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## **“Managing the Archives of Wilhelm Reich, M.D.**

**A Presentation by  
The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust  
at the Invitation of the  
Institute for the Study of the Work of Wilhelm Reich**

**Saturday – March 15, 2008  
New York City**

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On Monday, October 29, 2007—five days before the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wilhelm Reich’s death—The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust posted the Index of “The Archives of the Orgone Institute” on our Museum website.

An announcement and a link to this Index was and continues to be prominently featured on our Home Page, which at the time averaged 84 hits per day and is now up to about 94 daily hits. We announced this posting immediately in our October 2007 e-mail Update which went out to our regular Update List of close to a thousand people.

The Index itself is 141-pages long, and lists the contents of 282 archive boxes of Reich’s materials according to Category, File name and Box number. The materials themselves, in their respective archive boxes, have been organized into 12 individual Categories. These 12 categories, alphabetically, are:

- Audiotapes
- Conspiracy
- Correspondence
- Films
- Manuscripts
- Organizations
- Orgone Institute
- Orgone Institute Photographic Slides
- Orgone Institute Press
- Personal Files
- Photographs
- and Published Work & Unpublished Translations

These materials are housed at “The Center for the History of Medicine” at the Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard University, one of the world’s premier medical libraries. Reich’s Archives comprise a total of 98-cubic feet of materials, making these archives one of the Countway’s largest collections.

Along with the posting of this Index, we included a brief history of the Archives *and* the Access Policies & Procedures, by which scholars and researchers may formally apply to The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust to study these materials.

And since then, the Trust has processed numerous applications from scholars and researchers who have subsequently gone on to study archival materials at the Countway or are planning to do so in the near future.

All of which has ushered in an entirely new set of responsibilities for the Trust, for which we need to consistently strike a balance between the genuine needs of bonafide scholars and researchers, *and* the broader issues involving Reich's legacy. These issues include:

- protecting copyrights
- protecting Reich's authorship of unpublished materials
- protecting the facts and the intellectual truth of Reich's unpublished materials
- the plans of the Trust to draw upon unpublished materials for future publications, educational tools, conferences, and presentations
- and finally—and perhaps most important—The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust's commitment to encouraging and bringing together individuals from different affiliations and disciplines for new research opportunities and scholarship, for workshops, and for practical applications of Reich's legacy.

So these are the major issues that the Trust consistently balances as we manage Reich's Archives. And one of our challenges to achieving this balance—in a process in which we are admittedly still finding our way—involves the degree to which *we* are familiar with the specific contents of this vast collection.

Who, if anyone, has actually read all of the thousands and thousands of handwritten and typed pages in the Archives? And looked at all of the visual materials? And actually listened to all of the dozens and dozens of hours of audio recordings? Who, if anyone, has done all of these things?

With the presumable exception of Reich throughout the course of his life, nobody has read, looked at, or listened to the entire 98 cubic-feet of materials in The Archives of the Orgone Institute. Indeed, how would such a thing be possible?

We are talking about a large, but obscure archive that has never been funded by any academic or professional institution, due in no small part to the consistent public distortions about Reich that have persisted since his death.

Archives and collections—in whatever institution they reside—need specific allocations of funds and staffing whenever these collections require ongoing maintenance and preservation of materials, as Reich's Archives do. And the owner or donor of such collections bears much of the responsibility for providing such funds.

Given the public perception of Reich to this day, from what academic institution or professional organization would such funding or interest possibly come from?

Consequently, for close to 50 years now The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust alone has had to assume responsibility for *all* archival work and for *all* archival expenses. And so today, although the Archives have been preserved, organized and catalogued by Category, File, Document and other designations, the specific contents of much of these materials are unknown to anyone.

For example, in the Category labeled **Correspondence** we find a rich vein of raw material: 39 archive boxes containing hundreds and hundreds of letters—many in German, others in English—sent to a wide range of individuals and organizations. From notable historic figures in psychoanalysis, politics, government, medicine, law, science, education and the arts, to more obscure figures of various backgrounds, interests and nationalities whose contact with Reich is often quite compelling and revealing.

