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SEX *without* LOVE

The Kinsey Institute has fallen from renown to ruin in a bitter six-year brawl between a flamboyant sexologist and staid IU officials.

By Linda Graham Caleca
STAR SENIOR WRITER
• 1993, THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

Bloomington, Ind. — Sex, lies and fingerprints. Academic fraud, revenge and a gun threat. Ghostly letters, burglary and sabotage. Lovers, straight and gay. Conceit and deceit.

These are among the bizarre and bitter charges hurled in a scandal that has disgraced and perhaps ruined the renowned Kinsey Institute for sex research.

"It's tragic. There is no question that it has lost its pre-eminence," said respected



The late Alfred Kinsey was dubbed the "Columbus of Sex."

University of Houston professor and sex researcher William Simon.

The institute founded nearly a half-century ago at Indiana University by the late Alfred C. Kinsey once was unique in the world, conducting landmark research, writing best-selling books and teaching sex-shy lovers about intimacy.

Today it is embarrassed and impoverished, the victim of a brawl between a brassy sexologist hired to be the next Kinsey and the staid university that decided she was no Alfred and must go.

June Machover Reinisch squandered the institute's reputation over 11 years by favoring self-promotion over science, her bosses and critics charged. Worse, some said, she neglected research at a time when the institute could have been a leader in the study of AIDS.

She in turn accused them of conducting a cruel and cowardly witch hunt against her, violating university policy and her constitutional rights. All, she said, spurred by a series of untrue and cowardly anonymous letters.

"This will go down as one of the great academic scandals of the century," said David K. Frasier, who observed it firsthand when he was a librarian for the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction.

"It could also be a best-selling Jackie Collins novel."

Devastated in the tasteless tale were the reputations of the institute: its embattled former director, Reinisch; its employees and



Associated Press

HOME IN BROOKLYN: June M. Reinisch is redecorating her New York apartment while she decides what to do next.

See KINSEY Page 16

KINSEY

Continued from Page 1

its trustees. The university that for decades sheltered the Kinsey didn't emerge spotless either.

Scientists and researchers from across the world, many of whom supported Reinisch, expressed their dismay in letters to IU President Thomas Ehrlich.

"Help me understand what on earth is going on," wrote Dr. John Bancroft from the Medical Research Council in Edinburgh, Scotland.

In this poisoned atmosphere, even the institute's revered, dead founder did not escape attack. Some conservative groups and writers have spent the past two years slamming Kinsey and his research as fraudulent.

Author Judith A. Reisman even accused Kinsey of being a child molester — a charge many call ludicrous — for collecting data 45 years ago on orgasms among infants and children. (See accompanying story.) She wants the government to investigate to see if those children, now middle-aged, were left scarred.

"People think that I killed the institute," Reisman said.

Besieged by attacks and drained by the six-year fight with Reinisch that ended earlier this year, IU officials slashed the Kinsey's funding by more than half, from \$522,000 last year to \$250,000 this year.

"The cut was not intended as punishment or a death blow," stressed Jeffrey Alberts, IU associate dean for research, the only IU official who agreed to talk for this story. Four top IU officials, including Ehrlich, refused repeated requests for interviews.

Alberts said cash-strapped IU decided the Kinsey needs only "bare-bones" funding until it gets a new director and direction. He said he envisions a vigorous search for a new boss, new faces on the Kinsey board and innovative research worthy of the Kinsey's legacy.

Today, the institute exists, in the words of interim Director Stephanie Sanders, in a "moribund state."

So few employees staff the upper floors of IU's Morrison Hall that phones are answered only during certain hours each day. Little research is being done, al-



Star Photo / Robb Hill

though five grant applications are being prepared. One recent day, a leak rained water on a priceless collection of erotica.

Trustees of the institute — which is incorporated as a private, not-for-profit entity — talk openly of trying to move it to a friendlier college.

"I'd move it in a New York minute," Kinsey trustee Sherry Hackett, wife of wisecracking comedian Buddy Hackett, snapped from Los Angeles. "IU has not only cut off the funding but is draining its blood dry."

