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Bohler

TO HAVE OR TO BE?

Erich Fromm. Harper & Row, \$6.95
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In a profoundly searching work that is closely related to the earlier "Escape from Freedom," "The Art of Loving" and "The Revolution of Hope," Fromm recasts Hamlet's question by exploring two "modes" of existence: *having* and *being*. Western civilized society, he demonstrates, is structured economically, politically and psychologically on property and its possession; trying to survive in such a society makes consumer-oriented, thing-owning, "having" characters of the great majority. Most are victims of the illusion that "having" is security, power, fulfillment; yet the corporate man who best typifies our grasping, competitive society all too often is emotionally atrophied. Fromm's richly coherent discourse beautifully seeks out the meaning of "being" as it illuminates or underlies Biblical writings, the thought or lives of Master Eckhart, the Buddha and later figures like Spinoza, Schweitzer and others—including Marx and Lenin, about whom his insights are remarkably acute. His closing description of a "new man and new society" is

a poignant vision of a humanist socialism that hangs on man's answer to the simplest yet most paradoxical of questions. *Major ad-promo.* [October 6]