

# THE HOMOSEXUAL CITIZEN

*Ellie Vining* 50¢

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- 
- NEWS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES
  - AND SOCIAL RIGHTS
  - FOR HOMOSEXUALS

**SPECIAL FEATURE**

ARE YOU  
ON FILE?



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# There's a Dossier on You\*

*It Might Not Be in CIA or FBI  
Files; It Might Only Be FHA's  
Check on Marital Stability*

by Richard Harwood  
Washington Post Staff Writer

On an ordinary working day, the Federal Housing Administration puts away in its files "confidential" reports on the marital stability of approximately 4000 prospective home buyers. More than a million of these reports were collected for the government last year by private investigating agencies whose assignment is to spot people likely to wind up in a divorce court.

Their snooping is done so discreetly (and often so superficially) that few if any FHA loan applicants are aware that their domestic problems are the subject of public interest. If one asks what interest the Government has in, say, the indiscretions of an Arlington suburbanite, he is given an answer worthy of the counting house:

"The reputation and marital amicability of an applicant for a mortgage loan... are a vital part of our risk determination. One of the leading causes of foreclosure is divorce."

The same sort of logic is used to justify snooping of every description into the personal affairs of American citizens by both public and private institutions in our society.

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"The ideal," as a security official at the Defense Department has put it, "is to eliminate risk in advance."

### A SIX MONTH BAG

In pursuit of this ideal, Defense has created an elaborate investigative apparatus which in a recent six-month period turned up 22 sexual perverts, three alcoholics and ten "psychiatric cases." They were all private citizens who required "security clearances" because their companies held defense contracts.

The military, of course, is not alone in this business. The Civil Service Commission spends more than half its budget probing into the lives of present and prospective jobholders. In the past five years it has discovered a dozen communists and several thousand homosexuals, excessive drinkers and otherwise "immoral" people.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration inquires into every facet of the lives of its astronauts and their families and weighs the findings against the model "public image" it seeks. (The process broke down last year when an astronaut unpredictably was sued for divorce.)

The Passport Office demands detailed personal histories from all passport applicants who have been married more than twice. It also engages in a curious political surveillance program which, in theory at least, could deprive a Senator like J. William Fulbright or Wayne Morse of the right to travel abroad.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service snoops on an international scale. It has dossiers on "sex deviates," prostitutes, rapists and criminals in countries all over the world.

To harvest and handle information of this kind, an enormous industry has been created in the United States in the past 30 years. It spends hundreds of millions of dollars and engages the talents and inquisitive instincts of thousands. The Federal Government alone employs far more investigators than doctors -- 40,000-plus -- although they are not all compiling personal dossiers.

The Retail Credit Co., largest of the private investigating concerns, grosses more than \$100 million a year from activities that have little to do with "retail credit." The Federal Civil Service Commission spends \$17 million a year on personnel investigations.

For the same purpose, Defense spent \$45 million last year, the Internal Revenue Service spent \$10.3 million, the Atomic Energy Commission spent \$5.6 million. The \$170 million FBI budget included about \$145 million for "security" and criminal investigations.

The fruit of these investments is tangible. The names and numbers of virtually all of us can be found in somebody's filing cabinet and for millions of us there are extensive life histories with intimate details of our sexual habits, friendships, financial affairs, oddities and political and religious beliefs.

### NO FBI MONOPOLY

One automatically thinks, in this connection, of the FBI with 175½ million sets of fingerprints, its bulky dossiers on 11,000 Communist Party members and 100,000 Communist "sympathizers" and its supersecret list of people to be arrested immediately in the event of war. But the FBI has no monopoly in these affairs.

The Retail Credit Co.'s 7000 investigators maintain dossiers on 42 million people at any given time. Some of them contain such incriminating information that they are kept under lock and key in the offices of the company's top personnel.

The Defense Department has a central index of 21.5 million name cards plus 14 million life histories compiled in the course of its security investigations. The disclosure of information in its possession could wreck the lives and careers of thousands of men and women.

