

instituted a closed-circuit TV system to help the Norfolk Hospital.

The first experiment was tried in a high security ward for women, including chronically ill and brain-damaged patients, who had been known to assault hospital aides. From 120 miles away, the Omaha psychiatrist took charge of the ward, and began training aides and the nurse in charge to handle the patients.

At first, the psychiatrist prescribed drugs to calm the patients. He listened to reports given by the staff and attempted to solve their immediate problems. Ten minutes a day were given to handling incidents reported by the aides, 10 minutes to education and 10 minutes to the patients themselves.

The Nebraska doctors claim that their project was a success. It was subsequently broadened to a total of eight wards with 350 patients. They said that the project involved the staff "more meaningfully with the patients," since they now saw themselves as "treatment personnel rather than jailers."

The patients also like the system, the doctors said.

• Science News, 89:385 May 21, 1966

## PSYCHIATRY

## Psychiatrists Condemn Capital Punishment

► CAPITAL PUNISHMENT was vigorously condemned by psychiatrists who called on members of their profession to take a more active stand against it.

Besides being outdated, immoral, expensive, cruel and unfair, the death penalty has other evil, more complex effects, Dr. Louis Jolyon West of the Oklahoma School of Medicine, Oklahoma City, told colleagues attending the American Psychiatric Association meeting.

"Legal extermination of human beings in any society generates a profound tendency among the citizens to accept killing as a solution to human problems," Dr. West said. "Its official existence symbolizes the fact that it is permissible—even desirable—to resolve issues by murder." More specifically, he charged, capital punishment may serve as an incentive to murder for those who want to die but do not have the courage to commit suicide.

Dr. West cited the case of Howard Otis Lowery who requested an Oklahoma judge to sentence him to the electric chair in 1964. Mr. Lowery, who had pleaded guilty to a previous murder in 1961, warned that if one jury would not give him death, he would get it from another.

James French, who wantonly killed a motorist, was sentenced to death, and after three years on death row murdered his cell mate. In an interview, Mr. French told Dr. West his motive for the second killing was to force the state to deliver the promised electrocution.

Many others may be found in which the "promise of the death penalty consciously or unconsciously invites violence," the psychiatrist said.

• Science News, 89:386 May 21, 1966

## Questions

How can some stellar distances be measured with new precision? p. 387.

What recent advances have scientists made in understanding the human growth hormone? p. 393.

How old are the recently discovered life forms in Transvaal, South Africa? p. 395.

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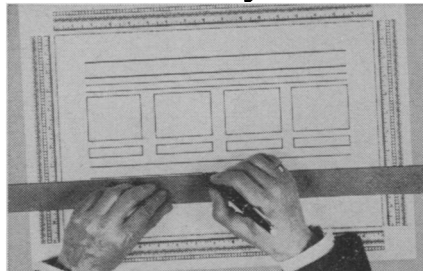
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