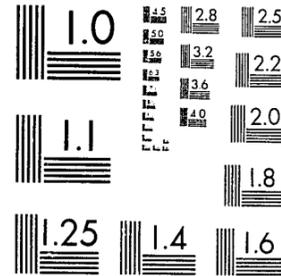


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# Federal Probation

Public Relations in Probation ..... Eugene Kelly

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Linda M. Williams

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DECEMBER 1983

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# Federal Probation

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## This Issue in Brief

**ERRATA:** The volume number on the June and September 1983 issues of FEDERAL PROBATION is incorrectly shown as Volume XXXXVI (46) instead of Volume XXXXVII (47).

**Public Relations in Probation.**—U.S. Probation Officer Eugene Kelly outlines the need of probation offices for public relations so that the community can be more aware of the philosophy that motivates probation workers. He also examines the role of the media—television, press, radio, college—and advocates a specific program for developing interns in parole and probation.

**Academic and Practical Aspects of Probation: A Comparison.**—In the practical world of probation, probation officers emphasize logic or common sense, subjective criteria, rules and guidelines, a maximum caseload size, and processing defendants quickly and skillfully. The academic world of probation emphasizes knowledge for its own sake, objective data, theory, and empirical research. Dr. James R. Davis of the New York City Department of Probation concludes that it may be dysfunctional to mix the academic and practical worlds of probation since each has its own role in criminal justice.

**Profit in the Private Presentence Report.**—Four basic issues raise a question about the appropriateness of private presentence reports, according to U.S. Probation Officer Chester J. Kulis. They are: (1) whether the private sector has a legitimate role in a quasi-judicial function such as sentencing; (2) whether private presentence reports thwart needed reform of the probation function and sentencing; (3) whether private reports are truly cost-effective; and (4) whether the private practitioner has ethical dilemmas tending to compromise the sentencing process.

**Reducing the Cost and Complexity of Probation Evaluation.**—Professor Magnus Seng of Loyola University of Chicago believes that, while evaluation

is sometimes complex and expensive, it need not be. His article examines two misconceptions or myths

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about evaluation that lead to erroneous views about its methods and its cost and suggests ways in which meaningful evaluation of probation programs can be conducted without undue complexity or expense.

**The Lively Career of an Island Prison.**—The Federal penitentiary on McNeil Island began as a territorial prison over a century ago. Though it had an ill-advised location, the most primitive of accommodations, and no program except menial work, Paul Keve reports that it survived a half century of neglect to become one of the more dynamic of the Federal prisons. Its story is also the story of pioneers, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Puget Sound area, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

**Prison Industries in Transition: Private Sector or Multistate Involvements.**—Interviews with prison industry leadership in five states show that their problems are primarily organizational in nature. Authors Miller, Funke, and Grieser write that industry leadership was seen to have the necessary technical competencies to implement change, while inmate population increases have motivated correctional agencies to desire industries' expansion.

**The Incidence of Sex and Sexual Aggression in Federal Prisons.**—The first of two reports by Drs. Nacci and Kane establishes baselines of male in-

mates' involvement in sex and sexual aggression. Three hundred and thirty randomly selected inmates from 17 randomly chosen Federal prisons were interviewed by an ex-offender. Inmates were volunteers; confidentiality was maintained.

**Group Psychotherapy and Intensive Probation Supervision With Sex Offenders: A Comparative Study.**—This report by Joseph Romero and Linda Williams is based on a 10-year followup study of recidivism among 231 convicted sex offenders. The findings indicate that group psychotherapy in addition to probation does not significantly reduce sex offense recidivism when compared to intensive probation supervision alone. Issues in the evaluation of intervention techniques with sex offenders and implications of the findings are discussed.

**Counselling the Mentally Abnormal (Dangerous) Offender.**—Some aspects of social work counselling with the mentally abnormal (dangerous) offender are discussed from an English perspective by Herschel A. Prins of Leicester University. The need to have regard for the offender-patient's social milieu is stressed and some specific strategies for more successful work with this type of case are suggested.

All the articles appearing in this magazine are regarded as appropriate expressions of ideas worthy of thought but their publication is not to be taken as an endorsement by the editors or the Federal probation office of the views set forth. The editors may or may not agree with the articles appearing in the magazine, but believe them in any case to be deserving of consideration.

