THE DANGERS OF FREEDOM†

By Paul Martin, M.D.

Bertrand Russell tells the following story in his book on child education:

One day he found his children sitting in a tree eating green apples. He told them he thought they’d better stop, otherwise they would get sick. The following day one of the children came to him and said: “Daddy, I got sick.”

Today when so many people are taking potshots at freedom, it might be well to remember this little story. It shows how happy a person may well be for having been permitted to experience things for himself, even when it went so far as to make him sick.

Today there seems to be a universal tendency to solve problems by merely dictating a solution for all to obey and punishing those who do not follow orders. Strict disciplinarians are also seeking to exploit the temper of the times. Consider, for example, the school system in general and physical education teachers specifically. Besides, it is war-time, which in itself tends to foster strict discipline. A contributing factor is undoubtedly this: Those who believed in freedom were unable to show they could handle the situation convincingly. A particularly striking example is Russia. After the Bolsheviks took over power there arose strong tendencies towards freedom in sexual customs and education, but these tendencies were not continued. The main reason is very likely that the people lacked the ability to bring about real freedom and self-regulation in both the fields mentioned. In Russia today we therefore find widespread restriction of sexual freedom and a type of education in

which discipline and authority play a decisive role.

Nevertheless I belong to those who believe freedom will soon receive immensely better treatment, because I am convinced that more people than ever are hungry for freedom.

The title of this article runs the risk of being misunderstood or used wrongly. People may say: “Even Martin warns against too much freedom, it’s too dangerous!”

Therefore, I want to emphasize immediately that I believe in freedom—complete freedom for all that is healthy, and for all that is sick as long as it does not turn destructive. Only when freedom leads to a condition that is both sick and harmful should it and must it be limited. I hope to be able to show how completely and unreservedly I believe in freedom, and at the same time in the necessary limitations. Even Russell’s little story indicates that freedom must be restricted. It is all very well to let children eat green apples, but we all draw the line at poisonous toadstools. Clearly it would also be insane not to place restrictions on murderers and rapists as long as they exist. Here the question is simply which restrictions are the most effective. It seems to me it would be just as insane to allow rapists and murderers to walk freely in our midst as it would be to allow a system of upbringing to continue which creates murderers and rapists.

We live under conditions where there can be no question of unconditional freedom. Since we know that freedom is a necessity if human beings are to develop their faculties and attain happiness, the important thing is to fight for freedom with open eyes. It is not enough to close
them and go after a static idea of freedom. We must understand where freedom leads: to the unfolding of the human personality and to the enrichment of humanity. We must also understand wherein the dangers of freedom lie: in man's pathological, ruined structure, and in rigid social conventions. Our goal thus becomes to aid man, with complete confidence in the infinite wealth of his powers, to unfold his possibilities and at the same time to avoid as much as possible the dangers that lurk by the wayside.

The first problem we are faced with is that we actually know so infinitely little about how people will react when they are given the chance to realize the inner biological urges that primarily determine their actions as in all other living organisms. This lack of knowledge is in itself no objection to freedom. Above all, we must continually point out that wherever we have seen freedom at work, i.e., among primitive peoples such as the Trobiands and Arapeches, and wherever we as educators have brought it about by our teachings, the results have been completely convincing. Consider for example Neill's achievements at Summerhill, or consider those primitive tribes whose language has no word for "stealing," and among whom sexual crimes are unknown. You, as teachers, also know how the restriction of freedom frustrates the capacity for living. As a doctor, I can assure you that, exactly to the extent to which it is possible to eliminate the inhibitions resulting from upbringing and environment, my patients are able to develop their faculties, talents, and capacity for love; this change is so striking that one simply dares not realize the magnitude of these possibilities. The perspectives that open up are vast. No, we have no reason to feel doubtful of freedom! But in its way it is far more demanding than any other process. The great advantage of authoritarian systems of upbringing is that they tell the educator exactly how to react in a given situation: if the child behaves in such-and-such a manner, all you have to do is this-and-that. Look at the precision with which certain educators, notably the Americans, lay down rules for eating and sleeping.

