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## A Study of Staff-inmate Social Distance Seen as a Function of Contiguity in Two Correctional Settings

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A STUDY OF STAFF-INMATE SOCIAL DISTANCE SEEN AS A FUNCTION  
OF CONTIGUITY IN TWO CORRECTIONAL SETTINGS

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A Thesis

Presented to  
the Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies  
Indiana State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by

John Rhodes McCune

January 1970

THESIS APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis of John R. McCune, contribution of the School of Graduate Studies, Indiana State University, Series I, Number 973, under the title, "A Study of Staff-Inmate Social Distance Seen as a Function of Contiguity in Two Correctional Settings," is approved as counting toward the completion of the Master of Arts Degree in the amount of six semester hours of graduate credit.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Background of the problem. Authorities in the field are in general agreement that social distance pervades all social relationships though it may be found in varying degrees in different relationships and in different societies. In such social situations involving authority-hierarchy or stratification, it is presumably a functional prerequisite.<sup>1</sup>

The prison, often described as an isolated caste-like social system in which status-distinction relationships are expressed in a manner of superordination-subordination, provides an optimal opportunity to observe the role played by this social distance. The prison, with its established hierarchical order of authority coupled with its relative

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<sup>1</sup>Pierre L. van den Berghe, "Distance Mechanisms of Stratification," Sociology and Social Research, XLIV (January-February, 1960), 156.



isolation from the outside community, is a microcosm of a rigidly stratified society where prescriptions and sanctions, be they formal or informal, function to control, regulate and make predictable the behavior between persons of different status relationships. Thus, in viewing the prison as a self-contained community or subculture, social distance may be expected to play a functional role similar to the caste barriers found in any caste system.<sup>2</sup>

"Caste and class distinctions," wrote Dollard, "are ways of dividing people according to behavior expected of them . . . ."<sup>3</sup> In the typical prison, with its authoritarian type of structure, this bipolarization of status-distinction between staff and inmates is structurally

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<sup>2</sup>According to Berreman, the hierarchical order of a caste system entails "a system of differential evaluations, differential power and rewards, and differential associations; in short, a system of institutionalized inequalities." Studies of the prison have shown these differential attributes to be characteristic of the prison social order. Gerald D. Berreman, "Stratification, Pluralism and Interaction: A Comparative Analysis of Caste," Caste and Race, Anthony de Reuck and Julie Knight, editors (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1967), p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937), p. 62.

perpetuated and sustained through the normative system as it is embodied in the prison's organizational structure and promulgated through its dictates and policies.<sup>4</sup> This authoritative-submissive role-relationship between these two groups becomes manifested through the recurrent emphasis upon compliance, control, rules and conformity. Therefore, from the social-structural viewpoint of the prison, social distance may be seen to function primarily as a means of keeping staff-inmate roles in their proper perspective as defined by the institution.

Social distance, in its varying degrees, then, would seem to play an important part in controlling the nature of staff-inmate involvement or non-involvement. Moreover, it is assumable that such an attitude would take on a differential significance to the staff who are in a peripheral role-relationship with inmates in comparison to the staff

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<sup>4</sup>The normative system of a formal organization, according to Caplow, not only functions in a manner that describes the expected activities one is to perform in regard to his role position but it also engenders expected feelings, perceptions and beliefs one is to hold toward others in related role positions. Theodore Caplow, Principles of Organization (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964), p. 81.

who are in a central or contiguous role-relationship with inmates.

The purpose of the study. It was the purpose of this study to examine the nature of the role played by social distance in differential superordination-subordination relationships. More specifically, the aim of this study was to investigate whether there existed any significant difference in the degree of social distance held by prison staffs of varying degrees of contiguity with inmates at the United States Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana, and at the Indiana Reformatory at Pendelton, Indiana.

Formulation of the hypothesis. The noncontiguous staff member who functions primarily in a non-supervisory role-relationship with inmates is more often, so to speak, in a position to spatially segregate himself from inmates by simply restricting his contacts with them. In other words, he can withdraw physically in symbolic affirmation of his status position. Thus, the noncontiguous staff member in his contacts with inmates has this additional means whereby he can maintain social distance from them, namely, spatial distance. Since this is so, his need to

rely on the attitudinal aspect of social distance to maintain his position as a symbol of authority may not necessarily be so great.

The contiguous staff member or the correctional officer, on the other hand, cannot easily restrict his contacts with inmates in view of the nature and the demands of his job. He has more direct dealings with the inmates on a day-to-day basis than any other category of personnel that staff a prison. Accordingly, he is in a central position to be continually confronted by the many pressures on the part of inmates to succumb to their various and sundry requests. Consequently, it is the correctional officer who is most often sought out by inmates to be manipulated in their efforts to modify the various conditions that the prison environment imposes upon them.

In short, there appear to be two principal reasons why the contiguous staff member would be expected to place a greater reliance on social distance in his interactions with inmates as compared to the noncontiguous staff member. First, he is often confronted by various status-threat strategies on the part of his charges in their efforts to exploit his position to mitigate against the deprivations

and frustrations that the conditions of imprisonment impose on them. Secondly, he is limited as to the devices he can use to preserve his position as a symbol of authority in relation to his prisoners.

Prison policies in general, especially in custodially oriented institutions, do not encourage staff to develop personal friendship ties with the inmates. The purpose of such staff regulations is to reduce the possibilities of inmates' corrupting staff and to prevent breaches in institutional security. Without some sort of intervening factor, however, to function as a restraining mechanism in controlling the nature of staff-inmate relationships, the possibility of personal friendships developing between staff and inmates in frequent contact with one another becomes increasingly a likelihood, for as Homans points out, ". . . people who interact frequently with one another tend to like one another."<sup>5</sup> Social distance, then, as a mechanism of social differentiation, can serve as an effective means with which a superordinate (staff member) can maintain his

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<sup>5</sup>George C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1950), p. 111.

position of authority in regard to his subordinates (the inmates). Hence, the correctional officer by surrounding himself with a social distance can remain aloof and reserved in his interactions with inmates, thereby protecting his position of authority or insulating himself, as it were, from the many pressures on the part of inmates to subvert his position to their own ends.

The basic assumption of this study, as derived from the foregoing discussion, was that there existed differences in attitudes between staffs of different role-relationships toward inmates with regard to social distance. It was further posited that staff in close daily contact with inmates relied more on social distance as a mechanism of social differentiation in order to preserve their status as a symbol of authority. In other words, the more contiguous staff-inmate relations become, the greater the social distance between the staff and inmates. Then, with regard to the staff-inmate relationship in a prison, it was hypothesized that:

The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the social distance between the staff and inmates.

Since social distance is thought to have both

affective and behavioral aspects, the above hypothesis was subdivided in the following two subhypotheses, one reflecting the affective and the other the behavioral aspect:

1. The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the more unfavorable the attitudes of the staff toward the inmates will be.
2. The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the personal distance between the staff and inmates.

## II. DEFINITION OF THE TERMS USED

Social distance. As used in this study, the term "social distance" was defined to mean the degree to which one exercises reserve in his social interaction with another as a representative of a group or collectivity.

Personal distance. "Personal distance," for the purpose of this study, was defined as the degree of intimacy which obtains between individuals apart from their position as members of different groups. Such degree of intimacy is personal distance insofar as it is free from the dictates of social norms and contains merely the element of individual satisfaction.

Contiguity. The term "contiguity," as used in this

study, referred to the degree of closeness in association between a staff member and inmates based upon the frequency of contact between the two as defined by the staff member's role position in the prison.

Contiguous staff member. For the purpose of this study, the term "contiguous staff member" referred to prison staff whose job responsibility was primarily concerned with providing the daily face-to-face supervision of inmates and their activities. In other words, the term as used in this investigation was synonymous with that of correctional officer.

Noncontiguous staff member. The term "noncontiguous staff member" as used throughout this study referred to prison employees whose jobs called for little or no supervisory responsibilities toward inmates. Staff categorized as such were (1) administrative, business and clerical personnel; and (2) department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

Chapter II is devoted to a review of the literature



and research related to the variable investigated. The collection of the data and the instrument used in the investigation are discussed in Chapter III. The analysis of the data follows in the fourth chapter. The fifth and final chapter contains the summary, conclusion and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much that has been written in regard to social distance, along with the research done in this area, has been concerned chiefly with the ethnic and racial distance. Part one of this Chapter presents a general overview of the literature on social distance in regard to its various dimensional aspects. Since basic similarities are said to exist between the prison and the mental hospital,<sup>1</sup> two studies previously done on social distance in mental hospital settings are reviewed in part two, which provided considerable help in developing the problem and the methodology for this study. Part three is a review of the various observations that students of the prison have made in regard to social distance as being a factor in affecting the nature of staff involvement or non-involvement with inmates.

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<sup>1</sup>Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions: The Inmate World," The Prison, Donald R. Cressey, editor (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), pp. 16-22.

## I. ON SOCIAL DISTANCE

The nineteenth-century French sociologist, Gabriel Tarde, is credited with making the first use of "distance" in sociological context in his writing, Laws of Imitation. Distance, according to Tarde, "exists between classes and is measurable by the degree of imitation which exists between them. Class differences are class distances."<sup>2</sup> The concept was first introduced into American sociology by Park and Bogardus. Their conception of social distance seems to have been founded on the ideas advanced by Georg Simmel, who viewed distance to be inversely related to the degree one allowed another to enter into his sphere of affairs.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter, the concept found wide practical use among sociologists as a means whereby degrees of understanding and intimacy which distinguish interpersonal and group relationships generally, could be measured.

