

**NOVEMBER 2011 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 September 2011 can be read at our website at:

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/update_11_09.pdf

or

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/update_11_09.html

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

www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/monthly_updates.html

These Updates (53 of them) provide the best contemporaneous accounts of the Trust's ongoing activities over the past seven years.

**FREE LECTURE AT THE COUNTWAY LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
AT HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL – NOVEMBER 17:**

“WILHELM REICH'S BION EXPERIMENTS (1936-39)”

PRESENTER:

James E. Strick, Ph.D.

Author of:

*Sparks of Life: Darwinism and the Victorian Debates Over
Spontaneous Generation* (Harvard University Press, 2002)

Co-author of:

*The Living Universe: NASA and the Development
of Astrobiology* (Rutgers University Press, 2005)

Thursday – November 17th – 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Ware Room – 5th Floor

Countway Library of Medicine

Harvard Medical School

Boston, MA.

FREE – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

James Strick is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Earth & Environment, and of Technology & Science at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

His current book-in-progress for Harvard University Press is about Reich's biological bion experiments on the origin of life, which Reich first conducted in his Oslo laboratory from 1936 to 1939, prior to his emigration to America in August 1939.

Professor Strick's lecture is being presented as part of the Countway Library's ongoing "2011 Colloquium on the History of Psychiatry and Medicine."

In the words of the Countway Library, "This Colloquium offers an opportunity to clinicians, researchers and historians interested in a historical perspective on their fields to informally discuss historical studies in progress. Please let other people and groups who are interested in a historical perspective know about this Colloquium."

OUR RECENT LETTER IS PRINTED IN THE *NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW*

On Friday, September 30th, the following letter to the *New York Times Book Review* was submitted via e-mail *and* via regular postal mail on Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust stationary:

Dear Editor,

As an admirer of Christopher Hitchens' body of work—having read well over a thousand pages of his books and articles—it is disappointing that in his September 25th review of Christopher Turner's *Adventures in the Orgasmatron* he unfairly regurgitates the author's distortions and slanders about Wilhelm Reich's orgone accumulator being a "sex box," while failing to fact-check what Reich himself says.

As a director of the Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust—which oversees the publication of Reich's books and manages Reich's archives at Harvard's Countway Library of Medicine—I personally called Turner's attention in 2004 to Reich's published statements about the orgone accumulator. Which includes the following from Reich's April 1950 *Orgone Energy Bulletin*: "The orgone accumulator, as has been clearly stated in the relevant publications (*The Cancer Biopathy*, etc.), cannot provide orgasmic potency."

In fact, in over 7000 pages of his publications, Reich never once claimed or promoted the orgone accumulator as a way of achieving "orgasmic potency." Why, then, do Turner and Hitchens constantly rely on the foolish interpretations and sexual expectations of Mailer, Kerouac, Burroughs and other "intellectuals" to misrepresent Reich's actual uses for the orgone accumulator?

As documented in Reich's published writings, the orgone accumulator was a modified Faraday cage for scientific and medical research, developed from

early 1939 to October 1940. And Reich's first published statement about the accumulator appeared in March 1942, two and a half years after his emigration to America—contrary to Turner's and Hitchens' snide assertions that Reich was quick to announce its invention.

Kevin Hinchey
Director – The Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust
Associate Director – The Wilhelm Reich Museum

P.O. Box 687
Rangeley, Maine

On Wednesday, October 5th—at 1:24 p.m.—the Trust received the following e-mail from the *New York Times Book Review*:

Dear Mr. Hinchey,

Please take a moment to read your letter (copied below) in response to Christopher Hitchens's review of "Adventures in the Orgasmatron." Your letter has been edited substantially—because of its length, and because some of the issues you raise (for example, your exchange with Christopher Turner in 2004) are beyond the scope of our letters section—and is scheduled for publication in our Oct. 16 issue, which we'll close this evening (Oct. 5). If you'd like to request changes or corrections, please let me know by 6pm.

