

**EMOTIONAL PLAGUE
VERSUS
ORGONE BIOPHYSICS**

The 1947 Campaign

**By
THEODORE F. WOLFE, M.D.**



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A vicious campaign of slander and distortion against Wilhelm Reich and his work was begun early in 1947. There is no telling where it will lead. This campaign has not been confined to magazine and newspaper articles, but an agency of the United States Government has been dragged into it.

The necessity of informing the public about these attacks, and of correcting misstatements widely published in magazines and newspapers, is the reason for this publication.

The author: M.D. (Zürich), Med.Sc.D. (Columbia); Fellow, American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association, New York Academy of Medicine, etc. Formerly, Instructor, Johns Hopkins University; Associate, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University; Associate Attending, Vanderbilt Clinic, Presbyterian Hospital.

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Eva Reich.

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EMOTIONAL PLAGUE VERSUS ORGONE BIOPHYSICS

The 1947 Campaign

When, at the close of the year, we looked back on 1947, two things stood out. One was a great experimental finding: Wilhelm Reich had succeeded in demonstrating a motor force in the orgone energy by means of the Geiger Müller counter. The other was the beginning of the first campaign against orgone biophysics in America.

The last campaign had taken place in 1938 in Norway. Reich came to this country in 1939. It took until 1941 before a new publishing house, the Orgone Institute Press, could be established. One book of Reich's was published in 1942, two in 1945, one in 1946, and one (plus a new edition of the 1942 book) was ready for publication in early 1948. In addition, 4 volumes of a Journal were published between 1942 and 1945, and the first number of the Annals in 1947. Not a bad volume of publication for an Institute without outside backing. But the volume is not the point. The content was enormous: in new, revolutionary findings in medicine, biology, sociology and physics, in new, unconventional attitudes, in sticking to plain, straightforward truths in a way unknown in academic publications. Nevertheless—although this literature was very widely read and discussed—it had not stirred up any publicity in the general press.

There were reviews, mostly in scientific journals, some good, some bad, some indifferent, most of them—as was to be expected—characterized by a lack of comprehension because of the newness of the material. Occasionally, a journalist would come around, wanting to interview us in order to write a sensational article for a magazine. But we kept telling them that we did not want any publicity. There were also press agents who wanted to "help us to become more widely known." They usually had the best of intentions, but they did not know that their techniques are inapplicable in our case. They are used to selling things, and, no doubt, they are very good at this business of selling things, of promoting

a soap, an idea, a book or an opinion. But we have nothing which could be sold or promoted. All we have is a thing which "sells" very poorly: truth. Truth about what makes the animal, man, tick; truth about what a healthy baby wants and needs; truth about healthy sexuality and sick pornography; truth about spontaneous morality and hypocritical moralism; truth about the lowest forms of life which one can observe under the microscope if one is not hide-bound by mystical biological theories such as that of the "air germs"; truth about the cosmic energy in the human organism which is called either "God" or "Devil"; truth about the poor fellow who does not know that he is a slave when, instead of identifying himself with living life in himself, he goose-steps, identifies himself with "the national honor" and yells, Heil, Führer!; truth about the cancer disease which does not consist in a tumor but in a biopathy, the incapacity of the patient to live and love.

Truth cannot be promoted. It is there, for everyone who can see it, and it is not there, for everyone who cannot see it. People think we have "ideas" about life, and these ideas should be "promoted." Ideas have been promoted ever since man learned to write. And where has it got us, this promotion of ideas, be it the idea of Christian brother love, of socialism, or what have you? Exactly nowhere. We leave the business of making and spreading ideologies to the politicians, churchmen and rabble-rousers. We advocate the truth, and for this reason we do not need "promotion"; the truth can wait; it will be recognized by people when they are ready for it, and no amount of promotion will make them ready for it. Everyone knows of people and movements which have been "promoted"; it may take 5, 10 or 15 years—it does not matter—before they are the laughing-stock of everybody, or are forgotten by everybody. This is why, in addition to not needing promotion, we do not want promotion: truth cannot be promoted the way a soap or deodorant is promoted. And if anybody were to try it just the same, he would have fooled himself: he would no longer be interested in the truth but, instead, in what the Academy of Medicine had to say about it, in whether or not he were going to get the Nobel prize, in whether or not he could buy himself a Cadillac car. This is why we did not want any publicity, and told the journalists and press agents so.

What we wanted was to be left in peace to do our work, and for quite

a few years we managed to be left in peace. Reich did his research work which was unbelievably fruitful: the orgone energy revealed more and more of its secrets; the ways in which it works, both in the human organism and in nature in general, became clearer and clearer; the cancer disease lost one after the other of its mysteries. The writer kept to his desk, translating, editing, publishing. Sometimes he would be thrown together, at social gatherings, with physicians, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who asked him many questions; he answered their questions, without trying to "convert" them or to convince them of the correctness of what he knew to be correct; he did not go out and make speeches. The isolation which inevitably comes one's way if one does not go out to publicize oneself or what one stands for was often hard to take but it was a price well worth paying.

They were good years, years of hard work, of putting on paper (which was hard to get) what had been found, of spending many a night in discussion—often troubled and anxious discussion—about the future of the work, of work which had no outside support, which depended for its continued existence on the unfailing cooperation of a very few, and which aroused violent anxiety and hatred in a great many. Because we knew this, we also knew that avoiding publicity would not save us in the long run; it could do no more than give us a period of grace. We knew that sooner or later the emotional plague, stirred into activity by our truths, would raise its ugly head as it had done in the past and would try to smash our work by the only means it knows. We knew that in the more than 25 years since Reich had started to state facts, not one single scientific statement of his had ever been refuted on objective scientific grounds. But we also knew that, in spite of this, his life and his work had been threatened with extinction more than once. We knew how dangerous it is to advocate truth in a world in which few people know the truth or have the courage to advocate it, and which consists largely of institutions designed for the express purpose of hiding and fighting the truth, because the truth would undermine so many vested interests and so many cherished illusions with no other standing than that of being moss-covered. We knew that the peace of the laboratory, the desk and the therapeutic office could not last, that sooner or later an attack would come. It could not be an attack on the open field of scien-

tific discussion; it would have to be an oblique attack by the emotional plague.

Where would it come from? The Medical Association, the Pharmaceutical Industry, the Psychoanalysts, the Communists, the Church? And then it came. Of all places, in such a staid magazine as *Harper's*. At the risk of boring the reader, I will have to go into considerable detail. Not because what has been written is important in itself, not because the work needs to defend itself against it, but because we have a job to do. As a therapist, it is my job to get the emotional plague out of the patient's system; as a writer, it is my job to tell the people what, in doing so, we have learned about the emotional plague, to tell them things which are hard to believe: how the emotional plague finds ways and means—and what ways and means—of attacking decent work, of bringing it into disrepute and endangering it.

Here, then, is the story of how the emotional plague started its 1947 campaign against orgone biophysics:

In *Harper's Magazine*, April 1947, there appeared an article, entitled, "The New Cult of Sex and Anarchy," by Mildred Edie Brady, "economist and free-lance writer" of Berkeley, California. It deals with a group of "bohemians" on the West Coast, the socially accepted attitude toward whom is: "After all, it's only a small minority and this is the postwar. You've got to expect something like this after a war. It always happens. Remember the twenties." These young people are interested in poetry, painting, philosophy and politics, and, last but not least, in sex. Their attitude toward sexuality is a highly individualistic, mystical and even religious one, as described by Brady: "love as 'the ecstasy of the cosmos'"; "the sexual sacrament" as the acme of worship; "this lofty inner objective which turns every sexual encounter into a religious rite."

"Here," writes Brady, "is where psychoanalysis comes in supporting faith with argument. The ultimate authority is no longer Freud, nor Jung (who stands high, nevertheless), but one who—in his own words—now wears the mantle of Freud: Wilhelm Reich, whose *FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM* is probably the most widely read and frequently quoted contemporary writing in this group. Even at the poetry-reading sessions you are likely to find someone carrying a volume of his turgid and

pretentious prose. Reich's thesis, briefly, is that all physical and spiritual ills, from cancer to fascism, stem from 'orgastic (stet) impotence'; and he is the creator of that phrase, which means inability to realize sufficient pleasure in the sexual orgasm."

To set straight a thing or two right here:

1. "One who—in his own words—now wears the mantle of Freud: Wilhelm Reich." Reich has never said that he was wearing the mantle of Freud. He has emphasized repeatedly the fact that he is no longer a psychoanalyst. What is true, however, is the following: Freud once stated that psychoanalysis [a psychological science] would one day have to be put on a biological basis. This, Reich has done. Freud's clinical discoveries in the psychic realm have now a sound foundation in orgone physics. With that, Reich, of course, is no longer a psychoanalyst. Freud also once said to Reich: "Either you are all wrong, or one day you will have to carry the heavy lot of psychoanalysis all by yourself." Reich was not wrong, and so Freud's prophecy came true: No psychoanalyst is fought any more; the psychoanalysts have—unfortunately aided by formulations of Freud himself—given up essential psychoanalytic truths in their dominating interest of making psychoanalysis socially acceptable. Reich did not follow here, and so he has to "carry the heavy lot of psychoanalysis all by himself." But no longer as a psychoanalyst; he is being fought as an orgone biophysicist, just as Freud was fought as a psychoanalyst. And, as was the case with Freud, the emotional plague knows how to pick its "free-lance writers" to do the fighting.

2. "'Orgastic (stet) impotence'; and he is the creator of that phrase." Could it be that a "free-lance writer" who coins facile "phrases" does not know that "orgastic impotence" is not a phrase but a clinical finding of the highest importance, which it took years of painstaking clinical work to elucidate and elaborate? That it is an impertinence born of ignorance to belittle such finding by such devices as "stet"? That she does not know that millions of men consider themselves "potent" if they are capable of having an erection and an ejaculation, even if they experience no pleasure and no love in the sexual act? And that millions of women, who have equally lost their natural sexual feelings, do not know that all the man is doing is raping them or demonstrating his "potency," that to him the sexual act means a degradation of the woman (which, under

the circumstances, it is)? The scientific findings concerning "orgastic potency" and "orgastic impotence" will still stand when nobody will remember the names and the drivel of this or that "free-lance writer." Orgastic impotence is not a subjectivistic thing, as the "free-lance writer" would have it, not "inability to realize sufficient pleasure in the sexual orgasm." It is an objective clinical and biological fact: the inability to discharge, in the orgasm, an amount of energy equivalent to the sexual tension.