IU's board of trustees makes no promises about the future of the institute, which is now one of dozens across the nation that conduct sex research.

"I think its time has passed some," said Robert H. McKinney, the board's new chairman. "The

Kinsey was of critical importance back in the '40s, but it's no longer that important. We are counting pennies every place."

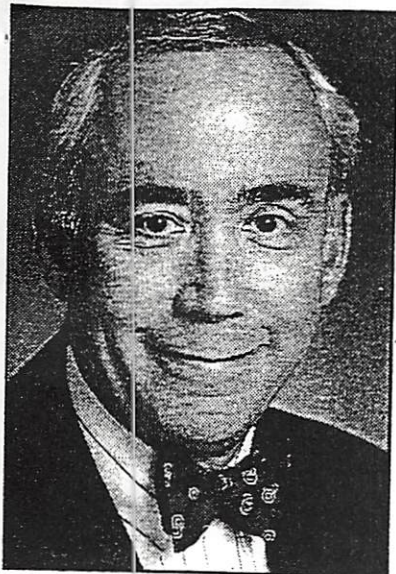
"It might be best for the university to cut bait," added IU trustee Ray Richardson. "There are a growing number of people, both on and off the board, who believe that the university just doesn't need or want it anymore."

Institute once was unique

Once that would have been unthinkable.

When bow-tied zoologist Alfred Kinsey founded the institute in 1947, it was unique in the world and treasured at the university. No scientist before him had documented what went on behind bedroom doors.

Kinsey's landmark books on the male and the female astound-



WELLS VS. EHRlich: IU
Chancellor Herman Wells (left) has been a champion of the Kinsey institute. He was IU's president when the institute was founded and stood up for its academic freedom — despite political pressures. In contrast, some say IU President Thomas Ehrlich cared little for the Kinsey or its past director, June Reinisch.

ed and liberated. They revealed that masturbation and sex before marriage were common practices, and that homosexuality was more prevalent than anyone believed.

The books were best sellers, and Kinsey was acclaimed. On Aug. 24, 1953, a portrait of Kinsey — surrounded by birds and bees — appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine. He was hailed as the "Columbus of Sex."

"Kinsey took sex out of the toilet," said Paul Gebhard, who worked for Kinsey for years and then succeeded him as director.

When the institute drew controversy, then-university President Herman B Wells was its champion. He stood up to McCarthy-era critics and, in 1950, even hung up on Gov. Henry F. Schricker, who was furious to learn that the institute was collecting erotic art.

"I told him, 'We'll talk when you cool down.'" said Wells, now 91 and still the university's chancellor. "Academic freedom is a little like pregnancy — you can't have a little of it."

A strong champion like Wells, many say, never would have allowed a bitter brawl to drag on for six years, fueling an anonymous smear campaign, disgracing the Kinsey Institute and ruining the reputations of all it touched.

For starters, it touched June Reinisch and IU President Ehrlich.

"The cloud never clears," admitted Reinisch, the abrasive, fast-talking sex researcher and psychology professor at the heart of the controversy. After announcing her retirement in March, she packed her bags and returned to her native Brooklyn, N.Y., in May.

Reinisch still unemployed

She is giving speeches, working on a book and renovating the apartment she shares with her husband, Leonard Rosenblum. But she remains unemployed.

"Why hire somebody who has a cloud over their head?" she asked, "when you can hire somebody who doesn't have a cloud over their head?"

From her hotel in San Diego where she recently gave a speech on menopause, she conceded: "There's no question that some people might dislike me or hate me. I don't have a mild personality. I am not bland. I have a spicy personality. But I did nothing wrong. I was just me."

Her cloud persists, she said, despite Ehrlich's glowing — some say embarrassing — public apology to her on Jan. 20.

The apology was part of a settlement, nearly everyone agrees, of a weighty lawsuit filed by Reinisch and her Indianapolis attorney, Robert Wagner. The lawsuit accused IU of violating her rights, believing anonymous accusations and hurting her reputation.

