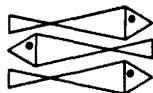


*The  
Sexual  
Revolution*

TOWARD A SELF-REGULATING  
CHARACTER STRUCTURE

*by Wilhelm Reich*

*Translated by Therese Pol*



**FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX  
NEW YORK**

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## *Preface to the Fourth Edition (1949)*

Twenty years have passed since the material for the first part of this book was gathered in Austria and, under the title of *Geschlechtsreife, Enthaltensamkeit, Ehemoral*,<sup>1</sup> was turned over to the Münster Verlag in Vienna for publication. Twenty years are of little account in the realm of biology, but in that stormy portion of the twentieth century more misery was inflicted on humanity than in preceding centuries. We may say that all concepts formulated by men to explain and shed light on their lives have been brought into question and have remained unresolved for two decades. Among those concepts none has collapsed so completely as that of compulsory sexual morality, which unshakably ruled human existence a mere thirty years ago. We are living through a true revolution of all values regarding sexual life. And among those values most seriously undermined are those relating to infant and adolescent sexuality.

In 1928, when I founded the Socialist Society for Sexual Consultation and Sexual Research in Vienna, the genital rights of children and adolescents were denied. It was unthinkable for parents to tolerate sexual play, let alone to regard such manifestations as part of a natural, healthy development. The mere thought that adolescents would satisfy their need for love in the natural embrace was horrifying. Anyone who even mentioned these rights was slandered. Resistance to the first attempts to guarantee the love life of children and adolescents united groups of people who otherwise were violently opposed to each other: members of all religious denominations, socialists, Communists, psychologists, physicians, psychoanalysts, etc. In my counseling office for sexual hygiene and in our meetings to promote mental hygiene, which many Austrians may still recall, there were moral-

<sup>1</sup> *Sexual Maturity, Abstinence, Marriage Ethic.*

ists and sophists who predicted the downfall of the human race as a result of immorality. Politicians who irresponsibly promised the masses "heaven on earth" expelled us from their organizations because we fought for the rights of children and adolescents to have a natural love life. Our purely clinical defense of biological needs pointed to necessary changes in the whole social and economic structure of society. It would be necessary to have apartments for adolescents; a secure livelihood for parents, educators, and adolescents; characterological restructuring of educators; criticism of all political trends that base their activities and existence on the characterological helplessness of man; the inner self-sufficiency of human beings and, with it, of the masses of humanity; the development of self-regulation in children which would lead eventually to independent adults. These would be the beginnings of a great revolution in the biological constitution of man.

The pressure exerted from all sides on this social-hygiene work was so strong that I decided to move to Germany. In September 1930 I gave up my flourishing medical practice and my psychoanalytic teaching in Vienna and went to Berlin. Since then I have been back to Austria only once, in April 1933. During that brief sojourn, in an address to a large gathering of Viennese university students, I was able to outline some of my conclusions about Fascism. To me, as a psychiatrist and biologist, the German catastrophe resulted from the biological helplessness of masses of human beings who had come under the spell of a handful of power-hungry bandits. I was grateful for the understanding that Vienna's academic youth afforded me at that time; but not a single politician deigned to listen to me.

Since then, the problem of the biology of the human animal has grown infinitely. Today, March 1949, in the United States, we are in the midst of severe struggles for the recognition of a biological revolution which has gripped humanity for several decades. It would lead us too far afield to go into detail at this point. But one fact must be strongly emphasized.

What appeared so alien and dangerous in the Austria of 1920–1930 is today, in 1949, the subject of lively public debate in

America. This change came about circa 1946, shortly after the end of World War II. It became evident in an increasing number of articles in the daily papers which endorsed the naturalness of genital self-gratification for the child. The all-encompassing mental-hygiene movement has penetrated public consciousness in the United States. It is now recognized that *the future of the human race depends on resolving the problem of human character structure.*<sup>2</sup> Particularly during the last two decades the concept of self-regulation has become popular in child education and is now beginning to appeal to large masses of people. Of course, here as elsewhere, we find the highly placed sexual hypocrite, the government bureaucrat, the political climber of the worst sort, who becomes indignant when he hears of self-regulation. But there can be no doubt that the mental-hygiene movement and the affirmation of the natural biological sexuality of children and adolescents are steadily progressing. They can no longer be stopped. The negation of life is being confronted by the affirmation of life.

I am not saying that victory has already been gained. We still face decades of arduous dispute. But I do say that the basic affirmation of natural love life is advancing inexorably, in spite of numerous and dangerous foes. To my knowledge, America is the only country where life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are anchored in the Constitution. Let me assure the reader that I, too, am fully aware of reactionary trends in the United States. But here, as nowhere else, there is the possibility of striving for happiness and for human rights. Thousands of copies of Alexander Neill's book *The Problem Family*, which fully endorses the principle of sex-economy<sup>3</sup> in education, were sold soon after publication. The present volume, *The Sexual Revolution*, has also been favorably received. In America, there are powerful and well-

<sup>2</sup> Character Structure (Human Structure). An individual's typical structure, his stereotyped manner of acting and reacting. The orgonomic concept of character is functional and biological, not a static, psychological, or moralistic concept.

<sup>3</sup> Sex-economy. The body of knowledge within orgonomy which deals with the economy of the biological (orgone) energy in the organism, with the energy household.



established parent-teacher organizations which defend the principle of self-regulation and, with it, of sex-economy for the child. Universities teach the life principle, including its sexual elements. Here and there one encounters hesitation, silence, even hostility, but sexual hygiene for the masses is making strong progress.

It would have pleased me to enlarge this book and bring it up to date with contemporary knowledge, but I had to forgo this. The book forms a comprehensive whole in reflecting the sexual-political conditions of the 1920's; essentially, it is still valid today. The scientific and medical findings made since 1930 in the field of sex-economy have all been published *in extenso*. Hence, I present *The Sexual Revolution* in virtually unchanged form. In so doing, I must emphasize once again that for more than seventeen years my work has been independent of all political movements and parties. It has become a piece of work about human life, a work which has often been in sharp conflict with the political threat to human life.

*Forest Hills, New York*  
*March 1949*

## *Preface to the Third Edition (1945)*

The current, third edition of my book *Die Sexualität im Kulturkampf*<sup>1</sup> is presented here for the first time in the English language. It contains no changes in subject matter, but it was necessary to make many changes in terminology.

The European freedom movement forms the framework for the material in this book, gathered originally between 1918 and 1935. It labored under the illusion that authoritarian ideology was equivalent to the life process of the "bourgeoisie," while freedom reflected the life process of the "proletariat." The European freedom movement foundered on this basic error. The social events of the last twelve years have provided a bloody refutation of this error: authoritarian and progressive ideologies have nothing to do with economic class distinctions. The ideology of a social stratum is not an immediate reflection of its economic condition. The emotional and mystical excitations of the human masses must play at least as large a role in the social process as do purely economic interests. Authoritarian coercion crisscrosses *all* social strata in all nations, just as do progressive thought and action. There are no class boundaries in character structure, as there are economic and social boundaries. It is not a matter of "class struggles" between proletarians and the bourgeoisie, as theoretical sociology has mechanistically postulated. On the contrary, workers who are structurally capable of freedom war against workers with authoritarian structures and against the parasites of society; members of the upper social classes with the capacity for freedom have risked their existence to fight for the rights of *all* workers against dictators who have arisen from the ranks of the proletariat. The Soviet Union of 1944, with its origin in a proletarian revolution, is—and I deeply regret to say so—

<sup>1</sup> First ed., 1930; 2nd, enlarged ed., 1936.

reactionary in terms of sex politics, while the United States, originating in a bourgeois revolution, must be described as at least progressive in its sexual policies. Social concepts of the nineteenth century which were defined purely in economic terms no longer fit the ideological stratifications in the cultural struggles of the twentieth century. In its simplest formulation: today's social struggles are being waged between those forces interested in the safeguarding and affirming of life and those whose interests lie in its destruction and negation. Today the principal social question no longer is: "Are you rich or are you poor?" but: "Do you endorse and do you fight to secure the greatest possible freedom for human life? Are you doing everything in your power to enable the millions of workingmen to become so independent in their thinking, acting, and living that the complete self-regulation of social life will be taken for granted in the predictable future?"

It is clear that the basic social question, as concretely formulated above, must take into account the living functioning of even the poorest member of the human community. And, in this context, the significance I had ascribed to sexual suppression fifteen years ago takes on gigantic proportions. Social and individual sex-economy have established the fact that suppression of the love life of children and adolescents is the central mechanism for producing enslaved subordinates and economic serfs. So it is no longer a question of whether one carries a white, yellow, black, or red party membership card as proof of this or that mental persuasion. It is quite unmistakably a question of whether one fully affirms, supports, and safeguards the free life expressions of newborn infants, of small children, adolescents, and adult men and women, or whether one suppresses and destroys these expressions, regardless of which ideology or subterfuge is used, regardless of whether it is done for this or that country, regardless of whether "proletarian" or "capitalistic," regardless of religion, be it Jewish, Christian, or Buddhist. This is universally true and will remain so as long as there is life; it must be recognized if we want to eradicate for all time the organized swindle perpetrated on the working masses of humanity, if we want to prove in action that we take our democratic ideals seriously.

