



## **In search of solidarity: the ethical politics of Erich Fromm (1900–1980)**

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Erich Fromm is rarely thought of as a *political* writer, despite his consistent commitment to socialist humanism and a long record of support for radical causes. The attraction of best-sellers like *The Art of Loving* and *To Have or To Be?* has been based largely on the promise of the spiritual guidance which might help the individual reader negotiate an unfeeling age.<sup>1</sup> Aware of the danger that his work might be used for emotional escapism, he deliberately left material out of his final book, *To Have or To Be?*, in order to dispel the idea that the problems of living in late capitalist society could be resolved by spiritual regeneration on the part of enlightened individuals without fundamental political and economic change.<sup>2</sup> Such change, according to Fromm, could come about only with a simultaneous revolution in values, and he advocated a democratic socialism which expressed 'the establishment of new moral values' and 'the realisation of human solidarity'.<sup>3</sup> To this end he developed a social psychology and humanistic ethics which owed much to the work of the early Marx on human essence and its alienation, and then lent support to a range of socio-political initiatives which he considered might move us closer to the goal of a non-alienated society. His work, taken as a whole, provides a shining example of the value of interdisciplinary socio-political theory and offers a strong ethical support for radical politics of both 'old' and 'new' social movements.

Fromm's upbringing and education in Frankfurt was steeped in orthodox Judaism and its rabbinical scholarship, from which he retained a penchant for prophetic messianism.<sup>4</sup> He shared its vision of 'universal peace and harmony between all nations' and, searching for ways to understand and overcome the obstacles to its achievement, enthusiastically embraced the work of Marx and Freud in the 1920s.<sup>5</sup> In 1929 he outlined an ambitious long-term research programme, arguing for the need to investigate 'what connections there are between the social development of humanity, particularly its economic and technical development, and its mental faculty, particularly the ego-organization of the human being.' He proposed to do this through a historical anthropology which would give psychological categories a historical materialist form.<sup>6</sup> He brought this perspective to the Frankfurt School (the Institute of Social Research) in 1930, originally working on a major empirical survey of working-class character-types.<sup>7</sup> After fleeing Nazi Germany for the USA in 1934 with other members of the School he effected a decisive break with Freud's biological theory of instincts, instead developing a 'culturalist' approach more compatible with Marxism's emphasis on social conditioning. Nevertheless, it offended senior colleagues such as Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse, and he left the School in 1939.<sup>8</sup> Shortly afterwards he produced a psychological overview of the development of social consciousness



from the Reformation to the mid-twentieth century, *The Fear of Freedom*, which provides the analytical framework for much of his subsequent work.<sup>9</sup>

The key conceptual innovation in *The Fear of Freedom*, the idea of 'social character', will be outlined in the next section, followed by a critical discussion of his provocative attempt to formulate a humanistic ethics grounded in a theory of human essence in *Man for Himself* (1947). This text remains relatively neglected, despite the recent revival of interest in 'character' or 'virtue' ethics, but I will argue that it can provide a powerful theoretical foundation for emancipatory politics. I will then introduce Fromm's attempts to develop an ethical socialist politics in various interventions at three levels—everyday life, democratic institutions, and the emerging 'One World'. Finally, I will press the claim that Fromm's social thought offers an important ethical dimension which ought to be an essential component of an effective emancipatory social theory.

### Social psychology

In *The Fear of Freedom* Fromm situates the role of social psychology as attempting to resolve the Marxian dialectical contradiction that history makes 'man' while at the same time 'man' makes history.<sup>10</sup> As well as understanding how passions and anxieties are moulded by the social process, social psychology attempts to show how those energies in turn become productive forces capable of moulding that social process.<sup>11</sup> Social character refers to that part of the character structure of individuals which is common to most members of a particular social group, developed in response to their conditions of life:

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 experiences and mode of life common to that group.*<sup>12</sup>

Character is shaped by the dynamic adaptation of needs to social reality, and, in its turn, character conditions the thinking, feeling, and acting of individuals. Despite his use of the word 'determines', Fromm consistently stresses the dynamism of human nature whereby individuals and groups are able to resist the seduction of certain enslaving adaptations and open up the possibility of positive freedom through self-realization.<sup>13</sup> The concept of social character helps to explain the link between the material basis of society and the ideological superstructure. It is the 'intermediary' between the socio-economic structure and the ideas and ideals prevalent in society. The economic basis conditions social character, which determines the ideas and ideals of a class or a group. In turn these ideas help to mould the social character and, indirectly, influence the economic structure.<sup>14</sup>

Released from the pessimism inherent in Freud's death instinct, Fromm was able to keep open the possibility that, on the basis of what we all share as human beings, we are capable of creating a society in which the prevalent relationship of domination and submission is rejected in favour of a relationship of solidarity.<sup>15</sup> However, the bulk of *The Fear of Freedom* and much of his other work analyses the negative part of the dialectic of the 'progress' of modernity. The analysis of the psychology of socio-economic change in various social classes from the time of the Reformation through to the twentieth century reveals a variety of ways of suppressing the freedom which was on offer as a result of the break from the



political, economic and spiritual shackles that bound people in pre-modern times. According to Fromm, modernity involves a breakdown of old securities which is so frightening that different social groups resort to belief systems and movements which bind them to new forms of domination and submission. With the Reformation, the authority of the church is replaced by the authority of the state, which is in turn replaced by the authority of conscience. In the twentieth century, western industrial society in its monopolistic phase makes for the development of a personality which feels powerless, lonely, and insecure, and whose loss of identity alone makes it even more imperative to conform to the expectations of others.<sup>16</sup> One political response lies in surrendering freedom to a new authoritarianism, or, where liberal democracy prevails, to the 'anonymous authority of common sense and public opinion'.<sup>17</sup>

