Students with comparable demographics were enrolled in three sections of introductory sociology. An experiential learning section involved students in survey research, participant observation at a religious service, the writing of an autobiography, learning sociological concepts through reading fiction, working with census data, role playing, class experiments, exposure to carefully selected films, guest lecturers, and weekend use of a SIMSOC simulation, whereas two control sections relied upon more traditional lecture/discussion methodologies. Two types of student evaluations showed no significant difference between the experiential class and the two control sections. Subsequent enrollment in departmental courses, however, was greater for students in the experiential section.

Experiential Learning in Introductory Sociology

A Course Description and Evaluation

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There is a growing dissatisfaction with the traditional lecture/discussion method of teaching (Gelles, 1980; Althof, 1976), accompanied by discussion and research supporting both sides of the question of its effectiveness (Rovin et al., 1972; Atherton, 1972; Birkel, 1973; Fletcher and Knott, 1971; Lucas et al., 1975). To remedy real or imagined problems with lectures, many teaching innovations have been suggested, while a smaller number have actually been implemented and evaluated. These al-

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ternative teaching strategies can be designed either to replace or to supplement lectures as the primary teaching technique.

One such innovation is experiential learning, which stresses active participation and involvement of students in "real life" situations, where "action learning" occurs as they learn by doing. The merits of using experiential learning techniques are discussed by several authors (Coleman, 1974, 1976; Chickering, 1977; Karlin and Berger, 1971; Keeton et al., 1976, 1979). Most of this work, however, does not present quantitative evaluations of experiential learning by comparing it with other techniques in the classroom environment. Moreover, variations in the definition of experiential learning, the scope of its application, and the level of education where it is used complicate these discussions. Experiential learning often denotes nonacademic work experience or general prior learning for which formal educational credit is granted (Rippetoe, 1977). These internships are formalized experiences which concurrently and intentionally straddle nonacademic and academic institutions (Levinson, 1979; Gondolf, 1980; Satariano and Rogers, 1979). A battery of experiential techniques are available for stimulating creative student involvement within the confines of the classroom, with lesser forays into the "real" world, such as drama, role playing, game playing, debates, experiments, participant observation, introspection, films, creative essays, guest resource persons, computer simulations, other simulation activities, and so on. Experiential learning activities are points on a continuum: from traditional teaching techniques to strenuous engagement in "real life" experiences, all of which should eventually be evaluated for independent and interacting effects upon students. However, at this stage in our understanding of experiential learning we must settle for cruder tests.

Experiential learning is an attractive substitute or enhancement of lecture/discussion teaching in sociology courses for several reasons. Sociology students are increasingly vocationally oriented

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and seek courses relevant to employment (Rippetoe, 1977). Pressure to meet these students' demands may be met with experiential activities which provide student links with the "real world," where the jobs are. Linsky and Straus (1973) found that sociology teachers were rated lower when compared to those in other disciplines. Undesirable evaluations of teaching effectiveness may lead sociology professors to turn to experiential techniques to increase student interest. Many students see sociology as abstract and theoretical, and involvement in experiential activities can help it seem more "real." Relating materials to "real life" situations and involving students in the collection and analysis of data, as well as other "sociological" activities, may be more effective than traditional classroom techniques in stimulating the learning of difficult concepts.

These assumptions, of course, may or may not be valid motivations for the use of experiential techniques and do not assure their success. It is clear that there are no guaranteed formulas for effective teaching. McGee (1974: 213-214) contends that the "form of instruction in the college classroom makes no difference in the amount of student learning," echoing the results of the analysis of a review of 91 studies comparing college teaching techniques by Dubin and Taveggia (1968). He further states that the apparent way to enhance quality of learning is to improve those who are teaching. In reviewing research on pedagogical procedures and interaction styles, Hamacheck (1975: 39) indicates the importance of quality teachers and teaching, but also writes that it is their flexibility and ability to adapt to individual differences which is important. Eble (1976: 4) summarizes the prevailing view when he writes: "My broader philosophic bias is that I am a pluralist: I cannot conceive of any way of teaching that will excel all others." Other investigators, however, argue that method does make a difference. Proponents of PSI have shown in several studies that it is superior to lectures in informational learning and perhaps in higher cognitive learning (Johnson, 1977). The type of learning desired may be a key to the eventual answer to questions about the effect of method, with type of instruction giving different results in the application and

analysis of information than the learning of facts (Bligh, 1972; McKeachie, 1977; Kulick and Kulick, 1979).