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## Public Relations in Probation

BY EUGENE KELLY

U.S. Probation Officer, Camden, New Jersey

THERE is no question that there is a great need for public relations in probation. Probation as a human service is a relatively new development in social services. It needs to be defined and identified, and its various services need to be explained. The community generally classifies probation with juvenile service. Little is known about the existence of even such a fundamental document as the presentence report. Editors of newspapers, as a general rule, eliminate reporting that a presentence investigation is being prepared. Some years ago one newspaper in Chicago used for its logo the slogan, "Abolish Parole." Frequently it has been said that probation officers are reluctant to discuss their job not because of confidentiality of reports but because of a feeling that theirs is not a socially acceptable profession in society. The probation officer as a member of the community is a second-class citizen. Moreover, probation is a *public* service and the community has a right to know what this office is doing just as they know about the role and function of the district attorney's office. Unless, therefore, he speaks out, all of the good that this service does will remain unknown.

Public relations is "developing reciprocal understanding and good will." It is also, "the conscious effort of an organization to explain itself to those with whom it has or would have dealings."<sup>1</sup> Public relations is a generally well understood concept in most social organizations. Normally a private agency could not function without good and ongoing public relations. Most businesses know that they would have no customers without full public relations and widespread knowledge of their product or services. Probation needs a special kind of public relations which differs with each "public" that is encountered. The first of the "publics" regularly contacted by probation officers is the clients. They may be called, "criminals," "offenders," a "caseload," or just "the cases," but they are the human beings who, for a wide variety of reasons, find themselves convicted of a state or Federal offense which brings them into contact with a probation officer, first as an investigator and

then, in many cases, as a regular counselor. Public relations begins with this first contact with the client. Projecting himself as an interested, efficient, competent and well-informed public official dealing with his client is the first public relations function of the probation officer.

In addition to this key role, a probation officer encounters a number of other persons in the court and correctional system. These include: judges, defense attorneys, prosecuting attorneys, secretaries, student interns, and jail personnel. Probation officers should as a matter of practice have an open door to all members of the "court family." This should incline him, for example, to give new judges and other lawyers a full explanation of the role of probation and the different duties of the position. This can be done formally by a full program outlining the probation officer's role or informally by office chats and exchanges of views. Both techniques service a specific function.

Probation officers, more than any other agency officials in state or Federal Government, unite what are described as human service functions and police duties. Each of these has a somewhat different role and a different philosophy. In reality they both offer a social agency service that, like probation, is often misunderstood. Police, although often defined differently, function as helping persons in many situations. Social service agencies often investigate clients in situations that sometimes are more difficult than police making an arrest. Probation officers share both these roles. Most probation officers can share the frustration of both agencies and may be able to bring an understanding of each that is special to the probation function.<sup>2</sup>

Probation has a special role in addressing the problem of the development of new community agencies. This brings into the system a number of different "publics" which must be managed in different ways. The probation officer as an investigator often knocks on doors and interviews people of different classes in society. He encounters the very poor, the middle classes, and occasionally members of the upper classes. Perhaps, a Federal probation officer encounters more corporation heads than other probation officers because of the various offenses that are special to Federal courts; nevertheless, all probation officers interview employers, landlords, school officials and

<sup>1</sup>Guide to Community Relations for United States Probation Officers, Federal Judicial Center, Washington, D.C., 1975, p. 1

<sup>2</sup>Ehlers, Walter H., et al., Administration for the Human Services, Harper & Row, 1976, p. 291 ff

Pressures from wardens add to the problem. Numerous reports were given of wardens' lack of understanding of production costs. Hearsay reports indicated that some wardens see neither overhead nor raw materials as costs. Where wardens do understand the pricing structure that allows industries to show a profit, they are less inclined to make the necessary adjustments for increased industries productivity.

In all but one state the DOC received a discount on prices from industries, ranging from 10 percent to 70 percent, using free market prices as a comparison basis. Virtually ignored was the possibility the DOC appropriation could be increased to pay industries' market value (as often required by law) for the latter to be more profitable and expand operations.

One DOC director characterized the situation as due to his and other staff's ignorance about how businesses are run. They ignore industries since they cannot contribute to solutions for its problems. At the same time, he called industries "the whore of corrections" for asking for "special" perks or privileges in handling inmates.

Virtually no efforts were seen of attempts to educate the DOC directors or staff about industries' needs. One industries manager said that efforts on his part would be futile since it would be thought of as more special pleading. At the same time, the industries managers were not seen to have the data or analytic skills needed for educating the DOC. For example, not one interviewee had ever calculated the replacement value of prison industries, that is, what it cost the DOC to hire staff to supervise the inmate workers.

#### *Franchising Applicability Factors*

The two franchising options provoked differing responses from the industries managers and the DOC directors. These seemed consistent with the inferences drawn about the salience of organizational issues.

