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HERON: A Mini-P.O.D.

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Regional Activities

HERON: A Mini-P.O.D.

D. JOSEPH CLARK

P.O.D. has been concerned about the growth and development of its membership since it began. While we number about 300 members, a large number of people seem to join for one year and then fail to renew their membership. CORE has interpreted this as a lack of tangible pay-off for many people who need more than an annual meeting to help them face local responsibilities. The following report about a new faculty development network which has been formed in the Pacific Northwest has a point to consider for those interested in the continued well-being of P.O.D.

The Higher Education Renewal Organization of the Northwest (HERON) is a network similar to P.O.D. but has a feeling of day-to-day intimacy due to the physical proximity of its members. The group is a direct outgrowth of a Faculty Development Conference sponsored by Eli Lilly through a grant to David Haliburton at Stanford and by the University of Washington through the Office of the Provost, implemented by Robert Garfias, which was held in Seattle in December of 1978. HERON has had one retreat and is busy planning a 1½-day conference for October 12–13 which will focus on the Evaluation of Teaching. Donald Garrity, President of Central Washington State University, and David King, Dean of Liberal Arts at Oregon State University, will be keynote speakers at the conference.

HERON has approximately 30 members representing 14 institutions of higher education in this region, with some expansion expected this fall. The small size and high enthusiasm is reminiscent of the small nucleus of P.O.D. founders emerging from the CASC conference at Cincinnati in 1976.

It seems to me that most of the HERON members would not have

joined P.O.D. Reasons might include lack of travel funds to attend the annual meeting, or belief that their own needs are too specific and immediate to be served well by a large national organization. However, I predict that as HERON members obtain local support they will grow and reach beyond HERON, tapping into the national groups which will be most responsive to their needs for professional growth. I think that P.O.D. will be a most logical organization to support the next stage in their development.

Perhaps some of those people who cycle in and out of P.O.D. would remain if the first steps are taken with the neighborhood gang rather than the international mafia.