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Conference Evaluation Report Summary

GLENN F. NYRE

Thirty-four states, the District of Columbia and Canada were represented at POD's Fourth Annual Conference. (As your truthful evaluator, I must "come clean" and confess that POD is really only three years old. How, then, you might ask, can we have held a Fourth Annual Conference? It's easy. We just co-opted the conference out of which POD grew and called it our own so people would not think we were some upstart organization. If I tell you this, could I falsify anything which follows?) Texas was represented by 16 people, California by 13, and Illinois and New Jersey were the only other double-digit states, with 12 each.

Of the 206 registrants, 167 filled out a two-page conference evaluation form (81%), and their responses represented the major evaluation activity. Core Committee members also interviewed people throughout the conference and provided me with more personal-type comments which helped to round out the evaluative picture. All of the information obtained in these two ways has been synthesized and presented to Core Committee members in the form of a twenty-page memo. Since a distribution of the same to all members would be prohibitive, the major points contained therein are highlighted here for everyone.

One of the purposes of POD conference evaluations is to create a profile of participants from year to year which can document changes in conference clientele. Two of those characteristics which I feel would be of most interest to members in general and other people who might be considering joining POD or attending a future conference are the positions which the participants hold in the real world and the type of institutions from which they come. If you are not interested in this, it's too bad. The dye has been cast (to color a phrase).

The largest proportion of participants were directors of professional development-type programs or centers (37%), followed by faculty (28%), administrators (22%) and a variety of misfits (13%). The average amount of time these people have been involved in professional development activities is 4.5 years, and they ranged from seven people who had just become involved to five old-timers who have been in this area for over ten years.

Participant institutional-type affiliation was as follows: public 4–5 year college/university, 27%; private college, 23%; public university, 17%; community college, 10%; private university, 9%. The remaining 14% were from professional schools, systemwide offices, agencies and consortia.

Even though POD has now had four conferences, half of the participants were attending their first one—the same as last year—and about one-fourth of those attending were not members—also the same as last year. Forty new members joined POD at the conference.

Everyone was asked to rank the facilities, quality of program, scope of program, organization and location on a five point scale, with five being highest, and these are the results of that ranking: Facilities, 4.3; Quality, 4.2; Scope, 4.2; Organization, 4.5; and Location, 3.4. These scores demonstrate that the participants were really very pleased with everything except the location. And, actually, a 3.4 rating is not all that bad except in comparison to the high scores in the other areas. Obviously, organization was the forte.

The most satisfying element of the conference were found to be, in descending order, the personal support/interaction it offered, the quality of the sessions/program, the exchange of ideas and information, the open/welcoming atmosphere of the group, and the diversity of the program. Many other aspects were mentioned, but in the interest of journal space, I have only listed those mentioned by at least 20 people, with the first one having been mentioned by 87.

Everything was not perfect, however, as there were comments regarding the least satisfying aspects of the conference. Yet, there were only three things mentioned by more than ten people: lack of free time, 18; isolated location, 16; and overlapping/competing sessions, 15. The request for additional suggestions or comments brought forth a host of kudos for the Conference Planning Chairwoman and Committee, and only one criticism was mentioned by