*Franchising of new industries* provoked more positive responses among DOC directors than among the industries managers. Dissatisfaction among the DOC directors for industries' responsiveness to the overcrowding/idleness problem meant the directors were disposed to look at alternative means of gaining new industries programs. Among industries managers an emphasis on marketing was more important than prior experience with franchising as a predictor of their receptivity to franchising. Those managers whose expertise was more in management or finance were less receptive than those with sales backgrounds. To some extent, these qualities also

parallel willingness to take risks. At the same time, it should be recognized that managers with primarily marketing backgrounds are more dependent on outside expertise for the needed technical capabilities to implement new programs.

*Franchising concepts' applicability* to industries was generally accepted by industries managers and DOC directors. There seemed to be little commonality among those expressing caveats to any particular mode of interstate cooperation or coordination. While those characterized as risk-takers were highly enthusiastic, so too were many of the more conservative correspondents. In sum, there was no single or even several factors that distinguished those interested but with reservations about feasibility.

#### *Summary and Conclusions*

This study began as an effort to test receptivity to the introduction of franchising as a means to prison industries improvements. The study findings go beyond this issue, however, in that the problems identified as limiting franchising can be expected to delimit most other industries' reform efforts as well. At the same time, our field work showed that prison industry programs have seen considerable improvements in the past few years.

In historical perspective these twin findings are not contradictory because prison industries today is in a period of transition. Industries' historical dependency on the larger correctional agency which it serves seems to be lessening. Industries is gaining its own organizational identity through a combination of enabling legislation and managerial leadership. Every state visited had some unique program element worthy of emulation by other states' industries.

The task now is to develop an industries organization that will synthesize these several model program elements. In a variety of ways this is already occurring. An important first step for industries has been the recruitment of private-sector experienced managers. Their immediate task is to sufficiently communicate industries' needs and how those needs can be met within the overall correctional setting. To that end, information about other states' experiences needs to be collected and disseminated.<sup>6</sup> A second step for industries' improvements is the introduction of private-sector actors to industries. They add both political influence for correctional accommodation with industries and technological or capital formation assistance.

The several franchising options studied here included both private-sector involvements and cooperative relations with other states' industries programs. Explicitly and implicitly these options cover

the gamut of modern industries reform proposals. Viewed in the context of a transition period, differences in receptivity may more represent how far different industries programs have come than fran-

chising's likely potential for the future. From this perspective, both seem equally viable options, given the continuation of present trends toward the renewed prominence of prison industries.

92865

## The Incidence of Sex and Sexual Aggression in Federal Prisons\*

BY PETER L. NACCI, PH.D., AND THOMAS R. KANE, PH.D.\*\*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Concern about an outbreak of violence at the United States Penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, prompted the national investigation, by Federal Prison System researchers, of inmate sexual aggression and homosexual activity that is described in this article. Normally a calm institution, Lewisburg experienced 8 inmate murders in a 26-month period; simultaneously, there were numerous inmate-on-inmate assaults warranting referral to the FBI for investigation. The assaults included vicious stabbings and attempted homicides that fell just short of murder.

\*This is the first article of a two-part report on sex in Federal prisons. The second article on inmate involvement and employee impact will appear in the March 1984 issue of FEDERAL PROBATION.

\*\*Dr. Nacci is chief of research and Dr. Kane is senior research analyst, Federal Prison System. The opinions expressed in this article are theirs.

The authors wish to thank Nancy Miller who typed the report. They are also indebted to William Saylor for his significant contributions to the development of survey instruments and computer data files, and for archival data analyses to demonstrate sample representativeness; to John Tucker, who conducted interviews with the 330 inmates surveyed in this project; and to Dr. Robert Levinson who made many valuable comments on the entire long version of the final report. Dr. Ray Forer, professor of sociology and past chair of that Department, S.U.N.Y. at Albany, helped develop the sampling strategy. Howard Kitchener, director of the Office of Research, supported our efforts throughout the development of the study. Since the project's inception many other people contributed in various ways. It would be impossible to name everyone but a partial listing includes: Bob Verdeyen, Rick Reish, Jim Beck, Jerry Prather, Hugh Teitelbaum, Laverne Blackwell, Cynthia McGrory, Paul Lee, Patti Garrett, Barbara Towe, Earle Prouty, Barry Sprink, Karen Seaberg, John Wash, Clem Bartollas, Carolyn Handy, John DeCocco, Sheldon Adelberg, Lloyd Hooker, Penny Doucette, Ed Shannahan, Robert Newport, Charles Fenton, Scott Whitely, and Scott Moss.