There is no need for going into the details of this article. Its viciousness lies in its sneering tone and its creating the impression that Reich is a sexual cultist. Nobody who reads the article could get the impression that reference is being made to the results of 20 years of hard clinical and experimental work. The whole article has only one aim: to convey the impression that *THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM* is something that only a bunch of bohemians would be interested in, and that it belongs in their world of sexual mysticism and anarchism.

In this article, the attack on Reich and his work was by insinuation, sneering tone, and by putting the whole work in the subjective framework of a bohemian "cult." It was too oblique. Therefore, it was soon followed up by another article, by the same author, this time in the *New Republic*, of May 26, 1947, under the highly appropriate title, "The Strange Case of Wilhelm Reich." The subtitle, in large type, runs as follows: "The man who blames both neuroses and cancer on unsatisfactory sexual activities has been repudiated by only one scientific journal." This refers to the following sentence in the text of the article: "Only one scientific journal, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, has so far come out strongly against Reich; it characterized his writings about orgone as a 'surrealistic creation'." How does Mildred Edie Brady, the "free-lance writer," know about this stand taken by *Psychosomatic Medicine*? Because we reprinted their review in our own *Journal*. Why does she not mention the fact that Martin Grotjahn, in this review, also stated "that the book is most certainly nuttier than a fruit cake?" Because we reprinted it under the heading, *NUTTIER THAN A FRUIT CAKE*, making it thus quite clear that we were putting it on exhibit as an example of scurrilous book reviewing. Not one single statement of Reich's was "repudiated" in this review. Grotjahn also said, "Now W. Reich is beyond reason

and has peculiar dreams about 'bions'." *Name-calling is not scientific repudiation, it is the technique of politics and the emotional plague.* And how does Brady know that "many of his writings have been discussed in such high places as the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *American Journal of Psychiatry*?" Because there appeared, in our own *Journal*, an article entitled, "Misconceptions of sex-economy as evidenced in book reviews." This article set straight a number of errors and misconceptions in reviews of *THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM* which had appeared in these two journals; but this, the "free-lance writer" fails to mention. She picks out what serves her purpose of derogation and leaves out what does not serve it.

Her article is a cleverly vicious compound of truths, half-truths, insinuations and distortions. We quote:

Orgone, named after the sexual orgasm, is, according to Reich, a cosmic energy. It is, in fact, the cosmic energy. Reich has not only discovered it; he has seen it, demonstrated it and named a town—Orgonon, Maine—after it. Here he builds accumulators of it which are rented out to patients, who presumably derive "orgastic potency" from it.

The tone of this paragraph tries to convey to the reader that Reich has really not discovered or demonstrated it, that that is so only "according to Reich," that he really only "thinks" he did. Orgonon is not the name of a town but the name of the Orgone Institute Research Laboratories in Maine. "Here he builds accumulators of it" implies that Orgonon is an accumulator factory, presumably run for Reich's financial benefit. More of that later. The implication of the statement that they are rented to patients "who presumably derive 'orgastic potency' from it" is even more serious: it is that Reich runs a sexual racket. "Presumably" is a journalistic hedge against the libel law; Brady knows very well that Reich never made any such statement. The reader will be inclined to believe that these implications were perhaps not meant or that I exaggerate them; he will learn better. Further:

Reich's books have been assigned in university seminars for serious consideration and his orgone cult has spread so far that at a camp in New York State last summer it took the doctor's strict orders to

keep the camp director from furnishing orgone accumulators for the boys.

A positive statement linked by a simple "and" to a derogatory one. Assuming this story to be true, and the camp director had more sense than the doctor, why hold it against him? Did the doctor know anything about the orgone accumulator? Further:

Reich . . . was a member of a group of psychoanalysts who met monthly with Freud, and he was for six years the director of the Vienna Seminar for Psychoanalytic Therapy. In those years he was known as a courageous pioneer in therapeutic techniques.

And what is he now? A has-been? He *still is* a courageous pioneer in therapeutic techniques. With this difference: to do pioneer work in orgone therapy it takes a different kind of courage than it took in the case of psychoanalysis at a time when it had already existed for over two decades.

Then comes a subhead, *A lure to procreation-plus*, where we read:

That contribution is known in the literature as the orgasm theory. Briefly, the orgasm theory is this: Until Reich, Reich says, it had been naively assumed by nearly everybody that the sexual orgasm was nothing more than a tricky bit of sugar coating devised by Mother Nature to make sure that the race survived . . .

Of course, Reich never said anything of the sort. What he did say was that procreation was a function of sexuality and not vice versa. What Brady actually did read,¹ instead of the nonsense which she "quotes" Reich as saying, is this: "*The finding that procreation is a function of sexuality and not vice versa*, that, in other words, the sexual function is a primary biological function, is not Reich's, but Hartmann's and Freud's. Reich made it quite clear that he did not claim this to be his finding but that he merely adduced further, important support for this finding." The reader will readily see the difference.

The next subhead is *Corrupting Danish youth*. What else can be the implication of this subhead but that Reich *did* corrupt Danish youth?

¹ In: "Misconceptions of Sex-economy as evidenced in Book Reviews," *Internat. J. of Sex-economy and Orgone Research* 2, 1943, 171.

And what is the flimsy basis of it? It is not found until one gets down to line 14, and it is this: "The Socialist and Communist Parties in particular accused him of corrupting Danish youth with decadent German sexology." In other words, the political parties had no other means of attacking Reich than that of the emotional plague, that of *sexual defamation*. More than a decade later, the emotional plague does exactly the same: it takes a sexual defamation and italicizes it in a heading, as if it were a fact.

The next subhead is "*Stalin is anti-sex*." Here we read the following:

When he arrived in the USA, he was quite a puzzle to the FBI. As late as December, 1941, he was taken out to Ellis Island for three weeks of further investigation. But Reich had long since given up communism. More than that, he had damned Russia in a book, *THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION*. Stalin, according to it, is anti-sex.

When Reich arrived in the USA in 1939, he was no puzzle to the authorities at all. The fact is that on December 12, 1941, he was arrested by the FBI as an "Enemy Alien." The only possible explanation for this action was some cowardly denunciation. It was a well-known fact that Reich had not only "given up communism" but had not been politically active for years even before coming to this country. In his book, *THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION*, he did not "damn Russia," nor did he make such nonsensical statements as that "*Stalin is anti-sex*." It does not make any difference whether "*Stalin is anti-sex*" or not. It is vile journalism to impute such nonsensical statements to a serious scientist and to headline them. What Reich did say, and even Brady quotes him as saying so, is that Russia today is sex-reactionary. We quote Brady: "The evidence: Russia's strict divorce laws, her laws against abortion, her abandonment of co-education in secondary schools and her official encouragement of large families." Well, then why not study the evidence of an extremely serious social process, instead of poking fun? Further:

He taught at the New School for Social Research for two years and he managed to amass enough funds to launch his publishing activities.

Reich did not amass funds to "launch his publishing activities." The Orgone Institute Press was established by a co-worker who realized the

necessity for it and who certainly wished a great many times that there had been "funds amassed," because he had to do it on a shoe-string.

After stating that, in Reich's publications, "the romance of orgone is spelled out in polysyllabic detail," Brady goes on to describe the orgone in her sneering style, finally arriving at the following:

But its most astounding property is that it can be collected and concentrated if you know how, and Reich says he does. He has fashioned orgone accumulators which he rents out to his patients.

Never a fact without a sneer: "And Reich says he does." He does not just say so, but he has demonstrated the increased orgone concentration in the accumulator by thermal and electroscopic means; these experiments have been described in detail in Reich's publications. "Which he rents out to his patients." The implication is, of course, that Reich makes money that way. The facts are: the accumulators are not rented by Reich, but by the Orgone Institute Research Laboratories, Inc., a non-profit institution. The user pays a small contribution, or if he cannot do so, he receives the accumulator gratis. The contributions go to the Orgone Research Fund and pay only for a small fraction of the costs of the research. No individual derives any financial benefit from them. Not only is there no profit; the accumulators are such an administrative burden for Reich and one of his co-workers that they would have long since given up distributing them if it were a matter of their private interest. They have continued only because they feel the heavy responsibility of having to make the accumulators available to people who need them. But there are so many rackets that if somebody runs something which is not profitable to himself he is immediately suspected of running a racket. The attitude, "What's in it for me?" is so common that people cannot understand how anybody could do something without also asking, "What's in it for me?" One wonders "what's in it" for Brady when she writes her slanderous articles. She goes on:

The orgone accumulator is a six-sided box big enough for a man to get into and made out of metal on the inside and of wood, or some other organic material, on the outside. The organic material presumably absorbs orgone from the air. The orgone then seeps through the metal, thus stepping up the orgone concentration inside the box.

So far so good. Facts. But Brady mentions facts only in order to distort or annihilate them. The very next sentence makes these facts impossible: "Why it doesn't seep right out again is a mystery that has bothered Reich considerably, and he has not yet solved it." *Pure fabrication* on Brady's part, for her own purposes. To say what Brady says is like saying that, true, Newton found out why heavy bodies fall to the ground, but why they do not rise right up again is a mystery that has bothered him considerably, and he has not yet solved it.

Brady goes on: "With orgone Reich has combined in a magical package a group of ideas that resemble both mesmerism and phrenology and has welded the whole together with a persuasive amalgam of psychoanalytic concepts." But she does not even try to show what is "magical," what resembles "mesmerism" or "phrenology." It is enough to give the reader the impression that it is all hocus-pocus. The next sentence: "According to Reich, every living thing is surrounded by a field of orgone which keeps it charged with living energy." Again, "according to Reich." But Brady, again, does not say that this orgone field has been demonstrated by means of the orgone energy field meter, in a manner described in Reich's publications, with a diagram of the apparatus. Besides, to say, "which keeps it charged with living energy," is nonsense; Reich never said any such thing. The orgone energy field of the organism is its own; it can make contact with other orgone energy fields; but it cannot charge the organism with energy.

The next subhead is *The "orgastic impotent."* (What is meant is, the "orgastically impotent"). "His best hope of achieving mental health and decent social behavior is for him to relax the 'character armor' and give himself a chance at a good orgasm." About all that Brady has to say about character-analytic vegetotherapy is that "this phase of Reich's therapy is reminiscent of phrenology," but she fails to say how.

