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**IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELING FROM ERICH FROMM'S
VIEW OF MAN'S ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY**

by

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ABSTRACT

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Purpose of the Study: This study, motivated by man's current restlessness and lack of a stable frame of reference, focused upon man's ethical responsibility. Fromm was selected, not only because he has written extensively in this area, but also because he has employed ethics as the interconnecting basis for all of his efforts--both theoretically and therapeutically--for well over forty years. The present analysis was undertaken in the belief that the counselor's attitudes toward good and evil, right and wrong, and growth and decay are determined largely by the counselor's philosophical view of man.

Man, in the Frommian sense, is seen as the primary resultant of the process of evolution. Man's awesome greatness is exhibited both in his ability to transcend himself in love and creativity, and also in his ability to surrender



himself to fanatical hatred and destruction. A realization of the true nature of humanistic ethics will permit man's escape from the hands of economic and bureaucratic interests which Fromm views as bent on the systematic and relentless corruption of his basic needs and noblest aspirations.

Procedure: The study probed Fromm's view of man and of the human condition as a foundation for a logical and consistent analysis of the nature of ethics. This analysis emanated from a critical study and evaluation of Fromm's writings available in the English language.

Findings: (1) The study indicated that neurosis is an ethical failure, i.e., a violation of man's growth oriented impulses. Thus, the neurotic is one who has surrendered a part of his individuality to the collective demands of a society which may be termed alienated because of the diverse and corrupting influences of ignorance, prejudice, fear, and economic pressures. (2) In this study, adjustment psychology was understood as both superficial and dangerous because it sought either to "adjust" the client to an already alienated society, or to concentrate its efforts on mere symptom removal. If neurosis is viewed solely as the result of faulty learning patterns, character and personal choice are eliminated from the context of the analysis. The increasing division between psychology, ethics, and philosophy was seen as greatly complicating therapeutic efforts. (3) The study moved beyond mere social adjustment psychology and endorsed



a therapy which was primarily aimed at the cure of soul, i.e., the total reorientation of the personality as based on Fromm's understanding of the nature of character.

Conclusions: The conclusions drawn from this study supported the contention that the neglect of ethics in psychotherapy deters the therapeutic effort. Fromm's synthesis viewed neurosis as a moral failure. Man's basic orientation is toward life and growth; however, this fundamental productive orientation can be weakened and seriously vitiated by choices favoring death and decay. The compounding of the death orientation by successive choices makes neurosis a matter of character, which is the key to the ethical problem in psychotherapy.

Finally, the therapist must realize that the healing is first and foremost in the hands of the client himself. The therapist's expertise may facilitate healing; he may even stand as a model as one who is more successful in the art of living. The real cure, however, is the ethical decision on the part of the client to cooperate more fully with growth oriented impulses. Psychotherapy rests upon that ethical decision, that is to say, on that free choice.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. The Position and Role of Man in Nature	1
Man, the Freak of Nature	2
Man's Needs--as They Flow from the Conditions of His Existence	7
Relatedness vs. Narcissism	8
Transcendence--Creativeness vs. Destructiveness	9
Rootedness--Brotherliness vs. Incest	10
Identity--Individuality vs. Conformity	11
A Frame of Reference--Reason vs. Irrationality	12
2. Character and Freedom	18
Character, the Heart of Ethical Behavior	18
The Dynamics of Character	20
Nonproductive character orientations	22
Productive character orientation	24
The Healing Nature of the Unconscious	26
Social Character	27
Personality Syndromes	30
The Syndrome of Decay	30



Chapter	ix Page
Necrophilia--the love of death	30
Malignant narcissism	31
Incestuous symbiosis	32
The Syndrome of Growth	33
Biophilia--love of life	34
The love of man	35
Freedom, the Root of Humanness	35
3. Alienation	47
Alienation and Regression	52
Repression	53
Repression and human relatedness	54
Repression in religion	59
Alienation and Self-Awareness	63
4. Fromm's Ethical View of Reality	70
The Natural Law Ethic	74
Moral-Biological Progress	77
Humanistic Ethics vs. Authoritarian Ethics	83
Subjectivistic vs. Objectivistic Ethics	88
Fromm's Categorical Imperative: Live for Living	93
Conscience	100
The Authoritarian Conscience	101
The Humanistic Conscience	103
5. The Role of Ethics in Psychotherapy	106
Neurosis as an Ethical Failure	108



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Chapter	Page
The Dangers of Adjustment Psychology . . .	113
Cure of Soul	121
REFERENCES	126
APPENDIX	130
VITA	136



Chapter 1

The Position and Role of Man in Nature

Ethics concern the behavior of man. However, any discussion concerning ethics originates from some theory or understanding of the nature of man no matter how tentative. Erich Fromm has foreseen this difficulty and presents a fully developed theory of man, his position, and role in nature.

The underlying structure of Fromm's (1966b, pp. 31-33) thought is his adoption of an evolutionary approach to nature. Nature or reality is not a thing; it is a process. Man is a part of that process. Man's place is in nature; he is as much a part of nature as the plants and animals. Nevertheless, the reality of man, his position and role in nature, is seen as the primary resultant of the process of evolution.

To define man's nature, Fromm seeks to discover what position he occupies in that process. To determine his role, he seeks to define and distinguish something of the essential characteristics of man himself.

An understanding of man's position and role in nature demands examination of Fromm's concepts of man's

origin and emergence with its consequent problems and his attempted solutions of those problems.

Man, the Freak of Nature

For Fromm (1966b, p. 48), existence, or nature's domain, was formally a uniform and harmonious state. There was a noticeable difference between inorganic and organic life, but essentially the harmonious adaptation was the same: the equipment it inherited made it a fixed and unchanging part of nature's world. The formula for animal existence, often filled with strife and struggle, was basically the same: it either fit in, or it died out. The higher animals were no exception. They exhibit more intelligence, more flexibility of action pattern, even less structural adjustment at birth, but they too, equipped by nature to meet the conditions she imposes, must adapt or disappear. Thus, Fromm (1966b) finds all animal existence under a common formula: "the animal 'is lived' through biological laws of nature, it is a part of nature and never transcends nature [p. 28]."

This absorption by nature, following laws which could be neither questioned nor understood, was, according to Fromm, at some undetermined point, broken. Fromm (1967) views this "break" as the birth of man and calls man, negatively, "the freak of the universe [p. 49]."

Man's appearance was an accident. He was the product of a break in the great chain by which nature bound

her kingdom to herself. Fromm (1966b) states that this event took place:

... when in the evolutionary process, action ceases to be essentially determined by instinct; when the adaptation of nature loses its coercive character; when action is no longer fixed by hereditarily given mechanisms [p. 30].

Thus, man became a castaway, an orphan whose actions, no longer having the capacity to respond instinctively to nature's strict and rigid laws, became unpredictable, and at times, unbeneficial.

Fromm sees man's appearance also as a paradox. When an animal's life is not lived by fierce and rigid biological laws, he is most vulnerable; he is, in effect, the most helpless animal. Paradoxically, however, his helplessness is the conditio sine qua non for greatness. It is, according to Fromm (1965b), a felix culpa, for due to this unprecedented mutation, "... this very helplessness of man is the basis from which human development springs; man's biological weakness is the condition of human culture [p. 48]." Moreover, Fromm (1967, p. 48) indicates that the greater the disharmony, the smaller the animal's adaptive capacities and the more developed his brain and his ability to learn.