In response to this outbreak of violence, Mr. Carlson, Director of the Federal Prison System, convened a special task force to investigate problems at Lewisburg. The task force determined that among other things, Lewisburg accepted far more "management" problem prisoners than were transferred to other penitentiaries. Furthermore, there appeared to be an inordinate amount of violence linked to homosexual activity among inmates; 5 of the 8 homicides had sexual motivations, including sex pressuring, unrequited love, and jealousy. A quarter of the major assaults were linked to inmate homosexual activity.

Although the heightened level of violence at Lewisburg was abnormal, the general association of homosexual activity and prison violence is a well established malignancy in American prisons. In one calendar year 25 percent of inmate aggression in the California State System had homosexual underpinnings, according to one authority, Hans Toch (1965). Another important investigation revealed that homosexual activity was the leading motive for inmate homicides in American prisons (Sylvester, *et al.*, 1977).

Questions needing resolution quickly were focused after the researchers surveyed the literature and discussed associated management issues with key administrators, correctional officers, and inmates. Clearly, homosexual activity and violence are related circularly. Homosexual activity produced violence at Lewisburg both as an incidental force (as when there was strong affection between lovers and one partner acted out violently when spurned) and, as a direct motive (for example, the case of sexual assault—rape—or sex pressuring that becomes a violent exchange). On the other hand, homosexual activity can be a byproduct of violence. Davis' (1968) account of

<sup>6</sup>The National Institute of Corrections is presently funding the Institute for Economic and Policy Studies to develop policy guidelines and to survey existing industries operations as a beginning step in this direction.

sexual assaults occurring in the Philadelphia prison system established that many so-called "consenting" homosexuals entered prison as heterosexuals but were "turned-out" homosexuals, who participated in sex to avoid economic exploitation, rape, or murder. Because the potential for mutual casualty exists—from sexual aggression to homosexual activity and vice versa—the researchers elected to focus on both.

The primary dependent measures that were adopted are inmate's self-reported status as: (1) target of sexual aggression; (2) rape victim, and (3) willing participant in prison homosexual activity. The rationale for using self-disclosure, survey techniques centers on the belief that when circumstances are right, people discuss sensitive issues freely and honestly. Reliance on this general approach dictated the form and substance of the entire project. An articulate, black ex-offender—who had served 10 years in state correctional institutions, was released in 1960, and had already been a Federal consultant for 3 years—conducted individual interviews with a randomly selected sample of inmates, in a representative sample of Federal prisons. Procedures like guaranteed anonymity, lengthy pilot phase, and private interview room were applied and the specially created survey instrument used neutral, inoffensive language with more threatening items placed at the end.

Familiar principles from social psychology guided the project: (1) the causes of the dependent measures are knowable and can be tested through applied, scientific techniques; and (2) social forces (like peer group pressure for conformity, and early indoctrination into subcultures within the prison environment) can explain why people fall into one of the three compartmentalizations as target, victim or participant. Not only is there a sufficiently large group of randomly selected inmates in the study, there is also information provided by hundreds of correctional officers who work in the same prisons the inmates habitate. As the primary "agents of influence" on prisoner behavior, the correctional officers are a necessary addition to a comprehensive study.

The broadest statement of goals for the project—obtain information that would make prisons safer places for inmates and staff by applying humane techniques—established the nature of questions asked of correctional officers. The officers estimated the level of inmate sexual and aggressive activities, and they indicated how satisfied they are with their jobs and how willing they are to deter homosexual activity and protect inmates from sexual assault. The deter-

rence and protection questions are "motivational" and should be helpful for gauging the best way to meet the generic goal of making prisons safer: This is because line staff establish safety limits, and correct information (regarding inmates' activities and surveillance/protection techniques) is meaningless unless staff are motivated to do something positive.

**II. METHOD AND PROCEDURES**

*A. The Subjects*—Three hundred and thirty male inmates were selected randomly from the entire Federal population. This number is sufficient to generalize to the system with reasonable confidence. Five hundred correctional officers who worked in the same institutions where the inmates lived, completed officer surveys.

*B. The Prisons*—A proportional sampling procedure was used to select 17 Federal institutions. These facilities are a good cross section of the entire system. The number of inmates interviewed in each institution was proportional to the number of inmates incarcerated in prisons at that security level. For example, if one third of all inmates are maintained in the most secure institutions (levels 5 and 6) then a third of the 330 inmates would be drawn from the levels 5 and 6 institutions in the sample.<sup>1</sup> All correctional officers in those institutions were eligible to complete surveys.

