



Propriety of the Erich Fromm Document Center. For personal use only. Citation or publication of material prohibited without express written permission of the copyright holder.

Eigentum des Erich Fromm Dokumentationszentrums. Nutzung nur für persönliche Zwecke. Veröffentlichungen – auch von Teilen – bedürfen der schriftlichen Erlaubnis des Rechteinhabers.

bosses The horror of the flood itself and the terrific psychological impact of that event are so striking in Erikson's book as to obscure the considerable human blame both for the disaster itself and for its mishandled aftermath The raging waters were traumatic, but the actions of federal bureaucrats and mine-owners—and, at crucial moments, their inaction—surely completed the job the waters had begun. Erikson does touch on various human agents, policies, and practices, but he doesn't give them the emphasis they warrant.

There are two other small flaws After promising to focus only on the Buffalo Creek disaster, and after analyzing it as a single and atypical case, Erikson introduces various speculative notions about "modern society" He would have done well to have stuck to the flood in West Virginia Similarly, the author's concluding effort to broaden the concept of disaster to include all trauma-inducing circumstances belongs in another book. But these are small points. They detract only slightly from a penetrating, elegantly written, and important work.

Kathleen J. Tierney is assistant field director of the Disaster Research Center at Ohio State University in Columbus, where she is also a candidate for her doctorate in sociology

TO HAVE OR TO BE?

by Erich Fromm
Harper and Row, \$8 95
Reviewed by M. Brewster Smith

At 76, Erich Fromm has amply earned the mantle of sage, a role he assumes with considerable grace in this latest distillation of his psychosocial thought

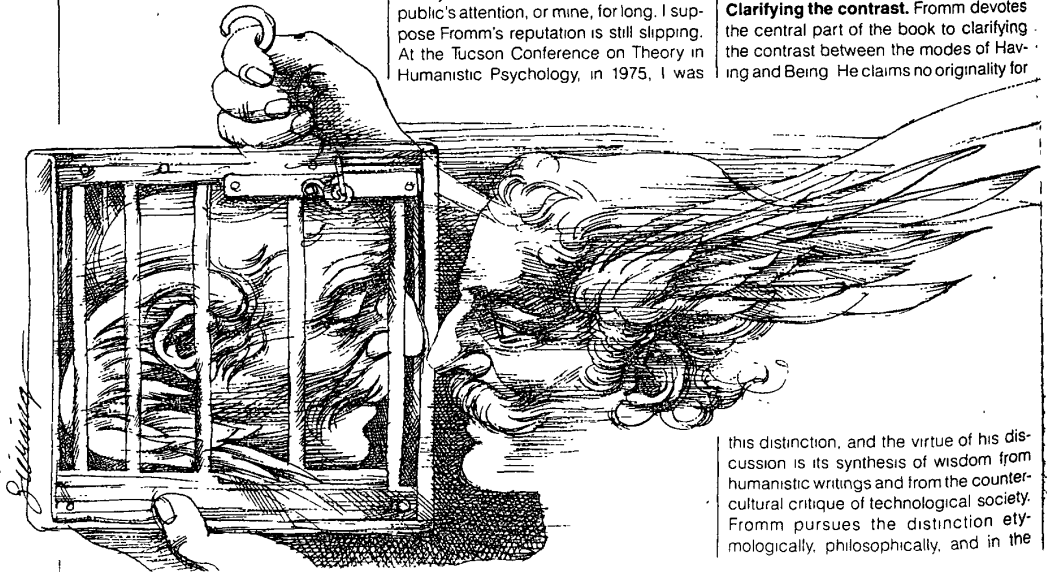
When I was a graduate student, before World War II, his *Escape from Freedom* struck me and many of my friends as an exciting and important book In it, Fromm's nondoctrine interpretations of Freud and Marx and European psychohistory helped illuminate not only the problem of Nazi Germany, which then preempted the attention of all of us, but also the problems of democracy in a world that could produce Nazism Later, in the immediate postwar years when I was beginning to teach, my students and I found his second book, *Man For Himself*, equally exciting in its attempt to construct a naturalistic, psychological ethics based on character types Books by Fromm have appeared regularly since then, but with the exception of *The Art of Loving*, which found its way into many homes, and *The Anatomy of Human destructiveness* in 1973, they have been relatively slim efforts that did not capture the public's attention, or mine, for long. I suppose Fromm's reputation is still slipping. At the Tucson Conference on Theory in Humanistic Psychology, in 1975, I was

surprised to find that I was the only participant who found Fromm and his ideas worth remembering One must therefore approach the present book wondering what has happened to Fromm as a prophet and social critic.