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<sup>2</sup>Willard C. Poole, Jr., "Distance in Sociology," The American Journal of Sociology, XXXIII (July, 1927), 99.

<sup>3</sup>Robert F. Murphy, "Social Distance and the Veil," American Anthropologist, LXVI (December, 1964), 1257.

Conceptually, social distance may be viewed from two different frames of reference. It can be seen in either a sociological or social-psychological context. In its sociological context, according to Sorokin, persons belonging to the same groups and functioning in identical positions within these groups are in close social distance with each other; conversely, social distance increases as differences in these respects become greater.<sup>4</sup> It is the self-sameness in group affiliations and role performance within such groups that are the essentials in determining degrees of social distance.

In a social-psychological context as defined by Bogardus, Park, and Poole, social distance refers to a continuum as to the degree of sympathetic understanding and/or intimacy of thought and action that exist between persons.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Pitirim A. Sorokin, Social Mobility (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1927), p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>Emory S. Bogardus, Sociology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954), p. 535; Robert E. Park, "The Concept of Social Distance," Journal of Applied Sociology VIII (July-August, 1924), 339; and Willard C. Poole, Jr., "Social Distance and Personal Distance," Journal of Applied Sociology, XI (November-December, 1926), 114.

In other words, it is attitudes held toward others and groups that is the imperative in distinguishing degrees of social distance. So described, the continuum may range from close, warm, and intimate contact on the one hand, to indifference, active dislike, hostility, and rejection on the other hand. The value of the concept of social distance in this latter sense lies in the way it enables the research worker to evaluate the extent of differentiation and to conceptualize it on a continuum. But regardless of the frame of reference from which social distance may be viewed, as Eubank has suggested, it seems to be axiomatic that in any human association there is a psychological "distance" that intervenes.<sup>6</sup> This concept appeared to have received the most attention by sociologists.

On the other hand, social distance can also be characterized as either vertical or horizontal. By vertical distance is meant the sense of difference between individuals and groups based on status. That is, in superordinate-subordinate arrangements in social situations, relationships

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<sup>6</sup>Earle E. Eubank, The Concepts of Sociology (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1932), p. 325.

are transacted on a vertical axis. In other words, status distinctions are delineated as being both different and unequal. Horizontal social distance, on the other hand, is the degree of sympathetic understanding, or intimacy of thought that functions between persons of the same or similar status.

In further analysis of the vertical dimensional aspect of social distance, the inequalities that are found in superordinate-subordinate relationships, as Eubank pointed out, may be of two kinds, "formal and natural."<sup>7</sup> Formal social distance, as he conceived it, would be the embodiment of kinds of behavior prescribed through the rules and regulations of any one particular organization. The military, universities, and mental hospitals could serve as examples where aspects of interpersonal relationships endogenous to the organization are defined through its rules and regulations. Poole's reference to "norms of distance," is very similar to Eubank's formal social distance, but is much more encompassing in scope, as can be seen in his statement:

These norms of distance do not find their justification

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 328.

in ideas of superiority and inferiority, but in ideas of group welfare, which may be the welfare ideas of a single dominant faction within the group. These norms of social distance, found in the mores and in the law, aim to protect the group from real or fancied dangers.<sup>8</sup>

Eubank comprehended "natural social distance" as grounded on attitudes of superiority or inferiority and/or emotional reactions socially created. He appears to hold that all prejudices are of this kind. His notion of natural social distance is similar to Poole's concept of personal distance which, for Poole, is the manner in which individuals subjectively interpret their relationships to others.<sup>9</sup>

Social distance, however, regardless of their dimensional aspect, are not fixed and unchanging. In the process of accommodation and assimilation, an attitudinal metamorphosis, or "mutation" according to Bogardus, may take place which serves eventually to narrow or widen the social

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<sup>8</sup>Poole, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

distance between persons and groups.<sup>10</sup>

From this general review of the literature on social distance, the theoretical frame of reference for this study was formulated. That is, social distance, as a social phenomenon that functions between persons and groups in differentiating social relationships generally, has been found to have considerable usefulness in measuring the degree of acceptance or rejection that obtains between various status-distinction relationships.

As the literature further pointed out, conceptually, social distance can be differentiated into the formal social distance, or social distance and the informal social distance, or personal distance. In delineating social distance

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<sup>10</sup>Bogardus cites the following example as a mutation in attitude, from unfavorable to favorable: "At first prisoners of war, as in the case of other prisoners, are viewed en masse, as belonging to a different 'world.' A dangerous, an enemy world of deed and thought. Fear, suspicion, and hatred are thereby aroused at the sight of them. A mutation may occur when a given prisoner comes out of the despised group and is seen as just another human being, a person, like oneself in some particular. If he is seen in a more or less helpless, and hence harmless, role, the more natural the mutation." Emory Bogardus, "Mutations of Social Distance," Journal of Applied Sociology, XI (September-October, 1926), 77.



in such a manner, it is conceived in the formal sense to be the embodiment of kinds of behavior that are prescribed, as for example, through institutional policies in the form of rules and regulations. Informal social distance, on the other hand, is attitudes held toward others that affect interpersonal relationships that originate out of personal experiences apart from one's position as a member of any one particular group.

Social distance, then, can be thought to have both affective and behavioral aspects as reflected in the two subhypotheses of this study. In its affective aspect, feelings and attitudes of social distance arise out of personal experiences independent of rules and regulations governing behavior toward others. In regard to the behavioral aspect, one's activities toward others as related to status-distinction relationships are formally prescribed into norms of behavior. For example, in the prison the nature of staff-inmate relationships is formally defined through institutional policies in the form of rules and regulations.

## II. ON THE MENTAL HOSPITAL

The system of dealing with the mental hospital patient and the system of dealing with the prison inmate have many similarities. The mental hospital and the prison show certain basic similarities in regard to bureaucratic organization, objectives of incarceration, custodial care and rehabilitation, and the nature of inmatehood.<sup>11</sup> Both the mental hospital patient and the prisoner are inmates of a "total institution," which is defined by Goffman as ". . . a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life."<sup>12</sup> As close societies, they have the following parallelisms:<sup>13</sup> (1) There is

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<sup>11</sup>Daniel J. Levinson and Eugene B. Gallagher, Patienthood in the Mental Hospital (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964), p. 26.

<sup>12</sup>Erving Goffman, Asylums (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1961), p. xiii.

<sup>13</sup>Ronald Leifer, "Involuntary Psychiatric Hospitalization and Social Control," The International Journal of Social Psychiatry, XIII (Winter, 1967), 55.

a cleavage between the staff and the inmates with little communication between the two with such relationships often being antagonistic to each other. (2) Various kinds of work are scheduled as part of the daily routine for which marginal remuneration is received. (3) Family relationships are ruptured with relatively little contact between family members for long periods of time. (4) A loss of initiative and self-determination is experienced in one's sphere of personal affairs. (5) The inmates find themselves in a situation where they are rendered unable to manage certain aspects of their home and community life. (6) The inmates are repeatedly exposed to degradation processes and experiences and forced conformity supported by punitive sanctions.

Two mental hospital studies. Perrucci, in a study of social distance strategies used on a psychiatric ward, found that ward attendants attempted to maximize social distance from patients who had made the greatest endeavor to reduce the social distance gap between them.<sup>14</sup> Such patients, he

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<sup>14</sup>Robert Perrucci, "Social Distance Strategies and Intra-Organizational Stratification: A Study of the Status System on a Psychiatric Ward," American Sociological Review, XXVIII (December, 1963), 962.

states, pose a "status threat" to staff because of their unceasing efforts to minimize social distance between the two. "Status threats," he writes, "involve attempts to gain knowledge of staff's extra-organizational self, or access to private symbols . . . ." <sup>15</sup> In gaining access to private symbols, the staff-inmate relationship can take on overtones and qualities of a personal nature. In such situations, there may be reciprocal first-name calling, discussion of one's personal life, and discussion of feelings about the institution and other personnel.

In the study above, three sociometric groups were selected from a women's ward based on the patients' selection of two desirable roommate choices, two undesirable roommate choices, and one leadership choice. Perrucci referred to these groups as "Hi Positives," "Hi Negatives," and "Hi Leaders," respectively. Within these groups each patient's contact pattern with the staff was mapped. The ratio of contacts was categorized according to the nature of the content situation. Areas of content included "Attention

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 955.

and Information," "Service Requests," "Staff Favors," "Criticism," and "Formal Business." The differences in patterns of contact between the three groups with regard to the various content areas were seen by Perrucci as differences in social distance patterns of interaction between staff and patients.

The "Hi Negatives" were found to be outstanding because of their relatively frequent contact with the staff as well as for the amount of contact that involved doing favors for staff. The "Hi Negatives" were seen as posing a status threat to staff through their efforts to reduce the social distance gap between the two, and because of this, it was felt that it would be reasonable to assume that the ward attendants would be primarily concerned with maximizing social distance from this group.