*The Fear of Freedom* is a sweeping psychological history of modernity. It historicizes Marx's insights on alienation and commodity fetishism and offers compelling explanations of the socio-psychological processes through which the 'freedom' which emerges with the development of capitalism leaves people isolated and dominated by forces beyond their control.<sup>18</sup> However, an important shift may be discerned in the final chapter of the book, dealing with 'Freedom and Democracy'. In dealing with the social character of those who embraced fascism, either as participants or as supporters, Fromm focuses on the lower middle classes, but when it comes to discussing social character in democratic societies he is not class specific, often implicitly classifying us all as part of a mass, as when he suggests that 'we have become automatons who live under the illusion of being self-willed individuals'.<sup>19</sup> There are dire warnings on the tendency of modern democratic societies to extract conformity from their citizens through competitive pressures and media simplifications, discouraging spontaneity and critical thinking. The cultural and political crisis, argues Fromm, is not owing to the fact that there is too much individualism, 'but that what we believe to be individualism has become an empty shell'.<sup>20</sup> Many years later Fromm summarized the social character of the late twentieth century as *homo consumens*, the person driven to consume more and more in compensation for 'inner vacuity, passivity, loneliness, and anxiety'.<sup>21</sup> Yet although this theme of the atrophied and atomized person is almost a *leitmotif* of Frankfurt School thinking, the warnings here are counterbalanced by a sense of hope:

If there is anything to be surprised at—and encouraged by—I believe it is the fact that the human race ... has retained—and actually developed—such qualities of dignity, courage, decency and kindness as we find them throughout history and in countless individuals today.<sup>22</sup>

The book concludes by pleading for the emergence of democratic socialism—although he adds that the name does not matter—in order that people can assert control over the processes which currently reduce the average individual to insignificance. The imperative is to replace manipulation by active and intelligent co-operation through the extension of the democratic principle into the economic sphere.<sup>23</sup>

### Humanistic ethics

Fromm's major ethical text, *Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, was published in 1947. As a text in ethics it is unconventional, for it



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spurns the 'rules and principles' approach which had dominated the philosophical treatment of ethics for two centuries, opting instead for an approach which is sometimes termed 'character ethics'.<sup>24</sup> As Fromm says, 'the virtuous or vicious character rather than single virtues or vices is the true subject matter of ethical inquiry'.<sup>25</sup> Character ethics reach back to the philosophy of Ancient Greece, and Fromm's debt to Aristotle (in this one respect) is freely acknowledged. In recent years Alisdair MacIntyre has championed a return to ethical Aristotelianism, arguing that the Enlightenment attempt to justify morality was bound to fail because it had jettisoned the central element on which all moral thought up to that time had been based, namely, the idea of a human nature and a human *telos*.<sup>26</sup> The abandonment of the idea of an essential human nature striving towards a *telos* leaves conventional moral philosophy the impossible task of deriving moral precepts from a view of 'untutored' human nature.<sup>27</sup> More often than not the moral precepts of Enlightenment philosophers are designed to combat the inclinations of that nature. In this view what is natural to humanity is often seen as 'an enemy within', something to be suppressed if good is to be achieved. Fromm explicitly criticizes this internalized authoritarianism, expressed not only in the theology of Luther and Calvin but also in the moral system of Kant, for whom the pursuit of one's own happiness has no positive ethical value, supreme happiness being found only in the fulfilment of duty.<sup>28</sup> This idea that there is a natural propensity for evil and that the moral law is necessary to suppress it is anathema to Fromm, for whom loving one's self and loving one's neighbour is not a phenomenon transcending humanity but rather an inherent attribute of that humanity.<sup>29</sup> It is the power by which we relate to and appropriate the world. We find fulfilment and happiness only in 'relatedness and solidarity' with our fellows.<sup>30</sup>

What, then, is Fromm's conception of human nature? Like Aristotle, he poses the question of what it is that distinguishes the human being from other animals. For Fromm, 'self-awareness, reason and imagination' disrupt the 'harmony' which characterizes animal nature. The human being is at once part of nature and yet transcends the rest of nature; reason drives us to endless striving for new solutions to the problems which ever-developing needs confront. The human life is one of 'unavoidable disequilibrium' in which there can be no return to a pre-human state of harmony with nature but only a development of reason towards mastery of nature, including human nature.<sup>31</sup> Only by recognizing that the only meaning to life is that which is given by humans through productive living can the possibility develop of achieving happiness through the full realization of the faculties which are peculiarly human—reason, love, and productive work.<sup>32</sup> In *Man For Himself* he cites Aristotle and Spinoza as the leading humanist philosophers, but also endorses Marx's comment in *Capital* that it is vital to distinguish between human nature in general and human nature as modified in each historical period.<sup>33</sup> In later writings Fromm's debt to Marx's conception of human essence becomes clear. In *The Revolution of Hope* (1968) he comments that perhaps the most significant definition of the species characteristic of 'man' had been given by Marx in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* when he summarized it as 'free, conscious activity'.<sup>34</sup> For Fromm, as for Marx, the fulfilment of our potential as creative human beings is imperative. Indeed, Fromm makes explicit the essentialist ethical dimension of Marx's work, focusing on the struggle to overcome the alienation of the human essence in order to



achieve a 'realm of freedom' in which self-realization becomes possible for all human beings.<sup>35</sup>

For Fromm, humanistic ethics is based on the principle that 'good' is what is good for us as human beings and 'evil' is what is detrimental to us, and the sole criterion of ethical value is human welfare.<sup>36</sup> 'Good' is regarded as the affirmation of life through the unfolding of man's powers and 'virtue' as responsibility to our own existence, whereas 'evil' is the crippling of our power and vice is irresponsibility toward oneself.<sup>37</sup> Drawing on Aristotle and Spinoza, Fromm commends 'productiveness' and the 'productive orientation', involving the full development of the human capacities for creativity, love, and reason. Failure to live in this way results in 'dysfunction and unhappiness' for the individual,<sup>38</sup> and if this happens on a widespread scale the result is a 'socially patterned defect'.<sup>39</sup> The contrast between productive and non-productive orientations is therefore vital if Fromm's ethics is to be meaningful as a 'practical' ethics. The non-productive orientations are presented as the receptive, exploitative, hoarding and marketing types, the latter being the most recent development whereby the character is dependent on the requirements of the market.<sup>40</sup> It is important to note that as the concept of social character is a dynamic one these sub-orientations are not mutually exclusive, and nor are productive and non-productive orientations. Rather it is a question of which orientations predominate and why. In his account of the productive orientation he effectively maps out a modern equivalent of what the Ancient Greek philosophers referred to as the virtues.<sup>41</sup> Productiveness involves the development of our human powers of rationality and love while avoiding exercising power as domination over others. Through productiveness we resolve the paradox of human existence by simultaneously expressing our oneness with others *and* our uniqueness.<sup>42</sup>