The Civil Service Commission has the same power. Its files include eight million secret dossiers on people investigated for Federal employment. They contain thousands of allegations (and in many cases proof) of "criminal conduct," "im-



moral conduct," "dishonest conduct" and " notoriously disgraceful and infamous conduct."

The Credit Bureau, Inc., the largest of Washington's credit-rating companies, has records on 2.5 million past and present residents and has access to millions of similar records in cities all over the United States. Its regular reports to the FBI and other Government agencies often are sufficiently damaging to cost a man his job. The FBI, for example, on the basis of Credit Bureau reports, weeded out a large number of people chosen to work for Sargent Shriver's Office of Economic Opportunity.

### AN ADMITTED THREAT

The Government's chief personnel investigator, Kimbell Johnson of the Civil Service Commission, is conscious of the power he and other investigators could wield.

"Whenever a bureaucracy amasses files about its citizens," he says, "an inherent threat to liberty exists."

Yale professor Staughton Lynd experienced this "threat" a few months ago when the State Department revoked his passport, in part, because of "anti-American statements" in his dossier. They had been collected by State Department investigators who trailed him to public meetings in this country and monitored his speeches for criticisms of American policy in Vietnam. These criticisms then became factors in the decision of the Passport Office to deny Lynd the liberty to travel abroad.

Another case involved Harvard Prof. H. Stuart Hughes, whose plans to visit Europe next fall were known months in advance to the FBI. Drawing on Hughes's political dossier, the FBI asked the State Department and the United States agents overseas to place the professor under surveillance when he reached Europe.

These incidents suggest, if nothing else, that the sweep of the Government's investigative interests is far broader than a citizen might assume in a free society.

### SECURITY "OBLIGATION"

In both the public and private sectors of American life, investigations are defended in terms of the search for security and certitude. An institution, it is argued, has an obligation to know who it is hiring, who it is lending money to and who may threaten its existence.

The inherent dangers in the process are everywhere recognized. Retail Credit, for example, acknowledges that some of its dossiers would be a gold mine for blackmailers; hence they are handled even within the agency like top-secret documents. Washington's Credit Bureau, Inc., uses a complicated code system to prevent the information it holds from falling into the wrong hands. The FBI, Defense and Civil Service Commission make a fetish of protecting their "raw files."

Thus, the investigators claim, dangers to the citizenry from snooping are minimal.

"No one need worry," one is told, "about the unauthorized use of his file."

The record, however, does not support this claim. What a man reveals about himself in an application for department store credit may later prove the crucial factor in the loss of a Government job. A "confidential" report discrediting a reporter for the Washington Post -- which later proved to be totally false -- went all the way from the State Department to the White House, the CIA, the Defense Department and ultimately, to the managers of the newspaper.

Government "security" reports on private citizens often end up in the hands of private employers and the reverse is true. The Civil Service Commission, the FBI and credit-rating agencies work hand in glove. The "confidential" FHA reports on applicants for housing are available to mortgage lenders for \$1.50.

### IN HIGH PLACES

For are disclosures of this kind always accidental. A President of the United States -- holding office in the 1960's -- has discussed at an "off-the-record" meeting with journalists the contents of



a secret report on the sexual indiscretions of a Senator.

The governor of a Mid-South state has, within the past five years, tried to peddle to newsmen the Federal income tax returns of a political opponent. The same thing has happened with politicians in other states, notably Florida and Ohio.

If a visitor stumbles onto the right private detective in Washington, he may be shown photographs of a prominent political figure in bed with the wife of a prominent socialite. Getting information out of the "closed file" of the House on Un-American Activities Committee is about as difficult as getting a weather report.

Just a couple of years ago, a foreign lobbyist obtained an HUAC report on the lobbying activities of a Senate staff member. The report was taken to the White House in an effort to discredit the staffer.

Whenever things of this sort occur, men of good will in Government or private industry respond with new suggestions for protecting the "sanctity" of the files. But it is obvious, as they concede, that so long as dossiers exist, they will be abused to one extent or another.

