

**APRIL 2012 UPDATE
FROM
THE WILHELM REICH INFANT TRUST**

We thank you for your continued interest and support.

None of the names on our e-mail Update list—nor the names of any 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.

Our previous Update from November 2011 can be read at our website at:

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/update_11_11.pdf

or

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/update_11_11.html

All previous Updates, dating from March 2004, can be read at:

www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/monthly_updates.html

These Updates (55 of them) provide the best contemporaneous narrative of the Trust's ongoing activities over the past eight years.

A QUOTE FROM REICH

“It took in-depth psychiatry 40 years of study, training, patience, correcting error, convincing oneself that there is at work in man an unconscious mind which determines the conscious activities.

It took orgonomy 20 years of painstaking work to make the atmospheric energy visible.

It takes further now from 5–10 years to train physicians or scientists in the comprehending and handling of a few orgonotic functions.

How, the discoverer asked himself, should it be possible for an overloaded judge to comprehend and meet rationally the unbelievable, the revolutionary in a piece of new knowledge of the future?”

Journal entry – February 1956

OUR FIRST UPDATE SINCE NOVEMBER

We apologize for going so long without our regular Updates, and we appreciate those of you who've contacted us wondering when we'd send out the next one. The past five months have been unexpectedly busy for us:

- working with our publisher to meet deadlines for the upcoming book
- researching, writing and distributing our documentary film outline
- a fundraising effort specifically to offset Orgonon's rising winter fuel costs
- attending to the Trust's day-to-day operations, including the maintenance of Orgonon's 175-acre property and infrastructure.

Consequently, with our limited time and resources we kept delaying our next Update from one month to another. More significantly, however—and much to our regret—we've had neither the time nor resources necessary for organizing our 2012 Summer Conference.

CANCELLING OUR 2012 SUMMER CONFERENCE: “The Orgone Energy Accumulator - Facts, Distortions and Myths”

As necessary as we feel this conference is—especially in the wake of last year's massive distortions and slanders about Reich and the accumulator in books, in book reviews in America and Europe, and on British television—we are cancelling our conference.

We made this difficult decision after carefully evaluating and prioritizing our current goals and projects, and considering the allocations of time required for these commitments.

And we kept returning to one overarching question: “What projects are *most* important toward correcting the prevalent public narratives of Reich and bringing Reich's legacy to newer, broader and younger audiences?”

For us, the new book (due out this summer), a one-semester college course on Reich (that we began developing last summer), and a documentary film (that will take years to produce) are crucial for disseminating factually accurate narratives about Reich to wider audiences.

Therefore, in the upcoming months we'll be finishing our work with publisher Farrar, Straus & Giroux to meet their deadlines for the book's publication. And instead of a summer conference, we'll use that week in July to work with a group of academics to complete the college syllabus *and* to review and discuss the documentary film treatment.

We hope to reschedule “*The Orgone Energy Accumulator: Facts, Distortions and Myths*” as our 2013 Summer Conference. And we'll certainly have far more time to adequately prepare this event once the new book is published this summer. We apologize for any disappointment or inconvenience caused by our cancellation of this year's conference.

NEW BOOK DUE OUT THIS SUMMER

Two years ago this month, our New York publisher Farrar, Straus & Giroux notified us that it had accepted our latest manuscript for publication: *Where's the Truth? – Letters and Journals (1948-1957)*, the sequel to *American Odyssey* and the fourth and final autobiographical volume derived from Reich's letters and journals

And with that began the long and arduous editing process, a process which is now in its final stages and which will culminate in the book's publication and availability this summer.

Where's the Truth? begins in 1948, eight months after an article in *New Republic* magazine entitled "*The Strange Case of Wilhelm Reich*" incited an "investigation" of Reich's work by the Federal Food and Drug Administration. The book ends with Reich's death in an American prison cell in 1957.

At some future date, we will share the details of the many difficulties we faced in bringing this book to fruition. These difficulties were the direct result of the commonplace distorted narratives of Reich that have influenced FS&G since the death of its founder and president, Roger Straus, in May 2004.

SYLLABUS FOR A ONE-SEMESTER COLLEGE COURSE

The Trust's goal in July will be to expand upon the following structural outline and complete a syllabus for an educational "product" or "prototype" that would bring Reich's legacy into a college or university curriculum. This one-semester, 14-week course is being designed for classes that will meet once a week for 2¾ hours.

Class 1

- Introduction to the major themes of the course (i.e., Reich's energy concept, prevalent mainstream perceptions and distortions about Reich's legacy, etc.)
- Reich's early life, medical school, early work as a Freudian psychoanalyst.

Class 2

- Reich as a young pioneering psychoanalyst and psychiatrist in Vienna.
- This class takes us up to the day that Reich was "politicized" (July 15, 1927).

Class 3

- Reich's left-wing activities and the evolution of his psychoanalytic work in Vienna.
- This class takes us up to Reich's last meeting with Freud (September 1930).

Class 4 & Class 5

- Reich's psychoanalytic work, left-wing activities, and writings in Berlin.
- Class 5 takes us up to Reich fleeing from Berlin after the Nazi newspaper condemns *The Sexual Struggle of Youth* (March 1933).