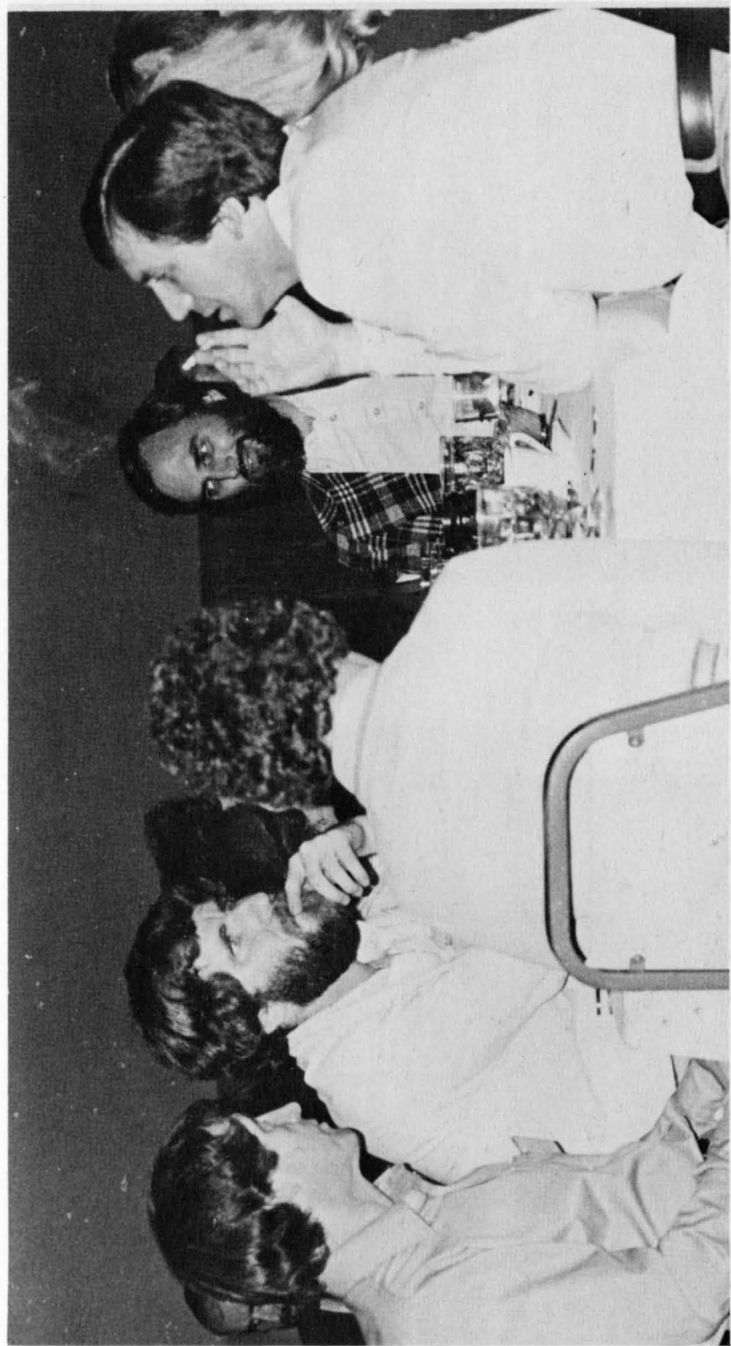
On the past . . .



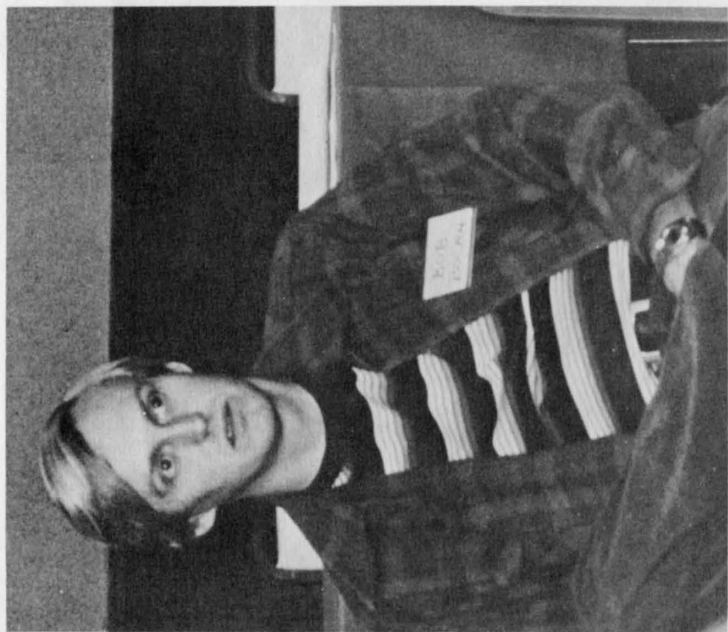
and the future.



