

The housemates under electronic monitoring

*12th Annual Conference of the ESC:
Criminology in the 21st Century:
a necessary balance between freedom and security*

Panel session: Punishment and its alternatives I

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A. Introduction

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- Electronic monitoring (= EM) in Belgium
 - Definition
 - Form
 - Use



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B. Pay attention to housemates

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Basic requirement in the ministerial instruction of 25 July 2008:

=> the agreement of the adult housemates

Hardly no attention to housemates in:

- policy and practice
- the academic world

Why is it important to pay attention to housemates?

1. EM is not a matter of the offender only
2. The important role of housemates in ensuring the success of EM

Aim of this presentation

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C. Methodology

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Population

- Housemates of persons under EM

Sample (n = 25)

- *Gender*: female (22) – man (3)
- *Origin*: Belgian (21) – Dutch (1) – Indian (1) – Kosovar (1) – Turk (1)
- *Age*: between 17 and 74 - mean age = 37
- *Relationship*: partner (15), family member (9), close friend (1)
- *Children*: yes (20) – no (5)
- *Working situation*: employed (11) – unemployed (1) – searching for a job (4) – following courses (3) – getting a benefit (2) – retirement (3)
- *In terms of EM*: experience for ≤ 2 months (11) - experience between 2 and 3 months (7) - > 3 months (7)
- *In terms of imprisonment*: > 1 month (16)

Setting

- At their home

Qualitative interviews

- 25 open face to face interviews about their experience with EM
- Average duration: 1h17m15s

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D. Results

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D1. The influence on their life

D2. The role housemates play during EM

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D1. The influence on their life

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A. General

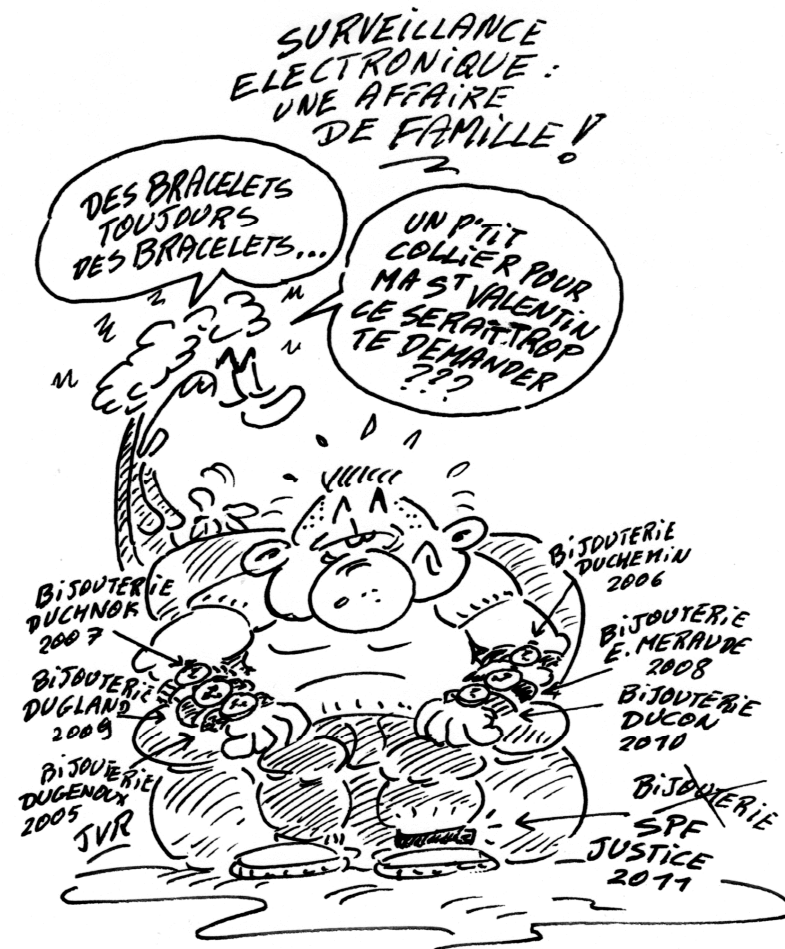
The fact that he was home, was more important to me than the fact a little box was standing here. So for me, there was no influence. In a nutshell, this [EM] does not play a role. (partner)

B. Advantages

Yes, this [EM] is most convenient. Because I don't longer have the stress of having to go to X (prison) on a visit and, of course, my brother is here... (sister)

C. Disadvantages

It was a lot easier for me when my father was imprisoned than when he was at home. Because when he was in prison, at least I didn't have to do everything, I wasn't burdened with everything. His son was with his mother, so... (daughter)



Cartoonist: J. Van Russelt

Journal: Journal du Droit des Jeunes n° 311, January 2012

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D2. The role housemates play during EM

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A. Supervision

I checked his time schedule a lot... Because it is a man and they are more negligent ...

It [EM] was just for two months and I thought "I will take it over"[...] But it is a burden you carry, whether you think about it or not. Because you also have to be responsible for him. I have to make sure that everything goes well. (friend)

A. Moral support

We try to fob him off... When he says 'I cannot go over there', 'Yes, later you can go there', so motivate him a little bit. (partner)



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E. Conclusion

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General conclusion: more benefits than harm

Two big influences:

1. Spillover effects
2. Back up work

A need for recognition of the influence

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