The situation is quite different for the truly progressive educator. He has but one goal: to give the child opportunity to develop. His main task is to discover the desires of the child from its behavior, and as much as possible to keep his wants from not being realized, or at least to facilitate a release of emotion when realization is impossible. This is difficult enough with healthy children, as for example with the newborn baby. When I read Aldrich's book, "Babies Are Human Beings," it became clear to me that in many instances we disturb without thinking the self-regulation which alone leads to real freedom. What, then, is self-regulation? Aldrich taught me something about the bath given the newborn baby. Everywhere in the civilized world the first thing that happens to a baby is the bath given to cleanse it of the fatty substances covering it at birth. Aldrich firmly believes that this bath is harmful and that when it is avoided these fatty substances are absorbed during the following days into the baby's skin, giving it a much greater capacity for resistance. In the same way we believe that the important thing is to let the child determine how and how much it wants to sleep, eat, etc. In other words, let the child determine its way of living according to its own capacity, let it have its own joys, its own sorrows, its own anger. Naturally not everyone has the patience to allow a baby to cry violently half the night, and yet it is possible for a little child to have such strong feelings of rage that only after this period of time do they find full release.

The problem is much more difficult with children, or adults, whose development has been frustrated. Then the child has conflicting tendencies that push it in
different directions with varying force. Here it is no longer merely a question of freedom: we associate with the child, and we can only achieve a real relationship if we ourselves know what forces in the child will lead to a healthy development of the child as a free and independent individual, and which forces serve only to defend against outward influences the stronghold in which his spirit is already imprisoned.

Let us take a very simple example, one which may antagonize many of you or give you the mistaken impression that the problem is only a sexual one. This example shows the importance of the attitude of the environment. The case is that of a four-year-old boy whom I knew well. He was a very lively child but had certain inhibitions deriving from the inhibition of his exceptionally strong and satisfying masturbation. Occasionally, however, the desire would break through the inhibition and would be gratified; then, the boy immediately became quite healthy and happy. But each time the effect lasted only a short time. He was living in the country during the summer and went about playing diffidently with his little penis many times a day, without quite daring to masturbate. After a while he became more courageous. His parents took care that everyone should regard it as quite natural. Finally he masturbated successfully. Immediately he became completely healthy and happy. Until now he had cried and complained but this vanished altogether. He had also seemed quite tormented and had been quite a burden to those around him; now he became free and joyous and it was a pleasure to be with him. Then his parents left for a vacation trip. When they returned, they found the boy had had a serious relapse. He cried and complained as before, and no longer masturbated. His parents came to the conclusion that the neighbors had frightened him. How it happened was never fully cleared up. But a year passed before the child regained his composure and happy spirits and during this time he suffered a good deal. Finally a real love affair helped him over his troubles.

Things are rarely as simple as in this case. But at the bottom of every neurosis there is always a sexual conflict, most often masturbation anxiety. This was Freud's discovery and it forms the basic concept in classical psychoanalytic teaching. Reich, too, confirms this finding. His essential contribution is that sexual anxiety, particularly masturbation anxiety, forms the basis not only for mental conflicts but for all neurotic structure as expressed in a person's character and body. The whole living vegetative organism becomes inhibited. Its ability to function freely, in a self-regulating manner, flowing out towards the world, is destroyed by this anxiety. Neill, who also became a sex-economist, upholds this view in his latest book, "The Problem Teacher."

The attitude of the educator is clearly significant throughout the whole course of education. It is impossible to emphasize strongly enough that our unconscious attitudes, our whole outlook, are the decisive factors. Here is one of the greatest dangers of freedom. We give our children a certain proportion of freedom, bringing them up, as we see it, freely. But actually we remove only the superficial inhibitions. This is enough, however, to give the child a strong feeling of release and gratitude, making it feel a deep affection for the person who was the cause of this release. This in turn causes the child to behave, usually quite unconsciously, in accordance with that person's wishes. The teacher exclaims happily: "There you are! I gave the child freedom, and immediately it became as a child should be!" This is the impression the teacher receives, and he deceives himself, the world, and the children as well. One could give countless examples of this state of affairs. More than
anything else this makes it necessary to
differentiate sharply between what is
called a free or progressive upbringing and
one which really is free. I once attempted
to show that much of the Montessori sys-
tem followed this principle. If we look
around with open eyes we can see it again
and again. Its worst effects are found
among teachers whose conception of “fre-
dom” stands for practically nothing but
uninhibited behavior. Here the result of
so-called “progressive education” is the
person who believes himself to be “com-
pletely free.” He meets everyone and
everything with exaggerated and uncritical
self-confidence and belief in his own
worth; all this together with utter lack of
respect for anyone or anything. We find
this in so-called progressive kindergartens
and schools. We must bear in mind what
is so often forgotten—that
freedom has
nothing whatsoever to do with being unin-
hhibited. Quite the opposite: uninhibited
behavior is nothing but an indication that
the ability to choose from existing possi-
bilities is lacking. Real freedom lies in the
power to choose from existing possibilities
the particular one you feel is right for you
to follow.