It is from this view that Fromm (1966a) asserts that the problem of human existence has its origin in man's original "break" with the unities and harmonies of nature. With the initiation of the process of becoming human, the pre-human state of harmony is disrupted, and man is driven



to seek new unities and harmonies with nature, his fellow-man, and with himself. Fromm (1966b) states that:

The problem of man's existence, then, is unique in the whole of nature; he has fallen out of nature, as it were, and is still in it; he is partly divine; partly animal; partly infinite, partly finite. The necessity to find ever-new solutions for the contradictions in his existence, to find ever-higher forms of unity with nature, his fellow man and himself, is the source of all psychic forces which motivate man, of all his passions, affects and anxieties [p. 31].

Reason is seen by Fromm (1966b, p. 30) as man's curse as well as his blessing. It produces in man a condition different from all other organisms; it places him in a state of constant and unavoidable disequilibrium. Man is driven to resolve dichotomies or contradictions with which reason or self-awareness have burdened him. Life, as Fromm (1966b) points out, has become aware of itself, and makes demands on itself:

Self-awareness, reason, and imagination disrupt the harmony which characterizes animal existence. . . . Being aware of himself, he realizes his powerlessness and the limitations of his existence. He visualizes his own end: death. Never is he free from the dichotomy of his own existence: he can not rid himself of his own mind, even if he should want to; he can not rid himself of his body as long as he is alive--and his body makes him want to be alive [p. 30].

Thus, the dynamic side of man's psyche is rooted in the origin of man himself. His birth introduced an ever-pressing need to find new solutions for the contradiction found in his human situation. However, one solution is forever closed to him. He is prevented from ever returning to his pre-human existence in an attempt to regain purely animal harmonies. Fromm (1966b) indicates:

Man's evolution is based on the fact that he has lost his original home, nature--and that he can never return to it, can never become an animal again [p. 31].

Thus, man is not content with the mere satisfaction of purely physiological needs, i.e., hunger, thirst, and sex. Fromm (1966b) points out that "inasmuch as man is human, the satisfaction of these instinctual needs is not sufficient to make him happy; they are not even sufficient to make him sane [p. 31]."

What is man? No question is more fundamental to Fromm. According to Fromm (1967, p. 54), the answer does not lie in reducing man's strivings and passions to instinctual-biological drives. It must be remembered that man's dichotomous situation is basic to his humanness. It is the contradictory nature of man's existence which generates aspirations and strivings which are uniquely human, transcending his animal origins. Thus, an understanding of man must proceed from an understanding of his human situation and condition. Fromm (1966b) states:

The archimedic point of the specifically human dynamism lies in the uniqueness of the human situation; the understanding of man's psyche must be based on the analysis of man's needs stemming from the condition of his existence [p. 32].

Here is the root of Fromm's understanding of man. His intention is to study, analyze, and define the basic needs and strivings stemming from man's human condition. What promotes man, keeps him sane, and encourages his full growth is good; what cripples and frustrates him is evil.

Before proceeding to a fuller discussion of man's basic needs and the dichotomous situation out of which they arise, some brief mention needs to be made about a more general concept which considers man's basic posture toward existence itself. Fromm (1966b) indicates that man suffers a bipolar tendency. He is pulled toward death as well as life:

. . . We are never free from two conflicting tendencies: one to emerge from the womb, from the animal form of existence into a more human existence, from bondage to freedom; another to return to the womb, to nature, to certainty and security [p. 33].

The similarity between Fromm's (1967, p. 215) regressive tendency and Freud's death instinct is readily admitted. Nevertheless, while Fromm admits that Freud's "thanatos" has a kernel of truth, it has not the whole truth. The difference lies in the fact that Fromm's forward-going impulse is stronger, biologically, than the regressive impulse. Moreover, normally, the life instinct increases in relative strength the more it grows.

The latter alternative, regression, is no solution, and necessarily fails. Moreover, the double tendencies are not present just in man's early developmental stages, but are to be found in every stage of development. His whole life is a series of births and deaths. Nevertheless, Fromm (1966b, p. 33) states emphatically that man's forward-going impulse, the progressive answer to his problems, has gained the upper hand in the race as a whole.



7

The idea of understanding man from the vantage point of basic needs which flow from man's human condition has taken on increasing importance in Fromm's thought. In Escape from Freedom, Fromm discusses only one need, that of relatedness. Schaar (1964) points out that, "he treated it more in terms of 'human nature' than in terms of the 'human condition' [p. 45]." In The Sane Society, Fromm presents a well thought out and consistent picture of the five psychic needs basic to man's happiness and development.

Man's Needs--as They Flow from the Conditions
of His Existence

Fromm leads into his discussion of man's needs by insisting that man's motivational forces arise basically from his constant attempt to attain equilibrium, to attain a new harmony, in the face of ever-present and ever-newly arising inner contradictions. He notes that this represents a fundamental departure from Freud's thought. As powerful as man's libidinous nature is, it is not the most powerful or fundamental force with which man must contend.

Citing this as the key to humanistic psychoanalysis, Fromm (1966b) adds:

... powerful as the sexual drive and all its derivations are, they are by no means the most powerful forces in man and their frustration is not the cause of mental disturbance. The most powerful forces motivating man's behavior stem from the condition of his existence, the "human situation" [p. 34].



Relatedness vs. Narcissism

The first basic need is man's urgent need for relatedness. Man no longer has his instinctively driven relatedness to nature. Reason and imagination tell him he is alone, cut off, and in an indifferent world. He must reduce the anxiety and fear productive of this state. Only by bridging the gap between himself and his fellows can he replace those instinctual ties he has lost forever with new ties. The matter, as it is for all man's basic needs, is not only urgent but absolutely necessary. According to Fromm (1966b), "The necessity to unite with other living beings, to be related to them, is an imperative need on the fulfillment of which man's sanity depends [p. 36]."

The satisfaction of the need for relatedness can take several forms. Submission to others is one such form. In an effort to overcome his helplessness and isolation, Fromm (1965a, pp. 232-233) feels that man can submit himself to powerful, even insane leaders who may bring down destruction on leader and followers alike. Man's submission is not always to overt authority. He can submit himself to internalized authorities, such as conscience, or duty, or inner compulsion, or to anonymous authorities such as public opinion. Another such approach, cited by Fromm (1971a, p. 124), is to establish oneself as a power over others, making them a part of oneself. Both means of satisfaction are symbiotic and involve the loss of freedom and integrity by all involved.

Can man progressively satisfy his need to relate to the world outside himself and still retain his freedom and dignity? Fromm (1966b, p. 37) answers in the affirmative. The solution to man's basic need for relatedness is love. Love is giving, but not giving up, one's integrity and independence. It is the bridge that closes the distance between alienated man and his fellows. There are many forms of love--self-love, motherly love, brotherly love, erotic love, love of God--but they are all an act of giving, and all possess the same fundamental characteristics toward the one loved: care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge.

Transcendence--Creativeness vs. Destructiveness

The second basic need is man's need for transcendence. Man's conscious-awakening finds him a pawn in the arbitrary hand of fate. He is in the world, but he cannot account for his arrival, or his departure. Fromm (1966b, p. 41) believes this position to be intolerable. Man can answer his need to transcend the accidental and passive character of his condition in one of two ways.