Today, realization of the necessity for a radical change in the conditions of sexual life has penetrated social thinking and is rapidly taking hold. An appreciation and concern for the child's sexuality is becoming more and more widespread. It is true that there is still little social support for adolescent love life, that official science still avoids picking up the "hot coals" represented by the sexual problem during puberty. But the idea that sexual intercourse during puberty is a natural and self-evident need seems no longer as horrendous as it did in 1929 when I first discussed it. The success that sex-economy enjoys in so many countries is due to the many good educators and understanding parents to whom the sexual needs of infants and adolescents are completely natural and justified. Although we still have disgraceful medieval sexual legislation and dreadful correctional institutions, which have caused tremendous harm, the rational thinking about infantile and adolescent love life has indelibly left its mark.

A new period of enlightenment will have to assert itself against the powerful residual forces of medieval irrationalism. Although there are still some exponents of "hereditary degeneracy" and "criminal deviation," knowledge of the *social* causes of crime and emotional illness has made a breakthrough everywhere. Although there are far too many physicians who recommend that the hands of infants be tied to prevent masturbation, many mass-circulation dailies have gone on record against such practices. Although healthy adolescents are still sent to correctional institutions because they have gratified their natural love functions, there are many judges who know that such jurisprudence and such institutions are social crimes. Although there is still an abundance of ecclesiastical snooping and moralizing which condemn natural sexuality as the work of the devil, there is a growing number of candidates for the priesthood who are practicing social work and casting off conventional morality. There are even bishops who favor birth control, although they restrict it to legal marriages. Although too many young people come to grief in the exhausting battle for happiness in love, a father has been publicly censured on the radio for condemning his daughter because she had a child but no marriage license.

Although there are still compulsory marriage laws which turn divorce into blackmail, the abhorrence of such laws and such divorce procedures is growing and affecting the general community.

We are experiencing an authentic revolutionary upheaval of our cultural existence. In this struggle there are no parades, no uniforms, no medals, no beating of drums, and no cannon salutes. But the fight is costing no fewer victims than a civil-war battle of 1848 or 1917. The responses of the human animal to his natural life functions are awakening from the sleep of millennia. The revolution in our lives strikes at the root of our emotional, social, and economic existence.

It is mainly the tremendous upheavals in family life, the Achilles' heel of society, that are emerging in a state of chaos. They are chaotic because our authoritarian family structure, derived from ancient patriarchy, has been deeply shaken and is about to make way for a better, more natural family organization. This book does not attack natural family relationships but opposes the authoritarian form of family, which is maintained by rigid laws, human structure, and irrational public opinion. It is precisely the events in the Soviet Union following the social revolution of 1917 (which will be dealt with in the second part of this book) that demonstrate the emotionally and socially dangerous nature of this upheaval. What Soviet Russia tried to resolve by force within a brief time span during the 1920's, is being accomplished today throughout the whole world in a slower but far more thorough manner. When I speak of revolutionary upheavals in the conditions of our cultural life, I have in mind primarily the removal of the patriarchal authoritarian family form in favor of natural family relationships. But it is precisely these natural relationships between husband and wife, and between parents and children, which are confronted with extremely dangerous obstacles.

The word "revolutionary" in this as well as in other sex-economic writings does not mean the use of high explosives but the use of truth; it does not mean secret meetings and the distribution of illegal handbills, but an open and public warning

directed to human conscience, without pretexts or circumlocutions; it does not mean political gangsterism, assassinations, the signing and breaking of treaties, but it does mean "rational revolution, grasping the root of the matter." Sex-economy is revolutionary in the same sense that the following events were revolutionary: the discovery of microbes and the unconscious emotional life in medicine, the discovery of mechanical laws and electricity in physics, and the discovery of the nature of productive power, labor force, in economics. Sex-economy is revolutionary because it reveals the laws of the formation of human character structure and because it no longer bases human aspirations for freedom on slogans but on the functional laws of biological energy. We are revolutionary in the sense that we view the life processes from the standpoint of *natural science* instead of from that of mysticism, mechanistics, or politics. The discovery of cosmic orgone energy, which functions in living organisms as biological energy, provides our social efforts with a solid foundation rooted in natural science.

The social development of our time strives everywhere for a planetary community and for internationalism without ifs and buts. Government by politicians must be replaced by the natural scientific regulation of social processes. What is at stake is human society, and not the state. We are concerned with truth, not with tactics. Natural science confronts its greatest task: to assume the responsibility for the future destiny of a tortured humanity. Politics has finally been reduced to mere politicizing at cross-purposes. Natural scientists, whether they like it or not, will have to guide social processes, and the politicians will have to learn, willy-nilly, to accomplish some useful work. One of the tasks of this book is to help the new, rational scientific order of life, which is embattled everywhere, to break through and to make its birth and growth less painful and entailing fewer victims. Anyone who is decent and has a sense of responsibility toward life cannot, and will not, misconstrue or abuse this book.

November 1944

WILHELM REICH

## *Preface to the Second Edition (1936)*

In October 1935, three hundred of the best-known psychiatrists called upon the world's conscience. Italy had just carried out her first assault on Ethiopia. Thousands of defenseless people, among them women, old men, and children, were slain in that first attack. People began to realize how vast would be the scope of mass murder if there should be another world war.

That a nation like Italy, with millions starving, would follow the cry of war with such enthusiasm and without rebellion, save for a few exceptions, was to be expected, but it is incomprehensible. It strengthened the general impression that the whole world allowed itself to be governed by men whom psychiatrists would have described as mentally disturbed, but more than that: people in all parts of the world are indeed emotionally sick; their emotional reactions are abnormal, in contradiction to their own wishes and real potentialities. These are the symptoms of emotionally abnormal reactions: to starve amid abundance; to be exposed to cold and rain in spite of available coal reserves, construction machinery, millions of square miles of empty land on which to build, etc.; to believe that a divine power with a long white beard guides everything and that people are completely at the mercy of this power; to be jubilant over murdering people who have done no harm to anyone and to believe it is necessary to conquer a country one has never heard of; to go about in rags and think one is representing the "greatness of the nation" to which one belongs; to desire the classless society and to regard the "people's community" with its profiteers as that kind of society; to forget what a national leader promised before he came to power; generally to entrust individual persons, even if they are statesmen, with power over one's life and destiny; to disregard the fact that even the so-called leaders of state and economy

must eat, sleep, have sexual disturbances, follow their bladder and bowel urges, and be governed by uncontrollable emotions just as the average mortal is; to look upon corporal punishment of children in the service of "culture" as a matter of course; to forbid adolescents in the bloom of life the happiness of sexual embrace. . . . One might continue indefinitely.

The psychiatrists' appeal was an official politicization, on the part of an otherwise nonworldly and allegedly nonpolitical science. But this act was incomplete. It did not touch the roots of the phenomenon which it correctly described. The psychiatrists did not proceed from the *nature* of the general emotional sickness of contemporary man. They did not question the basic cause of the masses' boundless willingness to sacrifice themselves in the interests of a handful of politicians. They did not note the difference between real gratification of needs and the illusionary gratification in nationalistic frenzy, which is related to the ecstatic state of religious fanatics. They did not attempt to understand why the masses accepted hunger and misery despite increased economic productivity which should have led to a rational planned economy. The problem was not the psychology of the statesmen but that of the masses.

Modern statesmen are the friends, brothers, cousins, or fathers-in-law of financial tycoons or dictators. The fact that the mass of thinking people, whether or not they are educated and cultured, do not see this and react accordingly is a problem in itself. It cannot be solved by the "psychodiagnostic examination of individuals." Emotional illnesses, revealing confused thinking, resignation, emotional enslavement, self-injury, unquestioned faith in a leader, etc., all express a disturbance in the harmony of vegetative, particularly of sexual, life which is inherent in the social mechanization of life.

The grotesque symptoms of the mentally ill are merely distortions and magnifications of the mystical, credulous attitudes of the masses who try to ward off war by prayers. The mental institutions of the world, which house about four in every thousand people, pay no more attention to the ordering of sexual life than does politics. The chapter on sexuality still remains to be



written by official science. Yet the origin of abnormal emotional reactions in the pathological channeling of ungratified sexual energy can no longer be doubted. Therefore, when we raise the question about the social ordering of man's sexual life, we strike at the roots of emotional illness.

Sexual energy is the biological energy which, in the psyche, determines the character of human feeling and thinking. "Sexuality" (physiologically, the parasympathetic function) is the productive life energy per se. Its suppression results not only in psychic and somatic disorders but in a general disturbance of social functioning manifested in most purposeless actions, mysticism, readiness for war, etc. Sex politics must therefore proceed from the question: *Why is human love life suppressed?*

Let us briefly summarize how sex-economy relates emotional life to the socioeconomic order. Human needs are formed, altered, and, in particular, suppressed by society; this process establishes the psychic structure of man. It is not inborn but develops in each individual member of society in the course of the never ending battle between his needs and society. There is no innate structure of the impulses; this structure is acquired during the first years of life. What is innate is the larger or smaller amount of biological energy in the organism. Sexual suppression produces a subordinate individual who simultaneously exhibits slavish obedience and rebellion. We want man to be "free." Therefore, not only must we know how modern man has been structured; we must also understand how free men have been structured and what forces have been used to create them.

Since the core of emotional functioning is the sexual function, the core of political (pragmatic) psychology is sex politics. This is apparent in literature and motion pictures which cater almost exclusively to sexual needs.

The biological needs—food and sexual pleasure—create the necessity for the social community of men. The conditions of production thus created by community change the basic needs, without, however, destroying them, and also create new needs. The transformed and newly created needs in turn determine the

further development of production and its means (tools and machines), and, along with them, the social and economic relations among men. Based on these conditions of production, certain ideas about life, morals, philosophy, etc., develop. They generally correspond to the level of technology at a particular time, i.e., to the ability to comprehend and master life. The social "ideology" thus created forms the human structure and is turned into a material force to be preserved in that structure as "tradition." Now, everything depends on whether the whole society or only a small minority participates in the formation of the social ideology. If a minority holds political power, then it also determines the type and content of the general ideology and the formation of human structure. Therefore, in an authoritarian society, the thinking of the majority corresponds to the economic and political interests of the rulers. Conversely, in a work-democratic society, where there are no minority power interests, the social ideology would correspond to the vital interests of *all* members of society.