The fact that we can influence children
by handing them a piece of freedom or
opportunities for freedom is so well
known that it is used or, rather, con-
sciously misused by many pedagogues. In
this connection I want to name Anna
Freud and one of the most unpleasant
educators I know, the Vienna psycho-
analyst Aichhorn. He uses the method in
question quite consciously. He has an
extraordinary ability to make children and
young folks feel that he understands them.
Then he uses the trust he receives to get
them where he wants them, i.e., to inhibit
them and make them obedient individuals.

Aichhorn brings us to the most im-
portant aspect of all in regard to “the
dangers of freedom.” Perhaps no other
instance can teach us so much. Those of
you who know his book, “Verwahrloste
Jugend,” know what I mean. For the rest
of you, I shall only mention that he took
some of the worst “brats” in Vienna out to
a camp, some barracks built to stand hard
treatment. The camp was the scene of
fairly serious battles before the group
quitted down. The most important thing
was the aggression, the desire to destroy,
to take revenge, and all the rage that was
revealed. You can see something of a
 corresponding nature in the outstanding
Russian film “The Road to Life.” You
can read about it in Neill’s books, and you
can see it in any nursery school where the
children are permitted actual freedom. I
also find it among all my patients.

It is not difficult to understand. People
in general and particularly those discussed
here, are inhibited. They suppress their
affects, first and foremost their feelings of
aggression and, in the widest and narrow-
est meaning of the word, their sexuality. If
we are to help them from a state of in-
hibition to a state of freedom, we must
first allow all the suppressed feelings to
flow out. This is what Aichhorn had the
opportunity to observe, at any rate, the
beginning of it, and it is this phenomenon
more than any other that makes people so
afraid of freedom as to say: “Man is a
brute animal. Are there to be no limits?
We’ll have nothing but chaos and
anarchy!” These and other objections are
raised. Only when we understand all these
objections and have seen and understood
their real basis and realize the importance
of the problems we face; only when we
have witnessed a good many of the dis-
agreeable manifestations that often arise
out of the first measure of freedom and
have seen how much evil and malicious-
ness and sickness people are hiding within
themselves, quite without its being their
fault, due to all the frustration they have
undergone, when we have finally had our
eyes opened and have chosen the path to
freedom, then and only then may we call
ourselves true advocates of freedom. Then at last we have an opportunity to bring about a truly free way of living. Then we see that freedom leads not to chaos but to order, order that is self-regulating from within. This is the order that leads not to careless and uninhibited behavior but to limits chosen by man himself in accordance with his inner desires. Man becomes not an animal but a real person who can love and work and, if necessary, fight for his love and his work, not wildly and irrationally, but resolutely and consciously. It cannot be denied that we have a long way to go before the irrational creature of today, bound by authority, can become a free and independent human being.

But let's not lose ourselves in theoretical considerations but go on to something more concrete. How does it work out in practice? First, a few kindergarten examples. From one kindergarten, moved to summer quarters in the country, comes a desperate letter from the director: “I am about to drown in wet and dirty pants; one after another, children who have until now been clean are now quite the opposite. What shall I do?” I answer: “Have patience, and things will soon change.” This is exactly what happened, but it is easy to understand that the occurrence was no holiday for the personnel of the camp. To say there ought to be more counselors will not solve the problem. The only real solution will come the day the teacher himself fights for and gains the respect due him and his mission; the day society realizes that the minister's mission is to comfort; the lawyer's, to protect society wherever it is threatened; the physician's, to cure where harm has already been done or to prevent it where it is imminent; while the teacher lays the cornerstone for the whole structure, or rather, helps it to develop.

