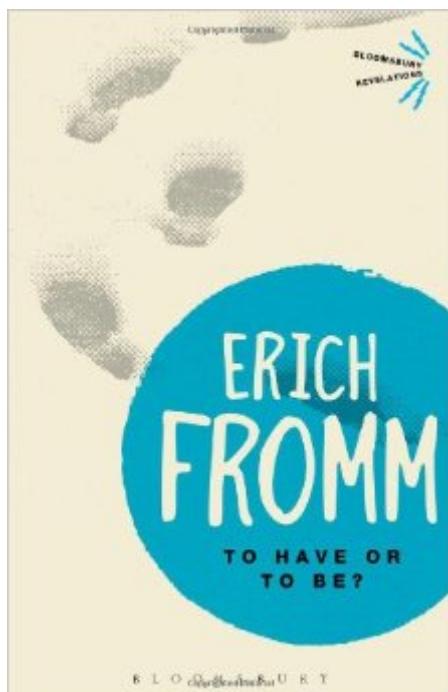


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To Have Or To Be? (Bloomsbury Revelations)



Synopsis

To Have Or to Be? is one of the seminal books of the second half of the 20th century. Nothing less than a manifesto for a new social and psychological revolution to save our threatened planet, this book is a summary of the penetrating thought of Eric Fromm. His thesis is that two modes of existence struggle for the spirit of humankind: the having mode, which concentrates on material possessions, power, and aggression, and is the basis of the universal evils of greed, envy, and violence; and the being mode, which is based on love, the pleasure of sharing, and in productive activity. To Have Or to Be? is a brilliant program for socioeconomic change.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Seriously, if you are opening this book, be prepared to use your brain for real or spare yourself the trouble. First, to paraphrase a foreword from a non-English translation, you need to be aware that Fromm is the analyst, and not the sweet-sounding visionary. So, the last part of the last chapter is best served by skipping it or browsing with the smile, remembering that even great analysts sometimes can't resist the temptation to 'envision' a 'recipe'. The rest of the book, or should I say the actual book, is pure gold, but in order to reach it you need to be prepared to simply trust the author for the duration of the book. Then turn around and if you don't start recognizing things he's talking about in real life - feel free to debate him - during the second reading. If you jump to debate him every time he crushes something you consider 'sacral' you'll just waste your time. Consider this a

test of your own brain - is it really working or just being busy filtering the uneasy information. Also, be prepared to read the book twice, even if you don't feel like debating it :-) The reason is that pretty soon you'll want to quote something from the book but you won't have an easy one-liner. To quote Fromm, you'll need to quote the idea, and ideas take a few paragraphs or even pages to be 'painted' and understood properly. Last but not least, be aware that Fromm himself was aware of the fact that the one who is discovering or telling a new thing doesn't actually have the vocabulary to express it, so be prepared to fill in and consider it normal if some words don't sound precise or modern.

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