And then, toward the conclusion of the article, Brady returns to her true purpose at which she had hinted in the introduction and for which all the distortion and slander only served to lay the groundwork: *Reich should be officially discredited.* She introduced her article by saying:

The psychoanalysts who are assembled in New York this week for the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association [is the

publication date of this piece an accident?—T.P.W.] . . . are faced with some problems, too, and the most pressing of these is the responsibility of their profession to discipline itself if it is not to be disciplined by the state.

Toward the end of the article, she writes: "It would certainly not be fair to lay the whole blame for the growing Reich cult at the door of psychoanalysis itself. But some of it must be placed just there. The reputable analysts who have quoted him as an authority will tell you that they do not hold with orgone, and that Reich is now discredited among them."

This seems to be the department of utter confusion. Reputable analysts "have quoted him as an authority." What does that mean? That he has written several authoritative books in the field of psychoanalysis and that his authority in the field is recognized. They have given an opinion in a field where they are entitled to an opinion. But then the reputable analysts will also "tell you that they do not hold with the orgone." Why should they? And what does it mean if they do not "hold with something" that is entirely out of their sphere? What does it mean if "reputable priests" do not hold with contraception? Does that discredit contraception? They also say that "Reich is now discredited among them." What does that mean? That they acknowledged him as a leader in the field of psychoanalysis, and that they do not acknowledge him as a leader in the field of orgone physics? Why should they? How could they? They know nothing about it, and nobody can "acknowledge" Reich in his field of orgone physics unless he knows at least as much about it as does Reich. Does it mean that Reich is "discredited" when even now his books are assigned at university seminars and psychoanalytic institutes, or when, in a recent lecture series on "Pioneers in Psychoanalytic Thought" one evening was devoted to Reich?

"To be sure," Brady continues, "Reich himself does not belong to the association. But no member of the association has taken pains to make public the current professional evaluation of Reich's work." How on earth could they "evaluate" it? They know nothing about it. How is an Egyptologist to evaluate an oscillograph or a Geiger Müller counter? It is not, as Brady thinks, that "psychoanalysts on principle wish to avoid attacking one of their number even though they disapprove of

him." It is not so in the case of Reich, anyhow. They do attack some of their number. *But Reich is not one of their number and has not been for 13 years.* So, obviously, they cannot attack him as one of their number. And why should they, anyhow? Because some "free-lance writer" would like to see Reich officially discredited? Nobody can officially discredit him. It can be done only unofficially, by spreading rumors and by writing slanderous articles. Brady racks her brains as to what could be done about licensing psychoanalysts, a field where "the amateur analyst is within the law," and continues:

The case of Wilhelm Reich, however, points up a matter that is an even greater problem to psychoanalysis than the legal laxness which allows chiropractors, swamis, spiritualists, etc., to give so-called analytic aid. Before the qualifications for a license for psychoanalysts can be drawn up, a definition of the practice is necessary.

Now, all of a sudden, Brady seems to be concerned about psychoanalysts, their practice and their being licensed or not licensed for practice. Who will go for this red herring? What she is interested in is mentioning Reich's name in one sentence with chiropractors, swamis, spiritualists, etc. What she is interested in is some licensing requirement for psychoanalysts that would "put Reich out of business." "The simplest solution," she writes, "would be to take the current standards of the American Psychoanalytic Association and write them into the law." And what would that help? The same trick was pulled in Norway, where the king was made to issue a decree that nobody could practice psychoanalysis without a license from the government. It did not affect Reich there, because he did not practice psychoanalysis, and it would not affect him here for the same reason.

And so Brady ends her piece with the following paragraph:

The only answer which established, well trained analysts have been able to give to this question of public protection is the old one of publicity. Educate the public to recognize the unsound practitioner, they say. But such education would appear to call for more hearty cooperation from those recommending it than has been given in the past. And the case of Wilhelm Reich shows how unreliable a reed publicity can be when it, alone, must carry the burden of public protection.

We know that Brady is not interested in standards of psychoanalytic practice. If all the verbiage is boiled down to what she would like to say but cannot say because of libel laws, it is this: Wilhelm Reich is an "unsound practitioner" and the public should be protected against him. Because she cannot say it, she puts it across by insinuation. "She could be sued for libel," said a lawyer, "if you could sue a person for what he makes people *think* of you; but the writer of this article was clever enough to avoid a libel suit."

I wish we could take leave from Brady here and go out for a breath of fresh air. But another thing has to be mentioned: the sneaking way in which she obtained an interview with Reich. Reich does not see journalists, because we do not want publicity. One day, a call came from a Mrs. Brady who told the secretary of the Institute that she would like to talk with Dr. Reich. She had, so she said, "good and interesting news from the West Coast, greetings from friends." This opened the door for her. (She followed the same procedure with friends of our work on the West Coast.) She told Reich she wanted to write an article about his work because it seemed interesting and important to her. Reich asked her not to write anything and explained to her the reasons for our not wanting publicity.

Brady says the following with a sneer and does not believe it, but it is true:

And make no mistake about it, the dark forces generated in the pleasure-starved unconscious of the orgasmically impotent are as powerfully evil as any demon of ancient times.

Yes, the emotional plague is indeed as powerfully evil as any demon of ancient times. Brady herself proves it with her articles. But the ways of the emotional plague are no longer a secret, and—unless humanity extinguishes itself with atom bombs—the emotional plague will one day be put down as were the plagues of the Middle Ages.

Until there are laws against the emotional plague, indeed "the only answer to this question of public protection is the old one of publicity." And now that the emotional plague forces us to do so, we are going to give the doings of the emotional plague the widest publicity possible.

Like anaerobic bacilli, the emotional plague can thrive only where there is no air. We are going to air it.

In the issue of December 2, 1946, the *New Republic* published a review of Reich's *THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM*, by Frederic Wertham. This is the most outstanding example of the misuse of a "book review" as a smear article that has yet come to this writer's attention. Practically every sentence referring to the book under review is a distortion; every quotation taken from the book, out of context, serves the purpose of distortion. The review is entitled, *CALLING ALL COURIERS*, and begins as follows:

They were free to choose whether they wanted to be kings or the couriers of kings. Like children, they all wanted to be couriers. That is why there are now nothing but couriers. They race through the world and, since there are no kings, they call to one another their messages which have become senseless.

In this little story the poet Kafka illustrates a state of mind prevalent in our time: the shirking of active political responsibility in favor of important-sounding but empty words.

Thus, in the very first sentence, the book under review is stamped as one of "important-sounding but empty words." In the third sentence, we read:

Wilhelm Reich, in his *MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM*, goes Spengler one better: "Hitler as a political genius was a magnificent unmasking of the essence of politics in general." Since Nazi politics was bad, Reich pleads for "the abolition of politics" altogether.

The reviewer quotes *one* sentence out of context, and then imputes to the author the ridiculous reasoning that "since Nazi politics was bad . . ." This first quotation is from the *last* paragraph of the book, which reads:

For a decade, the politics of the European dictators was unrivalled. In order to comprehend the essence of politics, one only has to remember that it was a Hitler who, for many years, was able to keep the world breathless. *Hitler as a political genius was a magnificent unmasking of the essence of politics in general.* [Sentence quoted by

Wertham.—T.P.W.] With Hitler, politics reached the peak of its development. We know what were its fruits and what was the reaction of the world. In brief, I believe that the twentieth century, with its gigantic catastrophes, ushers in a new social era, an era free of politics. It remains to be seen what part politics will play in the eradication of the political emotional plague and what part the consciously organized functions of love, work and knowledge.

THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, p. 340.

Wertham's fourth paragraph reads as follows:

Evidently Reich believes that in this country the soil is well prepared for his message: "In the United States, for example, the doings of the politicians have brought about a rather general realization that the politician is a cancer in the body social . . . Today, in 1945, hatred of politics, based on well known facts, has become more or less general . . . All attempts to reach the masses politically are bound to fail . . . In America the hatred of politicianism and the insight into its social harmfulness is quite general."

Nothing seems to interest Wertham but politics, nothing seems to bother him as much as a criticism of politicianism, although he is not a professional politician, but a *psychiatrist*. Now, let's see what is the context from which he plucks his quotations. This is what Reich wrote:

The finding of facts does not ask whether the facts are welcome or not, but only whether they are correct or not. For this reason, it always comes into sharp conflict with politics which does not ask whether a fact is correct or not, but only whether or not it serves this or that political purpose. This makes things very difficult for the scientific sociologist. On the one hand, he must find and describe actual processes; on the other hand, he must remain in contact with actual social movements. In publishing painful findings, therefore, he must think over carefully what will be the effect of his correct statements on the masses of people who are predominantly under the influence of political irrationalism. A sociological concept of any considerable weight can penetrate and become practically important only if it has already been spontaneously acquired by the masses in their

own lives. Outworn systems of political thought and institutions inimical to freedom must, *in the feelings of everyone*, have been ruined by political machination before rational insights into the vital necessities of society can break through spontaneously and generally. *In the United States, for example, the doings of the politicians have brought about a rather general realization that the politician is a cancer in the body social.* [This is the sentence quoted by Wertham. —T.P.W.] In the Europe of 1935, one was far from such a realization. The politician was the one who determined what was to be considered true or false.

Important social insights usually develop in the people long before they are explicitly stated or can find organizational expression. *Today, in 1945, hatred of politics, based on well-known facts, has become more or less general.* [This is the next sentence quoted by Wertham. —T.P.W.] If, now, a group of social scientists has observed facts and formulated them well, facts which really correspond to the objective social process, then the "theory" will inevitably meet with the feeling for life on the part of the masses of people. It is as if two independent processes converged in *one* point, where the social process and the mass-will *become one* with the sociological insight. This seems to be the case in all decisive social processes. It was so in the American emancipation from England in 1776 as well as in the emancipation of Russian society from the Tsarist state in 1917. The lack of correct sociological work may have catastrophic effects. In that case, objective process and mass-will have matured, it is true, but they get lost again if the simple scientific concept is lacking which should unite them and carry them further. This was the case in Germany in 1918 when, though imperialism was overthrown, no true democracy developed.

The fusion of scientific and social process into the unity of a basic new social order fails to come about if the process of scientific insight does not grow from old concepts as organically as the social process grows from the misery of practical life. I say, "*growing organically*"; for one cannot "think out" or "plan" a new order; it must grow organically, in closest contact with the practical and theoretical facts of human life. *For this reason, all attempts to "reach the masses politically," to "give them revolutionary ideas," are bound to fail and to end in nothing but noisy and harmful politics.* [Note the significant

omissions in Wertham's quotation which reads as follows: "All attempts to reach the masses politically are bound to fail."—T.P.W.]

MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, p. 180 ff.

This work-democratic criticism of politics does not stand alone. *In America, the hatred of politicianism and the insight into its social harmfulness is quite general.* [This is the next sentence quoted by Wertham. Note the significance of omitting the rest of the paragraph.—T.P.W.] One hears from the Soviet Union that there the technician gains more and more the upper-hand of the politician. Possibly, even the executions of leading Russian politicians by other politicians had a hidden rational meaning, as much as such executions are an expression of political irrationalism and sadism.

MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, p. 340.

From all this sociological material Wertham picks out four sentences to "support" his statement: "Evidently Reich believes that in this country the soil is well prepared for his message." Note well: "*in this country.*" Nothing is quoted that is said about Russia or Germany. And what is Reich's "message"? That is left to the reader to figure out. Maybe overthrowing the politicians, the government of this country?

Wertham's next paragraph reads as follows:

When a scientist writes a book against politics in these times it is a serious matter. It is even more serious when, like Reich, he not only writes an apology for this anti-political attitude but also furnishes for it an elaborate rationalization.

The book under review is *not* a book "*against politics*," even though it may impress people as such who feel their own politics threatened. It is always the politician who is "against," and Wertham certainly is against this book. But he fails to show Reich's alleged "elaborate rationalization." After having stated that in his opinion Reich's book is "typical of widely prevalent reactionary [!] trends in current psychopathology," and, therefore, "is a symptom of more than academic interest," Wertham becomes sanctimonious and states: "A book reviewer, like a psychiatrist, should do more than look for what is wrong. It is his task to search for positive aspects and for the historical developments of the results before him." It is always more gratifying to knock a man down when he has first been built up. So he goes on saying that Reich

was "one of the most brilliant psychoanalysts in Vienna . . . was assistant and then acting director of the Psychoanalytic Clinic there . . . particularly noteworthy were his clinical contributions to the study of character formation . . . he added to our knowledge of a neglected phase of the psychology of sex. His contributions to psychoanalytic technique were widely accepted . . . he did not evade these questions [social problems], as many psychoanalysts do. Nor did he—as is fashionable—say 'cultural' when what has to be faced is social and economic. He was one of the first psychoanalysts to study Marx. Some of his writings on the subject of Marx and Freud contain valuable formulations." And right in the next paragraph we read: "But to look at the world from the point of view of orgasm, as Reich does, does not mean helping the adolescent—it means looking at the world through the eyes of an adolescent." Further:

His present condemnation of all politics is a rebound from his previous revolutionary attitude . . . Reich describes well the irrationality of our time. But he draws from it irrational conclusions.

It is easy to explain away scientific statements as being a "rebound." It is easy to accuse someone of "irrational conclusions," but it may be difficult to *prove* them. Wertham does not even try to do so. Instead, he goes on quoting out of context. Here is the context in Reich's book:

All precision of our social existence notwithstanding, there is as yet no definition of the word freedom which would be in keeping with natural science. No word is more misused and misunderstood. *To define freedom is the same as to define sexual health.* [Sentence quoted by Wertham.—T.P.W.] *But nobody will openly admit this.* The advocacy of personal and social freedom is connected with anxiety and guilt feelings. As if to be free were a sin or at least not quite as it should be. Sex-economy makes this guilt feeling comprehensible: freedom without sexual self-determination is in itself a contradiction. But to be sexual means—according to the prevailing human structure—to be sinful or guilty. There are very few people who experience sexual love without guilt feeling. "Free love" has acquired a degrading meaning; it lost the meaning given it by the old fighters for freedom. In films and books, to be genital and to be criminal are presented as *the same thing*. No wonder, then, that the ascetic and the

reactionary enjoy a higher esteem than the loving primitive; that high social position is incompatible with natural sexual attitudes and behavior; that the "authority" is not allowed to have a "private life"; that a great scientist like De La Métrie could be besmirched and hounded by ascetics; that any perverse moralist can get away with besmirching a happily loving couple; that adolescents risk the reformatory for having sexual intercourse; etc.

This article was intended to show the miscalculation to which thus far all struggles for freedom have fallen prey. It is this: *the incapacity for social freedom is physiologically anchored in the human organism.* [Next sentence quoted by Wertham.—T.P.W.] It follows that the mastery of the physiological incapacity for freedom is one of the most important prerequisites of any genuine struggle for freedom. This article was not meant to discuss those elements of freedom which are generally known and advocated, such as the freedom of expression, freedom from economic suppression and exploitation, freedom of assembly, freedom of scientific search, etc. The essential task here was that of showing the most powerful *obstacle* in the path of all these endeavors.

THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, p. 297 f.

Of all this, Wertham quotes *two* sentences, in order to make the following point: "*Freedom, however, is not a hygienic but a political concept.*" This, of course, is the gist of this whole diatribe of Wertham's. One might say that there is a *political* concept of freedom and *also* a *hygienic* (or mass-psychological) one. And in view of the utter failure of the political concept, perhaps another concept should be given a chance. Wertham further states: "The human race could no more survive without politics than it could without sex." Oh, yes, the human race could: there are civilizations without politics, who know no crime or sexual perversion. But even granted that what Wertham says is true in our kind of civilization and as things are today, one might ask, do they have to be that way, forever? And is survival all that counts? Or is it more important that the lives of the masses of people become something more than mere survival? And even that is more than the politicians have been able to secure for them!

Wertham continues: "Reich seems to think that by changing words one can change historical facts." Oh, the poor slaves to the "inexorable

course of history!" They don't know that they are the ones who make history, by doing a good job of carpentry or a poor job of a book review. To quote our reviewer:

Instead of "industrial work" he proposes to say "vitality necessary work." To substitute "working individual" for "proletarian" does not abolish the proletariat. Reich believes that such a verbal change "eliminates a chasm which has done so much to disrupt working human society." In his new terminology "class consciousness" becomes "work consciousness" or "social responsibility." "Consciousness becomes "dynamic structure," "needs" become "orgonotic instinctual processes," "tradition" appears as "biological and characterological rigidity." The terms "communistic," "socialistic," etc., are abolished. *This is of course nothing new. It is exactly what the fascists preach.* [Italics mine.—T.P.W.]

This is an old technique. When somebody finds out something you don't like, you say *either*, "That's old stuff; Freud, or Marx, or Darwin, said that long ago," *or*, "It's all wrong," *or*, "It is exactly what the fascists preach." Now let's see whether Reich thinks that "by changing words one can change historical facts." The above quotations are taken out of the context of the *Preface* of the third edition of the book, in which Reich explains why the new, sex-economic concept of "work" made necessary certain changes in terminology. We quote:

The present edition contains a presentation of the essence of this new sociological concept [work democracy]. It comprises the best and still valid sociological findings of Marxism. At the same time, it takes into account the social changes which the "worker" has undergone during the past hundred years. I know from experience that it will be exactly the "legitimate representatives of the workers," the past and the coming "leaders of the international proletariat" who will fight this extension of the concept of the worker, by calling it "fascist" [as we have seen, this is precisely what Wertham does.—T.P.W.], "Trotskyist," "counter-revolutionary," etc.

The politics of the prewar Marxist parties has no future. Just as the concept of the sexual energy perished within the psychoanalytic organization and arose anew, young and vigorous, from the discovery of the orgone, so did the concept of the international worker perish

in the Marxist party doings and arise anew in the framework of sex-economic sociology. For the activities of the sex-economist are possible only in the framework of all other *socially necessary work*, and not in the framework of a reactionary, mystical and non-working life.

Sex-economic sociology was born out of the attempts to harmonize the depth psychology of Freud with the economic theory of Marx. Human existence is determined by instinctual *and* socio-economic processes . . . Sex-economic sociology dissolves that fateful contradiction which made psychoanalysis forget the social factor and made Marxism forget the animal origin of man.

In accord with the new, sex-economic concept of "work," the following changes in terminology were made in the process of revising this book. The concepts "communitistic," "socialistic," "class-conscious" were replaced by such sociologically and psychologically unequivocal terms as "revolutionary" and "scientific." What they mean is "radically changing things," "rationally active," "going to the roots of things."

The change in terminology takes into account an important fact: today it is no longer the Communist and Socialist parties but, in opposition to them, many *unpolitical* people and groups of people of all shades of political opinion who are developing more and more a revolutionary attitude, who, in other words, are striving for a basically new, rational social order. There is a rather general awareness of the fact that the world, in its fight against the fascist pestilence, has entered a phase of a gigantic international *revolution*. The concept "proletarian" was coined more than a hundred years ago to connote a stratum of society which was deprived of all rights. True, there are still such groups, but the great-grandchildren of the proletarians of the 19th century have developed into specialized, technically trained industrial workers who are socially responsible and conscious of their skills. The term "class consciousness" has to be replaced by "*work consciousness*" or "*social responsibility*."

In the Marxism of the 19th century, "class consciousness" was limited to the *manual* workers. The other working people in vitally necessary professions . . . were distinguished from this "proletariat" as "intellectuals" and "petit-bourgeois." This schematic and obsolete distinction was a major contributing factor in the victory of fascism in Germany. The concept of "class consciousness" is not only too narrow; it does not even correspond to the structure of the class of manual workers. "Industrial work" and "proletarian" are, therefore, replaced by the

concepts of "*vitally necessary work*" and the "*working individual*." These two concepts comprise all who do *socially vital work*, that is, in addition to the industrial workers, the physicians, teachers, technicians, laboratory workers, etc. This eliminates a chasm which has done much to disrupt working human society and thus has contributed to fascism, be it the black or the red variety.

Marxist sociology, out of its ignorance of mass psychology, contrasted the "bourgeois" with the "proletarian." This is erroneous. A certain character structure is not limited to the capitalist but pervades the working people in all professions. There are revolutionary capitalists and reactionary workers. *There are no characterological class distinctions in the biophysical depth of human structure.* The fascist pestilence makes it clear that the economic concepts of "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat" have to be replaced by the characterological concepts of "*reactionary*" and "*revolutionary*."

THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, xviii ff.

Does this give the reader the impression that Reich "seems to think that by changing words one can change historical facts?" Could Wertham, after having read this, and much more, honestly believe so? He only quotes out of context in order to say: "This is of course nothing new. It is exactly what the fascists preach." "One cannot negate politics without negating history," Wertham writes. Reich does not negate politics or history. On the contrary, he shows that the history of the world is the history of politics, be it the politics of governments, of political parties, of the church, the Inquisition, the academic societies, in brief, of everything which has organizational power. And he shows why politics—in whatever sphere—leads the human being who is its victim into the blind alley and the misery in which he finds himself. But the "saviors" of humanity accuse Reich of "negating history!" Further:

But what stands out from all the biological obfuscation is an utter contempt for the masses: "that typical structure of the masses which is expressed in their longing for authority, their mysticism and their incapacity for freedom."

