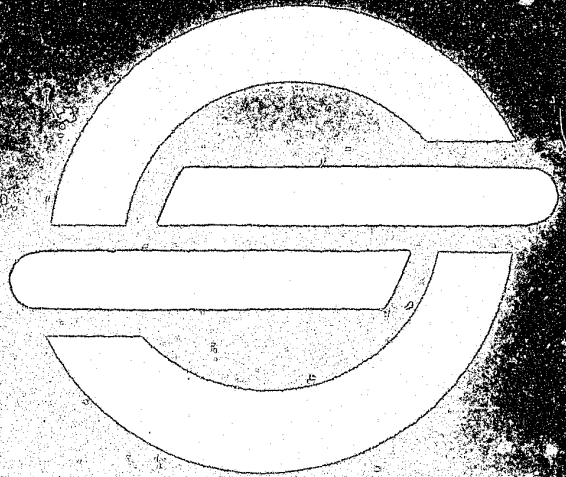


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Sexual Assaults, Sex Offender  
ment, Women's Equality, and  
Conjugal Visiting

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# The Evolution of Conjugal Visiting in Mississippi

Columbus B. Hopper\*

Perhaps no other single prison program has endured longer than conjugal visiting at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. It began in the dim past of Mississippi penology.<sup>1</sup> I traced it back definitely as early as 1918 when Parchman (as the institution is known locally) was a racially segregated penal farm where inmates worked from daylight to dark to make profit for the state. In all probability, conjugal visiting began as soon as Parchman Plantation was made into a prison in 1900 (Hopper, 1969).

## *The Early Days*

To say that conjugal visitation had an informal beginning in Mississippi is accurate and also an understatement. Not only did the practice begin without planning, it also started in a way which modern Mississippians would consider uncouth if not shameful.

In the early days, there were no facilities provided for conjugal visits. Some prisoners took their wives or girlfriends into the sleeping quarters of the camp barracks and secured whatever privacy they could by draping blankets over beds. Others slipped into tool sheds and storage shelters in the camp areas. According to some old-time prison employees I interviewed over 30 years ago, the practice was first allowed for black inmates.

Most current Mississippians think their prison is less rigidly controlled than it used to be, but they are mistaken. Prostitutes were allowed to visit Parchman and ply their trade during the 1930's. They arrived every Sunday afternoon on a flatbed truck driven by a pimp as lordly as any who ride city streets in pink Cadillacs. The women did a thriving business at the individual camps which were scattered over the 22,000 acres of prison land. According to a song written by an inmate of the era, the price of a prostitute's service was 50 cents, not a small amount during the Great Depression when many people worked a 12-hour day for a dollar.

No records were kept on Parchman's arcane visiting privileges of this period. My own investigations indicate that it was not until 1940 that any facilities were provided for conjugal visits. Beginning in that year, the inmates built their own visiting buildings out of scrap lumber and gave them the name of "red houses." While one might guess that the term was short for "red light district," the first makeshift structures were given a coat of red paint which happened to be handy, and as simply as this, they were referred to as red houses. The buildings were a feeble step toward respectability rather than a celebration of prostitution.

It is easy to look back and criticize Parchman's artless sexual practices of the early era. Still, the institution's leniency with visitors was an attempt, however crude, to meet the physical and emotional needs of its prisoners, even if the motivation was originally pecuniary. Parchman was truly a plantation in those days and not much different from others in the Delta in basic characteristics.

The inmates were workers who were expected to produce a profit. Since they were not paid in money, they were allowed unusual privileges as compared to other prisons in America. A major process in all plantations is accommodation, a give and take between

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owners and workers whether they be slaves, prisoners, or tenant farmers. Thus, a prison which operated as a plantation had to make concessions. Convicts (or anyone else) will not work productively through punishment alone.

Conjugal visiting was not the only liberal practice which developed in Mississippi's profit-oriented prison. In 1945, Parchman began a Holiday Suspension Program in which selected prisoners were given ten-day furloughs. The leaves were allowed in December and January when there was less work needed on the farm.

