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METRO

Three Kinsey volumes back in print

Biography rekindled interest in research on human sexuality

Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Three landmark volumes containing the results of Alfred Kinsey's controversial sex research have been republished by The Indiana University Press and the Kinsey Institute.

The release of the books, formerly out of print, commemorates the 50th anniversary of the first publication of the first volume, "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male," in 1948.

All three volumes became available again Thursday, said IU Press spokeswoman Marilyn Breiter. Several thousand copies have been printed.

The books are listed in the IU Press catalog and can be ordered at bookstores or over the IU Press Web site, www.indiana.edu/iupress/ordering.html.

"We'll make them available to libraries, and I would think there are a few individuals (who) would buy them," Breiter said. "Anyone with interest in Kinsey will want to know they're out there again."

Interest in the sex researcher has heightened since the publication last year of a Kinsey biography by James H. Jones, a University of Houston professor, Breiter said.

"Because of interest in the biography, there is a lot of interest in looking at the Kinsey research again," she said.

The biography, previewed in The New Yorker, challenged Kinsey's objectivity and suggested his findings may have been skewed by his own sexual behavior.

The director of the Bloomington-based Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction, John Bancroft, has defended Kinsey's integrity while acknowledging flaws in his research methods.

Bancroft continues his appraisal and evaluation of Kinsey's work in an introductory essay in the republished "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female."

He calls the last 10 years' controversies over Kinsey a political campaign "by those who deplore the change in family and sexual values that have occurred in the United States and elsewhere."

"They appear to believe that, by discrediting Kinsey, they will in some sense be able to set the clock back to what they assume were more appealing times."

The second volume is "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female," first published in 1953.

The third volume is "The Kinsey Data: Marginal Tabulations of the 1938-63 Interviews Conducted by the Institute for Sex Research." In it, Paul Gebhard, a key member of Kinsey's research team and eventually his successor as institute director, re-analyzes Kinsey's original data.

Publication of the third volume at the same time as the other two works is valuable, Bancroft added.

"It received little attention when it was originally published," he said. "It hardly figures in the attacks against Kinsey and yet it helps provide a much better perspective of the other two works."