First, he can become a creator. By force and strength of the creative act itself, man can escape from the decisive but unreasoned nature of his position. Fromm (1966b) dictates, "In the act of creation man transcends himself as a creature, raises himself . . . into the realm of purposefulness and freedom [p. 41]."



A second answer to man's need for transcendence is found in the act of destruction. If man cannot create life, he can destroy it. In the act of destruction, man sets himself above life, and in a sense, masters it. If the door to creative activity is closed, the door to destructive behavior stands as a possible answer to this need. Fromm (1966b) indicates:

... Thus, the ultimate choice for man, inasmuch as he is driven to transcend himself, is to create or to destroy, to love or to hate. The enormous power of the will for destruction which we see in the history of man, and which we have witnessed so frightfully in our own time, is rooted in the nature of man, just as the drive to create is rooted in it [p. 42].

There is indication from Fromm's writings that creativeness and destructiveness are not two hostile forces or principles of equal stature. In point of fact, Fromm (1966b) feels that creativeness, the primary potentiality, is inherent in man's nature and gives way to destructiveness, a secondary potentiality, only by default: "They are both answers to the same need for transcendence, and the will to destroy must rise when the will to create cannot be satisfied [p. 41]."

Rootedness--Brotherliness vs. Incest

The third basic need, rootedness, is like the other four needs necessary for man's sanity. Man's birth means the severance and emergence from his natural ties. Yet, the "break" itself is frightening. Man is nowhere and nobody. His sanity depends on developing "human" roots, and only



after he has built a human home can he replace the home he lost. One of two principles that Fromm (1966b, p. 43) feels can form the basis for the re-rooting of himself in the world: incest, which is the desire to merge with one's own blood, soil, and clan; or brotherhood, which is the recognition of all men as equal and deserving of love and justice.

The Sane Society was Fromm's most comprehensive presentation of man's basic needs. The consistence and importance of rootedness in his thought are seen in his later publication of The Heart of Man. Here, Fromm (1971a) devotes a full third of his work to the dangers of incestuous ties:

. . . To sum up: the tendency to remain bound to the mothering person and her equivalents--to blood, family, tribe--is inherent in all men and women. It is constantly in conflict with the opposite tendency--to be born, to progress, to grow. In the case of normal development, the tendency for growth wins. . . . Incestuous wishes are not primarily a result of sexual desires, but constitute one of the most fundamental in man: the wish to remain tied to where he came from, the fear of being free, and the fear of being destroyed by the very figure toward whom he has made himself helpless, renouncing any independence [p. 134].

Needless to point out, Fromm (1966b, p. 60) indicates nationalism, state worship, and racism are all regressive forms of incestuous fixation and all deny the possibility of man using his powers productively.

Identity--Individuality vs. Conformity

The need for identity is the fourth basic need. Man's ability to say "I" is what gives him identity. Identity makes him aware of himself as a separate entity.



The root of the need for identity is the originating "break" with nature. Because his life is not lived, he must identify himself as the center of his actions.

In his work, Erikson (1962) extends Fromm's fundamental understanding of identity:

. . . We can always counter any doubts about our biological origin with ordinary defenses and typical phantasies; but we are helpless against the recurrent discovery of the icy fact that at one time we did not exist at all. . . . Where man cannot establish himself as the thinking one . . . , he may experience a sense of panic; which is at the bottom of our myth-making, our meta-physical speculation, and our artificial creation of "ideal" realities in which we become and remain the central reality [p. 111].

Fromm (1968) makes the same point. When an adult comes near the "icy fact" of nonexistence, he has available automatic recourse to a context in which he is needed, loved, or useful. Such a context, or thought system, reduces his "ego-chill" and gives a sense of control.

True identity is achieved through the process of individuation, the process by which the personality knows itself as the center and subject of its own being. Very few men achieve this goal. Most find substitutes in identification with nation, occupation, class, or religion. For Fromm (1968, p. 63), herd conformity becomes the primary way, and illusory one, of achieving a sense of identity.

A Frame of Reference--Reason vs. Irrationality

The fifth and final need is a need for a frame of orientation and devotion. The price man must pay for consciousness is insecurity. This insecurity can be

tolerated only by accepting and being aware of his human condition. Fromm insists that man must know and accept the world in which he now exists. Moreover, Fromm (1968) insists that man must cease his attempt to diminish the odds against him by inventing a world which is fictitious:

... He has to have a frame of orientation which permits him to organize a consistent picture of the world as a condition for consistent actions. He must fight not only against the dangers of dying, starving, and being hurt, but also against another danger which is specifically human: that of becoming insane [p. 63].

The human being would indeed go mad if he did not have some frame of reference to offset the experience of helplessness, disorientation and uprootedness. But beyond that, the system of orientation must be rational and objective; it must be built on sound knowledge of self, nature, and society. Nevertheless, this is not sufficient. A consistent world-view may satisfy the mind, but man is more than an intellect. He is a being who feels and wills and desires. According to Fromm (1966a), this demands that some "object of devotion, which gives meaning to his existence and his position in the world [p. 66]," be included.

The analysis of the human situation and the psychic needs flowing from it are the basis for Fromm's social criticism. Happiness, virtue, and freedom must be measured in terms consistent with whether or not society encourages the fulfillment of man's basic needs in a productive way. Only by analyzing the tone or condition of society can its real contribution to man's development be determined.

Schaar (1964) points out that Fromm's discovery of man's basic needs are founded, not on empirical evidence, but rather on an appeal to authority:

He found them (the five needs) in the pages of a number of philosophers and moralists and in his own brief philosophical analysis of the human condition. They are philosophical postulates, not empirical findings [p. 52].

While this conclusion contains some truth, it is not altogether accurate. It must be remembered that Fromm, and for that matter every school of psychoanalysis, has been observing the reactions of men in varying situations and their personal histories for more than six decades. Moreover, he has at his disposal the findings of modern psychology, which are considerable. Certainly, such findings afford a basis to challenge Fromm's position in these matters. Fromm's thought is built on the premise of man's growing and developing nature. It is obvious that the evidence concerning man's core qualities is far from complete. Thus, Fromm (1968) indicates that the task of determining what essentially makes man to be human is vast indeed:

This understanding goes beyond what is called "psychology." It should more properly be called a "science of man," a discipline which deals with the data of history, sociology, psychology, theology, mythology, physiology, economics, and art, as far as they are relevant to the understanding of man [p. 58].

It remains now that Fromm's understanding of man's dichotomous nature be examined more systematically. Man must understand himself in the light of what Fromm (1967)



terms "the existential and historical dichotomies [p. 48]." He indicates that existential contradictions in living have their source in the emergence of reason. The most fundamental dichotomy is that between life and death. This contradictory problem, along with the two to follow, admits no solution. They are not problems to be solved, but rather conditions of existence which man must make a part of his world-view if he is to live in the truth. Man's mortal nature produces another dichotomy: his inability to completely and fully fulfill himself. This contradiction arises not only from the fact that man must die, but from the fact, according to Fromm (1967, p. 51), that the individual's radical potentials are coextensive with the whole of mankind. Man can never say, "enough." Fromm (1967) states:

. . . . Every stage he reaches leaves him discontented and perplexed, and this very perplexity urges him to move toward new solutions. There is no innate "drive for progress" in man; it is the contradiction in his existence that makes him proceed on the way he set out [p. 49].