In another kindergarten two older boys held an absolute reign of terror. But even here the teacher was able to hold out until the problem was solved. In this case the teacher successfully understood the problem that lay at the bottom, the problem which Aichhorn did not dare to tackle although he recognized it. In “The Road to Life” as well, the starting point of the problem was sexual. “Sexual” is used here again in its full connotation. First of all, at any age, there is the problem of surrendering oneself, giving oneself up to the deepest sensations of pleasure. It is a fact that if you suppress feelings of love it leads to a greatly increased desire for aggression. We can therefore not expect this aggression to express itself normally unless there is opportunity for release of the sexual feelings. In the kindergarten mentioned above the children began to talk about sexual matters, genital and anal, in the typically “fresh,” guilt-laden manner showing they knew they were on forbidden territory and were only trying to see how much they could get away with. The kindergarten teacher realized what was going on. She took the first convenient opportunity to talk honestly with the children about sex, and in doing this she brought about a much freer and more natural atmosphere so far as sexual matters were concerned. This helped to clear up the aggression and the “fresh” language as well.

It is my impression that we face the same problems with children in grade school, but here I have no experience of my own to rely upon. Neill gives many examples in his books that seem to bear me out. Sometimes it took days, weeks, even months, before a child decided to learn something of his own free will, or to wash himself, etc. As I stated earlier, Neill also believes that the role of sex is absolutely decisive.

During puberty the question of freedom takes on a character of its own. Even in early puberty the problems of becoming free and of breaking with the environment come strongly to the fore, simulta-
neously with strong pressure from sexual desires. This whole period is characterized by deep uncertainty, anxiety, and doubt. The period of puberty offers freedom a great chance. It would undoubtedly be possible to help young people to the utmost to become free and living beings—but at this time such help is practically never forthcoming. The attitude of society, particularly towards sex, during these years, is however so decisive that the problem becomes first and last a social one. This is true to such an extent that S. Bernfeld, the official spokesman among psychoanalytic child psychologists, has written a book with the sole message that so many dangers threaten the youth who succeeds in becoming free and healthy during puberty that possibly it would be better for him to remain neurotic.

Finally we come to the question: What about adults? What happens to them if you give them freedom? Do they also go through a phase during which suppressed and often perverted desires well up and dominate? Yes, this happens quite often! It results in many unhealthy phenomena. I remember with horror a good friend of mine who asked me quite seriously: "Is it freedom to go to bed with your best friend's wife without further ado?" He had just experienced such an example of so-called freedom. I told him that naturally such actions have nothing to do with true freedom but rather with the grossest misunderstanding of freedom. Free people naturally realize that such an act is not something one does "without further ado." This is an example of how freedom is discredited. It shows clearly why many honest and serious people come to believe, "May God preserve us from freedom if that's what it is!" There are people who swallow worse than this. Not long ago I heard of an example of how far this sort of thing can be carried. It had something to do with me as well. Rumors—often highly fantastic—are concocted about me, as about everyone else who enters the fray of sexual problems. The reason for this will soon be apparent. One of the most common of these rumors is that I have sexual relations with my women patients. I understand that one young girl not only believed this rumor but was "reconciled" to her fate. She had been very strictly brought up and had determined to free herself completely from this upbringing with one blow, with the result that she was left without any ideals. That is where this kind of free thinking, in reality a very deep misunderstanding of free thinking, had brought her. I must say that the idea of a doctor or a person whose business it is to advise his fellowmen misusing—and here we can speak only of misuse—his position by going to bed with his patients, is something I cannot reconcile myself to. There are many other ways in which sexual freedom is misunderstood. Recently, a professor of medicine mentioned in an article the cases of young women among his patients who receive sexual enlightenment and then throw themselves into the arms of the first best man who comes along and as a result have severe nervous breakdowns. Naturally such examples are used as arguments against sexual freedom—and not without reason! There is a good deal of propaganda for sexual freedom which sadly enough degenerates into the so-called "glass-of-water" theory. This

