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CRITIQUE OF THE ON-GOING AND  
PROPOSED HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
AT THE MAJOR CORRECTIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS IN MINNESOTA

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In writing this critique of the on-going and proposed higher education programs at the major correctional institutions in Minnesota, it might be well to start with a picture of what these institutions are like, how they differ and what constitutes the daily routine for inmates. Necessarily, my description will be somewhat personal and I can only write with actual experience about one institution - the St. Cloud Reformatory. Nevertheless, certain things about the institutions are common to all and, because of my visits to the institutions and talks I've had with inmates and administrators, I feel that I can at least give a clue to the general aura at the various institutions with respect to education in general and higher education in particular.

It must be remembered that I'm not an educator. It also must be understood that the views and conclusions I draw about the institutions are my own and some other person with similar experience may see the institutions in a different light.

I noted while interviewing people from different colleges that in almost every instance I felt compelled to identify myself as a recent, former inmate because the person being interviewed started to tell me what inmates and institutions were like. Some of these people have had personal experiences with corrections institutions - certainly much more than the average citizen. But I'm constantly amazed at the manner in which these people and others who comment on Corrections tend to lump all institutions together as if they were the same.

There are vast differences - not only between jails and prisons - but among jails in different counties and among the major correctional institutions in this state. And, in my view, some differences have a direct bearing on the implementation and success of present and future educational programs at the institutions.

I suppose it's always the case that people comment on matters about which they have few facts but it seems to me that this problem is particularly acute in the corrections field. For instance, about a year ago, a Minnesota Legislator came to the St. Cloud Reformatory for a few hours and then issued a press release condemning the fact that inmates couldn't converse at will in the cellhouses during the evening hours. Normally, inmates applaud people who criticize prison living conditions but in this case few inmates agreed with the Legislator. The reason is obvious to anyone who ever lived in prison. In a cellhouse, constructed of granite, steel and concrete where 150 or more men live packed together and where the sound from a fallen plastic cup clicks and ricochets around the room, seemingly banging on every bar, it just isn't conducive to orderly living for two or more inmates to converse with friends who may live 100 feet away and up three tiers. The conversing inmates can hear each other without difficulty and that, of course, is the problem. Everyone else can hear them, others may want to talk at the same time, and the other 150 inmates are studying, writing letters, working on hobbycraft projects or trying to sleep.

The topic of differences among penal institutions reminds me of the incarceration in a British prison a century or so ago of

Mr. Pickwick - a character created by Charles Dickens. Pickwick was a man of substance who had a money judgment lodged against him as a result of a spurious suit for breach of promise to marry. He refused to satisfy the judgment and was put into a debtor prison. In the prison, Pickwick had his own private apartment, was regularly attended by his servant, ate and drank well and generally lived in the same high style he had enjoyed on the outside. Adversaries of Mr. Pickwick named Alfred Jingle and Job Trotter were in the same prison at the same time. Jingle and Trotter, however, were paupers and, in contrast to Pickwick, spent their prison time wandering listlessly through the dungeons without food or proper clothing or hope and would have perished without Pickwick's help.

I think penal institutions differ today, one to the other, almost as much as the differences revealed within Dickens' fictional prison. Imagine, if you can, the contrast between a clean, relatively friendly and generally quiet rural jail in Minnesota and the much publicized jail in Manhattan called the Tombs. Or compare, perhaps, the St. Cloud Reformatory with what you've heard about Attica State Prison in New York. Granted, the two institutions probably look alike from the outside and I'm sure the Reformatory looks as prohibitive as any prison in the United States. The dark, granite buildings with turrets and battlements are solid, formidable and ugly - unless a person viewing them dreams of Camelot, King Arthur and Merry Old England. The Reformatory has the "world's longest granite wall", according to the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce tourist information booklet, and those walls have towers

patrolled by guards with high powered rifles. On a misty, foggy evening the old granite water tower in the prison yard with spot lights shining in every direction through the gloom reminds one of a 1930's movie about Sing Sing.

But because prisons look alike does not mean they're similar. At Attica, for instance, the inmates apparently had trouble getting showers. Each inmate at the St. Cloud Reformatory can get a shower every day and some who work in certain shops can get waterlogged if they wish. I worked in the laundry for awhile and there if an inmate doesn't have any work to do, which is most of the time,<sup>1</sup> he can take a shower or read or have a conversation with a fellow inmate or take another shower.