*C. The Surveys*—Both surveys were designed expressly for use in this study. The prisoner survey has questions that tap concepts germane to understanding the causes of sexual aggression and homosexual activity. Over 300 items on the surveys are referenced in a short hand manner by the two summary causal models below (see Models I and II).

*D. Conducting Interviews with Inmates*—Inmates were called-out to a small meeting room by the interviewer. He explained that the survey was anonymous, voluntary and that inmates would not be paid to participate. If they agreed, they were scheduled for one hour one-on-one interviews the following day. "No-shows" for the meeting or the interview were contacted to see if they had known about the call-out—or if those who earlier agreed had changed their mind. Only two inmates did not show up for the call-out because they were being segregated—neither was segregated for sex related reasons. Inmates who changed their minds are included in the group of "non-cooperators" tested later versus inmate cooperators on select dependent measures. All inmates in the institution were eligible once they had been there more than 2 weeks.

<sup>1</sup>The 119 interviews (n = 330) were proportionally distributed across the level 5 in institutions according to population size

*E. Distributing Staff Surveys*—Time constraints and travel restrictions limited sampling of staff to a simple self-administering 109 item survey. The survey was distributed to the officers by a research associate who worked in the institution. Officer surveys were anonymous—there were no identifiers and they were mailed directly back to the Office of Research by the officer. These procedures facilitate honest responding.

**Results**

**I. MEASURE OF SAMPLE QUALITY**

*A. Sampling Representativeness*—Sixty-four percent of inmates the interviewer contacted took the

survey. Aggregate data were used to compare the average Federal inmate with the sample. There were very few differences except that the sample was slightly more criminally sophisticated (i.e., more arrests, more convictions and incarcerations). This probably occurred because halfway houses were not included in the study (but are in population statistics). The argument that "hardened" inmates would not agree to be interviewed does not hold. Another analysis showed that the interviewees were not dissimilar from prisoners who were selected but who declined to be interviewed (noncooperators). The exception was that there were slightly more blacks and slightly fewer whites in the sample.

MODEL I

WHY INMATES PARTICIPATE IN HOMOSEXUAL ACTS

<i>Stimuli in the Social Psychological Environment</i>	<i>Participant's Sexual Role</i>	<i>Stimuli in the Social Psychological Environment</i>	<i>Participant's Sexual Role</i>
<p>I. The Environment as a Benign Facilitator:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stimuli</i></p> <p>Isolation, deprivation, abundance of male cues, problems with important social others—especially family</p>		<p>B. Actors in the Inmates' Environment:</p> <p>1. Passive Assaults:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stimuli</i></p> <p>Other inmate(s) uses trickery, manipulation, conning or persuasion ("con," "jockey," "pimp").</p>	
<p>II. The Environment as a Malignant Force:</p> <p>A. General External Features of Environment:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stimuli</i></p> <p>Crowding, idle time, limited ways to demonstrate masculinity, hostile prison guards.</p>		<p>2. Active Assaults:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stimuli</i></p> <p>Other inmate(s) uses force of numbers or weapons to compel undesired participation ("wolf" or "old man" if alone; but often participant in gang).</p>	
<p>Willing Participant—a "homosexual" if attitude valences change toward endorsing homosexual activity. Change in behavior or attitude relatively volitional.</p>		<p>Target may be called a "trick" or "punk." Not injured physically but perhaps suffer psychological damage.</p>	
<p>Compliant "heterosexual" or situational homosexual: may suffer self recrimination when released for not having resisted environmental pressures.</p>		<p>Target becomes a "kid" or "punk." Often repudiated as "homosexual"—depreciated by inmates if unable or unwilling to retaliate—may incur great physical or psychological damage. May be killed.</p>	

MODEL II  
SEXUAL ASSAULTS AND PRISON AGGRESSION

Some Immediate Causes	Effects
<p>Level of Analysis</p> <p>Social (Interpersonal)</p> <p>Systemic: Poor supervision; inhumane living conditions; poor programming; poorly trained or uncaring staff; racial, geographic cultural or ethnic disproportion of staff or inmates or ratio of the two groups.</p> <p>Group: Homosexual activity; gang membership; drug trafficking; gambling; prostitution; retaliation; racial tensions.</p> <p>Individuals: Social personal "needs" like: impress peers; defend honor or build or defend reputation; avoid exploitation; retaliation for insults; promiscuity.</p> <p>Personal</p> <p>Aggressors: Sexual gratification; inability to control impulses; use of force as influence style; mental instability; psychological disfunction.</p> <p>Target/Victim: Excessive passivity; inability to use threats or counterforce or to be assertive; naivety; other cues of physical or psychological "appropriateness" such as target for aggression (i.e., feminine, young, homosexual, cultured, different).</p>	<p>General</p> <p>(Non Sexual)</p> <p>Aggression</p> <p>or</p> <p>Acts of Sexual Aggression</p>

