

able to avoid arrest and jail records. We move from job to job in a mobile economy creating moving-company inventory records for our goods. Even as we move from place to place we leave behind short records of our airplane reservations and for some reason every hotel makes a ritual of acquiring and preserving the alleged names and addresses of its guests for posterity.

Book clubs and magazine subscriptions reflect our point of view and interests.

This is only a partial list. Play the game yourself and think of all the records you leave as you go through life.

WHY SO MANY RECORDS?

Behind all this creating of records is the implicit assumption that they will some day be of use. In order to be of use, there must be some means of interrogating the files to resurrect the information sought. Thus, we envision large families of systems, each individually useful. For example, an Internal Revenue Department investigator might wish to have immediate access to the tax returns of each of the associates of a man who is being audited to check for consistency of financial relationships.

A company may wish to have rapid access to its personnel files to know whether to give a good reference to a former employee.

A doctor may wish to trace the entire medical history of a patient to provide better input into a diagnostic computer.

The Veterans' Administration may wish to examine a man's complete military record and possible other previous medical records to see whether the ailment claimed as being service connected really is.

A lawyer for the defense of a man will wish to search for jail and arrest records, and possible credit records of all witnesses for the plaintiff.

Professional licensing boards may want to delve into any records to determine if an applicant has an unblemished character.

The military, in filling extremely sensitive positions, may even wish a record of all books borrowed by a prospective applicant to insure that his interests are wholesome and he possesses the proper political bias desired.

ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION

Today it is difficult to gather such information about a prospective examinee. If one went through direct channels and asked most sources for their records about a person, he would most likely be rejected, if for no other reason than that the information is not readily available—cheaply. Even if the records were publicly available, the investigator would have to spend a great deal of time and effort delving through to discover pertinent data. Today, as a practical matter, if an individual wishes to obtain certain information about a person, he hires a private detective who charges a great deal of money and expends a great amount of time obtaining a little information from a portion of these potential records. The price for a fishing expedition for information is high and most of the fish are inaccessible.