There are many areas of difference in regard to living conditions and programs. To a layman, a recitation of all differences would be boring but to an inmate these normally minor matters are the stuff of life. That's all there really is - the time that lights go out (at St. Cloud and Stillwater they can be on all night in a cell at the sole discretion of the inmate); items for sale in the canteen; gym activities; library; movies; radio; work - and whether a particular job pays sixty, seventy or eighty cents per

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<sup>1</sup>In the laundry, on my particular job, we worked from 9:30 to 10:30 A.M. and then again from 11:10 to 11:20. That was it - for the day. There were just too many inmates in the laundry for the amount of work. This is true of the general work picture in many areas at the Reformatory. I suspect the situation is much the same at Stillwater and that's why, in my own mind, I question statements by prison officials that they need a certain number of inmates just to perform vital services and keep the institution in operation. If men were required to really work, which they aren't, and were paid more so an incentive factor existed, perhaps more inmates would be available for other programs such as education.



day (the top jobs at Minnesota's major correctional institutions pay one dollar per day but at St. Cloud, for instance, there are only a dozen or so out of a population work force of 500 inmates);<sup>2</sup> visit and correspondence regulations; the time inmates can leave their cells during the evening and many other matters.

I remember an evening several days before Christmas last year when a radio news report indicated problems at a Wisconsin prison and then an announcement was made detailing the new, more liberal measures the Wisconsin warden was going to allow inmates for Christmas - things that St. Cloud and Stillwater inmates have had for a long time. Inmates in the cellhouse where I lived then talked of differences and "those poor guys" in the more restrictive Wisconsin prison. They also then talked at length (and this frequently happened) about the more liberal rules at Stillwater Prison compared to St. Cloud.

If we continue to have prisons essentially as now constituted, at least for some people, I believe more non-cell time should be allowed within the walls. But that takes money for personnel and facilities plus affirmative leadership within and without the institutions pushing for expanded programs. Stillwater Prison has apparently been a little more liberal for some years with respect to non-cell time but a start has now been made at the Reformatory with an honor cellhouse for about 125 inmates. In that cellhouse,

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<sup>2</sup>The maximum wage for inmates at St. Cloud, Stillwater and Shakopee is set by the Legislature. Minnesota Statute 243.32 provides that wage payments for inmates shall be "not less than 20 cents nor more than one dollar per day for each day worked. . ."

the cells are open each night until midnight or so and an inmate has the option of staying in his cell or going to an adjacent recreation area. He can come and go as he pleases. The arrangement not only provides considerably more freedom within the walls but a chance for some responsibility on the inmate's part.

For the rest of the inmates in the institution, the story is something else and the regulations only serve to stifle and embitter the individual. In the other cellhouses, unless an inmate joins an organization that meets on a particular night (and some inmates join just to get out of the cell, of course), he is allowed out of his cell only one hour between 4:45 in the afternoon and 7:30 the next morning. During that hour the inmate can go to the gym or the library. It makes for a long winter.

The situation is not so critical in the summertime. The entire inmate population can spend the evening hours and weekend days outside and there is an excellent recreational program. Water-filled granite quarries at St. Cloud provide almost a pastoral setting within the walls and probably are unique in American prisons. The quarries are not used for swimming for some reason but the ponds and wildlife at least provide something to view other than the guards in their towers.

Compared to many so-called correctional institutions in other states with constant searches, poor and dirty facilities, massive restrictions and several men to a cell (it's one man to a cell at both St. Cloud and Stillwater and has been that way for many

years),<sup>3</sup> the Reformatory is fairly liberal and Stillwater Prison is apparently much the same. Sandstone, incidentally, impressed me as being a much more free and relaxed institution than either St. Cloud or Stillwater.