Until now, social ideology was envisioned only as a sum of ideas forming "in the heads of men" about the economic process. But after the victory of political reaction in Germany's gravest crisis and the experience of the irrational behavior of the masses, ideology can no longer be regarded as a mere reflection of economic conditions. *As soon as an ideology has taken hold of and molded human structure, it becomes a material, social power.* There is no socioeconomic process of historical significance which is not anchored in the psychic structure of the masses and activated in the form of mass behavior. There is no "development of production forces per se," but only a development or an inhibition of the human structure, its feeling and thinking on the basis of economic and social processes. The economic process, i.e., the development of machines, is functionally identical with the process of psychic structure in the men who create it, propel it, inhibit it, and are affected by it. Economy without an active drive structure is unthinkable; conversely, there can be no human feeling, thinking, and acting without an economic foundation and its consequences. The one-sidedness of

both views form the basis of *psychologism* ("The emotional forces of men alone make history") as well as *economism* ("Technology alone makes history"). One ought to talk less about dialectics and, instead, comprehend the living interrelationships among groups of men, nature, and machines. They function as a unity while at the same time conditioning one another. Therefore, we will never succeed in mastering the current cultural process if we do not understand that the nucleus of psychic structure is sexual structure and that the cultural process is essentially a process of sexual needs that serve to maintain life.

The small, wretched, allegedly "unpolitical" sexual life of man must be investigated thoroughly and mastered in relation to the problems of authoritarian society. In reality, high politics does not take place at diplomatic dinners but in ordinary life. Therefore, the politicization of man's so-called personal life can no longer be postponed. If the 1,800 million people on this earth understood the activities of the hundred leading diplomats, everything would be all right; there would be no regulation of society and no ordering of the gratification of human needs on the basis of armament interests and on-the-agenda principles. But these 1,800 million people will not be able to control their destinies so long as they are not conscious of their own modest, personal lives. The inner forces which prevent this are called *sexual moralism* and *religious mysticism*.

The economic order of the last two hundred years has greatly changed human structure; but this change is minimal when compared to the all-pervading human impoverishment that has existed ever since natural life, particularly sexual life, began to be suppressed thousands of years ago. It took millennia of suppressing instinctual life to create the mass-psychological basis for the fear of authority, the slavishness, the incredible humbleness on the one hand, and the sadistic brutality on the other. On this base the capitalistic profit economy was able to run rampant and maintain itself for two hundred years. But we should not forget that it was social and economic processes which brought about the changes in human structure thousands of years ago. Hence,

we are no longer concerned with a two-hundred-year-old machine age but with a six-thousand-year-old human structure which so far has been incapable of putting the machines to beneficial use. No matter how splendid and revolutionizing the discovery of the laws of capitalist economy was, it alone is insufficient to solve the problem of human bondage and self-subjugation. Although groups of people everywhere, including members of the oppressed classes, are battling for "bread and freedom," the overwhelming majority of the masses stand passively aside and pray, or else they are fighting for freedom on the side of their oppressors. That these masses suffer incredible hardship is something they themselves experience daily and hourly. That someone is willing to give them bread alone, without all the pleasures of life, reinforces their humbleness. And in reality, what freedom is, can, or will be, has not been presented to the masses in concrete and intelligible form. The potential for general happiness in life has not been tangibly described to them. Whenever someone attempted to do so in order to win them over, they were presented with the sick, wretched, guilt-ridden pleasures that can be found in the philistine lower-middle-class dives and honky-tonk joints. The core of happiness in life is *sexual* happiness. No one with political power has dared touch upon this. The general view was, and still is, that sexuality was a private matter and had nothing to do with politics. But political reaction knows better.

The French translator of my book *Geschlechtsreife, Enthalt-samkeit, Ehemoral*<sup>1</sup> contrasts Freud-Marxism with authentic Marxism and says that the specific psychoanalytic thought pattern has changed the Marxist postulate. "With him [Reich] the sexual crisis does not result primarily from the conflict between morality and the conditions of declining capitalism on the one hand, and the new social relationships, the new proletarian morality, on the other; it results from the contradiction between the natural, eternal, sexual needs and the capitalist order of society." Such reflections are always instructive and productive, leading invariably to a sharpening and amplification of the original formulation.

<sup>1</sup> *La Crise Sexuelle* (Paris, 1934).

In this instance, the critic contrasts class distinctions with differences between need and society. Yet all these differences have *one* origin and should not be viewed merely as antitheses. It is correct that, objectively and from the viewpoint of class, the sexual crisis is a manifestation of the conflict between capitalist decline and revolutionary ascendancy. But it is also correct that it expresses the contradiction between sexual needs and mechanistic society. How can this be reconciled? Very simply. The critic cannot find the solution because the sharp distinction between the subjective and the objective sides of social processes is unfamiliar to him, although it is self-evident. Objectively, the sexual crisis is a phenomenon of class distinctions; but how is it represented subjectively? What does it mean: a new proletarian morality? Capitalist class morality is *opposed* to sexuality, i.e., it creates the contradiction and the resulting misery. The revolutionary movement eliminates this contradiction by its ideological endorsement of sexual gratification, which is then strengthened by laws and a new ordering of sexual life. Thus, capitalism and sexual suppression go together as do revolutionary "morality" and sexual gratification. To speak of a "new revolutionary morality" is meaningless. This new morality derives only its specific content from the orderly gratification of needs, and not just those in the realm of sexuality. Unless revolutionary ideology recognizes that this, among other things, is its real content, it merely *speaks* of a new morality but actually remains stuck in the old. This is clearly demonstrated in the contradiction between ideology and reality in the Soviet Union. The new morality consists precisely in making moral regulation superfluous and in establishing the self-regulation of social life. An obvious example can be found in stealing, or in the moral law against theft: someone who is not starving has no need to steal and therefore does not need a moral code to prevent him from stealing. The same basic law applies to sexuality: someone who is leading a gratifying sexual life has no need to rape and requires no moral law against rape. The "sex-economic regulation" of sexual life replaces authoritarian regulation. Owing to confusion about the laws of sexuality, Communism has tried to retain the form of bourgeois morality while changing its content; thus a "new morality" is produced in

the Soviet Union, displacing the old one. This is erroneous. Just as the state does not merely change its form but "withers away" completely (Lenin), so compulsory morality, too, does not merely change but withers away.

A second error of the aforementioned critic consists in believing that we postulate an *absolute* sexuality which comes into conflict with contemporary society. For example, a basic error of psychoanalysis is to comprehend the drives as absolute biological facts; but this is not rooted in the heart of psychoanalysis, which is specifically dialectical, but in the mechanistic thinking of psychoanalysts, which, as usual, is supplemented by metaphysical theses. Drives emerge, change, and disappear. But the time intervals between biological changes are so vast, and those of social processes relatively so small, that the former impress us as absolute events, while the latter are regarded as relative and in flux. To investigate specific social processes which are very limited in time, it is sufficient to establish the conflict between a given biological drive and the manner in which the social order understands and deals with it. But for biological laws of the sexual process which are measured in terms of centuries, it is in no way sufficient; here, the relativity and changeability of the instinctual organization must be clearly elaborated. If we recognize the life process of individuals as the *first* prerequisite of *every* social event, it is sufficient to assume that life, with its basic needs, exists. But life itself is not absolute; it emerges and disappears in changing generations, while, at the same time, it is preserved unchanged in the form of genes which continue to live from generation to generation. Considered in terms of cosmic time, all life has emerged from the inorganic and, just as in the case of the rise and decline of stars, will disappear, i.e., return to the inorganic state. This is a necessary assumption of dialectical thinking. Perhaps no other point of view is better suited for comparing the infinitesimal smallness and insignificance of human illusions and their "spiritual," "transcendental" mission with the overriding affinity of human vegetative life and nature in general. This might be interpreted to mean that social struggles also appear futile when compared to the cosmic proc-

esses of which man and society are only a small part. How ridiculous, one might say, that people slaughter one another "to end unemployment" or to carry to power someone like Hitler and then organize nationalistic consecration processions, while the stars are moving in the cosmos and one would be better off enjoying nature. Such an interpretation would be erroneous because it is precisely the natural scientific viewpoint which argues *against* political reaction and for work democracy.<sup>2</sup> The former tries fruitlessly to press the infinite cosmos and man's reflected feeling for nature into the framework of the infinitesimal idea of sexual asceticism and patriotic self-sacrifice. Work democracy, on the other hand, tries to integrate the insignificant individual and all social life into the immensity of natural occurrences, to eliminate the contradiction caused by a "faulty development" of nature in society—six thousand years of exploitation, mysticism, and sexual suppression—even though this development may have been "necessary." In brief, it supports sexuality and opposes the unnatural sexual ethic; it supports international planned economy and opposes exploitation and national boundaries.

