

AP PSYCHOLOGY SUMMER READING: THE ART OF LOVING

Erich Fromm belongs to the *Social Psychoanalytic* school of psychoanalytic thought in his approach to human behavior. Influenced by Sigmund Freud, this school of thought teaches that humanity is motivated by thoughts, feelings, or desires in the unconscious. What distinguishes these theorists from Freud and his school, is their emphasis on forces outside people, specifically the social/cultural influences upon them. In Fromm's case, he believes that while people became more and more free as time went on, the sense of isolation from the rest of humanity increased, thus creating an intolerable situation. The essential drive for the individual then is some need for affiliation with humanity, which underlies all human activity. Basically Fromm believes we have two choices: either submit to authority/the state and become slaves, or we use freedom to join others in love and work. The latter choice enables humanity to develop a more "civilized" society, while the former creates a stable, safe but depersonalizing society lacking individuality. **The Art of Loving** discusses this situation of humanity and describes the various ways in which people can respond to these choices, thus fulfilling the underlying need of affiliation. As you read, consider the following ideas, points and areas.

1. What question has faced Man throughout time?
2. How does one overcome separateness from others? What is responsible for this condition?
3. What does it mean to transcend one's individuality? Can one maintain individuality and still find union with others?
4. What is the most powerful striving in Man? What happens when this is thwarted?
5. What is the cause of insanity?
6. What is *symbiotic union*? Is this synonymous with *mature love*?
7. What is *motherly love*? Is this the same as *fatherly love*?
8. Are the above two separate experiences or is a connection necessary? Why/why not?
9. Why is love rare in western society? What is responsible for this situation?
10. Does *capitalism* help or hinder the development of mature love?
11. What is the role of sexual satisfaction in love? How does Fromm differ from other views?
12. What fallacies do those who confuse sexuality with love follow?

13. What is *pseudolove*? Why does it occur? What are its forms?
14. What is neurotic love? Is it a substitution for union? Why/why not?
15. Why is there a need to *practice* love?
16. How is love an art? What does it have in common with other art?
17. What is *narcissism*? Where does it come from and how can it be overcome (if at all)?
18. What is the role of *objectivity* in the practice of love?
19. What is *Faith* according to Fromm? Is it the same as religious Faith?
20. How is *Faith* related to love and courage?
21. Does society in general foster love? Why/why not?
22. Overall, what is Fromm's theory of love and how is it distinguished from the modern usage of it?

ENDNOTE: Fromm was heavily influenced by the *ideal* of Marxism, not its reflection in the communist state of the twentieth century. As such he advocated a society that would emphasize the *communal* elements associated with Marxism as a reaction to the glorification of the state as seen in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. **The Art of Loving** was written during the late post-WW II early 1950's era with this idea in mind and as such may or may not be seen as valid in the modern time. This is a question which should be considered in its reading.