Most people probably have the idea that living in a cell is the worst part of being in prison. To me, and to many, many others, it was one of the better aspects of prison life because the individual inmate at least has his own private world within the institution - however small. And, at least now in Minnesota prisons, inmates can do about what they desire inside their cells. At the Reformatory, before the honor cellhouse previously mentioned was set up, the institution had a dormitory where approximately forty inmates lived. It was just like an army barracks - a wide open room with double bunks, complete freedom within the room and much card playing and television viewing. But many inmates who were offered the chance to go there didn't do so because of the lack of privacy. They preferred to remain in their cells even though locked in practically all evening every day.

I wasn't surprised when I visited the Federal prison at Sandstone to find that when an inmate first arrives at Sandstone he's placed in a dormitory and when he's been there awhile and gets seniority and honor points or whatever they're called he's then allowed to go to the privacy of a cell.

I've rambled on about this and I don't want to give the impression that I'm all for the fortress prisons. I'm definitely

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<sup>3</sup>"When there are cells sufficient, each convict shall be confined in a separate cell." Minnesota Statute 243.53.



not. But they're going to be here for a long time and I wanted to point out that what's more important than the configuration and style of buildings is the general attitude of the institution staff, the rules they set and the social, counseling and educational programs available to those incarcerated.

Earlier I mentioned the fact that at the St. Cloud Reformatory men are locked in their cells from 4:45 P.M. to 7:30 A.M. except for one hour when they can go to the gym or library. However, inmates can join many different organizations and some join just to get out of the cell for several hours. I specifically remember one instance when a friend of mine left the cell next to me at the 7:00 P.M. switch-out and didn't know whether to go to gym, band, gavel club, a Black Culture group meeting or the drama club rehearsals. And this sort of thing happens frequently. It is definitely a problem for institution personnel and the scope of the problem is increasing.<sup>4</sup>

Some institutions have little space for meetings and not enough guards in the evening to cover several hundred men wandering from one place to another. It seems to me that one of the major problems is, as institution personnel claim, a lack of funds and

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<sup>4</sup>At St. Cloud, the institution on October 1 of this year found it necessary to go on a split shift arrangement. Every inmate goes to school or work from 8 A.M. to 12 noon. During that period, an inmate cannot be called from school or work except in the most unusual circumstances. Afternoons are also scheduled for school (study halls and library) and work but volunteer and inmate organizations may meet and inmates may leave school or work for many, diverse activities.

whether the State wants to spend more money for expanded programs. On the other hand, some security people at St. Cloud resisted programs and I assume the situation is the same at most penal institutions. Security people have a much easier job when the entire population is locked up. And it should be mentioned that frequent conflicts occur between institution educators, caseworkers and other "Treatment and Training" staff pushing for more programs and some security people trying to get the inmates secured for the night in cells.

Part of the problem relates to the hodgepodge proliferation of volunteer organizations. They are well meaning and have social value but little coordination exists and not much planning for basic inmate needs. Perhaps I'm wrong but I've had the impression that it's almost a case of an institution taking whatever legitimate volunteer comes to the door and using that person in some fashion.

Few, formal educational programs are available to the general inmate population in the State of Minnesota except for those provided by the Corrections Department itself. At St. Cloud, a functioning remedial and high school exists and operates during the daytime with twelve full time, fully accredited teachers. Approximately seventy inmates are graduated each year from the high school which became accredited in the early 1950's.<sup>5</sup> The school

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<sup>5</sup>I recall a scene in June 1971 when I attended the semi-annual graduation ceremony. I worked in the school office for the Director of Education and I was asked to attend and help the thirty five graduates get into their robes and mortar boards. It was also my job to help the graduates with their ties. I expected total resistance to the ties but while few could tie them not one graduate

department holds classes every day of the year except for the major holidays. Most Minnesota high schools will give diplomas to the inmates who started at a particular high school and then graduated from the Rosenberger High School at the Reformatory.