In both cases, Fromm indicates that ideologies tend to try to reconcile or deny the confusion and anxiety generated by these existential dichotomies by insisting that the fulfillment of these needs takes place after death. Reconciliation is likewise attempted in a second way by assuming that the meaning of life is not found in man realizing his fullest unfolding, but in sacrificing himself, his development, freedom, and happiness, to some social

service or social institution. Thus, Fromm (1967)

indicates:

... the individual is subordinate to or even irrelevant in comparison with the welfare of the state, community, or whatever else may symbolize eternal power, transcending the individual [p. 51].

Radically different from existential dichotomies are the historical dichotomies. Fromm (1967) indicates that historical dichotomies:

... are the many historical contradictions in individual and social life which are not a necessary part of human existence but are man made and soluble, soluble either at the time they occur or a later period of human history [p. 52].

The distinction between existential and historical dichotomies is important. It is significant, because their confusion has far-reaching implications. Those interested in upholding the historical contradiction are eager to prove them existential and insoluble. One of many contemporary contradictions is found between the rise in technology, which assures an abundance of material satisfaction, and the incapacity to use such technology exclusively for peace and the welfare of people. However, such confusion does not keep man from trying to solve the contradictions. In fact, it is peculiar to man that, when faced with a contradiction, he cannot remain passive. Fromm (1967) states that, "It [man's mind] is set in motion with the aim of resolving the contradiction. All human progress is due to this fact [p. 52]."

It must be noted that for Fromm (1967, p. 53) the basis for rationalization in the individual life and ideologies in social life are the products of man's attempt to harmonize, and thus negate, these contradictions.

In summary, man's emergence from his instinctual ties with nature has brought him a blessing and a curse. His reason, imagination, and intelligence are productive, not only of knowledge, progress, and freedom, but also of ignorance, regression, and submission as well. The fruits, sometimes bitter, sometimes sweet, are man's attempt not only to fulfill needs basic to his nature, but to fulfill them in the face of his radically dichotomous situation. As will be discussed in length on the topic of freedom, Fromm (1971a) views man's essence as "a contradiction inherent in human existence [p. 147]." Man is bound to search out the answer to the ever-newly arising contradictions in living.

Chapter 2

Character and Freedom

Chapter 1 outlined Fromm's understanding of the nature of man. Such an understanding is a necessary background for any discussion of ethics. Without some idea of man's nature and his fundamental problems and needs, comment on his behavior would be inadmissible. However, ethics demand a more penetrating understanding of man than merely a discussion of his origin or basic needs. Therefore, man's behavior will be examined in the light of Fromm's understanding of the nature of character and freedom. Both concepts are essential to Fromm and will constitute the two major headings of this chapter.

Character, the Heart of Ethical Behavior

Human conduct, if it is to have worth and meaning, must be tied to character. This insight is one of Fromm's chief strengths. He realizes that ethics must rest on the recognition that virtue or vice is the product of the virtuous or vicious character. In this way, he escapes the never-ending ambiguity peculiar to a casuistic system of ethics. Hence, the single act does not merit ethical

consideration. According to Fromm (1967, p. 41), the discussion must proceed from the recognition that the meaning given to conduct, virtue or vice, is the function of the character of the person of whom it is predicated. Fromm (1967) opens his study of ethics with a theory of character, for as he states, "the virtuous or the vicious character, rather than single virtues or vices, is the true subject matter of ethical inquiry [p. 42]."

Fromm's (1967) theory of character begins with a definition of personality, "the totality of inherited and acquired psychic qualities which are characteristic of one individual and which make the individual unique [p. 59]." Temperaments, gifts, and constitutionally given psychic qualities are inherited, while the acquired qualities of one's personality are one's character. Moreover, Fromm (1967) states:

. . . temperament . . . is constitutional and not changeable; character is essentially formed by a person's experience . . . and changeable . . . by insights and new kinds of experiences [p. 60].

Character reveals one's success in the art of living and constitutes the real problem of ethics.

Thus, Fromm views character as essential to the discussion of ethics, while maintaining that temperament is without ethical significance. Fromm (1967, pp. 60-62; 1971a, p. 20) feels that the confusion between the two has only complicated the history of ethics, especially the question of responsibility and moral judgments.

The Dynamics of Character

Fromm's understanding of character differs from both the behaviorist and Freudian conceptions. For the behaviorist, character is simply a pattern of behavior: a man's character is the cluster of behavior typical to him. Thus, character traits are synonymous with behavior traits. Fromm (1967) contends that Freud, on the other hand, developed a "consistent and penetrating theory of character as a system of strivings which underlie, but are not identical with behavior [p. 63]," i.e., a theory of unconscious motivation. Behavior can only be understood and predicted by penetrating beneath the surface and understanding the highly charged unconscious forces motivating man. The decisive point, then, is that character traits, "a system of strivings," underlie and give behavior its real meaning. Thus, Freud understood that character, fundamentally, was not a single trait but the total character organization or orientation from which the single trait follows.

Fromm follows Freud in differing with the behaviorists and then goes on to differ with Freud himself. While fundamentally agreeing with the foregoing conceptions, Fromm contends that Freud, while presenting a brilliant theory, was simply wrong about human nature. The error which forced Freud to view human nature all askant, Fromm (1967) thinks, was to conceive of man as a closed system of biological forces rather than a being who is fundamentally conditioned by society:

. . . . The main difference is that the fundamental basis of character is not seen in various types of libido organization but in specific kinds of a person's relatedness to the world. In the process of living, man relates himself to the world (1) by acquiring and assimilating things, and (2) by relating himself to people (and himself). The former I shall call the process of assimilation; the latter, that of socialization [p. 66].

Fromm (1965a) offers two definitions of character, each of which emphasizes the difference between his own and Freud's conceptions: "Character . . . is the specific form in which human energy is shaped by the dynamic adaptation of human needs to the particular mode of existence of a given society [p. 305];" and, "Character can be defined as the (relatively permanent) form in which human energy is canalized in the process of assimilation and socialization [p. 67]."

The orientations, to be discussed shortly, form the core of personality structure. Character traits are seen as a syndrome which result from a particular organization or, as Fromm (1967, pp. 65-66) calls it, orientation of character.

According to Fromm (1967), "the character of any given person is usually a blend [p. 89]" of several different orientations, any one of which may be dominant. The character types or orientations are either productive or non-productive. The former mobilizes all man's life-giving forces, while the latter has a crippling and thwarting effect on his development. Moreover Fromm (1966a), indicates that all nonproductive orientations have negative

and positive aspects, "and whether the positive or the negative aspects dominate depends on the relative strength of the productive orientation within the individual or social character [p. 87]."

Nonproductive character orientations. Fromm's

(1967, p. 70) "Receptive Orientation" depicts someone who feels that every good comes from outside of his own person. Nothing of value, nothing of substance is found within. The most distinguishing feature is a large open mouth, for he is spoon fed all of his life. His thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and even love itself are the products of some magical helper, who promotes his welfare for reasons he never examines.