With these considerations in mind, we planned, implemented and evaluated a section of introductory sociology employing experiential learning techniques and compared it with two traditionally taught sections of the course. Introductory sociology was chosen because it is a vital course in all departments, developing interest in higher-level courses, generating majors, and providing students with a solid foundation in the discipline. Furthermore, introductory courses include a high proportion of freshmen. Chickering (1977) suggests that experiential techniques are most applicable to new students in higher education. Kohout (1977) feels that an inquiry model and a humanistic model have much more promise for a first course in sociology than a traditional vocational model. Experiential learning should provide more opportunity for inquiry and humanistic perspectives than is provided in a lecture course.

THE COURSE

To plan this course, five faculty members in a joint Sociology/Anthropology department compiled lists of appropriate experiential projects, activities and films. When this was completed, they met and organized the course syllabus, including topics, topic order, readings, films, and the experiential activities. Appendix A is an abstracted version of the syllabus. The decisions concerning the selection and order of the topics involved considerable discussion and compromise. We quickly discovered that each of us has his own theory on the appropriate order of topic presentation, and it was necessary to work and rework the syllabus to accommodate the philosophies and preference of everyone.

One faculty member was designated as the course coordinator and given responsibility of testing and paper grading. Others were assigned the task of teaching the topics most closely related to their expertise and interests. There was no intention that the course be team-taught, and faculty were not required to attend

the classes which they did not teach. The coordinator and the presenting faculty were always present in class and, for a majority of the classes, three instructors were present. Although there was no team-teaching per se, considerable dialogue occurred between those faculty who were present.

A multitude of experiential projects was considered, but because of the time available only a few were selected for implementation (see Appendix A for complete listing). Broom and Selznick (1977) was used as a basic text in the course, supplemented by other readings on reserve at the library. (These readings are not included in the abstracted syllabus since there are a variety of traditional and contemporary readings available from which any instructor can choose.) Jones (1975) discusses the use of fictional literature in teaching introductory sociology and the apparent value of this technique. The fictional readings used in this course included the following: "Shame," Stephen Crane; "The World of Migratory Workers," John Steinbeck; "On Account of a Hat," S. Aleichem; "The World as a Stage," from William Shakespeare; "The Circumlocution Office," Charles Dickens, all from Coser (1963). We used some as part of class discussion and others on examinations.

The vast majority of films were shown twice, in the late afternoon or evening to conserve class time for discussion. Smith (1973) discusses the use of films in an introductory course, considering their value as a tool for promoting learning and holding student interest.

Two guest lecturers were used in class to acquaint students with professionals outside the department. One spoke about the sociology of religion and the other about race and ethnicity. Both had practical experience in the area of social welfare and combined theoretical and applied perspectives.

To expose students to data analysis, two projects were designed. On the first day of class, students filled out two questionnaires. One replicated 19 questions from the national General Social Survey (Davis, 1978) dealing with attitudes toward work, the death penalty, gun registration, liberalism/conservatism, social class, abortion, attitudes toward the elderly, and religious preference, participation, and attitudes. The second

was a Bogardus-type social distance questionnaire designed to elicit reactions toward types of social deviations. Class responses to the General Social Survey questions were tabulated and compared with the national results during the discussion of sociological methodology, using the variables and data to demonstrate the steps in the process of sociological research. The social distance data were utilized in the discussion of norms and social deviance. For a discussion of the value of such techniques, see Clifton's (1976) paper on the value of students "doing sociology" and Sobal (1981) on teaching with secondary data.