Neither Reinisch nor IU officials will reveal the settlement's terms.

Ehrlich, who also announced his resignation this year, will step down next July to spend more time with his family. He refused any comment for this story — even after his assistant asked to see *The Star's* questions in writing, and those 35 questions were promptly provided.

"If Herman Wells was still president, he might be sitting here today talking to you about this," Associate Dean Alberts admitted.

The day Ehrlich issued a glowing apology to Reinisch and withdrew his demand for her resignation clearly was a low point in his presidency.

"If you have a gripe, you confront someone face to face with it," Eoyang said heatedly. "The days of cowardly accusations are the days of the Nazis and the cultural revolution in China. That it happened here is shameful."

"I wouldn't defend it ever," quietly added Associate Dean Alberts of the anonymous attack.

But David Frasier and other former Kinsey staffers said Reinisch was so vengeful that no one would dare criticize her to her face. In fact, Frasier and two other Kinsey librarians asked to be quickly and quietly transferred to other posts on campus in 1988 after complaining about Reinisch.

The Alfred letter, Reinisch's opponents say, is mostly true.

In fact, in August 1988, a university internal review committee came to many of the same conclusions about Reinisch.

"We recommend that the director be asked to resign immediately," the reviewers said in their harsh 28-page report. The "welfare of the institute," Lowengrub then said in a letter to Reinisch, "requires your resignation."

"Capital squandered"

The major allegation was that Reinisch neglected serious research. Her few efforts in the area of acquired immune deficiency syndrome were "poorly conceived and executed," reviewers said.

"There was very little by way of impressive research at a time when AIDS was rampant," William Simon, the University of Houston sex researcher, agreed. "The Kinsey, with its reputation, could have gotten grants and funding, but it squandered its intellectual capital."

Kinsey's eldest daughter, Anne Call of Bloomington, said she saw an example of Reinisch's research one day when she visited an office on campus.

"There were a pile of questionnaires for students, asking them a variety of silly questions like, 'Do you know how long the average



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"You can bet your sweet life that if the university could have found the goods on June Reinisch over all those years, it would have," said Eugene C. Eoyang, outspoken Kinsey board chairman and IU professor of comparative literature and East Asian languages.

"Say what you want about June Reinisch — she might not be your cup of tea, but she's no wimp like the people on the other side are."

Wimp is a word that John Walda, past president of the IU board of trustees, said he would never use to describe Ehrlich. He called the president an "assertive and effective" leader who ably handled a difficult legal situation.

But Eoyang countered: "The university aided and abetted scurrilous rumor-mongering, false witness and character assassination. It's shameful. It's dirty. It is ill-fitting a distinguished university of IU's character."

Hackett added: "There are people in this world who are blatantly in fear of saying the word sex, and Ehrlich is evidently one of them. He didn't like the Kinsey, and he sure didn't like June Reinisch."

"She wants to be a celebrity"

If Ehrlich disliked Reinisch, he had plenty of company.

One critic could take no more of her in March 1987 and began making those feelings known in an eerie, ghostly way.

"Call me Alfred," said the anonymous letter signed in the name of Alfred Kinsey, who died of pneumonia and exhaustion from overwork in 1956.

"It is an emergency . . . something has to be done," pleaded the letter mailed to IU official Morton Lowengrub, now the dean of arts and sciences.

The mystery accuser called Reinisch a "cruel, ruthless, vindictive and unscrupulous person" who was an academic fraud. It said Reinisch had done no original research or writing since she came to the institute.

"She wants fame but not as a scientist or scholar. She wants to chase celebrities and to be a celebrity. She wants to be on the Johnny Carson show," the letter said. "Her professional reading consists of *People* magazine."

To this day, no one is certain who wrote that first "Alfred letter" or the four letters that followed it. Many believe the subsequent letters were copycats not written by the original author. In any case, the fact that an anonymous smear campaign found footing at a university infuriates Eoyang and embarrasses IU official Alberts.