Fromm's (1967, p. 72) "Exploitative Orientation" also operates on the principle that all good comes from without. But instead of the open mouth of the receptive, there are bared teeth and a clenched fist. This man takes, by force and cunning, whatever he needs or desires. Everyone is an object to be exploited. His sins speak of his own dependence and helplessness: in love, someone else's spouse; in intellectual pursuits, someone else's thoughts and ideas; in material things, someone else's goods. His sense of power arises from his skill as a thief.

Fromm's (1967, p. 73) "Hoarding Orientation" is essentially distinct from the two preceding: he relates to the outside world neither by receiving nor grasping. His fist is tightly clenched, but that is because it contains his



hope and his future--money and self-possession. He is firm, strong, and just, but distant, cold, and hard as well. He trusts no one; suffering and death have more reality than growth and life.

Fromm's (1967; p. 75) "Marketing Orientation" is fully the man of the modern world. His character is based on economics; his heart on buying and selling. Everything is marketable: values, feelings, violence, prejudice, prayer, even himself. He too must be packaged and sold on the personality market. His firm conviction and belief are based upon fashion which is dictated from moment to moment. This orientation leaves the personality vague and ill-defined. He is friendly and fair, but always superficial. He wants love, but his superficiality prevents real commitment. His surface orientation works against his individuality and his freedom.

This discussion completes the rather somber collection of self-defeating orientations. It must be remembered that while the process of assimilation is indicated by the name Fromm gives the orientation, the style of socialization is included as well. Thus, the orientations, in the process of assimilation, are the receptive (accepting), the exploitative (taking), the hoarding (preserving), and the marketing (exchanging). The styles of socialization are masochism, sadism, destructiveness, and automation conformism. Moreover, Schaar (1964, p. 89) indicates that the orientations are listed, respectively:

the person whose assimilative life style is that of receptiveness will usually relate with the world masochistically; the exploitative character, sadistically; and so forth.

The schema can also include the productive orientation. The process of assimilation is productive work, and the person follows a loving relatedness to his world.

Fromm, at this point, moves his attention toward constructing the character of the complete person, man fully human. This discussion will do likewise.

Productive character orientation. The "Productive Orientation" is Fromm's (1967) attempt to present a detailed portrait of the good man:

. . . In discussing the productive character I venture beyond critical analysis and inquire into the nature of the fully developed character that is the aim of human development and simultaneously the ideal of humanistic ethics [p. 90].

Fromm's stated purpose is to move beyond our present knowledge and try to construct a badly needed image of man fully human. Such an undertaking may be bold, even novel in the modern world, but hardly innocent. Fromm undertakes his mission, fully aware of his limitations. He realizes that his knowledge, from whatever source, is still incomplete. So, it is an adventure--an attempt to shed some light not on what man is, but on what one day he could be.

The "Productive Orientation" embraces a total configuration of character, a complete mode of relating to the world and to oneself, which activates one's inherent powers.



Productiveness is the term at issue. Confusion will perhaps be minimized by turning to Fromm's (1967) fullest definition of it: —

The productive orientation of personality refers to a fundamental attitude, a mode of relatedness in all realms of human experience. It covers mental, emotional, and sensory responses to others, to oneself, and to things. Productiveness is man's ability to use his powers and to realize the potentialities inherent in him. If we say he must use his powers we imply that he must be free and not dependent on someone who controls his powers Productiveness means that he experiences himself as the embodiment of his powers and as the "actor"; that he feels himself one with his powers and at the same time that they are not masked and alienated from him [p. 91].

Man, productive man, is known by his fruits. He builds, composes, and creates. His works are images of his person and vitality; they are never far from his hand.

Fromm (1967) indicates that the artist is "the most convincing representation of productiveness [p. 21]." A work of art is always signed by the artist in uniqueness, originality, and beauty. While not every man can produce a real work of art, Fromm (1967) feels that man can still live and experience life productively: "Productiveness is an attitude which every human being is capable of, unless he is mentally or emotionally crippled [p. 92]."

The healing of the emotionally crippled is what psychoanalysis is all about. The main road to productive living is the making of the unconscious and conscious.

The Healing Nature of the Unconscious

In Fromm's view, the healing nature of the unconscious eliminates the "break" separating man from nature. Homeless and malcontent, man looks for union with his former existence. His search is useless and regressive. The answer must be sought in a new kind of union. His separation from nature is only on the level of conscious awareness. All the levels of nature and developmental stages are to be found in man, but they are below his conscious awareness. Fromm (1966b) indicates:

... But man, in any culture, has all the potentialities: he is the archaic man, the beast of prey, the cannibal, the idolater, and he is the being with the capacity for reason, for love, for justice. The content of the unconscious, then, is neither the good nor the evil, the rational nor the irrational; it is both; it is all that is human. The unconscious is the whole man--minus that part of man which corresponds to his society. Consciousness represents social man, the accidental limitations set by the historical situation into which an individual is thrown. Unconsciousness represents universal man, the whole man, rooted in the Cosmos: it represents the plant in him, the animal in him, the spirit in him; it represents his past down to the dawn of human existence, and it represents his future to the day when man will have become fully human, and when nature will be humanized as man will be naturalized [p. 94].

The goal or aim of human nature, man conscious of his true nature, is in every way equal to Fromm's productive orientation. From the above, it is obvious that the psychoanalytic process pursues the selfsame end.

Fromm (1967, p. 94) offers three powers or "modes of relatedness" which represent the realization of all that is distinctively human: reason, love, and creativity. These are the powers that make him feel related and at home in the

newly developing world of man as his true nature intended him to be. Fromm (1967) adds:

... With his power of reason (man) can penetrate the surface of phenomena and understand their essence. With his power of love he can break through the wall which separates one person from another. With his power of imagination he can visualize things not yet existing; he can plan and thus begin to create [p. 103].

Fromm (1970) feels that the securing of man's triple powers is the mainstream of the psychoanalytic procedure, or stated differently, it is the rendering of the unconscious conscious:

... The most characteristic element in psychoanalytic approach is, without doubt, its attempt to make the unconscious conscious--or, to put it in Freud's words, to transform the Id into Ego [p. 95].

Nevertheless, Fromm (1970) feels that Freud's limited concept, to control repressed impulses of the unconscious by the ego, must be greatly broadened in its application:

... When we free ourselves from the limited concept of Freud's unconscious ... then Freud's aim, the transformation of the unconsciousness into consciousness (Id into Ego) gains a wider and more profound meaning. Making the unconscious conscious transforms the mere idea of universality of men into a living experience of this universality; it is the experimental realization of humanism [p. 107].

Social Character

At this point, it is advantageous to take up the general theoretical basis upon which Fromm's analysis of character orientation is founded. What is of interest here is not the peculiarities by which the individual characters differ from each other, but that part of their character

structure which shares common elements or traits. This is what Fromm calls the social character. It differs, as was seen, from this or that character which is comprised of a whole network of traits which in turn forms the basis of a particular personality. However, Fromm (1965a) delineates:

. . . the social character comprises only a selection of traits, the essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of a group which has developed as the result of the basic experience and mode of life common to the group [p. 305].

Fromm's work has utilized this concept to the fullest. With it, Fromm (1965a, p. 231) attempted to make some analysis of the chaos of Nazi Germany that led to World War II. Social character in the dynamic sense is determined by society. Each character must answer human needs by adapting to the mode of existence peculiar to a given society. Moreover, there is little doubt, according to Fromm (1970, p. 103), that the social character is necessary for the proper and efficient working of society.