Fromm distinguishes between 'universal' and 'socially immanent' ethics, noting that universal principles such as 'thou shalt not kill' or 'love thy neighbour as thyself' have been amazingly similar in all cultures, but that there are also principles which are specific to particular cultures and even social classes within cultures whose virtues need to be adhered to if the social entity is to survive.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately, there will remain a conflict between the two different types of ethics 'as long as humanity has not succeeded in building a society in which the interest of "society" has become identical with that of its members'. The contradiction between absolute and immanent principles will tend to disappear only if society becomes progressively free and human.<sup>44</sup> Fromm's account of the major moral problem of the age—'man's indifference to himself'—is, in effect, an ethico-psychological account of what commodity fetishism does to human relations and mental health. He argues that the pursuit of money, prestige and power prevents us from recognizing the interests of our real self, and he bemoans the fact that we bow down to the 'anonymous power of the market' and 'of the machine whose servants we have become'.<sup>45</sup>

There are some obvious objections to Fromm's psychological ethics. First, it might be asked why his view of what constitutes the fully lived or truly human life should be regarded as more valid than any other. Fromm insists that his normative principles are 'objectively valid', rejecting the view which has prevailed from the time of Kant that objectively valid statements can be made only about facts and not about values.<sup>46</sup> He points to the arts and also to applied sciences such as medicine and engineering, where it is common to construct





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objectively valid norms by which to judge the success of a project, and where failure to comply with them is penalized by poor results. In his own sphere, he insists that living is an art and that humanistic ethics is 'the applied science of the "art of living" based upon the theoretical "science of man"'.<sup>47</sup> Fromm accepts that despite a wealth of data from anthropology and psychology we have only a very tentative picture of human nature,<sup>48</sup> but he insists that 'objectively valid' does not mean absolute, and that all scientific progress is based on provisional truths.<sup>49</sup> Fromm repeatedly stresses the empirical and scientific nature of his psychology, based largely on his psychoanalytic practice. In the course of discussing the early development of his interest in social psychology Fromm claims 'there is not a single theoretical conclusion about man's psyche ... which is not based on a critical observation of human behaviour carried out in the course of this psychoanalytical work'.<sup>50</sup> Fromm also pioneered survey work in order to clarify character types.<sup>51</sup> This empirical work, combined with critical analysis of psychological categories developed by Freud and others, enables Fromm to speak with confidence about mental illness and mental health in the individual and in society.

A second potentially serious objection to his ethics centres on his faith in the capability of humanity realizing its full potential through love, reason and human solidarity.<sup>52</sup> Why, it may be asked, should we consider only this positive potential, when humanity has all too often demonstrated its potential for wholesale destructiveness? Why conceive human nature as goodness struggling to be free, rather than as badness barely under control?<sup>53</sup> Fromm was well aware of the danger to his humanistic thesis posed by views which emphasized destructiveness or aggression as ineluctable aspects of human nature. He rejected Freud's adoption of the death instinct, seeing it as a reflection of the collapse of liberal optimism in the horror of World War I.<sup>54</sup> For Fromm, destructiveness is essentially a 'secondary potentiality', and although it possesses all the power and intensity of any passion, it is merely an alternative to creativeness, something that arises when the will to create cannot be satisfied.<sup>55</sup> In this respect Fromm shares Marx's view of the historical progress of freedom while being under no illusion about the difficulty of advancing towards an emancipated society from a distinctly unpromising *status quo*.<sup>56</sup> His most sustained work, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, refutes the arguments of instinctivists and behaviourists who view aggression as inevitable, and also analyses 'malignant aggression' as essentially a manifestation of the breakdown of creativeness.<sup>57</sup> Potentially serious destructive tendencies such as greed and envy are not strong because of their inherent intensity but because of 'the difficulty of resisting the public pressure to be a wolf with the wolves'.<sup>58</sup> I think Fromm's position on understanding destructiveness is correct, for whatever heinous crimes are perpetrated by humanity they should not be regarded as inevitable or natural, and indeed are not generally regarded as such. Society could not evolve were such behaviour endemic to humanity. Rather it is aberrational and subject to rational analysis of the interaction between antagonistic structures created by societies and the social groups who live them.

A third objection to Fromm's humanistic ethics concerns the difficulty of operationalizing the ideal of the productive character. As we have seen, in *Man For Himself* it is contrasted with the non-productive orientations. Later, in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, he opposes biophilia (love of the living) to



necrophilia (love of the dead),<sup>59</sup> and finally, in *To Have or To Be?*, he contrasts the being mode with the having mode. The being mode is a situation in which activities are productive in the sense of being consciously directed at the enrichment of human existence, as opposed to the having mode in which activity is directed to acquiring wealth and power over others.<sup>60</sup> Although he accepts that the having mode is socially dominant, he argues that only a small minority are governed entirely by it. There are still aspects of most people's lives in which they are genuinely touched by non-instrumental feelings for their fellow human beings.<sup>61</sup> One of the problems in establishing pictures of the productive individual and the being mode is that psychoanalysis has traditionally focused on neuroses rather than well-being. Fromm compares his ideal of productiveness with Freud's concept of the genital character, denoting a mature and happy personality, but notes that this concept has remained vague and abstract.<sup>62</sup> The problem is made more complex by the theoretical move from the consideration of the mental health of the individual to that of society.<sup>63</sup> Utopian thinking traditionally addresses the possibility of a happy society, but often this is seen merely as the removal of anxiety caused by material oppression or deprivation. These imaginary societies are often static, as with More's *Utopia* or Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, lacking the idea of transcendence which is central to Fromm's conception of human nature.

