

IRRATIONALISM IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SEX-ECONOMY

III. ON A COMMON MOTIVE FOR DEFAMATION*

By THEODORE P. WOLFE, M.D.

In November, 1943, the Editor was invited to appear before the *Board of Censors* of the Medical Society of the County of New York, of which he is a member, the matter under consideration being his "connection with the Institute for Sex-economy and Orgone-Research." At the meeting of the Board of Censors on December 9, 1943, it turned out that a physician had written to the Board saying that a patient had made the following statements to him, and that they should be investigated:

a) this Institute advocates promiscuous sex relations among married and unmarried people;

b) this Institute advocates the concept that children should be encouraged and taught to masturbate.

In reply to the Board's question whether these statements were correct, the Editor pointed out that the activities of our Institute, its concepts and what it stands for, are a matter of public record, the *International Journal of Sex-economy and Orgone-Research* now having been published for 2 years. He pointed out that, as far as infantile masturbation is concerned, our concept is that it should not be interfered with; and as far as promiscuity is concerned, that our Institute advocates the exact opposite: a *healthy* sexuality.

On December 15, 1943, the Editor wrote the following letter:

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SEX-ECONOMY
AND ORGONE-RESEARCH

Dr. Wm. Crawford White, Secretary
Board of Censors
Medical Society of the County of New
York
2 East 103 Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. White:

As requested by several members of your Board, I am sending you, under separate cover, the issues of the *International Journal of Sex-economy and Orgone-Research* published thus far. With regard to the questions brought up at the meeting I would like to call your attention to the article, *Sex-economic "Upbringing,"* vol. 1, p. 18ff., and to the statement, *Warning against the misinterpretation of "sexual health,"* vol. 2, p. 197.

As I told you at the meeting, our Institute is familiar with defamations and irrational accusations. They are made by professional people who have no objective arguments against our scientific findings and therefore resort to defamations, and by neurotic individuals who have their own irrational motives. In the present case, these motives are easy to understand. The informant of the physician who wrote to you is the husband of a woman who is undergoing vegetotherapy. She has authorized me to give you the background from which the statements in question arose. The marriage has been unhappy for

* Third in a series of articles on Irrationalism in the Fight against Sex-economy. cf. I. Biophysical functionalism and mechanistic natural science, by Wilhelm Reich. *This Journal* 1, 1942, 97 ff., and II. The Fascist newspaper campaign in Norway, by Gunnar Leistikow. *This Journal* 1, 1942, 266 ff.

years. The question of separation or divorce had come up repeatedly, but because of her neurosis, the woman was unable to do anything about it. Her husband, along with protestations of his love, treats her badly. Up to now, he was able to get away with this because of masochistic tendencies in his wife. Now, that she is getting healthier, the husband is afraid that she may become unable longer to put up with an intolerable situation and may seek a separation from him. This man, although a talented and well-trained professional man, has not supported his wife and children but has essentially lived on her money. If a separation should occur, he would have to work and make his own living.

This, then, is essentially the motive for his distortion of our views which led to the action of your Board.

I trust that the perusal of the JOURNAL will answer any further questions you may have. If not, I shall be glad to answer them in writing.

Very sincerely yours,
Theodore P. Wolfe, M.D., Secretary

The following passages from the *Warning against the misinterpretation of "sexual health"* bear repeating here:

It happens again and again that biopathic individuals who lack the feeling for the difference between *natural love* and *sexual activity motivated by secondary drives*—a distinction which we have emphatically set forth—confuse "sexual health" with sexual libertinism. It has to be said again and again that sex-economy has nothing to do with the propagation of a way of living which consists in the libertine enjoyment of socially irresponsible pleasures . . .

Our Institute advocates the gratification of a *healthy* sexuality and not of a sick sexuality which is characterized by lack of seriousness, by lasciviousness and by the lack of the readiness to take full responsibility for one's happiness in love . . .

The organized emotional pest only waits for the chance of showing that we only talk of natural happiness in love but that we actually, as the bearers of the emotional

pest would like to have it, "propagate immorality."

On December 18, 1943, the Editor wrote the following letter to the informant of the physician who had written to the Board:

I have had to appear before the Board of Censors of the Medical Society of the County of New York as the result of a letter written to the Board by a physician to whom you made certain statements. These statements, among others, were to the effect that

a) our Institute advocates promiscuous sex relations among married and unmarried people;

b) our Institute advocates the concept that children should be encouraged and taught to masturbate.

