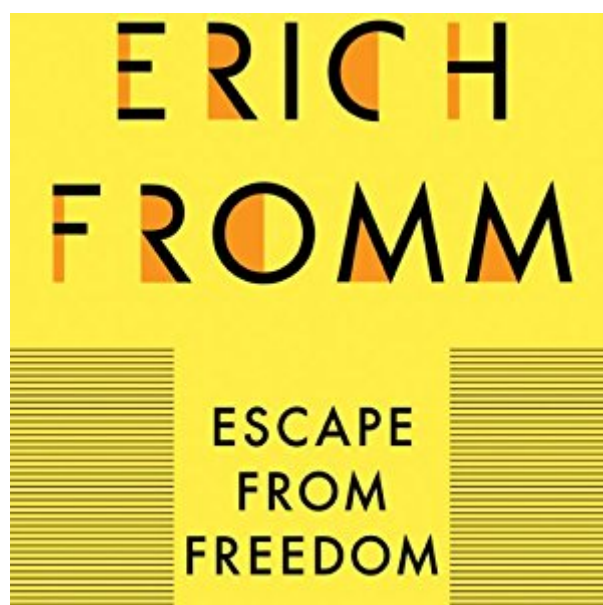


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# Escape From Freedom



## Synopsis

If a man cannot stand freedom, he will probably turn fascist. This, in the fewest possible words, is the essential argument in this modern classic, *Escape from Freedom*. The author, Erich Fromm, is a distinguished psychologist, late of Berlin and Heidelberg, now of New York City. He applies the psychoanalytical method to the illness of our civilization which expresses itself in an abject submission to dictatorship. It is true that the rise of democracy set men free and brought to an end the authority of the medieval state and the medieval church. But it brought into existence a society where a man feels isolated from his fellows, where relationships in an industrial age are impersonal, where insecurity replaces a sense of belonging. This sense of isolation may drive an individual to one of various forms of escape. It may drive a people to seek escape in blind devotion to a leader, in utter submission to an all-powerful state, into a barbarous and sadistic program of aggression against minority groups or neighbor nations. Few books since the rise of the dictators have thrown such light upon our times. Few books have penetrated so clearly into the causes of fascism and Nazism - and into the inherent qualities of a democracy. In his psychoanalysis of the social scene, the author makes a new contribution to psychology by modifying the basic concepts of Freud in placing a purely biological orientation by a cultural one. To all who see that democracy today faces its gravest hour, Dr. Fromm illustrates the essential character of the danger and the nature of democracy's responsibility. By its brilliant exposition of the modern social scene *Escape from Freedom* will help clarify many of today's most perplexing problems.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

.An amazing book that pieces modern society starting from the medieval to the renaissance and reformation, that is, from a well defined structured and fixed group identity, fixed meaning to life, determined purpose to life and the here after, to that of the existential, capitalistic and monopolist society that has produced radical individualism with the type of freedom producing severe loneliness, separation and the need to alleviate such emptiness, which has been fulfilled by illusionary means.Fromm relates a major piece of Western civilization's struggle in the ability to see the correlation between the medieval, secure, self-employed society to that of the Renaissance, an elite aristocracy employing the masses as dependent employees, commodities under a new capitalistic society. It was here only the limited rich could prosper in creativity, while the masses existed in a new existential despair. And so Luther, and later Calvin, devised new forms of Christianity, existential types, to aid these new psychological needs of the masses in accepting this change from security to exploitation.Fromm goes both into the psyche of man, the nature of societal structure, the development of western civilization and need for security and certainty to that of either authoritarian rule, internal conscious rule or the invisible rule of democratic conformity to public opinion, or automation.Basic Masochistic/Sadistic desires of man from the extreme, to what is considered "normal" has been seen in the forfeit of the individual self into totalitarian control, capitalistic profit and religious and social concepts that attempt to fill the void of separateness without keeping the self.

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