"Biological obfuscation!" Does the reviewer, in one single instance, show where Reich's bio-social statements are incorrect? No, it is much easier to use the weapon of the politician, invective: "biological obfusca-

tion," and let the reader think what he may. "Utter contempt of the masses!" Does the scientific statement that a patient has a cancer, perhaps with an evil odor, *show utter contempt for the patient?* Does it, Frederic Wertham, M.D.? No, it is always the politician who has contempt for the masses, because he expects nothing of them but votes, and he expects to get them by doing such "work" as "baby-kissing" and maligning his opponent. To put the blame for social events on the masses, to expect them to take responsibility for their own lives, instead of getting everything presented to them on a silver platter, *that* means to take the masses seriously. And to say so takes more courage than "baby-kissing" and making promises which nobody even expects one to keep. If Reich had contempt for the masses, he would not write the following:

Incapacity for freedom is not naturally given. People have not always been incapable of freedom; in principle, then, they can become capable of freedom.

As social and clinical sex-economy has convincingly demonstrated, *the mechanism which makes the masses of people incapable of freedom is the social suppression of genital love life in children, adolescents and adults.* This social suppression, also, is not naturally given. Rather, it has developed with patriarchy and can, in principle, be abolished. If, however, it can be abolished, and if it is the central mechanism of a character structure incapable of freedom, then things are not so hopeless. Then, society has at its disposal the means of eliminating all the social evils which we call "emotional plague."

The task of a true democratic-revolutionary movement is that of guiding (*not* of "leading" from above!) the masses who—as a result of thousands of years of suppression of living functioning, have become weak-minded, incapable of criticism, biopathic and submissive—in such a way that they immediately become aware of any suppression and learn to shake it off *in time, irrevocably and enduringly.* It is easier to prevent a neurosis than to cure it. It is easier to keep an organism healthy than to free it of disease. Similarly, it is easier to keep a social organism free of dictatorial institutions than to eliminate them. It is the task of a genuine democratic guidance to make the masses go beyond themselves, as it were; this is only possible, however, if the masses develop, out of themselves, social organizations which do not vie with diplomats in political rigmarole, but which formulate and express for

the masses that which the masses are incapable of expressing because of need, lack of training, submissiveness to a Führer idea and the plague of irrationalism. That is, *we ascribe to the masses of people the full responsibility for all social processes.* We demand their responsibility and fight their irresponsibility. We blame them, but do not accuse them as one accuses a criminal.

THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM, p. 187 ff.

Then comes what is perhaps the most incredible statement of Wertham's:

In this whole book, allegedly devoted to the mass psychology of fascism, nothing is said about gas chambers, extermination camps or death factories. The masses are described as having lost their social spontaneity through the inhibition of their sexual life. What about the methods of terror by which they were bludgeoned into submission? Far from answering these key problems of mass psychology, Reich conceals them.

If the "key problem" of fascism were that of gas chambers, extermination camps, etc., *then there would be no problem of the mass psychology of fascism.* It would again be a problem of a few sadistic scoundrels who "bludgeon into submission" a population of 60 million people. The problem of mass psychology is precisely the question as to what enables them to do so. If the extermination camps were the "key problem" of fascism, then it would again be a German, and not an *international* problem. Incidentally, the people were not "bludgeoned into submission" by gas chambers, extermination camps or death factories. These things occurred some 10 years after fascism had come to power and after they had submitted to fascism. The reasons why they had submitted were not "bludgeons"; they were of a *mass-psychological nature*. And while Reich explains them, Wertham writes: "Far from answering these key problems of mass psychology, Reich conceals them," and calls the book "allegedly" devoted to the mass psychology of fascism. The next statement is just as incredible:

The success of Hitler's propaganda was not due, as Reich claims, to the "authoritarian, freedom-fearing structure of the people." On the contrary, the Nazis deliberately and skillfully played on the people's

desire for freedom. Then as soon as they were in power they acted the way Reich talks.

Of course, the Nazis played deliberately and skillfully on the people's desire for freedom; if they had not, they would not have had a chance. But why did the people not see where they were being led? Would a healthy people have been misled that way? The reason why Wertham cannot see the simplest fact having to do with freedom is that to him, a psychiatrist, "freedom is not a hygienic but a political concept." What he tries to imply by saying, "Then as soon as they were in power they acted the way Reich talks," is unfathomable to this writer.

"Of Reich's Marxism little remains but a verbal shell," the reviewer continues. Again, one of these one-sentence statements which mean nothing but may insinuate anything. Does it mean that Reich has become a "traitor" to Marxism? What is Marxism? Marx's science of economics, or the politics of the "Marxist parties?" Reich makes his views abundantly clear, but one does not want to hear a rational discussion of Marxism, and so one calls it a "verbal shell."

The reviewer goes on to say: "He wants to rebuild society on the three pillars of 'love, work and knowledge.'" Reich has no intention whatsoever of "rebuilding society." He leaves that to the politicians and reformers. He has pointed out—as a scientist, not as a social reformer—those living forces which one day may make it possible for society to rebuild itself. He also keeps pointing out that if there is any hope of such rebuilding, it rests on the readiness of the masses to take the responsibility for their own lives. (This is what the politician, who pities and despises the masses, calls Reich's "utter contempt for the masses"). Further: "He considers these as 'natural life functions' and as non-political. He fails to see that these very words could be used as political slogans hiding a very dubious content by an élite who want to lord it over the masses." And then comes the crowning statement: "*That is actually how he himself uses them* [italics mine.—T.P.W.] and that is why this book can only have the effect of confusing and disarming liberals and progressives." What, one may ask, is wrong with the liberals and progressives if they let themselves be confused and disarmed by such a book? Can't they think for themselves? Can't they be made to think by such a book? Further:

Reich writes with great feeling about the little man running wild. But behind his own condemnation of politics there is really a fear of politics. And behind this fear lies the common fear of the middle-class man who is afraid of losing his little place in the big economic machinery: "God keep the Squire and his relations—And keep us in our proper stations."

What a filthy thing to say! No, the man who risks everything writing about the truth is not afraid, least of all of "losing his little place in the big economic machinery." The man who puts all his earnings into his independent research work is not afraid. Afraid is the one who has to play politics in order to get or keep this or that position in a hospital or university or a research grant from a foundation, and to get patients in his private practice, the one who accuses Reich of "politicophobia" and who does not know the motives of his own politicophilia.

Wertham goes on to say: "The burden of Reich's attack is turned against Russia." If it had not become clear before, now it is quite clear what bites our "book reviewer": he feels that "Russia" is being attacked. There is, of course, nothing of the sort. The book deals with the mass psychology of fascism as an *international phenomenon*. "It seems to him," writes Wertham, "that there must be something wrong with the sexual life of the Russians." Did Reich ever single out "the Russians" in his descriptions of sexual pathology? All he did was to counter the Russian argument that sexual pathology was a bourgeois fancy idea, that the "proletarians" did not have any sexual problem, and that, anyhow, the sexual problem would "solve itself." It takes a great deal of chauvinistic stupidity to deny that to be true for the Russians which is patently true for any other people living in a similar civilization.

"Reich's book," Wertham concludes, "encourages the evasion of real social problems." But Wertham, in his whole review, does not mention one of these "real" social problems. To him, none of the real and serious social problems which are discussed at length in Reich's book mean anything. To him, politics is everything. And for this reason, *THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM* is "a book against politics." And so, in the true manner of the political plague, he concludes his review by calling on people "to combat the kind of *psycho-fascism* which Reich's book exemplifies. Calling all couriers!"

What purports to be a book review, then, is actually a smear attack, using the well-known tactics of the emotional plague: distortion and defamation. It is not a book review but *dirty politics* in the guise of one.

Now we must return to Mildred Edie Brady, the "free-lance writer." Her pieces in *Harper's* and the *New Republic* were successful beyond expectation. A condensation of the latter was published in *Everybody's Digest*, a magazine with millions of readers; it was prominently displayed on the front cover as the feature article. As in the *New Republic*, five single statements made by Reich in his publications (length: one sentence each) were taken out of context so as to be deliberately misleading. They were displayed in a box with the large-type heading, AS WILHELM REICH SEES IT, the implication being, of course, that nobody else could possibly see it that way. Excerpts of the *New Republic* piece soon appeared in Scandinavian, French and Swiss papers. A particularly scurrilous piece, based on Brady's piece in *Harper's*, appeared in the *McGill Daily*, Montreal, written by one Alan Portigal. This piece illustrates particularly clearly how some writers picked up some of Brady's dirt and gleefully added some of their own. Where Brady *insinuates* that Reich is a sexual cultist, Portigal flatly calls him *the founder* of this sexual cult (of which, previous to Brady's article, Reich had never heard). While Brady merely uses a sneering tone in describing the orgone, Portigal calls it "*a sort of erotic phlogistqn*." As the reader can see, the seed sown by the emotional plague sprouts fast and bears its evil fruits in abundance. If only truth could be spread as easily as can defamation!

The original impression that Brady's interest had not been in the "bohemians" of the West Coast but in slandering Reich was confirmed when, in the summer of 1947, a member of the research staff of *Life* magazine called the writer on the telephone saying that they intended to investigate and write up this group. Why did they call me up if what they were interested in was that group? I told them to go ahead if they thought the group was interesting, but that we had nothing whatsoever to do with this group. Thus far, *Life* has not evinced any further interest in them.

The last place where one would expect a parroting of Brady's mud-slinging is in a biography of Freud. One would expect a biography to

be based on research, and not on slanderous hearsay. Yet, in chapter 15, *The Larger World of Psychoanalysis*, of a recent Freud biography,² the section dealing with Reich is based entirely on Brady's piece in *Harper's*. Here we read:

A third school of psychoanalysis, approaching the proportions of a cult, is that formed by Wilhelm Reich—expelled from the International Psychoanalytic Society in 1933—and his adherents. Unlike the Horneyites, who minimize the importance of sexuality, the Reichites go even further than Freud in believing that sex is everything.