When inmates first come to the Reformatory, they are pushed into school although they are not required to go. Attending the Remedial School, High School or Newgate is considered to be the inmate's full time job and he does nothing else. This contrasts dramatically with Stillwater Prison where the Education Director told me he has trouble getting men from the Industries Department to attend school because they have other jobs to do and the men are needed to turn out the products which the prison manufactures and sells. That one factor seems to particularly distinguish Stillwater from St. Cloud, Sandstone and Shakopee.<sup>6</sup> Neither Sandstone or

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objected. The graduates ranged in age from 19 to 27 and as they lined up in the school hall preparatory to entering the gym for the ceremony, I stood with the one guard in charge of the graduates. It was quiet in the gym and we were waiting for the Pomp and Circumstance rendition to start the procession. One inmate, with a grin, said in a whisper heard by all the graduates and the guard, "Let's have an F." Then the response "F" came from all the graduates. Then came a "U" and all the letters through "THE PIGS" and the tension was broken. The processional started, parents' flash bulbs popped, tears were shed, speakers spoke, diplomas were awarded and a social hour was held in the dining room. None of the graduates would admit it but most of them were proud and all were glad to get their diplomas from Edina, Rochester Mayo, Mechanic Arts, Duluth Central or wherever.

<sup>6</sup>This would hardly be news to Stillwater Administrators. They are required by statute to "operate, at the state prison, a factory for the manufacture of farm machinery and other implements of husbandry. . ." Minnesota Statute 243.66.

Shakopee have anywhere near the educational programs that St. Cloud has (the inmates at St. Cloud are much younger, of course) but, nevertheless, those institutions also appear to put much more emphasis on education than does Stillwater.

Education in the evening at Stillwater is not the problem that it is during the day but at all institutions there's a lack of adequate space. The problem is least at St. Cloud because of the three-floor school building with approximately fourteen regular classrooms and several other small meeting rooms available. Conversely, Shakopee has only two comparable rooms. The institution is much smaller, of course.

This is not to say that room somehow couldn't be found for good educational programs. Every institution staff person I talked to indicated they would welcome regular, steady, educational programs. On the other hand, practically every official indicated cynicism to a degree when they talked about college level courses being offered to inmates who don't have a high school or G.E.D. diploma and who, in some cases, have a grade-school reading, grammar, math and spelling level. And some of these same inmates refuse to take remedial or high school courses when offered by the institution. I must admit that in some cases I agree with institution staff on this question. I frequently did work for inmates such as writing letters and preparing legal papers and some who were taking college courses, and some who wanted to, obviously had a low level high school or less capacity insofar as basic reading, writing and spelling is concerned.

The educational program inventory indicates clearly that, at this time, few formal college courses are available on a steady basis to correctional institution inmates. And, without Federal funding, virtually no programs would exist except for University of Minnesota correspondence courses. Volunteer educational programs exist, to be sure, and some of them are providing an excellent service because of the dedicated people involved. This appears to be particularly true in the cases of the Meisels from Mankato State, Bob Powless from UMD and Sister Joan from Grace High School in Fridley.<sup>7</sup> But how long can these volunteers keep up their programs? Everyone agrees that, for the most part, it's a lot of work just dealing with the red tape at the institutions and yet, in the cases of the Meisels, Powless and Sister Joan, the institutions' staff personnel are practically ecstatic about their respective efforts.<sup>8</sup>

One of the major problems about volunteer educational programs, as well as all other volunteer activities, is that they are

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<sup>7</sup>Sister Joan, incidentally, became active in the Indian G.E.D. program through the efforts of Bill Craig, formerly at CURA, and Powless told me he became interested in the program solely through the efforts of Sister Joan. Also, Brother Denis Pahl of St. Mary's College indicated the College's history course involvement at Stillwater Prison was initiated at the urging of Sister Joan.

<sup>8</sup>It should be noted here that Powless, Sister Joan and the Newgate program at the Minneapolis Workhouse have zeroed in on a critical situation and the efforts are producing results. Indian inmates, for whatever reasons, were reluctant to get involved in the G.E.D. programs. By concentrating on the Indian inmates and helping them work together many more Indian inmates now are going into and successfully completing the G.E.D. program. They apparently haven't noticed this problem as much at the Reformatory because they've been successful there in getting Indian inmates into the high school program.

haphazard at best. A specific instance which had a bad effect involved the Reformatory night school program during the winter months of 1971. This program is separate from the regular day high school program. During a ten-week period in January, February and March of each year, the Reformatory Education Department offers ten high school courses to any inmate in the institution - whether the inmate is enrolled in the regular day high school or not. This past winter the courses offered were Black History, Journalism, Remedial Reading, Contemporary Social Issues, Blueprint Reading, First Aid, Law in Society and Art. The school operates two nights each week for the ten week period from 5 P.M. to 7 P.M. - so as not to conflict with other evening inmate activities. Teachers come primarily from St. Cloud area high schools except that a practicing lawyer teaches Law in Society, about 10 graduate students from St. Cloud State teach Remedial Reading on a one-to-one basis and an art instructor from St. John's University teaches the Art course.

During the 1971 term, the individual who was to teach the Black History Course failed to show most of the time. At the start of the 1972 term, when the class schedule bulletin was distributed to the inmates, Black inmates who remembered the incident from the year before advised other inmates in poignant words not to register because it would be a waste of time. Only a comparative few inmates registered for the course which was taught in 1972 by Earl Barnett from the University Afro-American Studies Department. Barnett made it to the Reformatory each night during the term except for a heavy blizzard night when none of the teachers appeared. The teacher who

failed to show the previous year was not from the University.

This is not the only instance, of course. It happens frequently with all kinds of volunteer activities and inmates are acutely aware of the situation. Most of these activities are something to look forward to - a way out of the cell for an hour or two - a chance to socialize with other inmates and visitors - a chance to see someone different.

The structured programs are another matter. I knew a number of inmates and staff taking Augsburg courses. The inmates liked them - the staff didn't. I think the staff reluctance was primarily because they were associating rather closely with inmates they might have to discipline in the future - although it didn't seem to be a major problem. The inmates liked having Augsburg students, particularly the girls, in the classes. The inmate-students for the Augsburg courses were carefully chosen and many were Newgate students already taking college courses during the day.

One thing has struck me about the Augsburg program and I think it might be a valid criticism of any program where sporadic college courses are offered at an institution. There's really no counseling or programming of any kind insofar as the inmates are concerned. The Augsburg program isn't geared for it. I realize something like that would take considerable time but while the Augsburg program is fairly extensive it amounts basically to an assorted bag of courses given here and there with no real plan for the inmates.

I have the same feeling about some of the intern programs and simulations and so forth where inmates are involved. Schools and



departments take credit for being involved with inmates but I wonder about the value to the inmates of these programs in comparison to the value for the school and students. Perhaps in the long run it's a good thing to get students involved and on a purely social level it helps the inmates but I do object to the view that inmates are really being counseled much by some of these activities.<sup>9</sup> I must confess that I feel much the same way about Augsburg's program. They are just offering random college courses and I doubt if there's much rhyme or reason to the selection of courses for a regular progression in the learning process. Personally, I'm glad they're doing it because there's little else to take their place and those few inmates involved have something to look forward to but I would much prefer to see the money used - by Augsburg or any other school - in a larger program where some systematic use of an inmate's background, academic and otherwise, is used in selecting courses to meet his interests and, perhaps, goals in life. This is in effect what Newgate at the Workhouse, Powless at Sandstone and Sister Joan at Stillwater are doing. They are concentrating on a specific problem area and, from all indications, the three separate programs are having excellent results.

Or, look at the University Without Walls program. It's very small at this point but I assume that they are counseling the inmates

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<sup>9</sup>This statement should probably be qualified to some extent insofar as the activities of St. Cloud State and St. Benedict's are concerned. Those colleges are close to the Reformatory and close supervision of students is maintained by instructors who are frequently at the institution themselves.

to a certain degree and I'm sure there's a much wider choice of courses for the inmate than the sparse selection offered by Augsburg each year at the respective institutions. And this is true, I think, even though UWW has to rely on University instructors teaching the courses on an overload basis and the fact that UWW is running into "considerable resistance" from University teachers.

Newgate, of course, is the big program. I don't know that its effectiveness has been documented as yet but it's a lot better than nothing and I have a hunch it's going to work. That's my opinion now but someone in authority is eventually going to be faced with the ultimate decision on whether Newgate should be continued. And, unless the program is very, very successful with practically every inmate-student making it on the outside and not returning to the penal institution, people are going to differ on what constitutes success.

Initially, of course, it depends a lot on the kinds of people taken into the program. If those actually admitted are considered on the ultra-safe side in comparison to all applicants while others with sufficient mental capacity to do the job but who are a little unsteady on the behavior side are automatically excluded, perhaps not much is being accomplished.

It seems to me that the ultimate decision makers on Newgate and other educational programs must realize that not all inmates admitted to a program with their diverse backgrounds and severe psychological problems are going to be successful. Just giving them a year or two of college is not going to turn some guys around. But I think Newgate will help some people and, even as expensive a program as Newgate is, not very many need to be reformed to save society considerable amounts of money, much peace and some lives.

I personally knew most of the Newgate students while I was at the Reformatory. Having worked in the school building and having lived in C House where all the Remedial, High School and Newgate students lived, I saw and talked to them daily. For about six months I lived in the same cellblock tier as the Newgate students and they were all around me. I noticed that most of them were bright and most seemed to be strong individuals. They were certainly leaders around the institution - for the most part. I suspect they're also leaders on the outside in whatever community or social group they find themselves. And that's a point I want to make. If some of these individuals can be turned around by a real chance for an education, the State or University in charge of an educational program like Newgate may be transforming some of these bright individuals who can perhaps do the most damage outside the prison walls. No one, including staff in the Newgate program, has mentioned this point to me. And I have no facts to back me up. I just knew these fellows well, compared them to the

rest of the inmate population, and think it may be a valid proposition.

Newgate reaches few inmates. There are only about 40 to 50 students at the Reformatory and another 30 or so getting re-entry support of various kinds at Newgate House on campus. Aside from the college program is the Indian High School G.E.D. program at the Minneapolis Workhouse which should clearly be continued and, in my view, expanded to all other state institutions with any sizable Indian Community.

Even though Newgate doesn't reach many inmates and costs a lot, I think that ending the program now would be a disaster. The program has to be given a period of four or five years at least to truly measure its effectiveness. I should point out here that I'm one who's been somewhat critical of the peer group therapy aspect of Newgate. Some inmates, I think, exclude themselves because they just don't want to go through the process. But that's probably really a side issue. I used to ask Newgate students about the therapy sessions and expected to hear considerable cynicism because I was somewhat cynical myself. Perhaps Newgate students have a built-in reserve about criticizing the group therapy aspect or any part of the program but I heard few complaints.

Some other more extensive uses should be made for Newgate House if it continues to operate. Perhaps all ex-offenders are now welcome at Newgate House whether they were in the Newgate Program or not but if it isn't that way - it should be. And some affirmative action should be taken to inform ex-offenders at the University and other area colleges about Newgate House and its availability

for counseling, low cost meals and just plain socializing.

There's much room for additional higher education programs at the correctional institutions. Even if Newgate is successful and continues, some inmates won't go into the program for many reasons, including the group therapy requirement, and others won't be able to get into the program because of the requirement that an inmate have only between six and fifteen months remaining on his sentence before he can be accepted. Perhaps I can give you an example by citing the experience of one particular inmate.

I knew a young boy at the Reformatory very well. We worked together and lived in C House for one year. This young fellow was sent to the Reformatory at the age of fourteen on a second degree murder charge. He went to high school there, and, because of the accelerated high school program, finished high school before his seventeenth birthday. He also took additional high school courses at the winter night school each year. After high school graduation, he applied for acceptance in the Newgate program but was rejected - primarily, he was told, because of his age and the fact that he had too much time remaining on his sentence. He was finally accepted by Newgate this year after an eighteen month hiatus between high school graduation and Newgate acceptance.

This young man is very bright and works hard. He applied himself to his daily job and took several University correspondence courses. But he was bored and constantly looked for something to do. I think he was a prime candidate for some counseling and higher education on a more personal level during the eighteen

month period. He could have taken more correspondence courses, I suppose, but he told me that one at a time was enough.

The HELP Center proposal for counseling and some form of educational program sounds interesting. The counseling is badly needed and I think they'll reach prospective students that Newgate wouldn't or couldn't touch - at least under present policy. It seems to me that Newgate and the HELP Center might meet head on in their quest for prime college students but there could very well be room for both - especially if Newgate was recognized by the counselors, whoever they may be, as an established educational entity doing a decent job.

The counseling aspect is what intrigues me about the HELP Center proposal. No effective job, skill or educational counseling existed at any Minnesota Correctional institution for in-coming inmates until recently.<sup>10</sup> Several months ago, the Minnesota Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) started a counseling service for all new arrivals at the St. Cloud Reformatory. DVR has been at St. Cloud for several years but in the past received most of its clients from caseworker refer-

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<sup>10</sup>The following may be difficult to believe but happened on a regular basis. The metropolitan area phone books were located in the school office. Inmates would come to the school office with a list of companies they had heard about that might employ ex-offenders. They used the phone books to get addresses but many inmates had to ask for help because they couldn't find any of the companies in the book even though the list in hand contained the correct spelling of the companies. They either didn't know how to use a phone book or their spelling and word construction capabilities were so bad they couldn't cope with the situation. These fellows needed help badly and none was available.

rals. DVR does testing and interviewing and generally works with clients while at the institution and provides funds for some inmates going to vocational schools after release from the institution. I have no idea how effective the counseling will be under the new system but I was told that DVR, after the initial counseling, will still only take a certain number of inmates under its wing. DVR offices are not physically located at Shakopee, Stillwater or Sandstone as they are at St. Cloud although a limited number of inmates at Stillwater and Shakopee receive DVR assistance.

As I understand another portion of the HELP Center's proposed plan, college courses would be offered at the prison and, in some instances, those inmates with a vocational training goal would leave the institution under guard and go to an area vocational school. This type of thing is already being done at Shakopee. Security problems are not as acute there and that institution has had a maximum of six inmates leaving the institution each day and traveling to various vocational schools throughout the Metropolitan area. Most of these inmates attending vocational schools are funded by DVR.

It's obvious that higher learning academic education isn't the only answer to the possible job goals of many inmates.<sup>11</sup> I think the HELP Center's proposal to work out counseling and possible

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<sup>11</sup>At St. Cloud, approximately 27 per cent of in-coming inmates have completed high school or received a G.E.D. certificate. At Stillwater the figure is 33 per cent. The percentage is somewhat different at Shakopee although not comparable because the figures are not strictly for in-coming inmates. At Shakopee, in April, 1972, of 63 inmates, 28 had completed 12th grade or more while 15 had received a G.E.D. certificate for a high school completion



vocational school possibilities outside the walls for some inmates is excellent. Whether it will work because of community pressure after several escapes is something else again. But I think it should be tried. They've had vocational training in a number of areas within the walls at St. Cloud for years and my personal opinion is that the program as a whole has been close to being a farce. Some of the shops seem to do well and the instructors keep the inmates working. The Print Shop instructors, for instance, always appeared to be doing a good job. But most other vocational shops - and there must be a dozen or more - just seem to go through the motions. The new Director of Education at the Reformatory ordered a study of the vocational system by outside people but I haven't seen the results. However, knowing the present Director, I think some changes will be made if changes possibly can be made within the bureaucracy of the institution. My fear is that the study done by people from the outside wasn't financed enough to allow those doing the study to spend sufficient time at the Reformatory. I'm being cynical, I know, but if someone would devise time-motion clocks and hang them around the necks of some vocational instructors at the Reformatory, the clocks would rust in several weeks for lack of motion. I think some of the supposed vocational education is close to being non-existent. Vocational instructors come primarily - exclusively is probably the better word - from

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figure of 67 per cent.

The G.E.D. program at Stillwater was expanded this year and it is expected that up to 150 inmates each year will complete the G.E.D. requirements.

security guards who move up the pay scale by becoming vocational instructors. It's ridiculous. I believe that situation will change, however, under the new Director of Education.

The question of using media in different forms has been raised. This appears to be a real possibility and practically everyone, institution personnel as well as educators, thinks media can be used in the educational field in Corrections in some form. The distance of penal institutions from most centers of learning makes the use of media practically necessary. Cost is the prime factor. Miss Jacqueline Fleming, Superintendent at Shakopee, told me she'd "use media in a minute if it was free because there are some high security but bright people in the institution."

The technology is certainly available and, insofar as Stillwater Prison is concerned, media might possibly be tied into the individual cells because the cells were wired for individual television sets. I don't know the extent of this wiring nor the technology involved but inmates may now buy and use television sets in their cells.

