As the newly appointed director of The Kinsey Institute at Indiana University, I am writing to share my thoughts and plans for the future with you.

The Institute, as you know, is where basic research on human sexuality began nearly 70 years ago when the brilliant biologist Alfred Kinsey laid the foundation for our understanding of human sexual behavior. My intent is to extend his efforts and those of his successors with a new emphasis on the science of love, nurture, and well-being across the lifespan.

Although we live in a world increasingly inundated with fear, isolation, and trauma, humans remain inherently social. Emotional and physical health—and the longevity of our species and our planet—depend on our capacity to understand and foster positive emotions, such as love, and processes, such as nurture, that are essential to our individual and collective well-being. The Kinsey Institute is needed now more than ever!

My own research over the past three decades has revealed the same basic neurobiological processes and systems that support healthy sexuality are necessary for encouraging love and well-being. I discovered that, at the biological heart of the experience of love, is the hormone oxytocin. In turn, the systems regulated by oxytocin protect, heal, and hold the potential for people to experience greater fulfillment in life and society.

Going forward, I will be expanding our multidisciplinary research team with unique talents and new methods for uncovering the science of love and nurture. We will collaborate with faculty from IU, as well as outstanding scientists from institutions around the globe, to address important issues of relevance to society—sharing widely the perspectives of leaders from fields as diverse as biology, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology, sociology, education, public health, medicine, philosophy, economics, business, history, and the arts.

Being entrusted with the leadership of The Kinsey Institute is an honor and a significant responsibility. I look forward to hearing your ideas and seeing what we can do together to advance the Institute as a renowned center for understanding human sexuality and relationships.

With my warmest wishes,

C. Sue Carter, PhD
Director, The Kinsey Institute
Rudy Professor of Biology, Indiana University