A participant-observation exercise was developed to get the students into the field, sending pairs of students into area churches which ranged along most of the church-sect continuum. Before the experience, the participant-observation method was discussed and students were told how to observe and what kinds of things to look for. During the in-class discussion of religion, the instructor listed trends in religion in America and asked the students to support or refute the trend with data from their field experience.

In the autobiographical paper students discussed people who had a major influence on their lives, stating the values, attitudes, and beliefs acquired from each significant other. Information from the paper was used in class discussion to illustrate socialization, significant others, alienation, and other pertinent concepts.

One of the highlights of the course was the playing of SIMSOC (Gamson, 1978). The class assembled on a Saturday and the simulation experience was set in motion. After a postgame discussion, the students wrote a short paper to integrate the experience with concepts of social organization. Greenblat (1973) provides a comprehensive discussion of the claims and evidence related to the effects of simulation games on teaching. While little hard evidence is available on the value of SIMSOC in the course, the students seemed to rate the experience as a positive addition.

Examining this combination of ten types of nonlecture activities is obviously a crude test of experiential learning. But it is very much a real test of the types of techniques that can be utilized in attempting to supplement the traditional lecture/discussion

method. It is a field test of a combination of teaching alternatives and innovations as they would be implemented in someone's classroom. As such it is a case study of one course using multiple experiential innovations.

The explicit goal in offering this experiential learning course was to convey the sociological approach to a class by supplementing lectures and discussions with active engagement in learning activities. We operationalized this goal into specific objectives in three major categories: (1) subjective evaluations, measured by student assessments of the learning situations; (2) academic performance, as measured by tests; (3) interests in sociology seen in planning to take and taking additional courses in the department. We hypothesized that students in the experiential learning class, the target population of this educational experiment, should perform better in these categories than students in classes taught by the traditional lecture/discussion method.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The experiential learning section was one of three introductory sociology courses taught during the spring semester of 1978, all using the same text, Broom and Selznick (1977). The other sections used the lecture/discussion method of teaching almost exclusively, deemphasizing experiential techniques. One other section was taught by a professor who also had the primary responsibility for the experiential section, and one by someone who did speak in the experiential section and frequently attended its classes. The fact that the one section was experiential was not advertised among the students prior to registration, eliminating a self-selection effect in assigning students to a course section. The only self-selection factor was the time of day the course was offered.[1]

To compare the effects of experiential learning with the less experiential formats, we must demonstrate that the three sections were comparable before the learning commenced, eliminating the effects of previous attributes as an alternative explanation of any

differences between the courses seen after using the "treatment" of teaching style. For this purpose we will use a set of "control" variables which might affect receptivity and reaction to types of teaching. The following controls were measured on all students at the beginning of the course using written interview schedules: sex, class, age, major, home state, population of home town, public or private high school, size of high school graduating class, high school grade-point average, college grade-point average, SAT scores, and grade expected in the course. In addition, a learning style inventory (Reichmann and Grasha, 1974) was given to the students, assessing their preferred learning style as independent, avoidant, collaborative, dependent, competitive and participant. Names were included on this questionnaire so that these measures could be matched with later assessments of their performance and attitudes toward the course.

The dependent variables for the study are the student evaluations, test results, and indicators of interest in the discipline. Evaluations came from two sources. One was a questionnaire developed to measure student reactions to experiential learning techniques and plans for additional coursework. This included the following assessments:

(1) Do you feel that you experienced sociology or just read about it?
(2) Did/would movies add to the course?
(3) Did/would guest speakers add to the course?
(4) Did field trips, SIMSOC, doing a survey, and observing religious services add to the course? (Each was asked only in the experiential section.)
(5) Will you take another sociology course?
(6) Will you preregister for a sociology course next semester?
(7) Will you major in sociology?