*B. Survey Reliability*—Statistical analyses of inmate survey reliability were performed to determine whether inmates responded consistently to the survey items. The results demonstrated convincingly that the survey is reliable. Other specialized analyses of validity (e.g., factor and cluster analysis) assessed how well each designated subset of items worked as a group to measure significant aspects of inmates' beliefs. The statistics demonstrate the validity of the instrument, and the confirmation of the features of Models I and II strongly support the experimental techniques.

## II. INMATE SAMPLE

*A. Demographics*—A profile of the respondents was prepared. The average inmate is just under 34 years old. Forty-six percent are Black, 11 percent are

Hispanic and 40 percent Caucasian or nonminority. By comparison, 11.7 percent of the total U.S. population are Black and 6.5 percent are Hispanic, so these two groupings are highly overrepresented in the Federal Prison System. The sample's religious affiliation is predominantly Protestant (42%) followed by Catholic (24%) and Muslim (9%). The average height is 5'10" and weight is 174 lbs. The interviewer rated 51 percent of the inmates "muscular," 38 percent "stocky" and 12 percent "thin."

*B. Incarceration*—The average inmate has 1.1 arrests, 2 felony convictions, has been in 4.6 different jails and 3 different correctional institutions. Five percent of the sample had been in 2 or more training schools before their 16th birthday. The average inmates had been confined 6 years of their life. They had been in their current institution just under 1.5 years. Five percent had been convicted of sex related offenses. Finally, the average sentence length of inmates sampled was 125 months.

*C. Childhood*—Family background of the sample typically involved frequent arrests and incarcerations of parents (or absence of father altogether); however many inmates report that they had had a warm relationship with a significant parent figure. A third of the sample were raised by women alone and both parents were present in the home for 57 percent of the sample. Seventy-one percent said that the mother (or surrogate mother) was primarily responsible for child rearing.

*D. Attitudes toward Sex*—Altogether, inmates responded conservatively on 13 of 15 sex-attitude items. The items were borrowed from other national surveys (Kinsey, *et al.*, 1948; Reiss, 1967; Hunt, 1974). A comparison with the national samples is instructive and shows that compared with free males, the prison sample is *more* conservative (less accepting) regarding issues like mate swapping and homosexuality—but *less* conservative about heterosexual sex practices like sex before marriage, virginity, group sex, anal and oral sex.

*E. Homosexual Activity*—Survey data have been used before to estimate the incidence of homosexual activity. Population and procedural differences make comparisons difficult but some conclusions can be extrapolated nonetheless. According to Hunt's national sample of American males in the early 1970's about 20-25 percent of adult males have had a homosexual experience at some time in their lives while only 3 percent indicate a firm commitment to homosexuality as a lifestyle. Little is known about the incidence of homosexuality among prison groups but Buffum

(1972) aggregated results from 12 studies and concluded that about 35-40 percent have homosexual experience while incarcerated.

Among Federal inmates, 28 percent stated that they had had a homosexual experience at some time during their lives; 25 percent reported that they had had experiences as *adults*. Rates of adult experience were disproportionately high relative to childhood experience. This is an interesting finding because in a free society a great deal of homosexual activity occurs during adolescence (ages 11 to 15). Hunt reported that about 10 percent of American males had *adult* experience. Therefore, in comparison with free males, prisoners have slightly more homosexual experience overall and substantially more adult experience. In comparison with other (non-Federal) prisoners, the incidence of homosexual activity is low. About 3 percent of the sample are homosexual or bisexual.

