

# Tell us your Social Security number and we'll tell you what your neighbors say about your sex life.

Of course, we don't really want your number. But the government does. And so does your bank, your insurance company, your credit card company, and even your local motor vehicles bureau.

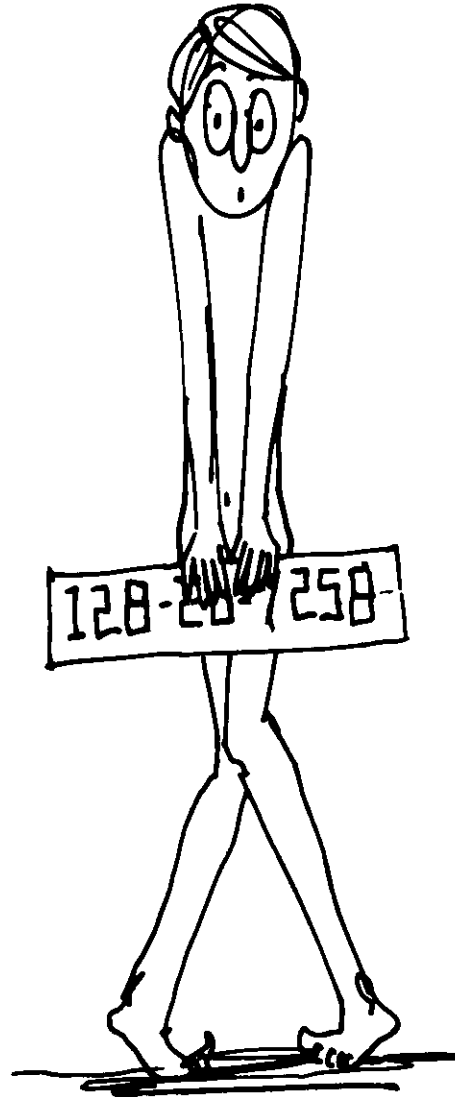
Your number wasn't always in such demand. It began innocently enough, intended simply to keep track of your Social Security benefits. But then everyone started asking for it, and because each request seemed harmless by itself, you gave your number freely.

As a result, your "Social Security" number has been transformed into a Universal Identifier. Fed into computers, your number functions like a fingerprint, making it easy for anyone who has it to obtain all kinds of information about you. Consider a few examples:

**What your neighbors say about your sex life.** There are more than 2,500 private dossier companies that maintain secret files on over 100 million Americans. In the name of investigating your credit, or your employability, they question your neighbors and co-workers about everything from the way you keep your house to your sexual habits. These "credit" companies are protected by law from your efforts to see your own file or adequately challenge its accuracy. Yet some of them will give out information to anyone claiming to be a potential employer.

**Checking up on your checking account.** A recent federal law has the effect of requiring your bank to microfilm and store a copy of every check you write. Your checks are a mirror to your entire life: the causes you support, the doctors you consult, the magazines you read, the company you keep. Yet government agents are allowed to examine these records without your permission, or even your knowledge.

**The medical history of your life.** Have you ever applied for life insurance? Your "confidential" medical records, along with other information about you, are probably in an insurance databank.



Have you ever been hospitalized for a physical or emotional disorder, or had a doctor prescribe a strong tranquilizer? Chances are it's all in a databank.

**Your "honorable" discharge.** If you were discharged from the military before March 1974, your "honorable" discharge papers contain a secret code known to the personnel departments of many major employers. For example, code #271 stands for "unsanitary habits", code #46A for "defective attitude", code #361 for "homosexual tendencies". Your code could be a clerical error or the work of a vindictive officer. But it, along with your entire military record, is linked to all the other data about you through your Social Security number (now used

as the military serial number!)

**Everybody into the pool.** Information like this is pooled among government agencies from the Internal Revenue Service to your local police. Yet present law provides few safeguards. You can only rely on the discretion of public officials. And that isn't much. Would you trust Messrs. Haldeman and Ehrlichman with your secrets?

**What can you do?** By yourself, not much. But you can join forces with 275,000 Americans who fight back through membership in the American Civil Liberties Union. As a member, you have a lot of muscle working for you. Professional staff works in the legislatures and hundreds of lawyers fight in the courts against threats to you and all Americans.

Organized by legislative districts, our members make Congress listen. In recent months, ACLU members across the country have made their voices heard through the ACLU impeachment campaign.

Right now, the ACLU is waging a national campaign for new laws to limit government access to the intimate details of your life. Even more important, wherever individual rights are threatened by abuses of government power, the ACLU can be counted on to fight back effectively. In its 54 years, the ACLU has argued more cases before the U.S. Supreme Court than anyone except the federal government. And we usually win.

You can win, too. Don't let the government get your number. Join us. Today.

## American Civil Liberties Union

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- I want to join ACLU. Enclosed is my membership:  
 \$15 Individual     \$25 Joint Membership  
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