

The Voyeur's Motel

By Gay Talese

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On January 7, 1980, in the run-up to the publication of his landmark bestseller *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, Gay Talese received an anonymous letter from a man in Colorado. "Since learning of your long awaited study of coast-to-coast sex in America," the letter began, "I feel I have important information that I could contribute to its contents or to contents of a future book." The man went on to tell Talese an astonishing secret, that he had bought a motel to satisfy his voyeuristic desires. He had built an attic "observation platform," fitted with vents, through which he could peer down on his unwitting guests.

Unsure what to make of this confession, Talese traveled to Colorado where he met the man—Gerald Foos—verified his story in person, and read some of his extensive journals, a secret record of America's changing social and sexual mores. But because Foos insisted on remaining anonymous, Talese filed his reporting away, assuming the story would remain untold. Now, after thirty-five years, he's ready to go public and Talese can finally tell his story. *The Voyeur's Motel* is an extraordinary work of narrative journalism, and one of the most talked about books of the year.

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The Voyeur's Motel By Gay Talese Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *The Voyeur's Motel*:

Named a Best Book of the Year by the *Daily Mail* (Event Critics' Selection)

"This book flipped nearly all of my switches as a reader. It's a strange, melancholy, morally complex, grainy, often appalling and sometimes bleakly funny book, one that casts a spell not dissimilar to that cast by Janet Malcolm's *The Journalist and the Murderer* . . . Gripping . . . [Talese] lays out what he knows and does not know in sentences that are as crisp as good Windsor knots. He expresses his qualms, but trusts the reader to come to his or her own conclusions . . . An intense book."**?Dwight Garner, *New York Times***

"Informative and intriguing . . . [I] was enlightened and entertained by *The Voyeur's Motel*."**?*Washington Post***

"This is a weird book about weird people doing weird things, and I wouldn't have put it down if the house were on fire."**?*Washington Times***

"Whether Gerald Foos is telling the complete truth is almost beside the point. The Voyeur is so fascinating a character?insightful, observant and amoral?that the reader becomes caught up in his story."**?*Providence Journal***

"If you've ever wanted your inner voyeur to run free, vicariously at least, then *The Voyeur's Motel* is for you . . . *Motel* delves deeply into the taboo world with no holds barred and no excuses . . . The type of unflinching New Journalism that Talese helped found three decades ago."**?*Jackson Clarion Ledger***

"Pioneering reporter Gay Talese tells the ultimate surveillance story in *The Voyeur's Motel* . . . Talese?a master of elegant, understated prose?uses an objective reportorial style to tell the voyeur's story, and it's the right approach for a narrative that requires no extra spice . . . An unforgettable book."**?*BookPage***

"Foos [is revealed] as a singularly pervy, grandiose, and strangely eloquent weirdo who would be irresistible to any writer, let alone one as talented, patient, and thoughtful as Talese . . . Those seeking a uniquely discomfiting journey couldn't find a better pair of reprobates with whom to cast their lot."**?*Booklist***

"Undoubtedly creepy and unnerving but also an entirely compelling slice of seamy American life."**?*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)**

"[A] truly shocking story . . . Not your typical beach book, perhaps, but you may want to read this compulsive page-turner?which raises all sorts of fascinating journalistic, moral and legal issues?under cover of an umbrella."**?*Barnes & Noble Review***

"A provocative and compelling story."**?*Midwest Book Review***

"An unsettling read . . . Foos's notes offer a long-term glimpse into the sex lives of Americans."**?*Maclean's* (Canada)**

"*The Voyeur's Motel* . . . had me hooked . . . It's an unsettling book, like being trapped in a hall of mirrors. The reader observes Talese observing Foos observing his guests. It might make you lose your bearings, but at the same time it's completely mesmerising, and often darkly funny, too."**?*Daily Mail* (UK) (Event Critics' Best Books of the Year)**

"[An] eye-popping book . . . Completely riveting from start to finish . . . Darkly comical . . . It is by turns fascinating and illuminating, very creepy and very funny, and will live in my memory long after many more doggedly accurate works have vanished into thin air."**?*Mail on Sunday* (UK)**

"A riveting page-turner . . . Short and brisk, it tells a compellingly sordid story, and Foos is one fascinating dude . . . The book is compulsively readable."**?*Winnipeg Free Press***

About the Author

Gay Talese was born in Ocean City, New Jersey, in 1932, to Italian immigrant parents. He attended the University of Alabama, and after graduating was hired as a copyboy at the *New York Times*.

After a brief stint in the army, Talese returned to the *New York Times* in 1956. Since then he has written for numerous publications, including *Esquire*, the *New Yorker*, *Newsweek*, and *Harper's Magazine*. It was these articles that led Tom Wolfe to credit Gay Talese with the creation of an inventive form of nonfiction writing called "The New Journalism."

Talese's bestselling books have dealt with the history and influence of the *New York Times* (*The Kingdom and the Power*); the inside story of a Mafia family (*Honor Thy Father*); his father's immigration to America from Italy in the years preceding World War II (*Unto the Sons*); and the changing moral values of America in the period between World War II and the AIDS epidemic (*Thy Neighbor's Wife*).

Gay Talese lives with his wife, Nan, in New York City.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anthony Hubbard:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their particular spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book entitled The Voyeur's Motel? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have some other opinion?

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