Nazi ideology contains a rational core which gives this reactionary movement its driving force. It is expressed in the phrase "unity of blood and soil." National Socialist practice, however, retains all those social forces which run counter to the basic trend of the revolutionary movement, i.e., unity of society, nature, and technology. It retains class distinctions, which cannot be eliminated by any illusion about the unity of the people; it retains private ownership of the means of production, which no amount of "community ideas" can obscure. Nazi ideology expresses mystically what is inherent in the revolutionary movement as a rational nucleus—a classless society and a life oriented in natural processes. The revolutionary movement, however,

<sup>2</sup> Work democracy. The functioning of the natural and intrinsically rational work relationships between human beings. The concept of work democracy represents the established reality (not the ideology) of these relationships, which, though usually distorted because of prevailing armoring and irrational political ideologies, are nevertheless at the basis of all social achievement.

while it is not yet entirely aware of its ideological content, is completely clear about the economic and social preconditions for realizing its rational philosophy, *the realization of happiness on earth*.

The critique of the prevailing sexual conditions and concepts which is summarized in this book was formed over a period of years from the sex-economic insights gained in my medical practice. Its first part ("The Fiasco of Compulsory Sexual Morality") was published about six years ago under the title *Geschlechtsreife, Enthaltensamkeit, Ehemoral*. Although it has been enlarged in a few places, it is essentially unchanged. The second part ("The Struggle for a 'New Life' in the Soviet Union") has been added; it is based on material gathered in ten years of research. The description of the retarding of the sexual revolution in Soviet Russia will show why I referred time and again to the Soviet Union in my first sex-political writings. During the last three or four years, there have been significant changes in that country and much is no longer in keeping with previously correct trends. The general retrogression to authoritarian principles in the social order has accompanied the erosion of Soviet sexual revolutionary accomplishments.

This volume does not pretend to examine all pertinent problems, let alone solve them. A critique of prevalent theories of psychic illnesses would have belonged here, as would an extensive treatment of religion. But this was not possible; the problems are inexhaustible and the book would have become unmanageable. My book *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* dealt with the sexual politics of Fascism and with the Church as a sex-political organization of patriarchy. This book is neither a sexological textbook nor a history of the current sexual crisis. It is deliberately restricted to showing the basic contradictions in present-day sexual life through typical examples. The sex-economic views presented here are not the result of armchair research. Without decades of close contact with youth, without constantly verifying my experiences with youth in my medical work with patients, I could not have set down a single sentence of this book. I am



stating this in anticipation of a certain type of criticism. As fruitful and indispensable as critical debate is, it is a waste of time and energy unless the critics personally investigate those areas of social life where the source of sexological knowledge is to be found: in the lives of the broad, uncultured or faultily cultured, suffering, and sometimes struggling, masses, whom the "God-sent" leaders of nations call "subhuman." On the basis of my practical experiences in Germany and Austria and my clinical practice, I have ventured to form an opinion on the course of the Soviet sexual revolution without having constant personal contact with the sex-political conditions in that country. It is quite possible that one thing or another has been overdrawn in describing the sexual conditions in Soviet Russia. However, it was not my intention to pronounce absolute truths but to present a basic picture of general trends and contradictions. Needless to say, I will take into account any pertinent correction of facts in future printings of this book.

Finally, I would like to say to my worried friends who admonish me to leave "dangerous politics" alone and to devote myself solely to my work in natural science: sex-economy, insofar as it deserves the name, is neither left nor right but forward-directed, *volens volens*, toward a rational revolutionary orientation. Who, in a house that is on fire, would leisurely write aesthetic treatises on the color sense of crickets?

November 1935

WILHELM REICH

PART ONE

*The Fiasco of Compulsory  
Sexual Morality*

The editor of *The Yarn Roll*, who posed the question "Why are we alive?", apparently likes to move around in the tangled shrubbery of philosophy. But, on the other hand, he may be in the throes of great fear and trembling as he contemplates the futility of human life. If the first is the case, it's good; if the second is the case, it's bad. And for this reason the only answer to that question is: "Man must live for the sake of living," even if this sounds strange and single-minded. For man, the whole purpose, the whole meaning of life, lies in life itself, in the process of living. To comprehend the purpose and meaning of life, one must above all love life and become totally submerged in the turmoil of living; it is only then that one can grasp the meaning of life and understand why one is alive. Unlike everything that man has created, life requires no theory; he who understands the sheer experience of living will by the same token understand the theory of life.

FROM THE DIARY OF THE STUDENT KOSTYA RYABTSEV

## *The Clinical Foundation of the Sex-Economic Critique*

### 1. FROM THE MORALISTIC TO THE SEX-ECONOMIC PRINCIPLE

The sex-economic views presented here rest on clinical observations and experience with patients who undergo a change in their psychic structure in the course of a successful character analysis. The question will be raised, and rightly so, whether what we have learned about restructuring a neurotic person can be applied forthwith to the problems of restructuring and reeducating large groups, or masses, of individuals. Rather than offering theoretical reflections, we shall let the facts speak for themselves. For the irrational, unconscious, purposeless phenomena of instinctual life can in no way be understood unless we are guided by our experience with the individual neurotic. This is basically no different from the procedure used in fighting an infection of epidemic proportions—that is, we closely examine the individual victims and investigate the bacillus as well as its effects, which are the same for all victims of the epidemic. The comparison may be carried further. In an epidemic, an external factor damages a previously healthy organism. With cholera, for instance, we would not be content with healing the individual victim but at the same time would isolate and destroy the source of the epidemic-causing bacillus. In the unhealthy emotional behavior of the average person, we can see similarities with our patient's symptoms: general sexual timidity, the force of moralistic demands, which are at times transformed into undisguised brutality (e.g., storm troopers); the inability to imagine that the gratification of drives can be reconciled with constructive work achievement; the belief, which is considered natural, that the sexuality of children and adolescents is a morbid aberration; the inconceiv-

ability of any form of sexual life other than lifelong monogamy; the distrust of one's own strength and judgment and the concomitant longing for an omniscient, all-guiding father figure, etc. Average individuals experience basically the same conflicts, although the details may differ according to each person's unique development. If we would apply what we learn from the individual to the masses, we can use only those insights which relate to conflicts that are typical and generally valid. It is then quite correct to apply conclusions drawn from the processes involved in the restructuring of individual patients to the restructuring of the masses.

The emotionally sick come to us with typical symptoms of emotional disorder. The patient's capacity for work is always more or less impaired, and his actual accomplishments correspond neither to the demands he makes on himself nor to those society makes on him, nor even to the abilities he feels he possesses. Without exception, sexual gratification is sharply diminished, if not absent entirely. In the place of natural genital gratification we invariably find nongenital (pregenital) forms of gratification; e.g., sadistic fantasies about the sexual act, rape fantasies, etc. One becomes unequivocally convinced that the development of the patient's character and sexual behavior is always clearly outlined by the fourth or fifth year of life. The emotional disturbance in social or sexual achievement is sooner or later evident to any observer. Under the condition of neurotic, sexual repression, every patient carries within himself the insoluble contradiction between instinctual drive and moralistic compulsion. The moral demands that, under the constant pressure of social influence, he places on himself intensify the blocking of his sexual and general vegetative needs. The greater the damage to his genital potency, the wider the discrepancy between the *need* for gratification and the *capacity* for it. This, in turn, increases the moral pressure necessary to suppress the dammed-up drives. Since the essential parts of the entire conflict are unconscious and therefore cannot be understood by the affected person, he is also completely unable to solve them by himself.

In the conflict between instinct and morals, ego and outside

world, the organism is forced to armor itself against both the instinct and the outside world, to restrict itself. This "armoring" results in a more or less reduced capacity for living. It is relevant to emphasize that the majority of people suffer from this rigidity. It is by far the most important source of loneliness in so many people, despite community living.

Character-analytic treatment is intended to free the vegetative energies from their bindings in the armor. At first, this strengthens the asocial, perverse, cruel impulses and, along with them, social anxiety and moral inhibition. But if childhood ties to the parental home, with its early traumatic associations and sexual prohibitions, are simultaneously dissolved, then more and more vegetative energy will flow toward the genitals. In other words, the natural genital needs acquire new life or appear for the first time. If, as a result, genital inhibitions and anxieties are removed, if the patient thereby attains the capacity for full orgasmic gratification, and if he is fortunate enough to find a suitable partner, we can regularly observe a far-reaching and, in many instances, astonishing change in his overall behavior. The most important aspects of this are the following.

If the actions and thoughts of the patient were formerly conditioned by the more or less acute and disturbing effects of unconscious, irrational motives, now his reactions are in tune with reality and irrational motives recede. Thus, in this process, the tendency toward mysticism, religiosity, infantile dependence, superstitions, etc., disappears spontaneously, without any attempt on the part of the physician to "educate" the patient.

If the patient had been severely armored, devoid of contact with himself and his environment, or capable merely of substitute, unnatural contacts, he now achieves an increasing capacity for immediate contact with both his impulses and his surroundings. The result of this process is the subsidence of the former unnatural behavior and the appearance of natural, spontaneous functioning.

In most patients we observe a double state. Outwardly, they appear somewhat odd, but we can sense a healthy quality through the sickness. Today the so-called individual differences

among people represent basically a stifling neurotic behavior. But these differences disappear in the process of getting well, to give way to a *simplification* of overall behavior. As a result of this simplification, these persons become similar in their basic traits, without losing their individuality. For example, every patient conceals his work disturbance in a very specific way. If he loses this disturbance, if he gains self-confidence, he also loses all those character traits which compensated for his sense of worthlessness. Self-confidence based on free-flowing work accomplishment is similar among all men.