Ward attendants' reactions to the patient groups along a social distance dimension were noted in regard to the following three indicators of maintaining social distance: (1) the attendant's degree of illness imputed to the patient; (2) the attendant's opinion as to whether a patient was in need of firm handling in view of her condition; and (3) the attendant's opinion as to whether he had to be

watchful of a patient to prevent her from manipulating things to her own liking. The results showed that the ward attendants were consistent in seeking to maintain social distance from the "Hi Negatives," the group who endeavored to minimize social distance.<sup>16</sup> One conclusion drawn from the study was that "the minimizing or maximizing of social distance can be viewed as a strategy for protection against positional threats, or as a status-enhancing mechanism."<sup>17</sup>

Pearlin and Rosenberg, in their study of social distance in a federal mental hospital, conceptually distinguished between status distance and personal distance. In this study, they conceived status distance as a sense of status superiority on the part of the staff which guided them in defining their relationships with patients. The status-distant staff member was viewed as one who interpreted his relationships with patients in terms of a superposed arrangement. Thus, a staff member could separate

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 962.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

himself from patients by setting himself above them.<sup>18</sup> The personally distant staff member, on the other hand, had "no particular affinity for the patients with whom he [worked] ." <sup>19</sup> In other words, one patient was viewed as being the same as any other patient.

The study group was composed of all members of the nursing personnel below the supervisor level. Three groups, referred to collectively as nursing personnel, were ranked according to differences in responsibilities, authority, and rewards. Nursing assistants, charge attendants, and registered nurses made up the three groups and were ranked from low to high respectively. The nursing orders most contiguous to the patients, nursing assistants and charge attendants, were found to be the ones most likely to emphasize attitudes of status distance toward the patients.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Leonard I. Pearlin and Morris Rosenberg, "Nurse-Patient Social Distance and the Structural Context of A Mental Hospital," American Sociological Review, XXVII (February, 1962), 57.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

As reviewed above, the mental hospital and the prison have some fundamental characteristics that are common to both. First, in both the mental hospital and the prison, there exists a bipolarization of membership into staff and inmates. Second, the official goals for both can be stated in much the same terms--incarceration, custodial care and rehabilitation. Third, both show certain basic similarities in organizational structure in which status-distinction relationships are formally prescribed with clearly defined social distance between the occupants of these different status positions.

From the foregoing two studies of social distance in a mental hospital setting, the problem for this study was conceptualized. Because of the basic similarities that were said to exist between these two types of institutions, it was felt by this investigator that certain aspects of both studies could, in part, and in a somewhat modified form, be replicated in a prison setting. The notion of contiguous and noncontiguous staff member was equally suited to both institutions. As the review of the literature on social distance in the prison will point out, as did both mental hospital studies, social distance can serve as an effective



means whereby the superordinate can set himself apart from his subordinates. In the Perrucci study, it was also noted that there was in the patient population, a tendency to reduce the social distance between themselves and their superordinates, which is likely to be so in the case of the prison. But in addition to this, both the mental hospital and the prison are what Goffman calls "total institutions." In accepting his concept of "total institutions," problems and research found to be pertinent to the mental hospital would likewise seem to have similar applicability to other kinds of "total institutions," as for example, the prison.

### III. ON SOCIAL DISTANCE IN PRISONS

Brooks, in his analysis of the correctional officer's role of today, states that it was shaped by the legacy of the so-called Pennsylvania system with its stress on the social isolation of the inmate.<sup>21</sup> The inmate's world of today is still an atomized world. Some have described it as

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<sup>21</sup>Robert J. Brooks, "The Role of the Correctional Officer," American Journal of Correction, XXXI (May-June, 1969), 22.

a world of "I," "me," and "mine," rather than "ours," "theirs," and "his." Then, as now, this social isolation of the prisoner can find its roots in the formal organizational structure of the prison. According to some observers of the prison community, some of the more obvious characteristics of prison organization which perpetuate and sustain the barriers of social intercourse between staff and inmates are: (1) the caste-like division between staff and inmates; (2) the ritualistic, routinized and depersonalized systems of control in the handling of inmates; and (3) administrative policies and staff rules which emphasize the maintenance of social distance between officialdom and inmates.<sup>22</sup> Numerous observers of the prison community have also asserted that the relationship between staff and inmates is

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<sup>22</sup>Daniel Glaser, The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1964), p. 122; Hugh J. Klare (ed.), Changing Concepts of Crime and Its Treatment (first edition; Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1966), pp. 143-144; Donald Clemmer, The Prison Community (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), p. 185; Lloyd E. Ohlin, Sociology and the Field of Correction (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1956), p. 15; and Elmer Hubert Johnson, Crime, Correction, and Society (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1964), p. 555.

characterized by rejection, hostility, contempt and conflict, or in other words, all the essential attitudinal factors necessary to give rise to feelings of social distance.<sup>23</sup>

This emphasis upon status-distinction, the depersonalized en masse handling of inmates, and relationships characterized by negative feelings, is notably typical of the custodial goal-oriented prison as compared with the treatment goal-oriented institution. In his study to examine the relationship between organizational goals and the inmates' informal structure in a variety of prison settings, Berk found a significant difference in attitudes inmates held toward their prison experiences in institutions of differing goal orientations. Of the three prisons studied, inmates in the treatment-oriented institution were

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<sup>23</sup>Gresham M. Sykes, The Society of Captives (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 90; Clemmer, op. cit., p. 296; Norman S. Hayner and Ellis Ash, "The Prison as a Community," American Sociological Review, V (August, 1940), 578; Frank Tannenbaum, Wall Shadows (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press, 1922), p. 27; Richard McCleery and others, Theoretical Studies in Social Organization of the Prison (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1960), p. 57; and S. Kirson Weinberg, "Aspects of the Prison's Social Structure," The American Journal of Sociology, XLVII (March, 1942), 718 and 721.

found to be more positive in their attitudes toward the institution, staff and program than those in the custodial oriented one.<sup>24</sup> This study would suggest that status distinctions or feelings of social distance are not so highly emphasized in prisons where the goal orientation is that of treatment rather than custody.

The contiguous staff member. Sykes, and McCorkle and Korn point out that because of their close daily association with the inmates, correctional officers are in the most precarious position for becoming targets of inmate intrigue and maneuvering and manipulative techniques.<sup>25</sup> As was pointed out in Chapter I, the correctional officer can effectively use social distance as a means of socially insulating himself from such kinds of maneuverings on the part of inmates. On this particular matter McCorkle and Korn

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<sup>24</sup>Bernard B. Berk, "Organizational Goals and Inmate Organization," American Journal of Sociology, LXXI (March, 1966), 534.

<sup>25</sup>Lloyd W. McCorkle and Richard Korn, "Resocialization Within Walls," Readings in Criminology and Penology, David Dressler, editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 527-28; and Sykes, op. cit., p. 54.

state:

In order to preserve his status as a symbol of authority, the custodian must surround himself with a social distance which prevents the realities of his weaknesses from becoming apparent to the inmates.

The inmate social system has developed techniques to exploit the custodian's psychological as well as his physical vulnerability. These techniques are aimed at a reduction of the social distance protecting his role as guard, outflanking it with a personal relationship, and exploiting that relationship for the inmates' own purposes. Once the relationship between keeper and inmate is on a man-to-man basis, the dependency and vulnerability of the custodian become apparent.<sup>26</sup>

Social distance, however, is likely to be maintained on the part of the correctional officer toward his charges with considerable difficulty, as was pointed out by Sykes:

He [the correctional officer] can remain aloof only with great difficulty, for he possesses few of those devices which normally serve to maintain social distance between rulers and the ruled. He cannot withdraw physically in symbolic affirmation of his superior position; he has no intermediaries to bear the brunt of resentment springing from orders which are disliked; and he cannot fall back on a dignity adhering to his office--he is a hack or a screw in the eyes of those he controls . . . .<sup>27</sup>

As the foregoing review of the literature indicates, the concept of social distance has received very little

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Sykes, op. cit., p. 54.

attention of penologists. Although penological studies have made little use of social distance, this concept has a great potential in understanding what is occurring in the interactional field involving both inmates and staff. That is, as the existing studies have clearly shown, staff-inmate relationships are greatly affected by the social distance gap that functions between the two.

## CHAPTER III

### DATA COLLECTION

This chapter discusses the process that took place in collecting the data. The major items included are descriptions of: (1) the research settings; (2) the needed information; (3) the instrument used; (4) the sample subjects; and (5) gathering of data.

#### I. THE RESEARCH SETTINGS

As was mentioned in Chapter I, this study was an investigation to determine whether there existed any significant difference in the degree of social distance held by staffs of varying degrees of contiguity with inmates.

The data were collected at two adult correctional institutions, the United States Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana, and the Indiana Reformatory at Pendelton, Indiana.<sup>1</sup> The reasons for choosing these particular institutions for the present study were:

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<sup>1</sup>For a brief description of these two Institutions, see Appendix A, pp. 88-91.

First, these institutions seemed to fairly well satisfy the basic requirement of being "total institutions," certain aspects of which were the underlying conditions upon which the present study was formulated. As Goffman has stipulated, a total institution is characterized by "the handling of many human needs by bureaucratic organization of whole blocks of people . . . ." <sup>2</sup> From this fact two important implications follow: <sup>3</sup> (1) in such situations there is a basic cleavage between the large managed group and the small supervisory staff; and (2) social distance, for the most part, is characteristically great, and social mobility between the two strata is greatly restricted with social distance often formally prescribed. In view of the size of the inmate population of these two institutions, slightly over 1300 at the United States Penitentiary (hereinafter referred to as Penitentiary) and approximately 2400 at the Indiana Reformatory, it seemed that they were appropriate

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<sup>2</sup>Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions: The Inmate World," The Prison, Donald R. Cressey, editor (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.



examples where the en masse or block handling of inmates was a common procedure in meeting many of the inmate population needs with a manifestation of the aforementioned two implications. That is, in these two correctional institutional settings, there was a large managed group or inmate group supervised by a relatively small staff. The staff at the Penitentiary numbered 275, and at the Reformatory somewhat over 400. Likewise, characteristic of both settings was a split or caste-like division existing between the two groups expressed in the manner of a superordinate-subordinate arrangement where social distance appeared to function to maintain such a status-distinction relationship.

