

June 14, 2011

The Wall Street Journal
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY, 10036

Dear Editor:

They just can't leave Wilhelm Reich alone.

It is remarkable how Reich and his work have had the power to excite both Mr. Allen and Mr. Turner, ("Thinking Inside the Box," June 11, 2011). If Henry Allen wants to write a diatribe on Reich, who's to stop him, but why would the *Wall Street Journal* choose to have him review a skewed biography of Reich when he himself is so clearly biased against the man? And where does such venom come from for a man dead more than 50 years?

Allen attacks Reich, the subject of the book, rather than actually making any review *or* criticism of how Christopher Turner dealt with such a complex subject, save the penultimate paragraph where he derides the writer for his "occasional lapses of organization and transitions..." And it's bad enough when someone takes facts and twists them to support a personal bias, but I would expect the *WSJ* to at least engage a writer who gets his facts straight. Reich did not violate the injunction against transporting his orgone device across state lines – one of his assistants did that on his own without prior notice to Reich. Out of decency and a tendency to take personal responsibility for the actions of anyone involved in his work, Reich took the fall with him. One fact Allen almost got straight was that the U.S. government burned Reich's books. Although not mandated by the original injunction, many of Reich's hardcover scientific and scholarly books, including even his widely regarded classic reference, *Character Analysis*, were burned under the supervision of the FDA based on a trumped up charge of being associated with a purportedly adulterated device.

For Allen to be so cavalier about the fact that Reich's books were burned – and to blindly ignore that Wilhelm Reich's books were the *ONLY* ones ever actually *burned* by order of the United States government evidences an appalling lack of perspective. He is apparently more concerned that this made Reich "a martyr" than that it was a flagrant violation of the basic American right to free speech. This reaction is certainly not what one would hope from anyone with even the slightest pretension of being a journalist. And besides, how could Reich have been made a martyr when so few people are even aware that the book burning by our government happened? Does it not even peak his journalistic curiosity to try to truly understand what it is about Reich's work that caused the Nazis to burn his books, the Soviet Union to ban them and the U.S. government to sanction their burning?

As president of the American College of Orgonomy, a professional institution near Princeton, NJ founded in 1968, I would like to point out that there are many who are dedicated to continuing to develop Reich's therapeutic, medical and scientific work. Thanks to his work and research, particularly his groundbreaking approach to therapy, and his pioneering work in character analysis – still used by countless therapists today – my colleagues and I have successfully provided true change for people suffering with anxiety, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, bipolar affective disorder, and schizophrenia. This approach also holds promise for people suffering with anorexia and bulimia as well as ADHD, autism, and many other childhood disorders. In an age when many psychiatrists have become primarily psycho-pharmacologists, our therapists still talk to patients and in fact have successfully weaned adults off of psychotropic medication and gotten children off of Ritalin.

Rather than attempt to tear Wilhelm Reich down with the timeworn attacks on his character, along with snide and salacious comments about his work – based on distortions and misrepresentations by others – isn't it time that a journalist carefully and open-mindedly read the original source material and took a serious, new look at the value of all of Reich's contributions made over years of work?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter A. Crist, M.D.", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Peter A. Crist, M.D., President