Nor is Fromm offset by the age-old assumption that the family molds the character of the offspring. Fromm (1966b) contends that the assumption is only partly correct. Parents indeed mold children, but they are merely the agents of society which insure the child will understand societal demands. Thus, the apparent conflict is reducible to the character structure being determined by the role which the child is to play in society.

Thus, the key concept for understanding the social process, as is delineated by Fromm (1965a), is the social character:

Character in the dynamic sense of analytic psychology is the specific form in which human energy is shaped by the dynamic adaptation of human needs to the particular mode of existence of a given society. Character in its turn determines the thinking, feeling, and acting of individuals [p. 305].

The concept is deceptive. Convention understands thinking to be a highly intellectual act independent of the psychological structure of the personality. Fromm (1965a, p. 306) thinks otherwise. No concept escapes the influence of the personality structure of the person who thinks. There is an emotional matrix, and this matrix, rooted in the character structure of the individual, gives color and tone to every concept and even to every doctrine. Thus, two people using the word love may be unaware that the two meanings given to the word are entirely different. Certainly the word would differ greatly for the productive personality and the person of sado-masochistic orientation.

It is clear that the social character is in part the product of familial, educational, religious, and civil influences. However, it must be understood that Fromm (1965a) in no way sees man as a mere "puppet, directed by the strings of social circumstances [p. 317]." Thus, human nature has dynamism of its own that constitutes an active factor in the evaluation of the social process.

Personality Syndromes

Fromm (1971a, p. 36) identifies "Personality Syndromes" which are two paradoxical tendencies called Biophilia, the love of life, and Necrophilia, the love of death. Oriented to one or the other, man develops either the syndrome of growth or the syndrome of death.

The Syndrome of Decay

The syndrome of decay comprises three different kinds of orientations, each of which, from Fromm's (1971a, p. 214) perspective, form the nucleus of severe mental problems. Because this syndrome epitomizes the waste and stagnation inherent in destruction and death, it fulfills the criterion by which Fromm (1967, p. 216) measures whether a man's life is productive of good or evil. Moreover, man is evil in direct proportion to the degree of the unfolding of his capacities which are blocked.

Necrophilia--the love of death. The term necrophilia customarily denotes a sexual perversion, namely, the desire to possess dead bodies or to be in the presence of the dead. Fromm (1971a) feels this is merely its more exaggerated form; the necrophiliac is attracted by "all that is not alive, all that is dead: corpus, decay, feces, dirt [p. 38]." In Fromm's (1971a, pp. 39, 43, & 41) analysis, the person with a necrophile orientation reveals a love of force, a desire to transform the living into the dead, a longing for the past, dreams of blood, killing, and

corpses, and an attraction to darkness and night. Their physical appearance and gestures can become distorted, and their skin loses healthy color. Sex blends into the formation of the orientation and produces sadism, masochism, necrophagia (eating of corpses) and coprophagia (eating of excrement).

The personality becomes rigid. It is orderly, obsessive, and pedantic. There is a craving for certainty. Life is above all uncertain and unpredictable. To control life, he must kill it and transform it into death.

Fromm (1971a, p. 39) utilizes Adolf Hitler and Carl Jung as prime examples of this orientation. Hitler had an unlimited capacity and willingness to destroy. Fromm (1971a) indicates that:

. . . He was fascinated by destruction, and the smell of death was sweet to him. . . His deepest satisfaction lay in witnessing total and absolute destruction: that of the German people, of those around him, and of himself [pp. 38-39].

With respect to Jung, Fromm (1971a) perceived that Jung's dreams were:

. . . filled with corpses, blood, killing . . . which were neutralized by these tendencies in his desire to heal and create, and thus making his interest in the past, in death and destruction, the subject matter of his brilliant speculation [p. 45].

Malignant narcissism. Fromm (1971a, p. 72) expands Freud's concept of narcissism, which he felt was unduly restricted to the state of infancy and psychosis, to distinguish between two forms of narcissism: benign and

malignant. With this concept, Fromm (1971a) explores the individual phenomena of "psychotic symbiosis, castration fear, jealousy, sadism" and the social phenomena of "nationalism, national hatred, and the psychological motivation for destructiveness and war [p. 71]."

Benign narcissism is the result of the person's own efforts. It is a justified pride in a job well done. Malignant narcissism is not something the person does or produces, but something he has; for example, his health, good looks, tone of his voice, or wealth. This would be a form of individual narcissism.

Social narcissism can also be benign or malignant. If the existence of some social group is productively oriented, or if the goal or object is an achievement, the same dialectical process as discussed above takes place.

Concerning the pathology of both individual and social narcissism, Fromm (1971a) indicates that "the most obvious and frequent symptom . . . is the lack of objectivity and rational judgment [p. 94]."

Incestuous symbiosis. Fromm (1971a, pp. 117 & 119) believes Freud's concept, incestuous fixation, to be one of the most far-reaching discoveries in the science of man, in comparison with which the genital incestuous desires of little boys are quite secondary. The mother figure, the pre-oedipal fixation found in both boys and girls, is

central both to the process of evolution and the causes of neurosis and psychosis. Fromm (1971a) further comments:

... This "incestuous" striving, in the pregenital sense, is one of the most fundamental passions in men or women, comprising the human being's desire for protection, the satisfaction of his narcissism; his craving to be freed from the risks of responsibility, or freedom, of awareness; his longing for unconditional love, which is offered without any expectation of his loving response [p. 120].

Fromm (1971a) indicates "the symbiotically attached person is part and parcel of the 'host' person to whom he is attached [p. 129]." The symbiotic attachment to the father never reaches the depth of the fixation to "mother-family-blood and earth [p. 128]." "Mother-family-blood and earth [p. 128]" all symbolize the symbiotic configuration of energy transferring itself from one object to another.

The pathology of incestuous fixations are measured by the degree of regression. The regression proceeds from an over-dependence upon and fear of women, termed benign, to a distortion of reason and the ability to experience another as fully human, which is of malignant development. More severe pathology indicates a conflict with independence and integrity, and results in self-imprisonment or total incapacitation.

The Syndrome of Growth

Just as Fromm measured the "evil man" by the syndrome of death, so he sees the "good" existing in the syndrome of growth. Within this context, Fromm dictates



that this concept is composed of the "Love of Life" and/or the "Love of Man."

Biophilia--love of life. This orientation is not a single trait, but several traits which comprise the fundamental tendency or drive to be fully alive. Fromm's (1971a) position is that:

. . . . The most elemental form of this orientation is expressed in the tendency of all living organisms to live It is an inherent quality of all living substance to live, to preserve its existence; as Spinoza expressed it: "Everything insofar as it is itself, endeavors to persist in its own being." He called this endeavor the very essence of the thing in question [pp. 46-47].

The biophilous orientation involves two aspects. The first, as noted above, is to preserve life and fight against death. The other, more positive, is the tendency to integrate and unite, to fuse with different and opposite entities.

How does the child's biophilous development take place? Fromm (1971a, p. 55) insists that the most important condition is that the child experiences life in the presence of people who themselves love life. Fromm (1971a) then lines up specific conditions:

. . . . Warm, affectionate contact with others during infancy; freedom, and absence of threats; teaching . . . of the principles conducive to inner harmony and strength . . . a way of life that is genuinely interesting [pp. 56-57].

