

## BFC Libraries Committee

### Minutes

November 16, 2018

Attendees: Nicolas Valazza (chair), Phil Ford, Ivan Kreilkamp, Claire Nisonger

Guests: Rick Van Kooten, Vice Provost for Research; Jamie Wittenberg, Co-Chair of the BFC Research Affairs Committee; Liana Zhou, Director of the Library and Special Collections, Kinsey Institute

Apologies: Robert Montoya, Mariam Mundle (undergraduate student representative), Rick Brewer (graduate student representative)

Meeting began at 1:00 pm.

#### 1. **Welcome and introductions**

#### 2. **Relocation of the Kinsey collection and current situation at the Kinsey Institute**

Rick Van Kooten, Vice Provost for Research, briefly summarized the steps that were taken after the flood that damaged part of the Kinsey collections and archive in Morrison Hall in June 2016. Since then, there has been a plan to relocate the Institute and its collections to a safer space, but this plan was hastened in the summer of 2018 because of the necessity to vacate space in Morrison Hall. So the relocation of the Kinsey collection (comprising of approximately 40,000 volumes) to the Auxiliary Library Facility was scheduled within a 2-month notice period and performed within two weeks in July 2018. The Vice Provost acknowledged that these conditions were far from being ideal for a collection of this extent and value. Liana Zhou, Director of the Kinsey Library, confirmed that the task was overwhelming, given the necessity of supervising a team of movers, with no training in handling rare books, performing the relocation. We were surprised to learn that no additional staff with expertise in special collections was hired to perform this task, and we are deeply concerned about the integrity of the Kinsey collections after its relocation.

The Director of the Kinsey Library believes that the Kinsey collections have no longer been a priority for the Kinsey Institute in recent years, and the staff reduction for the management of these collections is a direct consequence of this change of focus. We find this trend very concerning, in particular the fact that there is only one librarian in charge of overseeing, with an assistant librarian, all the collections, and no longer any art curator in charge of local exhibitions. This structural transformation of the Kinsey Institute has had adverse consequences on the preservation of the collections, their accessibility, and the possibility of organizing class visits and exhibitions, as many faculty members and other scholars have experienced.

The Vice Provost maintained that the administration is perfectly aware of this situation, and fully committed to restore the whole mission of the Kinsey Institute as a welcoming place for students and scholars, with appropriate reading rooms and spaces devoted to exhibitions, as soon as its relocation to Lindley Hall is completed, approximately in one year and a half.

Some of us also expressed concerns about the fact that the Kinsey Institute is no longer an independent entity, with its own Board of Trustees, but was merged with the University in 2016, with the consequence of placing it under the authority of the Board of Trustees of Indiana

University, and therefore subjecting it to greater political liability. The Vice Provost maintained that this merger has actually strengthened the legal protections of the Kinsey Institute against challenges to academic freedom.

*The Vice Provost for Research, the Director of the Kinsey Library, and the co-chair of the BFC Research Affairs Committee left the meeting at 2:00 pm.*

In light of the previous discussion, the BFC Libraries Committee recognizes the necessity for the Kinsey Institute to allocate more resources for the management of its invaluable collections. In particular, the Committee fully supports the following requests made by the Director of the Kinsey Library:

- a. Increasing collection staff including curator, librarian and archivists.
- b. Space commitment for ALF3, which will house Kinsey library's collections of art, artifacts, photographs and objects, as well as films (all art collections are currently in an off-site facility, which is not ideal for the collections).
- c. Space commitment for Lindley Hall, with adequate space for users, students, faculty, scholars as well as for teaching, digitization, displaying, and collaboration.
- d. Space commitment in Lindley Hall, with space for housing frequently used materials, new donations, and processing all types of materials such as books, films, and art. There will be stacks for materials to be kept on site.
- e. Exhibitions for both traveling and for Bloomington campus, preferably with gallery space in Lindley hall.

The Committee is planning to meet in the spring with Heather Calloway, Executive Director of University Collections, to further discuss this issue and possibly extend the discussion to other collections on campus.

3. **The next meetings are tentatively scheduled for Friday, February 8, at 2:30 pm, and Friday, March 29, also at 2:30 pm.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.