"Say what you want about June Reinisch — she might not be your cup of tea, but she's no wimp like the people on the other side are."

Eugene Eoyang
 Kinsey board chairman

penis is?' That was the kind of research she did."

A litany of allegations against Reinisch was detailed in the internal review, Alfred letters, a letter from former Director Gebhard severing all ties to the Kinsey, and other documents obtained by *The Star*.

Here are some of those charges, all of which Reinisch vehemently denies:

■ She tried to claim credit for others' work. *The Kinsey Report*, a newspaper column that answered readers' questions about sex and carried her picture, for instance, was alleged to be written by her staff.

■ She attracted little grant money — \$3.5 million over a decade compared with \$100 million attracted by IU's Cyclotron, the noted physics facility.

■ She misspent time and money on speaking engagements, "lavish" entertaining, decorating the Kinsey, travel and fund raising with "public luminaries." A few of those celebrities joined the Kinsey board.

■ She personally transported \$10,000 in cash or traveler's checks to a Danish researcher to help him circumvent Danish taxes. The Danish scientist was helping Reinisch conduct research on the effects of drugs during pregnancy.

■ She created a fearful work environment; tried to exact revenge on two employees who quit by calling one "mentally ill" and trying to get the other evicted from his campus apartment; and asked for employees' fingerprints on the suspicion her files were being rifled.

■ She obtained a handicapped parking sticker, claiming she had a heart murmur, to ensure a prized parking space on IU's crowded campus.

■ She hired at least eight employees who were poorly qualified but had "family or sexual relationships" with Reinisch's family or with her staff, the internal review said. She at one point hired her mother, her husband's daughter and her husband's daughter's

boyfriend, the Alfred letter said. Former staffers said Reinsch clearly favored the many lesbian members of her staff, some of whom ran errands for her.

"The keynote of her entire academic life was self-promotion," said Fraser, who easily won a university grievance against Reinsch when she tried to claim partial credit and royalties for the Kinsey from a book he wrote.

"She was all light and no heat. All show and no substance."

Added Simon, "She always struck me as being an empty calorie."

Brassy N.Y. personality

In a husky, clipped, accented voice often compared to comedian Joan Rivers', Reinsch calls the accusations defamatory lies.

She even suggests it's not fair to report them: "It's like saying Adolf Hitler had a point of view, and so did the Jews. I was a very little person being attacked by a very big institution."

Reinsch, 50, who earned a doctorate from Columbia University and formerly taught psychology at Rutgers University, concedes that some Hoosiers had trouble with her brassy, aggressive personality and unorthodox past.

Few start careers in academia as she did — managing the Cafe Au Go Go in Greenwich Village and promoting the rock group Sly and the Family Stone.

"Her New York personality did not go over very big in Indiana," Eoyang said. "There are things that for a New Yorker would be routine, but for a Hoosier might be considered rude or callous or abrasive."

But Reinsch's energy and spirited personality seemed just what the Kinsey needed in 1982 when she took over. Many say the institute had disappeared from the national spotlight and fallen into physical disrepair. Reinsch, say her many admirers, quickly raised the institute's profile again.

She and her defenders argued that her research was vigorous, and she also was busy working on her thrice-weekly *Kinsey Report* columns: that she attracted more grant money than others at IU who have escaped criticism, and that she entertained and gave speeches to benefit the institute and encourage donations.

They also said she violated no university rules by personally paying her Danish colleague or by occasionally hiring family, and her mother was a qualified librarian who did some work for the Kinsey at half the normal pay. Reinsch needed a special parking pass because she often worked into the night, and she asked Hackett to join the board because she is a top-notch fund-raiser.

Employees who did their jobs, Reinsch stressed, had no reason to fear her, and their sexual orientations were no one's business.



Star Photo / Robb Hill

HOLDING IT TOGETHER: Interim Director Stephanie Sanders hopes the institute has a future at IU.

Employees were asked to submit their fingerprints in 1987 after she and IU police officials suspected the institute had been burglarized and her files rifled. But they were allowed to refuse.