Despite these difficulties, a clear picture of the emancipated individual in the free society does emerge from Fromm's work, with the emphasis on a productive disposition and social relations infused with solidarity and love.<sup>64</sup> Although he states that the real artist is the most convincing representative of productiveness, he argues that it is not necessary to have such creative gifts in order to live productively.<sup>65</sup> Productiveness is the realization of human powers without imposing domination, as well as the development of loving relationships based on care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps his most succinct definition appears in *To Have or To Be?*:

The mode of being has as its prerequisites independence, freedom, and the presence of critical reason. Its fundamental characteristic is that of being active, not in the sense of outward activity, of busyness, but of inner activity, the productive use of our human powers. To be active means to give expression to one's faculties, talents, to the wealth of human gifts with which—though in varying degrees—every human being is endowed. It means to renew oneself, to grow, to flow out, to love, to transcend the prison of one's isolated ego, to be interested, to 'list' [listen], to give.<sup>67</sup>

While it is possible for individuals to glimpse this condition through occasional experiences, it is clearly impossible to universalize such an ideal within the structures of capitalist society. In *To Have or To Be?* Fromm argues that the capitalist ideology of unlimited production, absolute freedom and unrestricted happiness amount to a new religion of Progress, 'The Great Promise', based on the psychological premises that radical hedonism and egotism will lead to harmony and peace.<sup>68</sup> The promise, of course, can never be met, for it is premised on *not* delivering general satisfaction but encouraging acquisitiveness, and the individual can never be satisfied because, as Fromm says, 'there is no end to my wishes'.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, the logic of accumulation also encourages a constant fear of losing what we have gained.<sup>70</sup>



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Is it possible to change the world for the better, to move it closer to a condition of human solidarity? Fromm realistically thinks it unlikely that this will be achieved, placing the odds against it at something like fifty to one, but he never lets go of the hope that there *is* a 'real possibility', however small it may be.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps more importantly, he identifies some grounds for hope within the developing social system even at a time when atomization, conformism and fatalism appeared to be taking a firm grip. The next section will explore Fromm's identification of movements capable of promoting a humanistic ethic in challenging the values of a *status quo* which he regarded as mentally unhealthy and ultimately untenable.

#### **Ethical politics**

In 1968 Fromm lent his support to the candidature for the American presidency of the radical Eugene McCarthy, and in one of the speeches he wrote for him he comments that it is not enough for people to become aware of the failings of the existing social and political processes, but that they must be able to construct alternatives.<sup>72</sup> Many of the campaigns which Fromm endorsed were responses to the immediate issues of the day, such as the Vietnam War and the nuclear superpower stand off. However, many of his other interventions retain a direct relevance to our present situation and promote an ethical approach which asks how people can promote processes and structures consonant with a more humane and productive life. As indicated earlier, they operate on three 'levels': first, everyday life; second, political institutions within existing states; and third, the merging 'One World'.

#### *Everyday life*

A recurring theme in his contribution to a politics of everyday life is the experience of work. For Fromm, as for Marx, to produce was part of the human essence, although in modern society work was normally a stultifying experience. For the manual worker, de-skilling has destroyed interest in the process of work, engendering a 'socially patterned syndrome of pathology' manifested in apathy, boredom, lack of joy and a vague feeling that life is meaningless.<sup>73</sup> The majority of workers suffer from the dictatorial authority structures of major corporations, in which managerial elites display virtually unlimited power. It is, according to Fromm, the very opposite of the democratic process, a situation of 'power without control by those submitted to it'.<sup>74</sup> But even when authoritarian managerial methods are not dominant, employees or the self-employed are obliged to sell themselves, their personalities, in order to survive and progress. This concept of the 'marketing orientation' is extremely useful in understanding the mediocrity of modern management in organizations which judge merit by arbitrarily imposed and unaccountable criteria. 'Only in exceptional cases', he writes, 'is success predominantly the result of skill and of certain other human qualities like honesty, decency, and integrity.'<sup>75</sup> In addition to direct managerial pressure, the insecurity of the labour market means that those in work live in fear of offending management or feel obliged to adjust their behaviour to conform to the organizational culture. Those who want to move into new





occupations in mid-life have little opportunity to do so and become 'trapped' for decades in work which holds no interest for them.

Fromm is quite clear that these problems will not be adequately resolved before the realization of the final goal of socialism, democratic control of all economic activities, free co-operation of all citizens and the reduction of central state activity to a minimum.<sup>76</sup> But he was acutely aware of the need to present 'intermediate' socialist goals which could be pursued meaningfully by broad sections of working people. These intermediate goals include support for a Basic Income scheme, reduction in work-time, workers' participation in management, and stronger trade union activity on working conditions. The idea of a Guaranteed Income For All, currently enjoying renewed interest, was first supported by Fromm in *The Sane Society* (1956), where he argues that lifting the economic threat of starvation would make it very difficult to impose unacceptable working conditions.<sup>77</sup> He sees it as a means to removing one of the greatest limitations on human freedom, 'the threat of starvation against all who were unwilling to accept the conditions of work and social existence that were imposed upon them'.<sup>78</sup> It is important to note that for Fromm the idea needed to be matched with greatly diminished working hours for all and measures to discourage socially damaging consumption. He talks of a move from 'maximal' consumption to 'optimal' consumption, without which those on the minimum basic income would feel frustrated and worthless.<sup>79</sup> Ideally, the Guaranteed Income would be a step towards liberating people from the domination of the world of work so that they would have the time to confront the critical questions about the direction in which society was travelling and the values it embodied.<sup>80</sup>

Another approach which Fromm considers significant is the work on human relations management pioneered by Elton Mayo in the late forties. In his study of the various experiments in management conducted at the Chicago Hawthorn Works of the Western Electric Company, Mayo demonstrates that the output of workers increased considerably not primarily because their conditions were improved but because they were involved in the decisions to set those conditions. Participation in decision making not only improved their job satisfaction but also improved productivity.<sup>81</sup> Although it is possible to dismiss human relations management as just another device to raise productivity, the demand for democracy in the workplace raises awareness of the authoritarian and largely unaccountable reality of most management systems. Evidence of the greater efficiency of participatory schemes also challenges the commonly held management assumption that workers will perform better only when working under the threat of performance measurement. In a socialist manifesto which he drafted for the American Socialist Party he demands workers' participation in the management of big corporations and a greater influence for trade unions, particularly on issues concerning working conditions.<sup>82</sup> Writing in 1968, Fromm bemoaned the bureaucratization of the unions and their over-concentration on wages, calling instead for a return to their original 'broad social purpose'.<sup>83</sup> His suggestion of face-to-face groups in the workplace to decide on conditions and working practices appears to have been inspired by the *autogestion* movement in France and the workers' self-management system in Yugoslavia.<sup>84</sup> Interestingly, despite the difficulties faced by workers' movements since Fromm made these appeals, trade unions have tended to broaden their endeavours to tackle sexism, racism, bullying, environmental damage, and health and safety issues. The