You will realize that such statements are libellous. I am writing to ask you whether you maintain these statements to be true and are willing to defend them, or whether you wish to retract them as untrue.

I would appreciate your answer by return mail.

Very sincerely yours,
Theodore P. Wolfe, M.D., Secretary

This letter has remained unanswered. That is, this informant, like all rumormongers, is a coward. He has neither the courage to stand up for his statements, nor the decency to admit that he is in error. On the other hand, he has continued to go around to various people agitating against our Institute. As he put it to an acquaintance of his: "I'm out for Dr. Reich and Dr. Wolfe, because they have broken up my home."

This brings us to an issue which has to be made clear once and for all: *We*—that is, the Institute and the therapists associated with it—*are not responsible for the personal everyday actions of patients, of the readers of our publications, or of anybody else.* If, for example, a patient, in the course of the treatment or afterwards, decides to obtain a divorce or to enter a new

relationship, he or she does so at his or her own responsibility. We are not an ideological group which would try to impose its ideas on other people; we do not meddle in other people's lives. Our only task is that of helping the patient to get well. If, in the process of getting well, the patient comes to the conclusion that an existing marital situation is intolerable, he may, as far as we are concerned, decide to continue it or to discontinue it. The only time we interfere is when such a decision seems to be based on irrational motives; in that case we point out these motives and have the patient consider them. A patient may, for example, want to get a divorce at the time he realizes that his marriage contains an incestuous element, that his attitude toward his wife is to some degree determined by his—previously unconscious—infantile attitude toward his mother. Such a divorce, at this time, would be irrationally motivated. It would represent what Freud, I believe, called "the flight into actuality" and would prevent a solution of the infantile conflict. It would mean to "pour out the baby with the bath." First the patient will have to solve the infantile conflict. Then, after this is eliminated from his marital situation, he will see it without the infantile admixture, for what it really is. Then, he will find either that the marriage was based to such an extent on an infantile mother fixation that, after its elimination, there is not enough left to carry on; or, he may find that only now has an adult relationship become possible. At any rate, we tell a patient neither to get a divorce nor not to get it. We only try to make the patient solve his irrational conflicts which interfere with the rational solution of his problem. The decision, however, remains his own. People get divorces anyway. But if they do it after having worked through their irrational attitudes and have lost their neurotic hatred, they will do it more decently and without the disastrous consequences of neurotic hatred.

All this is really so self-evident that it should not even be necessary to mention it. What makes it necessary is the irrational reactions of people who are incapable of regulating their own lives, and who, out of a feeling of their inadequacy and their incapacity to take the responsibility for their own lives, shift the responsibility to us and make irrational accusations. A few years ago, one of our co-workers, Paul Martin, happened to spend some time in Oslo. At the same time some unmarried girl there became pregnant. Her mother ran to the police and demanded that Martin be expelled from the country because, as she said, "had he not been in the country, the girl would not have become pregnant." Martin did not know anything about the girl, and she probably had never heard of him. This may be an extreme example, but the others are no less irrational. Children have always masturbated. But now, sex-economy is being made responsible for it: It happened, also in Norway, that attempts were made to have Wilhelm Reich indicted in court for "seduction of children" because he affirmed infantile sexuality. Adolescents have always wanted to have sexual intercourse. But now "Reich's theories" are being made responsible for it. Homes are broken up and divorces are obtained every day of the week. But now our Institute is being made responsible for it. The home of our rumor-monger who "is after Dr. Reich and Dr. Wolfe because they broke up his home" had been broken up for years. This was, in fact, the principal reason on the part of his wife for seeking therapeutic help. But he is incapable of or unwilling to take the responsibility for his marriage and to do something about it. So he shifts the responsibility to us and spreads slanderous statements about us. It is to be hoped that our readers, when they come across similar incidents, will recognize this mechanism of the emotional pest.

Projeto Arte Org

Redescobrimo 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 microfimes (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.