In some years, over 500 men were given leaves; in no single year recorded did more than five fail to return on time. The furloughs were most often granted to prisoners who were serving long sentences for crimes such as murder, but they were allowed for any category of crime as long as the individual had achieved the status of trusty.

Trusties were fundamental to the system. They guarded other inmates and did all of the specialized maintenance and skilled work which kept the institution going. Such functionally important individuals had to be afforded special consideration. Governor Ross Barnett summed up the feeling of most Mississippi authorities when he reacted to criticism of the furloughs by asking, "If you can't trust a trusty, who can you trust?"

Except for legislative investigation into the handling of money derived from crops grown at the prison, the superintendent and other officers were left alone to run the place as they wished. Parchman was therefore the site of a few of the most generous policies and also some of the harshest treatment in American penology. Inmates who worked hard and did what they were told were given more consideration than those in any other institution in the land; men who gave trouble, however, were whipped with a five-foot leather strap called "Black Annie."

A few inmates whose homes were nearby were even allowed to work "for the state" in the mornings and then to go home to till their own farms during the afternoons. Although the term "work release" had not been invented in the 1940's, it was a fact for some prisoners in Mississippi.

While conjugal visiting was considered a radical practice elsewhere, Parchman officials did not think much about it. They just let it happen along with other atypical activities. Parchman is probably the only prison from which an inmate once escaped driving his own car! A trusty, he had convinced the superintendent that he would use his own car on his job which required him to go from unit to unit, thereby freeing another penitentiary vehicle for the staff. He did use it for this purpose for several months until the siren call of the open road became too strong.

### *The Transition Years*

Cotton was still king when I began studying conjugal visiting at Parchman in 1957. The inmates worked the "longline" from sunup to dark. Six hundred plow mules labored as hard as the prisoners in fields which literally stretched as far as the eye could see. Trusty guards carried 30-30 rifles and demonstrated their accuracy with the weapons when a buzzard circled the sky within range. In this setting, a researcher was considered a nuisance at best and a threat more often than not.

By the late 1950's, however, conjugal visiting had developed to the extent that all male units except the hospital and maximum security, a punishment cellblock, had makeshift facilities for them. Still, there was no official regulation or support. The prisoners themselves were responsible for the orderly operation of the red houses and for cooperation in the use of them. Although prostitutes were not permitted to visit the

prison at this time, common law wives were, and almost any woman an inmate could persuade to visit him was accepted as a wife.

While some men continued to have visitors who falsely claimed to be wives, conjugal visiting slowly came to be utilized mostly by those who were truly married. A family atmosphere began to dominate visiting day. Couples sat on blankets eating picnic lunches while their children played on swings and slides which the inmates had built. Although the visiting period every Sunday was four hours, most of the time was taken up in picnicing and family visiting rather than in the red houses.

When I began publishing articles on conjugal visiting in Mississippi (Hopper, 1962, 1965), the officials gradually began to change their indifferent attitude toward the practice. Since they had expected only negative reaction, they were surprised that conjugal visiting was considered progressive by most readers. As they began to get more and more inquiries about their program, thought was given to improving the facilities.

The opening of the First Offender's Unit in 1965 was important in the history of conjugal visiting in Mississippi. The red house was included in the unit plans from the beginning, and it was made of the same brick as the main building itself. This signified official recognition of the program; all new units constructed since then have routinely included conjugal visiting quarters.

### *The Modern Period*

Following official sanction, the old accommodative demeanor was replaced by a cooperative spirit. Instead of just tolerating conjugal visiting, the employees began to support it. And improvement came in unanticipated ways.

Parchman came under Federal court order (*Gates v. Collier*) in January of 1971; many changes were mandated at the prison farm, highlighted by the end of racial segregation, the use of trusty guards, and a general revamping of outdated inmate housing.<sup>2</sup> Although not mandated, the early jerry-built red houses were improved along with the rest of the buildings.

