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Philip Bennett was first introduced to Reich's work as a university student in the early sixties. At that time he underwent therapy with an orgone therapist trained by Reich himself. His interest in Reich was rekindled in 2004, and since then he has spoken about aspects of Reich's work at Orgonon, the home of Reich's laboratory outside of Rangeley, Maine; in New York City, Mexico City (at the National Autonomous University of Mexico), Oslo, Vienna and Berlin. He has published a number of articles in peer-review academic journals on aspects of Reich's life. His main focus is on Reich's social and political thought and activities, and he is currently working on a book entitled, *From Communism to Work-Democracy: the Development of Wilhelm Reich's Social and Political Thought*.

What is Orgonomy?

Wilhelm Reich defined orgonomy as the natural science of cosmic orgone energy. What did he mean by "natural science"? What, more generally, does it mean to approach a subject from a scientific point of view? Do we know – and not just believe – that there is such a thing as orgone energy and that it functions as Reich claimed that it does? If so, *how* do we know this? These and other questions will be addressed in this introduction to orgonomy as a scientific enterprise.

Wilhelm Reich's Social and Political Activities. An Overview

Later in his life, Wilhelm Reich claimed that his youthful affiliations with communist and socialist groups was medical and not political in nature. In this presentation, I show that Reich was not being completely candid in saying this, that instead, at one point in his life, beginning in 1928 and lasting through 1932, Reich was very much engaged in political activity, including running for parliament in Austria. His activities and the reaction to them, specifically by the German Communist Party, help explain his later attitude towards social change, his view that it could not and would not come through politics, and helps us understand more fully the meaning to his often quoted saying found on a placard in his museum, "Work, not Politics!"

What is Work Democracy?

Reich began speaking about work democracy around 1937, and saw it as an alternative to his former references to communism and socialism. But what does he mean by this phrase? Is work democracy to be understood as a developed political theory comparable to Marxism? This Reich rejected: "Work democracy is not an ideological system," he states in the glossary to new translation of *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*. But what then is it? And what difference would it make in our lives were we to function according to Reich's understanding of it? It will be shown that a proper understanding of this concept makes clear exactly what Reich meant by his adopted motto, "Love, work and knowledge are the well-springs of our life. They should also govern it."

Wilhelm Reich's Orgonomic Infant Research Center

In the mid-1940s Wilhelm Reich, A. S. Neill (of Summerhill School) and a number of others closely connected to Reich's work at this time, had children. All were attempting to raise their children in a way they thought followed from Reich's thinking, especially about "self-regulation." Reich decided to study the implications of their efforts, and in late 1949 introduced the Orgonomic Infant Research Center (OIRC) before a crowd of some forty doctors, social workers, educators, and nurses committed to his approach to child-rearing. The last reference to the OIRC was at the Conference at Orgonon in August, 1951, when a day was devoted to "The Children of the Future." Drawing upon both published and archival material, in this talk we will investigate the history of the Center's work, its findings but also its challenges, and explore the reasons for its being shut down.