



On Being Human

By Erich Fromm

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Any attempt to identify the thread that runs through the late Erich Fromm's writings will soon uncover an unequivocally humanistic world view. From the 1930s on, this was Fromm's guiding principle. It signified Fromm's break with the Frankfurt School: Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer. This posthumous volume includes writings from one of Fromm's most fertile periods--the 1960s. These writings concentrate on humanistic science, socialism, religion, and psychoanalysis. They are from lectures, works written for specific occasions, and manuscripts intended as books. Of particular interest is an extended essay on two very different thinkers: Meister Eckhart and Karl Marx.

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On Being Human By Erich Fromm Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #565405 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Continuum
- Published on: 1997-03-01
- Released on: 1997-03-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .42" w x 5.50" l, .48 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 180 pages

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Editorial Review

From Kirkus Reviews

Posthumous gathering of thoughts by the late socialist/humanist of *The Art of Loving*, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, etc. Fromm (1900-80), a German psychoanalyst who came to the US in 1934 and lectured at Columbia, Yale, Bennington, Michigan State, and NYU while publishing books on Western man facing his own alienation, wrote most of these formerly uncollected pieces, or delivered them off the cuff, during the 60's and 70's. Most of them circle around a common thought: alienation as a disease of modern man and the need for a humanist socialism "as distinct from existing capitalism as from the falsification of socialism that Soviet communism calls itself." How can a call for "a new humanism as a condition for one world" (as one piece herein is entitled by the book's editor, Rainer Funk) be answered by that creature whom Fromm describes as so utterly alienated by his fixation on "things" and "having" and by his blind eye to "being"? To locate some possible firm ground on which to begin building this new humanist/socialist, Fromm digs into unlikely places and finds a humanist bond between the concepts of man in Karl Marx and the treatises and sermons of the medieval German Catholic mystic Meister Eckhart. Both writers focused on poverty and "having" and "being" for their visions of man's social possibilities. Like Marx, Fromm says, "Eckhart denounces the property structure of existence as the evil that stands in the way of man's freedom, his aliveness, his finding himself." Some of this reads like a period piece, hinging as it does on our postwar Big Bomb anxieties and on depression flooding from the cold war - decades of bad feelings that still abound but are fading into new horrors. Fromm's large, keen mind and attractive, likable voice strives for heart as he asks himself the hardest questions of his day. -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Review

"This splendid volume is a welcome addition to Fromm's published legacy. Instructive foreword by the editor; bibliography; index."—Choice

"Fromm's large, keen mind and attractive, likable voice strive for heart as he asks himself the hardest questions of his day."—Kirkus Reviews

About the Author

Born in Frankfurt-am-Main, **Erich Fromm** (1900-1980) studied sociology and psychoanalysis. In 1933, he emigrated as a member of the Frankfurt School of social thinkers to the United States, moved to Mexico in 1950, and spent his twilight years between 1974 and 1980 in Switzerland. His books *Fear of Freedom* (1941) and *The Art of Loving* (1956) made him famous. Other well-known books are Marx's *Concept of Man*, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion*, and *The Essential Fromm*.

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