The rest is nothing but a paraphrase of Brady, except that Puner adds a new wrinkle by replacing the word "orgastic" (definition: pertaining to the sexual orgasm) by "*orgiastic*" (Dictionary definition: "Pertaining to or resembling the Greek orgies; hence, marked by wild revelries"). The following, however, may be worth pointing out here:

1. "A third school of psychoanalysis . . ." Orgone biophysics is *not* a school of psychoanalysis. Reich is not a psychoanalyst, nor are any of his co-workers.

2. "Reichites." This term always suggests cultism. There are no *Reichites* or *Reichians*. The present writer has been a co-worker of Reich's for some years, but he does not consider himself a "Reichian." He considers himself a worker in orgone biophysics. Either somebody is a worker, or he is not identified with the work. We have no club the members of which "follow" this or that "ideology." The purpose of Brady's piece, "A new cult of sex and anarchy," was precisely that of putting Reich's work in the framework of a bohemian cult, and, as we have seen, somebody else soon wrote about Reich as the *founder* of this cult. That is what the emotional plague says. The fact is that *neither Reich nor any of his co-workers had ever heard of this cult* before the appearance of Brady's article. We have nothing to do with any cult of any sort. Where we can, as with students and people who are in contact with us, we prevent the formation of cults. Beyond that, if cults do develop, all we can do is to point out that we have nothing to do with them.

² FREUD: HIS LIFE AND HIS MIND. A biography by Helen Walker Puner. New York: Howell, Soskin Publishers, 1947.

3. "The Reichites go even further than Freud in believing that *sex is everything*." This is such a hoary and stupid misstatement—going back to the early days of Freud—that one hesitates to refute it again. Nevertheless, since the point was made clear explicitly in *THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM*, we quote from the Translator's Preface:

Freud's original theory of sex was revolutionary and evoked the most violent reactions. The story of psychoanalysis is essentially the story of never ending attempts to allay these reactions on the part of a shocked world, and to make psychoanalysis socially acceptable. The proponents of any such modification have the satisfaction of popular acclaim; they soon become the center of a group of students who are eager to be "in on a good thing." But the price of appeasement is high: it is the relinquishing of basic scientific facts. In order to make psychoanalysis socially acceptable, sexuality had to be robbed of its real significance and to be replaced by something else. Thus, Jung replaced it by a religious philosophy, Adler by a moralistic one, Rank by the "Trauma of Birth," etc., etc. With the advent of the European dictatorships, the center of psychoanalysis shifted more and more to this country. Here, after a short-lived triumph of the theory of the death instinct, we are witnessing the development of various "sociological" schools of psychoanalysis. Theirs is, because it misleads so easily, a particularly dangerous argument. Whether explicit or buried in a great deal of academic or neologistic language, the argument is this: "The important agent in the etiology of the neuroses is *not* sexuality, *but* social factors." The appeal of such reasoning, because of the prevailing fear of sexuality and a general, though vague and confused realization of the importance of social factors, is enormous. The flaw in the argument is obvious, yet easily overlooked. Freud's original etiological formula of the neurosis is still correct: "The neurosis is the result of a conflict between instinctual demands and opposing social demands." Thus, *any argument as to whether it is one or the other is senseless*. If I run my car into a stone wall, what is to be blamed for its getting smashed up? The momentum of my car or the wall that opposes it? Theoretically, one might argue either way; practically, it is only the impact of the two opposing forces. That the same holds true for the neuroses, and that, in order to understand the neuroses, we must know something—or rather, a great deal—about *both sexuality and social forces*, that, I think, Reich makes perfectly clear in this volume.

THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM, 1st ed., p. xiv f.

The *Saturday Review of Literature*, August 16, 1947, published a whole-page Editorial, "The New Coast of Bohemia," based on Brady's article in *Harper's*. We quote from two "Letters to the Editor" (SRL September 20, 1947):

The colony at Big Sur was probed deeply by the *Examiner* after being reported in *Harper's* and *Time*, and with typical Hearstian thoroughness, but scant evidence of the reported love cult was developed, at least it was so scant that not even the *Examiner* could hang a juicy story on it.

(From a letter by Roscoe D. Jones, Jr., Danville, Calif.)

Sir: I was sorry to see you propagate . . . some of the fantastic ideas . . . which originated in a thoroughly irresponsible article in *Harper's Magazine* by a Mrs. Brady entitled "The New Cult of Sex & Anarchy."

I happened to be in San Francisco at the time this article appeared, and was so startled by it that I arranged interviews with a large number of the writers mentioned by Mrs. Brady. I found that most of her theories about their work and ideals were *pure products of her distorted imagination*.

Mrs. Brady contends that the young writers of San Francisco and the Big Sur are under the spell of Wilhelm Reich. Apparently, however, it is Mrs. Brady who is under Reich's spell. Most of them had never read his books. . . .

This one example is *typical of Mrs. Brady's many mistakes and misrepresentations*. Apparently no effort was made by her or the editors of *Harper's* to check the facts.

(From a letter by J. Laughlin, Norfolk, Conn.)

On December 6, 1947, *Collier's* published an article, "Greenwich Village: Tourist Trap," by Harry Henderson and Sam Shaw. Here we read the following:

In addition to the art circles, there are four major whirlpools of gumbusters, or cults. The largest of these goes into swooning over the work of Wilhelm Reich, the Austrian psychoanalyst. Reich, already the gadfly of European psychology, came to the Village in 1940, and got his start lecturing at the New School. His book, *Function of the Orgasm*, undertakes to explain what's wrong with the world and its people in terms of sexuality.

Dr. Reich claims he has discovered the "orgone," the cosmic energy. The orgone is theoretically an invisible blue stuff, radiating from you even as you read this. So far, Reich has been virtually the only person to see it. The trouble with many people, he says, is that they need an orgone build-up. He has constructed "orgone accumulators," big black boxes large enough for a man to get into. He rents them out to patients who sit inside, let the orgone accumulate and allegedly come out raring to go [in Brady's words: "who presumably derive 'orgastic potency' from it."—T. P. W.]. The orgone and the accumulator can lick anything from cancer to common cold, according to Dr. Reich.

Reich has been denounced by Freud and expelled from psycho-analytical societies. This is a frame-up, he says.

The following Press Release was sent to newspapers and magazines:

For release Monday, December 8 or after.

Statement of Dr. Theodore P. Wolfe, Editor, The Annals of the Orgone Institute; President, Orgone Institute Press.

Re: Dr. Wilhelm Reich

Until this time, Wilhelm Reich has not made any statements about his work to the general press. Reports on this work have appeared in scientific publications. Now, however, because misinformation has been published in popular magazines, it becomes necessary to make an effort to present a correction. All the more so, since as they now stand, some of these statements raise false hopes among sick people, particularly sufferers from cancer.

On December 6, *Collier's* magazine, in an article on page 24, included three paragraphs with the following statements of misinformation, which I now correct:

Wilhelm Reich did not, as *Collier's* states, "come to the Village in 1940." He arrived in the U. S. in 1939, and moved his laboratory from Oslo, Norway to Forest Hills, N. Y., where he has lived and worked ever since. Until 1930 Wilhelm Reich was on the teaching staffs of psychoanalytical societies in Vienna and Berlin, and taught at the Psychological Institute of the University of Oslo from 1934 to 1939. In Oslo he also established his first bion and cancer research laboratory. See his forthcoming book, *THE CANCER BIOPATHY*.

He came to the U. S. on the invitation of the New School for Social Research in New York City, as Associate Professor of Medical Psychology, and lectured there between 1939 and 1941.

It is correct that Wilhelm Reich discovered the orgone energy. It is not correct, however, that as *Collier's* stated, "the orgone is theoretically an invisible blue stuff"; on the contrary, his experiments have made it visible. Its blue color has been photographed on Kodachrome film. The orgone has been demonstrated objectively by means of the electroscope, temperature tests, and the orgonoscope. It is incorrect also to say that Wilhelm Reich has been "virtually the only person to see it." As a matter of fact, many persons, among them physicians and physicists, have seen it, in the laboratories of the Orgone Institute in Forest Hills and at Orgonon, Maine.

Wilhelm Reich's work with neurotic individuals led him more and more in the direction of biological energy which in psychoanalysis had been called "psychic" energy or "libido." Bio-electrical laboratory experiments conducted by Wilhelm Reich showed that this biological energy is not identical with electro-magnetic energy but is identical with an energy which he later found to be functioning not only in living organisms but in nature in general. This is the energy which Wilhelm Reich termed *orgone*. It was discovered in 1939 in the Norway laboratories, and experimental orgone research has been going on ever since. The Orgone Institute was founded in Forest Hills in 1942, and in 1945 the research activities were incorporated in the non-profit Orgone Institute Research Laboratories, Inc., of which Wilhelm Reich is Director. Wilhelm Reich's main activities, besides orgone research, are the training of physicians and teachers in orgone biophysics.

It was found that the orgone existing in the atmosphere can be concentrated in a cabinet of simple construction which Reich has called the orgone accumulator. Such accumulators have been used in experimental orgone therapy, first with animals and later with humans. The biological effect of the orgone accumulator is based on the fact that it charges the organism with atmospheric orgone, the concentration of which in the accumulator is several times higher than that in the atmosphere. The results of this experimental therapy have been published from time to time in the *International Journal of Sex-economy and Orgone Research*.

Collier's erroneously states: "The orgone and the accumulator can lick anything from cancer to the common cold, according to Dr. Reich." Wilhelm Reich has never made any such claim. On the contrary, he has warned repeatedly and emphatically in his publications against considering the orgone or the orgone accumulator a cure-all and has

also repeatedly emphasized the experimental nature of orgone therapy.

Wilhelm Reich does not, as Collier's states, rent accumulators to patients. The accumulators are rented by the Orgone Institute Research Laboratories, Inc. The income from the accumulators does not go to any individual but to the Orgone Research Fund, and pays for only a small fraction of the cost of orgone research.

It is not correct, as Collier's states, that Wilhelm Reich has been denounced by Freud, either in writing or speech.

Nor is it correct, as Collier's states, that Wilhelm Reich has been "expelled from psychoanalytical societies." The fact is that in 1934 the German Psychoanalytical Society, a member group of the International Psychoanalytical Association, under pressure from the Nazi movement, asked him to withdraw his name from their lists. Reich later declined the offer of the Norwegian Psychoanalytical Society to rejoin the International Psychoanalytical Association through this group.

Wilhelm Reich is the author of numerous works abroad. The following books have appeared in English: *THE DISCOVERY OF THE ORGONE*, Vol. I: *THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM*, 1942; *CHARACTER-ANALYSIS*, 1945; *THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION*, 1945; *THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM*, 1946. *THE DISCOVERY OF THE ORGONE*, Vol. II: *THE CANCER BIOPATHY*, is in process of publication.