A person's attitude toward sexual life is influenced in the same manner. For example, someone who represses his sexuality develops his own particular forms of moral and aesthetic self-protection. If the patient regains contact with his sexual needs, his neurotic differences vanish. The attitude toward a natural sexual life becomes more or less the same among all individuals—particularly in the affirmation of pleasure and the loss of sexual guilt feelings. The formerly insoluble conflict between instinctual needs and moral inhibitions resulted in a sickness in which the person had to act according to the criteria of an established norm outside himself. Everything he did and thought was measured by the moral standard that had been created for him; at the same time he protested against it. If, in the course of restructuring, he recognizes not only the necessity but also the indispensability of genital gratification, the moral straitjacket drops off along with the damming up of his instinctual needs. If previously the pressure of morality had strengthened the drive or made it antisocial, and this had, in turn, required a stronger moral inhibition, now the equalizing of the capacity for gratification with the strong drives destroys the moralistic regulation in the patient. The formerly indispensable mechanism of self-control also disappears because vital energies are withdrawn from the antisocial impulses. There is scarcely anything left to be controlled. The healthy person is virtually without compulsive morality, but neither does he have any impulses that would require a restraining morality. Any residual antisocial impulses are easily controlled if the basic genital needs are gratified. This is evident

in the daily conduct of the orgasmically potent individual. Sexual intercourse with prostitutes becomes offensive; any existing fantasies of murder or rape lose their force and significance. To force a partner into a love affair or to rape her becomes bizarre and unthinkable, just as do any impulses to seduce children that may have existed previously. By the same token, former anal, exhibitionistic, or other perversions also recede, along with social anxiety and guilt feelings. The incestuous ties to parents and siblings lose their interest, freeing energies hitherto repressed. In brief, the processes mentioned here are all to be regarded as a sign that the organism *regulates itself*.

It has been shown that people with the capacity for orgasmic gratification are considerably better adjusted to monogamous relationships than those whose orgasmic function is disturbed. However, their monogamous attitude rests not on inhibited polygamous impulses or moralistic considerations but on the sex-economic ability to experience pleasure repeatedly with the same partner. The prerequisite is sexual harmony with the partner. (In this respect, no difference between men and women could be clinically established.) But if no suitable partner is available, as seems to be the rule under the prevailing conditions of sexual life, the tendency toward monogamy turns into its opposite, namely, into the uncontrollable search for the right partner. If that partner is found, the monogamous behavior is spontaneously restored and is maintained as long as sexual harmony and gratification last. Fantasies and wishes for other partners are either very weak or else ignored because of the interest in the current partner. However, the relationship collapses irretrievably if it becomes stale and if another companion promises greater pleasure. This unshakable fact is the insoluble contradiction in the sexual organization of modern society, encumbered with economic obligations and considerations for children which oppose the principle of sex-economy. For this reason, it is the healthiest people who suffer most severely under the conditions of the sex-negating social order.

The behavior of orgasmically disturbed people, i.e., the majority, is different. Since they feel less pleasure in the sexual act or



can do without a sexual partner for greater periods of time, they are less selective: the act does not mean very much to them. Here promiscuity in sexual relationships results from sexual disturbance. Such sexually disturbed people are more capable of adapting to a lifelong marriage; however, their fidelity rests not on sexual gratification but on moral inhibitions.

If a patient regaining his health succeeds in finding a suitable partner, all nervous symptoms disappear and he can order his life with an astonishing ease previously unknown to him. He can resolve his conflicts without neurosis and develop self-confidence in regulating his impulses and social relationships. He follows the pleasure principle. The simplifying of his attitude toward life, in action, thought, and feeling, removes many sources of conflict. At the same time, he acquires a critical attitude toward the prevailing moral order, thus demonstrating that the principle of sex-economic self-regulation opposes that of compulsory moral regulation.

In today's sexually depraved society, the healing process frequently runs into almost insurmountable obstacles—particularly the paucity of sexually healthy people who might become partners for patients who are approaching health. Beyond that, there are the general impediments of a compulsive sexual morality. One might say that the genitally healthy person turns from an unconscious into a conscious hypocrite toward those institutions and social conditions which impede his healthy, natural sexuality. On the other hand, some develop the faculty of changing their environment to such an extent that the effects of today's social order are diminished or removed altogether.

I have had to limit myself here to the briefest of descriptions and I refer the reader to my extensive investigations in *The Function of the Orgasm* and *Character Analysis*. Clinical experience has permitted me to draw basic conclusions about the social order. The wide scope of these conclusions for the prophylaxis of neuroses, the fight against mysticism and superstition, the old problem of the apparent contradiction between nature and culture, instinct and morals, was at first surprising and confusing; but, after years of reexamination on the basis of ethnological and sociological material, I became convinced that the conclusions

based on the structural change from the moralistic principle to that of sex-economic self-regulation are correct; they were confirmed everywhere. If a social movement were to succeed in changing social conditions in such a manner that today's sex negation would be replaced by general sex affirmation (with all its economic concomitants), then the principle of restructuring the human masses would become reality. Of course, we do not mean to treat every member of society. The fundamental idea of sex-economy has often been misconstrued in this way. The experiences gleaned from the restructuring of individuals will serve merely to establish general principles for a new form of education of infants and adolescents in which nature and culture, individual and society, sexuality and sociality, would no longer contradict each other.

But the therapeutic experiences and their theoretical results, through which it was possible to make the orgasm theory accessible to psychotherapy, contradicted, and still contradict, virtually all approaches which have been developed in all relevant scientific fields. The absolute contradiction between sexuality and culture governs all morality, philosophy, culture, science, psychology, and psychotherapy as an inviolable dogma. Here the most significant position is no doubt held by Freud's psychoanalysis, which adheres to these contradictions, in spite of its clinical discoveries rooted in natural science. It is essential to describe briefly the contradictions which produced the psychoanalytic theory of culture and led to the deterioration of scientific psychoanalysis into metaphysics. This cultural theory has caused only confusion.

## **2. A CONTRADICTION IN FREUD'S THEORY OF CULTURE**

### **SEXUAL REPRESSION AND INSTINCT RENUNCIATION**

A serious discussion of the sociological consequences of psychoanalysis must first of all clarify whether the so-called

psychoanalytic sociology and world view, as reflected in Freud's later writings, and then obscured to the point of grotesqueness in the works of several of his students such as Roheim, Pfister, Müller-Braunschweig, Kolnai, Laforgue, and others, are the logical outcome of analytic psychology or whether this sociology and world view stem from a break with the analytic principles of clinical observation, due to a misconstrued or incomplete conceptualization of clinical facts. If such a rift or break could be demonstrated in the clinical theory itself, if furthermore we could show the relationship between the divergent clinical concept and the basic sociological viewpoint, we would have found the most important source of error. (Another source lies in equating the individual and society.)

Freud endorsed the cultural-philosophical viewpoint that culture owes its existence to the repression or renunciation of instinctual drives. The basic idea is that cultural achievements result from sublimated sexual energy, indicating that sexual suppression, or repression, is an indispensable factor in establishing any culture. Now there is already historical proof that this concept is erroneous, for there are highly cultured societies in which sexual suppression is nonexistent and whose members enjoy completely free sexual lives.<sup>1</sup>

This theory is accurate only insofar as sexual suppression forms the mass-psychological basis for a specific culture in all its forms, namely, the *patriarchal* culture, but it does not apply to the basis of culture and its formation in general. How did Freud arrive at this concept? It was certainly not from *conscious* political and philosophical motives. On the contrary, early writings such as his essay on "cultural sexual morality" point in the direction of a revolutionary sexual critique of culture. But Freud never again proceeded along that path; instead, he struggled against any efforts in that direction and once described them, in a conversation, as being "outside the middle line of psychoanalysis." It was precisely my attempts at a sex-political criticism of culture that gave weight to our first differences of opinion.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Reich: *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971).

In analyzing the psychic mechanisms and contents of unconscious emotional life, Freud found that the unconscious was filled with asocial and antisocial impulses. Anyone using the corresponding analytic method can confirm this discovery. Ideas of murdering the father and possessing the mother are of central importance in the fantasy life of every man. Cruel impulses are inhibited in everyone by more or less conscious guilt feelings. The majority of women are seized by violent urges to castrate the man and acquire his penis or incorporate it in one form or other, as, for instance, by swallowing it. If these impulses are retained in the unconscious, their inhibition creates not only social adaptation but also a number of emotional disturbances, e.g., hysterical vomiting. Cruel fantasies in the man, such as injuring, stabbing, or piercing the woman in the sexual act, give rise to various forms of impotence if they are blocked by feelings of anxiety and guilt; and they are at the root of perverse actions, including sex murder, if the inhibiting mechanism is disturbed. Analysis shows that impulses to eat their own or others' feces fill the unconscious of a large number of people in our culture, regardless of their social class. The psychoanalytic discovery that the overaffectionate mother or wife acts in direct ratio to the force of her unconscious murderous fantasies was anything but agreeable to the ideologues of "sacred mother love" and the "marital communion." We might list countless other examples, but let us return to our subject. These contents of the unconscious largely proved to be residues of infantile attitudes toward the immediate environment, toward parents, siblings, etc. The child had to master these impulses in order to exist in our culture. Most people, however, pay for this mastery with a more or less severe neurosis, even at an early age, i.e., with a serious impairment of their capacity for work and their sexual potency.

The discovery of the antisocial nature of the unconscious was correct, as was the finding that instinct renunciation is necessary for adaptation to social life. The latter, however, results in two contradictory facts: on the one hand, the child must suppress his instinctual drives so that he can become capable of adapting to culture; on the other hand, this suppression of in-

instinctual gratification usually leads to a neurosis, which in turn restricts his capacity for cultural adaptation, sooner or later makes it completely impossible, and again turns him into an asocial person. In order to restore the individual to the conditions of his true nature, however, his repressions must be eliminated and his instinctual drives set free. This is the prerequisite for recovery but not the cure itself, as Freud's early therapeutic formulations suggested. But what is supposed to replace the repression? Certainly not those impulses which have been freed from repression, for then the individual would be unable to exist in this culture.

