

The Orgone Accumulator Handbook by James DeMeo, Ph.D. Greensprings, P.O. Box 1148 Ashland, OR 97520: Natural Energy Works, 1989, 155 pp., \$12.95 (p).

This well-organized and well-written book accurately and succinctly summarizes what little is known about Wilhelm Reich's invention, the Orgone Energy Accumulator. James DeMeo may be considered one of the few authorities on orgonomy (the name Reich gave to his discipline), having done original, independent research over many years in many aspects of Reich's work. These include scholarly studies of the relationship between the origin of patriarchy and climatological changes in Saharasia, biophysical experiments with the orgone energy accumulator (ORAC), and extensive field work in many countries in orgonomic weather modification. At the University of Kansas he earned his Master's Degree in Geography by an experimental study on orgonomic weather modification and his doctorate with his study on patriarchy. DeMeo is director of research at his Ashland, Oregon, Orgone Biophysical Research Laboratory, which conducts research in orgone biophysics, gives seminars and laboratory courses in orgone biophysics, and publishes *Pulse of the Planet*, a journal containing articles on a variety of experiments in orgone energy physics, meteorology, biology, and sociology, as well as the latest findings in mainstream science that confirm orgonomic science and the ways and means that man has found to destroy his ecosphere.

This handbook is a non-technical overview of the history of the development of Reich's ideas with sufficient description of theory and experiments to permit readers to conduct their own experiments with the ORAC. It may be the only source of information written by a living, qualified scientist covering the broad scope of Reich's biophysical and physical investigations in one book. It is, therefore, extremely useful as a general introduction to the topic. DeMeo's sources are his own personal experiences, information from Reich's many books and articles on the subject, the papers of students of orgonomy who published in Reich's *Orgone Energy Bulletin* and in other journals devoted to orgonomy, and from papers and books of scientists, whose findings are similar to or compliment Reich's. The source material is well-referenced.

Following a foreward by Reich's daughter and scientific associate, Eva Reich, M.D., DeMeo prefaces his book by a passionate account of the irrational attacks on Reich and the suppression of his work through the various phases of its development.

In Part 1, The Biophysics of the Orgone Energy, DeMeo briefly, but accurately, describes the history and logic of Reich's discovery of orgone energy and the orgone energy accumulator. The guiding principle, the "red thread" of Reich's investigations was the search for the origin of life and the sources of human emotions. As a psychoanalyst, Reich's earliest experimental studies demonstrated a functional correlation between bioelectrical charges on the surface of the skin and emotional expression. Microbiological studies of

boiled foodstuffs and heated minerals led to the discovery of transitional forms of life ("bions") that radiated an "energy," that had distinct biological properties, could magnetize metals, fog photographic film and x-ray plates, and spontaneously luminate as a bluish fog, purple "pinwheels" of light, or brief lightening-like flashes in Reich's darkened laboratory. Further experiments led Reich to conclude that while this energy could be registered with instruments that measured bioelectrical and static-electrical charge, the energy was not fundamentally electromagnetic: it had unique properties that could not be explained by classical electromagnetic theory. Reich named the energy "orgone" from his earlier studies on the energetic basis of the function of the orgasm, which led to his later investigations, and the fact that the energy was best absorbed by organic materials.

Experiments revealed that metals would reflect the radiation from the bions and non-metals would absorb it. Reich, therefore, built a galvanized iron sheet-metal-lined box covered with a celotex-like material with a glass front hoping to better visualize the lumination from the bions. The visual effects from the enclosed bion cultures were better seen, but to Reich's surprise they persisted even after removal of the bions, airing-out of the box, and washing down its inner metal surface. Further experiments with a variety of controls led Reich to conclude that whatever it might be, the orgone radiation was present in the atmosphere as well as all living things and could apparently be concentrated by this kind of enclosure.