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1 Editor's note: I have seen this in two women patients. In part, this belief of patients is a relic from the common misinterpretation of the psychoanalytic concept of "transference" which, in the average lay mind, has the exclusive meaning of "falling in love with the analyst." This misinterpretation was fostered by the common neglect, on the part of the psychoanalysts, of the "negative" transference. In our case, this belief is apt to take on the form of "having to sleep with the therapist." These two patients had the idea that this was an indispensable part of the treatment and had tried to reconcile themselves to it. The idea is due to the above-mentioned misconception of "transference," plus the rumors set afloat by people who have perverse phantasies because they are unable to deal either with their own or their patients' sexuality.
theory states that it is just as natural to go to bed with another person as it is to drink a glass of water. This is of course a completely mistaken belief. A human being’s sex life is the source of his greatest joy, the richest well of fulfilment in existence. It is not something that can be compared with the rather nonchalant act of drinking a glass of water. Much the same attitude exists in certain circles about abortions, and there are tragic examples of women who have several abortions and later go to pieces because of sorrow. Naturally these examples are taken advantage of by those who fight against a sensible solution to the problem of abortion. The notion that a person is either moral and virtuous, with a strictly monogamous or ascetic sex life, or else “sleeps around” indiscriminately, is extremely widespread. I once had a very talented and intuitive woman patient who I suspected was well on the way to such a state of affairs. I therefore questioned her very carefully as to whether the relationship she was about to enter upon would be good for her and told her my own doubts, but she was absolutely sure of herself. Yet this did not stop her from claiming much later that I had encouraged her to enter upon it. No harm came of it; she quickly realized that it had only been her own feeling that I meant she must have an affair that in spite of my warning had led her into it. “How can you believe in sex-economy and not have a lover?”

This conception of the “moral life” versus “lust” is closely related to other attitudes quite as widespread that can be formulated as “morality” versus “brutishness.” Thus, either you check your desires and live as a “decent person” or else you are a “brute” who can be suspected of almost any vice. If you will only outwardly recognize the rules of official morality you may indulge in as many orgies as you please. The important thing is not to get caught. On the other hand, if you have a straightforward and open love life there is no limit to the anger and revenge of society. The reason for such reactions is not difficult to discover. Religion and official morality are both equally anxious to teach people that a natural and straightforward sex life is forbidden and filthy. Indeed they succeed in ruining many people so completely that either they stay strictly within the boundaries marked as moral or else they give way to feelings of disgust and lewdness. Since man has a strong tendency to believe that everyone else feels as he does, it seems to him that all who do not believe in his particular ideals of morality must be indecent.

Here you have the basis of all the above-mentioned rumors, countless and sometimes unbelievable, which not only travel about but are taken for gospel truth about the very people who openly champion a really decent conception of sex.

The belief that freedom is uninhibited behavior goes far back. As far back as I can remember there have been social circles in our city that have used it as a yardstick. You can still find groups of people among whom it is improper to flirt with your own wife, or where it is considered wrong to even feel bound to someone. Here again we are dealing with people who believe freedom means the absence of bonds. We believe freedom is the ability to make your own bonds and to loosen them yourself when you wish to do so. Those who cannot accept bonds and those who cannot loosen them are equally sick, equally imprisoned, because both these inabilities are caused by anxiety. The fear of being bound to someone and of becoming dependent is often as great as the fear of being alone. Most people suffer from both of these forms of anxiety, but usually one or the other is dominant.

Our world today is full of examples showing it is not only sexual freedom that can be abused. Consider the hunting down of certain racial groups and all its brutal-
ity. Consider those who occupy positions of authority and how they misuse their power to oppress those working under them. Think how many would like to go out and take to drink if they only had the opportunity of doing so. Bear in mind the way teachers wield their power over their pupils. Then you will also understand that it is impossible to introduce freedom "just like that" into the school system with its present group of teachers. It does not follow that it is impossible to give much more freedom than is now given.

I have tried to show that people as they are constituted at present are so unused to freedom that even the concept of freedom has changed. That is why so often people absolutely don't know what to do with freedom, or how to use it, when they suddenly become free. That is why freedom is so often feared. Let me give you one more example illustrating the reason for this fear!

From many descriptions of prison life it is clear that many fine people who were imprisoned—most often political prisoners—for a long period, ten to twenty years or more, have experienced their worst crises after being released. They then felt quite helpless, alone and without contact with the world. It seemed utterly strange to them, because it had developed, while they had slept as in a cocoon behind prison walls, separated from a real existence. Something like this happens to many people who more or less suddenly become released from all the bonds and inhibitions that bound them previously. They are helpless and either give themselves up completely to their desires or else hurriedly do everything possible to find new bonds in order to avoid taking full responsibility for their own lives. The history of revolutions is filled with such examples.