Sincerely,

Ihsan Taylor
Copy desk
The New York Times Book Review

Below is the *New York Times Book Review's* edited version of the Trust's letter:

To the Editor:

As an admirer of Christopher Hitchens, I was disappointed that his Sept. 25 review of Christopher Turner's "Adventures in the Orgasmatron: How the Sexual Revolution Came to America" regurgitates the author's distortions about Wilhelm Reich's orgone accumulator being a "sex box."

As documented in Reich's publications, the orgone accumulator, developed between early 1939 and October 1940, was a modified Faraday cage for scientific and medical research. In fact, Reich never claimed or promoted the orgone accumulator as a way of achieving "orgastic potency." Why, then, do Turner and Hitchens rely on the foolish interpretations and sexual expectations of Norman Mailer, Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs and other "intellectuals" to misrepresent Reich's actual uses for the orgone accumulator?

To which the Trust responded with the following e-mail, sent at 4:24 p.m.:

Thank you for your e-mail and for selecting my letter for print. While I understand the constraints of both content and length in your editorial decisions, I'd like to suggest a couple of changes in your revision of my original letter.

My major issue and disappointment with Mr. Hitchens' review (again, whose body of work I admire tremendously for its intellectual breadth and honesty) is that he apparently did no fact-checking of his own to see what Reich himself specifically wrote about the orgone energy accumulator. There really is no other conclusion I can come to.

Consequently, your omission of the final clause in my first paragraph—“*while failing to fact-check what Reich himself says*”—significantly waters down my key objection. But perhaps I should have added the word “*apparently*” before the word “*failing*”. So I am requesting that at the end of your revision of the first paragraph, you might add: “...*while apparently failing to fact-check what Reich himself says.*”

I also think it's unfortunate that in your revision you deny a wider readership the opportunity to read, at long last, just one example of Reich's own words about the orgone accumulator, i.e., “*The orgone accumulator, as has been clearly stated in the relevant publications...cannot provide orgastic potency.*”

And finally—for what it's worth in terms of my credentials—I am also a film writer who has written a screenplay about Wilhelm Reich and is now writing an American documentary film about Reich. Again, Mr. Taylor, thank you for selecting my letter.

To which Mr. Taylor responded in an e-mail to the Trust at 4:59 p.m.:

My hesitation regarding the phrase “failing to fact-check what Reich himself says” stems from my not knowing the extent of Mr. Hitchens's research. “Apparently” hedges the accusation a bit, but without giving Mr. Hitchens an opportunity to state his case, I'm still reluctant to use it. I'll confer with my copy chief.

As to your second point, instead of this phrase: “In fact, Reich never claimed or promoted the orgone accumulator as a way of achieving ‘orgastic potency,’ I'll try to incorporate Mr. Reich's own words on the matter thusly: “In the April 1950 *Orgone Energy Bulletin*, Reich himself wrote, ‘The orgone accumulator, as has been clearly stated in the relevant publications...cannot provide orgastic potency.’”

(My original decision to paraphrase was made because I cannot find Mr. Reich's quote online; however, if you're willing to corroborate it, that will do.)

To which the Trust responded with an e-mail at 6:01 p.m.:

Thank you for your very thoughtful note. I can definitely corroborate that quotation from the *Orgone Energy Bulletin* from one of the original copies. Reich's published research journals and bulletins were banned and burned in the United States in the 1950s by order of a Federal Court. But the Trust and Museum have original copies, and the Museum bookstore sells reprints. When writing my Letter to the Editor, I pulled an original copy of the April 1950 edition off the shelf to make sure that I had the correct wording.

Below is the final version which appeared in the *New York Times Book Review* (Oct. 16):

To the Editor:

As an admirer of Christopher Hitchens, I was disappointed that his Sept. 25 review of Christopher Turner's "Adventures in the Orgasmatron: How the Sexual Revolution Came to America" regurgitated the author's distortions about Wilhelm Reich's orgone accumulator being a "sex box."

As documented in Reich's publications, the orgone accumulator, developed between early 1939 and October 1940, was a modified Faraday cage for scientific and medical research. In the April 1950 *Orgone Energy Bulletin*, he wrote, "The orgone accumulator, as has been clearly stated in the relevant publications...cannot provide orgasmic potency." Why, then, do Turner and Hitchens rely on the foolish interpretations and sexual expectations of Norman Mailer, Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs and other "intellectuals" to misrepresent Reich's actual uses for the orgone accumulator?

Kevin Hinchey
Rangeley, Me.

The writer is director of the Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust and associate director of the Wilhelm Reich Museum.

"BANNED BOOKS WEEK" LECTURE ABOUT WILHELM REICH:

Every year the American Library Association 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."

On Saturday, September 24th—to commemorate Banned Books Week—the Monroe Township Public Library in Monroe Township, New Jersey hosted a presentation by the Wilhelm Reich Infant Trust entitled "*The True Story of a Court-Ordered Book Burning in America: the Publications of Research Physician-Scientist Wilhelm Reich, M.D.*" Approximately ninety people attended this lecture.

The complete text of this presentation can be read at:

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/book_burning-2011_09_24.pdf

or

http://www.wilhelmreichtrust.org/book_burning-2011_09_24.html

This lecture was part of the Trust's ongoing efforts to bring factual narratives about Reich to newer and wider audiences. And this presentation was prepared specifically for those with little or no previous knowledge about Reich. In fact, only about five or six people in attendance had any appreciable familiarity with Reich's life and work; the others had obviously attended because of the intriguing subject of the lecture *and* because of the library's outstanding publicity for this event.

Any doubts as to whether Reich can be a compelling subject for a general audience were dispelled by the large and attentive crowd, most of whom remained after the formal remarks for an enthusiastic question and answer period that lasted nearly 45 minutes.

Because of the success of this event, the Trust is now exploring opportunities for repeating this lecture to newer and *younger* audiences on college campuses.

Our thanks to Joseph Heckman, Ph.D. of Rutgers University who first brought the story of the banning and burning of Wilhelm Reich's books to the attention of the Monroe Township Public Library as a possible public lecture for Banned Books Week. Our thanks also to James Strick, Ph.D. of Franklin and Marshall College who attended the lecture and helped answer many of the audience's scientific and historical questions.

SAVE THESE DATES FOR THE 2012 SUMMER CONFERENCE AT ORGONON

“The Orgone Energy Accumulator: Facts, Distortions and Myths”

**Thursday, Friday, Saturday
July 12, 13, 14 - 2012**

Today we are seeing some of the most aggressive, repugnant and intellectually dishonest assaults on Reich and his legacy in 65 years—with an especially prurient focus on the orgone energy accumulator, Reich's principal scientific and medical research tool.

From major books, newspapers, magazines, television and radio in America and abroad, salacious and factually inaccurate narratives about Reich and the orgone energy accumulator continue to be widely promulgated.

Next summer's three-day conference will present, from Reich's extensive documentation, the scientific development of the orgone accumulator, starting in early 1939 with his

experiments using large and small Faraday cages in his Oslo laboratory to determine the nature of the radiation phenomenon he had just discovered in specific micro-organisms.

After Reich's emigration to America in August 1939, he continued these experiments in his laboratory in Forest Hills, New York, which eventually led to the construction of the first large orgone energy accumulator in October 1940 for human use.

This conference will also present a review of case studies involving the experimental medical applications of the orgone accumulator—starting in March 1941 in New York—as documented by Reich and the physicians studying with him; plus an historic overview of the origins and longevity of distorted, factually inaccurate narratives of the accumulator.

More information about this 2012 Summer Conference will be forthcoming in our future Updates.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

We would like to thank all of you who responded to our recent fundraising appeal which went out this summer via regular mail *and* again in our September 2011 Update. The survivability of the Trust is due in no small part to the financial generosity of our many friends and supporters.

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.