The second set of dependent variables were questions in a standardized departmental course evaluation given to all students. The instructors were rated, using four-point scales, on: knowledge of the subject, fairness of evaluation, respect for students' ideas, ability to explain material clearly, organization, availability for consultation, concern for students, comments on

exams, preparation for class, stimulation of discussion, style of lecturing, general ability, explanation of course objectives, and grading philosophy. Also assessed were: usefulness of readings, general recommendation of the course, comparative recommendation of the course, need for studying, and general difficulty. These indicators provide a broad base for comparing the effects of the two "control" sections with the experiential section. Other outcome measures could have been used but these will be left to future research.

This evaluation is a quasi-experimental design. Three randomly assigned groups were measured on student demographics to assess their comparability before the experimental treatment. One group was exposed to experiential learning techniques while the other groups were not. One control group was matched with the treatment group by having the same instructor, while the other had a different professor. Finally, all three groups were subjected to evaluations at the end of the semester, and the matched experimental and control group received identical measures of academic performance. This produced an untreated control group design with proxy pretest measures using two control groups (Cook and Campbell, 1979).

RESULTS

Paired comparisons of the three sections on each of the background variables plus a simultaneous overall comparison of the experiential section as opposed to the pooled students of the other two sections were made using cross-tabulation. Section E was the experiential learning section, section B was a lecture/discussion taught by the same instructor who had primary responsibility for the experiential section, and section A was taught by a different instructor. There was only one significant difference between the three sections in background characteristics in the 48 comparisons. Sex was significant at the .05 level between sections B and E, with more females in the experiential section (63% [27] versus 39% [12]). We may conclude that our three experimental

TABLE 1
Student Course Evaluations: A Comparison of Three Sections on the Dependent Variables

	E versus A		E versus B		A versus B	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
Readings Useful	.14	.10	.34	.01	-.22	.04
Developed Own Ideas	.00	.50	.32	.01	-.27	.01
Interested in Sociology	-.25	.01	.34	.01	-.44	.01
Course Objectives Explained	-.29	.01	.09	.24	-.38	.01
Evaluations Fair	-.40	.01	-.11	.19	-.27	.01
Instructor Respected Students	-.02	.42	.30	.01	-.26	.01
Instructor Knew Subject Matter	-.23	.02	.23	.03	-.39	.01
Instructor Explains Clearly	-.12	.15	.20	.05	-.27	.01
Recommend Course to Others	-.27	.01	.28	.01	-.46	.01
Course Coordinated and Organized	-.06	.29	.06	.30	-.13	.14
Instructors Available Outside Class	-.01	.49	-.13	.15	.11	.19
Instructor Concerned with Students	-.37	.01	-.11	.20	-.24	.03
Useful Comments on Papers and Exams	-.34	.01	.13	.15	-.41	.01
Instructor Prepared for Class	-.03	.41	.06	.31	-.03	.39
Clear Grading Philosophy	.00	.50	.05	.34	-.05	.35
Overall Quality of Course	-.28	.01	.34	.01	-.55	.00
Exams a Learning Experience	-.08	.24	.41	.01	-.44	.01
Difficulty of Course	-.06	.31	.16	.10	-.09	.23
Quality of Class Discussions	-.16	.08	.50	.00	-.59	.00
Quality of Instructor's Lecture Style	-.03	.38	.50	.00	-.43	.01
Overall Rating of Instructor	-.24	.02	.39	.00	-.50	.00
Feel You Experienced Sociology	-.15	.10	.17	.10	-.30	.01
Movies Add to Course	-.31	.01	-.33	.01	.06	.33
Guest Lecturers Add to Course	-.06	.30	-.19	.06	.14	.14

samples are equivalent and that differences between the sections at the end of the semester are probably not a result of qualities the students possessed before entering the course. This is reinforced by showing that there are no significant differences between the experiential group and the pooled attributes of the two nonexperiential sections.

The course evaluations produced consistent differences in the paired correlation comparisons between sections, as shown in Table 1. The experiential section fared better than section A, as seen in the negative correlations on 21 of the 24 dependent variables, of which 10 are significant. Most of the indicators used here are instructor- rather than technique-oriented. The questions on developing one's own ideas, the quality of class discussions, feeling that they experienced rather than *just learned* sociology, and that movies and guest lecturers did or would add to the course were more relevant to experiential learning than the others. Compared with section A, the experiential learning

section was worse on only the readings question, with two ties. From this we can conclude that the experiential section fared much better in the students' eyes than the section A, although this may have been due more to the instructors than the technique.