But Reich’s voluminous correspondence over the course of his lifetime isn’t limited to this single category. Hundreds and hundreds of additional letters can be found in boxes among other categories of materials. For instance, the categories labeled **Conspiracy, Organizations, Orgone Institute, Orgone Institute Press** and **Personal Files** all contain prolific correspondence, as well. And to date, only a small fraction of any of this correspondence has appeared in print, comprising valuable content in:

- *Reich Speaks of Freud*
- *Record of a Friendship*
- *Passion of Youth*
- *Beyond Psychology*
- and *American Odyssey*

The challenge and mission of the Trust, then, is:

- to familiarize ourselves with these untapped, unpublished resources,
- to explore and identify fresh themes, perspectives and storylines in these letters,
- and to select, organize and shape some of this unpublished raw material into new publications, future presentations, and educational tools.

Similarly, the Category entitled **Organizations** contains fascinating materials for scholars and researchers, as well as potential opportunities for the Trust’s future publications, presentations and educational resources. Among these 49 archive boxes are files about:

- Reich’s “Orgone Institute Research Laboratory”
- Reich’s “Orgone Research Clinic” in New York City
- the participants and work of the “Orgone Infant Research Center”
- the purchase and development of Orgonon as Reich’s scientific research center
- and the creation and activities of The Wilhelm Reich Foundation.

Of particular note is that 15 of these 49 archive boxes contain files about the manufacture, use and distribution of orgone energy accumulators in the 1940s and 50s. So these materials also need to be examined to see how they might be crafted into new articles, journals or books, or into future conferences, presentations and other applications.

The Category entitled **Orgone Institute Press** contains 36 archive boxes of files documenting the activities of Reich's private publishing house in America. Today many people fail to appreciate the fertility of Reich's private press which, at its peak, had a mailing list of over 6000 names. This included individuals, colleges and universities, libraries, hospitals, public health agencies, professional organizations and academic publications.

In a January 1947 letter to his colleague Dr. Walter Hoppe, a physician in Palestine, Reich reported that the Orgone Institute Press was selling an average of 400 copies of literature per month. Furthermore, Reich's books, bulletins and journals were being regularly reviewed in bonafide academic, psychiatric, medical and scientific periodicals, and often quite favorably. Obviously the history of Reich's publishing activities in America is a significant part of his legacy and a worthy subject for scholarship, future publications and presentations.

In the Category entitled **Manuscripts** we are confronted with more complex issues and challenges. In these 17 archive boxes are hundreds of files, thousands of pages, spanning decades of Reich's life, with many manuscripts written in German even up into the 1950s. While Reich was alive the sheer quantity of his published work in Europe and America was staggering: books, articles, lectures, research journals and bulletins. Consequently, one of the Trust's priorities is to determine which manuscripts—in this Category and in others—actually constitute a substantial amount of unpublished new knowledge in the science of orgonomy.

We know from reading Reich's publications that he was constantly revisiting his earlier work, constantly building upon his earlier findings, constantly revising and updating already published books, often issuing second editions and third editions to document his constantly evolving thought and emerging discoveries. And Reich's Archives are permeated with thousands of pages of early drafts, revisions, handwritten notes and changes, as well as newer drafts of older materials, much of which Reich eventually coalesced into published articles, additional chapters and books.

And so again, what among any of these manuscripts—or among any of Reich's archival materials—actually constitutes unpublished new knowledge? Not about Reich himself, not about the minutiae of the man's life and personality—all of which is certainly valuable and necessary for scholarship. But rather, new knowledge about Reich's research and discoveries, information previously unknown through which the science of orgonomy is dramatically propelled forward, information previously unknown that is truly—in Reich's own words—"The Knowledge of the Future."

And it's become increasingly apparent to us that much of what we might call this "unpublished new knowledge" is to be found in the category entitled **Orgone Institute**. Among these 45 archive boxes, we see numerous files—with materials from the 1940s and 50s—whose titles *seem* to hold a promise of genuinely new knowledge.

For example, we see numerous files devoted to "orgonometry," the word that Reich used to describe "quantitative orgonomic research," what we would call the mathematics and the physics of orgonomic functions. So it's in files whose titles have the words "*Orgonometry*" or "*Equations*" where we find pages and pages of orgonometric equations, many of them handwritten and many of them typed, equations expressing orgonomic functions.

