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Lewdness, Sex, and Terrorism

Editor

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Abstract: The author discusses the idea of punishing supervisory personnel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for sexual behavior.

Lichtblau (2003) has reported that some supervisory personnel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have been engaging in "lewd conduct and improper sexual activity." Behaviors at issue include a male supervisor having sexual affairs with two female subordinates, "demonstrating favoritism towards an employee" (submitting her name for cash awards) with whom he had sex, "letting a prostitute accompany him to a hotel on an out-of-town training trip, as well as engaging in "other sexual improprieties;" a male special agent having a sexual affair with the wife of an organized crime figure; a male special agent leading a seminar making a sexist and racist joke to an audience of men and women; and a "senior official" and "other officials" dressing in drag and engaging in "sex jokes" and "an apparent reference to oral sex and a lap dance."

Lichtblau (2003) reports a controversy over whether such FBI personnel have been punished enough or appropriately. One might also explore whether such personnel should be punished at all—i.e., what do such behaviors have to do with the carrying out of FBI responsibilities. This is especially the case because the FBI has significantly upgraded its responsibilities in preventing terrorist threats against homeland security including those against aviation and other transportation modalities. It is also the case when addressing the more general Issue of appropriate and inappropriate behavior for personnel in any organization.

If sexual behavior prevents or has prevented the carrying out of one's responsibilities, then some sort of punishment would be in order. For example, a report doesn't get written or a specific surveillance assignment doesn't get carried out because one was engaged in sex.

If sexual behavior decreases the quality of carrying out one's responsibilities, punishment would also be in order. For example, one might take an important phone call while engaged in sex or engaged in sexual fantasy or while in the throes of biopsychosocial phenomena contingent on sexual functioning—and such concurrency leads to not properly attending to, or analyzing, or acting on information as well as one might otherwise.

If sexual behavior detracts from the image of an organization and thus imperils the authorization and allocation of necessary resources it needs to adequately support homeland security, then punishment would be in order. This would be the case even if sexual behavior or at least that in question otherwise might in isolation—if that is possible for the social organism that is homo sapiens—have no detrimental effect on the organization's mission.

Again, even if there would be no isolated causal relationship between sex and suboptimal performance, punishment might be warranted, if the FBI personnel or any individual in question would not be comfortable enough with that sexual behavior to willingly experience its disclosure to everyone and anyone. Otherwise, the threat of blackmail and existential coercion could well induce suboptimal

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performance and even behavior extremely contrary to security. (Even without the threat of blackmail and existential coercion, one's perception of how one's construction of society values one's sexuality can engender alienation imbued with a behavioral sociopathy leading to security violation.)

Although the last example is the most obvious, all examples bear on sexuality as a personality security issue. And sexuality at its broadest would embrace both the carrying out of one's sexual orientation—i.e., who one engages and what consists of the engaging—and one's gender identity—i.e., who one believes oneself to be in terms of being male, female, or some combination. Both classes of sexuality would need to be exemplified not only by behaviors but intrapsychic narratives and scripts.

So, what lessons might be learned from analyzing and from associating from accounts of FBI sexuality as it applies to personnel security? To be on the safe side, one might venture that all personnel with security relevance should be non-sexual—a tall order for most people through common conceptions of human nature and through living in a society that often facilitates instant and individual gratification. Or one might venture that only personnel should be hired who willingly embrace their sexuality as an open book—even as the very nature of almost all human societies and cultures as well as of humans would function as an impediment to embracing this requirement.

Yet again, one might venture to proscribe certain sorts of behavior for security personnel or personnel whose behavior might have security implications. But this proscription would present significant difficulty, because the same behaviors would present different security risks for different people. For example, even the most seemingly innocuous sexual transaction with one's spouse could contribute to violating security if the transaction were exposed to the public light.

One might even ascribe blame to a personnel security system for creating sexual criteria of which people may run afoul or with which organizational competitors might employ as weapons. Such a personnel security system might be labeled one of sexual terrorism even as the system was intended to thwart political terrorism. And the difference between the two might escape individuals singled out within the system. (See Hertz, R. (1996). Guarding against women? Responses of military men and their wives to gender integration. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 25, 251-284; Jones, F. D., & Koshes, R. J. (1995). Homosexuality and the military. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 152, 16-21; Lichtblau, E. (November 14, 2003). Report finds F.B.I. bosses engaged in lewd conduct. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Simon, W. (1973). The social, the erotic, and the sensual: The complexities of sexual scripts. *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, 21, 61-82.)