In Part 3 DeMeo describes in great detail how one can construct box-accumulators and a variety of other orgone accumulating and "shooting" devices. The accumulator is an enclosure of any size or shape made of alternating layers of non-metallic and metallic materials with the metal on the inside.

Usually orgone energy accumulators are built of celotex for the outermost layer, wool, fiberglass, cotton, or plastic for the non-metallic layers, steel wool for the metal layers, and galvanized iron for the innermost surface. For purposes of experimentation a box or cylinder consisting of 3 double layers is usually adequate if used in a reasonably dry and non-polluted atmosphere. DeMeo gives sufficient account of objective, experimentally-derived evidence with the accumulator to stimulate an open-minded and curious investigator to go to original source material to find out more and try to replicate the experiments. These include visual and photographic effects and the anomalous elevation of temperature, slowing of electrostatic discharge, elevated Geiger-Muller counts, water evaporation, and plant growth within the accumulator. DeMeo documents the unwitting confirmation of many of Reich's findings by prominent scientists working independently of Reich.

Part 2, "The Safe and Effective Use of Orgone-Accumulating Devices," is essential reading for anyone contemplating using the Orac for personal health or experimental research. DeMeo describes Reich's experiment where small amounts of radioactive material were introduced into a highly charged orgone energy environment. This resulted in anomalously long-lasting and

remarkably high counts in a Geiger-Muller device and symptoms in laboratory assistants of bioenergetic overcharge. The various bio-medical effects of this apparent change in state of orgone energy when exposed to a variety of commonly found noxious agents, such as electromagnetic radiation, are described in some detail, as are simple means of detecting such agents, and how to protect oneself against them.

Reich made many significant discoveries in the origin of cancer, some of which have been confirmed by more mainstream scientists in recent years. DeMeo well summarizes these findings, which include the emotional resignation of patients with cancer and the biopathological sequelae of these emotional changes. Reich's studies on the effects of the ORAC on cancer mice and humans with cancer and other illnesses are also described as are the personal experiences of DeMeo and friends and acquaintances who used the ORAC for the treatment of a variety of superficial and serious medical problems.

Finally, following the appendices mentioned above, there is a brief section on where and how to order books on orgonomy and related subjects, the functions of the Orgone Biophysical Laboratory — workshops, seminars, research, etc, and a description of the *Pulse of the Planet* and how to order it. The latest issue, #4, published in 1993, includes English translations of seminal articles by Reich on his theoretical and experimental investigations of the biophysical basis of autonomic nervous system functions, the orgasm as an electrophysiological discharge, and the bioelectrical experiments mentioned above.

The essentially anecdotal character of the experiments and case studies in the *Orgone Accumulator Handbook* will not convince a skeptic of the validity of Reich's claims, especially in view of how fantastic they seem compared to the findings and canons of mainstream science. However, those wishing to chew on more substantive fare might find the lengthy abstract of the study by Muschenich and Gebauer in the appendix, to their liking. Utilizing a double-blind protocol Muschenich and Gebauer measured body core body temperature, skin temperature, and heart rate (*via* EKG) on human subjects at rest, then in an accumulator or in a non-metallic box of identical appearance. Changes in the measured parameters in subjects in the accumulator as compared to the resting and control state were of such an order that the null hypothesis could be rejected with a probability of .01. The authors conclude that the accumulator, as Reich reported, induces a vagotonic effect in human subjects that cannot be explained by the mere fact that one is sitting in repose in a darkened, peaceful enclosure.

In my long experience as an orgonomic physician and scientific investigator in orgonomy, I have found that it is generally assumed by scientists that Reich was "crazy" or that, at best, he practiced a so-called pathological science, totally lacking verity. Therefore, it is argued, it is a waste of time to try to replicate his studies. It is hoped, however, that those who read *The Orgone Accumulator Handbook* will conclude that there may, indeed, be scientific riches to be

mined in the study of ergonomics and that they will pursue the subject to the great depth that it deserves.

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