to a position in marketing. In retirement he devotes part of his time to counseling for the Service Corps of Retired Executives. He lives in Highland Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

During the war years I worked in industry testing submarine controls.

I continued my education working toward an advanced degree at Northwestern University. However, with one summer session left to complete my degree, time became a problem.

I left teaching and found work as a personnel and purchasing agent in the recycling industry. I did, however, go back when time allowed, and got a Masters in Educational Guidance and Supervision at UW-Milwaukee.

My wife, Eva and I, have been married almost 52 years. She was a teacher with Milwaukee public schools for 42 years. We have two children, five grandchildren, and twin great-grand daughters. Our son, David, is a sales rep for a national concern, and our daughter is a reading specialist. Both graduated from UW-Oshkosh.

Eva and I both retired within two days of each other in 1978. Since then, we have been busily involved with our family, as well as several organizations in which we have served as officers. The time has gone by quickly, and continues to do so.

John S. Ruenitz, Class II

The Experimental College was an important element in my personal growth.

I wish today's schools put emphasis on the questioning mind, as the College did. I do think such education is relevant to the present.

These responses, however, do not permit conclusions of any great validity. Only those who choose to answer get counted. You should take a sample statistically sufficient in size of the Ex-College students, randomly selected. Then chase them down and see how they feel and what they have done with themselves.

James F. Sachs, Class IV

I believe that the Experimental College was the single most important event in my educational and personal growth.

The whole concept should be a part of anyone's educational process. Particularly important was the close contact with the instructors, and especially the inspiration of Doctor Meiklejohn.

I guess I was prepared to handle the program for I recall no serious traumas. I would certainly encourage my grandchildren to undertake such a program today, for that kind of educational approach is relevant to this new Century.

H. Michael Sapir, Class III

On entering the Experimental College, utter bewilderment was my lot for many weeks in this strangely free, self-reliant environment; but I was soon relishing both the many innovative methods of study and learning, as well as the novel and demanding curriculum of study.

There was the magnetic, charismatic personality of Alex Meiklejohn, whose warmth, wit and incisive thinking pervaded all of our activities. Along with my father, Alex was the second great influential mentor of my formative years.

I was utterly fascinated by the immersion of the first year in the study and appreciation of Periclean, 5th Century B.C. Athenian civilization. Plato (and Socrates), Thucydides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes, etc. were deeply meaningful and wonderful

Though I lived in Chicago, I did my regional study on my birthplace, Ottawa, Canada. Going there to stay with relatives while I did my research, I found the project vastly exciting and rewarding.

The second year of study on modern Western and especially American "capitalistic" society was also very exciting and challenging. I recognize, in retrospect, how I was especially drawn to descriptions of the poverty and misery of workers, farmers and "underdogs" in modern industrial society.

The writings of Upton Sinclair, Lincoln Steffens, John Steinbeck, Karl Marx and others deeply affected me. Was this prophetic? Somehow, the economic problem was already attracting me.

And, there was the warm and friendly social community which we Guinea Pigs formed through our living, studying, and playing together in and around Adams Hall, our dormitory. We were clearly a close-knit learning community.

I think most of us regretted that the mores of American life in the 1920s did not permit a co-educational format for the Ex-College, but there were a substantial number of bright, vivacious co-eds who envied us, dated us, socialized and participated with us in many Ex-College functions.

I felt a strong need, however, for some practical "tool" subjects in my education to complement our special curriculum. Each year I took German language and math courses. Interestingly, I disliked our central "text" or core book for the second year, "The Education of Henry Adams." I disliked his stiff, upper crust attitudes and narrow view of education. I fought this book at every turn, having to

H. Michael Sapir became a professional Economist. He taught at Ohio State, served in various U.S. government agencies until the end of World War II. He then went to Occupied Japan, serving over three years as a private economic consultant both to Japanese and foreign clients.

The United Nations recruited him for technical assistance work in Latin America, first in Brazil, the Chile. All together, he worked and lived for nine years in South America. From there, he went to the World Bank in Washington for 14 years, living and working almost half of that time in resident missions in Ethiopia, East Africa, and Indonesia.

Michael retired from the World Bank in 1977, and now lives in Marin County, California..

write several papers on various parts of it.

Alex and the Ex-College experience were my avenue to a life-long deep appreciation of classical Greek, as well as modern Western philosophy, history, literature, art, and other aspects of society. I learned to value the power of critical thinking, and of intelligent dialogue, including vigorous disagreement expressed in moderated and friendly terms.

I have ever since been grateful for the keen sense of ethical and moral values instilled in us at the College, as well as a deep humanistic and social orientation. I would like our education system at all levels to put more adequate stress on ethical principles in human conduct.

Did the Ex-College in any important way influence my choice of later career? I have always answered, "No, not in a literal, direct way."

But, my two years in Madison thoroughly unsettled me. I was lucky to go to Germany for a year before enrolling in Yale, and the dramatic experience of depression, poverty, unemployment, political tension, and so on in Germany in 1931/32 were clearly a factor impelling me towards economics as a study major and as a profession, leading still later to over thirty years devoted to living and working in less developed countries all over the world.

Without question, I can state that the inspiration of Alex Meiklejohn and my learning process at Madison represented one of the truly momentous "transformational" experiences in my life.

Nevertheless, I would not fully replicate the Experimental College, today. My reasons have nothing to do with the methods of teaching and learning at the Ex-College. My concerns are for the appropriate curriculum for today's world.

I want to dwell on one major theme that seems to me to be absolutely imperative. This is the need for a truly global and multi-cultural agenda, not only for entering college students, but even more importantly for high school and primary school students. In essence, our Ex-College curriculum was too narrow, academic and ethno-centric, being based on study of cultures only in the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions.

America is still amazingly and predominantly ethno-centric, and even chauvinistic. It was Socrates who said: "I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world." Narrow though his world was then, he captured the essential common humanity of mankind. I know in my heart that Alex Meiklejohn, if constructing

a liberal studies curriculum in today's world, would adopt a more universal, global, truly multi-cultural approach.

Carl Skagersberg, Class II

Yes, I think I was ready for Adams Hall, just fresh out of high school after working at home on the farm for nine years after the eighth grade.

After the College, I worked in Madison as a motor messenger for Western Union on night shift until the NRA reduced it to a pittance. So, I quit and went back to the farm. Found work on the highway to supplement the farm income.

In 1937 I made the best move of my life. I married a graduate of Northwestern University. We continued to live on the farm for a year and produced a pair of twins. With the hard times, my two younger brothers came home, laid off at their jobs. With three of us boys at home, I was no longer needed on the farm, so we moved to Evanston, Ill., and I found machinist work there.

We added another daughter, and in 1952, with the three children ready for high school, we moved to Central City, Colorado. We were lured by the prospect of restarting a mining mill that had been shut down six years.

We restarted it. I pulled the switch that started the gears; but then we were broke and let go the crew. I was happy to get a machinist job in Denver, night shift for six months. Then my health failed.

As I was recovering, we refinanced our house and made a down payment on a cafe in Central City. We paid it off and ran it for ten years. Then my wife's health failed and she left us. Now I'm not working, drawing on our savings for everything.

Sorry I haven't done better on the survey. I should have done better on a lot of things!

Alfred Van Tassle, Class III

The Ex-College was central to my education, but not because of the curriculum. The College was unique in that one was judged by intelligence of approach to problems; not skill in sports or popularity.

The strongest part of the College was the preparation of a paper subject to criticism by faculty. It made me skillful in ways which were useful throughout college

Carl Skagerberg lives in a Denver, Colorado suburb with his daughter. He writes (in 1993): "I am a fine, mature 90-year-old. Walk every day, no cane, swing both arms, a tough Swede from Northern Wisconsin. You will have a great reunion. It will make the papers."

Alfred Van Tassle says his career was "up and down, depending on the political situation." He continues: "It was steadily up from 1936 as junior engineer-economist to the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee, to Economist at the United Nations Headquarters, until fired by

U.N. after taking the Fifth Amendment at McCarran Committee hearings in 1953.

At age 50, Albert Van Tassel entered Columbia University as a Ph.D. candidate in economics. Achieved the degree in 1964 (first in class) and joined the Columbia faculty as lecturer.

Al's journey took him next to the University of Illinois, Urbana, as Associate Professor and editor of the Illinois Business Review.

He moved on to Hofstra University as Professor of Business Research., where he retired in 1983. He lives in Glen Cove, New York, and is working on his memoirs.

Al Watson became a Senior Foreign Service Officer, in charge of administration at Rome, Australia, Taiwan; and Executive Director of the U.S. Mission to the U.N. He now lives in West Brattleboro, Vermont.

and later employment on a National Research Project and with the Senate Committee on United Nations.

The supplemental readings should have been more selective as guidance to students, however. Yes, I do think that such an education as the Ex-College provided would be relevant to the next Century.

Albert Watson, Class III

To me, the College was special in several ways. A stimulating approach to learning was pervasive. We were thinking about society as a whole. There was integration of knowledge rather than fragmentation. It was a joint adventure between the Advisors and students as a community of equals.