Freedom is beautiful, perhaps the most beautiful of all possessions. But it throws upon people the unusual burden of having to make their own decisions instead of having authorities, laws and rules decide their lives for them. It thus becomes necessary to help them bear this burden. (One might say that since Rousseau the whole history of modern pedagogy has been a chain of ever-repeated attempts to find the way to freedom. I say ever-repeated because each attempt got stuck somewhere because of the opposition and obstacles that came up).

So far we have considered only the dangers to freedom coming from within, from the inner powers of man himself that are chained, suppressed, and therefore unnatural. As educators and human beings, we must keep our eyes open to these dangers. Only insofar as we succeed in exposing an apparent expression of freedom as nothing more than a rebellion against a previous suppression, in other words, a mask for the lack of freedom, may we expect to succeed in helping ourselves and others attain real freedom.

However, this is merely the groundwork. Practically each step along the road brings us face to face with new opposition and new dangers.

It begins shortly after birth, particularly if the baby is born in a hospital, where so many of the arrangements do not take into consideration the needs of the child. These arrangements follow two well-known rules: the Board of Health "rule-book," with its "regularity and more regularity," never according to the child's own rhythm, but forced on it from the outside, and according to the needs of the hospital. Later on, doctors and pedagogues, all of them "authorities," are equally anxious to teach the child "good" habits of eating, sleeping, cleanliness; etc., and to get rid of "bad" habits such as thumb-sucking, biting, masturbation, sexual curiosity and others.

And there you are, forced to decide whether you will dare carry out your program of freedom, when the doctor, or
perhaps the grandmother, says: “Well, it’s your own responsibility.” Naturally you don’t always dare. Or else there’s trouble: the child must go to a hospital, a nursery, a summer camp, and there is no lack of kind people ready to teach the “spoiled darling” to keep himself clean, to “stop crying like that,” to stop sucking, etc. Obviously the parent who is well off has a much better chance of overcoming these difficulties than the workingman who lives on the wrong side of the tracks.

Still, the period of early childhood is not the most dangerous nor is it impossible to overcome its dangers. Much greater difficulties face children attending kindergarten or school. Now they come into much greater contact with the outside world and family, neighbors, people on the street or in streetcars, and various official authorities begin to demand obedience. I don’t wish to discuss here all the minor dangers in the form of shame, anger, etc., threatening each child who is different from “the way a child ought to be.” But one danger is so important for those of you who are kindergarten teachers trying to bring children up in freedom, that you must face it squarely. This danger is that the child may be unavoidably caught in a situation of deep conflict. This may happen when the teacher is giving the child a great measure of freedom while the home, or other parts of the environment, consciously or unconsciously, work in opposition. Such a situation can put the child in a quandary of the worst kind; if you can’t get the home environment to change its attitude the only way out is to refuse to take the child into the kindergarten. This is one of the occasions when treatment of the parents is the most important and difficult part of the kindergarten work.

During this period there are also complications from another direction, i.e., when a child wants to induct other children into “bad habits,” masturbation or sexual play, etc., or when he enlightens other children about sex. These difficulties are not too great, however, until the years of puberty. The dangerous period comes a little farther on in school, chiefly for children who cut school and become “vagabonds.” Here again my own experience is rather meager. But in the cases I have seen, the children had good reason to stay away from strict and oppressive schools and homes.

If we did not consider that the majority of child care institutions—in their present form—constitute a danger to children, we would naturally have another viewpoint on these questions. But as yet it seems to me that everything we see and hear forces us to this viewpoint. Nowhere is there enough love, and even when there is an honest desire to develop it, the personnel is too limited in number. Practically everywhere the primary concern is to keep the children quiet.

