

AMERICAN SCENE

The Dark, Secret World Of Alfred Kinsey

BY BOB KNIGHT

To the media and thus the world, Alfred C. Kinsey was a consummate scientist. Little was said of his personal life. He and his devoted wife Clara had four children and a stable home. *Time*, *Life* and *Look* magazines portrayed Kinsey as a typical Midwestern hus-

Alfred C. Kinsey A Public/Private Life

BY JAMES H. JONES
NORTON, 1997
\$39.95

band and father, a sort of Promise Keeper who just happened to have a fascinating occupation—the study of sex.

Behind the facade, however, was a deeply disturbed man whose mission was to remake the world in his own sexually contorted image.

"Beginning with childhood, Kinsey had lived with two shameful secrets: He was both a homosexual and a masochist," writes biographer James Jones. Jones (also the author of *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*) tells Kinsey's story with sympathy, clarity and precision.

Mr. Knight, director of cultural studies at the Family Research Council, wrote and directed a video documentary about Alfred Kinsey, The Children of Table 34.

Kinsey was raised in what Jones describes as a "repressive" brand of fundamentalist Christianity. Jones says Kinsey "must have suffered in full measure the pain and agony to which seriously religious children can fall victim."

Betraying an apparent bias of his own, Jones nonetheless carefully documents how Kinsey's forbidden desires became Dr. Kinsey's professional passion: "Kinsey was a crypto-reformer who spent his every waking hour attempting to change the sexual mores and sex offender laws of the United States."

Kinsey began his sexual experiments in a Hoboken, N.J., basement at age 7 with other children. "By late adolescence, if not before, Kinsey's behavior was clearly pathological, satisfying every criterion of sexual perversion."

During college, Kinsey lived the life of a "young Christian gentleman" by outward appearances. He graduated from Bowdoin College, and went on to Harvard. "As it had for years, his social life at Harvard revolved around church affairs, particularly

those involving young boys."

He alternatively fought and cultivated his homosexuality and masochism. As a biology professor, he took male students on field trips and required all the students to bathe naked in his presence. Some visited his tent after hours.

At Harvard, Kinsey first questioned, then became contemptuous of, Christianity. Jones documents in detail Kinsey's growing hatred of religion and his fascination with "bizarre" sexual behavior, especially the more exotic expressions of homosexuality.

After spending years studying the gall wasp, Kinsey agreed to teach a course on marital relationships at Indiana University. That led to his founding the Institute for Sex Research, from whence he leaped into history, in 1948, with the publication of *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, which was followed by *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* in 1953. These volumes, colloquially known as "The Kinsey Report," created a scientific apologetics for the sexual revolution that soon swept America.

Unbeknownst to the public, Kinsey abused his scientist's status to engage in sex with numerous partners. The attic of his home became a studio where he engaged in sex with men and filmed people copulating. Even his

wife was filmed there in odd encounters.

Jones maintains a descriptive tone without descending into prurience. But the sheer perversity of Kinsey's activities makes the book not for the faint-hearted.

Jones shows how Kinsey manipulated a willing media. Before releasing *Human Male*, Kinsey handpicked influential reviewers and hosted numerous feature writers and reporters for tours of the institute. Despite critiques from statisticians who found crippling errors in Kinsey's work, the press compliantly showcased the Kinsey message: sexual license at no apparent cost.

At the time of his death in 1956 at age 62, Kinsey felt he had failed in his quest to reshape sexual mores. But he was wrong. His books helped precipitate America's plunge into divorce, unwed pregnancies, abortion, venereal disease, feminist and homosexual activism, child abuse and a \$9-billion pornography industry.

The Kinsey Institute refuses to open its files on the victims of its founder's shocking "research," which includes graph tables documenting "oral and manual" manipulation of young boys. These Kinsey graphs, unfortunately, are the Rosetta Stone for a sex-education establishment that regards children as sexually viable from birth, or at least from kindergarten.

Jones's book is an important work, laying bare Kinsey's sexual agenda. But it leaves some important questions. Among them: Who were the children and how were they procured for the "research?" And why have the media generally been so incurious about the Kinsey Institute's appalling curiosities?