See also the notation under Reich, in *AMERICAN MEN OF SCIENCE*, 1944 edition.

Collier's received a number of letters protesting against the misstatements made in the article. Walter Davenport, Editor, wrote to the present writer: "When I received the press release copy that you sent me on December 6th I turned it over to Henderson and Shaw, the men who wrote the article. They assure me that everything they had said about Dr. Reich is borne out and actually noted in his own writings." In answer to one letter of protest, Davenport wrote, in part:

I am afraid I can't agree with you that his work was completely misrepresented in Collier's. I called in the authors of the article and they showed me books and pamphlets by Dr. Reich, and about him, which, in my opinion, bear out everything the authors said.

At any rate, I am having the whole thing investigated and I assure you that if we discover that we have done an injustice to the Doctor, we shall say so in print, prominently, willingly and wholly. That, of

course, is the least that we could do. It has been a tradition of Collier's to do just that when we find that we have done anyone a wrong.

I am still awaiting the result of the investigation which, I may add, is being done quite independent of this office.

It will be interesting to see the results of this investigation in view of the fact that Davenport—the statements made in the Press Release notwithstanding—is already of the opinion that "books and pamphlets by Dr. Reich, and about him . . . bear out everything the authors said."

Thus far, we have dealt with distortions and defamations in newspapers and magazines. Now we come to another aspect of the story. Some people or interests succeeded in dragging a government agency into the campaign. One day during the summer of 1947, an investigator from the Portland, Me., division of the *Federal Food and Drug Administration* turned up at Orgonon. He said a friend of his had read Brady's article and thought it might be "worthwhile" looking into the matter. He was given all the information about the orgone accumulator that he asked for. However, when he turned up a second time, now admitting being under orders from the main office of the Eastern District in New York, and asked for details about Reich's conflict with Freud, he was referred to the literature. Soon, we heard reports about this investigation from various places. What had seemed to be an investigation of the orgone accumulator took on very peculiar forms.

Gradually, as the investigation progressed, it became clear that—as the first investigator who came to Orgonon had intimated—the investigation was in fact based on Brady's slanderous statements.

If that were not so, why did an investigator ask a co-worker, a physician, about the people connected with the Orgone Institute, in particular, "How many women are there?" "What do they do with the women?" Why did they ask similar questions, intimating the suspicion of a sexual racket, of other people?

Or why did the investigator ask Reich, of all things, about his "conflict with Freud?" What has that to do with the accumulator? This question was based on Brady's lie that Reich was expelled from the Psychoanalytic Association because "Freud himself saw fit to take issue with him."

And where did the investigators get the idea of a "sexual racket?" (They did not say so in so many words, but their questions showed clearly that that was what they were after.) Nobody had ever intimated such a thing before Brady.

And why did the Federal Food and Drug Administration become interested in the orgone accumulator only now, after Brady's publications? Why not 4 or 5 years ago, when laboratory findings and clinical results were published, and when findings were submitted to the Surgeon General and the National Research Council? Why were they not interested in the orgone accumulator until Brady referred to it as follows: "Here he builds accumulators of it which are rented out to patients, who presumably derive 'orgastic potency' from it?" Now they ask such questions as the following: "Were you told that the accumulator would produce orgasms?" "Do you know of any 'accumulator cults' in Southern California?" and make statements such as the following: "Oh, you don't need one, you're not married."

And why did they want to see the files of the Orgone Institute Press, and try to get the production records from the printer? Because, in their view, our scientific literature is used "for promotional purposes!" And what does it "promote"? The orgone accumulator!

If they are investigating the orgone accumulator, why then do they tell people that they are "interested in the activities of Dr. Reich and Dr. Wolfe?" This can leave people with only one impression: that if "the Government" is "interested in the activities of Dr. Reich and Dr. Wolfe," then *there must be something wrong* with their activities. This is, in fact, the impression a great many people get from this kind of investigation.

Patients who are under *psychiatric* therapy (and who also use an orgone accumulator) are asked whether the therapy is different from psychoanalysis, and "what the doctor does," and "what else" the doctor does. Patients are asked to explain character-analytic technique. Now, a patient does not know the technique or the theory it is based on. If he answers such questions, he will inevitably make misstatements. A number of such erroneous statements, put together, may well present a picture similar to that given by a Brady. It is easy to collect misinformation and then to use it. Now, if they are interested in the technique and theory of

character-analytic vegetotherapy, why don't they read the literature? And what, in asking these questions, do the investigators learn about the orgone accumulator, which is what they claim to be investigating? And what is the authority of investigators of the FDA to inquire of patients what licensed physicians "do to them" in their therapeutic sessions?

Now, there seems no doubt that most of these actions on the part of FDA investigators are *lawful* in the sense that there is no law which could be invoked against them. But there are other laws, of *truth* and *decency*, and of *responsibility*. There is the responsibility of *protecting* honest work and its fruits against indecency and defamation, of protecting patients against the invasion of their privacy and their therapy.

All this puts us in a very peculiar position. What seemed to be an investigation of the accumulator turned out to be an investigation of a "sexual racket," of a research scientist who uses his research results "for promotional purposes," who is engaged in "experimental work on which he relies when he ships it [the orgone accumulator] in interstate commerce to cancer patients," of a scientific publishing house which sends out its publications "for promotional purposes," of the therapeutic techniques of licensed physicians and the private lives of their patients. The peculiar position in which we find ourselves is this:

If a government agency conducts a fair and objective investigation of something which is in their province, we want, of course, *to cooperate to the fullest extent*. And *we did* fully cooperate until the irrational and slanderous aspect of the investigation became clear.

If, however, an investigation is based on erroneous and slanderous assumptions, and is carried on on this basis, *we cannot cooperate*.

W. R. M. Wharton, Chief, Eastern District, Food and Drug Administration, in a letter of December 9, 1947, to our lawyer, made the following statement:

To correct what appears to be a misapprehension on the part of your client, permit me to say that none of our investigators has intimated in any way, at any time, to any person that the Food and Drug Administration has the opinion that the Accumulator is a "pornographic device of no value except for immoral purposes." As a matter of fact that particular point is of minor interest to us, if any.

How can Mr. Wharton deny that such intimations were made? He was not there when his investigators asked their questions, but the people who were asked them were. Such a denial does not undo the harm which these intimations have done. That particular point may be "of minor interest, if any," to the Food and Drug Administration, *but it is of major interest to us*. The emotional plague is out to *discredit our work*. It tries to do this by slandering Reich; by making his work appear to be a sexual cult; by making the orgone accumulator appear to be a device from which the user "presumably derives 'orgastic potency'" or "orgasms," and a device used in a cancer racket in which Reich uses his experimental results and the publishing house of the Orgone Institute "for promotional purposes." This is why the manner in which this investigation has been carried on is a major concern to us. *It has happened before in the history of science that important work was killed by slander*. In the case of the orgone, we shall do everything in our power to prevent this fate. For, make no mistake: the real attack is not on the orgone accumulator, but on *the discovery of the orgone itself*.

We have discussed the nature of this investigation and the reasons why we can no longer cooperate in it. There is another, even more important, aspect, and that is the question of *competence in matters of orgone energy*. With regard to this, I quote from a recent communication from Wilhelm Reich:

The Food and Drug Administration is neither capable of nor equipped or entitled to deal with the orgone energy. The Food and Drug Administration would have to prove that they know how to demonstrate the universal existence of a basic cosmic energy with the Geiger Müller Counter, before I would concede their right to do what they propose to do, namely, "to study his device and to examine the details of the experimental work. . . ." Orgone energy is an overwhelming phenomenon of nature. Overwhelming, because it has been so thoroughly overlooked, although it has been functioning in every single cell of the organism of man ever since he existed. In the light of the magnitude of this fact, the laws about "shipping in interstate commerce" shrink to utter insignificance. Unless we ourselves fully recognize this discrepancy, no matter what the consequences, we are not worthy of being called researchers in orgone physics.

New discoveries of natural functions have always created the necessity of new laws for their administration. The airplane brought about new laws. It could not have been administered by laws pertaining to the steam engine. New laws had to be put into effect when electrical or atomic energy became a social issue. Obviously, atomic energy could not be administered like Kreml's hair tonic. Now, the orgone energy is not only a *newly discovered* type of energy; it shows, in the clearest objective language of natural science, a faster reaction on the Geiger Müller Counter than even atomic energy. It is also more powerful as a *social* issue, because it has those beneficial biological effects which are sought for in vain in atomic energy. The facts make it obvious that new laws will have to be put into effect for the administration of the cosmic orgone energy.

Orgone energy, then, is in a situation similar to that of atomic energy. This fact calls for courage, knowledge and a strong will to win out in this fight.

A mechanical, and therefore empty, application of "The Law," in this case the "Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act," to the orgone accumulator is, practically speaking, utter nonsense. Human diseases cannot be handled by laws, but only by appropriate knowledge.

As stated on previous occasions, there are no authorities whatsoever in the field of orgonomy except people who have worked in the field, thoroughly and efficiently. We do not grant any authority to the nuclear physicist or the Atomic Energy Commission in this matter as far as factual knowledge is concerned. A physicist of the highest renown has declared himself incompetent in this matter. Even I, the discoverer, had to struggle desperately for a decade to attain some clarity about these basic natural functions. Two thousand years of natural philosophy have been filled with anguish and hard intellectual struggle about the issue involved. Should we yield to a Food and Drug Administration which deals with aspirin and such? *No state authority is big enough to force us to abandon our factual authority based on knowledge*. To grant authority to an agency like the Food and Drug Administration would mean reducing the importance of our work to zero.

The Food and Drug Administration confuses a *statement of medical facts* with a "promise of cure." *I have never promised any cure for anything to anybody*. I would not do so even if, instead of breaking new trails in medicine, I were practicing routine medicine. All I did was reporting results, positive as well as negative. The orgone accumulator

may help in one case of shrinking biopathy and not in another. It did, for example, make an old farmer suffering from arthritis able to walk again; in other cases of arthritis it failed to help. Is the description of such facts "promise of cure?" Or, did I use these "results" for "promotional purposes" when I reported so and so many cases as having died? If I had wanted to use my findings for "promotional purposes," would I have stopped working on cancer cases with tumors and turned to theoretical problems of organometry? I have not handled a cancer patient in more than 3 years. I have refused to accept advanced cancer cases for experimental orgone therapy. On the other hand, in my article, "Anorgonia in the carcinomatous shrinking biopathy," published in early 1945, I stated explicitly, with conclusive proof, that the cancer biopathy is rooted far more deeply than anybody, physician or layman, dares to believe.