Class 6

- Reich in Vienna, Copenhagen, Malmö, Slettin; his travels to London, Paris, Zurich; his psychoanalytic work progressing from the psychic to the somatic (1933-1934).
- This class takes us up to Reich's expulsion from the IPA at Lucerne (August 1934).

Class 7

- Bio-electrical experiments in Oslo (1934-1935).

Class 8

- Bion experiments in Oslo (1936-1939).

Class 9

- Discovery of orgone energy & the development of the orgone energy accumulator (Oslo/New York/Rangeley, 1939-1940).
- This class takes us up to the construction of the first large accumulator (October 1940).

Class 10

- Applications of the orgone energy accumulator, including case studies (1941-1956).

Class 11

- Reich's other work, i.e., psychiatric orgone therapy, children and adolescence, work democracy, emotional plague, etc. (1940s-1950s).

Class 12

- Oranur Experiment and weather engineering (Maine/Arizona, 1950-56).

Class 13

- Reception and perception of Reich's work in U.S. – psychoanalytic/psychiatric/medical communities, literary/art/music communities, media, State Department, FBI, FDA, INS.

Class 14

- FDA investigation, Reich's legal case, banning and burning Reich's publications.
- Summary of Reich's legacy and its contributions to psychoanalysis, psychiatry, medicine, science, socio-politics, etc.

This coming July at Orgonon, our syllabus work will focus on:

- refining the specific lecture points for each of the 14 classes
- creating a reading list from Reich's published books and articles
- identifying other learning resources for specific classes, i.e., Reich's laboratory notebooks, audiotapes and films of Reich, other materials from Reich's archives, appropriate secondary materials, etc.

THE NEED FOR A “BREAKTHROUGH” NARRATIVE

55 years after Reich’s death, 52 years after the re-publishing of his books by a major American publisher, 5 years after the accessibility of his archives at a Harvard University medical library, and with over 7000 pages of his writings publicly available in 22 books plus reprints of his American research journals and bulletins, the key question remains:

“Have the widespread, distorted, public narratives about Wilhelm Reich been corrected in any appreciable way?” Sadly, we don’t think so.

One need only consider last year’s vitriolic book about Reich—published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux, no less—to see how the author’s factual inaccuracies and personal invective were constantly regurgitated, accepted as fact, *and never challenged* in book reviews and articles in prominent American and European publications (i.e., *The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Economist, Financial Times*, etc.).

And can the strategy of simply adding more content onto more “Reich-oriented” websites ever be effective in reaching much-needed target audiences of academics, scientists, physicians, and students in specific disciplines?

And do conferences, lectures, and other events devoted to Reich’s legacy ever succeed in attracting sufficient numbers from these much-needed target audiences?

Clearly, there needs to be a compelling and factually accurate *breakthrough narrative* that will challenge and correct the prevalent distorted narratives of Reich. And we can think of no better medium for this than a factually accurate documentary film.

CONNECTING THE DOTS & CORRECTING THE NARRATIVE

The “American” portion of the documentary film outline we’re developing is still being written. But the outline’s first 72 pages—dealing with Reich’s arrival in America, then moving back in time to his European years—have been sent to independent scholars and filmmakers for their possible participation. These pages comprise 12 sections:

1. An Exile from Europe (1939)
2. A Physician Joins the Fight Against Fascism (1927)
3. A Medical Student in Vienna (1918-1922)
4. A Pioneering Psychoanalyst (1922-1927)
5. Psychoanalysis for the Masses (1927-1930)
6. In the Political Nightmare of Germany (1930-1933)
7. Searching for a Home (1933-1934)
8. Into the Laboratory (1934-1935)
9. Deeper Into the Somatic (1930s)
10. Discovery of a New Micro-organism (1936)
11. Cancer Cell Research (1936-1939)
12. The Discovery of Orgone Energy (1939)

The factual narratives of Reich's life and legacy are documented in thousands of pages of publicly available primary materials—i.e., books, research journals, correspondence, diaries, archives—and *some* credible secondary materials. But to adequately grasp the facts, chronology, themes and significance of this life and legacy requires years of study.

Consequently, our approach in researching and writing the documentary's story outline is to meticulously "connect the dots" from reliable source materials to craft what will be a cohesive 90-100 minute film narrative about Reich *in which every fact is correct*.

Part of this "connecting the dots" approach—as evident in our current 72 pages—is to use substantial excerpts from Reich's publications, diaries, letters, audiotapes, and unpublished materials in which Reich, *and not someone else*, explains his work, his thoughts, his life.

REICH'S LEGACY IN REICH'S WORDS

For decades, too many narratives about Reich—i.e., articles, books, book reviews, radio, TV, websites, and documentary films—have relied largely on the uncontested opinions and misstatements of alleged "experts" and "authorities" to weave their stories of Reich.

"You are entitled to your opinions, but you are not entitled to your facts" is a quote by the late Senator Moynihan of New York. And it's a tenet we subscribe to regarding anyone making unfavorable or favorable statements about Reich in which basic facts are incorrect.

