

# KINSEY *Today*

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*Perch*, Dean Adams (2015).  
All works are ©copyright the artist

One of the artworks appearing in the Juried Art Show 2015, on display until July 11th at the Grunwald Gallery of Art.

## Oxytocin leads to brain response to crying infants

Researchers at the Kinsey Institute and Indiana University studying postpartum depression have found that the hormone oxytocin has selective effects on what activates women's brains. Notably, there is increased activation in a reward-sensitive area of the brain when women view images of crying infants, but not when they view images of smiling ones, leading researchers to consider that oxytocin might spark the motivation in humans to help an upset baby.

In the study, led by Dr. Julia Heiman, women in the first sixth months postpartum and women who had never had children were given either a nasal dose of oxytocin or a nasal placebo. The subjects then viewed images of crying infants, smiling infants, sexual activity and neutral items like nature photos.

Brain activity measured by functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) while the women viewed the images showed that the oxytocin group, regardless of child status, showed a significant increase in activation in the ventral tegmental area when the subjects viewed the crying infants and sexual images. This area is associated with the brain's reward circuitry, explained Julia Heiman, former Kinsey director and now a professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences and senior research fellow at the Kinsey Institute, who was senior author on the paper.



Areas of the brain appear light in in fMRI depending on oxytocin administration, and image viewing. Photo by Jennifer Bass

Oxytocin is a social neuropeptide closely associated with nurturing behaviors like breastfeeding and bonding that also increases in humans with touch and during orgasm. The researchers want to understand how depression affects the processing of the external world during the first six months postpartum, a time when infant development and parental adaptations are rapid and demanding. They also want to know just how decreased motivation toward sexual interests gets balanced between infant demands and the need of most families to maintain and nurture their pair bonds.

Why only crying babies and not the smiling ones? Heiman thinks that most adults have similar reactions to a smiling infant so fewer differences in "reward" can be found. But oxytocin, especially given its connection to significant reproductive events for women, might facilitate the appeal and motivation to help an upset baby since responding to infant distress is so critical in the early months of life.

"We know there are tradeoffs in terms of sexual responsiveness and in terms of attention to a new infant, who requires care and affection," she said. "We are learning that what changes during the postpartum period, how these

changes positively impact the mother and the infant, and to what extent this nurturing response overrides sexuality, depends on a number of influences.”

Kinsey director Dr. Sue Carter, known for her groundbreaking oxytocin research, commented on this collaborative project and its significance: “This exciting research once more shows the importance of oxytocin in maternal behavior and other positive social behaviors. Since oxytocin is normally released during lactation, this work also supports the importance of encouraging mothers to nurse their babies.”

Though the postpartum period is known as a time of less sexual desire for women, this latest study showed variability. Using a scale developed at The Kinsey Institute to measure sexual inhibition and sexual excitation, the postpartum women reported lower desire, more inhibition and less excitation in general. Yet those women who had a higher sexual excitation score also showed more activation in the ventral tegmental area of the brain with visual sexual stimuli when given oxytocin, regardless of whether they were new mothers or never mothers.

“From an evolutionary perspective, this is a nurturing period, a time of focus and bonding with a new baby whose life and future depend on attentive parenting, yet sexual sensitivity does not evaporate,” Heiman said. “It just may be less obvious in the first months following birth.”



Dr. Julia Heiman Photo by Tyagen Miller

“People forget about the ‘other parent’ even though between 54 percent and 91 percent of babies in the U.S. are born into married or cohabitating couples,” Heiman said. “There remains a lot to uncover about this early phase of life and how the key players adapt. We want to understand what is lost and what is gained in the service of healthy outcomes.”

The study, published in the journal *Hormones and Behavior*, was written with former IU graduate student Rebecca Gregory, IU senior scientist Hu Cheng, Kinsey research fellow Heather A. Rupp and IU professor Dale R. Sengelaub.

Gregory, R., Cheng, H., Rupp, H.A., Sengelaub, D.R. and Heiman, J.R. 2015. Oxytocin increases VTA activation to infant and sex stimuli in nulliparous and postpartum women. *Hormones and Behavior*. 69: 82-88.

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## Kudos to Kinsey Faculty Stephanie Sanders and Justin Garcia

### Dr. Stephanie Sanders Named IU Provost Professor

IU has recognized Kinsey Institute researcher and Gender Studies faculty member Dr. Stephanie Sanders as an Indiana University Provost Professor. According to the nominators, Dr. Sanders is being recognized not only for cutting-edge interdisciplinary scholarship, but also for her critical intellect, kindness, and generosity towards students, colleagues, and the international community of researchers.

Stephanie is professor of gender studies in the College of Arts and Sciences and associate director of the Kinsey Institute. She has been a faculty member at IU Bloomington for over 30 years and has served as interim director of the Kinsey Institute three times, most recently in 2014.



Photo by Herbert Ascherman, Jr

Stephanie has also served as president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, the oldest professional society dedicated to the advancement of knowledge about sexuality. She was awarded the society's Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award in 2007 and received its Distinguished Service Award in 2014. She has been a principal or co-principal investigator on research grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the National Institute of Mental Health.

Her research addresses sexual behavior; sexuality, sexual identity and gender relations; sex differentiation; gender difference in psychological and physical development; effects of prenatal hormones and drugs on human development; women's health and well-being, menstruation, menopause and the life cycle; and bio-psychological perspectives on debates in feminist theory. She has authored over 120 scientific papers and mentored students in gender studies, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and public health, and has helped decades of students grapple with concepts of sex, gender, and sexual orientation in a changing society.

IU Provost Professors are chosen for local, national, and international achievements and recognition in both research/creative activity and for teaching. Dr. Sanders certainly embodies the spirit of this award.

## Dr. Justin Garcia Awarded Trustee Teaching Award

The College of Arts & Sciences at Indiana University has selected Dr. Justin Garcia as one of the recipients of the 2015 Trustees Teaching Awards which recognize and enhance excellent teaching at Indiana University, especially at the undergraduate level. Justin's classes on *Understanding Sex/Gender Differences* and *Modern Love* have earned him student accolades. Next year he will launch a new course, *Biologics of Gender and Sexuality*.

Participants in this summer's Mini University at Indiana University will also benefit from this gifted teacher when he presents, *Nature AND Nurture: Sexuality Across the Lifespan*, on June 11th.



## Juried Art Show 2015 Opening:

### The Kinsey Institute Juried Art Show 2015 features many messages, many media

*Adapted from a blog post by Karen Land with additions by Jennifer Bass*

The Kinsey Institute Juried Art Show has reached a major milestone.

The exhibition — on display through July 11, 2015 at the Grunwald Gallery — marks its 10th year with a lively mix of artwork about sexuality, gender, relationships, reproduction, eroticism and the human figure.



At right: Brooklyn artist David Siever created "Founding Fathers" to imagine Ben Franklin the night before signing the Declaration of Independence.

“This is the best Kinsey juried show yet,” said Betsy Stirratt, director of the gallery and one of the jurors. “I am so pleased to see that the entries have become more thoughtful and thought-provoking than ever.”

It all began in 2006 as The Kinsey Institute Juried Erotic Art Show. Over time, the annual event has expanded to include more artwork and more themes relating to the mission of The Kinsey Institute. At first confined to an intimate setting within the Kinsey space at Morrison Hall, the show moved to the expansive gallery inside the Fine Arts Building in 2009.

## A rich mix

The 2015 edition of the show offers a rich mix of media and viewpoints, thanks to the Kinsey curator Catherine Johnson-Roehr, associate curator Garry Milius, and at the Grunwald, Stirratt and Jeremy Sweet, technical advisor and associate director.

In addition to photography, paintings and prints, there are ceramics, multimedia installations, readymade objects, sculptures and more.

Outside the gallery, a sign alerts visitors: “Please be aware that works in this exhibit contain nudity and sexual situations.”

Those who venture beyond the frosted doors will see that artists from around the country — and one from the Netherlands — have responded astutely to the exhibit themes. Some pieces make bold statements, while others display nuance, wit and whimsy.

## A common thread

This year, both the **Best in Show** and **Curators’ Choice** prizes have been awarded to fiber pieces.

Jennifer Hart of Lexington, Kentucky, received the top honor for “Self Portrait With J.” As her website states, her creations are “not your grandma’s quilts. Her art is about transformation; she turns pornography into “humanized” nude figures, and fabricates the images from discarded thrift-shop clothes.

“I think the ‘Self Portrait with J’ is both a personal statement and a continuation of my dialogue on pornography,” she said.

Aric Verrastro’s “Teammate Series” won the **Curators’ Choice**.

The Bloomington artist, who graduated from IU this month with an MFA in metalsmithing and jewelry design, often incorporates textiles and textile techniques into his work.



In his series, photographer William Zuback invites models to use a dress to express their own gender identity and body shape.

Here he has reimagined football shoulder pads in satin and lace, embellished with false eyelashes and acrylic nails.

In a passage on his website, Verrastro explained that he has referenced protective gear from a very traditional, masculine pastime and made it overtly feminine. “As a gay man, I constantly have to be conscious of my masculinity and its perception in social settings, even within gay culture,” he said.

Other artists also have chosen to address relationships and sexual themes through traditional forms of textiles.

Among them, Kathryn Shinko has embroidered racy text

messages in her “Dirty Sampler Series” and Bren Ahearn has employed cross-stitch in her “Sampler #13” to list milestones and ask: “When Will I Ever Learn?”



The “Teammate Series” by Aric Verrastro was awarded Curators’ Choice. Verrastro plays with gender stereotypes, adding feminine flourishes to football gear.

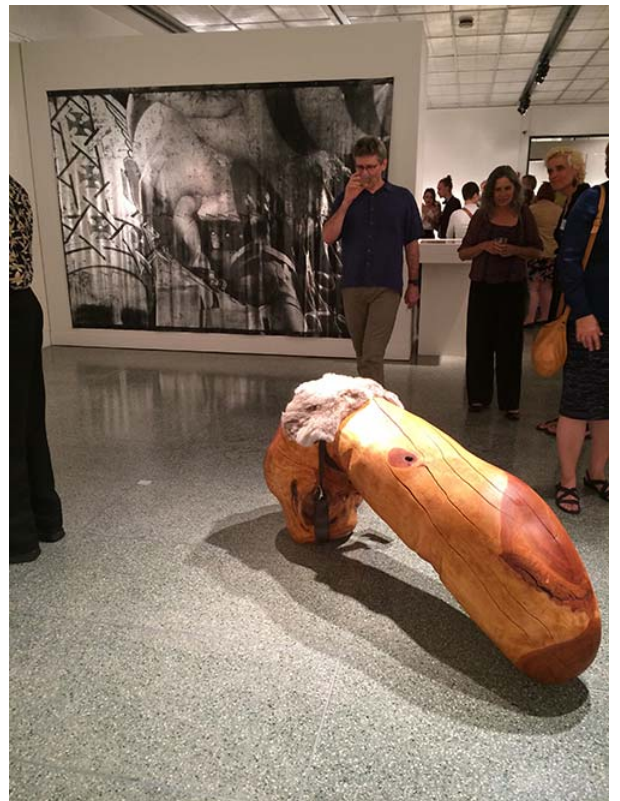
Kinsey summer art intern Mary Skrenta noted that artists like herself who create around themes of gender and sexuality appreciate the opportunity to share their work among others exploring these themes. She was also impressed by the artists’ talks during the opening, which will be available on the Kinsey Institute YouTube channel later this summer.

## Crowd favorite

The opening night crowd at the exhibition selected the third show award, the **Gallery Visitors’ Choice**, which went to a giant wood sculpture by Melanie Cooper Pennington of Bloomington. She is a current MFA student at IU who will be teaching an introductory ceramics course in the fall. “I am interested in mining the figure in all of its parts,” Pennington said about her work.

“I feel that getting the People’s Choice award is appropriate for the sort of art that I try to make. I tend towards what-does-it-mean-to-be-human sorts of themes that I hope will inspire viewers to interact with the pieces.”

Right: Gallery Visitors’ Choice was an untitled climbable sculpture by Melanie Cooper Pennington. Pennington combines curves and texture to soften the bold wooden phallus. *Inquisition* by Michael Bill Smith is on the back wall.



## To see the show

The Kinsey Institute Juried Art Show 2015 remains on display at the Grunwald Gallery through July 11. Hours are noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

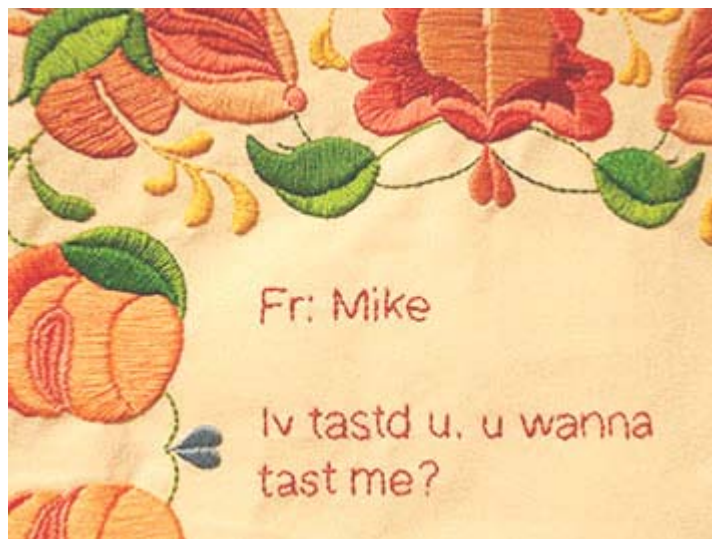
## More images from the opening:



Kathleen Garrison created the large-scale pastel "Ready."



Gallery visitors with "Sampler #13" (2014) by San Francisco, California artist Bren Ahearn.



Above: Detail of "Dirty Sampler Series: iv tastd u" by Kathryn Shinko. Hand embroidery on cloth.

Left: Oil painting "COUPLE" by Douglas Stewart, with viewer.



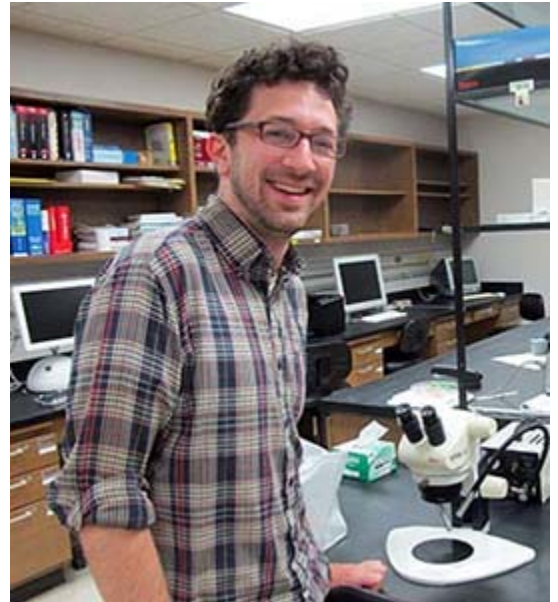
## It's All About People:

### Welcome New Research Faculty

#### Dr. Will Kenkel, Postdoctoral Fellow

**Will** is a behavioral neuroendocrinologist with a focus on the developmental consequences of oxytocin (Pitocin) exposure at birth. He examines the long-lasting impacts of this widely-used obstetric intervention - one which is now used in the majority of births in the U.S.

His predoctoral work focused on alloparenting - when individuals other than the parents perform as parents - in the prairie vole, a non-traditional laboratory rodent studied for its social bonding, monogamy, and caregiving behaviors. Will's research examined the role of oxytocin in alloparental caregiving and its effects on the autonomic nervous system. In his lab at the Kinsey Institute, he will continue to explore the consequences of administering oxytocin during the birth process on offspring brain and behavior throughout development.



#### Dr. Hossein Nazarloo, Research Scientist

**Hossein** is trained in molecular neuroendocrinology, neuroimmunology and clinical cardiology. He has worked with Dr. Sue Carter at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Research Triangle Institute and University of North Carolina (originally as a Research Assistant Professor, then Research Associate Professor, and Senior Neuroscientist), where he developed his research with prairie voles. His research interest is to understand mechanisms through which stressors across the life-span regulate physiology and behavior.

He has a long-standing interest in validation of the ELISA Assays and a better understanding of sex differences, especially as it relates to female health and behavior. Currently, he is conducting some exciting works on validating oxytocin in saliva as well as working on epigenetic mechanisms involved in the oxytocin receptor gene.

Dr. Nazarloo holds an M.D. from Carol Davila University of Medicine in Romania and a Ph.D. from Kochi Medical School in Japan.



## Celebrating Staff Service Anniversaries

The Kinsey Institute enjoys stellar administrative and service staff, and we are pleased to join Indiana University in recognizing three important anniversaries in 2015: **Thomas Albright** celebrates 30 years as our Systems Analyst/Programmer. **Shawn C. Wilson** and **Catherine Johnson Roehr** have been integral members of the staff for 15 years: Shawn as Library Public Services Manager and Catherine Johnson-Roehr as Curator of Art, Artifacts, and Photographs.



Photo by Herbert Ascherman Jr.

As Library and Archive Public Services Manager, **Shawn** (right, middle) is first-point-of-contact for library and archive scholars. Researchers from IU and around the globe have made special mention of Shawn's skills and helpfulness. He is cited in numerous manuscripts, dissertations, books and documentaries for his project assistance. In his spare time, Shawn serves as a Bloomington Hospice volunteer, and organizes the Kinsey team for the annual AIDS Walk, consistently raising funds and awareness around the community.

**Tom** studied Anthropology at IU under former Kinsey Director Paul Gebhard, starting in 1979, when he also was hired as graduate assistant. As a graduate student, he developed several human sexuality courses in the Anthropology department and worked daily as a graduate assistant during Dr. Gebhard's directorship. In 1985, he joined the staff as computer support provider. Tom has been the sole IT support provider for the Kinsey Institute through almost every director (Paul Gebhard, June Reinisch, Stephanie Sanders, John Bancroft, Julia Heiman, and today, Sue Carter) - all but Alfred Kinsey himself!

Besides his attention to the smooth IT operations and cybersecurity, Tom manages the Kinsey data archives, keeping the data alive and useful to researchers and scholars today. We are lucky to have him on our team!



Shawn C. Wilson with graduating library students, Jordan Starnes and Tom Nowak



Photo by Herbert Ascherman, Jr.

**Catherine Johnson-Roehr** arrived at the Kinsey Institute from the Lilly Library, which houses IU's rare book and manuscript collections, to serve as our art curator. Catherine has expanded the Kinsey collection of fine art and artifacts to include works by contemporary artists. In 2006, she founded the Juried Art Show, which opened for its 10th year on May 15.

Over the past 15 years, Catherine has overseen over 30 exhibits, providing extraordinary opportunities for the public and students to engage with the collections. She is currently focusing on developing traveling shows to showcase the phenomenal collection of art, photographs and artifacts in the Kinsey archives.

Congratulations and thanks to all for your dedication!

## Updates from the Board of Trustees

In April, the Kinsey Institute Board of Trustees met at Indiana University for its biannual meeting to discuss research and strategic priorities for the institute. The dedicated trustees bring expertise, organizational knowledge and a focus on supporting the Kinsey Institute in its mission to advance scientific knowledge in love, sexuality, gender and reproduction under the directorship of Dr. Sue Carter.

This spring, Professor Amy Applegate, Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Viola J. Taliaferro Family & Children Meditation Clinic at the Indiana University Maurer School of Law, began her term as Board chair. She follows Lynn Luckow, President and CEO of LikeMinded.org, who led the board through strategic planning, and guided the board through the transition to a new director, Dr. Sue Carter. The trustees, faculty and staff of the Kinsey Institute are extremely grateful to Lynn for his extraordinary service to the Kinsey Institute.



Kinsey Institute Director Sue Carter with outgoing chair Lynn Luckow, and new Board chair, Amy Applegate.

Sue Carter commented on Lynn's leadership:

"Lynn Luckow has been unwavering in his support of the Kinsey Institute, both during his tenure as Chair of the KI Board, and for many years prior to that time. He has earned the sincere gratitude of those with whom he worked most closely over the last decade."



## **Kinsey Institute Board of Trustees, 2015**

*Seated:* Bernice Pescosolido, Susan Benton, Wendy Kinsey Corning, Jenny Boylan, Lynn Luckow.

*Standing, left to right:* Michael Rudder, Betsy Stirratt, Bradley Wheeler, Barbara Bichelmeyer, Dan Smith, Katherine DeBruyn, Matt Dellinger (advisor), Bobby Schnabel, Amy Applegate, Munirpallam Venkataramanan, Thomas Schuler, Ruth Stone, Sue Carter, Fred Cate and James Wimbush.

*Not pictured:* Richard Gunderman, Eileen Kamerick, Deborah Levine, Jackie Simmons, Michael Sherrod and Tony White.

Photos by Jennifer Bass

## Uncovering History in the Kinsey Institute Archives

Gender Studies instructor Jeanne Vaccaro knew that the Kinsey library and archives held treasures for students interested in sexuality and gender, and wanted to encourage them to dig deeply into a topic of their own interest using materials at the institute. Over the semester, the students studied the development of sexology as a field of study, first using the taxonomic approach of Alfred Kinsey, and then exploring the work of Dr. Harry Benjamin and John Money to better understand the foundations of mid-20th century development of “normal” and ‘deviant;’ what might now be including as queer modes of sex, gender and identity. Final independent topics included:

- “Dear Dr. K” correspondence:  
After the publication of the Kinsey reports in 1948 and 1953, Dr. Kinsey received and answered hundreds of letters from people about their own sexual issues. This student presented on correspondence on ‘frigidity.’
- Transgender histories of “self making:”  
Personal accounts of gender identity from the mid-20th century
- Kinsey and his gay male networks, 1939-41.  
Embarking on his interview project, Dr. Kinsey sought out underground communities. Searching the archive paints a picture of the Chicago gay community, and its informal network.
- Black sexuality in the social and health sciences:  
Health disparities in minority populations is well-documented. This project explored the sensitive inclusion of African-Americans in sexual health research.

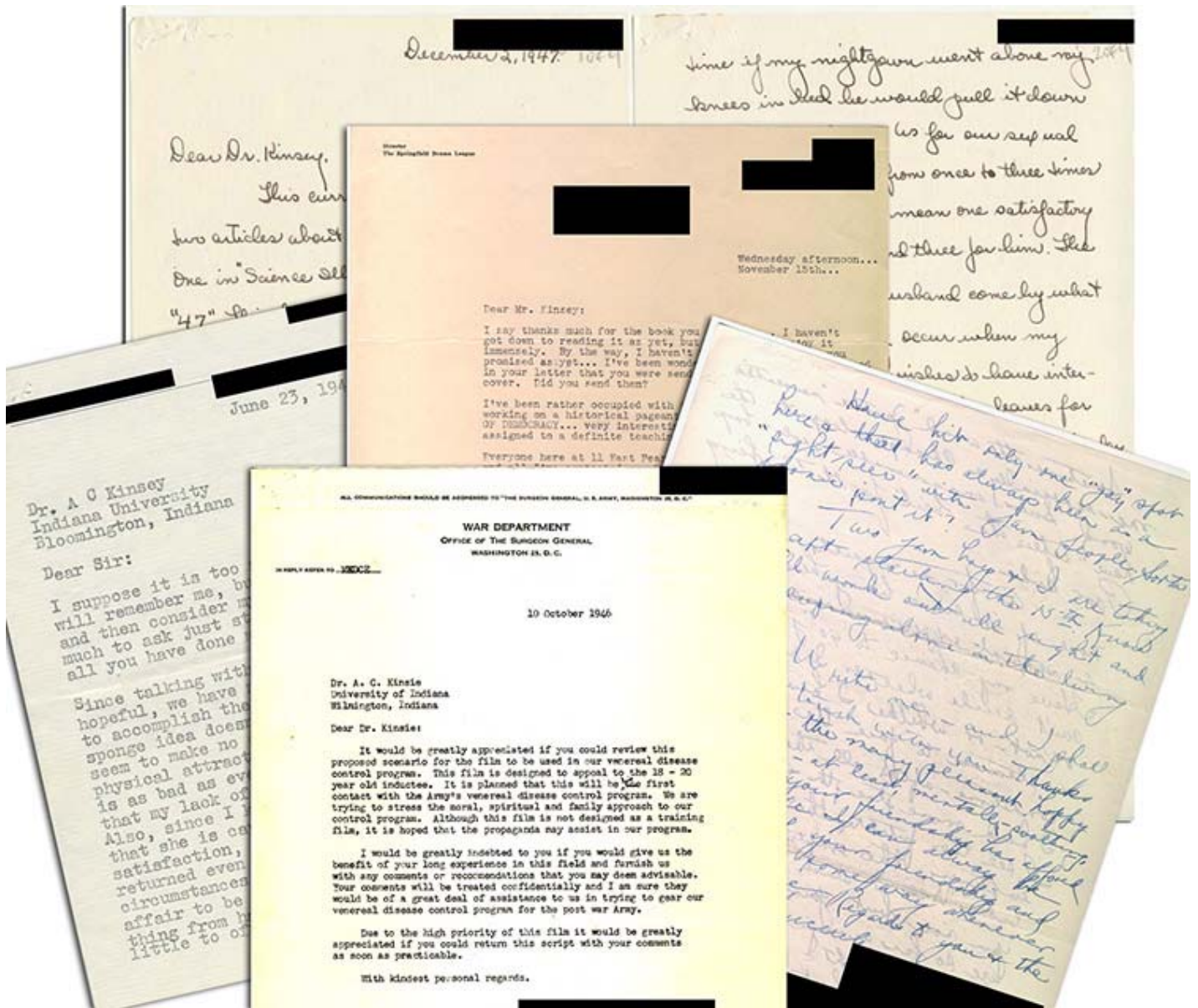


Comparing newspaper clippings like this one in the Kinsey Institute archives shows students how history and culture affect our understanding of sexuality and gender topics.

Other topics included:

- Moral panic in sex education
- Masculinity, militarism, and sex work
- Informal sex education through Tijuana Bibles
- Abortion before Roe v. Wade
- Frigidity, hysteria, and “the myth of the vaginal orgasm”

Given the growing number of affiliated faculty advisors based in the humanities, the Kinsey collections staff anticipate more and more use of the collections by IU classes.



Correspondence in the Kinsey Institute Archives includes letters from individuals requesting counselling or sharing their experiences (Dear Dr. K.), and consultations with government departments and agencies, including the War Department and the US Air Force,

## Kinsey Institute Welcomes New Affiliated Faculty

We are pleased to welcome new affiliated faculty in the social sciences and arts & humanities. These active and engaged scholars join the existing affiliated faculty and research fellows from Indiana University and around the world who have ongoing interests in love, sexuality, gender, and relationships. Affiliated faculty bring expertise from their own disciplines and research interests, and are associated with the teaching and research mission of the Kinsey Institute.

- **Claudia Breger**, Germanic Studies & Gender Studies, Indiana University
- **Wendy Gamber**, History, Indiana University
- **Scott Herring**, English, Indiana University
- **Dinah Holtzman**, Gender Studies, Indiana University
- **Jennifer Maher**, Gender Studies, Indiana University
- **Brian Powell**, Sociology, Indiana University
- **Elizabeth L. Rink**, Health and Human Development, Montana State University
- **Shane Vogel**, Cultural Studies & English, Indiana University

We are also pleased to thank our Collections & Special Advisors who share their expertise and time with Kinsey Institute staff & researchers on a variety of special projects:

- **James Canary**, Head of Conservation, The Lilly Library, Indiana University
- **Claude Cookman**, Professor Emeritus, The Media School (Journalism), Indiana University
- **Malcolm Daniel**, Curator, Department of Photographs, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- **Joan Hawkins**, Associate Professor, Film and Media Studies, Indiana University
- **Joanne Passet**, Professor Emerita, History, Indiana University East
- **Doug Sanders**, Paper Conservator, E. Lingle Craig Preservation Library, Indiana University
- **Eric Schaefer**, Associate Professor, Department of Visual and Media Arts, Emerson College
- **Mark Schoen**, Producer, SexSmartFilms
- **Joel Silver**, Director, The Lilly Library, Indiana University
- **Melissa Stone**, Ph.D., International Advisor, United Nations Affiliation
- **Jon Vickers**, Founding Director, Indiana University Cinema
- **Jeffrey Wolin**, Professor, School of Fine Arts, Indiana University

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