Reich published information about basic orgonometric equations for the first time in the October 1950 issue of the *Orgone Energy Bulletin*. He followed this up with a second article about equations in the April 1951 bulletin. And reprints of both these bulletins are available in our Bookstore.

Reich's book *Cosmic Superimposition—Man's Orgonotic Roots in Nature*—also published in '51—includes the briefest of references to equations, as does the *Cosmic Orgone Engineering* bulletin in July 1954. In 1957, Reich's final book *Contact with Space* includes perhaps a dozen pages devoted to equations, the most that he ever published. And in *American Odyssey*—published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux in 1999—Reich's diaries from the 1940s contain numerous contemporaneous entries about early orgonometric equations.

But these published equations and passing references represent the tiniest fraction of the *quantity* and the *complexity* of the equations in Reich's Archives. Those of you who have looked at Reich's published equations are well aware that even basic orgonometry comprises new symbols and new algebraic values as Reich grapples with new ways to describe quantitative and qualitative properties of natural processes.

Among the archival materials, we see basic orgonometric symbols, values, and meanings constantly evolving into new symbols, new values, new meanings. We see what Reich might call "simple equations"—although their meaning is unclear to us—evolving into progressively intricate expressions of orgone biophysics.

To look at these pages is to see the language of orgonometry itself developing and transforming into increasingly elaborate formulae. To look at these pages is to see what is truly "Knowledge of the Future" that, to date, is beyond our comprehension; equations that require meticulous study and discussion by those well-versed in Reich's published scientific work so that these equations might be deciphered and understood and made practical.

It is also among these 45 boxes in the "**Orgone Institute**" category that we find materials pertaining to the Orgone Motor, the object of considerable curiosity, speculation, and anticipation for decades.

On August 8, 1947, Reich discovered a potential motor force in atmospheric orgone energy when the impulse needle of a Geiger-Müller counter—which had been sitting just outside the Orgone Room in the Student Laboratory for about two months—when this impulse needle began to rotate at a rate of almost 100 counts per second, almost 6000 counts per minute.

Within a year—on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1948—Reich had succeeded in propelling a small Western Electric KS-9154 motor by means of the Orgone Motor Force. This motor force comprised, among other things, a Geiger-Müller Counter calibrated to measure atmospheric orgone energy, in conjunction with several vacuum tubes exposed for prolonged periods of time to high concentrations of atmospheric orgone—what Reich called VACOR Tubes—as well as other scientific apparatus.

Unfortunately this promising research was cut short by the erratic, irresponsible and, to this day, inexplicable conduct of a laboratory worker who suddenly left Orgonon in the Fall of 1948, coupled with Reich's escalating legal problems with the Food and Drug Administration which had begun in the summer of 1947. Consequently, Reich's published information about the Orgone Motor Force is limited.

In *The Cancer Biopathy*, published in 1948, Reich concludes Chapter 4 - "The Objective Demonstration of Orgone Radiation" with a mere half-page about his recent discovery of a motor force in orgone energy. In the inaugural issue of the *Orgone Energy Bulletin* in January 1949 is a five-page article entitled "A Motor Force in Orgone Energy – Preliminary Communications". This article includes notarized statements and affidavits that Reich sent to his attorneys in New York City and in Maine, to the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington D.C., to The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and to numerous colleagues throughout the world:

- to Doctors Wolfe and Tropp in New York
- to A.S. Neill in London
- to Dr. Hoppe in Tel-Aviv
- to Ola Raknes in Oslo
- and to Leunbach in Copenhagen

In one of these published, notarized statements, Reich says:

"On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1948, at 1 p.m., I succeeded in setting a motor (Western Electric KS-9134, Serial Number 1227) into motion by means of the Orgone Energy Motor Force which I had discovered by way of the Geiger-Müller counter on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1947. To date, the energy output has been increased to around 200,000 impulses per minute, measurable with the 32 Geiger-Müller Scaler. An activated filament of electronic amplifiers, without any high voltage, is sufficient to transmit the Orgonotic Motor Force. In order to set the Orgone Motor into motion, a certain function, called Y, is necessary. This function cannot be divulged at the present time."

And several paragraphs later, in this same published notarized statement, Reich says:

“The speed of the motor action can be regulated. It depends on:

- (a) the number of vacor tubes connected
- (b) weather conditions, in accordance with orgonotic functions found hitherto, such as temperature difference  $T_0 - T$ , speed of electroscopic discharge, etc.
- (c) Function Y.”