It is appropriate for any documentary to include rational, educated differences of opinion. And this film is no exception. But any critiques of Reich in any medium should be from people who have read a substantial amount of his writings and who express their views without the usual vitriol, ridicule and dismissal that characterize so many opinions of Reich.

And no one's opinions about Reich—favorable or unfavorable—should supplant Reich's own words in explaining essential facts about his life and work.

Therefore, in our narrative, Reich's words—in excerpts from his writings and audiotapes—are always used to establish fundamental facts about character analysis, vegetotherapy, his socio-political work in Austria and Germany, the bio-electrical and bion experiments, his cancer cell research, and his discovery of orgone energy in 1939.

THE DOCUMENTARY FILM AS A TEACHING TOOL

Give us 100 minutes and we'll give you a coherent, compelling and factual narrative about Wilhelm Reich. That's the goal anyway. We see this documentary as a vital and definitive teaching tool for future generations:

- entertaining, accessible and provocative to wider audiences
- as a key educational resource for conferences, lectures, seminars, classrooms
- and as a succinct introduction to Reich for more targeted audiences, i.e. academics, scientists, physicians, psychiatrists and students

PRESENTATION ON REICH'S BION EXPERIMENTS AT THE COUNTWAY LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

November seems like a long time ago, but we think this deserves mention.

On November 17, 2011, there was an impressive turn-out of over 30 people—most of them “new faces”—for science historian James Strick’s lecture “*Wilhelm Reich’s Bion Experiments (1936-39)*” in which Professor Strick discussed his research for his new book-in-progress, to be published by Harvard University Press.

Strick is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Earth & Environment, and of Technology & Science at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. And his new book focuses on Reich’s bion experiments in Oslo, Norway in the 1930s.

Strick’s previous books are: *Sparks of Life: Darwinism and the Victorian Debates Over Spontaneous Generation* (Harvard University Press, 2002), and *The Living Universe: NASA and the Development of Astrobiology* (Rutgers University Press, 2005) which he co-authored with Steven J. Dick, Chief Historian at NASA.

Professor Strick’s lecture was presented as part of the Countway Library’s ongoing “Colloquium on the History of Psychiatry and Medicine.”

GOODSEARCH: A PAINLESS WAY FOR ANYONE TO DONATE TO THE TRUST

The fact is *anyone* can easily support the Trust. We often tell people, “You don’t have to be a doctor, scientist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, professor, teacher, or rich person to help preserve, disseminate and advance Reich’s legacy. In-kind services or financial contributions—no matter what the amount—are valuable ways to sustain our efforts.”

And last year, several supporters told us that they were supporting us through their online shopping purchases at: www.Goodsearch.com

Thousands of online stores are listed on the www.Goodsearch.com website. And on the site’s Homepage are easy-to-follow directions for identifying your “cause” and for registering to have a percentage of your online purchases donated to your “cause.” Depending on the specific store, the percentage of your purchase that will be donated to your “cause” can range from .5% to 8%.

The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust has registered as a *recipient* for Goodsearch donations. So if you shop online and you’d like to make us your cause, visit www.Goodsearch.com:

- In the box labeled “My Cause,” type in “Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust”
- Then register to raise money for your cause
- Then go shopping

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

We'd like to thank all of you who responded so generously to our February fundraising appeal—which went out via regular mail—to bring in money for what were dramatically rising fuel costs. Your response was significant and much appreciated. And we hope you'll indulge us as we repeat this appeal below for those *not* on our regular mailing list.

FEBRUARY 2012 FUNDRAISING LETTER

Dear Friend,

We are in trouble and hope you can help us. The price of oil—with which we must heat the numerous buildings at Orgonon during Maine's extreme weather conditions—is rising steadily, threatening our financial capacity to protect the integrity of Reich's historic buildings.

In particular, we are concerned about the Orgone Energy Observatory which represents Reich's life and work. But our Office & Conference Building (formerly Reich's student laboratory) *and* our two rental cabins, which are indispensable for our financial survival, also need to be sustained and heated.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Orgone Energy Observatory contains a valuable collection that requires year-round climate control: period furnishings, scientific instruments and charts, photographic materials, personal items, textiles, and a library that contains several thousand published books, journals and reports. The Observatory's collection also includes original paintings by Reich, drawings, works of art on paper and a Käthe Kollwitz woodcut.

This building is open to the public on a regular basis in July, August and September. It is an invaluable source of knowledge about Reich's life and work, *and* a cultural and financial asset to the local and state communities, attracting visitors and researchers from around the world.

Last year we spent over \$14,000 on fuel to heat *all* of our buildings. So far in 2012, we have already spent \$3,221 in twenty days.

Please understand that we are doing everything possible to conserve heat. For example, burning wood harvested from our property has always been a significant supplemental heat source for the Office & Conference Building. And we've installed two-inch thick Styrofoam panels in the windows of the Orgone Energy Observatory.

As you can see, we really need your help. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

Sincerely,
Mary Boyd Higgins, Executive Director

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.

Thank you again for your friendship and support.