*1. Federal Penitentiaries*—Inmates were asked if they participated in their current institution—this would be adult experience since the system does not incarcerate juveniles. The figure is revealing; it places time constraints on the data because the average time served at the time of the survey was about 20 months and therefore figures represent relatively current, adult activity. Overall, 12 percent of the sample responded positively on this item. In penitentiaries, where more dangerous offenders are incarcerated for greater lengths of time, the rate understandably was higher. Twenty percent of the penitentiary inmates stated they had had a homosexual experience in their current Federal institution. To estimate the actual number of penitentiary "participants," it is better to use figures from a question that asked, "Have you had a homosexual experience in a prison as an adult?"—30 percent of the penitentiary inmates stated that they had. Assuming that the pressures to underreport (fear of detection, appearing unmasculine) outweigh pressures to overreport (denigrate the Federal system—liberalize furlough practices or pressure for conjugal visit program), the more general statement that the inmate had participated *in a prison* (location unspecified) represents probable behavior in current institution, since what has been done before under other circumstances seems likely to be repeated at least occasionally.<sup>2</sup>

*2. Sex acts and sexual identity*—If an inmate responded that he had had homosexual experience, a separate set of items asked if the inmate had performed fellatio or anal intercourse, and whether the

prisoner was insertee or inserter. Many more inmates had been inserters in these two acts. Probably because inmates believe that environmental pressures (lack of women) "force" abnormal sexual acts, performing the masculine act (inserter) and sexual identity as heterosexual were associated. On the other hand, performing the female insertee role and sexual orientation as homosexual or bisexual were associated.

*3. Problem behaviors associated with homosexual activity*—Overall, 29 percent of Federal inmates had been propositioned in their institutions; however only 7 percent were "seduced" by inmates bearing gifts or offering favors. Rate of prostitution was rather low—2 percent of the sample had taken money for performing sex. For a managerial perspective, the long standing lover relationship is especially dangerous; this occurs among 1.8 percent of the sample. Only 1 prisoner (.3%) stated that he had had to protect himself from other prisoners by performing sex.

*F. Sexual Aggression*—A target of sexual aggression was counted if an inmate responded positively on an item that asked if anyone had forced or attempted to force the inmate to perform sex against his will (involving battery). Incidence characteristics are tabulated below:

Table 1—Victim-Reported Data

9%	of Federal inmates were targets in a prison
2%	of Federal inmates were targets in a Federal institution
.6%	of Federal inmates (2/330) were victims (had to perform an undesired sex act) in a Federal prison
.3%	of Federal inmates (1/330) were raped (sodomized) in a Federal institution

Once a target or victim was identified by the interviewer, a separate set of items were asked. Not all of the 30 prisoners (targets) agreed to respond and among those who did agree not all the items were completed, hence, findings are informative but not conclusive. Table 2 shows the response patterns for some of these items.

Table 2.—Circumstances Involved in Being a "Target"

- Targets were usually located in very secure institutions or very low security institutions when interviewed
- Targets and aggressors usually lived in the same unit or dormitory
- Assaults occurred most often in living quarters
- Institutions were not locked-down at the time of the assault
- Targets had no warning of the assault
- 70% of homosexual or bisexual inmates were targets
- 66% of targets were heterosexuals
- Whites were likely to be targets
- Blacks tended to group together for assaults, therefore, there are *more Black assaulters*

<sup>2</sup>Evidence in the survey suggests that the pressures suppressing reporting are greater; inmates are often "complimentary" when evaluating the system and the system already operates a furlough program.

- Assaults are as likely to be committed by Whites as by Blacks
  - 57% of targets had been in their institution less than a month before the assault\*
  - 36% of assaults involved multiple assaults and single victims
  - Targets were 20.5 years old at the time of the assault
  - Being a target did not affect sexual orientation
  - Staff did not learn about the assault in 63% of the cases
  - 68% of targets did nothing "official" to remedy the problem
- \* Correctional officers did not think that newness to the institution was a relatively important cue aggressors use but this is not the case and should be noted.

A second report appears in the next issue of *Federal Probation* (March 1984). The focus in the present report has been on answering questions of immediate concern to corrections officials—the extent of inmate participation in the topic behaviors. The subsequent paper contains criminal and social "profiles" of inmates in the sample (participants and targets), describes the results of a survey administered to 500

correctional officers working in the same prisons as the sample, and discusses various strategies for reducing inmate homosexual activity.

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## Group Psychotherapy and Intensive Probation Supervision With Sex Offenders

### A Comparative Study\*

BY JOSEPH J. ROMERO AND LINDA M. WILLIAMS, PH.D.\*\*

THE MAJORITY of programs in the United States treating sex offenders are less than 10 years old.<sup>1</sup> As a result, measuring the effectiveness of these programs is still in its infancy. In addition, there is little empirical information available to provide the basis for making decisions as to the usefulness of these programs with sex offenders. The current study, a 10-year followup of sex offender

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recidivism, was conducted by the Joseph J. Peters Institute (JJPI) to provide the basis for an evaluation of the long-term effects of intensive probation supervision and group psychotherapy on sex offense recidivism rates for sex offenders. The current study is unique in the field of the evaluation of sex offender treatment programs, since the study is a followup to an earlier study where a controlled experimental research design was used.