Moreover, Fromm (1971a, pp. 56-57) demands security in the sense that there is an absence of scarcity and injustice.

The love of man. The love of one's fellowman is the opposite of malignant narcissism, whether personal or social. Fromm (1971a, pp. 100-102) finds true humanism and a valid scientific attitude, as opposed to mere technique, as the tools for overcoming man's narcissism. In this connection, the ethical-spiritual viewpoint is essential to control and overcome man's debilitating self-love. Fromm (1971a) offers a one sentence summary of all the great humanistic and religious movements: "It is the goal of man to overcome one's narcissism [p. 108]."

Freedom, the Root of Humanness

Freedom is a necessary condition or premise for the understanding of human existence. For, as Fromm (1965a) points out, "human existence and freedom are from the beginning inseparable [p. 40]."

Fromm ushers in the discussion on freedom by merging two concepts, which it is hoped will circumvent the classical problem of free will and determinism. Fromm's (1965a, p. 39) argument rests on the concepts of man's animal origins and the transcendental nature of awareness.

Fromm (1967) not only strikes down all definitions of man which express his nature in terms of essential qualities, but also challenges man as:

. . . a political animal (Aristotle), an animal that can promise (Nietzsche), or an animal that produces with foresight and imagination (Marx), but also insists upon a definition of man which refers to his essence per se [p. 147].

This ambitious undertaking is extended by Fromm's refusal to be drawn into the camp of those who assume man has a certain substance constituting his essence, which would force him into a nonevolutionary, nonhistorical position; or, on the other hand, those who posit that man has no substance or essence at all. The latter proposition forces one to espouse an evolutionary position which demands that man be an ever changing, without content, history, or substance. Thus, both the concept of a fixed nature, which was the basis for so many forms of authoritarianism and the more recent concept or idea that man has no inborn nature whatsoever, is rejected.

Fromm attempts to escape this dilemma by an appeal to the witness of history. History shows that man possesses an almost infinite malleability. He cannot only endure almost any physical hardship, various climates, or foods, but he can also endure under almost all psychic conditions, as well. Fromm (1968) reasons that "there is hardly any psychic state in which man cannot live, and hardly anything which cannot be done to him [p. 64]." While this seems to indicate there is no such thing as a nature common to all men, that is only half true. The historical fact of revolt and resistance against despots and ruling cliques indicates that man has basic needs and basic requirements for human growth and sanity. Fromm (1966b) delineates that "He cannot help reacting; he must either deteriorate or perish, or bring

about conditions which are more in accordance with his needs [pp. 26-27]."

The discussion now moves to the heart of the matter. Having rejected any definition of man as a pure and simple substance or having no substance at all, Fromm puts forth his own definition. Fromm (1971a) defines man's nature or essence as a "contradiction inherent in human existence" [p. 147]."

Fromm's definition of man is as full of insight as it is profound. It certainly merits an extensive examination. That examination will be undertaken forthwith.

As has been stated, man's "fall" from nature left him helpless and maladaptive. The "break" produced, over a long undefined period of time, a sense of self-awareness, but such awareness did nothing to restore the originating harmony in man phylogenetically, nor in the individual during his stages of development. The dialectic quality of the process of individuation places man in a never-ending search for solutions to problems which are inherent in his human condition. Fromm (1971a) supports this concept in that:

What I want to point out now is that it is not enough to see this conflict as the essence of man. . . . It is necessary to go beyond this description and recognize that the very conflict demands a solution [p. 148].

Thus, man seeks to find new ways to make himself comfortable in the world. Fromm (1967) delineates that man seeks answers which will liberate him from the fright inherent in existence:

... There is one condition which every answer must fulfill: it must help man to overcome the sense of separateness and gain a sense of union, of oneness, of belonging [p. 148].

It must be stressed again. For Fromm (1971a, p. 149), the answer to the isolation, fear, and anxiety of man never constitutes the essence of man. The question and the need for an answer constitute man's essence. The process is dialectical. The original question is the thesis, and the answer is the anti-thesis. Therefore, each question and answer is the synthesis for a "further question." The dynamic character of man's searching essence is in keeping with the dialectics of Hegel, which is also found in Marx's philosophy. However, there seems to be more here than the mere compromise of contraries, which Hegel calls synthesis, or purely evolutionary elements. Fromm seems to put forth a heuristic quality in man's essence. Man tends by nature to be led to investigate himself and his condition by continual inquiry. Man's essence is the conflict, the struggle, to answer the newly formulated question.

The intensification of the struggle to understand his dichotomous situation leads not only to enlarged awareness, but also to an increase in freedom. Fromm (1971a) clarifies that:

... Freedom characterizes human existence as such, and furthermore that its meaning changes according to the degree of man's awareness and conception of himself as an independent and separate being [p. 148].

The appropriation of more freedom requires man to be engaged in his unique, concrete situation and to become aware of the possible significance that may be uncovered there. In fact, Fromm demands that freedom of choice be discussed in terms of a specific individual, and not man in general. Freedom of choice as it applies to mankind is an erroneous way to proceed. Thus, Xirau (1972) states that freedom of choice is defined as a "form of life and love of life, rather than a theory about life [p. 158]."

Fromm (1965a, p. 48) distinguishes two ways of understanding human freedom: a negative understanding and a positive understanding, "freedom from" and "freedom to." Fromm views the former as a release from natural and traditional bondage. Thus, the original break with nature is the beginning of "freedom from" for mankind, and for the individual "freedom from" begins with the freedom from the preconscious instinctual determination of his actions. The latter, "freedom to," according to Fromm, took a decisive step forward some four thousand years ago. Man set himself a new goal. The goal was that of being fully born, of being fully awake, of being fully human, of being fully free.

There is indication that freedom of choice is rooted in the structure of the character itself. Fromm (1971a) concludes that:

... Freedom of choice is not a formal abstract capacity which one either "has" or "has not"; it is, rather a function of a person's character. Some people have no freedom to choose the good because their

character structure has lost the capacity to act in accordance with the good. Some people have lost the capacity of choosing evil, precisely because their character structure has lost the craving for evil [p. 168].

It is difficult to understand how Fromm's thought does not reinstate the traditional conflict between free will and determinism. Certainly, a man who cannot do evil escapes the struggle and complaint which decision making enjoins, but neither is he self-determined. Both the man who cannot "not sin" and the man who cannot sin have lost their freedom. Fromm's (1971a) answer is that these men are the product of their choices, not the choices here and now, for there are none, but those remote choices which brought them to this state:

. . . In fact, a person in this sense is a loving, productive, independent person; freedom in this sense has no reference to a special choice between two possible actions, but to the character structure of the person involved; as in this sense the one who "is not free to do evil" is the completely free person [p. 169].

The foregoing quotation makes it obvious that a subtle, yet fierce, determinism has set in. While it might be difficult to deny that some men seem to give themselves over completely to evil, the reverse--men given over totally to good--is not at all easy to maintain. Fromm indicates that, according to Spinoza, freedom is based on "adequate ideas" which flow from awareness and acceptance of reality. Moreover, such determined actions secure the fullest development of the person's psychic and mental unfolding. The crux of the problem is Fromm's demand that every man possesses



within himself the potential of the entire race. This is basic to his thought, and is cited as one of the existential dichotomies: man can never be content, because he can never realize his complete potential. Man will always, no matter how "grace-filled," do the little evils, that is, fail to live up to all his latent potential.

Yet, that the heart does get "softened" and "hardened" by free choice is hardly deniable. Fromm (1971a) contends that:

. . . The freedom of choice. . . is always the freedom to choose the better as against the worse--and better or worse if always understood in reference to the basic moral question of life--that between progressing and regressing, between love and hate, between independence and dependence. Freedom is nothing other than the capacity to follow the voice of reason, of health, or well-being, of conscience, against the voice of irrational passion [p. 167].

Thus, there are those who are determined to be completely free or without freedom at all. However, the freedom daily experienced is that of the average man who must give either progressive or regressive answers to his problems. Fromm (1971a) calls this dimension of man's psyche alternativism:

. . . the capacity to make a choice between opposite alternatives; alternatives which, however, always imply the choice between rational and irrational interest in life and its growth versus stagnation and death [p. 169].

There is clear indication that Fromm makes a radical connection between freedom and the unconscious. He clarifies his position by pointing out that man's survival and trans-survival needs are a necessary condition for man to have

conscious and unconscious states. Both his desire (need) to survive, and his desire to transcend his purely biological condition, demand that man be aware (conscious) of some things and unaware (unconscious) of others. With respect to this concept, Fromm (1968) asserts that:

. . . Our conscious thought is essentially the awareness of such phenomena which the social filter composed of language, logic, and taboos permits us to become aware of. Those phenomena which cannot pass the social filter remain unconscious or, more accurately speaking, we are unaware of everything that cannot penetrate to our consciousness because the social filter blocks its entry. This is the reason why consciousness is determined by the structure of society [p. 74].

Man is most free, not when he is conscious, but when he is unconscious. When man is asleep, or better in a dream state, Fromm (1968) feels that he has perfect freedom:

. . . Sleep is that state of being in which man is free from the need to take care of his survival. While he is awake, he is largely determined by the survival function; while he is asleep, he is a free man [p. 74].

Sleep permits man to escape the thought categories of his conscious life. It is especially in dreams that man demonstrates his creative abilities which are uniquely his own. To substantiate, Fromm (1957) points out that:

This, then, is the conclusion at which we arrive: the state of sleep has an ambiguous function. In it the lack of contact with culture makes for the appearance both of our worst and of our best; therefore, if we dream, we may be less intelligent, less wise, and less decent, but we may also be better and wiser than in our waking life [p. 36].

It should be pointed out in this connection that dream activity depends upon the quality of reality itself.



If the outside world is, by and large beneficial, then Fromm (1957) states that:

. . . The absence of this influence during sleep would tend to lower the value of our dream activity, so that it would be inferior to our mental activities during the daytime when we are exposed to the beneficial influence of outside reality [p. 31].

Thus, the unconscious is the seat of wisdom, decency, knowledge, and freedom. In dreams, the individual transcends the boundaries of his society and becomes fully human. To be "fully human," for Fromm, means to be free. Man who is not free may not cease to be man, but he does cease to be humane. While the free act may arise only in a state of consciousness, it can only arise out of a state of unconsciousness.

The clarification of these concepts permit the return to the discussion of the negative and positive aspects of freedom. Fromm argues that modern man has won the former, "freedom from," but the victory has turned to ashes because he has not won the latter, "freedom to." The primary ties demanded that man see himself only through the medium of a clan or social/religious community, and not as human beings. While man was thus in bondage he could not develop his critical capacities. According to Fromm (1965a), his harmonious state demanded no inquiry, no questioning:

. . . This identity with nature, clan, religion, gives the individual security . . . He may suffer from hunger or suppression, but does not suffer the worst of all pains--complete aloneness and doubt [p. 51].



Man's new state, negative freedom, is an insecure condition which cannot be long endured. Escape from Freedom is now a classic study into man's almost universal fear of freedom. Fromm (1965a) states that negative freedom may at first delight man, but his delight is soon soured by his dawning awareness of the ambiguities and burden of freedom:

. . . Powerful tendencies arise to escape from this kind of freedom into submission or some kind of relationship to man and the world which promise relief from uncertainty, even if it deprives the individual of his freedom [p. 52].

Existentialists, like psychoanalysts, have reported the same anxiety-ridden phenomenon. Camus' (1956, p. 3) character narrator in The Fall drums home the selfsame message, as does the celebrated chapter, "The Grand Inquisitor" in Dostoevsky's (1952, p. 255) The Brothers Karamazov. The probing, penetrating insight of these literary artists reveals the dreadful and burdensome dimension of human freedom. Man is condemned to be free. He does not want freedom. Sadler (1969) concludes that, "this is the reason they invent such dreadful rules by which to live, so as to be kept in the safety of slavery [p. 209]."

Fromm's case (1965a) is stated in much the same language:

. . . At the same time (man) has become isolated, powerless, and an instrument of purposes outside himself and others; furthermore--this state undermines his self, weakens and frightens him and makes him ready for submission to a new kind of bondage [p. 35].

Man is frequently frightened by confronting the greatness of his freedom. It beckons his whole being forth,

yet he faces the darkness of the unknown. The darkness and the awesomeness of freedom lead to an anxiety which can paralyze man's ability to act, that is, to live. He cannot decide whether he is beckoned to fulfillment or death; to solidarity or solitary existence.

Is there no alternative to choosing the little freedoms which offer not only trivial possibilities that are the lot of most men? Fromm's (1965a) answer is precise and clear; let the discussion of freedom end with his affirmative answer:

However, submission is not the only way of avoiding aloneness and anxiety. The other way, the only one which is productive and does not end in an insoluble conflict, is that of spontaneous relationship to man and nature, a relationship that connects the individual with the world without eliminating his individuality [p. 43].

It would appear that Fromm has enjoined both character and freedom as essential to the discussion of ethics. Behavior must be measured in terms of freedom which is found to be essential to man as human and humane. The truly productive man has complete and perfect freedom which is characterized by the inability to do evil or inflict unnecessary pain either on oneself or others. However, the vast majority of men must work out their lives making alternate choices between good and evil. Man, faced with decisions (alternativism) obscured by culture and negative character orientations, is the object of this study. The various negative character orientations not only narrow and block conscious-awareness, but also twist and turn into



unconscious nightmares of waste and stagnation. Man can escape his plight through the power of consciousness and a benevolent social and historical process. However, as Fromm sadly notes, this has not been the case for man in general. Driven by negative freedom, a state filled with the pain and fear of isolation and aloneness, man attempts escape into the larger community. The community has the social instrumentality, the salve, to seemingly heal the wounds of loneliness, but only at a price. Man must sell his right to freedom and independence. He must build his individual character on the more general framework of the social character of the community, which is almost never productive.

In summary, man can be "somebody" and have an "identity" if he will sell his right to be himself. His communal identity, rooted in the negative character orientations, leaves him alienated from his true self. Alienation, the condition of the majority of human beings, has far reaching ramifications in discerning the quality of ethical behavior. It is man's unsuccessful and regressive answer to the awesome demands of freedom and responsibility and the pain and fear of isolation which are the concern of an investigation of this concept. The study of this concept, alienation, will now be undertaken.