In various passages of analytic literature we find the statement (which, incidentally, has already become part of the psychoanalytic viewpoint) that the discovery and liberation of the unconscious, i.e., the affirmation of its existence, should on no account signify an affirmation of corresponding action. Here the analyst establishes the rule of conduct for life as well as for the analytic situation: "You must and should *say* whatever you want; but this does not mean that you can *do* what you want." However, the question of what should happen to the drives that had been liberated from repression still confronted, and continues to confront, the responsible analyst with its vast implications. The answer given was: condemn and sublimate. But since only a small number of patients proved capable of the sublimation required by the recovery process, the demand for instinct renunciation by means of condemnation took precedence. Repression should now be replaced by censure. To justify this demand, it was argued that the instincts which in infancy faced a weak, undeveloped ego that could merely repress were now confronted by a strong, adult ego that could resist by "voluntary renunciation of the instincts." Although this therapeutic formulation is largely at odds with clinical experience, it has been—and still is—the dominant formulation in psychoanalysis. It also governs analytic pedagogy and is advocated, for instance, by Anna Freud.

In this view, the individual becomes capable of culture and a bearer of culture through instinct renunciation instead of

repression; and since, according to the other basic psychoanalytic concept, society behaves like the individual and can be analyzed as such, it follows logically that the culture of society is predicated and based on instinct renunciation.

The whole construct seems flawless and enjoys the approval of the vast majority of analysts as well as the exponents of an abstract concept of culture in general. For the substitution of repression by condemnation and renunciation seems to ward off a threatening specter which caused grave uneasiness when Freud disclosed his first unequivocal findings that sexual repression not only causes sickness but also renders people incapable of work and culture. The world was up in arms because his theory seemed to threaten morality and ethics, and it accused Freud of preaching, *nolens volens*, a form of "living out" which was a menace to culture, and so on. Freud's alleged antimoralism was one of the strongest weapons of his early opponents. His original assurances that he affirmed "culture" and that his discoveries did not endanger it had left little impression, as was shown by the countless references to Freud's "pansexualism." The specter receded only when the theory of renunciation was established. Then hostility was partly replaced by acceptance; for as long as the instinctual drives were not acted out, it did not matter, from the cultural viewpoint, whether the mechanism of instinctual renunciation or that of repression played the role of Cerberus who would not allow the shadows of the netherworld to rise to the surface. One could even register progress, namely, from the unconscious repression of evil to the voluntary relinquishment of instinctual gratification. Since ethics is not asexual but fights off sexual temptations, all parties arrived at a meeting of minds, and the proscribed psychoanalysis itself became culturally acceptable—unfortunately, by "instinct renunciation," i.e., by renouncing its own theory of the instincts.

I regret that I must destroy the illusions of all concerned, for this formulation contains a demonstrable error which proves it wrong. It is not wrong in the sense that the findings of psychoanalysis, on which the conclusions are based, are incorrect. On the contrary, they are entirely accurate; it is only that they are

partly incomplete and they partly obscure the true consequences by their abstract terminology.

## INSTINCT GRATIFICATION AND RENUNCIATION

To justify their unscientific conduct, the German psychoanalysts who, because of their middle-class background or under the severe pressure of conditions in Germany, tried to carry out the political adjustment of psychoanalysis, invariably quoted from those writings by Freud in which they felt they found a justification for their actions. Freud's works do contain some formulations which deprive psychoanalytic clinical discoveries of their cultural and revolutionary momentum and effect and demonstrate the contradiction between the natural scientist and the bourgeois cultural philosopher. One such passage reads as follows:

It is a sinister misunderstanding, justified solely by ignorance, to believe that psychoanalysis expects recovery from neurotic complaints by means of "free living out" of sexuality. Rather, in making the repressed sexual desires conscious in analysis, we are able to achieve a *control* [emphasis added] which was unattainable by previous repression. One might be better entitled to say that analysis frees the neurotic from the chains of his sexuality.<sup>2</sup>

If the seventeen-year-old daughter of a National Socialist dignitary falls ill with hysteria—say, with hysterical seizures caused by repressed coital desires—the coital desires are recognized as incestuous and condemned as such in psychoanalytic treatment. But what happens to the sexual needs? According to the formulation just described, the girl is "freed" from the chains of her sexuality. But clinically the matter looks different: if the girl frees herself from her father by means of analysis, she frees

<sup>2</sup> Freud: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. XI (Vienna: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1928), pp. 217–18.

herself merely from the chains of her incestuous desire, but not from sexuality itself. Freud's formulation neglects this central fact; we may say that the scientific controversy about the role of genitality is kindled precisely in this area of clinical postulation and forms the core of the difference between the theses of sex-economy and "adjusted" psychoanalysis. Freud's formulation postulates the girl's renunciation of all sexual life. In this form, psychoanalysis is acceptable even to a Nazi dignitary and furnishes Müller-Braunschweig with a tool for "breeding heroic man." But this formulation has nothing to do with the psychoanalytic writings burned by Hitler. They represented a psychoanalysis which, disregarding reactionary prejudices, establishes unequivocally that the girl can recover only if she transfers her genital desires from the father to a friend with whom she finds gratification. But this is precisely what contradicts the whole Nazi ideology and inexorably involves the question of society's sexual order. For, in order to satisfy sex-economic requirements, the girl does not merely need to be free genitally; she also needs privacy, a means of contraception, a sexually potent friend who is capable of love (i.e., *not* a National Socialist with his negative sexual structure), understanding parents, and a sex-affirmative social atmosphere—all the more so if her financial means of breaking through the social barriers against adolescent sexual activity are minimal.

The problem of replacing the mechanism of sexual repression with the mechanism of instinct renunciation or, in analytic work, with condemnation would be solved simply—and in the context of Freud's formulations—if the condemnation of instinctual needs and the instinct renunciation were not themselves tied to the economy of instinctual life. The psychic apparatus can tolerate instinct renunciation only under very specific sex-economic conditions, just as the sublimation of drives is governed by specific preconditions. Character-analytic clinical experience teaches us that permanent renunciation of pathogenic or anti-social impulses is possible only if the sexual economy is regulated, i.e., if there are no sexual blocks which invest the impulse to be condemned with additional force. *The sex-economic regu-*



lation of biological energy requires the possibility of sexual gratification corresponding to each age group. This means that one can give up infantile and pathogenic desires in adulthood only if the road to normal genital gratification is open and if such gratification can be experienced. Since the perverse and neurotic gratifications, from which social life must be protected, are themselves substitutes for genitality and develop only if genitality is disturbed or impeded, it is obvious that we cannot speak generally and abstractly of the gratification and renunciation of instincts but must ask concretely *which* instincts are being gratified and *which* renounced. If analytic therapy seeks only to eliminate repressions and not to preach morality, it can only achieve the renunciation of a need that does not correspond to the patient's age and stage of development. Thus, treatment will enable a sexually maturing girl, who produces neurotic symptoms because of her infantile fixation to her father, to censure her infantile incest demands by making them conscious. But this does not mean that these wishes are eliminated, for the constant sexual stimulation continues to press for discharge. Only moralistic arguments will bring about a renunciation of sexual gratification in a person of her age, but this cannot be done without seriously violating therapeutic principles and intentions. Actually, the girl can resolve the fixation to her father only if she finds a satisfactory sexual partner and experiences real gratification. If this does not happen, the infantile fixation either is not resolved or else regresses to other infantile instinctual goals, while the problem remains.

The same is true for every case of neurotic illness. The woman who is unsatisfied in her marriage will unconsciously reactivate infantile sexual needs which she will give up only if her sexuality is gratified in an extramarital relationship or in a new marriage. Just as the condemnation of infantile impulses is itself a precondition for establishing a healthy sexual life, so this new sexuality and its effective gratification are indispensable prerequisites for a definitive solution of the pathological striving. A sex murderer will relinquish his pathological sexual goals only if a biologically normal sexual life is opened to him. Therefore,

the alternative is not instinct renunciation or the living out of impulses, but which impulses are renounced and which are gratified.

In speaking abstractly of the infernal nature of the repressed unconscious, we obscure the most crucial facts not only for the therapy and prophylaxis of neuroses but also for the whole field of pedagogy. Freud discovered that the content of the unconscious in neurotics—and in our culture this means the overwhelming majority of people—essentially consists of infantile, cruel, antisocial impulses. This is correct. But one fact has been overlooked: the unconscious also contains demands which completely accord with natural biological requirements—for instance, the sexual needs of the adolescent or those of the person trapped in an unhappy marriage. Historically and economically, the subsequent intensity of asocial and infantile drives stems from the nongratification of these natural needs insofar as the ungratified libido either strengthens primitive infantile impulses or else creates new, mostly antisocial impulses such as exhibitionism or the impulse toward sex murder. Ethnology teaches us that up to a certain point of economic development such impulses are absent in primitive cultures and appear only as a substitute when that society suppresses normal love life.