I should like to refer at this point to a case from abroad. A girl of 16, unusually attractive, was brought to a psychiatric clinic. There was nothing whatsoever wrong with her. She had been brought in by the Child Welfare Department of a small country town. When she was about 14 years old and fully developed, the neighbors had her placed in a home for delinquents for having a love affair with a boy of the same age whom she cared for deeply. After that her life became a series of flights from the Home, which always caught up with her and brought her back. Two years later I saw her by chance again in the same clinic. But now she was suffering from a definite case of hysteria. Her life had continued as before. She had traveled widely, even abroad, but it had been impossible to prove that she had had relations with anyone except the first boy and later only with men for whom she really cared. In spite of her hunted existence she had never prostituted herself and the only time she broke the law was when she and a girl friend took a hotel room without having money to pay the bill.
This case shows, as do Bernfeld's many examples, how destructive is the treatment accorded by society to healthy and free young people. The Child Welfare Department watches over the morals of the young people, as it is called. A man told me he could show me a group of houses in town where the young "savages" are taken away to reform school because of healthy sexual expression during their youth. As a matter of fact, this is not an isolated occurrence. In many countries the youth is threatened by an added danger—the intelligence tests given to determine feeblemindedness—which in reality mean compulsory sterilization. The doctor is allowed such wide powers of interpretation in these cases that I absolutely cannot feel satisfied or safe, all the more so since I am not convinced as to the dependability of the intelligence tests or the hopelessness of feeblemindedness (especially the light cases). However that may be, it is undoubtedly true that both sexually and otherwise the dangers attending a free and independent attitude are much greater during puberty. At this time also, strong physical feelings appear, and society has little to offer beyond unemployment and a tragic home environment. Simultaneously, even greater demands are made for "good manners," for example, one should be thankful to one's employer. And then there are the family quarrels. For many young people, particularly young women, the fear of being thrown out of the home is the greatest obstacle to their own freedom. Add to this the dangers young people face through their own ignorance, and because they do not have access to contraceptive devices or do not dare seek the aid of a doctor to teach them how to use them, etc. At this point more than any other, more freedom is needed. And here particularly, any help is lacking!

Nor are the social dangers of freedom by any means inconsiderable in the case of the mature person. I am not speaking only of the great leaders of our cultural history, who had the courage and independence to go against the stream. Nearly all pioneers have suffered persecution. They have often been punished by exile or imprisonment. I am not thinking only of pioneers, however, but of each working person who risks his job. Consider the case of a teacher in a country town! Imagine what would happen to him or her if they were to live freely or merely showed serious leanings towards freedom! The intolerance that practically everywhere pursues those who think, feel, or act differently is always sharpest in conservative circles, but it is just as well-developed and inhuman in its expression in the so-called more liberal circles. We have seen this in such liberal cultural organizations as societies for sexual reform and others. I cannot say if the same holds true among so-called progressive educators but Neill says this is the case in England.

The dangers threatening the freedom of mature persons often lie closer home than in organizations or in society generally, e.g., among one's intimate family. No more than to believe in the common idea of freedom can endanger a marriage, as I have recently seen. How much more then, a truly free conception of it! So far as I know, a mere kiss, innocent enough in itself, is often enough to make a young woman wish to have nothing more to do with a man for whom she really cares. You might laugh, if there weren't so much real tragedy in it. We must not forget, however, that these dangers are real. If we want to take the road to freedom, often a very difficult road—and it is worth taking, one's capacity for life grows with each step—we must face all the difficulties and understand that it is our duty to seek to overcome even those which seem to be of minor importance. And we must also understand that for children, the small people of this world—often the biggest,
humanly speaking—the dangers are much greater than for adults, who can rely on authority, position and advice for help.

In the foregoing I have spoken in a general way, emphasizing the idea of freedom, so often and so greatly misused. I have taken as my motto Neill's words: "Let real freedom have a chance, it has so seldom had it." I have disregarded the most serious aspect of the problem, the curative aspect, often purely psychiatric. However, here we come upon dangers of such proportions that I must call your attention to them. From what I have already stated you will have understood that freedom in education demands more of those who practise it than any other form of upbringing. Consequently I must emphasize that especially in progressive education it is of the utmost importance to recognize the limits of one's knowledge and ability. This becomes particularly important with regard to medical questions, such as the danger of insanity. In dealing with people for whom such a danger exists, in other words with psychopathic cases, the question of a really free attitude as opposed to a forced, so-called free or sensible attitude, takes on particular importance. One of the most tortured human beings I have ever seen was a woman of 50 years, a patient in a psychiatric hospital. The head physician and I were agreed that her condition had been caused by a so-called "wild" psychoanalyst (that is, one not properly trained) who practised "masturbation therapy." He had encouraged this woman, who had been living in sexual abstinence, to masturbate. She was tortured constantly by the strangest sensations in her whole body, not least of all in her sexual organs. This was a very serious case but the occurrence is in itself not uncommon, I believe. Ignorant persons frequently advise people who have unhappy marriages or love affairs to seek sexual satisfaction only—and in this way drive them into conflicts with which they cannot cope due to guilt feelings and sexual anxiety.