Second, the receptiveness of the administration of both institutions in having such a study carried out in their institution and their cooperativeness in availing to this investigator the means whereby the needed data could be collected, were also important factors in their selection for this study.

Third, a further consideration in their choice was their relative accessibility in regard to distance to this investigator whose residence was located in Terre Haute, Indiana.

## II. INFORMATION NEEDED TO EXECUTE THE STUDY

In order to execute this study the following three kinds of information were needed: (1) information about staffs' official positions in the institution, which later were grouped into categories in such a manner as to represent different degrees of contiguity; (2) the staffs' attitude toward the inmates with regard to social distance (for the first subhypothesis); and (3) the staffs' evaluation of their personal distance toward inmates (for the second subhypothesis).

## III. THE INSTRUMENT USED<sup>4</sup>

The instrument used for the data collection was an anonymous questionnaire developed by this investigator, as described in the following pages. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part one was to identify each individual staff member's official position from a listing of job categories; part two an attitudinal scale; and part three a personal distance scale, both of the latter being

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<sup>4</sup>Samples of the Questionnaires are appended. See, Appendix B, pp. 92-96.

made up of scaled items.<sup>5</sup>

The Social Distance Scale and the Personal Distance Scale. Failure to find on the market an appropriate instrument for this particular investigation necessitated that this investigator develop one. The social distance scale and the personal distance scale used in this study are modified versions of the ones constructed by Pearlin and Rosenberg for use in their study in a mental hospital setting.<sup>6</sup> It was, however, necessary to modify these scales only slightly to make them appropriate for the present study.

The following modifications were made to Pearlin and

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<sup>5</sup>Although the questionnaire administered to both institutions asked for the three kinds of information as earlier mentioned, the one given out at the Reformatory was modified slightly in form from the one that was administered at the Penitentiary. It differed in that an additional job classification of supervisory officer was listed from which staff could signify what job category their position best fit into, besides asking for the staff member's time worked in corrections and for personal comments.

<sup>6</sup>Leonard I. Pearlin and Morris Rosenberg, "Nurse-Patient Social Distance and the Structural Context of a Mental Hospital," American Sociological Review, XXVII (February, 1962), 58.

Rosenberg's social distance scale as indicated by the substitution of the word or words in parentheses for the word or words underlined.

- (1) If you get too friendly with patients (inmates), they often lose respect for you.
- (2) It's a bad idea to get too friendly with patients (inmates).
- (3) You have to keep your distance from mental patients (inmates), otherwise they are liable to forget you are a nurse or nursing assistant (staff member).
- (4) It's hard to be friendly with patients (inmates) without its becoming too personal.
- (5) One of the problems in getting friendly with patients (inmates) is that patients (inmates) don't know where to draw the line.
- (6) It's all right to get friendly with patients (inmates) but not too friendly.

The changes made to Pearlin and Rosenberg's personal distance scale were as follows, with the replacement of the word or words in parentheses for the word or words underlined.

- (1) I often find pleasure in talking about myself to

patients (inmates).

- (2) I often become quite personally attached to patients on my ward (inmates under my supervision), and in a way am sorry to see them leave the ward (transferred to other assignments or institutions).<sup>7</sup>
- (3) Whenever possible, it is fun to sit down with a patient (inmate) and just pass the time of day talking.
- (4) One patient (inmate) is more or less the same as any other.
- (5) When I get to know a patient (inmate) well, I find that I talk to him just as I would anyone else.

The validity of the instrument, even though it was modified as was mentioned above and administered in different settings, could be assumed relatively high enough to draw meaningful conclusions from the analysis of the data collected through the use of this instrument. Some of the

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<sup>7</sup>In that staff who function in administrative, business and clerical roles would possibly have no inmates under their immediate supervision but who would nevertheless have contact with inmates for various other reasons, it was inserted after "inmates under my supervision," in parenthesis, "or inmates you have dealings with for whatever reasons" to take care of such situations.

reasons for assuming the above are: (1) the reproducibility of the two Guttman scales of the original instrument developed by Pearlin and Rosenberg to measure the dimensions of social distance and personal distance in both cases is .95, with their scalability according to the Menzel formula .85 and .82 respectively;<sup>8</sup> and (2) a correctional institution and a mental hospital have many basic similarities. As was noted in Chapter II, some of the more fundamental characteristics found to be common to both are: (a) a cleavage or caste-like division between staff and inmates; (b) multiple goals of incarceration, custodial care and rehabilitation; and (c) an authoritarian-bureaucratic structure in which status-distinction relationships are formally prescribed.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Pearlin and Rosenberg, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>Further, Goffman, in speaking collectively of mental hospitals, prisons and similar institutions, clearly points out the similarities that can be found with regard to the nature of such staff-inmate relationships. On this point he states: "Each grouping tends to conceive of the other in terms of narrow hostile stereotypes: staff often seeing inmates as bitter, secretive and untrustworthy, while inmates often see staff as condescending, high-handed and mean. Staff tends to feel superior and righteous; inmates tend, in some ways at least, to feel inferior, weak, blameworthy and guilty." Goffman, op. cit., p. 18.

The changes that were made to the items in both scales, as just described, were minimal in extent and consistent with the context of the original scales.

#### IV. THE SAMPLE SUBJECTS AND GROUPING

The sample subjects from the Penitentiary consisted of 77 correctional officers, 28 department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees, and 20 administrative, business and clerical personnel. As a composite institution sample, they numbered 125 and represented the number of questionnaires returned out of 185 distributed to all such categorized employees. From the Reformatory, the sample subjects were comprised of 55 correctional officers, 11 department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees, and 29 administrative, business and clerical staff. This total of 95 subjects made up the institution sample at the Reformatory and represented all department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees, all administrative, business and clerical personnel, and 55 of the 60 correctional officers assigned to the day shift.

Breaking the staff into differential groupings. As specified above, these three job divisions made up part one

of the questionnaire with each job category being representative of a difference in degree of contiguity or contact that a staff member has with inmates as defined in terms of his role position. As earlier noted, in the case of the Reformatory, the job category of supervisory officer, for the purpose of this study, was combined with the correctional officer group in that it denoted a ranked order in the correctional officer hierarchy but not a supervisory position comparable to a department head or similarly situated employee. From these job classifications, then, staff members were grouped according to differences in degree of contiguity with inmates.

These three job classifications of correctional officer, department head and/or supervisor-in-charge of other employees, and administrative, business and clerical personnel were designated the "most contiguous group," the "moderately contiguous group," and the "least contiguous group," respectively. Since the data from both institutions revealed that few staff placed themselves in the "moderately contiguous group" or job category of department head and/or supervisor-in-charge of other employees, staff members were therefore separated into a "contiguous group" and a



"noncontiguous group." In this schism, correctional officers (plus supervisory officers in the case of the Reformatory) made up the "contiguous group," while the "noncontiguous group" was comprised of the remaining job categories.

Correctional officers were designated the "contiguous group" in that they had the chief responsibility for the day-to-day supervision of the inmates, and with whom the inmates had the most face-to-face contacts.<sup>10</sup> The "moderately contiguous group" was made up of staff who functioned as department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees because in the performance of their roles they were principally concerned with overseeing the total operation of any one department or area of work. Consequently, the time such personnel, as compared to correctional officers, allotted to individual inmate contacts was

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<sup>10</sup>The Interagency Board of U.S. Civil Service Examiners, Correctional Officer with the Federal Prison Service (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 3; and National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Corrections in Indiana, A Report Prepared by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (New York: National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1967), I, p. 5.40.

necessarily circumscribed.<sup>11</sup> Inasmuch as the administrative, business and clerical personnel rarely had the opportunity to interact with inmates or found it necessary to do so (unless it was perhaps with a few inmate janitors or clerks that may have been assigned to these various offices), they constituted the "least contiguous group."<sup>12</sup>

#### V. GATHERING THE DATA

Distribution of the questionnaire to the staff of the Penitentiary was handled through the personnel office. The personnel clerk was the responsible person in seeing to it that they were distributed to all department heads, who in turn saw to it that they were distributed to the employees within their respective departments. A second distribution was made of the questionnaire inasmuch as the percentage of return from the first distribution was low. The initial distribution was made in April 1969 with the follow-up distribution occurring in May 1969. Once the questionnaire was

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<sup>11</sup>Interview with Mr. Reed, Personnel Officer, U.S. Penitentiary, April, 1969; and interview with Mr. Schroeder, Assistant Superintendent, Indiana Reformatory, June, 1969.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

received by the individual, it was his responsibility to see to it that it was returned to the personnel office, if he chose to fill it out. On each form was the notation:

"Return to Personnel Office."