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weakening of collective bargaining which has accompanied post-Fordism has nevertheless raised issues about the treatment of individuals and particular groups of workers which have provided unions with new opportunities to oppose the power of autocratic management. In the fifties Fromm had anticipated the development of 'super capitalism' with an extension of competition into the workplace itself through the widespread introduction of incentives such as performance-related pay and bonuses.<sup>85</sup> But he continues to see the enduring significance of trade union activity in responding to the changing work environment and defending the dignity of labour.

A second issue of everyday life which interested Fromm was the social effect of the consumption process. In the world of advertising and marketing he saw the manipulation of needs and the imposition of conformity, but he also saw the possibility of contesting the power of the major corporations. With great prescience he supported the work of consumer movements as early as 1941:

The consumer movement has attempted to restore the customer's critical ability, dignity, and sense of significance, and thus operates in a direction similar to the trade union movement.<sup>86</sup>

Although the development of capitalism brings with it an impulse to meet whatever desires are present in society, Fromm points out that there has always been regulation or prohibition of certain products, sometimes from concern with bodily harm but often on the basis of 'vestigial remnants of the Puritan morality'.<sup>87</sup> What Fromm would like to see is the advancement of 'life-furthering' rather than 'life-denying' consumption. His suggestion, made in 1968, that a group of experts (psychologists, sociologists, economists and consumers) could study consumption to establish which products were humane and which were not now appears somewhat naive,<sup>88</sup> but the subsequent development of independent groups which promote such critical scrutiny is right in line with Fromm's attitude to making consumption a site of struggle. His championing of the 'revolution of the consumer'<sup>89</sup> against the domination by industry anticipates some of the successful challenges to corporate capital that have since taken place. Ultimately, concludes Fromm, sane consumption only becomes possible when we curb the right of corporations to determine their production solely on the basis of profit and expansion.<sup>90</sup> Short of that, however, the struggle over consumption can reveal the irrationality of the global system of production and reflects a new desire to overcome passivity. So, the struggles against the tobacco corporations, the oil giants and the big banana producers help to question the logic of accumulation and promote awareness of the limitations of corporate power. Fromm calls for 'consumer strikes' to unleash the potential of the humanist-minded consumers and to assert a genuine democratic impulse in an active and non-alienated fashion.<sup>91</sup>

A third aspect of everyday life which Fromm identifies as playing a key role in the struggle to transform values is feminism, or 'women's liberation' as it was known to him. Deriding Freud's conception of women as little more than castrated men, Fromm, writing in 1969, categorizes women as a class exploited by men in all patriarchal societies, requiring an ideology to explain their domination as 'natural'.<sup>92</sup> His position was not merely a response to 'second-wave' feminism, for as early as 1934 he had written critically of the damaging aspects of 'patricentric' psychic structures. Focusing on the nineteenth-century



work on matriarchy by J. J. Bachofen, Fromm relates patriarchy to the maintenance of class society and concludes that 'matricentric' psychic structures are, implicitly, socialist.<sup>93</sup> Bachofen viewed matriarchal society as democratic, sexually open, and without private property, in which maternal love and compassion were the dominant moral principles and injury to another was the gravest offence.<sup>94</sup> According to Fromm, this chimed with the Marxist stress on the meeting of all material needs through democratic social control and the promise of a life of happiness residing in the harmonious unfolding of one's personality.<sup>95</sup> Returning to the theme in 1969, Fromm relates the significance of the idea of the matriarchate to the development of the 'women's revolution' which was attempting to make a reality of the Enlightenment idea of the equality of all people.<sup>96</sup> In *To Have or To Be?* he argues that the freedom of women from patriarchal domination is a 'fundamental factor in the humanisation of society' and concludes that if the women's movement can identify its role and function as an 'anti-power' then women will have a 'decisive influence' in the battle for a new society.<sup>97</sup> Fromm perceives patriarchy as a distortion of human essence and feminism as a path to the achievement of true humanization, an equality of recognition and respect. To be an 'anti-power' is to acknowledge the sources and configurations of social power and for Fromm this is rooted in control of the means of production and administration. Postmodernist feminists like Iris Young reject this type of essentialism as inevitably denying the 'ontological difference within and between subjects', but it not clear that the empowerment of a multitude of groups revelling in their differences can overcome the problem of 'structural injustice' which she acknowledges and which imposes its own master narrative on our lives.<sup>98</sup>

### *Democratic institutions*

Moving on to the second level of social participation considered by Fromm, his work on renewing political democracy is more significant in principle than in the practical detail of his suggestions and interventions. However, it is important to note that he was prepared to engage in mainstream political activity even if it fell well short of his ideal of democratic socialism. Here the contrast with Herbert Marcuse could not be clearer, for the latter disapproved of any involvement with established politics, prompting Fromm to accuse him of a lack of concern with politics.<sup>99</sup> Fromm's ideas for renewing democratic politics first appear briefly in *The Sane Society*. He largely accepts the gloomy conclusions of Joseph Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* that most citizens in modern western democracies were passive, apathetic and possessed little power over decision making. To counter this, Fromm suggests something like a return to the old Town Meetings of the early USA, in face-to-face groups which are well informed and are capable of directly influencing the decisions made by the centrally elected parliamentary executive. Such groups might meet monthly and comprise say, 500 citizens, based on areas or workplaces and hopefully composed of people from a variety of social backgrounds.<sup>100</sup> These ideas are developed further and in greater detail in *The Revolution of Hope*, in which he suggests that the equivalent of the Town Meetings could become an official part of the decision-making process at state and federal level.<sup>101</sup> He also suggests a National Council called the Voice of American Conscience comprising 50 'good' Americans