The introduction is excellent. In a few terse pages, Fromm sketches the failure of our culture's promise of unlimited progress, and he declares that industrialism's two main psychological premises are untenable. Those two premises are: "that the aim of life is happiness, that is, maximum pleasure, defined as the satisfaction of any desire or subjective need a person may feel (radical hedonism)" and "that egotism, selfishness, and greed, as the system needs to generate them in order to function, lead to harmony and peace." Fromm then joins the informed consensus of latter-day Jeremiahs about the catastrophe toward which business-as-usual is leading humankind, and he asks us to explore radical alternatives. Capitalism, social democracy, and Soviet socialism all emphasize Having as a mode of existence Fromm asks instead that we reinstate the mode of Being, as experienced in the medieval world and stressed by *The Masters of Living* from East and West All these capitalized terms are Fromm's, and I must say that "Masters of Living" offends me.

Clarifying the contrast. Fromm devotes the central part of the book to clarifying the contrast between the modes of Having and Being He claims no originality for

this distinction, and the virtue of his discussion is its synthesis of wisdom from humanistic writings and from the counter-cultural critique of technological society. Fromm pursues the distinction etymologically, philosophically, and in the





Propriety of the Erich Fromm Document Center. For personal use only. Citation or publication of material prohibited without express written permission of the copyright holder.

Eigentum des Erich Fromm Dokumentationszentrums. Nutzung nur für persönliche Zwecke. Veröffentlichungen – auch von Teilen – bedürfen der schriftlichen Erlaubnis des Rechteinhabers.

when he examines Having and Being in daily experience

Take the experience of learning, for instance. A student in the Having mode acquires facts and theories and stores them up by memorizing or taking notes on them, in the contrasting mode of Being, the learner encounters and lives with the lecture or readings, and the encounter alters his understanding. Take the experience of authority. The Being of authority rests on personal qualities, on competence. The Having of authority rests on arbitrary status. Similarly, faith in the Having mode entails dogmatic beliefs, in the Being mode, inner experience is continuously validating faith, whether it is faith in God or self or humankind. Love in the Having mode is possessive, controlling, stultifying, in the Being mode love is affirmative and creative.

Fromm follows the early Marx in believing that we are seduced by our acquisitive society into alienation from ourselves, from the products of our work, and from participation in our common humanity. What is required for our salvation, Fromm implies, is nothing less than a new man in a new society, a change of heart amid changed institutions. Neither is possible alone, since we tend to share a social character molded by socioeconomic institutions—institutions that make us want to do what we have to do.

False religions. Social character also requires a religion, a framework of devotion. The problem, Fromm says, is that our two chief social religions today are false—both the "industrial religion" of work, property, profit, and power that corresponds to the hoarding and exploitative character of the industrial era, and the false "cybernetic religion" of post-industrial times. Fromm would replace these with a humanistic, nontheistic religion of Being and caring. He calls finally for a new society, decentralized and debureaucratized. He sees a participatory democracy without advertising or brainwashing, yet guided by an elite Supreme Cultural Council and a "system of effective information." He even calls for a new science, "a Humanistic Science of Man as the basis for the Applied Science and Art of Social Reconstruction."

Since I agree with Fromm's appraisal of our common plight, and since I share many of his goals and applaud his attempt at constructive utopian thinking, I cannot help feeling mean-spirited that I

well and hope this book wins new converts to his concerned humanism. But in distilling ideas that he and others have voiced often before, Fromm has lost much of his old force and richness.

The book has the virtues and the defects of sagacity, of humane reasonableness. Fromm is far more reasonable than such recent psychoprophets as Herbert Marcuse, Norman O. Brown, or Ernest Becker, who are often wrongheaded, one-sided, and perverse. But he is also much less interesting than these other writers, and less useful in challenging and clarifying our own thoughts. Fromm is much more reasonable than Freud, whose influence on his thought is by now barely visible. What is left, though, along with the reasonableness, is a kind of pallid existentialism that lacks the bite and tragic depth of Kierkegaard's tradition of existentialism, and a psychology that lacks the complexity and productive tensions of Freud's.

As a contribution to utopian thinking in the cause of radical humanism, To Have or To Be? is too shallow and casual to be

satisfying. We have gained more, I think, from contending with the tough pessimism of Robert Heilbroner's inquiry into the Human Prospect. Fromm's self-ascribed radicalism simply isn't radical enough to cope with the dilemmas inherent in his prescriptions. His ethics needs a politics, but his politics is left wholly to the imagination. I'm also pretty sure that his religion of caring reasonableness will be found wanting. "Ethical culture" lacks power, understandably.

Yet this is still a good book, if not a satisfying or deeply troubling book. Reasonableness itself is in short supply. Social scientists, in particular, should note that their fashionable quaseconomic models have been profoundly challenged by Fromm's insights into the way psychology, society, ethics, and history combine to make the human world. Some of our tribe still have much to learn from the venerable Fromm.

M. Brewster Smith, professor of psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz, is President-elect of the American Psychological Association.