Conjugal visiting was initiated for women inmates in July 1972. In 1974, the program was expanded by the addition of a three-day family visitation privilege which permitted an inmate's family to spend three days and two nights with him or her in apartments especially built for this purpose on the prison grounds. The family visits did not supplant regular conjugal visits; they were added to them. The typical married inmate now has a conjugal visit every two weeks and a three-day family visit every other month.

Conjugal visiting in Mississippi has come a long way from the old, informal system I observed there in 1957. The program is now administered by a staff member with the title of Director of Family Counseling. All inmates in Parchman benefit from the focus on family stability whether or not they are married.

Within the prison, different styles of conjugal visiting exist in the various units. Along with most other correctional systems in this country, Parchman's population has increased greatly in the past ten years. Approximately 4,800 inmates are currently confined in the institution. Two units now contain over half of the prisoners; one holds 1,500 men and the other 1,300.

The two large inmate complexes are so arranged that residents move from one segment to another as they earn higher status and more privilege in what is essentially a behavior modification program. Along with other advantages, conjugal visits must be earned by good behavior. In these facilities, inmates have marital visits in isolation cells which afford complete privacy.

All incoming male inmates now must work their way through the behavior modification programs. In the older units, conjugal visits continue to take place in the red houses very much like they always have. Most of the traditional camps at Parchman now operate as medium or minimum security facilities, and prisoners work their way into these units.

Roughly one-third of the prison population, both male and female, takes part in conjugal visiting. Female prisoners no longer are housed at Parchman; they currently have their own prison and visitation program in Rankin County near Jackson, Mississippi.

### *Inmate Evaluation and Public Appraisal*

Table 1 shows the remarkable consistency of inmate evaluations of conjugal visiting in surveys I made 21 years apart in Parchman. Clearly, in both periods (1963 and 1984), the participating prisoners believed that the main way the program helped them was by keeping marriages from breaking up. In fact, the 1984 respondents were more strongly convinced that this was true than was the first group. This finding makes sense in light of the increased emphasis on family counseling which has occurred at Parchman in the intervening time. It is also evident that the reduction of homosexuality still ranks as the second most important function.

**TABLE 1**  
**Inmate Rating of the Functions of Conjugal Visits**  
**1963 and 1984**

Conjugal Visits Help Most By	1963		1984	
	No.	%	No.	%
Keeping Marriages Together	234	50.4	140	59.8
Reducing Homosexuality	75	16.2	40	17.1
Making Inmates Cooperative	19	4.1	12	5.1
Rehabilitating Inmates	19	4.1	15	6.4
Keeping Inmates Under Control	39	8.4	8	3.4
Making Inmates Work Harder	10	2.2	17	7.3
Help All Above Equally	68	14.7	2	0.9
Total	464	100.1	234	100.0

Most inmates in both surveys did not think conjugal visits made inmates work harder. They also did not believe the privilege caused them to be more cooperative or easier to control. Nor did they see the practice as helpful in rehabilitation. For the majority of Parchman inmates, for over a quarter of a century, conjugal visits have stood primarily for hope in salvaging one's marriage and family while doing time.

It has been suggested that conjugal visiting would cause resentment among single prisoners and thus increase tension and conflict within the institution. Table 2 shows that this has been only a minor problem in Mississippi. In 1963, 7.1 percent of the single inmates had strong feelings about the privilege, and an additional 3.3 percent expressed a little resentment for a total of 10.4 percent. In 1984, 12.8 percent of the single prisoners expressed resentment, but a smaller percentage felt strongly about it.

**TABLE 2**  
**Percent of Single Inmates Who Resented Married**  
**Inmates Having Conjugal Visits, 1963 and 1984**

If You Are Unmarried Do You Resent Married Inmates Having Conjugal Visits?	1963 (N = 1165) Percent	1984 (N = 600) Percent
Yes, Very Much	7.1	4.3
Yes, A Little	3.3	8.5
Total	10.4	12.8

The Mississippi public is generally favorable toward conjugal visiting. Since 1962, I have conducted small surveys of public opinion on attitudes toward the practice. The responses have broken down as follows: 34.0 percent highly favor conjugal visits for married prisoners; 36.1 percent somewhat favor them; 10.5 percent express no opinion, while 11.2 percent somewhat disfavor them and 8.2 percent strongly disapprove. Because of their long experience with conjugal visiting, Mississippians probably know more about the practice than do the people in other states.