A trusted secretary in Johnson's office in the Civil Service Commission divulged a great deal of information about Government personnel to the late Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R-Wis.). She acted out of patriotic motives and she was finally fired. But the damage was done.

The more difficult question is whether the millions of dossiers piling up in Government and private offices are really necessary. How much does one need to know before hiring a man or lending him money? Not even the investigators have those answers.

The retail credit agencies, for example, acknowledge that even though credit is freer and easier today than at any other time in history, the loss rate from deadbeats remains infinitesimal. The FHA justifies its questions about marital stability in terms of the foreclosure problem. But it has no figures to support the claim that "one of the leading causes of foreclosure is divorce."

The CIA and the National Security Agency compel job applicants to take an offensive lie detector test that includes such questions as: "Have you engaged in homosexual acts since the age of 16?" But there is great controversy over the value of these tests. The Civil Service Commission's Johnson has a low opinion of the polygraph. Even CIA people concede that it is useless when the subject is a congenital liar.

## A CRIPPLING PARADOX

To Johnson and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Walter Skallerup, the whole process of personnel investigation is distorted by the preoccupation with turning up "dirt." They urge a system aimed at discovering talent rather than spotless mediocrity.

Finally, there is a paradox in the present system that makes absolute "security" unattainable even if it were desirable in a free society. The people privy to the highest secrets of the Government and the men on whose judgement and emotional stability the world's fate may hang are exempt from the screenings of the investigators.

"Who," asked a CIA man not long ago, "is going to give Lyndon Johnson a polygraph test or a psychological examination?"

The members of Congress who deal with these matters are never checked out by the FBI. Psychologists do not probe the mind of the Secretary of Defense the way they probe the minds of some of his underlings.

## A DALLAS AFTERMATH

In the aftermath of President Kennedy's assassination, there was intense concern with the problem of presidential security. There were suggestions that thousands of potential security risks be arrested or at least confined to their homes whenever the President was traveling.

"That," J. Edgar Hoover replied, "is what you would call totalitarian security. I don't think you can have that kind of security in this country without a great wave of criticism against it."



There are signs that a similar reaction is setting in against snooping. General Motors has promised that there will be no more Ralph Nader investigations. Secretary of State Dean Rusk has promised to curtail the surveillance of American citizens traveling abroad. The Civil Service Commission is having second thoughts about psychological testing. The President has ordered a curtailment of electronic eavesdropping.

Meanwhile, however, the dossiers continue to pile up in the offices of Government and industry. What will become of them, nobody knows.

## The Government : From Within

by Evan Colodny

The Civil Service Commission Bulletin #273-9 deals with the inspection of equal employment Opportunity Programs in government agencies and includes guidelines to be used by the CSC inspectors. (Unfortunately the inspectors will be talking to top management and not to the lower-level employees).

Primary emphasis will be on the following areas:

1. Analyzing the factors and problems bearing on equal opportunity.
2. Developing and implementing action programs designed to achieve full equality of opportunity.

Though the importance of this program in upgrading the quality of personnel engaged in high-level government work was widely publicized and the role of each agency in helping to implement and carry out this worthwhile program was underscored, there was NO mention of any sort of negative reaction or vindication on the part of CSC against any agency that refused to comply...Perhaps CSC is so naive as to imagine that all agency heads do conform to such rulings, even when equal opportunity is against their personal philosophy.

The minority Group Statistics System will request every full-time employee to provide information on his minority group status on a card questionnaire. Designations will include AMERICAN INDIAN, NEGRO, ORIENTAL, SPANISH-AMERICAN, NONE OF THESE. Appropriate follow-up procedures will be initiated in cases where these card questionnaires were either not filled out at all or improperly completed. The bulletin stated that no employee will be required to provide such information and that no disciplinary action will be taken against those who refuse to cooperate. CSC hopes to finish this project by the next census.

Supposedly this tally is to aid in the struggle for equal opportunity. However, individual supervisors have a way of using such information in a manner detrimental to the individual employee. Some observers also fear the establishment of a quota system.

Does the union at your agency or facility have exclusive jurisdiction???? If it does, it is required to represent you even if you are not a member. If you are tired of beating your head against a stone wall because your boss will not play by the rules or, even worse, if he makes his own rules, then go to the union...they can yell louder and longer than you can.

If the local union does not have exclusive jurisdiction and you are not a member, you can still ask the local for help. The only time you will be required to join in order to receive help is if you need representation at an official hearing.

## British Law Reform

by David Wayne

LEGALIZING HOMOSEXUAL CONDUCT between consenting adults in private moved one step closer to law on July 5, when the House of Commons voted by a large majority, 244 to 100, to reintroduce the measure which nearly passed Parliament last February. Commons originally approved a similar



bill, but it died before final reading when the Commons adjourned for the general elections. The House of Lords has already approved a bill. As in the United States, the measure must pass both legislative bodies of Parliament.

Introduced by Leo Abse, a Labor Member, the bill is based on the well-known Wolfenden Report (1957) and was debated and defeated in the past. It would repeal all criminal penalties against private homosexual acts if by consenting adults.

Mr. Abse declared that "only those who willfully blind themselves to the nature of our proceedings can suggest that this bill condones or approves homosexual acts," but he found it absurd that, as a result of present laws, "the largest class of criminals in the land are homosexuals, apart from motorists." Mr. Abse stated that there are 100 convictions annually of adults committing homosexual acts in private. He estimated the number of male homosexuals in Britain to approximate a million, or about one in 25.

An opponent of the bill, Sir Cyril Osborne, a Conservative, argued that there could not be as many homosexuals as claimed by the proponents. For in that case, Sir Cyril said, there would have to be "at least 30 homos in this House" -- if it represented the population at large. This observation drew shouts of laughter from both the Government and Opposition benches and cries of "name them." Sir Cyril claimed he had never encountered any homosexuals in the House during his 21 years in Parliament.

## ILLINOIS NO PARADISE FOR HOMOSEXUALS

By David Wayne

Even though the practice of homosexuality is not a crime in Illinois, homosexuals in the state and especially in Chicago continue to face many hazards, such as losing their jobs, abuses from the public and even imprisonment, according to a series of articles in The Chicago Daily News. The

subject of homosexuality is covered in considerable depth with a certain amount of understanding in a four-part series (June 20-23) by reporter Lois Wille. It discusses such subjects as the gay bars, harassment and entrapment by the police, social criticism, and the psychological background of homosexuals.

Illinois is the only state in which homosexual acts in private between consenting adults is not a crime. This reform came about in 1961 when the Illinois state legislature passed the American Law Institute's model penal code wiping out the old sodomy laws.

The first article notes the concentration of homosexuals in large cities such as Chicago, Washington, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. It is debatable if homosexuality is increasing, the article states, but it seems so because more people are willing to discuss the subject openly and frankly. Even though the law favors the homosexual in Illinois, homosexuals still fear exposure because of loss of jobs and public ridicule. They are still being arrested on such charges as "disorderly conduct" or "indecent behavior."

According to the article, many homosexuals are moving into expensive Chicago apartments and living as "married couples." One six-apartment building houses four homosexual couples, and supposedly, homosexuals moving into some neighborhoods are causing residents to leave.

Mattachine Midwest, started about one year ago in Chicago, has been very active and sponsors about a dozen social events each month. Their social functions range from speeches by ministers and psychiatrists to theater parties and potluck suppers. An officer explains, "We want to give our members a normal social life." The group's mailing list of 2,000 in the Chicago area includes physicians, teachers, artists, social workers, dentists, construction workers, printers and clergymen.

The Chicago Daily News reports that the 38 gay bars in Chicago appeal to a wide group of people ranging from the "professional elite," who attend elegant bars in the downtown area, to the "sado-masochist," the "new crop of homosexuals who go for leather jackets...and the rugged look."



The double life of a clergyman is the subject of the second Daily News article. The minister of a prosperous suburban church is reported to be leading a "bizarre double life," saying he would lose his position if his homosexuality were discovered. At first it was difficult to assume his masquerade, he admits, but then he realized that "everyone wears a mask to cover what he is really like."