In contrast, the experiential section was seen as significantly worse than section B on 19 of the 24 variables (12 of which were significant), and the same instructor taught both of these. The experiential section was rated better on only 5 variables, with only one rating significant: the assertion that movies added to the course. This supports the value of one very important supplement to lectures and discussions, but on the whole shows that from the students' point of view the experiential learning section was not as good as another section taught by the same person. In this case the difference appears to be technique, and not personality. Section B was rated more positively than A on 21 of the 24 items, 17 of which were significant. In summary, students evaluated the experiential section more positively than section A and worse than section B.

We can also do individual-level comparisons to test the intervention effects of experiential learning. A dummy variable of experiential learning or nonexperiential learning was created, thus pooling the individuals exposed to the two other courses. This was correlated with the same dependent variables used earlier giving us an individual-level evaluation of the effect of being in an experiential learning section, as opposed to the class-by-class data shown previously. In addition, this technique allows us to partial out the effects of the student demographics from the experiential exposure effects. Of the 24 dependent variables shown in Table 2, only five are significantly affected by the type of instruction: usefulness of readings, fairness of grading, concern of the professors, usefulness of professors' comments on papers and exams and the feeling that movies added to the course. Style of lecturing was almost significant (.059). These significant correlations, however, were all negative except for the readings question, indicating that the experiential course fared worse than the other two sections on these significant zero order correlations. When correlations are tallied by direction alone, 9 are positive, 13 negative, and 2 zero, reinforcing the trend for the experiential to

TABLE 2

Zero-Order and Partial Correlations of Students in the Experiential Course Versus the Other Courses

Dependent Variable	Zero Order Correlation		Selected Partial Correlations Controlling for: Sex		Class	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
Readings Useful	.22	.01	.21	.02	.21	.02
Develop Own Ideas	.12	.11	.12	.11	.11	.13
More Interest	-.05	.29	-.04	.35	-.06	.28
Objectives Explained	-.14	.07	-.14	.08	-.14	.08
Fair Evaluations	-.26	.00	-.26	.00	-.27	.00
Atmosphere of Respect	.09	.17	.07	.23	.08	.20
Know Subject	-.08	.20	-.08	.20	-.08	.23
Explain Clearly	.00	.48	.01	.44	.00	.48
Recommend Course	-.07	.24	-.05	.29	-.07	.24
Organized	-.01	.46	-.05	.31	-.02	.43
Available for Consultation	-.05	.30	-.05	.33	-.05	.32
Concern with Progress	-.25	.00	-.27	.00	-.25	.00
Comments on Exams	-.15	.05	-.19	.03	-.16	.06
Prepared for Class	.04	.34	.04	.34	.03	.36
Explain Grade Philosophy	.02	.42	.00	.48	.01	.43
Comp. Rate Course	-.03	.38	-.05	.31	-.03	.38
Worth Studying	.10	.14	.09	.19	.10	.16
Rate Class Difficulty	.09	.17	.09	.19	.07	.24
Stimulating Discussion	.10	.14	.09	.17	.10	.14
Style of Lecture	.15	.06	.14	.07	.15	.06
Rate Professor	.00	.49	-.02	.43	.00	.49
Experienced Soc	-.04	.36	-.01	.47	-.04	.36
Movies Added	-.30	.00	-.29	.00	-.31	.00
Guest Lecturers Add	-.11	.12	-.09	.18	-.12	.13

TABLE 3
Evaluations of the Experiential Activities Used in Section E

How Much Did It Add to the Course:	Field Experiences	SIMSOC	Doing a Survey	Religious Observation
A Great Deal	20%	35%	0%	27%
Somewhat	35%	30%	63%	49%
Not Much	45%	35%	37%	24%

fare worse than the nonexperiential. Partialling out the effects of our demographic measures as control variables, the positive evaluation of the usefulness of the readings in the experiential course persists along with the negative evaluation of fairness, concern for progress, and the contribution of movies to the course, across all the demographic variables. Table 2 shows the first order partials for sex and class. The negative evaluation of comments on papers and tests for the experiential section was barely significant in the zero order correlations, but goes beyond the .05 level in several of the first order partials.[2] Style of lecturing was not statistically significant for any of the partials. Because there were no major differences due to the controlling of these demographics, we could not identify any subgroups, such as females, upperclassmen, majors, or bright students, who were particularly receptive or nonreceptive to experiential learning. Specific evaluations of experiential activities are shown in that section's evaluations of field experiences, SIMSOC, completing a survey and religious observation in Table 3. In general we can see a lack of enthusiasm in the student ratings of these activities, with none seen as adding a great deal to the course by more than a third of the students, and all seen as adding not much by at least a quarter of the class.

Another assessment of the differences between the sections considered mastery of academic material. Section B and the experiential section were headed by the same instructor, and 20 standardized multiple choice questions based upon the text were given to both sections as one part of the final exam.[3] The lecture section had more errors than the experiential section on 10 ques-

tions, the experiential erred more on seven, and there were three ties. The overall percentage of errors was higher for the lecture section (116% versus 69%). Significant differences occurred for only two individual questions, with the experiential section performing better on the question about norms ($p < .05$) and the question about ethnocentrism ($p < .01$). Many of the experiential activities could have contributed to a better understanding of norms. Perhaps teaching the difficult concept of culture was facilitated by the experiential technique, especially the movies about other cultures, and this is shown in those students' better understanding of ethnocentrism. Thus experiential learning may enhance general intellectual performance as well as learning in specific categories.

A final category of evaluation is interest and commitment to the discipline as measured by the attitude and behavior of planning and actually taking additional courses in the department. Most teachers would consider it a major accomplishment if they were able to motivate students to major in their discipline, or at the very least to take additional courses in the field. From a practical standpoint, the increasing competition for students along with declining enrollments, budgets and faculty positions make this an important concern. The expressed end-of-semester plans of students to preregister and take more courses and major in the discipline were compared by section, producing significant differences and suggesting no immediate effect of the course (see Table 4). A one-year follow-up of all the students was also done, examining the actual number of departmental courses taken. While the students from the two other sections only averaged .95 and .93 additional courses per eligible student, the experiential section averaged 1.21 (this pattern persists even if anthropology courses are not considered, with students in the experiential section averaging 1.03, section A .8 and section B .93). This higher average for the experiential section suggests a possible positive latent effect of the teaching method which did not reveal itself in immediate tests or evaluations. The real value of experiential learning may show itself in indirect ways over longer periods of time by generating a long-term interest in the subject matter. It is

TABLE 4
Sociological Commitment and Interest

Plans for Additional Coursework at End of Course

	E versus A		E versus B		A versus B	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
Preregister for Soc/Anthro Course	-.03	.41	.08	.26	-.05	.34
Take Another Soc/Anthro Course	.20	.09	.05	.40	.25	.06
Major in Soc/Anthro	.05	.35	.01	.47	.06	.33

Additional Departmental Courses Taken During the Two Semesters Following Introductory Sociology

	Courses			
	Sociology	Anthropology	Total	Mean Number of Additional Courses per Student+
Section E	34	6	40	1.21
Section A	34	5	30	.93
Section B	20	0	20	.95

+This average of additional coursework over the next year was computed on the basis of the students attending classes the following semester, which for section E = 33, A = 42.5, and B = 21.5. These are smaller than the class totals because of graduation, semesters abroad, and withdrawals from school.

also possible that the team-teaching aspect of the course introduced students to a broader spectrum of sociology instructors, from which more students were able to find someone whose other courses seemed appealing. Additional longitudinal data may help to clarify this potentially imporant outcome of experiential or team-taught courses.