And let me point out here that this is not a matter merely of psychic phenomena. We have all been brought up to speak of these things (and are even now sometimes forced to do so) as though they were purely mental, touching the organic only in isolated instances. This is not the case. We are dealing with vegetative phenomena, i.e., phenomena which are physical and psychic at the same time, as is all being and all form of expression, as is all sexuality, even if at times the physical or mental aspect may predominate. In the example I just mentioned of this tortured woman, the physical expression predominated. Her condition was directly brought on by the compulsion to masturbate and was characterized by violent physical sensations.

On another occasion I have seen a nervous breakdown precipitated by gymnastic attempts to relax the muscles of the face. As contrast, even though I must withhold his identity, I would like to mention the world-famous gymnast whose female pupils experienced the most violent reactions both with regard to sexual liberation and gynecological conditions when he tried to relax their pelvic musculature. He stopped the exercises and said: "This is evidently something fundamental, but I don't understand it and don't know how to manage it. I'll have to leave that to others." He knew quite clearly what he was able to cope with and what he ought to leave alone, and was free enough to leave it alone.

This is exactly what I would like to ask you to do: to work for freedom, work to give both yourselves and the children in your care the chance to live according to your and their own true needs so that you and they will be independent and responsible for your own acts.

And don't be frightened when you realize how many problems we are still un-
able to solve. Don't be afraid of the one thing that often seems so difficult: merely to say, "I don't know anything about this particular problem, I don't understand it—I'll have to leave it alone or pass it on to someone else, or find out where I may learn enough about it to cope with it." Only when you yourself know and admit all that is not free or that is lacking in yourself will you be able to help others attain freedom.

A philologist friend of mine has told me that freedom not only actually but purely from the language point of view has the same meaning as love.
Projeto Arte Org
Redescobrindo e reinterpretando W. Reich

Caro Leitor
Infelizmente, no que se refere a orgonomia, seguir os passos de Wilhelm Reich e de sua equipe de investigadores é uma questão bastante difícil, polêmica e contraditória, cheia de diferentes interpretações que mais confundem do que ajudam. Por isto, nós decidimos trabalhar com o material bibliográfico presente nos microfilmes (Wilhelm Reich Collected Works Microfilms) em forma de PDF, disponibilizados por Eva Reich que já se encontra circulado pela internet, e que abarca o desenvolvimento da orgonomia de 1941 a 1957.

Dividimos este “material” de acordo com as revistas publicadas pelo instituto de orgonomia do qual o Reich era o diretor.
01- International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research (1942-1945).
02- Orgone Energy Bulletin (1949-1953)
03- CORE Cosmic Orgone Engineering (1954-1956)

E logo dividimos estas revistas de acordo com seus artigos, apresentando-os de forma separada (em PDF), o que facilita a organizá-los por assunto ou temas. Assim, cada qual pode seguir o rumo de suas leituras de acordo com os temas de seu interesse. Todo o material estará disponível em inglês na nuvem e poderá ser acessado a partir de nossas páginas Web.

Sendo que nosso intuito aqui é simplesmente divulgar a orgonomia, e as questões que a ela se refere, de acordo com o próprio Reich e seus colaboradores diretos relativos e restritos ao tempo e momento do próprio Reich. Quanto ao caminho e as postulações de cada um destes colaboradores depois da morte de Reich, já é uma questão que extrapola nossas possibilidades e nossos interesses. Sendo que aqui somente podemos ser responsáveis por nós mesmos e com muitas restrições.

Alguns destes artigos, de acordo com nossas possibilidades e interesse, já estamos traduzindo. Não somos tradutores especializados e, portanto, pedimos a sua compreensão para possíveis erros que venham a encontrar.
Em nome da comunidade Arte Org.

Textos sobre a praga emocional e sociedade. 
Texts on the emotional plague and society.

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