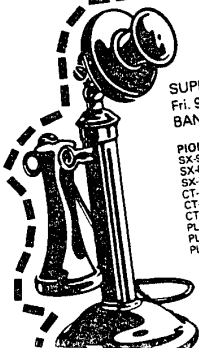
HI-FI HOT LINE?

We've got it

Being the largest Hi-Fi Mail Order Business in the Country isn't easy. One of the problems is keeping our Customers informed of Up-to-the-Minute Price Information and Stock Conditions. We've solved the problem with our New "Super-Service" Line. Just give us a call. Check our Prices, Brand Selection and Inventory... and Place Your Order. It's that Simple.

301-252-6880
JUST ASK FOR "SUPER-SERVICE"

SUPER SERVICE HOURS: Mon. thru Thur. 9:00 to 9:00.
Fri. 9:00 to 5:30 and Sat. 9:00 to 3:00.
BANKAMERICARD AND MASTER CHARGE HONORED.



PIONEER	\$409	SANSUI	\$329
SX-950 Receiver	\$350	7070 Receiver	\$262
SX-750 Receiver	\$281	6050 Receiver	\$203
SX-750 Receiver	\$299	5950 Receiver	
CT-F9191 Cass. Deck	\$270	KENWOOD	\$149
CT-F8282 Cass. Deck	\$143	KR2500 Receiver	\$199
CT-F212 Cass. Deck	\$170	KR3500 Receiver	\$238
PL-530 Turntable	\$119	KR4600 Receiver	\$285
PL-117D Turntable	\$75	KR5600 Receiver	

STEREO DISCOUNTERS
11 WYLESBURY RD. TIMONIUM MD 21093



FROMM-Online

Propriety of the Erich Fromm Document Center. For personal use only. Citation or publication of material prohibited without express written permission of the copyright holder.

Eigentum des Erich Fromm Dokumentationszentrums. Nutzung nur für persönliche Zwecke. Veröffentlichungen - auch von Teilen - bedürfen der schriftlichen Erlaubnis des Rechteinhabers.

psychology today®

UB = ZB 1438

FEBRUARY, 1977/VOL. 10, NO. 9

THE MAGAZINE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE

35
Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer
 by Kenneth R. Pelletier
 The stress of modern living calls for bringing the healing arts together. Mind, body, and soul must be treated as a unit.

42
The New Science of Genetic Self-Interest
 Sociobiologist Irvan DeVore talks with Scot Morris about our selfish genes. It's not survival of the fittest, but reproduction of the individual's genes that motivates man and beast.

44
Man in the Middle
 A sketch of Irvan DeVore

53
The Busy, Purposeful World of a Baby
 by Michael Lewis
 A baby knows who he is before his language can tell us. He's not only aware, he's sometimes in control.

51
Orchestra Conductors Would Make Good Porpoise Trainers
 by Karen Pryor
 Every little movement has a meaning all its own. With porpoise trainers it's called operant conditioning, in orchestra conductors, it's genius.

67
Who Wouldn't Help a Lost Child? You, Maybe.
 by Harold Takooshian, Sandra Haber, and David J. Lucido
 Helping a lost tyke is not as universal a reaction as you would expect, especially in the city.

70
Sweaty Palms in the Control Tower
 by David Martindale
 Air controllers lead lives of constant stress. Juggling 1,900 flights a day takes its toll in ulcers, nightmares, and shattered nerves.

76
Dance Therapy
 by Elaine Feder and Bernard Feder
 The language of movement often communicates a person's feelings better than cautious, self-censored speech.

109
Workers Can Set Their Own Wages—Responsibly
 by Edward E. Lawler
 The heretical idea that employees can decide their own wages and benefits is gaining ground.

111
The Heresy of Worker Participation
 by A. H. Raskin

4
Letters

17
Up Front:
Alias Johnny Hooker
 by Alan C. Elms

18
Psychology and the Arts
 by Silvia Feldman
 The banning of a film—sexual politics at work.

by Benjamin Brody
 Modern portraits—an art exhibit that evokes the shock of recognition.

29
News Line
 by Jack C. Horn
 Meddling in family feuds; some magic words that increase contributions, and other items.

98
Books
 Reviewed by Gerald Jonas, Kathleen J. Tierney, and M. Brewster Smith
 Erich Fromm nods reasonably, water destroys a bit of West Virginia, joy, grief, sex at your fingertips.

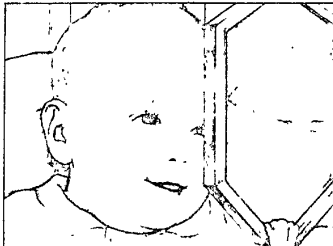
113
Classified Advertising and Reprint Information

Cover photography by Frank Maresca

PAGE 10



PAGE 51



PAGE 74



SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Write to Psychology Today, P.O. Box 2990, Boulder, CO 80323. When changing address, please send old and new addresses. ALL EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE should be directed to...