At the Reformatory, the librarian, Ron Schuster, and the Director of Education, Duane Sheppard, are very much interested in using media for educational purposes. Schuster was a former guard who went to St. Cloud State and received a Master's degree in Information Media. In the past year, Schuster has received different media equipment from manufacturers for display and try-out purposes and these items have been used by inmates. A separate

room has been set up next to the library for media purposes. The inventory now includes only two movie projectors, one phonograph, one film strip projector, two slide projectors, three listening centers (a record is placed on a turn table and ten people can listen to the same record with earphones without disturbing others in the area) and a touch tone system which is a gadget placed on the telephone whereby the library can pick up and record any audio information from the Random Remote Access Information Retrieval System at the St. Cloud State College Library. Further, Schuster has secured some funding from the Library Services Construction Act (LSCA program for institution libraries) through the Corrections Department. With these monies, he intends to buy 30 cassette recorder players for inmates to take to their cells. These are purely audio. He also intends to get some audio-visual Study Mates which are small television screens. A filmstrip is used for visual material and a cassette for sound. On his present budget, however, Schuster will have no monies this fiscal year for programs to use on the equipment. In addition, Schuster forwarded a proposal to the Governor's Crime Commission for closed circuit television to all classrooms and to each cell in the institution but he had no word on his request for funds when I last talked to him. He didn't expect a favorable ruling.

The library at Sandstone had several Study Mates and a small inventory of filmstrips and cassettes. The Study Mates were being used by inmates when I was at the institution.

Some media technology could almost certainly be used effectively

in prisoner education. The initial cost for most systems is high but an institution like Stillwater Prison seems to be an ideal place for media to be used. And, under certain systems, once equipment is purchased and courses recorded for video and sound they can be used hundreds of times. Many courses are now available on tape and others could be produced to meet specific needs. The Stillwater Director of Education indicated he would like to see media used at the prison - especially for Adult Basic Education courses in reading, writing, math and science.

One system that could be used now is Tele Lecture. The studio on the St. Paul campus is used frequently to give courses to people congregating in County Agents' offices around the state. Sometimes a specialist will give a course to people in twenty counties at the same time. The cost is minimal compared to other systems. Installation charges are \$45.00 at each place. A basic fee is charged every month by the telephone company and then line charges are added for the program time. Last year, fifty counties had over 400 programs involving about 10,000 people. One absolutely necessary requirement for this type of program to be effective, I'm told, would be a moderator at the institution for any given class session.

I've often wondered, since I became involved in this survey and the media question arose, whether any other schools in other states are using media in educational programs for inmates. And I've wondered whether any other state corrections departments are using media in penal institutions without any specific assistance

from colleges or universities. Perhaps a system is in operation somewhere. It might be interesting and profitable to find out. I know, for instance, that the University of Hawaii has a special program in its Education Research and Development Center involving Adult Basic Education in Corrections. I don't know that they have considered media possibilities but perhaps someone should find out. I'm aware of the U of Hawaii program because last spring an Associate Superintendent, the Director of Education and a Vocational Supervisor from the Reformatory went to a week-long regional seminar conducted by the University of Hawaii in Chicago involving education methods in the Corrections field.

When I started this survey, I expected to find many more educational programs. I had been confused by all the volunteer activities which are seldom educational in nature. Rumors abound about this or that program. Several different people here at the University told me as a plain matter of fact that Caroline Rose from the Sociology Department had given a course to Stillwater inmates by Tele Lecture. I talked to Caroline Rose and she told me it never happened. It seems to me that if the University is going to conduct formal programs of education in penal institutions then a central committee should be established to work with and inform institution education directors of programs and coordinate the proposals and activities of different departments of the University and other colleges and universities. It is evident that people from one college don't know what others are doing, except perhaps in general terms, and the same can be said for

different departments within the University. Also, someone in authority must coordinate media activities so that several different departments or organizations or colleges or penal institutions are not all at the same time attempting to set up media programs. Someone, somewhere, has to know what everyone else is doing and contemplating within the state.

Finally, I think structured educational programs are necessary for any real impact in the Corrections field. Some volunteers are doing fine work but their programs will eventually wither for some reason - death, sickness, a transfer to another position or disillusionment after months and years of controversy with institution staff and inmates.

October, 1972.