ter types." The argument is that the left is mired in intellectual defenses (or "armoring") while the right is mired in mystical ones. The solution is for everyone to get in touch with their sex drive and have better orgasms.

Osama bin Laden, we are told, suffers from "orgiastic impotence" despite having sexual relations with many women (13). The solution is for him, and everyone else, to have "regular and complete pleasurable discharge of energy with *involuntary convulsions* of the body's total musculature, accompanied by a *temporary suspension of consciousness*, and followed by total relaxation and a tender, grateful attitude toward one's partner" (13). The problem with this argument is that we have no evidence about bin-Laden's sex life other than the fact that he has several wives. Nor does Konia offer any evidence that this kind of sexual experience has changed anyone's political beliefs.

At one point, Konia argues that the social movements of the 1960s were "fueled by unfulfilled sexual longing which could not be satisfied" (xxvi). Later in the book, they are attributed to "the collapse of Germany following its unconditional and humiliating defeat in the First World War" (220). But the 1960s were a time of sexual liberation thanks to birth control pills and there is no reason to believe that sexual frustration increased in the 1960s as compared to the 1950s. Furthermore, the West German economy was booming.

Many of the author's other opinions are similarly unconvincing. He asserts that smoking does not cause cancer; it is caused by a predisposition to cancer. "Cancer, atherosclerotic heart disease, diabetes, obesity and the myriad autoimmune diseases… each involves an underlying sexual disturbance that has, at its basis, disturbed bioenergetic pulsation." (400). He states that gun control is useless since criminals will always find guns and that liberals are blind to reality when they criticize "President Bush's intuitive, clear-sighted characterization of North Korea, Iraq and Iran as an `Axis of Evil'" (437). He also states that homosexuality is "a symptom that arises from an underlying disturbance in the orgasm function" (285).

The link between these idiosyncratic opinions and Reich's theories is unconvincing, as is Konia's attribution of Islamic terrorism to sexual frustration and the promise of virgins in the afterlife. This is not a new observation, and it fails to explain why Islamist movements have emerged at this point in time. Sexual repression in Islamic societies is nothing new.

This reviewer wonders why Charles Konia. A psychiatrist certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, is so devoted to defending the ideas of Wilhelm Reich. The answer becomes apparent when I realized that he is certified in medical orgonomy by the American Board of Medical Orgonomy and that he practices medical orgone therapy in Easton, Pennsylvania.

Finally, Konia argues that "all efforts at human betterment have failed" because of a failure to adopt Reich's sexual theories. But many efforts at human betterment have not failed. Slavery has been abolished, infant mortality is down, life expectancy is up, workers have unions, women and racial minorities have much improved opportunities, the rights of homosexuals are acknowledged, and witches are no longer burned at the stake. Although not universal, these improvements are real in many countries, and they owe very little—if anything—to Reich's theories about orgone energy.

Sincerely yours,

Ted Goertzel

Ted Goertzel, PhD, *is Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University in Camden, N.J. His many publications include Turncoats and True Believers: The Dynamics of Political Belief and Disillusionment; Linus Pauling: A Life in Science and Politics; and Fernando Henrique Cardoso: Reinventing Democracy in Brazil. Dr. Goertzel may be contacted at tedgoertzel@gmail.com.* ❑

Learning Psychohistory in the U.S.A.

Dear Editor,

Learning psychohistory under Professor David Beisel at Rockland Community College of the State University of New York was one of my greatest academic experiences because it gave me hope for a better world. When I arrived from Tokyo in 2003 as an international student to the United States, I was surprised to see flags everywhere and armed soldiers who seemed to be on every corner of New York City. This brought to mind the worries of many people in my homeland about my going abroad at this time of terrorism and the war in Afghanistan. When I actually stood on the ground of New York City, I realized

that there was something unusual going on in this country.

Rockland County, where I went to college, was a quiet suburb, and yet I could still find people talking nervously about how terrorists could attack their little village. I was rather shocked to see the villagers being so sensitive about the war and their soldiers in Middle East. The war on terrorism felt real. I was frightened and at the same time curious about Americans' reactions. This situation reminded me of what I have heard about the Japanese experience during World War II.

Fortunately, I was acquainted with many good Americans during my student life in Rockland County; they were always supportive and open-minded in dealing with me as an international student. Nor did I experience any discrimination or physical danger. Yet, I have also heard how the lives of other Asian students in the U.S. changed as they felt anxiety and thought themselves to be seen with suspicion after the September 11th attacks. For example, one Asian student was misidentified as a "Muslim" and threatened by a local person.

For me, being Japanese is about being sick of hearing about World War II. Ever since my elementary school days, I have heard so many horror stories and seen gruesome pictures of atrocities by fanatical Japanese soldiers during WWII that I had been conditioned to feel sick and guilty about the behavior of my people. Therefore, I had ambivalent feelings toward Americans when I actually witnessed the aftermath of September 11th. Americans becoming more patriotic and declaring war on terrorism did not trouble me. At the same time, I felt helpless before the irrational, chauvinistic, and violent behavior I heard about or observed. How could people so readily be reckless and thoughtless about their own and other peoples' lives? Similarly, even though there has been considerable research on the atrocities of Japanese soldiers, it has not been offered to the general public in Japan. Mainly I was told that those Japanese soldiers were so irrationally extreme that we could never understand them.

