

**MAY 2011 UPDATE
FROM
THE WILHELM REICH INFANT TRUST**

We thank you for your continual interest and support. For newcomers to our e-mail Update list, none of the names on this 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 October 2010—as well as all previous Updates dating from March 2004—can be read at our new Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust website at:

www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/monthly_updates.html

These Updates (50 of them) provide the best contemporaneous accounts of the Trust's ongoing activities over the past seven years.

OUR FIRST UPDATE SINCE OCTOBER

We apologize for going so long without any Updates and we appreciate those of you who've contacted us wondering when there would be another one.

The past six months have been inordinately busy for us: speaking in Brazil in October and in Philadelphia in November; finishing our new website; working with our publisher in New York on our new manuscript (Reich's letters and journals, 1948-1957); writing a detailed storyline for a full-length American documentary film about Reich; breaking in our new caretaker after our caretaker of 11 years retired; and organizing a work group to create a college course on Reich and to start planning our 2012 Summer Conference.

Consequently, with our limited time we kept delaying our next Update from one month to the next. Hopefully we will not be as remiss in the future.

And with the long Maine winter gone and springtime now upon us at Orgonon—with ice thawing in the Rangeley Lakes, the remaining snow in the woods melting, and the loons already returning to Dodge Pond—perhaps May *is* the most opportune time to update you about these new developments.

OUR NEW WEBSITE

Here is the link to our new Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust website:

www.wilhelmreichtrust.org

Please update your Favorites/Bookmarks/Links so that they direct you to this new website. Our old address (www.wilhelmreichmuseum.org) will no longer contain content, but it will redirect visitors to the new site for the next year.

Our deepest thanks to longtime friend and supporter Phil Eskew of Bloomington, Indiana, who spearheaded the effort to design a robust, content rich website, and who has been the principal creative force and technical guide throughout the process.

Among the website's new features are fuller explanations of Reich's books, research journals and bulletins, *plus substantial PDF-file excerpts from these publications.*

Because the Internet is rampant with inaccuracies, distortions and intellectual ineptitude about Reich's life and work—from detractors *and* so-called admirers—we wanted the Trust website to be a reliable resource for factual information through primary resources.

EXCERPTS FROM REICH'S PUBLICATIONS

We also hope that these excerpts will enhance serious readership and Bookstore purchases. Readership of Reich's publications has dwindled over the years as people turn to Internet sources, rather than to information about Reich's life and legacy in his own words.

Shrinking book sales mean lower royalties for the Trust, royalties that historically have been critical for the Trust's survival. Hopefully website visitors who sample some of the available PDF excerpts will be sufficiently intrigued and inspired to purchase Reich's books, research journals and bulletins.

Here are a few excerpts that we'd like to bring to your attention:

- “*About the History and Activities of Our Institute*” from the inaugural issue of Reich's first research journal in America, ***International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research*** (March 1942). This is an excellent historical overview of Reich's work and contains his first published statements about orgone energy.
- “*Public Responsibility in the Early Diagnosis of Cancer*” from the April 1949 issue of the ***Orgone Energy Bulletin***. This is a concise and clear explication of Reich's prescient approach to cancer research and treatment in the 1940s. He also mentions some of the distortions about his work that were circulating at the time.
- The first 13 pages of ***Orgonomic Diagnosis of Cancer Biopathy***, published in April 1952, which is a laboratory manual for performing the 3-part Reich Blood Test for the early diagnosis of disease processes in the body.

SOON ON OUR WEBSITE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Conspicuously absent on the website, as of this writing, is our FAQ section. Here we will offer factual answers to commonplace questions about Reich's life and legacy. We will also candidly identify the most typical—and often outrageous—distortions, myths and misunderstandings about Reich, and provide accurate clarification. Coming soon!

NEW REICH MANUSCRIPT

Trust director Mary Higgins was in New York again recently, meeting with the publishers about our new manuscript, compiled from Reich's journals and letters from 1948 to 1957. The process is moving ahead smoothly, although there are still countless prosaic details to be attended to. The anticipated publication date of this sequel to *American Odyssey* is 2012.

Below is a brief excerpt from the manuscript: Reich's journal entry on July 9, 1949 after he has moved into the newly constructed Orgone Energy Observatory (now the Museum):

"I am enjoying my Observatory. These are its main characteristics so far: It is located in a mountainous region 1650-1700 feet above sea level among pines and birches and hills 3-4000 feet high. Thus, it reminds me of beloved Bukovina, Austria-Vienna, Norway, Rex, Schneeberg, Mamaû Wiese, where I loved to dwell. The Observatory terrace surveys all hills up to White Mountains some 90 miles away, 3 lakes, meadows, pastures. The wind blows my music there.

*Excellent observation of sky, clouds, stars, aurora, sun, planets.
A building of fieldstones, fitting the environment, nature, the motto:
Build your life on rock. Roominess, airiness, height, breadth, width.
Four separate working places: Observatory, Mathematics, Physical
Laboratory, Study. A final home after 28 years of wandering around."*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS TO PUBLISH NEW BOOK ON REICH'S BION EXPERIMENTS

Recently we received word that Harvard University Press has contracted with science historian James E. Strick, Ph.D. to publish his upcoming book about Reich's bion experiments on the origin of life which Reich conducted in his laboratory in Oslo in the 1930s. Strick is an Associate Professor of Earth & Environment and Technology & Science at Franklin and Marshall College, and currently serves as Department Chair.

In 2000, Harvard University Press published Professor Strick's first book, *Sparks of Life – Darwinism and the Victorian Debates Over Spontaneous Generation*. And in 2004, Strick was co-author with Steven Dick, chief historian of NASA, of *The Living Universe – NASA and the Development of Astrobiology*, published by Rutgers University Press.

Reich's bion experiments in the late 1930s are the very cornerstone of orgone energy research. It is these biological experiments that bring Reich into the realm of cellular and cancer research; that lead to the discovery of orgone energy in January 1939 in specific bion cultures; that provide the basis for Reich Blood Tests as diagnostic tools; and that culminate in the development, over time, of an orgone energy accumulator—derived from Reich's use of Faraday cages—first as a scientific instrument and later as a medical tool.

The value of a book about Reich's bion experiments, authored by a bonafide science historian and published by a leading university press, cannot be underestimated.

STRUCTURING THE STORYLINE FOR AN AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY FILM ON REICH

To secure the necessary “start-up funds” for a 90-100 minute American documentary about Reich, we are in the process of putting together a more detailed film proposal that will clearly elucidate the film story itself, i.e., identifying key events and elements in Reich’s life and organizing them into a coherent, accessible film narrative.

A major problem when discussing this project with American producers and funders is that prior to these discussions they have invariably surfed the Internet for information on Reich, and have conjured their own possible storylines, angles and creative approaches. Too often their ideas are based on commonplace distortions and inaccuracies which could only lead to yet *another* misguided portrayal of Reich that plays fast and loose with facts.

Therefore, we have no choice but to clearly lay out *in significant detail* what we feel is the film story that needs to be told. Kevin Hinchey—a Trust director with a background in film writing—has completed the first half of this storyline and is now writing the second half which is set entirely in America.

The story begins with Reich’s arrival in America in 1939, then shifts back and forth in time to depict Reich in Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway. This first half comprises nine sections: (1) An Exile from Europe (2) A Physician Joins the Fight Against Fascism (3) A Medical Student in Vienna (4) A Pioneering Psychoanalyst (5) Psychoanalysis for the Masses (6) In the Political Nightmare of Germany (7) Searching for a Home (8) Into the Laboratory (9) The Discovery of Orgone Energy. Please read excerpts at:

www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/excerpts-documentary_storyline.pdf

THIS SUMMER AT ORGONON

We regret that, for the second year in a row, we will not be holding our regular Summer Conference in July. After considerable discussion in late fall and early winter of 2010, and again in January, we felt the best use of our resources would be to focus on some long-range issues rather than a conference for which we didn’t feel adequately prepared.

Therefore, during the week of July 11th, a small work group—including several college educators—will convene at Orgonon for several days to:

- Design a one-semester college/university course about Wilhelm Reich
- Begin planning a Summer Conference for 2012 that will focus on the historic development and applications of the orgone energy accumulator
- Discuss new exhibits for the Wilhelm Reich Museum that will focus on Reich’s cancer research and his development of the orgone energy accumulator

DESIGNING A ONE-SEMESTER COURSE ON WILHELM REICH

The Trust's goal is to create an educational "product" or "prototype" that might, at some point in the future, bring Reich's legacy into a college or university curriculum—and in a way that addresses Reich's *entire* scientific and medical legacy, and not simply his psychiatric, political and social work which has been dealt with sporadically in a handful of courses over the years.

This summer, our working group will begin designing a 14-week college course that would meet once a week for two hours and forty-five minutes. This design process will involve identifying (1) the basic content and lecture points for each session, (2) learning materials for each session, i.e., readings, visual and audio resources, archival materials, other learning aids, (3) topics for projects and written assignments.

Some immediate questions, of course, are: "What are the chances of any university or college wanting such a course? And who would or could teach it?" Excellent questions, for which we have no answers just now. But since the survivability of Reich's legacy for future generations depends on reaching new and younger people, then we need to create an intellectually honest model for teaching Reich in a college or university curriculum.

EARLY PLANNING FOR A 2012 SUMMER CONFERENCE ABOUT THE ORGONE ENERGY ACCUMULATOR

The orgone energy accumulator—Reich's principal scientific and medical tool from 1940 to 1957—continues to be misunderstood, misrepresented, ridiculed and slandered. Today there are renewed attacks and accusations from significant media sources that perpetuate the false narrative that Reich was promoting, renting and selling orgone accumulators as a sexual device and cancer cure. None of which is true.

And even among many favorably disposed to Reich's legacy, there is little understanding of Reich's well-documented research from January 1939 to October 1940 which led to the development of the first large orgone energy accumulator for human applications. Few people are aware that the orgone accumulator is, in fact, a modified Faraday cage which is a commonplace scientific apparatus that Reich began using to determine if orgone radiation—which he had just discovered—was simply electromagnetic energy.

Since physicist Michael Faraday's invention of the cage in 1836—which excludes all exterior electrical energy from its enclosure—countless scientists have stood, sat, worked and experimented inside Faraday cages. Wilhelm Reich was one of them.

This summer we will begin planning a 2012 Conference that will (1) explicate, in Reich's words, his observations and experiments from January 1939 to October 1940 that led to the development of the orgone accumulator, (2) discuss his experiments with cancer mice using small orgone accumulators, starting in 1940, (3) discuss Reich's medical case histories involving large accumulators, (4) review a compilation of medical case histories by Reich's co-workers.

NEW EXHIBITS FOR THE WILHELM REICH MUSEUM

The urgency to do whatever we can to correct the persistent, damaging misrepresentations about the orgone energy accumulator underlies some new exhibits we are now designing for The Wilhelm Reich Museum.

To make Reich's scientific legacy more relevant to museum visitors, we are planning a simpler, more visual presentation of Reich's bion and cancer research, his discovery of orgone energy in SAPA [SAnd Packet] bions, his early orgone research involving large and small Faraday cages, and his development of the orgone accumulator.

In Oslo and later in New York, Reich sat inside a Faraday cage to observe SAPA cultures under the microscope and to observe radiation phenomena emanating from test tubes of SAPA bions within the cage. One of our exhibits will re-create this experimental environment: a large Faraday cage containing a chair, table, one of Reich's microscopes and racks of test tubes.

LECTURE ON REICH FOR "BANNED BOOKS WEEK"

Every year the American Library Association (ALA) designates the last week in September as Banned Books Week which "highlights the benefits of free and open access to information while drawing attention to the harms of censorship by spotlighting actual or attempted bannings of books across the United States."

To our knowledge, the banning of Reich's books in 1954 by a Federal court and subsequent burning of his books in 1956 and 1960 have never been mentioned anywhere in any of the week's publicity materials or library events. The censorship of more well-known titles such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and countless other books are always given considerable attention, and deservedly so.

But thanks to the efforts of Professor Joseph Heckman of Rutgers University, Trust director Kevin Hinchey will be giving a presentation about the banning and burning of Reich's publications during this year's Banned Books Week. This talk will take place at a public library in New Jersey, and will be an opportunity to bring the narrative of Wilhelm Reich to an entirely new audience. We'll have more information in later Updates.

OUR NEW CARETAKER AT ORGONON

Pete Henderson, Orgonon's caretaker since November 1999, retired at the end of 2010. Pete's numerous skills, including his many years as a woodsman, were indispensable in his maintenance of our 175-acre property of fields, forests, waterfront, long dirt driveways, two rental cottages, the Office & Conference Building and the Orgone Energy Observatory. Pete's three daughters and his wife Mary (our office manager) threw him a wonderful retirement party that was well attended. Which was no surprise—it's often been said that Pete is related to almost everyone in Rangeley and Stratton.

Pete is already much missed here at Orgonon, although he drops in from time to time, and Mary keeps us apprised of his comings and goings.

We are happy to report that Pete and Mary's grandson, Adam Menard, is our new caretaker. Adam has worked at Orgonon for many years as a museum guide and as his grandfather's assistant, so he is familiar with the needs of our property and infrastructure. And during Pete's final weeks here, Adam came every day to be mentored by his grandfather in the wide range of responsibilities that are now his.

Adam is in his early 20s and he brings a youthful enthusiasm, perspective and artistry to his work which is already manifesting itself in his redesign of our Museum Bookstore. We are fortunate to have Adam in his new role at Orgonon.

AWARD FROM "ADOPTIVE & FOSTER FAMILIES OF MAINE"

If you're a longtime friend and supporter of the Trust, you probably know that since 1989 we've donated our larger rental cottage, Tamarack, to the Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine (AFFM) for a few weeks each summer.

In his Last Will & Testament, Reich stipulated that this cottage—formerly the living quarters for him and his family—was to be used "as a summer home for children." Mary Higgins and Mary Henderson have carried out that wish by making this cottage available at no cost to adoptive, foster and kinship children and their families who could not otherwise afford a summer camp experience as a family.

Every year, AFFM selects several families by random drawing; each family spends a week at Tamarack which offers quiet, seclusion, a private dock on Dodge Pond, and the opportunity to be together in the beauty of the Rangeley Lakes Region.

On April 29th, AFFM presented Mary Higgins and Mary Henderson with a beautiful plaque at a ceremony in Orono, Maine, in gratitude for the Trust's 22 years of involvement in this program. Inscribed on the plaque are these words:

Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine
Honors
The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust

For the generous gift of time at
Tamarack Cottage
Where peace and joy abound
And memories formed last forever

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.