"The record will show that there was sabotage, leaking of documents and, of course, the anonymous Alfred letters, all done by someone on the inside," Eoyang said. "It was clearly a vendetta."

"Old boys, little girl"

Reinsch admits she would have liked to accomplish more on AIDS. But she said she did conduct national symposia on the disease and worked with the IU Medical Center to try to establish an AIDS research center.

She pointed out that she succeeded at educating the public with *The Kinsey Institute New Report on Sex*, a compilation of Kinsey Report columns that was translated into many languages and sold worldwide.

The question about the average penis length, for instance, was one of the most-asked questions by men writing to Reinsch. Its answer was reprinted in the book.

"Oxford University Press published some of her books, and they don't publish rubbish," said John Money, director of the psychohormonal research unit at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He called the internal review report a "malicious and mendacious" document.

Enemies jealous that she landed the high-profile, \$80,000-a-year job seemed to dislike Reinsch from the start, Eoyang charged.

He said a longtime Kinsey employee, disgruntled with the new director, showed up at the institute with a gun in the fall of 1982, looking for Reinsch. Reinsch was not there, but other staffers alleged they were threatened by the employee.

No charges were filed. The employee, who soon after was fired from the Kinsey, admits having a gun permit but denies ever threatening anyone.

As for the administration's

charges against Reinsch, her supporter Sherry Hackett who calls Reinsch a "whiz kid" summed it up this way:

"The big old boys' club just didn't like a little girl coming along with a big mouth."

Reinsch retaliated by writing a 101-page rebuttal to the internal review committee and then suing her reviewers and bosses in Monroe Circuit Court.

"The proof," she said, laughing heartily, "is in the pudding."

The apology she received from Ehrlich in January was so glowing that insiders say Reinsch or her attorney must have written it. They also suggest she won a monetary award in the deal.

The apology called Reinsch an "excellent manager and administrator, a nationally renowned researcher, and an effective advocate for the research, archival and educational missions of the institute." She succeeded, he said, despite an unfair, "organized pattern of vicious attacks and hostility."

Satisfied that Ehrlich cleared her name, Reinsch announced her resignation two months later as institute director. That, some believe, was IU's sole goal.

"It was just incredible that the president of Indiana University had to say all those lies and bull," said Call, Kinsey's daughter. "She marched in with a lawyer and sued everybody. And Ehrlich bowed to her."

"But no one — no one — is fooled by it."

What would Kinsey think?

Visit Alfred Kinsey's grave at Rose Hill Cemetery on the west edge of Bloomington, some say, and you'll hear him spinning.

"Alfred is rotating, with good reason, in his coffin," said Fraser.

Not only is his beloved institute in ruins, but it was he who unwittingly paved the way for the scandal to drag on for years.

Hoping to shelter the institute and its precious data from attackers, Kinsey and Herman Wells decided in 1947 to independently incorporate it. That meant that only the Kinsey board — not IU officials or politicians or powerful critics — could determine its future and the future of its director.

Those good intentions backfired, some say, when Reinsch came in and began stacking the Kinsey board with "cronies" faithful to her, like Hackett. She also got herself named to the board and remains on it today.

For six long years, IU couldn't fire Reinsch as director. And the board, chaired by Eoyang, wouldn't fire her.

Some say Reinsch and Eoyang grew personally close, but both vehemently deny being more than friends. Eoyang added, "even if I were enjoying June on the side, that's nobody's damn business."

Reinsch said there had also been untrue rumors pairing her with an IU administrator.

Eoyang said some accusers

crawled his name and June's on the walls of a Bloomington bar, adding that the accusations "come from minds set on graffiti."

He said there was no reason to dismiss Reinsch, pointing to four audits, for instance, that cleared her of any financial irregularities.

But other respected board members, like Lilly Librarian William Eagle, "quit in disgust" when they saw the quality of Reinsch's research and noticed her handpicking the board, said Call.

A separate science advisory board set up by Reinsch is composed of scientists and scholars, but its role is only advisory.

