

**NOVEMBER 2007 UPDATE
FROM
THE WILHELM REICH INFANT TRUST
& THE WILHELM REICH MUSEUM**

We thank you for your interest and support. For newcomers to this list, none of the names on this e-mail list—nor the names of Museum visitors, conference attendees, or bookstore customers—are shared with any other individuals or organizations.

If at any time you wish to be removed from this list, please let us know. All previous Updates, dating from March 2004, are archived at www.wilhelmreichmuseum.org/resources.html

RECENT ACTIVITIES

The past few weeks have been inordinately busy as we complete our major responsibilities and activities for this milestone year of 2007:

- On Monday, October 29th, we posted the Index of the Archives of the Orgone Institute on our website, plus a History of the Archives and the Access Policies & Procedures. See: <http://www.wilhelmreichmuseum.org/resources.html#archives>

With the posting of this information, The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust is now accepting applications from scholars and researchers who wish to study materials from the Archives.

- During the week of November 5th, members of Wilhelm Reich's immediate family were the first to visit the Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard University to study materials from Reich's Archives.
- On Wednesday, November 7th, Kevin Hinchey—Associate Director of The Wilhelm Reich Museum and Board Member of The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust—flew from JFK Airport to Vienna on the same flight that carried two professionally-packed wooden crates of objects and materials from the Museum and the Countway Library.

These objects and materials are on loan to the Jewish Museum Vienna for its Wilhelm Reich Exhibit. Kevin accompanied the crates as they were transported from the airport to the Jewish Museum Vienna, and was present as the crates were opened and the objects and materials were unpacked for installation.

- The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust has taken a significant step in realizing its goal of producing a full-length documentary film about Wilhelm Reich. While in Vienna, Kevin Hinchey agreed to an exclusive co-production deal with an award-winning Austrian filmmaker with whom he has been in contact since October 2006. This deal commits Kevin's efforts and the Trust's resources exclusively to this collaborative documentary film project. We'll have more details in our January 2008 Update.

- On Monday, November 12th, Mary Higgins—Director of The Wilhelm Reich Museum and Board Member of The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust—flew to Vienna to be on hand for the November 15th Grand Opening of the Reich Exhibit at the Jewish Museum Vienna.

Entitled *WILHELM REICH – Sex! Pol! Energy!* [www.jmw.at/de/wilhelm_reich.html], the exhibit runs from November 16, 2007 to March 9, 2008.

- On Thursday evening, November 15th, 2007, the Jewish Museum Vienna hosted the Grand Opening of its exhibit *WILHELM REICH – Sex! Pol! Energy!* The exhibit curator Birgit Johler—who first contacted The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust for its assistance back in April 2004—e-mailed our office at Orgonon to tell us that about 300 people attended the Grand Opening.

NOVEMBER 2007 NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP)

On September 11, 2007, we received an e-mail from Mr. Jerry Harkavy, an Associated Press reporter in Portland, Maine, wanting to write an article on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Reich’s death. Mr. Harkavy said the article would definitely appear in several Maine newspapers, but he hoped that the Associated Press might distribute it nationwide as well.

Our first response was a tongue-in-cheek “So where were you and the rest of the Maine newspaper reporters on the occasion of our *2007 International Conference on Orgonomy* last summer?”

(For the record, despite press releases about the 2007 Conference which we sent out for two months to all of the major Maine newspapers, not one reporter attended any portion of this three-day event. Nor did our press releases, well in advance of the Conference, to the Leonard Lopate and Brian Lehrer radio programs in New York City elicit any response. And when a longtime supporter of the Trust and Museum contacted a friend of his who writes for The Boston Globe, there was no interest at all. Furthermore, over the past few years, press releases about our conferences and activities to national public radio stations in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont have yielded nothing.

We mention this only to emphasize that we should not misconstrue our interest in Reich during this milestone year of 2007 as an indication of any widespread awareness, knowledge or curiosity about Reich in the mainstream American media or among the general public.)

Based on years of unpleasant experiences with the media, our second response to Mr. Harkavy’s overture was concern that his article might turn out to be a regurgitation of the same inaccuracies, distortions, and snide innuendos that characterize much of what people write about Reich and his work. But because Mr. Harkavy—a 40 year newspaper veteran—had written a decent article about The Wilhelm Reich Museum a few years back, and was going to proceed with or without us on this new article, we wanted to assist him in any way that we could.

During the first week of November 2007—coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Reich’s death—Mr. Harkavy’s article appeared in numerous Maine newspapers, as well as in newspapers nationwide and various online news providers, including The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, Newsday (Long Island’s newspaper of record), The Hartford Courant, CNBC.com, Newsweek.com, and many others.

And we’re generally pleased with the content of the article. Mr. Harkavy was courteous and professional during all of our personal and telephone contact with him, and the civil, evenhanded tone of his article was refreshingly free of the sarcasm, snideness, and innuendo that we’ve come to expect from typical articles about Reich. Indeed, we hope that Mr. Harkavy’s professional voice might serve as a model for other journalists writing about Reich in the future.

Unfortunately, however, different headlines introduced different versions of Mr. Harkavy’s article in different newspapers, with some headlines perpetuating the same sensationalized distortions that first appeared in print during Reich’s lifetime. One of the most alarming was the headline that appeared in The Hartford Courant in Connecticut (which boasts of being “the oldest continuously published newspaper in America”):

WILHELM REICH’S LIFE IS MARKED
Controversial Collector of Purported
Sexual-Orgasm Energy Died in 1957

Thus, exactly 50 years after Reich’s death, the inaccurate and distorted idea of the orgone energy accumulator as a sexual device is given new life by the American press.

When we asked Mr. Harkavy why different headlines and different versions of his article appeared in different newspapers nationwide, he was very forthcoming:

“We [The Associated Press] did not write it [The Hartford Courant headline]. In most cases, the newspaper crafts its own headline. We include a suggested headline atop each story, which may or may not be the one that winds up in print. In this case, the headline I wrote read: ‘50 years later, supporters promote discredited scientist's work.’ The headline we suggest appears more often in online versions of the story.

It's pretty common to see the length of the story reduced as it goes through the editing process. I wrote 1500 words, which got cut to less than 1,000 for use on state lines. Then when it went nationally, it got trimmed some more. This comes with the territory. And of course newspapers or Web sites that choose to use it may trim it some more, often when they face constraints on page space.”

All of which is good to know. We appreciate all of Mr. Harkavy’s efforts in researching and writing this article, and in being attentive to our concerns throughout.

UNTIL NEXT MONTH

Please share this Update with colleagues, friends, and family who may be interested in the life and legacy of Wilhelm Reich and the good works of The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust and the Wilhelm Reich Museum. And thank you again for your friendship and support.