I'm sure I didn't take full advantage of the opportunities offered -- no fault of the College! As far as the applicability of the College to the present, I think the 21st Century is going to need, desperately, broad-based thinking about where this society is going.

Possibly because of the Ex-College, at least in part, I have maintained a broad range of intellectual interests, particularly in science, and varied activities, such as presidency of the local Audubon Society.

Following are several unattributable responses from alumni whose identities were not altogether clear.

1

The College experience was negative (relative to the possible). Tolerance in any environment is appreciated.

But college life in Adams Hall was much too open.

It might have been a good educational experience if a regimen more disciplined (or directed) had been superimposed. I am sure that others who had the discipline (self) or direction (from other sources) found the open environment productive.

I would have been as well off with any kind of sensible reading list and turned loose. I would have been better off with the reading list and a teacher to challenge me on it.

I didn't have the initiative to take advantage of what was available. I had my kinds of initiative, but not that.

So, I have to say that any education that does not address the needs of the individual student (including

the one lacking the necessary initiative) is not successful.

To the question, "what has been the course of your career?" the answer is satisfactory.

2

The Ex-College taught me to think independently, to inquire, and to question. If that isn't the purpose of a liberal education, what is?

I would wish for a more integrated studies curriculum in contemporary undergraduate education; and attention to the duties and responsibilities of a citizen, as presented in the "Apologia," and in Pericles Funeral Oration.

The College accomplished the forceful (yes, forceful!) opening of my mind. And I value, especially, the acquaintances and relationships with the faculty; but there was too much toleration of indiscipline -- and the all masculine student body. No girls!

Would the Ex-College work today? Why not? Look at how the University of Chicago has flourished with a similar program.

3

Irrelevant to my education. It was fun, but at that age I needed discipline and a more structured environment to become a good student. I would not want to see another such College instituted. After getting a B.A., my career has been in the insurance business.

Addendum

William Gordon, Class I

The College profoundly affected my progressive political and social philosophy. I would wish a new Experimental College would focus toward the study and debate around world-wide changes, transformations affecting ecology, and social and political issues, especially in the third world.

The comradeship and close relation with the faculty were wonderful, but there was a tendency to elitism. The absence of women students was a weakness; too male-oriented -- even the reading assignments; but its strength

William Gordon lives in Portland, Oregon. He has had a long-time involvement in social concerns, and is currently active (at age 85) in senior and health care issues. He is a co-convenor of the Portland Gray Panthers and a member of the National Board. He is also on the Board of Oregon Health Action, currently sponsoring legislation for a single-payer, Canadian style

Robert E. Kraeger, Class III

After college, he began as a factory laborer, working his way up to vice-president for production of a company with three plants and its main office in New York City. He was in charge of production and labor union contracts for forty-three years. Bob Kraeger lives in Fremont, CA.

The College was just a part of my education, not central or pivotal. The many discussions with others, no doubt, gave me a different view, in other words a broadening effect.

Being on the same floor with Wilbur Cohen, Walker Hill, Jenks and Dick Lloyd Jones, I got a two-way picture of the times; one conservative, the other very socialistic. I consider myself a moderate.

Donald Meiklejohn

Don Meiklejohn is a son of A.M. He was professor of Philosophy at University of Syracuse until retirement; also on faculty of the College of the Atlantic. He makes his home in Syracuse, New York .

The most important lesson that the College taught me (and which I've tried to follow at Chicago, Syracuse, and College of the Atlantic) was the lesson of the unity of the curriculum.

That unity generated and maintained the unity of the conversation among students and advisers, what Harold November refers to as "the learning community." Today, when pressures for recognition of special interests and special knowledges are especially urgent, it seems to me that the message of the Ex-College is particularly important.

That message includes, so far as my own experience has been involved, the continuity between the intellectual comprehension of our culture and the direction of our public policy.

I suppose that this lies behind my having spent most of my academic career in programs and courses dealing with public policy problems. They are not the only way to unify the curriculum, but they are among the most rewarding.

Alvin J. Gordon, Class IV

Al Gordon traveled many roads : actor, teacher, writer, chef, hotel owner, educational film maker. He lived in Mexico, for several years, then made Sonoma, California his home until his death.

The Ex-College was central to my education. We experienced the possibility of non-violent discourse, even between enemies, and that would be a welcome phenomenon on college campuses today. Certainly, Meiklejohn, himself, was of great value to me, but I would have dispensed with Mr. Adams . (Henry, ed.)

The kind of education I found at the College is needed now, even more than before. Some of those concepts should start at sixth grade level. Your survey question: "Any further thoughts?" One of the Ex-College's strongest points. There are always further thoughts!