#### Background

##### 1965—Pilot Study

Joseph J. Peters, M.D., began his work with sex offenders in 1955.<sup>2</sup> In the 10 years from 1955 to 1965,

<sup>1</sup>E. Brecher, *Treatment Program for Sex Offenders*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

1,600 sex offenders received group psychotherapy at Philadelphia General Hospital. At this point, Dr. Peters and staff conducted a retrospective 2-year followup study to determine the changes, if any, resulting from this form of treatment. In this preliminary study, 92 sex offenders who had completed 16 weeks of group psychotherapy treatment were compared to a group of similar sex offenders who had been placed on probation without group therapy. Both groups were comprised of males with convictions of all categories of sex offenses and sentenced to probation. However, assignment to treatment or probation was not randomized. The mean length of psychotherapy for the treatment group was 26.2 weeks. There were four homogeneous psychotherapy groups treating assaulters, pedophiles, exhibitionists, homosexuals and a fifth mixed group contained sex offenders from all legal categories.

Based on an analysis of rearrests, the treatment group seemed to have fared better. Of the probation group, 27 percent were rearrested as compared with only 3 percent of the therapy group. However, the design of the study was beset by some major problems. Basically the 2-year followup period was too short. The use of a comparison group instead of a control group further limited the validity of the findings. It was the need to remedy these shortcomings which led to the creation in 1966 of a controlled research design to measure the effectiveness of group psychotherapy with sex offenders.

#### 1966 NIMH Research

In 1966, Dr. Peters and his staff were awarded a research grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to study the effects of group psychotherapy on probationed sex offenders. The research was designed to measure the effectiveness of group psychotherapy by a comparison of subsequent sex crime rearrests for two groups of probationed sex offenders; those assigned to group therapy and those not receiving the therapeutic intervention (probation only). Through a random assignment procedure the study was designed so that differences between the two groups could be controlled with exposure to treatment as the only difference being measured. Once a probationer was accepted into the research he was randomly assigned to either treatment or to probation only. All offenders were then assigned to either treatment or to probation only. All offenders were then assigned to one of four mutually exclusive subpopulations which covered the range of offenses for the entire population. The four subpopulations were homosexuals, exhibitionists, pedophiles, and assaulters (rapists). There were four homogeneous

therapy groups which corresponded to the four subpopulations, and a fifth heterogeneous group consisting of sex offenders from all four subpopulations. In addition, for the assaulters there was a self-directed group. The therapy groups met once a week for approximately 1 hour. All groups, except the self-directed, were conducted by a JJPI staff psychiatrist.

Sex offenders in the control group (probation only) reported to their probation officers once a month. In addition, the probation officer made a home visit once a month. In March 1967, an Intensive Supervision Unit (ISU) was started in the Philadelphia Probation Department. All sex offenders on probation were then handled through this office, and probation officers in the ISU supervised those sex offenders assigned to the control group. Probationers in the treatment group were excused from their monthly reports to their probation officers. However a monthly visit was made to the probationer's home.

The major finding that emerged from the 1966 study was that there was no significant difference in rearrest rates for treatment and control (probation only) groups. Approximately 10 percent of both groups had a subsequent sex offense arrest in the 2 to 3 years following treatment. (Note: This figure included recidivism for homosexuals, which is the group with the highest sex offense recidivism rate of 32 percent. This group has been excluded from analysis in the current study). An additional 20 percent of both groups were rearrested for a nonsex offense in the followup period.

#### 10-Year Followup Study

##### Research Sample

The research sample for the current study numbered 231 males, which included 48 pedophiles, 39 exhibitionists, and 144 assaulters. For all 231 cases, 32.9 percent were white and 67.1 percent were nonwhite. Only three sex offenders reported having an education past the 12th grade, with 33.6 percent of the sample reporting at the time of the study having no more than 9 years of education. For the entire sample, 32.9 percent were never married, 38.5 percent were married and 28.6 percent were separated or divorced. The sample was predominately young (see table 1). Overall, one-half of the sample was under 25 and almost two-thirds of the assaulters were under 25. The listing of charges for which the sample were arrested (see table 2) shows rape to be the most common charge. The sample had a fairly extensive history of arrests by the time they were admitted to the research (see table 3). Over one-third of the sample had between 4 and 7 arrests. Twenty seven percent

**END**