The article points out that most homosexuals live a double life--referring to an estimate by Dr. Paul Gebhard (successor of the late Dr. Alfred Kinsey as director of the Institute of Sex Research), who said that only 15% of the homosexual population do not attempt to disguise themselves. Dr. Gebhard states, "Almost nobody chooses to be a homosexual. More than 9 times out of 10, a man becomes a homosexual for the sole and simple reason that he cannot help it."

The third article describes in detail how Chicago homosexuals are continually harassed by the police, even though they aren't breaking the law. Police and defense attorneys believe there are at least 150 homosexuals arrested monthly.

The newspapers once printed the names of 103 men arrested in one bar near O'Hare Airport. Thirty of those arrested lost their jobs even though charges were dismissed in court. The Illinois Division of the American Civil Liberties Union has announced it will investigate "this growing practice by police to treat sexual deviancy as a criminal offense."

Chicago also has the problem of extortionists, "gayola" racketeers, who take homosexuals for large sums of money. Some homosexuals, the article reports, accuse the police of negligence in attempting to catch the extortionists, but police claim they get few complaints because the victims are too terrified to report the incidents.

The final article deals with the subject "Is Homosexuality a Sickness?" A Mattachine official affirms that homosexuals are not sick: "Because a person is born with a physical departure from the norm, doesn't mean he needs psychological treatment."

In response to the four-part series, the Chicago Daily News received a number of letters. One person commented that the articles "clearly tend to justify the growing knowledge that the majority of homosexuals are constructive, well-behaved, tax-paying citizens, whose only "difference" is their wish to pursue their sex life freely and privately."

## BOOK REVIEW

By Susan Colodny

### The Microcosm

By Maureen Duffy. Simon and Schuster, Inc. 1966. 314 pp. \$5.95.

At last a book has been written by a competent author -- aimed neither at heterosexual men nor at sensation seekers -- which treats Lesbianism for just what it is: one of the many factors in the lives of some women.

The author does us the great favor of sticking to the matter at hand--her characters. She tells their stories simply, with sympathy and no small knack for technique. The philosophy she wishes to advance is expressed through her characters as an integral part of their personalities. Each of their conflicts is a part of the total group spectrum.

The characters are bound together only by casual acquaintance. Congregating at a certain bar each Saturday night, they represent a cross-section



of English society, varied age groups, and various degrees of experience in the "gay" world.

There is Steven, a physical education teacher in a girl's school, dealing with student crushes, parents, her supervisor: wondering which of her charges will soon belong to the same world in which she lives. We see her make tentative overtures of friendship to a new teacher, letting her imagination roam at the possibilities of a deeper relationship and, although aware of the pitfalls, proceeding hopefully toward anything to break her isolation.

There is Marie, mother of one of Steven's pupils, who suffers a nervous breakdown precipitated by events in her marriage which lead to the realization of her needs. The author's startling technique of letting Marie speak of herself in lower case letters until she becomes aware of how she may be fulfilled -- when the text again resembles that used for the other characters, in an unusual integration of text and type -- elicits an emotional cheer from the reader.

But it is Matt who is the spokesman, the vehicle for the basic precepts of the book's philosophy. Matt is an archeological scholar, pumping gas for a living, retreating into the microcosm she herself has named. It is Matt who fights the intellectual battle; it is she who is aware of the other characters and their methods of dealing with their homosexuality as well as of her own. Supported by the strong serenity of her lover Rae, she rejects the microcosm and leaves for an expedition in the field, where she intends neither to announce nor deny her relationship, but to live as any married couple would under any circumstances that might be encountered.

Other characters are portrayed in the book, each caught in a series of vignettes interspersed with the longer sections, pictured in the small moments which reveal the texture of their lives.

The Microcosm is not THE definitive Lesbian novel. On the contrary, it stands as a good novel, comparable to any on the market today, regardless of theme. It is a satisfying reading experience for a popular audience and leaves those of us in the homophile movement grateful to Miss Duffy for writing an excellent book without letting her subject matter overwhelm her considerable talent as an author.