On the initial distribution of the questionnaire, 43 were returned by the correctional officers, 13 by the department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees and 18 by the administrative, business and clerical personnel--a total of 74 or 40 per cent. The follow-up distribution produced 53 more questionnaires which brought the total return to 127 or 68 per cent. To break this down into job classifications, 20 out of 20 or a 100 per cent return was received from the administrative, business and clerical personnel; 28 out of 31 or a 90 per cent return was received from the department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees; and 79 out of 134 or a 58 per cent return was received from the correctional officers. Of the questionnaires returned, only two could not be utilized. Therefore, of the 185 questionnaires distributed, 125 or 67 per cent were returned that were usable for this part of the investigation.

In the case of the Reformatory, the distribution and

the collection of the questionnaire was made by this investigator with the help of staff.

In giving out the questionnaire, this investigator was first introduced to the correctional officers that made up the day shift by the Captain of that shift at their morning formation prior to going on duty. After this introduction, a brief explanation as to the nature of the study was given with the subsequent handout of the forms to this group of employees. If they chose to fill it out, they were instructed by the Captain to return it to a correctional officer stationed in the sally port any time prior to going off duty that day.

After distribution was made to the correctional officers, the Assistant Superintendent personally took this investigator to the various offices located outside the walled area where distribution was made to these employees. These people, for the most part, consisted of administrative, business and clerical personnel with a few department heads included. After this investigator was introduced by the Assistant Superintendent to these people upon entering each office, the purpose of the study was briefly explained, as was the case with the correctional officers. On leaving

each office the employees were told by the Assistant Superintendent that this investigator would return that afternoon of the same day to collect all completed questionnaires. After distribution was made to these employees, one of the case workers took this investigator around to the various staff located within the walled area; there the same procedure was followed with the exception that these people were asked by the case worker to return the questionnaires to the Assistant Superintendent's office prior to their going off duty that day.

The subjects to whom the questionnaire was administered at the Reformatory, then, included all department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees; all administrative, business and clerical personnel; and all correctional officers who made up the day shift, numbering 11, 29 and 60 respectively.

Of the total of 100 questionnaires distributed, 95 or 95 per cent were returned. Broken down into job categories, of the 11 department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees, 11 were returned or 100 per cent; of the 29 administrative, business and clerical personnel, 29 were returned or 100 per cent; and of the 60

correctional officers, 55 were returned or 91 per cent. Of those questionnaires returned, all could be used in the study.

In conclusion: Caution was exercised in the steps taken to gather the data to assure that the information collected was valid and relevant to the characteristics in which this investigation was concerned. Although the measuring instrument selected for use in this study was originally devised for use in a mental hospital setting, the slight modification made to it in order to make it appropriate for use in a prison setting in no way altered the content material of the items and, consequently, the characteristic they were intended to measure. Furthermore, the criterion used in dividing the staff into differential groupings to represent differences in degree of contiguity with inmates, was based on role positions that have been explicitly defined.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents the test of the hypothesis, incidental observations, and a discussion and interpretation of the results of the data analyzed.

#### I. TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

As stated in Chapter I, the major hypothesis under investigation in this study was: The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the social distance between the staff and inmates. And this main hypothesis was restructured into two subhypotheses:

(1) The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the more unfavorable the attitudes of the staff toward the inmates will be. (2) The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the personal distance between the staff and inmates.

To collect the data needed to test these two subhypotheses, as was discussed in the previous chapter, an anonymous three-part questionnaire was used. All items on both Social Distance and Personal Distance scales of the

questionnaire were answerable by respondents by endorsing either "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," or "Strongly Disagree." Examination of the completed questionnaires, however, revealed that most of the respondents' endorsements to the above four categories on the scale items were so concentrated as to pose a great difficulty in analyzing such data appropriately to test the two subhypotheses.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it was decided to score the questionnaire by grouping the respondents into two groups, as either "low" or "high" in both Social Distance and Personal Distance.

In regard to the Social Distance, persons agreeing to, out of a set of six items, zero to three (0 to 3) items were categorized as "low" in social distance; and those who were in agreement with four to six (4 to 6) items were "high" in social distance. In the case of Personal Distance, respondents agreeing to, out of a set of five items, three to five (3 to 5) items were classified as "low" in personal distance; and those agreeing to zero to two

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix D for frequency distribution of endorsements to scale items on the questionnaire, pp. 101-102.



(0 to 2) items were "high" in personal distance.<sup>2</sup>

Test of subhypothesis one. To test subhypothesis one, "The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the more unfavorable the attitudes of the staff toward the inmates will be," the data was grouped into a Contiguous Group and a Noncontiguous Group to which the chi square test of significance was applied, with the region of rejection set at the .05 level.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>In regard to the Personal Distance Scale, item four, "One inmate is more or less the same as any other," was stated in a reverse manner in comparison to the other four items on the scale. Consequently, a reverse scoring was applied to this particular item so as to maintain a uniformity of scoring with the rest of the items.

<sup>3</sup>The chi square formula used\*:

$$x^2(1df) = \sum_{k=1}^K \left[ \frac{(|f_{o,k} - f_{e,k}| - .5)^2}{f_{e,k}} \right]$$

\*Daniel S. Lordahl, Modern Statistics for Behavioral Sciences (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1967), p. 203.

In considering first the relationship between positional contiguity of Penitentiary staff and social distance, as shown in Table I, it can be seen that they were not related. In fact, both groups were found to be identical in the percentage of staff who were high and low in social distance. The chi square value yielded was .098 with one degree of freedom (hereinafter referred to as df) which was found not to be significant at the .05 level.

TABLE I  
POSITIONS OF PENITENTIARY STAFF AND THEIR  
SOCIAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Social Distance	Contiguous Group		Noncontiguous Group		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	45	58	28	58	73	58
Low	32	42	20	42	52	42
Totals	<u>77</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>100</u>

$$\chi^2 (1df) = .098 \quad P > .05$$

Table II presents the relationship between positional contiguity and social distance in regard to Reformatory staff. As this table shows, the two were found to be unrelated. The Contiguous Group, however, was found to be somewhat more disposed to high social distance as compared to the Noncontiguous Group. The chi square value obtained was .403 with 1df which was found not to be significant at the .05 level.

TABLE II  
POSITIONS OF REFORMATORY STAFF AND THEIR  
SOCIAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Social Distance	Contiguous Group		Noncontiguous Group		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	35	64	22	55	57	60
Low	20	36	18	45	38	40
Totals	55	100	40	100	95	100

$$\chi^2 (1df) = .403 \quad P > .05$$

The results of the chi square test as applied to the

data from these two institutions did not substantiate sub-hypothesis one. In other words, differences in degree of contiguity with regard to staff-inmate relationships were found not to be a significant factor in affecting staff attitudes of social distance toward inmates.

Test of subhypothesis two. In order to test sub-hypothesis two, namely, "The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the personal distance between the staff and inmates," the data were likewise grouped in such a manner as to represent a Contiguous Group and a Noncontiguous Group to which the chi square test of significance was also applied, with the region of rejection set at the .05 level.

In looking first at the relationship between positional contiguity of Penitentiary staff and personal distance, as presented in Table III on the following page, 79 per cent of both the Contiguous Group and the Noncontiguous Group showed high in personal distance. The chi square value yielded was .039 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE III  
POSITIONS OF PENITENTIARY STAFF AND THEIR  
PERSONAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Personal Distance	Contiguous Group		Noncontiguous Group		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	61	79	38	79	99	79
Low	16	21	10	21	26	21
Totals	77	100	48	100	125	100

$$\chi^2 (1df) = .039 \quad P > .05$$

The relationship between positional contiguity of Reformatory staff and personal distance is shown in Table IV on the next page. As this table shows, the Reformatory staff also maintained a high personal distance with inmates and particularly so in the case of the Contiguous Group, in which 90 per cent of them showed high in personal distance. The chi square value obtained was 5.41 with 1df which was found to be significant at the .02 level. That is, differences in degree of contiguity with respect to staff-inmate relationships were found to be a significant factor

in affecting staff attitudes of personal distance toward inmates.

TABLE IV  
POSITIONS OF REFORMATORY STAFF AND THEIR  
PERSONAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Personal Distance	Contiguous Group		Noncontiguous Group		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	50	90	28	70	78	82
Low	5	10	12	30	17	18
Totals	55	100	40	100	95	100

$$x^2 (1df) = 5.41 \quad P < .05 \quad P < .02$$

The results of the chi square test as applied to the data with respect to personal distance from these two institutions did not agree with each other as to whether subhypothesis two is tenable or untenable. The data from the Penitentiary did not substantiate it, while the data from the Reformatory did.

## II. INCIDENTAL OBSERVATIONS

In that the data were collected at two adult correctional institutions, certain comparisons between the two settings in regard to these two dimensions of distance were made possible. In making such comparisons, the data lent themselves to the chi square test of significance, with the region of rejection set at the .05 level.

Other observations to be noted are: (1) a comparison between the Contiguous Groups and the Noncontiguous Groups of the two institutions in respect to social distance and personal distance; (2) the relationship between these two dimensions of distance in each of the institutions; and (3) the relationship between the years Reformatory staff worked in corrections and their social distance and personal distance toward inmates.