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research

Emocional Plague and Society

01 Wilhelm Reich. Biophysical Functionalism and Mechanistic Natural Science
1941

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
2 1942

Interval 1-11 Pag. 97-107

02 Paul Martin. The Dangers of Freedom 1942

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
3 1942

Interval 34-45 Pag. 226-137

03 Stefan Hirning. The Place of Literature in the cultural Struggle 1942

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
3 1942

Interval 46-54 Pag. 238-246

04 Wilhelm Reich. Character and Society 1936

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
3 1942

Interval 55-64 Pag. 247-256

05 Gunnar Leinstikoy. The newspaper compaing in norway 1942

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 1 Number
3 1942

Interval 74-81 Pag. 266-273

06 Wilhelm Reich. Give Responsibility to Vitally Necessary Work 1943

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 2 Numbers
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Interval 1-4 Pag. 93-97

07 Wilhelm Reich. The Biological Miscalculation in Human Struggle for Freedom
1942

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 2 Numbers
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Interval 5-29 Pag. 97-121

08 Wilhelm Reich. Work Democracy Versus Politics 1943.

International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 2 Numbers
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Interval 30-48 Pag. 122-140

09 Dorothy I. Post. Freedom is not so Dangerous 1943
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 2 Numbers
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Interval 56-60 Pag. 148-152

10 Harry Obermayer. Reviews Social reconstruction Without Sex-Economy 1943
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 2 Numbers
2 3 1943
Interval 81-83 Pag. 173-175

11 Theodore P. Wolfe. On a Common Motive for Defamation 1944
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 3 Number
1 1944
Interval 76-78 Pag. 71-73

12 Harry Obermayer. Reviews The Psychology of Facism 1944
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 3 Number
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13 Wilhelm Reich. Some Mechanism of the Emotional Plague 1945
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 4 Number
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14 Gladys Meyer. Review The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy 1945
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 4 Number
1 1945
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15 Wilhelm Reich. The Development of the Authoritarian State Apparatus from
Rational Social interrelationships 1945
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 4 Numbers
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Interval 25-33 Pag. 147-155

16 Gladys Meyer. The Making of Fascists 1945
International Journal of Sex Economy and Orgone Research Volume 4 Numbers
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17 Wilhelm Reich. Work Democracy in Action 1944
McF 207 Annals of the Orgone Institute, Number 1. 1947
Interval 6-21 Pag. 4-35

18 Anthony I. Swaroswsky. Thoughts on the Sex Behavior of American Soldiers
in the Eto 1947
McF 207 Annals of the Orgone Institute, Number 1. 1947
Interval 54-57 Pag. 101-107

19 T.P. Wolfe. Emotional Plague versus Orgone Biophysics 1948
McF 515 T.P. Wolfe. Emotional Plague versus Orgone Biophysics 1948
Interval 1-26 Pag. 1-49

Orgone Energy Bulletin

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01 Myron Scharaf. A Danger Tendency in Contemporary Thought 1949
McF 208 Orgone Energy Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1. Jan. 1949
Interval 19-20 Pag. 30-33

02 Notes Editorial. Orgonomy A Threat. A Warning. Regarding Rumors 1949
McF 208 Orgone Energy Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1. Jan. 1949
Interval 21-22 Pag. 34-37

03 From Recent Reviews by Wilhelm Reich 1949
McF 208 Orgone Energy Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1. Jan. 1949
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04 Chester M. Raphael. The Malboro Incident 1949
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07 Elizabeth Tyson Reviews. Want do Be like Stalin 1949
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08 Walter Hoppe. Gret Men in Confliet with the Emotional Plague I 1951
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09 Walter Hoppe. Gret Men in Confliet with the Emotional Plague II 1951
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Germes 1951
McF 309 Orgone Energy Bulletin. Vol. 3, No. 3. Jul. 1951

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11 Reviews. Science and Common Sense. The Name of Humanity. And Biography of D. H. Lawrence 1952

McF 311 Orgone Energy Bulletin. Vol. 4, No. 1. Jan. 1952

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12 Wilhelm Reich. Truth Versus Modju 1952

McF 313 Orgone Energy Bulletin. Vol. 4, No. 3. Jul. 1952

Interval 19-23 Pag. 162-170

13 On the Record. On Human Evil 1952

McF 314 Orgone Energy Bulletin. Vol. 4, No. 4. Oct. 1952

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14 Wilhelm Reich. The Murder of Chist 1953

McF 315 Orgone Energy Bulletin. Vol. 5, No. 1,2. Mar. 1953

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15 Archives of the Orgone Institute. Modju at Works in Journalism 1953

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