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## 'Kinsey' critics ready

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America's sexual revolution is about to heat up again as abstinence supporters plan protests at theaters this fall when a new movie about famed 1950s sex researcher Alfred C. Kinsey is released.

"Kinsey did a lot more damage to our country than we even have an idea of," said Leslee Unruh, president of the Abstinence Clearinghouse, a Sioux Falls, S.D., organization that advocates sexual abstinence until marriage.

Abstinence supporters are going to stand at theaters and pass out booklets called "Casualties of Kinsey," which contain stories about how Kinsey's research negatively impacted their lives, she said.

"I am shocked at what I am hearing," Mrs. Unruh said, referring to stories of sexually transmitted diseases, child pornography and sexual addiction that have been collected for the booklet.

Other observers are hoping that "Kinsey," which stars Liam Neeson as the late zoologist-turned-sexpert, will rekindle interest in sex research.

"We hope to use the movie -- and the [Kinsey] documentary that comes out in February on PBS -- as an opportunity to inform people about sex research today," said Jennifer Bass, spokeswoman for the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind.

Although "Kinsey" is not expected to be entirely factual, she said, "we hope it will spark an interest in sex research today and encourage people to find out more about the Kinsey Institute."

"We also expect to clarify any issues about Alfred Kinsey's research," Ms. Bass added.

Dramatically different portraits of Kinsey have emerged since he burst onto the American scene more than 50 years ago.

Initially, Kinsey was depicted as a diligent scientist and devoted family man who applied his prodigious skills in studying the gall wasp to the unexplored world of human sexuality.

Kinsey's initial report, released in the 1948 "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male," stunned the nation by saying that American men were so sexually wild that 95 percent of them could be accused of some kind of sexual offense under 1940s laws. The report included reports of sexual activity by boys -- even babies -- and said that 37 percent of adult males had had at least one homosexual experience.

Kinsey's 1953 follow-up, "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female," contained the equally shocking claim that premarital sex could help prepare a woman for successful married life. The 1953 book also included reports of sexual activity involving girls younger than age 4, and suggested that sex between adults and children could be beneficial.

Kinsey said that there was a seven-point scale of normal human sexuality, with bisexuality the most "balanced" state and heterosexuality and homosexuality occupying equal positions on the opposite ends.

Questions immediately arose over how Kinsey arrived at his findings, with leading statisticians and psychologists questioning his methods and findings. However, his reports were widely accepted as valid -- even though it was later shown that he incorrectly used data from prisoners, prostitutes, pedophiles and other sexually promiscuous people to explain the behavior of all Americans.

Recent biographies now have revealed that Kinsey himself was bisexual, voyeuristic and masochistic, engaging in bizarre practices so damaging to his health that some believe it helped lead to his death in 1956 at age 62.

Kinsey was also shown to be an atheist who loathed religion and its constraints on sex. All sexual activity is natural, he said. The main reason that children are not sexually active and adults tend to be heterosexual is because of "cultural restraints" and "societal inhibitions," he said in his 1948 report.

All of which makes Kinsey an excellent subject for a movie, promoters say.

"Kinsey is an incredibly complex character," Academy Award-winning writer-director Bill Condon told Variety that when he announced plans for the movie. "A scientist who spent 20 years as a biologist and had one brilliant but simple idea, which is still radical today --that no one person's sexuality is the same as another's and that we are all tortured by what is sexually normal."

"Kinsey" debuts at this week's Toronto International Film Festival and has a Nov. 12 release date in America, said its presenter, Fox Searchlight Pictures.

Kinsey critics, including author Judith Reisman and radio talk-show host Laura Schlessinger, have expressed concerns that "Kinsey" will glamorize its subject and mislead more people about his work.

But some lawmakers, who are eager to see a reversal of Kinsey-influenced changes to laws governing sex and marriage, say that the movie may help their cause.

The movie will do two things -- raise awareness of the issue because of curiosity about sex and make people ask whether Kinsey "was a good guy or a bad guy," said Kansas state Sen. Kay O'Connor, a Republican, who headed a subcommittee on "junk science" for the American Legislative Exchange Council.

Kinsey's research is "junk science," according to a report that ALEC issued this spring. And yet, based on Kinsey's reports, state lawmakers "overturned or trivialized 52 designated laws protective of women and children," it said.

"It is time for state lawmakers to jettison bad policy based on bad science and to restore legal protections for American women and children," according to the report, written by Linda Jeffrey, who works with the Kentucky-based advocacy group RSVP America.

Sex-education laws are another area in need of reform, said California state Assemblyman Ray Haynes, a Republican, who wrote an introduction to the ALEC report. "Kinsey completely rewrote the rules on how you teach children about health, particularly sex," he said, and the result has been all kinds of social problems.

Robert Knight, who directs the Institute for Family and Culture at Concerned Women for America, is another Kinsey critic who sees a

potential silver lining in the movie.

"Kinsey was a household name, but that is not so for people under 40," Mr. Knight said. "The Kinsey movie is actually an opportunity to revisit someone who has had such a profound effect on America's culture and expose him for what he was. Hollywood will try to make him a hero, but he's best left under the covers."

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