As far as allowing the visits for single inmates, however, the public is against it. In my samples, only 7.1 percent highly favor the privilege for unmarried individuals, whereas 46.9 percent are strongly opposed. Only 5.8 percent believe that a wife should be ashamed to engage in sexual visits, and less than that think the program morally wrong.

**TABLE 3**  
**Level of Support for Conjugal Visiting of Mississippians**  
**Over Three Decades, Compared by Sex**

Level of Support	1962 (N = 508)		1972 (N = 485)		1985 (N = 506)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Low	40.0	14.8	43.5	42.1	47.2	28.3
Medium	56.7	64.8	41.9	52.6	41.7	60.4
High	3.3	20.4	14.6	5.3	11.1	11.3



Table 3 shows the level of Mississippi public support for conjugal visiting as shown in my surveys over three decades, broken down by sex. Overall, it appears that women are more favorable toward conjugal visiting than are men. It is also evident that there was a little more support in 1962 and 1972 than there was in 1985.

The greatest change in attitudes has been among females. The support of women went down in 1972, but rose again in 1985. Most Mississippians still believe in conjugal visits, but it appears that the negative attitude toward treatment programs extant among corrections professionals nationwide is having an impact on the Mississippi population. Criminal justice officials claim to be following a conservative movement in the larger society, but they may be leading the parade rather than adapting to it.

### *Conclusion*

I have studied conjugal visiting in Mississippi for many years, and I have been surprised myself at its durability. The prison system has changed a great deal physically; it has undergone lawsuits, administrative turnover, political controversy, and crisis after crisis of various sorts. Through it all, conjugal visiting has remained.

Since it began and operated in a racially segregated institution for many years, for example, I was afraid that the program would suffer when integration occurred. However, it did not; in fact, it became more organized and was strengthened by the change. I am fearful now that overcrowding and heightened security emphasis will curtail the privilege, but it will probably survive these problems as it did the previous ones. Any program which has existed so long must be doing something functionally important in the maintenance of the system.

The AIDS problem is a concern in Mississippi as it is everywhere else. Parchman's warden was quick to get educational material to the inmates and staff regarding the virus. Condoms were placed on sale in the inmate canteens and recommended as part of safe sex practices. Although conjugal visiting was one consideration, the main purpose was to make them available to inmates who engaged in homosexual activities.

There were a few critical letters written to the editors of state newspapers about condoms being recommended to inmates, but most people saw it as a practical attempt to deal with a health problem. While prison administrators in other places were discussing the morality of providing condoms for prisoners, Mississippi was taking the lead again in another controversial correctional program.

Conjugal visits are now offered in at least six other states besides Mississippi.<sup>3</sup> The privilege had begun to spread around the country just when the negative attitude of "nothing works" started. Prison officials and legislators now believe it is useless to try to do anything except punish prisoners, and so conjugal visiting and other good programs are somewhat stymied.

Robert Martinson (1974), whose analysis began the notion that most programs do no good, is stretched too far. He concluded that about 30 percent of rehabilitative efforts were effective. The eagerness with which Martinson's negative appraisal was accepted revealed official bias. He said punishment did not work either, but practitioners paid no attention to that part of his report.

Mississippi officials did not try to persuade others to adopt conjugal visits. And they are not so pretentious as to require the program to be subjected to empirical tests. They believe it is worthwhile to attempt to retain inmates' families whether or not one can demonstrate that the program lowers the rate of recidivism. The staff members feel good in allowing conjugal visits, and the inmates are grateful for them.

Family visitation works in Parchman not because Mississippi is different from other places but because the program is sound and the inmates and staff members both want it to succeed. It will work in any prison where there is a genuine interest in developing meaningful visitation programs.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>For a good summary of the early history of penology in Mississippi, see Paul B. Foreman and Julien R. Tatum (1938) "A Short History of Mississippi's Penal System." *Mississippi Law Journal* 10 (No. 3):249-60.

<sup>2</sup>Additional descriptions of litigation involving Mississippi's prison are in Ronald Welch (1979) "Developing Prisoner Self-Help —The Early Mississippi Experience." *Prison Law Monitor* 2:105-20; Stephen Gettinger (1979) "Profile/Mississippi." *Corrections Magazine* 5 (June):4-20; and David M. Lipman 1974 "Mississippi's Experience." *Mississippi Law Journal* 45:685-755.

<sup>3</sup>The other states which have announced conjugal visiting programs are: California, Connecticut, Minnesota, New York, Washington, and South Carolina. Alabama, apparently surreptitiously, had such visits in some of its isolated units in some periods. See Ray A. March (1978) *Alabama Bound: Forty-Five Years Inside a Prison System*. University, AL: University of Alabama Press.zl

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# Correctional Administrators' Attitudes Toward Private Family Visiting

*Lawrence A. Bennett\**

Private Family Visiting (the nomenclature used here is that developed by the American Correctional Association in its survey in preparation for the publication of the annual directory of facilities) and conjugal visiting programs have now developed a history of some 20 years, long enough to be established as an identified program. However, there are few studies of either the programs in operation or of the attitudes of significant actors in the field. What little material there is about the level of activity in this area is largely out of date (Markley, 1972; Burstein, 1977). Hayner (1972) reported that, at the time of his contact, two jurisdictions had operational Private Visiting programs with two others in the planning stage. More recently Bennett (1987) found eight jurisdictions with active programs.

The attitudes toward such programs exhibit some strange turns. A positive view was presented by Hopper (1969) in his description of the Mississippi program, while Johns (1971) felt that even positive attitudes would not result in wider implementation and outlined the reasons for his belief. They included (1) the negative attitudes of inmates who would be unable to participate; (2) facilities are not available and are not likely to be made available; (3) the practical problems of administration — security, abuse of power, common-law relationships — would be too severe; (4) administrative support is not really very strong; (5) the sexual nature of conjugal visits is not in tune with the culture of the times — the whole program is too degrading for the spouse; and (6) possible additional children born of "inadequate families," requiring support from public welfare. Holt and Miller (1972) found that when Private Family Visiting programs are objectively evaluated, Johns' number one concern was unfounded. In an institutional setting where it was estimated that only 20 to 30 percent of the inmates would be likely to participate, 95 percent of the inmate population positively endorsed the program of Private Family Visiting. In 1964, Balough surveyed 52 wardens and found that only 13 percent approved of Private Family Visiting programs. Shortly thereafter, Vedder and Kind (1965) found nearly twice the percentage of positive responses from 49 directors of state and federal correctional operations.

In view of the dearth of information about the attitudes of wardens and superintendents, it was felt a current survey might be of value. The sample depicted in the study by Balough (1964) was unspecified and appeared to be less than random. Whatever the basis for selection, the sampling seems likely to have introduced bias of an unknown nature into the results. The attempt in this study was to obtain responses from those wardens or superintendents who had active Private Family Visiting programs in their institutions and from a random sampling of the remainder of the institutions throughout the nation.

## *Methodology*

As noted, the wardens and superintendents of all 41 of the institutions that have Private Family Visiting or conjugal programs were sent questionnaires. In addition,

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\*This paper is based on a presentation made at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Chicago, Illinois, November 1988. While prepared under the auspices of the National Institute of Justice, the views are those of the author and do not reflect either the views or the policies of the National Institute of Justice or the U.S. Department of Justice. Dr. Bennett is a consultant in criminal justice in Sacramento, California.

questionnaires were sent to wardens and superintendents of other institutions, selected on a random basis from among those states not having Private Family Visiting programs. One representative from each state was chosen plus every third institution listed in the American Correctional Association Directory. While 43 institutions claimed to have Private Family Visiting programs, only 41 were found to actually have such programs; all of these were contacted. An attempt was made to achieve a 20 percent sample of the remaining institutions, resulting in 171 questionnaires being sent out.

### *Results*

Thirty-eight responses were received from 41 institutions with programs. In terms of those without programs, 116 officials responded out of the 171 possible. Thus, there was an overall response rate of about 73 percent; a 92 percent response rate from wardens or superintendents where Private Family Visiting programs were in operation and a 68 percent rate from the others.

In terms of the total sample, responses to the various statements were distributed in a bimodal pattern with nearly equivalent proportions rejecting and endorsing the various policy positions posed. For example, the total sample was nearly evenly divided on the issue of whether Private Family Visiting is an appropriate program for a correctional institution, given adequate safeguards and suitable administration, with 46.3 percent indicating either approval or strong approval of the statement and 47.1 percent disagreeing. However, despite this generally balanced picture, there were many statements where the tendency was somewhat stronger in one direction or the other. If we take approximately 50 percent as a guide for either strongly disagree or disagree on the one hand and for strongly agree and agree on the other, an interesting pattern emerges, with eleven of the statements evoking positions of either acceptance or rejection.

The group tended to feel that Private Family Visiting would be of value in reducing disciplinary problems (49.3 percent endorsed), but did not accept the idea that it would reduce sexual assaults (56.9 percent rejected the statement). Similarly, most felt it would not reduce homosexuality in the prison (56.3 percent rejected) and that it would not reduce violence in prison (51.9 percent responded negatively to this position). On the more positive side, most agreed that Private Family Visiting would help strengthen family ties (69 percent), improve inmate morale (53.3 percent), and lead to more positive parole planning (47.7 percent).

Many felt that negative public reactions would cause problems for the institutions (52 percent); that the positive aspects of the program are not sufficient to warrant the costs involved (48.3 percent); that the program would greatly increase the problem of the introduction of contraband into the institution (59.9 percent); and that determining who is legally eligible to participate would create difficulties that would far outweigh any benefits derived from the program (51.4 percent). The group as a whole, however, did not go along with the idea that Private Family Visiting was morally degrading for those involved, with 60.8 percent rejecting that statement and only 11.8 percent endorsing.

Overall, the total sample seemed to feel that Private Family Visiting was here to stay, with a good likelihood that it would increase over the next ten years (57.9 percent). Over 10 percent felt that it would greatly increase over that time period, while 13.8 percent felt that it would either decrease or slowly fade away as a program.

### *Effects of Program Experience*

As observed in an earlier study of departmental attitudes (Bennett, 1987), those who had programs in operation tended to have much stronger positive attitudes toward Private Family Visiting. On several of the questions, there were statistically significant differences (Chi-squared significant at the .05 level or less) between those with and without programs at their institutions. Those institutions that have Private Family Visiting programs tend to see them as making positive contributions and as creating few difficulties of serious nature.

The one position where responses were *not statistically different* was on the question concerning whether Private Family Visiting would help to reduce homosexuality in the prison. Of those without such programs, 59 percent rejected that statement, while only 42 percent of those with programs reacted negatively to the statement. When it came to endorsing the question, the two groups were very similar (23.2 percent for those with programs; 23.4 percent for those without such programs).

### *What Women Think*

While the number of women superintendents or wardens is not large —fifteen— their views should be of interest. By and large, the views of the women fairly closely paralleled those of their male counterparts, if we look at only those items where statistical significance differences are noted (six out of eighteen). However, even in those cases where the differences fell short of statistical significance, there are definite indications of trends.

In terms of areas of marked differences, we see that the women more strongly endorsed the idea that Private Family Visiting would help reduce disciplinary problems; that it would help reduce sexual assault; that it would help reduce homosexuality in prison (43 percent vs. 22 percent for the men); and that it would help reduce violence in prison (53 percent vs. 32 percent). They were much more optimistic about the future of Private Family Visiting, with over 73 percent endorsing the concept that Private Family Visiting would increase either greatly or slightly as contrasted with the men, with about 57 percent in these categories. As something of a switch or inconsistency, women felt more neutral with regard to the potential of nonparticipants creating problems. However, at the same time, they did endorse this statement at a lower level of frequency (21.4 percent as compared to 40.1 percent of the males).