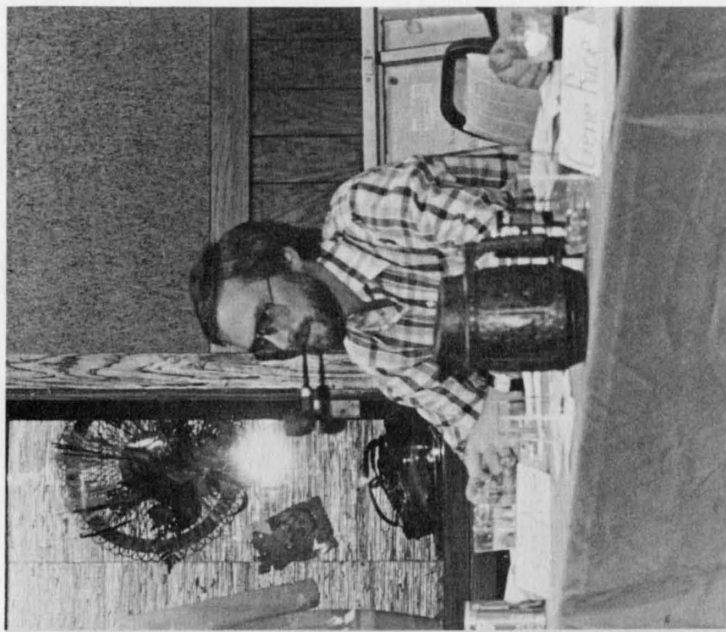
In spite of the Core Committee, POD continues.



You have **HOW MUCH** funding?



The buses are **WHERE?**



WHY don't you think they'll fill out questionnaires?



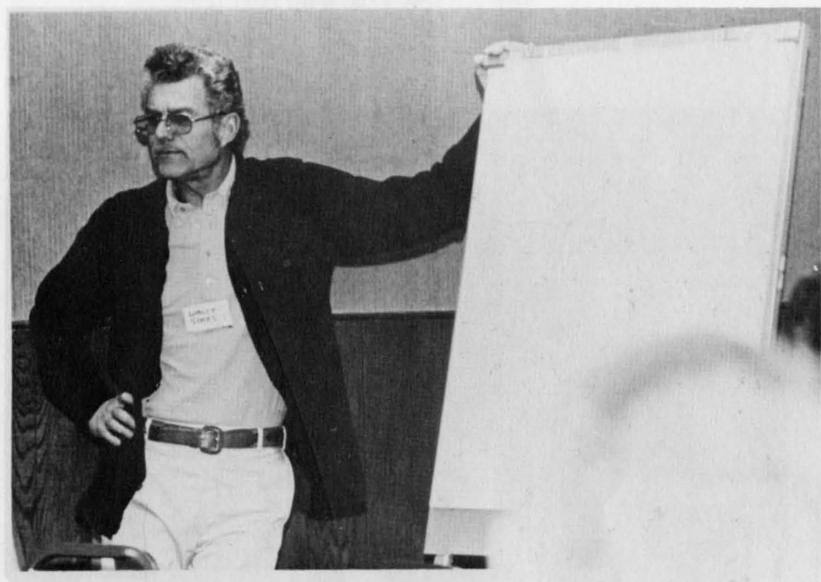
Now the way I see it for next year,
Clare will . . .



You jog how far?



I'm sure someone can answer that.