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to discuss the major issues of the day and issue recommendations. These major issues could be discussed at a lower level by Clubs of between 100 and 300 people, and by small Groups of about 25 people.<sup>102</sup> The general idea was for a more participatory polity in which forums would serve an educative as well as a deliberative function, in order to counter the power of vested interests. The chief problem is how such an initiative could get off the ground, and there is no obvious answer. Fromm tried to take the idea forward by having a card inserted in each copy of *The Revolution of Hope* which asked readers who they would nominate for the National Council and whether they would be prepared to participate in a Club or a Group.<sup>103</sup> However, democratic forums historically have tended to flourish only in revolutionary moments, and the recurring aspiration towards greater participation needs to look for new forms. One such development would be through more proportional representation and the involvement of non-party organizations in the political process. Another would be participation through on-line personal computers, and it is to Fromm's credit that he identified the democratic potential of computerization as early as 1968.<sup>104</sup>

#### 'One World'

The ultimate level of political activity which concerns Fromm is the international or global level. In a speech in California in 1962 he argued that the globalization of industrial production and new methods of communication means that 'One World' is coming into existence and it is probably the 'the most revolutionary event in the history of mankind'.<sup>105</sup> The question he poses is whether the One World will be a liveable one or a giant battlefield. He devoted much energy in the fifties and sixties to supporting the cause of nuclear disarmament and arguing for *detente* between the superpowers.<sup>106</sup> Today, however, it is perhaps the issues of global inequality and the power of nationalism which are most relevant. On global inequality, Fromm argues for the redistribution of resources from the affluent countries to the poorer countries. For this to happen, the having mode must be greatly weakened and a 'sense of solidarity, of caring (not of pity), must emerge'.<sup>107</sup> But this is not just a pious hope. He points to the oil-price hike of 1973–4 and the Vietnam War as assertions of the rights of former colonized states to challenge their exploitation and oppression by the dominant powers. The recent past has been rich in words about global redistribution and poor in effective intervention, but it is clear that an issue which was marginal in Fromm's lifetime will be of major significance in the new century.

The principal ideological obstacle to the development of a harmonious global society in Fromm's view is tribalism, a feeling that we have confidence only in those who belong to our tribe, who eat the same food, sing the same songs, speak the same language. Nationalism is the modern form of tribalism, through which we project all the evil in us on the stranger, and in so doing we lose touch with humanity.<sup>108</sup> As part of his personal 'Credo' appended to *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*, he expressed his belief that the One World will become truly human only if a 'New Man' comes into being, free of tribal loyalties, beyond the call of blood and soil, who feels himself to be a 'citizen of the world whose loyalty is to the human race and to life'.<sup>109</sup> In *The Sane Society* he issues an unequivocal denunciation of nationalism, describing it as our form of incest, idolatry and insanity, with patriotism as its cult.<sup>110</sup> He laments the unparalleled power of



outrage shown against those who have the temerity to deny that they love their country or unthinkingly support its war effort, and complains that this nationalist rage is often conducted under the rationalization of solidarity. He argues that, on the contrary, human solidarity can be found only when nationalism has been transcended; only when we develop our love and reason further than we have done so far can we 'build a world based on human solidarity and justice' and thereby transform it into 'a truly human home'.<sup>111</sup> The persistence of bellicose nationalism in violent conflicts in eastern Europe and central Africa indicate the strength of the problem identified by Fromm, but in movements towards the development of supra-national entities like the European Union and forums such as the global summits there is at least the chance that these conflicts can be ameliorated.

## Conclusion

Fromm's combination of social psychology, humanistic ethics and democratic socialist politics offers a powerful alternative to and protest against the postmodernist rejection of essentialism. Laclau and Mouffe's assertion that 'an anti-essentialist theoretical stand is the *sine qua non* of a new vision for the Left'<sup>112</sup> is but one expression of the assumption that theories based on an idea of common humanity necessarily lead to highly prescriptive and intolerant views of a liberated future. Fromm is, without doubt, an essentialist, operating with strong adherence to a *communis sensus*, but his work on the productive character and the goal of the 'being mode' conveys a sense of liberated expression which is wholly consonant with the widest variety of cultural identities. Indeed, it is one of the strengths of his work that he draws from ethical sources from ancient times to the present century and from a variety of religions and civilizations in order to demonstrate the remarkable endurance of the common attachment to freedom, justice, and solidarity. It is a pity that postmodernist theorists fail to take seriously the implications of *not* adhering to some conception of common human nature, more often than not dismissing the idea without a thorough consideration.<sup>113</sup> Iris Young comes close to this when she admits that in a strong sense any normative theory relies on a theory of human nature, but she then insists that any definition of a human nature is dangerous 'because it threatens to devalue or exclude some acceptable individual desires, cultural characteristics, or ways of life'.<sup>114</sup> It seems to me that Fromm's approach resolves this contradiction by removing the imputed threat of devaluation or exclusion. Different desires and characteristics can be seen as particular expressions of universal character orientations, and Fromm's work provides a guide to understanding whether they promote or harm the well-being of the individual in society, overcoming the danger of the baleful relativism of 'anything goes'.