—which, as we recall, Reich said “cannot be divulged at the present time.”

Two years later, Reich published *The Oranur Experiment - First Report (1947-1951)*. And in it he devoted two chapters—65 pages—to documenting his research about the orgone motor force. But he includes nothing about the actual experiments whereby that small Western Electric motor was propelled by this motor force. Nor does he include anything about the Y Function.

And while *American Odyssey* includes Reich’s exciting contemporaneous entries about his discovery of an orgone motor force in August 1947, the book ends in December 1947, 6 months before the successful experiments involving that small Western Electric motor.

A video of Reich’s original 16mm film of this motor being propelled by orgone energy is run continually during visiting hours at the Wilhelm Reich Museum. And excerpts from this film appear in our 28-minute biographical video and DVD *Man’s Right to Know*. Reich’s original 16mm film is a priceless primary resource, but it does not answer critical questions about the exact set-up of the successful orgone motor experiment. Nor does this film resolve questions about what Reich called the Y function.

And so it is among the archival materials in the Category entitled **Orgone Institute** that we hope to find the answers. But archival materials pertaining to the Orgone Motor are limited, as was the research itself, for reasons already mentioned. And a cursory examination of these limited materials indicates that the answers we’re looking for are not necessarily self-evident.

For example, the small Western Electric motor used in these experiments reposes in Box 41, among other miscellaneous items. And to reflect upon this small, ordinary device being propelled by orgone energy sixty years ago in June of 1948 induces a wide range of intellectual and emotional responses. And as an historic object that played a vital role in the science of orgonomy, this motor has tremendous *intrinsic* value. But in and of itself, the motor offers little or nothing in terms of determining the precise set-up of the 1948 experiments or the nature of the Y function.

More to the point obviously are Reich's many notebooks from the 1940s which contain his handwritten, contemporaneous entries about his ongoing laboratory research, as well as his various other simultaneous projects.

In Box 18, for example, is a collection entitled "Composition Notebooks" with over a dozen notebooks dating from 1940 to the early 1950s. Typically the individual titles and entries of these notebooks are sometimes in German and sometimes in English.

And in Box 17 is a separate notebook from 1948, entitled "Zu Erledigen" which roughly means "To work out" or "To settle". This notebook, together with two Composition Notebooks from 1947 and 1948, contain significant information about the orgone motor research as it was unfolding.

To the scholar and researcher well-versed in Reich's life and work, these handwritten notebook entries are dramatic and intellectually stimulating, even while offering no immediate self-evident answers to critical questions about the experimental set-up and the Y Function.

What are striking in these entries about Reich's orgone motor research are pages containing more organometric equations: pages of symbols and algebraic values that need to be studied, discussed and deciphered. Perhaps it's among these equations that we may be able to eventually discern the Y function. But we need to expand our efforts into other files, into other archival materials that might conceivably yield additional information about orgone motor research.

We know, for example, that Reich was a very visual thinker in terms of creating charts, diagrams and schematics to explicate his work. His published books—starting with the original 1927 edition of *The Function of the Orgasm*—are filled with such illustrations. And his Archives contain numerous boxes of these visual materials. So perhaps a clearly understandable schematic of the set-up of the 1948 orgone motor experiments does exist.

We also know that in the interests of safekeeping certain aspects of his work, Reich often deposited particularly sensitive scientific information and mathematical equations with his lawyers and his co-workers. Which means we need to cross-reference other files, including Reich's correspondence with these individuals. So clearly this is an intellectually exciting area of new knowledge, requiring substantial investigation and study.

The Archive Index also indicates that the **Orgone Institute** boxes contain promising new knowledge in the areas of "Oranur Medicine" and "Oranur Chemistry."

As most of you know, the word Oranur—spelled O-R-A-N-U-R—is Reich's term for Orgone Energy Against Nuclear Energy. This was the name that Reich gave to an experiment that he conducted at Orgonon in Rangeley, Maine in 1951, in an attempt to test the medical effects of orgone energy on nuclear radiation sickness at a time of escalating global tension between the United States and Korea.

