

CULTURE, et cetera



No sex in Missouri

Here's one for the annals of legislative affairs: The Missouri Legislature may have managed to outlaw sex.

Not that that was the intention. Rather, it's the result of varying interpretations of a measure passed last session to modify the law governing sex between consenting teen-agers. An effort to use the bill to forbid homosexual sex left the final wording muddled.

The new law states that "a per-

son commits the crime of sexual misconduct in the first degree if he has deviate sexual intercourse with another person of the same sex, or he purposely subjects another person to sexual contact or engages in conduct which would constitute sexual contact except that the touching occurs through the clothing without that person's consent."

As written, says Dan Viets, president of the Missouri Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the law appears to outlaw any sexual contact — even between husband and wife.

Some legislators think the measure outlaws only homosexual sex and nonconsensual sex. Others believe it actually legalizes consensual gay sex.

Either way, most everyone agrees it is unlikely that any law-breaking Missourians will find themselves in handcuffs — unless, of course, that's what turns them on.

● *Compiled by Jennifer Pinkerton from staff and wire reports.*