These impulses, which resulted from the social development of sexual forms, and had to become unconscious because society justifiably prohibits their gratification, are invariably understood in psychoanalysis as biological facts. This viewpoint is not far removed from that of Magnus Hirschfeld, e.g., that exhibitionism is based on specific exhibitionistic hormones. Such fatuous mechanistic biologism is so hard to unmask because it fulfills a certain function in modern society. It shifts the problem from the social to the biological realm, rendering it for all practical purposes inaccessible. Hence there is a sociology of the unconscious and of asocial sexuality, which means a sociological history of unconscious impulses, in terms of both the quantity and the quality of the repressed impulses. Not only is repression itself a social phenomenon but what causes repression is also a social phenomenon. The investigation of the origin of partial drives will

have to be oriented in ethnological findings. For example, in certain matriarchal tribes, an anal phase of libidinal development—which in our own society is generally placed between the oral and genital phases—is rarely seen, because the children are suckled up to their third or fourth year and then immediately and actively engage in genital games.

The psychoanalytic concept of antisocial impulses is absolute and therefore leads to conclusions which clash with the facts. If these impulses were understood in context, however, basically different conclusions would result, not only for the concept of analytic therapy but also, and in a particularly important way, for sociology and sex-economy. The anal activity of a child in his first or second year has nothing whatsoever to do with being “social” or “asocial.” The abstract view of the asocial nature of anal impulses in the child favors the often applied rule to make the child “capable of culture,” if possible even in the first six months of life. Later this approach results in the exact opposite, severe inhibitions of anal sublimations and anal-neurotic disturbances. The mechanistic view of the absolute contradiction between sexual gratification and culture causes even analytically oriented parents to resort to measures against childhood masturbation, or at least to “mild diversions.” Unless I am mistaken, there is no reference in Anna Freud’s writings to what she privately concedes to be in accord with psychoanalysis, namely, that the child’s masturbation must be regarded as a physiological development and should *not* be curtailed. If unconscious, repressed material is also considered inimical to culture, the genital demands of adolescents must be condemned. This is usually done with the well-intentioned comment that the reality principle requires a postponement of instinct gratification. That this reality principle is itself relative and that it serves, and is determined by, today’s authoritarian society, is excluded from the discussion as mere politics which has nothing to do with science. That this exclusion also constitutes politics is not recognized. The most ominous fact is that such postulates have gravely threatened analytic investigation, not only by impeding the discovery of certain facts but also by paralyzing the practical application of confirmed results by connecting them with reactionary cultural concepts, and some-

times even by falsifying them. Since psychoanalytic research constantly operates with the effects of society on the individual as well as with judgments about health and sickness, sociality and asociality, but is unaware of the revolutionary character of its method and results, it moves in a tragic circle between the finding that sexual repression is inimical to culture and that it is a cultural necessity.

To summarize the facts overlooked by analytic research and contradicting its concept of culture:

Qualitatively and quantitatively, the unconscious is itself conditioned by culture.

The condemnation of infantile and antisocial impulses is predicated on the gratification of the physiological sexual needs at a given time.

Sublimation, as the most important cultural achievement of the psychic apparatus, requires the elimination of sexual repression and in adulthood is applicable only to the gratification of pregenital, not genital, needs.

Genital gratification as the decisive sex-economic factor in the prophylaxis of neuroses and in the restoration of the capacity for social achievement is in flagrant contradiction to today's laws and to every patriarchal religion.

The elimination of sexual repression which was introduced by psychoanalysis as an essential element of the therapeutic process and as a factor of sociological significance stands in sharp opposition to those aspects of culture which are based on this repression.

Insofar as psychoanalysis maintains its theory of culture, it does so at the expense of the factual results of its research because it tries to resolve, in favor of its cultural philosophy, the contradiction between the cultural views of analytic scientists and those scientific data that are directed against this culture. Wherever it does not dare to draw the conclusions from the results of its own research, it takes shelter behind the allegedly unpolitical (nonpragmatic) character of science, while every step of analytic theory and practice deals with political (pragmatic) facts.

If we examine the unconscious psychic content of clerical,

Fascistic, and other reactionary ideologies, we find that they are essentially defense mechanisms arising from the fear of the unconscious inferno which every individual carries inside himself. This might justify ascetic morality and the concept of God as opposed to the "satanic" element, but only if the antisocial unconscious impulses constitute a biologically given, absolute factor; then political reaction would be correct, but by the same token any attempt to eliminate the sexual plight would be senseless. The conservative world would then rightly appeal to the fact that the deterioration of the "higher," "divine," and "moral" qualities in man would lead to chaos in his social and ethical conduct. This is precisely what is meant unconsciously by the term "cultural Bolshevism." Apart from its sex-political wing, the revolutionary movement often does not know this interconnection and frequently makes common front with political reaction when basic questions of sex-economy are at issue. To be sure, it opposes the concept of sex-economy for other reasons than does political reaction (it does not know this concept and its historical modifications). However, it, too, believes in the biological and absolute nature of evil sexual drives and in the necessity of moral inhibition and regulation. Like its opponents, it ignores the fact that the moralistic regulation of instinctual life creates precisely what it alleges to keep in check: the antisocial drives.

However, sex-economy teaches us that the antisocial unconscious instinctual life of modern man—insofar as it is indeed antisocial and not merely regarded as such by moralists—is a product of moralistic regulation and can be abolished only with its elimination. Sex-economy alone can resolve the contradiction between culture and nature because in eliminating repression of the instincts it also eliminates the perverse and antisocial drives.

### 3. SECONDARY DRIVES AND MORAL REGULATION

In the struggle between so-called "cultural Bolshevism" and Fascistic "anti-Bolshevism," the assertion that social revolution

completely destroys morality and leads social life into sexual chaos has played an enormous role. So far, attempts have been made to invalidate this argument by claiming that, on the contrary, a shattered capitalism has created the social chaos and that the social revolution is entirely capable of restoring the security of social life. Here, one contention faced another. And in the Soviet Union the substitution of the authoritarian moral principle with non-authoritarian self-regulation did not succeed.

The confrontation of the two claims is just as unconvincing as the attempt to compete with political reaction by insisting on one's own "morality." It must first be understood why the average person is so bound to the concept of morality and why he invariably connects the words "social revolution" with the image of sexual and cultural chaos. Part of the answer to this question has already been given by our investigation of Fascist ideology: to the unconscious, affective life of the average man, structured in terms of sex negation, being a cultural Bolshevik meant the "living out of sexual sensuality." Now, if someone believed that in the social revolution sex-economic insights which eliminate moral regulation could be immediately applied in practice, this would merely furnish evidence that the concept of sex-economy was misunderstood.

As soon as a society assumes ownership of the means of production, it is inevitably confronted by the question of how human communal life should be regulated: morally or "freely." Even superficial reflection shows that there can be no question of immediately freeing sexuality or suspending moral norms and regulations. We have frequently encountered the fact that man, with his present character structure, cannot regulate himself, that although he can immediately establish an economic democracy he cannot create a political one. This is, after all, the whole point of Lenin's thesis that the state would only gradually wither away. Therefore, if we want to suspend moralistic regulation and replace it with self-regulation, we must know to what extent the old moralistic regulation was necessary and to what extent, in terms of both individuals and society, it was a calamity and caused further calamities.

The compulsory moral viewpoint of political reaction regards biological drives and social interests in terms of an absolute contradiction. As a result, it is said, if "morals were suspended," the "animal instincts" would take over and "cause chaos." It is clear that the evocation of social chaos, which plays such a tremendously important role in politics, is nothing but the fear of human drives. Therefore, is compulsory morality necessary? Yes, insofar as antisocial drives do threaten the social community. How, then, is it possible to eliminate compulsory moral regulation?

This question is answered immediately if we take into account the following sex-economic findings: moral regulation of the natural, biological needs by means of repression, nongratification, etc., creates secondary, pathological, antisocial drives that must, of necessity, be inhibited. Thus, moralism did not arise from the need to suppress socially disturbing drives, because it existed *prior* to the formation of these drives. It originated in primitive society when a developing upper class, which was becoming economically powerful, had certain interests in suppressing the natural needs, which in themselves did not disturb society.<sup>3</sup> Compulsory moral regulation acquired justification for its existence at the moment when social life *actually* became threatened by the conditions that moral regulation had produced. Correspondingly, suppression of the gratification of the need for food produced the tendency to steal, which in turn necessitated the moral regulation against stealing. Hence, if we discuss the question of whether compulsory morality is necessary or not, whether one form of morality should be replaced by another, or whether moral regulation per se should be replaced by self-regulation, we can make no progress whatever unless we distinguish between *natural* biological drives and the *secondary*, antisocial drives created by a compulsory morality. The unconscious psychic life of man in a patriarchal society is filled with both kinds of drives. Therefore, if the antisocial drives are suppressed—and justifiably so—natural biological drives will also be sacrificed, because it is impossible to separate them. However, while

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality*.

political reaction *a priori* associates the concept of drives with the idea of antisociality, the distinction we have made above offers us a way out.

As long as the restructuring of man has not succeeded to the extent that the sex-economic regulation of his biological energy precludes any tendency toward antisocial acts, moral regulation will not be eliminated. Since the process of restructuring will presumably take a very long time, we can say that the elimination of compulsory moral regulation and its displacement by sex-economic regulation will be possible only to the extent to which the realm of the secondary, antisocial drives is reduced in favor of natural biological drives. We are justified in making this prediction on the basis of the processes observed in the character-analytic treatment of individuals. There, too, we see that the patient relinquishes his moralistic form of regulation only to the extent to which he regains his natural sexuality. Along with the moral regulation by his conscience, the patient also loses his antisocial tendencies and becomes "moral" to the same extent that he becomes genitally healthy.