In Reich's experiment, one milligram of radium—relatively harmless under ordinary conditions—was exposed to high concentrations of atmospheric orgone energy over an extended period of time with dramatic, unpredictable and compelling results that propelled the science of orgonomy into new realms of biophysics, medicine and chemistry. This included the identification of Deadly Orgone Energy in the atmosphere and in the living organism—abbreviated by Reich as D-O-R, or DOR—as well as the invention of the cloudbuster in 1952 and the Medical DOR-buster in 1954–55.

In the 1950s, Reich published hundreds of pages documenting his research in these areas, including articles written by several of his co-workers, all of which are currently available. These include:

- *The Oranur Experiment – First Report (1947-1951)*
- “DOR-Removal and Cloudbusting”
- “DOR Sickness—A Review of Reich's Findings”  
by Dr. Chester Raphael, M.D.
- “The Blackening Rocks” in which Reich describes physical changes in the rocks at Orgonon following The Oranur Experiment
- “Melanor, orite, brownite, and orene” in which Reich's co-worker Robert McCullough describes new physical substances that evolved from The Oranur Experiment
- and “The Medical DOR-buster – Part I, The Emotional Desert” in which Reich describes the basic research that led to his last invention, which he developed to mobilize stagnant orgone energy in the human body.

But in Reich's Archives there is much more in these specific fields of research contained in files whose contents hold out at least a *promise* of Knowledge of the Future:

- Reich's logbooks, notebooks and diaries about Oranur and its aftermath
- Oranur protocols and reports
- health protocols
- meeting protocols
- correspondence, phone calls and reports
- and Oranur chemistry diaries and protocols from Reich and McCullough

So all of this potential for new scholarship and research, based on archival materials, is exciting and intellectually stimulating.

*But for whom? And for how many? And to what end?*

If over 7000 pages of Reich's currently available books, journals and research bulletins have produced little or no interest from mainstream psychiatry, medicine, science or academia...and if over 7000 pages of Reich's available publications have had so little effect in counter-acting commonplace distortions of his life and work...then let us all resolve to do this:

Let us accept the fact that in Reich's Archives there is no single thing—in and of itself — that will suddenly change the prevailing, distorted perceptions about Reich. And then— having accepted this fact—*let's move on!*

Let's move on to continually explore and pursue what might be more realistic opportunities and expectations for factually correcting distorted perceptions of Reich in ways that might lead to more widespread appreciation, research and practical applications of his work.

Throughout Reich's life—and up until today—the voices against him personally and against his work have always spoken from platforms larger and more powerful than Reich's and more influential than ours: voices from psychiatric, medical, scientific, academic and government institutions; voices on radio and television; voices in popular books and magazines, as we've seen this year with disinformation about Reich in *Vanity Fair* and *Forbes Magazine*.

Decades of these voices speaking from these formidable and far-reaching platforms have told a factually and intellectually dishonest story of Reich. But it is a story of Reich told for so long and so insistently and so loudly that it has become ingrained and accepted as fact in official and public consciousness.

There's a terrific quote from Thomas Paine, in which he says: "*A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right.*" And it's precisely this "long habit of not thinking a thing wrong" that underlies the persistence and the perpetuation of the same common distortions about Reich.

And so the challenge of the Trust—and of all of us here—is essentially a challenge of storytelling, the challenge of finding and creating new platforms for *our* voices, new and powerful platforms from which *we* tell the story of Reich's life and work factually and compellingly to new audiences.

This is the reason that the Trust has devoted so much time and effort trying to get a major feature film produced about Reich, based on our screenplay, although getting any screenplay into the hands of any reputable director, producer or actor is difficult.

This is the reason that the Trust is working on a script for a factually accurate, full-length documentary film about Reich, although securing the necessary funding for any documentary is never easy.

And creating new platforms for telling Reich's story to new audiences is the reason for planning a major conference on "Orgonomic Medicine" and "Orgonomic Science" here in New York City, although finding a feasible and receptive venue is a major obstacle.

And finally—in reference to my earlier remarks—using Reich's archival materials to craft new publications, educational tools and presentations, specifically aimed at wider audiences, also addresses this need for new platforms from which we can tell the story of Reich's life and work.

Thank you all for coming today and thank you for listening.

*Kevin Hinchey*  
*The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust*