

the leniency of the law". There is evidence, however, that the general trend is towards a worsening of behaviour following the first finding of guilt.^{12,13} So contrary to the deterrent theory, most previous research suggests that severity of punishment and especially commitment to a penal institution is more likely than leniency to produce an escalation of delinquency.¹⁴

These facts surely point away from looking at punishment as a deterrent and focusing on preventive measures where we would need to look at the ways we bring up our children and the effect of parental attitudes and practices on them. There is a need for more community-based programmes and a move away from institutional treatment as an answer, although some institutional places will probably always be needed.

A. MARKANTONAKIS

*Institute of Family Psychiatry
The Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich*

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Special Interest Group on Philosophy and Psychiatry

DEAR SIRS

We are delighted that Council recently formalised the setting up of a Special Interest Group in **Philosophy and Psychiatry** – thank you to all those Members and Fellows who wrote in support of the group.

We are now well placed to set up an inaugural meeting which we are planning for early 1989. We will circulate details as soon as they become available.

In the meantime, the purpose of this letter is (a) to invite other colleagues who would like to hear more about the group to contact Jean Wales at the College in the first instance; and (b) to ask members and prospective members of the group to write to Dr Bill Fulford with suggestions concerning the form and activities of the group. This would help us with our own ideas as we plan the inaugural meeting.

BILL FULFORD
SIDNEY BLOCH

*Department of Psychiatry
University of Oxford
Warneford Hospital
Headington, Oxford OX37JX*

DAVID FORESHAW

*Institute of Psychiatry
London SE5*