Table V, on the following page, presents a comparison between the Contiguous Groups of these two institutions with regard to social distance. As this table shows, over 50 per cent of the Contiguous Group in both institutions was high in social distance. The Reformatory group, however, was more inclined to attitudes of high social distance

toward inmates. The chi square value yielded was .186 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE V  
CONTIGUOUS GROUPS AND THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCE  
FROM INMATES IN THE REFORMATORY  
AND THE PENITENTIARY

Social Distance	Reformatory		Penitentiary		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	35	64	45	58	80	61
Low	20	36	32	42	52	39
Totals	<u>55</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>100</u>

$$\chi^2 (1df) = .186 \quad P > .05$$

On the following page, Table VI shows the comparison between the Contiguous Groups of these two institutions with regard to personal distance. In both of these groups, attitudes of personal distance were high. Of staff who made up the Contiguous Group at the Reformatory, 90 per cent was high in personal distance, while 79 per cent of the comparable group at the Penitentiary was high. The chi square



value obtained was 2.39 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level. It was, however, significant at the .10 level.

TABLE VI  
CONTIGUOUS GROUPS AND THEIR PERSONAL DISTANCE  
FROM INMATES IN THE REFORMATORY  
AND THE PENITENTIARY

Personal Distance	Reformatory		Penitentiary		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	50	90	61	79	111	84
Low	5	10	16	21	21	16
Totals	<u>55</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>100</u>

$$\chi^2 (1df) = 2.39 \quad P > .05 \quad P < .10$$

In looking at the Noncontiguous Groups of these two institutions, as Table VII on the next page shows, over 50 per cent of both institution samples were found to be high in social distance toward inmates. The chi square value yielded was .005 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE VII  
NONCONTIGUOUS GROUPS AND THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCE  
FROM INMATES IN THE REFORMATORY  
AND THE PENITENTIARY

Social Distance	Reformatory		Penitentiary		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	22	55	28	58	50	56
Low	18	45	20	42	38	44
Totals	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>100</u>

$$x^2 (1df) = .005 \quad P > .05$$

A comparison between the Noncontiguous Groups of these two institutions with regard to personal distance is presented in Table VIII, on the following page. As this table shows, 70 per cent of the Reformatory group and 79 per cent of the Penitentiary group were high in personal distance toward inmates. The chi square value obtained was .549 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE VIII  
NONCONTIGUOUS GROUPS AND THEIR PERSONAL DISTANCE  
FROM INMATES IN THE REFORMATORY  
AND THE PENITENTIARY

Personal Distance	Reformatory		Penitentiary		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	28	70	38	79	66	75
Low	12	30	10	21	22	25
Totals	40	100	48	100	88	100

$$x^2 (1df) = .549 \quad P > .05$$

As pointed out in Chapter I, social distance referred to the extent to which a staff member exercised reserve in his interaction with inmates, while personal distance was the degree to which a staff member interacted with inmates as a means of gaining an element of personal satisfaction. The relation between these two attitudes and the extent to which they overlap or depart from each other are presented in Table IX on page 62 in regard to the Penitentiary. It can be seen from this table that every combination of

social distance and personal distance was exhibited. Some of the staff were highly conscious of social distance in thinking of their relations with inmates, but nevertheless expressed close personal distance toward them. One might have suspected that a certain relatedness between these two dimensions of distance would exist. The data, however, not only failed to bring this out but clearly pointed out that the two attitudes were by no means identical, as 73 per cent of the staff were high in personal distance while being low in social distance. The chi square value yielded was 1.507 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE IX  
THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DISTANCE OF  
PENITENTIARY STAFF FROM INMATES

Personal Distance	Social Distance					
	High		Low		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	61	84	38	73	99	79
Low	12	16	14	27	26	21
Totals	73	100	52	100	125	100

$$x^2 (1df) = 1.507 \quad P > .05$$

The data that are set forth in Table X, on the following page, show the relationship between these two dimensions of distance in respect to the Reformatory and the degree to which they overlap or depart from each other. As this table reveals, these two attitudes were likewise found to be dissimilar in the case of the Reformatory, as 82 per cent was high in personal distance while being low in social distance. The chi square value obtained was .024 with 1df which was

found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE X  
THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DISTANCE OF  
REFORMATORY STAFF FROM INMATES

Personal Distance	Social Distance					
	High		Low		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	47	82	31	82	78	82
Low	10	18	7	18	17	18
Totals	57	100	38	100	95	100

$$x^2 (1df) = .024 \quad P > .05$$

On the questionnaire distributed at the Reformatory, staff were asked to indicate the time they had worked in corrections. Table XI, on the next page, shows the relationship between the years staff worked in corrections, and social distance. As can be seen from this table, those who had worked in corrections for five or more years were only slightly more disposed to attitudes high in social distance

toward inmates in comparison to those who had worked in corrections for five or less. The chi square value yielded was .115 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE XI

YEARS REFORMATORY STAFF WORKED IN CORRECTIONS  
AND THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Social Distance	Five years or less		Over Five years		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	23	58	34	63	57	61
Low	17	42	20	37	37	39
Totals	<u>40</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>94*</u>	<u>100</u>

\*The grand total in this table is one less than the number of sample subjects used in this part of the study. One respondent did not indicate the time he worked in corrections.

$$\chi^2 (1df) = .115 \quad P > .05$$

The relationship between the years staff worked in corrections, and personal distance is shown in Table XII. As this table reveals, no appreciable difference in attitudes of personal distance toward inmates was shown between staff with less than five years in comparison to staff with over five years experience. The chi square value obtained was .495 with 1df which was found to be not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE XII  
YEARS REFORMATORY STAFF WORKED IN CORRECTIONS  
AND THEIR PERSONAL DISTANCE FROM INMATES

Personal Distance	Five years or less		Over Five years		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
High	31	78	46	85	77	81
Low	9	22	8	15	17	19
Totals	40	100	54	100	94*	100

\*The same discrepancy in regard to the grand total exists in this table as in Table XI, page 64.

$$x^2 (1df) = .495 \text{ } P > .05$$



### III. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data from the Penitentiary failed to substantiate either of the two subhypotheses of this study. On the other hand, the Reformatory data failed to support the first subhypothesis while the second was substantiated, namely, "The more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the personal distance between the staff and inmates."

The analysis of the data from the Penitentiary evidenced that positional contiguity was neither related to social distance nor to personal distance. In other words, the social distance and the personal distance held by the staff toward inmates were apparently not affected by the contiguous nature of the staff-inmate relationship so far as the Penitentiary staff were concerned. In the case of the Reformatory, the data revealed that while positional contiguity and social distance were unrelated, the positional contiguity was a significant factor in relation to personal distance.

Possible reasons for this study's failure to produce the expected results are as follows: (1) inappropriate

conceptual structure; (2) inadequacy of the measuring instrument; (3) inadequacy in the size of the sample; (4) subcultural influence; and (5) administration of the questionnaire. Each of these reasons will be examined separately.

Inappropriate conceptual structure. Of the reasons considered, foremost in importance would appear to do with the structure of the concept of "total institutions," upon which the theoretical frame of this study was based. That is, inasmuch as both the prison and the mental hospital are total institutions as defined by Goffman, with fundamental characteristics common to both, consequently, it was presupposed that the differing ramifications stemming from such characteristics would, then, likewise show certain parallelisms for these two institutions. More specifically, the problem for this study stemmed from two studies on social distance conducted in two mental hospital settings. As these two studies showed, staff in close association with patients were disposed to a greater social distance toward patients compared to staff who were in a less contiguous relationship with them. Following through with Goffman's

concept of total institutions, it seemed quite logical to assume that a similar situation in regard to staff-inmate relationships would also exist in a prison. Therefore, it was hypothesized that staff in a central role-relationship with prisoners would be inclined to hold greater social distance toward prisoners as compared to staff who functioned in a less contiguous role-relationship with them.

The conceptual frame of this study, as seen above, did not take into account the fact that the prison and the mental hospital were also dissimilar in certain important respects. When he was discussing the total institution, Goffman was principally concerned with characteristics common to all such institutions; he did note briefly, however, the fact that such institutions are organized with different purposes. In fact, he broke down the total institutions found in contemporary American society into five groupings in accordance to their established purposes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Goffman grouped total institutions in accordance to their established purposes as follows: (1) institutions to care for persons who are unable to look after themselves and who are innocuous; (2) institutions to care for persons who are unable to look after themselves but who in addition

The difference in their established purpose on the basis of which Goffman grouped the prison apart from the mental hospital would seem to bear heavily on the differential attitudinal orientation of staff toward their subordinates--inmates and patients.

The mental hospital is established to care for persons unable to look after themselves and who may in addition be an unintentional threat to the community. The prison, on the other hand, is organized to protect society from persons who intentionally act in anti-social ways, with the welfare of the incarcerated individual not necessarily the primary concern. With this difference between the established purpose of the prison and the mental hospital, it follows that persons committed to these two kinds of institutions manifest different problems which in turn society handles and looks upon in different ways. Prisoners

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are an unintentional menace to the community; (3) institutions to protect society from intentional acts of anti-social behavior on the part of persons; (4) institutions established to perform some specific work-like task; and (5) institutions organized as retreats that in conjunction serve as training centers. Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions: The Inmate World," The Prison, Donald R. Cressey, editor (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), pp. 16-17.

are generally stereotyped as dangerous and untrustworthy in addition to being viewed at times as morally repugnant. Mental patients, on the other hand, are more often looked upon with compassion or, at worst, with ambivalence. In other words, staff's way of reacting to their charges may reflect such societal attitudes toward mental patients and prisoners.

Furthermore, the inmate group in the prison is monosexual while it is heterosexual in the mental hospital; and a greater proportion of the staff in mental hospitals are women than is the case of the male prison. It would likewise seem reasonable to assume that these differences between the prison and the mental hospital would also affect the differential attitudinal orientation of staff with respect to these two types of institutions.

In conclusion, Goffman's concept of total institutions appears to be too general; and as a generic organizational type, he proposes, in effect, that all organizations which meet the criteria of total institutions will generate like intrinsic properties. In other words, the difficulty with the concept of total institutions is that it provides too homogeneous an image of diverse organizational forms.

Inadequacy of the measuring instrument. Differences between the prison and the mental hospital, of which some have already been noted, would naturally bear on the validity of both social and personal distance scales. Further, scale items were small in number and should have been made up of twenty items each for the two scales.

Inadequacy in the size of the sample. The sample subjects drawn from the two Institutions were comparatively small compared to the total number of officers that staffed these two institutions. That is, of the entire correctional officer staff of 134 at the Penitentiary who were asked to fill out the questionnaire, only seventy-five or 58 per cent did so. Although the correctional officers at the Reformatory numbered over 200, the sample subjects were limited to those officers who made up the day shift, or sixty officers, of which fifty-five or 91 per cent completed the questionnaire.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the institution sample for both institutions

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<sup>5</sup>This manner in selecting the Contiguous Group at the Reformatory was done at the suggestion of the Institution's administration in order to facilitate the ease in the distribution and the collection of the questionnaire to this particular group of employees.

cannot be considered an adequate representation of the correctional officer group as a whole, and particularly so in the case of the Reformatory. On the other hand, of those staff who were classified as "noncontiguous" at the Reformatory and the Penitentiary for the purpose of this study, 100 per cent and 94 per cent, respectively, were represented in the two Institution samples.

Subcultural influence. As members of a prison official subculture, staff may have, in a stereotyped manner, reflected in their endorsements on the questionnaire the subcultural norms of these two institutions governing staff relationships with inmates. For example, staff are generally cautioned not to become too friendly with inmates since the latter will take advantage of them. That is, by becoming too friendly with inmates, their position as a symbol of authority may be subverted to inmates' own purposes. As the normative system of a formal organization, the official subculture is to function, as Caplow has pointed out, in such a manner as to engender in its members expected feelings and beliefs one is to hold toward others

in related role positions.<sup>6</sup> A relatively high social and personal distance toward inmates yielded in this study may evidence this point. Moreover, this would also seem to explain why the dispersion of endorsements to the two sets of scale items on the questionnaire were highly concentrated.

Administration of the questionnaire. The manner in which the questionnaire was distributed at the two institutions would seem to have been an influencing factor as to how staff received it and in turn responded to it. At the Penitentiary, since the questionnaire was distributed through routine official channels, it would seem reasonable to suppose that in many instances the questionnaire was responded to in a like perfunctory manner. On the other hand, at the Reformatory, administration of the questionnaire was done on a more personal basis thereby allowing the subjects to feel personable in responding to the questionnaire. It would seem plausible to assume, then, that this

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<sup>6</sup>Theodore Caplow, Principles of Organization (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964), p. 81.



factor, difference in the administration of the questionnaire when coupled with the influence of official subculture on the subjects, played a significant part in influencing the manner in which the respondents of the two institutions filled out the questionnaire and, therefore, in the differences in results.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The theoretical basis for this study was derived from an examination of the nature and characteristics of the concept of social distance. Writers identify the central feature of social distance as a mechanism of social differentiation, a functional exigency in any social situation involving authority-hierarchy or stratification. The prison, being a microcosm of a rigidly stratified society in which status-distinction relationships between staff and inmates are expressed in a manner of superposed arrangements, was thought to provide an optimal opportunity to observe what role such social distance plays in its day-to-day operation.

Specifically, the aim of this study was to see if there existed differences in attitudes between staffs of different role-relationships toward inmates with regard to social distance. The hypothesis tendered for this investigation was: The more contiguous the staff-inmate

relationship becomes, the greater will be the social distance between the staff and inmates. Inasmuch as social distance was thought to have both affective and behavioral aspects, this major hypothesis was restructured into two subhypotheses: (1) the more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the more unfavorable the attitudes of the staff toward the inmates will be; and (2) the more contiguous the staff-inmate relationship becomes, the greater will be the personal distance between the staff and inmates.

The data, collected at the United States Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana, and the Indiana Reformatory at Pendelton, Indiana, consisted of staffs' official positions and their social distance (for the first subhypothesis) and personal distance (for the second subhypothesis) toward inmates. Staff were classified to represent differences in degree of contiguity with inmates in accordance to their institutional role positions, namely, the Contiguous Group and the Noncontiguous Group. Correctional officers were classed into the Contiguous Group, while department heads and/or supervisors-in-charge of other employees, administrative, business and clerical personnel comprised the Noncontiguous Group. The gathering of the data was

accomplished through the use of an anonymous questionnaire.

The analysis of the data failed to substantiate the major hypothesis in its entirety. The data from the Penitentiary showed that a difference in degree of contiguity with regard to staff-inmate relationships was not a factor to affect significantly the staff's social and personal distance toward inmates. The percentage of staff "high" in social distance for both the Contiguous and the Noncontiguous Groups was the same, 58 per cent; and the percentage of staff "high" in personal distance for both the Contiguous and the Noncontiguous Groups was also identical, 79 per cent.

In the case of the Reformatory, the findings revealed that while the relationship between positional contiguity and social distance was unrelated, the relationship between positional contiguity and personal distance was found to be significantly related. The percentage of staff "high" in personal distance for the Contiguous Group and the Noncontiguous Group were 90 per cent and 70 per cent, respectively. Although positional contiguity and social distance was found to be unrelated in the case of the Reformatory, it would seem worthy to note that 64 per cent of the Contiguous

Group were "high" in social distance compared to 55 per cent for the Noncontiguous Group.

The possible reasons considered to account for the study's failure to produce the expected results were: (1) inappropriate conceptual structure; (2) inadequacy in the measuring instrument; (3) inadequacy in the size of the sample; (4) subcultural influence; and (5) the manner in which the questionnaire was administered.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

The staffs of both the United States Penitentiary and the Indiana Reformatory were found to be holding a relatively "high" social distance and an even higher personal distance toward inmates. The Contiguous Groups of the two institutions when viewed as a composite group, showed that 61 per cent were "high" in social distance while 84 per cent were "high" in personal distance. The Noncontiguous Groups when viewed as a composite group, showed that 56 per cent and 74 per cent were "high" in social distance and personal distance, respectively. If nothing else, these percentages would certainly indicate, as other prison studies have consistently revealed, that a definite cleavage

does exist between staff and inmates and that the caste-like division between these two groups is one of the more fundamental characteristics of these two institutions. In short, the prison is a microcosm of a stratified society.

Correctional workers generally concur that social conditions are the major determinant of criminality. That is, criminal behavior is bred under conditions of impoverishment of the quality and quantity of human relationships. Consequently, social conditions serve as a crucial factor in any rehabilitation efforts. The social climate of a social system stems from the patterning of interpersonal contact and communication between its members. Whether prisoners will be returned to society as useful, productive members will, in large measure, depend upon the nature of their prison experiences, particularly the kinds of relationships they have had with staff members. The social distance gap, as was evidenced in this investigation between staff and inmates, would seem to affect not only the nature of the individual staff-inmate relationship but, more importantly, the rehabilitative climate of the total institution. Although the concept of social distance has attracted relatively little attention of penologists, an

intelligible use of this conceptual frame may produce a deeper insight into the phenomenon of staff-inmate relationship.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Through the entire experience of this investigation, the writer came to feel that the following problems are in need of further study:

(1) The concept of total institutions pioneered by Goffman needs to be subjected to further examination. As was mentioned in Chapter IV, the difficulty with the concept of total institutions is that it provides too homogeneous an image of what are really diverse organizational forms. For example, the mental hospital is quite different from the prison from the standpoint of sex composition of both staff and their charges, in addition to the kind of problems persons committed to their care manifest. That is, the properties of one kind of total institution may not necessarily be possessed by other kinds of total institutions. Hence, studies directed toward reconstruction and/or refinement of the very concept of total institutions are not only desirable but also imperative if any empirical study is to be

conducted within this conceptual frame.

(2) As was pointed out in Chapter III, there was no available instrument on the market specifically designed for the measurement of social distance on the part of prison officials toward prisoners. Thus, foremost in importance to further social distance study in prisons would be the development of a social distance scale that is not only valid but also sensitive and reliable.

(3) Much of the literature on the prison deals with the inmate social system or subculture to the almost exclusion of what might be termed the official subculture of officialdom. Although the prison official is guided by formally prescribed rules and regulations in his dealings with prisoners, a system of informal norms may equally, if not more profoundly, influence his relations with prisoners. A penetrating insight of the staff-inmate relationship needs a systematic study in the nature and characteristics, as well as the effects, of such official subcultures upon the staff-inmate relationship.

(4) The extent to which a prison is bureaucratized may be another factor in affecting staff's social distance toward inmates. That is, regardless of a staff member's



job position, the more highly bureaucratized a prison is, perhaps the greater will be the pervasiveness of similarities of attitudes on the part of the staff toward inmates. A study in the degree of bureaucratization of prisons would provide another valuable piece of knowledge in understanding staff-inmate relationships.