DISCUSSION

The indicators used in this test of experiential learning point to a lack of many significant beneficial effects over the traditional teaching techniques. This is in line with McGee's (1974) observation that teaching style really does not matter much, but at least experiential learning techniques do not detract from teaching effectiveness. Smith (1973) found that an introductory course taught entirely with films produced little difference in test-measured achievement, again reinforcing a lack of benefits from this genre of teaching technique. Other authors, however, show that other components of teaching, such as feedback, remediation,

practice, and so on, when used with *any* technique can improve teaching and learning (Kulick and Kulick, 1979). Experiential learning techniques are not noted for encouraging immediate mastery of a body of knowledge; rather, their strongest effect is in promoting student involvement and long-term memory. The measures used here do ask about planned involvement with sociology, finding no immediate effect upon plans to become a major or to take more courses, but showing a slight positive effect on actual course enrollment. Research on long-term memory will be left for future investigators to consider.[4]

This study is a negative case in the literature on teaching sociology, something which is not commonly reported (Gelles, 1980). The lack of information about these failures may be due to a hesitation to report and publish unsuccessful innovations. Alternatively, the majority of innovations may be successful, possibly due to the "Hawthorne effect" (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939). This innovation produced few measurable benefits despite excited, involved, hardworking faculty who enthusiastically attempted to make it work, and a class which during the course of the semester realized that "something extra" was being done for them which was not done for most classes. Therefore the finding of no great advantages to experiential learning is doubly negative: The technique produced no benefits and the Hawthorne effect did not overcome the lack of differences. Innovation does not always lead to teaching improvement. Perhaps the lack of a positive effect of experiential learning was partially due to the predominance of underclassmen in these sections, even though class made no difference when considered in the evaluation. Freshpersons and sophomores may not be ready to benefit from experiential activities. Their lack of intellectual maturity may prevent them from reflecting upon concrete experiences and activities and drawing useful abstract conclusions and generalizations, despite Chickering's (1977) suggestion that experiential techniques are most useful for new students.

One factor which may have mitigated the effects of experiential or lecture/discussion presentation was class size. The experien-

tial section (E) had 43 students, section A 45 students and section B 31. Because sections A and E were of similar size, their comparison was not affected by class size. A plausible explanation for the better evaluations of section B than the experiential section could be the difference in class size (43 versus 31). However, a recent exhaustive examination of the available information on class size at all levels of education by Glass et al. (1979) concludes that there is little effect of size differences for classes of 20 or more. Therefore, we suggest that class size was not the major reason for the failure of the experiential section to excel in student evaluations. If class size did make a difference, the fact that the experiential course was larger than the lecture/discussion section taught by the same instructor made this an extremely conservative test of the effects of using supplemental experiential techniques.

If instructional method does not appear to matter, then perhaps the teaching in the three sections was not really that different. Dubin and Taveggia (1968: 46-47) suggest that commonalities between courses can easily outweigh differences, and diminish the effects of method. The use of the same textbook was a great commonality between the sections of this course, and may have overridden the effects of classroom experiences. The use of an innovative method is also important, and the effectiveness of the instructors' use of experiential techniques was an unmeasured variable in this study. Both teachers and students may not have taken full advantage of the potentials of experiential learning, leaving out indicators to record the effect of similarities in the sections more than the differences which could have been achieved in optimal use of these techniques with highly receptive students.

A final explanation for the failure of the experiential section to excel over the others may be the additional workload it imposed. The out-of-class research activity (simulation, movies, and so on) may have been perceived by students as an excessive demand upon their time, even though the evaluations showed no significant difference in the reported difficulty of the sections. Baker and Jones (1979) reported a negative student reaction to an innovation involving writing improvements in a sociology course, pri-

marily because of the extra work involved. Especially when several sections of introductory sociology are offered simultaneously, students compare themselves to others taking the same course, using them as a workload reference group. A relative deprivation phenomenon can occur, where more work detracts from the students' receptivity to an innovative technique if other sections do not include the additional work. This results in some contamination in evaluations which could be controlled in future research by using other research designs, such as the ABA design used by Wiggins et al. (1979).

In summary, this case study of the implementation of an introductory sociology course involved faculty who worked enthusiastically with nonlecture techniques to teach sociological principles. Despite the feeling among the professors that unique learning experiences were occurring, the indicators used in our evaluation showed few positive benefits of including experiential learning techniques in the course. Limitations in the research design and unmeasured sources of input and outcome do make this a suggestive, and not conclusive, study. We hope that more research will be done on using experiential techniques in teaching sociology, especially with larger samples.

The results of this study do not imply that experiential activities are not a necessarily useful supplement to lectures and discussion, but do suggest that they are not a panacea and can be overdone. The problem is specifying which activities are best used under what conditions. Other instructors may do well to temper their inclusion of experiential innovations to avoid overwhelming their students. Perhaps the intensive use of one or two supplements to lectures may be more effective than occasional use of many types of teaching in one class. The most valuable areas for selective addition of experiential activities may be in the teaching of the difficult concept of culture and the use of simulations (such as SIMSOC) to teach social structure. We hope that future research will reveal the most appropriate topics for implementing experiential activities to enhance the lecture/discussion method at selective points rather than abandoning either technique entirely.

APPENDIX A
Abstracted Experiential Course Syllabus

Topic	Experiential Techniques/Films
A. Scientific Sociology Development and Methods	
1. Historical Development and Methodology	Questionnaire Completion
2. Data Analysis	Questionnaire Analysis
B. Culture	Film Series: Bitter Melons, Turtle People, The Ax Fight, Cows of Dolo Kem Paycu
1. Animal vs. Human Society; Components of Culture	
2. Culture as a Normative System	Film: Ishi in Two Worlds
3. Social Deviance	Analysis of Social Distance Questionnaire
4. Subcultures	Film: Satan's Choice (Motorcycle Club)
C. Socialization	Autobiographical Paper Films: 16 in Webster Groves, Webster Groves Revisited
D. Social Organization	
1. Social Systems; Levels of Organization	SIMSOC
2. Roles	
a. Introduction b. Presentation of Self c. Defense mechanisms	Role Playing
3. Groups	In class experiments on group process and effects
4. Formal Organization	
5. Family Institution	Videotape: The Burk Family of Georgia (from Six American Families) Personal attitude assessment toward marriage and the family using questionnaire
6. Social Stratification	Films: Valley of Darkness (Coal miners in W.V.), On the Line (Welfare)
7. Race and Ethnicity	Guest Speaker
8. Educational Institution	
9. Religious Institution	Participant observation in area churches In class discussion of observations Guest speaker
E. Major Issues	
1. Population/Ecology/ Urbanization	Use of census data and maps in class
2. Work and Leisure	Film: America: On the Edge of Abundance
3. Social Change	
a. Collective Behavior b. Social Movements	Film: But Is This Progress?
F. The Logic of American Social Structure	

NOTES

1. There was no major difference in loss of students in these sections, with only a few students entering and leaving each section during the first two weeks of classes when

students dropped and added courses. Only two students withdrew from the courses during the semester without finishing.

2. The first order partial correlations that exceed the .05 level on the "comments" variable are class, major, hometown population, graduating class size, college GPA, verbal SAT, math SAT, and grade expected.

3. Section B and the experiential section were compared by looking at the number of correct answers to each multiple choice question. The t-test was used to assess statistically significant differences. The questions on the test dealt with the following topics: primary groups, socialization, stratification, urban growth, self, Durkheim, Weber, personality, doing sociology, social organization, group structure, mobility, functionalism and religion, sociology as a science, social status, subculture, sociology as a discipline, norms, and ethnocentrism.

4. A one-year follow-up of information content learning and subjective course evaluations was not done, partially because of the logistics of recontacting students. In addition there would have been large amounts of contamination in both areas. A maturation effect from acquiring new knowledge in both sociology and other courses over the period of a year could largely invalidate a reassessment of information content. Furthermore, evaluations of professors and courses are subject to maturation effects as images fade in students' memories and as they have further contact with sociology and with the instructor in other courses, student advising, personal contact, and hearsay.

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