"I wouldn't give \$1.98 for the Kinsey board," said researcher Simon, who worked for the Institute under Gebhard. "No decent researcher would touch the job of Kinsey director with that board and its standards and lust for publicity."

The board can't expect IU "to bankroll the Kinsey Institute into

the next century," added John Cameron, the Cyclotron director who also has to beg for university funds each year.

Associate Dean Alberts, who has been meeting regularly with Kinsey Interim Director Sanders to find solutions to problems, wants to add five new members to the six-member board to give it fresh blood and expertise. He hopes the new board will work with IU to find and agree upon a new director.

A "cruel irony"

He also hopes the new board will feel a responsibility to keep the Kinsey in Bloomington.

"The original spirit and intent of the incorporation was to protect forever the intellectual freedom of the Kinsey Institute as part of Indiana University," Alberts said. "I think it's morally questionable, even though legal, for a group to use the incorporation as a tool for threatening to leave."

"It's a cruel irony to imagine that this could be taken from us."

But Sanders and Eoyang said it is their duty to move the Institute if it can no longer thrive or survive at IU. Insiders say trustees are shopping it to universities as far away as Hawaii, but so far there are no serious takers.

Call said she would be relieved to see the Institute salvaged merely as a "fine library" to display the precious art, photographs, artifacts, data and information collected by her father.

She said she and her siblings are heartbroken over the demise of the Institute cherished by her family, adding, "This is one of the biggest disasters that could have happened."

"The glory years have passed the Kinsey by," said Frasier, who had hoped to make a career there. "It's ruined as a research institute. No one is going to give it money. Because of the scandal, the place is tainted."

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~ Alfred Kinsey, W. Pomeroy and C. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*,
(Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1948)

"When children are constantly warned by parents and teachers against contacts with adults, and when they receive no explanation of the exact nature of the contacts, they are ready to become hysterical as soon as any older person approaches, or stops and speaks to them in the street, or fondles them, or proposes to do something for them, even though the adult may have had no sexual objective in mind. Some of the more experienced students of juvenile problems have come to believe that the emotional reactions of the parents, police officers, and other adults who discover that the child has had such a contact, may disturb the child more seriously than the sexual contacts themselves. The current hysteria over sex offenders may very well have serious effects on the ability of many of these children to work out sexual adjustments some years later..."

~ Alfred Kinsey, W. Pomeroy, C. Martin, and P. Gephard,
Sexual Behavior in the Human Female (Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 1953)

LET DECENT PEOPLE KNOW WHAT REALLY
GOES ON IN BLOOMINGTON !!

Lesbopalooza Is Set In Bloomington

BLOOMINGTON—Lesbopalooza, an annual women's art festival, is set to take place on Saturday, 11 October, at Collins Living Learning Centre on Indiana University's Bloomington campus.

The all-day event will feature educational workshops, musicians, artists, comedians, gender illusionists (amateur drag kings) and other performers with an emphasis on lesbian, bisexual and feminist women.

Lesbopalooza was first conceived a couple years ago as a day to celebrate women in all their diversity and beauty.

The event was a success, but today the planners are thinking bigger and better. It is hoped that Lesbopalooza will become an exciting, impassioned day for women of all ages and walks of life. The festival, which falls on National Coming Out Day, is free and open to the public.

Men and women alike are welcome to enjoy the day, however, organisers point out that all performers and artists will be female so as to create a "totally women-focused and women-centered atmosphere."

The Lesbopalooza steering committee is currently looking for women who would like to participate in the festival as musicians, artists, poets, workshop leaders and the like. A 15 September deadline has been established for interested women.

The committee is also seeking sponsors for the event from any supporters in the community, male or female, individuals, businesses and vendors. Booth space can be reserved with any pledge over \$25.

Others interested in sponsoring or performing at Lesbopalooza, and those needing any other information, can contact Erica at 812/323.7123 or e-mail to lesbo@indiana.edu. They can also be reached through their website at <http://php.indiana.edu/~lesbo>.