This, then, was the course of the 1947 campaign against orgone biophysics: A "free-lance writer," probably as the tool of a political organization, writes two slanderous magazine articles. The slanderous statements are taken up by other magazines and newspapers, and by the author of a Freud biography, successive writers adding some of their own dirt to that of the "free-lance writer." Finally, an agency of the United States Government takes it up, not knowing what they are dealing with, and thus falling for all the slander. Being based on slanderous statements, their investigation became an integral part of the slander campaign against orgone biophysics.

The investigation by the Food and Drug Administration has now been going on for some 6 months, at Orgonon, Me., in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Berkeley, Calif., and probably many other places from which we have not heard. *It is still going on.* If they had conducted an objective investigation of the orgone accumulator, this investigation, most likely, could have been brought to a conclusion in less than 6 months, to the satisfaction of everybody concerned—except the detractors of the work.

There is no telling where it will lead. They will finally have to admit that they were barking up the wrong tree when they were investigating a "vice racket" or a "cancer racket" or a "promotional scheme." Then, the orgone will have to be put into some other classification. We might

suggest the following: Couldn't the orgone accumulator be classified among the many fake devices which are put on the market? There was an article, "Beware of the Medical Frauds!" in the *Saturday Evening Post* of November 22, 1947, extolling the Food and Drug Administration and describing, among other things, "Doctor" Ghadiali's Spectro-Chrome, which looks like an oversize juke box. In raised letters on the front, it said that it was "for the measurement and restoration of the human radioactive and radio-emanative equilibrium," that it was "attuned by color waves," and required "no diagnosis, no drugs, no manipulations, no surgery." Now, couldn't the orgone accumulator be made to look somehow like that fake contraption? This contraption had 9000 users, including a number of doctors; one of these testified in Ghadiali's behalf. It is easy to get testimonials, in any number, for any "therapeutic" contraption; what does it mean, then, one way or another, when the Food and Drug Administration goes around getting affidavits from users of the orgone accumulator? Precisely nothing.

On January 3, 1948, the Food and Drug Administration got some more publicity, this time in *Collier's* (one month after *Collier's* had published the slanderous statements about Reich). This article, in its dramatic title, referred to the Food and Drug Administration as "The People's Life Preservers." The concluding paragraph reads as follows:

FDA laboratories are being fitted now with special equipment to separate the good from the bad in the atomic medicine bag, and its health detectives are confident they can cope with the new threat just as effectively as they handled the patent medicine and vitamin cheats. Now, even after years of disillusioning experience with a gullible public, the FDA hopes that *this time* the folks will be wary of the atomic killers with their "guaranteed" one-shot remedies *for everything from cold feet to cancer.* [First and third italics mine.—T. P. W.]

Now, couldn't the orgone be put into the "atomic medicine bag" and Reich made out to be one of the "atomic killers with their 'guaranteed' one-shot remedies for everything from cold feet to cancer?" After all, the Food and Drug Administration has it on the authority of such writers on the Greenwich Village as Henderson and Shaw in *Collier's* that "the orgone and the accumulator can lick anything from cancer to the common cold; according to Dr. Reich."

Another suggestion: Let Government physicians and physicists, who know absolutely nothing about the orgone, the orgone accumulator or the physical and biological tests and methods for demonstrating the orgone, examine an orgone accumulator. (We have offered the Food and Drug Administration the cooperation of one of our experienced physicians for such an investigation, but this offer was refused.) They will find themselves in the same position I would be in if I, as a physician, were asked to render an authoritative opinion on, say, a multicolor offset press. They will sit there, not knowing what to do with the thing, and finally, because there are no electrical connections, no switches, no evidence of any *previously known* energy, and because they simply will not comprehend the existence of a non-mechanical, non-mechanistic device, they will declare that the orgone accumulator *has no value whatsoever*. They will make this declaration on the basis of their ignorance of what they are investigating, but with all the formal authority of this or that Government position. They probably will not know at whose behest and in whose interest they made their statement and that they were simply used as another tool in the campaign to discredit the orgone.

It is time to admit that the level of the present discussion is altogether incongruent with the magnitude of orgone research. It is not a matter of Bradys, Hendersons, Shaws, Portigals, Whartons or whatever their names may be or whatever they may say or do. It is a matter of a scientific discovery of the first order. It is time to drop false modesty and academic reserve. I am going to make a statement which—for some peculiar reasons—one "just does not make" in a scientific publication (which this is not). It is this: **THE ORGONE ACCUMULATOR IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE DISCOVERY IN THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE, BAR NONE.** If the Bradys poke fun at it, if the FDA investigators "investigate" it, that does not alter the fact in the least. To prove the fact publicly would be very easy. It is just a matter of financial resources. The necessary financial resources, furthermore, are *nothing* compared with the money which is wasted, year in and year out, in futile and sterile research. All that would be necessary is something like the following: Let just 10 large hospitals install 100 orgone accumulators each. Let 10 physicians learn the technique of orgone application and the

necessary physical and biological tests. Each hospital could apply about 1000 orgone treatments a day. Let them treat each alternate case of cold, sinusitis, anemia, cancer, leukemia, angina pectoris, vascular hypertension, varicose ulcer, etc., with the orgone accumulator, and each alternate case with the orthodox therapy. After 1 year of this, no honest physician could go back to orthodox therapy.

Reich has discovered the orgone and the orgone accumulator. Is it now his responsibility to see to it that it is "recognized" and that it is made available to the people? It is not. One physician after the other, when asked about the orgone or the orgone accumulator, offers the alibi that "it is not recognized by official medicine." Who is "official medicine"? These physicians, who, together with their colleagues, form the Medical Association, or Dr. Fishbein in Chicago? When physicians see cancer tumors disappear under orgone therapy, when they compare the X-rays of a patient with bone tumors before treatment and after, when the tumors are gone, is it not *their responsibility* to get such a therapy "recognized"? The fact is that they do not take this responsibility. Nobody wants to "stick his neck out," nobody wants to "risk his professional reputation." Would it not be the responsibility of the Public Health Authorities to see to it that the orgone accumulator gets "recognized" and made available to the people? Is it not enough that Reich has spent years of hard work, and hard cash to boot, in making and confirming the discovery? Should he now, instead of going on to other research tasks, also fight the Bradys of this world, and a Government agency which accuses him of using his research results for "promotional purposes"? No, the issues involved are much more basic than this. Let me quote from an article³ Reich wrote back in 1941:

It would be so much simpler to explain away the hostility toward our work by pointing out that "it has always been that way." Was not every important discovery disavowed, disregarded or fought by its contemporaries? Was not suffering always the lot of scientific pioneers? Were they not always derided as charlatans, frauds or psychopaths? To bow to what seems an inevitable fate would seem understandable indeed.

³ Biophysical functionalism and mechanistic natural science. *Internat. J. of Sex-economy and Orgone Research* 1, 1942, 97-107.

However, such reasoning is more than dubious. Why is it, one must ask, that the sciences, instead of participating in new discoveries and instead of *learning something new*, continue to endanger research work in new fields and often succeed in destroying it? Up to now, it has always been left to later generations to blame "narrow-mindedness," "jealousy" or "profit interests" for such occurrences. One might think that it would be possible to gain such insights *in time* instead of afterward; that it would be possible to take a *decent* attitude toward contemporary discoveries.

There is an element of derision in the fame which is heaped on courageous pioneers at a time when their exhausting struggle is long past, when they have ceased to suffer and the fruits of their struggles have become the easily acquired property of all. This recognition, late as it always is, is motivated much more by profit interests than by the desire to do better in the next case of pioneer work, that is, to help it along in its difficult stages rather than to endanger it. There is no consolation in the sadistic commiseration which later generations bestow upon the broken pioneer. The very same characters who as contemporaries interfere with pioneer work are the ones who later—after others have won the fight—pick the easy fruits.

. . . During the Rococo period, people were not in the habit of bathing. The resulting body odor was covered up with perfume which at that time was a bit of inviolable custom . . . The behavior of our society toward its body odor is no different from that of the people of the Rococo period. It glorifies flights into the stratosphere but does not allow the Augean stable to be cleansed which poisons everyday human life. He who, instead of meditating about space and time, undertakes to cleanse this stable or even suggests ways of doing it, is called crazy.

It is an old story. It is older than the ancient Greeks whom we consider the bearers of a flourishing culture . . . It was no different two thousand years later. Giordano Bruno, who fought for scientific knowledge and against astrological superstition, was condemned to death by the Inquisition. It is the same psychic pestilence which delivered Galileo to the Inquisition, let Copernicus die in misery, made Leeuwenhoek a recluse, drove Nietzsche into insanity, Pasteur and Freud into exile. It is the indecent, vile attitude of contemporaries of all times. This has to be said clearly once and for all. One cannot give in to such manifestations of the pestilence.

People write and talk about Reich as a new Darwin, a new Newton and a new Galileo, trying to make him out a new martyr in science. To call a man a "new Galileo" is cheap: it does not buy him a single piece of laboratory equipment. We hear the attitude: "Of course, Reich is the greatest creative scientist of the century, but what really great creative scientist would expect to have his findings recognized in his lifetime?" One might ask, *Why not?* Because the Bradys of this world cannot stand his findings about "orgastic potency" or because the FDA does not know the difference between a cancer racket and an orgone accumulator? To call him a "new Galileo" is not only cheap, it is vicious and dangerous: it means taking the Inquisition for granted as an inexorable fate; it means that the "new Galileo" should submit to the Inquisition as a matter of course. The old rule of the Church has been taken over by the State. Now the Inquisition is called "investigation," and it seems to be as powerful as ever. Are we not told by a competent lawyer that a Government agency such as the FDA can investigate anything they please and in any way they please, and that there is no legal recourse against it? Our only recourse is to tell the people the truth; this I have done to the best of my ability.

In conclusion, I wish to apologize for having to bother the reader with all this. It is not my fault, but that of the emotional plague. I would much rather do my real job, that of writing a scientific article, of translating one of Reich's books, of preparing the next issue of the ANNALS for publication. Or just watch my child play and perhaps take some pictures of her. Or listen to Bach. But the emotional plague won't let us—or you—do the things we are entitled to, and so, whether we want to or not, we have to fight it.

January, 1948.

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