Hence social development will not do away with moral regulation overnight; it will first of all restructure people in such a way as to enable them to live and work in a social community with independence and truly voluntary self-discipline, which cannot be imposed by authority and moral pressure. Moral inhibition will apply only to antisocial drives; e.g., the seduction of children by adults will be severely punished. Moral regulation will not be abolished so long as the impulse to seduce children is structurally present in the masses of adults. In this respect, conditions after the revolution will still be the same as in an authoritarian society. The crucial difference is that the free society will provide ample room and security for the gratification of natural needs. Thus, it will not only not prohibit a love relationship between two adolescents of the opposite sex but will give it all manner of social support. Such a society will not only not prohibit the child's masturbation but, on the contrary, will probably conclude that any adult who hinders the development of the child's sexuality should be severely dealt with.



We should not now regard the concept of "sexual drives" as absolute and rigid, for the secondary drive is conditioned not merely by what it wants but also by the point of time at which it develops and by the circumstances under which it seeks to obtain its gratification. One and the same drive in one situation and at a given time may be natural, while in another situation and at another time it may be asocial. To clarify this point: If a child in his first and second years urinates in bed and plays with his feces, this is a natural phase in the pregenital development of his sexuality. At that age, the impulse to play with feces is natural and biologically conditioned, and punishing the child for this natural activity itself calls for the severest punishment. But if the same person wanted to eat or play with his feces at the age of fourteen, this would be a secondary, antisocial, pathological impulse. Such an adolescent should not be punished; he should be hospitalized. Even so, a free society should not be content with this. Rather, its most important task should be to transform education in such a way that the impulse toward such actions would no longer exist.

To mention another example: If a boy of fifteen wanted to start a love relationship with a thirteen-year-old maturing girl, a free society would not only not oppose it but would support and protect it. On the other hand, if the same boy of fifteen were to induce three-year-old girls into sexual games or if he tried to seduce a girl of his own age against her will, such conduct would be antisocial. It would indicate that he is neurotically inhibited in his capacity to choose a partner his own age. To summarize, we may say that during the period of transition from an authoritarian to a free society the following principle would be valid: moral regulation for secondary, asocial drives and sex-economic self-regulation for natural biological needs. The goal of social development is progressively to eliminate secondary drives and the moral compulsion that accompanies them, and to replace them completely with sex-economic self-regulation.

Moralists or even persons who function in abnormal ways might easily interpret what we have said about the secondary drives as serving their own purposes. But it will doubtless be

possible to clarify the distinction between natural and secondary drives to such an extent that the moral superman of patriarchy can no longer slip through the back door into the life of the community. The existence of strict moral principles has invariably signified that the biological, and specifically the sexual, needs of man were not being satisfied. Every moral regulation is in itself sex-negating, and all compulsory morality is life-negating. The social revolution has no more important task than finally to enable human beings to realize their full potentialities and find gratification in life.

Sex-economy aspires to "moral conduct" just as much as does moral regulation. But sex-economy wants to establish it differently and it has also a totally different understanding of morality—not as something antithetical to nature but in full harmony with nature and civilization. Sex-economy opposes compulsory moral regulation, but not a morality that is life-affirming.

#### 4. SEX-ECONOMIC "MORALITY"

All over the world people are fighting for a new order of social life, sometimes under favorable but often under the most adverse circumstances. Not only do they wage their fight under the worst social and economic conditions, but they are also inhibited, confused, and threatened by their own psychic structures, which are basically the same as the psychic structures of those who oppose them. The goal of a cultural revolution is to create human character structures capable of self-regulation. Today's fighters who are struggling to reach this goal frequently live by principles formed by this goal, but they are no more than "principles." It is important to make clear that today there are no people with a fully developed, integrated, sex-affirmative structure, because all of us have been influenced by the authoritarian, religious, sex-negating machinery of education. Nevertheless, in shaping our personal lives we struggle for an attitude which might be described as sex-economic. One person may succeed to

a degree, another may have great trouble in restructuring himself. Whoever has participated for years, even decades, in the workers' movement knows from experience that something of a future sex-economic life has been anticipated here and there in the personal lives of these people.

A few examples will show what "sex-economic morality" means even today and how it has anticipated the morality of the future. It should be emphasized that we are by no means alone in advocating this kind of life and its aspirations; rather, we can hold such views and lead such a life because these modes of conduct, embodying new "moral principles," have already begun to penetrate the total process of human society, entirely independent of and unrelated to any individual's will imposed upon it from outside or to party slogans.

Fifteen or twenty years ago, it was a disgrace for an unmarried girl *not* to be a virgin. Today, girls of all social strata are developing the attitude, more or less clearly, that it is a disgrace *still* to be a virgin at the age of eighteen, twenty, or twenty-two.

Not too long ago it was a rigorously punishable offense if a couple who wanted to marry had physical knowledge of each other prior to marriage. Today, quite spontaneously and in spite of an opposing church, conventional medicine, philosophy, etc., the view has penetrated wide circles of the population that it is unhygienic, imprudent, and perhaps destructive for the future if a man and a woman who wish to establish a permanent relationship are tied to each other without previously being convinced that they are sexually compatible.

Extramarital sexual intercourse, which only a few years ago was still a disgrace, and even branded by the law as an "offense against nature," has today become a matter of course and a vital necessity.

Not long ago, the idea that a sexually mature girl of fifteen or sixteen could have a boyfriend seemed absurd, even unthinkable. Today the question is under discussion, and in a few years it will have become just as self-evident as is now the right of the unmarried woman to have a partner. In a hundred years, the insistence that woman teachers should not have any sexual life will evoke the same surprised smile that is reserved today for the

time when men forced women to wear chastity belts. The idea still generally prevails that a woman must be seduced and should not herself be the seducer. But who today does not find this ludicrous?

At one time the woman could not be sure that sexual intercourse would not take place if she was unwilling. The concept of marital duty, which is dictated by law and has serious consequences, proves this. But in our sexual counseling and our medical practice we learn every day that it is becoming increasingly a matter of course that, all social ideologies notwithstanding, a man does not have sexual intercourse with his partner if she is unwilling; even more, he does not embrace her unless she is genitally aroused. A number of years ago (and even today) it was well known that women tolerated the sexual act without participating in it. It is part of the new morality not to have sexual intercourse unless it is mutually desired; this eliminates the rape ideology and the attitude that the woman should be seduced or at least gently subdued.

A few years ago (and even today) the opinion prevailed that one had to watch jealously over the fidelity of the partner, and the statistics on sex murders convince us at first glance that social depravity in this area is widespread. But gradually, and more or less clearly, the insight gains ground that no individual has the right to forbid the partner either a temporary or a permanent sexual relationship with another. He (or she) is only entitled to withdraw or to regain the affections of the partner, or perhaps to tolerate infidelity. This attitude, which is in complete accord with sex-economic findings, has nothing to do with the hyper-radical ideology that one should not be jealous at all, that it "makes no difference" if the partner establishes another relationship. The pain in envisioning a beloved partner in another's embrace is natural. This natural jealousy must be strictly distinguished from possessive jealousy. Just as it is natural not to want to know that a beloved partner is in the arms of someone else, so it is unnatural, and tantamount to a secondary drive, to forbid a partner to establish another relationship when there is no longer any sexual intimacy in a marriage or long-lasting relationship.

We are satisfied with citing these few examples and contend

that the complicated personal and in particular sexual life of people today would be very simply regulated if human character structure were capable of drawing all those conclusions that result from taking pleasure in life. It is the essence of sex-economic regulation to avoid absolute rules or norms and to accept the interests of life affirmation and life enjoyment as the regulators of human society. That, owing to the ruined structure of human beings, this awareness is extremely restricted today, argues only against the moralistic regulation which has created this structure, but not against the principle of self-regulation itself.

Thus, there are *two* kinds of "morality" but only *one* kind of moral self-regulation. That "morality" which all people affirm to be self-evident (not to rape, not to murder, etc.) can be established only if natural needs are fully gratified. But the other "morality" which we reject (abstinence for children and adolescents, absolute and eternal marital fidelity, compulsory marriage, etc.) is itself pathological and causes the very chaos it feels called upon to master. It is this morality which we inexorably oppose.

It is said that sex-economy intends to destroy the family. People prattle about the "sexual chaos" that would follow in the wake of a freeing of the capacity to love, and the masses listen to their words and trust them because these people wear morning coats and gold-rimmed glasses and talk as if they were in command. Whether or not what they say is true, however, depends on what is meant here. The economic subjugation of women and children must be eliminated; and also their subjugation to authority. Only if this is accomplished will the man love his wife, the woman her husband, the children their parents, and the parents their children. They will no longer have any reason to hate one another. Thus what we want to destroy is the hatred which the family breeds, and the violation it causes under the guise of love. If familial love is the great human blessing, it will have to prove itself. If a dog on a leash does not run off, no one will regard him as a loyal companion on the basis of this fact alone. No reasonable individual will speak of love if a man sleeps

with a defenseless woman who is virtually chained hand and feet. No one, unless he is a real scoundrel, will be proud of a woman's love gained by financial support or by power. No decent person will accept love that is not given voluntarily. The compulsory morality of marital obligations and familial authority is a morality of cowards and impotent people who are afraid of life, people who are incapable of experiencing, through the power of natural love, what they try to procure for themselves with the help of marital laws and the police.

These people want to put the whole human race into their own straitjacket because they are unable to tolerate the sight of natural sexuality. It irritates them and turns them green with envy because they themselves would like to live in this manner but cannot. We do not want to force anyone to give up family life, but we also do not want anyone who does not want it to be forced into it. Those who can and want to live their lives monogamously should do so; but those who cannot, those whom it will destroy, should have the possibility of making other arrangements. After all, the establishment of a "new life" is predicated on recognizing the contradictions in the old one.