It was in the context of 9/11 and my awareness of Japanese wartime atrocities that I took a psychohistory course at Rockland Community College. In it, Professor David Beisel analyzed human behavior and history in a way that immediately caught my attention and stimulated my intellectual and emotional curiosity. Through his psychological analysis of Hitler, Chamberlain, and other European leaders prior to World War II, Dr. Beisel argued that the underlying cause of war is the misguided search for love and other emotions. Seemingly irrational behavior became reasonable in the name of love of the country. This valuable insight helped me to understand human behavior, changing how I looked at the world. I started noticing that both Americans and terrorists had been talking a lot about families, friends, neighborhoods, and countries. I also remembered that many Japanese soldiers had died for their own families and hometowns. When I understood their motivations and emotions, I felt more connected to the humanity of these soldiers than I had before.

At the time, my understanding of the human psyche was insufficient for me to have hope in the future. After all, humans have been fighting against each other throughout history. Hope actually came from "Dr. B.'s" introduction to the study of the evolution of childrearing by Lloyd deMause. To me the idea that human civilization is improving as a consequence of better childrearing was like one precious drop of water in the desert of violent human history. This study of evolutionary progress has encouraged me to look at the world with hope. This good news is connected to worldwide human rights movements to improve the situations of children, women, workers, and humankind in general, as well as advances in physical and mental hygiene. Peace movements and the lessening of war are very positive signs.

As a result of my studies with Dr. Beisel I can say to my friends that humans are getting better, even in the face of poverty, as well as apocalyptic violence and much negativity in our world. Part of the good news is that I can play a role in improving things, by working to improve childrearing. I know no other study that offers a clearer solution to human violence than this. A friend in the same psychohistory course spoke with me about all of us playing a role improving the future in this way.

Consequently, after I graduated from Rockland Community College, I majored in psychology at CUNY Queens College for the purpose of studying mental health. Last year I earned a bachelor's degree and I will be continuing my study in psychology in an American graduate school. My focus there and professionally, thanks to Dr. Beisel, will be improving parenting. I feel considerable gratitude to the professor of history who advocated love at this time of war. Psychohistory has given me a deep, positive understanding of other people and also of myself.

Learning psychohistory led me to view the future more hopefully.

Sincerely yours,

Sho Araiba

Sho Araiba *was born in 1983 and grew up in Tokyo before becoming an international student in America. After attending SUNY Rockland Community College from 2003 to 2005 he continued his study in psychology at CUNY Queens College from 2005 to 2007. In 2008 he will begin a masters program in psychology (Learning and Behavior Analysis) at CUNY Queens College. Sho Araiba may be contacted at sho.araiba@gmail.com.* ❑

In Memoriam: Otto Paul Pflanze

Paul Elovitz
Clio's Psyche

It has come to our attention that Professor Otto Paul Pflanze (1919-2007), who did some psychohistory as a biographer of Otto von Bismarck and was editor-in-chief from 1977 to 1985 of *The American Historical Review* (*AHR*—the preeminent American historical journal), died on March 3, 2007 in Bloomington, Indiana. Pflanze's "Toward a Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Bismarck" (*AHR*, 1972) is an invaluable source for understanding the psychodynamics of the unifier of Germany. This internationally renowned Bismarck (1815-98) biographer and historian of nineteenth-century Germany was born in Tennessee and educated at Maryville College and Yale University, with the latter interrupted by service in the Air Corps of the U.S. Army. Though still a graduate student, he worked for a year for the U.S. Department of State helping to edit *Documents of German Foreign Policy, 1918–45*. After receiving his PhD in 1950, he taught at New York University, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of Illinois, the University of Minnesota, Indiana University and finally as Stevenson Professor of History at Bard College prior to his 1992 retirement.

Aside from his service as editor of the *American Historical Review*, Professor Pflanze is best known for his prize-winning three volumes on the "Iron Chancellor": *Bismarck and the Development of Germany* (1963-90). Bismarck the man shows with all of his hypochondria and contradictions in some of Pflanze's writing, though he did not delve into the fascinating unconscious reasons for the Chancellor's diplomacy.

Professor Pflanze was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton and of various professional associations, as well as the recipient of numerous awards. He had a reputation as a generous advisor, teacher, and editor, as well as an interesting raconteur. He is survived by his wife of fifty-seven years, his thee children, one grandchild, and a substantial body of scholarship.

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, took his doctoral degree in Modern European and English history and may be contacted at pelovitz@aol.com. ❑

BULLETIN BOARD

CONFERENCES: The first scheduled **2008/2009 Psychohistory Forum Work-In-Progress Saturday Seminar** will be the election year meeting on **November 1** on **"Psychobiographical and Psychological Aspects of Election 2008"** with presentations by **Herbert Barry, Paul Elovitz**, and a third psychohistorian. Some upcoming National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (**NAAP**) conferences in New York City are on **October 18** on "Listening in the Age of Google–Clinical Perspectives and Social Action" and on **November 16** "The Future of Psychoanalytic Education: Innovation and Preservation." The Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society (**APCS**) will be meeting at Rutgers on **October 24-26** with a Forum sponsored panel on the presidency with presentations by **David Beisel**, Paul Elovitz, and **Burt Seitler**. The Boston **November 21-23, 2008** International Federation for Psychoanalytic Education (**IFPE**) conference is on "Encounters and Escapes – Danger and Desires in Psychoanalytic Connection." Among the members and associates of the Psychohistory Forum presenting at the 31st Annual International Psychohistorical Association (**IPA**) at Fordham Law School in Manhattan on June 2-4, 2008 were **Florian Galler**, **David Lotto**, **Christine Silverstein**, and **Charles Strozier**. At the IPA Herbert Barry, Paul Elovitz, and **Dan Dervin** presented at the Forum sponsored panel on the childhood and personality 2008 elec-