Fromm's articulation of a humanistic ethics may be compared with the contribution of Alisdair MacIntyre, as mentioned above.<sup>115</sup> MacIntyre is often classified as a communitarian because of his emphasis on the self as always socially situated, in opposition to the notion of the abstract individual favoured by liberals. Fromm's self-description as a follower of 'humanistic communitarian socialism'<sup>116</sup> suggests a similarity in approach, and in one respect this is true. Both are occasionally prone to romanticism, as when MacIntyre concludes that society is waiting for a new St Benedict and Fromm calls for the emergence of a





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new (non-theistic) religion and hopes that a new ‘great teacher’ will emerge.<sup>117</sup> However, in MacIntyre’s case, the appeal for moral renewal is not complemented with a feasible political strategy, and the impulse towards community takes on a somewhat conservative disposition. In Fromm’s case, although he has been criticized for allowing his messianic inclinations to get in the way of elucidating a radical politics,<sup>118</sup> on the evidence I have outlined above this criticism seems to be misplaced. While it is true that Fromm’s occasional messianic remarks tend to undermine his own account of human freedom,<sup>119</sup> it would be unfortunate if they were allowed to occlude the significance of his substantive social theory. Fromm is an adept dialectician who identifies ways in which modern methods of social control are apt to undermine their own pervasiveness and permit opportunities for protest, reform, and the re-evaluation of values. This is where he has much more to offer than recent worthy but idealist appeals for ‘intellectual self-defence’ and a ‘compassionate revolution’ against corporate and state power.<sup>120</sup>

Fromm outlines a progressive political strategy which promotes a radical change of values away from instrumentality, possessiveness and acquisitiveness and towards social responsibility and respect for people. The social action which aids this change includes both old and new social movements, the struggle for reforms as well as direct protest. For example, Fromm endorsed the significance of trade union activity in struggling for worker participation in management and the reduction of working hours, as well as day-to-day struggles on issues such as discrimination and bullying. He was one of the first social theorists to identify the radical potential of new social movements, particularly those concerned with environmentalism and feminism. He lent support to reforms which he considered would strengthen and extend democratic political processes and, in the case of the basic income scheme, eradicate the causes of insecurity which too often push people to reactionary responses or to despair. He identified the emergence of ‘One World’ in an era of globalization which begs for global political solutions to the problems of war and peace, production and distribution, and sustainability. Ultimately, Fromm held fast to the idea that socialism is the only political movement which has the capacity to retain the hope of human liberation, the establishment of new moral values, and the ‘realisation of human solidarity’<sup>121</sup> But he recognized the weaknesses of previous forms of socialism, particularly in neglecting the visualization of a better world. In calling for the proliferation of designs, studies and experiments ‘to bridge the gap between what is necessary and what is possible’, he insisted that the model of the new society be determined by the requirements of the ‘un-alienated, being-orientated individual’.<sup>12</sup> In raising these ‘big’ questions of why we live the way we do and how we might live differently and better, Fromm’s work resolutely opposes the creeping fatalism of contemporary social and political life.

### Notes

1. *The Art of Loving* sold 1.5 million English-language copies between 1956 and 1970 and was translated into 28 languages—see Rainer Funk, *Erich Fromm: The Courage To Be Human*, New York, 1982, p. 7.
2. Rainer Funk, ‘Foreword’ to Erich Fromm, *The Art of Being*, London, 1993. This book contains the excised chapters. Fromm expresses his unease at writing about methods



- of self-improvement because so much literature of that sort forms part of the 'sham of man's salvation' (p. 13). He resolutely opposed cosmetic psychoanalysis, e.g. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, London, 1991, pp. 168–9, 191–208.
3. Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, London, 1991, p. 269.
  4. On the development of Fromm's early career see Funk, *Erich Fromm, op. cit.*, introduction, or, for a brief biographical sketch, Rolf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 52–60.
  5. Fromm discusses his upbringing and his discoveries of Marx and psychoanalysis in *Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud*, New York, 1962, Ch. 1.
  6. This was Fromm's opening address to the Frankfurt Institute of Psychoanalysis, cited in Wiggershaus, *op. cit.*, p. 55. Fromm started work as a psychoanalyst in 1927.
  7. Erich Fromm, *The Working Class in Weimar Germany: A Psychological and Sociological Study*, Leamington Spa, 1984.
  8. Wiggershaus, *op. cit.*, p. 271. The attack on Fromm eventually found its way into print in 1955 in Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, Boston, 1974, epilogue. Fromm counter-attacks in *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, New York, 1970, pp. 14–20.
  9. It appeared in the USA under the title of *Escape From Freedom* in 1941, and as *The Fear of Freedom* in Britain the following year.
  10. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, London, 1997, p. 10.
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
  12. *Ibid.*, p. 239. The emphasis is Fromm's.
  13. *Ibid.*, pp. 222, 247. In his discussion of social character in *The Sane Society* he emphasizes the interaction between human nature and the nature of the external conditions, stating that humanity is not a 'blank sheet of paper on which culture writes its text'. *The Sane Society*, London, 1991, p. 81.
  14. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, p. 253; cf. Erich Fromm, 'The Application of Humanist Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory', in Fromm, *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, New York, 1981, pp. 29–30.
  15. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, p. 228.
  16. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
  17. *Ibid.*, p. 218.
  18. Fromm acknowledges his debt to Marx in the book, although he cites him sparingly. *Ibid.*, pp. 140–1.
  19. *Ibid.* Much later, in *To Have or To Be?* (London, 1993, p. 195) Fromm points out that now the vast majority of the population are dependent on the sale of their labour power.
  20. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, p. 233.
  21. Erich Fromm, 'The Application of Humanist Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory', in *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, New York, 1982, p. 32. The article originally appeared in Fromm, ed. *Socialist Humanism: An International Symposium*, New York, 1965.
  22. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, p. 232.
  23. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
  24. See Edmund Pincoffs, 'Quandary Ethics', in Stanley Hauerwas and Alisdair MacIntyre (eds), *Revisions: Changing Perspectives in Moral Philosophy*, Notre Dame and London, 1983.
  25. Fromm, *Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, New York, 1990 (originally 1947), p. 33.
  26. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd edn, London, 1995, Ch. 5.
  27. *Ibid.*, pp. 54–5.
  28. Fromm, *Man For Himself, op. cit.*, pp. 121–3. The criticisms of Luther and Calvin are first set down in *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, Ch. 3, Pt 2.
  29. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom, op. cit.*, pp. 98–9.
  30. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
  31. Fromm, *Man For Himself, op. cit.*, p. 40. This view that human essence lies in the contradiction between being simultaneously in nature while transcending it is re-