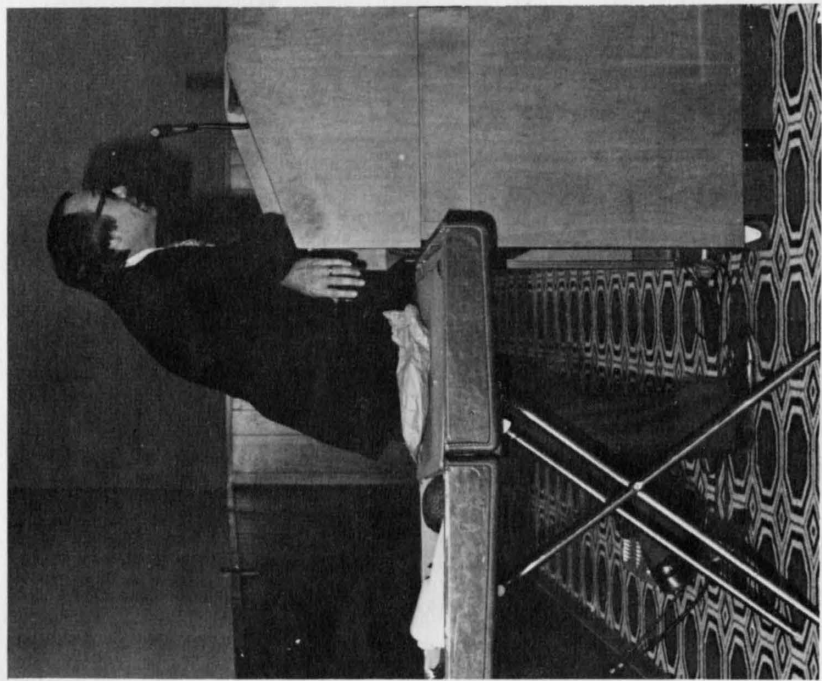
And that's all I have to say.



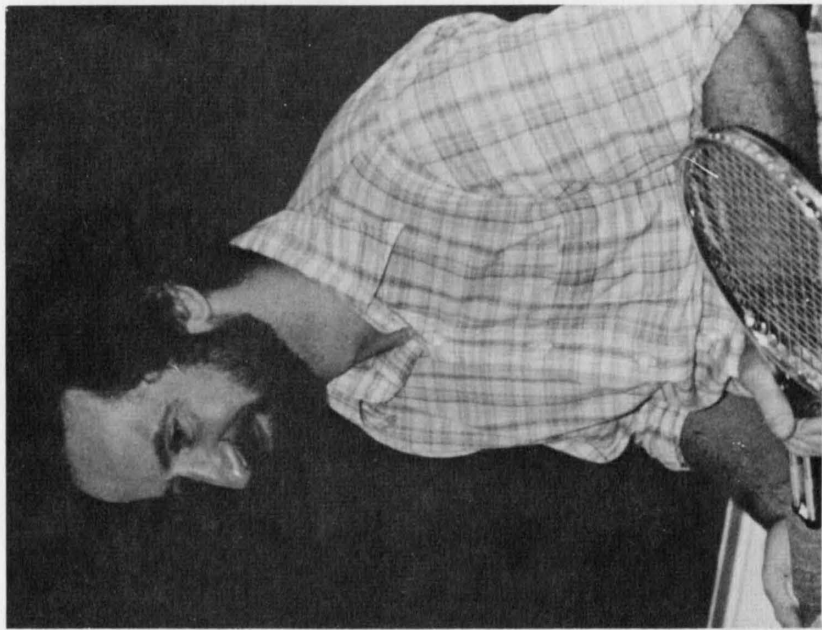
The oracle



Yes, I'm a dean now.



If this doesn't go well,
I'm packed.



What sessions?

more than seven people—the continuing remoteness of the conference sites selected by POD.

If your particular comments are not included above, do not despair. Every suggestion, criticism or other comment has been sent to all Core Committee members and the members of both the 1978 and 1979 Conference Planning Committees. They will all be considered, as we know that good ideas do not always come from multiple sources. In fact, most of the time they don't. But there are certain limitations in synthesizing a twenty-page (single-spaced) report. If you only knew how insightful, purposeful and humorous that report was, you would sympathize with me entirely!