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APPENDIX A  
DESCRIPTION OF INSTITUTIONS

## DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The United States Penitentiary. The institution at Terre Haute is one of six penitentiaries operated by the Federal Prison System. It is a medium-security institution completed in 1940. At the time this investigation was done, it housed slightly over 1300 inmates. The buildings, mostly two-story, are interconnected in a modified symmetrical telephone-pole design. With the exception of the farm dormitory and some other farm and maintenance buildings, the entire plant is surrounded by a high double security fence. Housing facilities for the inmates include inside and outside cells and dormitories. Inmates assigned to the farm and maintenance duties outside the security perimeter fence live in the farm dormitory located approximately a quarter of a mile from the main institution.

The institution handles younger, reformable offenders. Although inmates' ages range from a few in their late teens to a few past seventy, the great majority fall within the twenty to thirty-year age group. Persons relegated to its care have committed the gamut of federal crimes that can result in federal incarceration with sentences quite



diverse. The most common offenses are: (1) thefts of an interstate nature; (2) robbery, embezzlement and related actions against federal, or federally insured, banks; (3) violation of postal laws; (4) traffic in drugs; and (5) crimes involving the currency and internal revenue.

Work and training programs are varied. The industrial areas, notably the large textile mill and the furniture factory, employ a sizable number of the inmate population. The institution also operates two farms where about 2,700 acres are in production for crops or pasture.

The Indiana Reformatory. Of the six correctional institutions operated by the Indiana State Department of Corrections, Pendelton has the unenviable distinction of being the largest correctional institution for young offenders in the country. Built in 1923, this maximum-security institution was designed to house from 1500 to 2000 inmates. At the time this study was made, the population was about 2400. The site on which it is located consists of 1800 acres, with 32 acres enclosed within a high reinforced concrete wall.

Commitments are male prisoners ranging in age from

sixteen to less than thirty years of age. Sentences range from one year to life with every type of felonious crime represented within the inmate population. The inmates are housed in three cell-houses and one dormitory within the walls. An outside dormitory houses 254 men who are assigned to work programs outside the walls.

Various work, vocational training and educational programs are available to the inmates. Some of the major industrial operations are: (1) the furniture factory; (2) the dry kiln; (3) the tailor shop; (4) the foundries; (5) the print shop; (6) paint manufacturing; (7) the sheet metal shop; and (8) the mattress shop.

Of the 1800 acres, a little over 1200 are under cultivation on which a variety of crops are raised. In conjunction with the farm operation is a large dairy herd.

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRES

## AN OPINION SURVEY

This questionnaire is part of a study being conducted in affiliation with the Institute of Criminology at Indiana State University. It is to be filled out anonymously. The statements you are asked to respond to call for NO right or wrong answers. For this study to be meaningful, it is important that you sincerely and completely fill out the questionnaire. Your assistance in conducting this survey will be most appreciated.

From the list of job categories below, please check one that your job best fits into.

- ☐ Correctional Officer
- ☐ Administration, Business, or Clerical
- ☐ Department Head and/or Supervisor-in-charge of other employees

According to your opinion, please indicate in the appropriate space as to whether you either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree to each of the following statements.

1. If you get too friendly with inmates, they often lose respect for you.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
2. It's a bad idea to get too friendly with inmates.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. You have to keep your distance from inmates, otherwise they are liable to forget you are a staff member.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. It's hard to be friendly with inmates without its becoming too personal.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
5. One of the problems in getting friendly with inmates is that inmates don't know where to draw the line.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

6. It's all right to get friendly with inmates but not too friendly.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please respond to each of the following statements with either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

1. I often find pleasure in talking about myself to inmates.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
2. I often become quite personally attached to inmates under my supervision (or inmates you have dealings with for whatever reason), and in a way am sorry to see them transferred to other assignments or institutions.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. Whenever possible, it is fun to sit down with an inmate and just pass the time of day talking.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. One inmate is more or less the same as any other.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
5. When I get to know an inmate well, I find that I talk to him just as I would anyone else.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

## AN OPINION SURVEY

This questionnaire is part of a study being conducted in affiliation with the Institute of Criminology at Indiana State University. It is to be filled out anonymously. The statements you are asked to respond to call for NO right or wrong answers. For this study to be meaningful, it is important that you sincerely and completely fill out the questionnaire. Your assistance in conducting this survey will be most appreciated.

From the list of job categories below, please check one that your job best fits into. Also, give time worked in corrections.

- ☐ Supervisory Officer
- ☐ Correctional Officer
- ☐ Administration, Business, or Clerical
- ☐ Department Head and/or Supervisor-in-charge of other employees

Time in correctional service \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months.

According to your opinion, please indicate in the appropriate space as to whether you either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree to each of the following statements.

1. If you get too friendly with inmates, they often lose respect for you.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
2. It's a bad idea to get too friendly with inmates.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. You have to keep your distance from inmates, otherwise they are liable to forget you are a staff member.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. It's hard to be friendly with inmates without its becoming too personal.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

5. One of the problems in getting friendly with inmates is that inmates don't know where to draw the line.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
6. It's all right to get friendly with inmates but not too friendly.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please respond to each of the following statements with either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

1. I often find pleasure in talking about myself to inmates.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
2. I often become quite personally attached to inmates under my supervision (or inmates you have dealings with for whatever reason), and in a way am sorry to see them transferred to other assignments or institutions.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. Whenever possible, it is fun to sit down with an inmate and just pass the time of day talking.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. One inmate is more or less the same as any other.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
5. When I get to know an inmate well, I find that I talk to him just as I would anyone else.  
☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX C  
COMMENTS OF REFORMATORY STAFF



## COMMENTS OF REFORMATORY STAFF

In that the questionnaire distributed at the Reformatory asked for comments, various remarks were made by some of the respondents on the form. Of the 95 respondents, 22 or 23 per cent made some kind of comment on the questionnaire. Of the 22 who did comment, 6 or 27 per cent came from staff categorized as "contiguous" and 16 or 73 per cent came from staff classified as "noncontiguous." As can be seen from these comments, listed below, some have to do with the questionnaire.

1. The questions seemed to be too general.
2. This survey does not reflect my true response. The selection of choice is limited. The words "too" and "often" by definition are too broad, therefore, are indefinite.
3. Every inmate cannot be treated the same. Inmates with mental defects have to be treated different than those with normal mentality. Inmates coming from good environments have more respect than inmates coming from broken homes or no homes. I try to treat them accordingly.
4. The term "friendly" should be defined. There are different types or at least different connotations inherent in that term, as for example, congeniality, empathy, concerned and comradeship.
5. I find the statements repetitious with very little thought given to there objective. While not time consuming, they do not seem to be worth the effort to consider as a valid survey.

6. It is difficult to answer these questions without reservations. The questions must be considered in the professional doctor-client perspective or a therapeutic perspective.
7. An interest and a few kind words will help anyone through a trying situation. Inmates are human and should be treated as such.
8. Being a woman, I feel that I definitely cannot become too friendly with the inmates. However, if I were a man I would want to take more of a personal interest in them.
9. I feel that each inmate should be given the opportunity to develop his own abilities and talents, but should be treated equally in their status as inmates. I would definitely attempt to guide and make suggestions to an inmate but I would also encourage him to take the initiative and make his own decisions.
10. I feel that all the inmates of the institution should be treated equal inasmuch as they are inmates, but yet each one should be able to develop his own personality.
11. The terms used in this survey are ambiguous, to say the least. For example, what is meant by "friendly" and "too friendly?"
12. The only inmates I have ever been in close contact with have been either in the position of trustee, or semi-trustee, so they may be cut above the average. I have found them to be, for the most part, the same as anyone else, often a victim of environment or lack of guidance at home.
13. Other than our porters, I have no reason to talk to inmates. I treat them as I would anyone coming into the office and they have been very respectful.
14. I believe in being courteous with everyone.

15. I try to be courteous to all, but I do not care to carry on any conversation with any of them.
16. Questions were rather difficult to answer, as every inmate has a different personality. One could answer one way or another.
17. We have to remember that all people are not alike. Some have mental problems. Some are trying to do right and some just don't care. You can be friendly but firm.
18. They are human and should be helped in the right way whenever possible, if they so desire.
19. Persons should keep in mind that these people are human but they are also inmates. There is a reason for their being here.
20. In talking to inmates about myself, I talk to them about being good and clean and encourage them to do the same.
21. Some of these questions are leading and over bearing.
22. With the exception of personal conversation about myself, when I get to know an inmate well I talk to him just as I would to anyone else.

APPENDIX D  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF ENDORSEMENTS

TABLE XIII  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF ENDORSEMENTS TO  
SCALE ITEMS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Items	Penitentiary								Reformatory							
	Social Distance				Personal Distance				Social Distance				Personal Distance			
	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
1	23	71	27	4	2	8	68	47	26	48	18	5	1	9	36	51
2	31	74	17	3	2	10	66	46	27	59	9	2	0	10	55	32
3	6	36	64	17	2	26	63	34	10	29	52	6	1	21	43	32
4	5	22	82	16	3	22	59	41	13	28	47	9	6	16	40	35
5	12	65	44	4	7	43	57	18	25	39	30	3	3	44	33	17
6	11	93	15	4					10	63	14	9				
Totals	88	361	249	48	16	109	313	186	111	266	170	34	11	100	207	167

NOTE: SA, A, D and SD refer to Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively.