

MANHUNTS:

The Lovelorn Killer

The want-ad columns in hip America's underground newspapers are a sort of sub-subterranean bargain basement where a weird miscellany of fun-lovers trades in practically anything that love and money can buy. Who reads them? The FBI, among others—and what should the Feds find but some new clues to the

o 45

make-up of the man suspected of murdering Martin Luther King.

Tucked among the classifieds in the Los Angeles Free Press last Feb. 2 was an ad for a "passionate married female for mutual enjoyment," signed "Eric S."—and paid for by "Eric S. Galt," the pet alias of suspected assassin James Earl Ray. Whether he scored remains his secret, but, shortly thereafter, he answered another ad—placed by a "swingers club" that sent him (for \$1) a list of five presumably congenial girls. He picked one and sent her a Polaroid photo of himself—a photo the FBI tracked down and made public last week. In striking contrast to earlier mug shots of Ray as a lean, sharp-faced chronic felon, the new one makes him look like Everyman at 40: smooth, neatly groomed, turning a bit



Galt/Ray: Mr. Lonelyhearts?

jowly—considerably fatter, indeed, than in most previously published photos. How come? Insiders said he was taking amphetamines off and on and his weight might well have fluctuated sharply as a result. In any event, the FBI was satisfied that the new photo shows their man as he looks today.

At the same time, the bureau released a blurrier second photo of the suspect in sunglasses, probably taken last November in Mexico. The original showed a prostitute with him, but she was clipped out before the Feds got the photo. Still, the fact of her presence—plus Galt/Ray's pathetic try for mail-order romance—yielded telling insights, and thus helped fill out his emerging portrait as an ingrown, emotionally stunted loner. The more investigators find out about their man, in fact, the less they see him as the conspiratorial type. "You take five guys who don't know each other and put them in a room," said one. "Four of them would start talking small talk to each other. Ray would sit by himself." He picked up the suspect's mug shot. "This is our man," he said. "He killed King."

Newsweek, May 20, 1968