Some of the differences, while not statistically significant, supported a general trend. For example, women more strongly endorsed the suitability of Private Family Visiting as a prison program (73.3 percent vs. 43.7 percent) compared to men. They felt Private Family Visiting would help strengthen family ties (86.6 percent vs. 66.9 percent) and rejected more strongly the view that such a program would create problems that would outweigh benefits (50 percent vs. 38 percent). They also expressed less concern about negative public reactions (42.7 percent vs. 27.7 percent), rejected the idea that positive aspects did not warrant the costs involved (50 percent vs. 28.7 percent), were not as strongly concerned about the potential of greatly increasing the introduction of contraband (53.5 percent vs. 25 percent for the men), and did not feel that determining eligibility would create major problems.

### *Summary and Conclusion*

From the responses from the total group, it can be concluded that there has been a growth of positive attitudes toward Private Family Visiting over the period from 1964 to the present. Balough (1964) found only 13 percent of the 52 wardens he surveyed ap-

proving of family visiting programs. In the present study, 46 percent endorsed the idea that Private Family Visiting, properly administered and with suitable security safeguards, was a suitable program for a correctional institution. This fairly strong endorsement may be somewhat inflated by the group of wardens and superintendents who already operate such programs. When the respondents from that group are removed from the sample, 34 percent gave responses in the "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" categories. Thus, even this conservative estimate of favorable attitudes is considerably above that found by Balough (1964) and even higher than that reported by Vedder and Kind (1965), who found a 26 percent favorable response rate from 49 directors of state and federal correctional agencies.

Another indication of generally favorable attitudes is the prediction about future growth of such programs, with nearly 60 percent (57.9 percent) of the total sample indicating that there would be a slight or great increase in the use of the program over the next ten years; for those without programs, slightly over 50 percent felt that growth would occur.

Women wardens and superintendents tended to have stronger feelings of endorsement, with 73 percent viewing Private Family Visiting as a suitable institutional program and a similar percentage feeling that the program would expand over the next ten years. Some of those positive attitudes may be more related to program experience than gender in that 53 percent of those responding represented institutions with operational programs.

For the total sample, respondents felt that Private Family Visiting would help strengthen family ties, improve inmate morale, and lead to more positive parole planning. Women tended to endorse these same positive views, along with others, but at a higher frequency.

When it came to negative aspects of the program, those operating programs tended to view these concerns as of lesser importance, while those without programs endorsed negative statements similar to some of the concerns raised by Johns (1971). These included the view that negative public reactions would cause problems for the institution, that the positive aspects of the program are not sufficient to warrant the cost involved, that the program would greatly increase the introduction of contraband into the institutions, and that determining eligibility to participate would create problems that would outweigh program benefits. In one area, however, the group departed from the view of Johns; very few respondents felt that the program was morally degrading to the spouses participating.

In other areas, attitudes were scattered. There seemed to be agreement that Private Family Visiting might be of value in reducing disciplinary problems, but a lack of agreement about its effect on reducing violence and sexual assaults, although the women superintendents felt that it might. There seems to be a fair amount of agreement among the men that the program would have little impact on homosexuality in the prison with the women, again, feeling that it might help curb such behavior.

Overall, we see that the attitudes of wardens and superintendents are very complex, being dependent upon experience with the program, gender, and the specific area or behavior under consideration. As noted earlier, there has been an increase over time in favorable attitudes toward this type of programming, with the present level of positive views higher than program activity (eight out of 54 jurisdictions have Private Family Visiting Programs, 15 percent; 41 institutions out of some 581 have a program, 7 percent). It would appear that one of the strongest endorsements emerging from the present study is that slightly over 50 percent of those wardens and superintendents who do not have such a program believe that there will be either great or slight increases in the initiation of such programs over the next ten years.

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