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- stated in 'The Application of Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory', in Fromm, *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
  33. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–8. The Marx reference is found in *Capital*, Vol. 1, in Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 605n. Fromm cites the same passage in *The Sane Society*, London, 1991, p. 254, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter With Marx and Freud*, London, 1980, p. 28, and *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, London, 1971, p. 64.
  34. Erich Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanised Technology*, London, 1970 (originally 1968), p. 58. See also Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, New York, 1992 (originally 1961), Ch. 4. His most enthusiastic interpretation of Marx's view of human essence and its alienation comes in a paper delivered in Paris in May 1968, 'Marx's Contribution to the Knowledge of Man', published in *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, *op. cit.*, Ch. 3.
  35. Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, *op. cit.*, pp. 60, 76. Marx's discussion of the realm of freedom is in *Capital*, Vol. 3, Harmondsworth, 1981, p. 959.
  36. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
  37. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
  38. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
  39. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
  40. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–82, for a full discussion of the non-productive orientations.
  41. *Ibid.*, pp. 82–107.
  42. *Ibid.*, pp. 96–7. In *To Have or To Be?* Fromm lists the qualities of the character structure of the 'new man', emphasizing the need to take full responsibility for our lives, to reduce greed and hate, and to exercise our imagination in the struggle to remove intolerable circumstances. London, 1993, pp. 167–8.
  43. *Ibid.*, pp. 240–1.
  44. *Ibid.*, pp. 243–4.
  45. *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 245–50.
  46. *Ibid.*, pp. 14–20.
  47. *Ibid.*, p. 18. On the science of man, pp. 20–4.
  48. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
  49. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
  50. Erich Fromm, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter With Marx and Freud*, New York, 1962, p. 10.
  51. The first was the study of German workers mentioned above. The second was a study of Mexican peasants in the sixties. See Erich Fromm and Michael Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1970.
  52. See, for example, Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 276, 344; Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, Ch. 8.
  53. For example, John Schaar, *Escape From Authority: The Perspectives of Erich Fromm*, New York, 1964, p. 22. A similar objection, this time to Marx's humanism, has been made more recently by Ted Benton, *Natural Relations: Ecology, Animal Rights and Social Justice*, London, 1993, p. 40.
  54. Erich Fromm, *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, New York, 1970, pp. 33–5; Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, London, 1974, Appendix, pp. 581–631.
  55. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, p. 218; Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–8.
  56. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 192–3.
  57. Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, *op. cit.* The second part of the book compiles the evidence against the instinctivist theorists such as Konrad Lorenz.
  58. *Ibid.*, p. 194.
  59. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, *op. cit.*, p. 486.
  60. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
  61. *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 113.
  62. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–4.
  63. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 12–21.
  64. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–8.
  65. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
  66. *Ibid.*, Ch. 3, Pt 3.



67. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
68. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–13.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
72. Erich Fromm, *On Being Human*, New York, 1998, p. 55.
73. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 295.
74. Fromm, 'Let Man Prevail' (originally 1960), in *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
75. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
76. Fromm, 'Humanist Socialism', in *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, pp. 78–9; see also Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
77. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 335; cf. *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 185–6.
78. Fromm, 'The Psychological Aspects of the Guaranteed Income' (originally 1966), in *Essays on Disobedience*, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 93; see also his discussion of the 'universal subsistence guarantee', in *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 335–8.
81. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 302–5.
82. Fromm, 'Humanist Socialism', in *On Disobedience*, p. 89.
83. Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–12.
84. *Ibid.*; see also *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 306–21—in the foreword he comments that the Yugoslav model offered possibilities for widespread adoption (p. xiii).
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 240–6. Fromm found the idea in *Incentive Management* by J. F. Lincoln (of Lincoln Electric).
86. Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
87. Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
90. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
92. Fromm, *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis*, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–41.
93. *Ibid.*, Ch. 7.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 80. Fromm makes it clear that he favours a fruitful synthesis between matriarchal and patriarchal principles rather than simply the elimination of the latter.
97. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 186–8.
98. Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, 1990, Ch. 8; I discuss the relationship of Marxist humanism and feminism in Wilde, *Ethical Marxism and its Radical Critics*, Basingstoke, 1998, Ch. 6.
99. Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–9n.
100. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 341–2.
101. Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
102. *Ibid.*, pp. 151–62. In *To Have or To Be?* he suggests a Supreme Cultural Council (p. 189).
103. Fromm did not enclose a pre-paid envelope on the grounds that 'even the first small step requires the initiative at least to address the envelope yourself and spend the money for a stamp'. The response is not known.
104. *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 108, 113.
105. Fromm, 'A New Humanism as a Condition for the One World', in Fromm, *On Being Human*, New York, 1998, p. 61.
106. Fromm, *May Man Prevail: An Inquiry into the Facts and Fictions Foreign Policy*, New York, 1961; see also 'The Case for Unilateral Disarmament', in Fromm, *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, Ch. 8.
107. Fromm, *To Have or To Be?*, *op. cit.*, p. 185, cf. *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 333–4.
108. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
109. Fromm, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
110. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–9.



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111. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
112. Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, editorial statement to the *Phronesis* series of books published by Verso, e.g. Mouffe's *Return of the Political*, London, 1993, and Laclau's *Emancipation (s)*, London, 1996.
113. Jurgen Habermas, *Autonomy and Solidarity: Interviews with Jurgen Habermas*, London, 1992, p. 208; Paul Hirst, *Associative Democracy*, Cambridge, 1994, p. 46; Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation (s)*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
114. Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
115. Particularly MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, *op. cit.*
116. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 363.
117. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, *op. cit.*, p. 263, cf. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 352.
118. Michael Maccoby, 'The Two Voices of Erich Fromm: Prophet and Analyst', in *Society*, Vol. 32, No. 5, 1995; John Schaar, *Escape From Authority: The Perspectives of Erich Fromm*, New York and London, 1964, p. 212.
119. The religious impulse necessarily involves an allegiance to an authority which is always to some extent external to those striving for liberty. This directly contradicts Fromm's conception of freedom, for it is self-evident that the goals of self-realization and human solidarity cannot be realized by a *deus ex machina* standing outside and above concrete struggles.
120. David Edwards, *Free to Be Human: Intellectual Self-defence in an Age of Illusion*, Totnes, Devon, 1995, and *The Compassionate Revolution: Radical Politics and Buddhism*, Totnes, Devon, 1998. The former draws heavily on Fromm and Chomsky.