

Panel 1: Session chair, Maor Levitin

Author: Marie-Hélène Masse-Lamarche, Ph.D. candidate and lecturer
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Title: Conquer Snakes, Climb Ladders within Socially Patterned Defects: Study on Teacher Alienation in Neoliberal School Context.

Abstract: During the fall of 2023, the province of Quebec witnessed a significant wave of protests and strikes led by most of its primary and secondary school teachers. The demands for a fairer school system for students and more equitable treatment for teachers eventually received an economic response from authorities. With mixed feelings, the teachers accepted salary increases as a satisfactory makeshift solution to all the problems of educational discontent, including growing suffering in a profession where working conditions have been deteriorating for decades. Back to square one.

At the dawn of an imminent crisis, the social mortar cements around the financial foundation, evoking its social desirability inherent to neoliberalism, which, in the educational realm, commands authority by promoting its economic values (performance, competition, efficiency, effectiveness) for decades, sometimes at the expense of humanistic ones (emancipation, freedom, equity), thereby disrupting school's democratic, moral, and cultural foundations. The manifold ramifications of educational neoliberalism on teaching work are well-documented: loss of professional autonomy, ethical and identity conflicts, loss of meaning, and inauthenticity in the educational process. These various situations, where experiences of diminishment and disempowerment at work combined with psychological challenges, constitute the facets of a single harmful condition that seems to be increasingly present among teachers: alienation. Placing these actors in a sinister game where aspirations confront obligations, teachers find themselves navigating a precarious balance between their ideals and the demands placed upon them.

This contribution presents the preliminary results of a doctoral project investigating alienation among Quebec teachers, a phenomenon understood as a social pathology resulting from the influence of socioeconomic structures on individual psyches and causing various forms of suffering. We draw on Erich Fromm's social-analytical insights to examine the concrete manifestations of alienation among teachers, and to identify its structural and social causes. Based on the perceptions of forty teachers who expressed themselves in semi-structured interviews, the study's results suggest the denial of existential needs in the practice of teaching work embedded in what, in Fromm's sense, can be understood as a socially patterned defect. The presentation concludes with possible ways to find and rediscover spaces of freedom within teaching practice following the Frommian humanistic ethic.

Author: Shelly Johnson, Georgetown College (Georgetown, KY)

Title: Fromm, Freire, and Biophilia in the Classroom: How Biophilic Pedagogy Liberates both Privileged and Marginalized Students

Abstract: Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (PO)* has been instrumental in liberating oppressed people around the world in places like Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the U.S. Some critics wonder, however, about the relevance of *PO* to lives of predominantly privileged people or, as is the focus of this paper, in predominantly privileged classrooms. In this paper I argue that *PO* is highly relevant for privileged classrooms. I further argue that exploring the connection between Freire and Fromm illuminates why *PO* is so relevant for both oppressed and privileged students today. To argue this point, I first distinguish between the concept of oppression and dehumanization in *PO*. While Freire argues that only marginalized groups suffer oppression, he argues that all people, both oppressed and oppressors, can suffer dehumanization. He further argues that the oppression of one person or group results in the dehumanization of everyone. Second, I explain Fromm's notion of necrophilic and biophilic orientations of life, which Freire explicitly draws upon in *PO*. I show that Fromm's contrast between a biophilic and necrophilic orientation to life informs Freire's distinction between dehumanizing and humanizing orientations towards life. Freire argues that humanization is the vocation of every human being and refers to the full expression of every positive, pro-social human capacity, a parallel idea to Fromm's notion of biophilia. Thus, adopting a biophilic, humanizing orientation towards life co-liberates oppressed and privileged people and fosters their co-flourishing. Similarly, adopting biophilic and humanizing pedagogy co-liberates oppressed and privileged students fostering their co-flourishing. I end by sharing an example of biophilic, humanizing pedagogy from Mary Cowhey's Freirean-inspired book *Black Ants and Buddhists*. I suggest how such practices can inform university pedagogy to create biophilic classrooms at the post-secondary level.

Author: Rory Varrato, Teachers College, Columbia University, Philosophy and Education Program

Title: Empathetic Introjection: Finding a Frommian Psychagogy in Coetzee's *Jesus* Fictions

Abstract: In this paper, I conduct a Frommian interpretation of Coetzee's *Jesus* fictions in order to demonstrate the presence of a psychagogy I term "empathetic introjection." First, I largely accept Robert Pippin's framing of the *Jesus* trilogy as a meditation on metaphysical exile. However, I turn Pippin's analysis on its head by wondering what this means inwardly for the reader as opposed to outwardly for the characters in the narrative. Or, put differently, I seek to explore the trilogy's latent content rather than its manifest content. To that end, I establish Fromm's method of interpretation based on his conceptualization of symbolic language in *The Forgotten Language*. To do this, I use Nietzsche's "three metamorphoses" from his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as an example of crucial relevance to the *Jesus* novels. Then, I interpret (at least) three scenes from the *Jesus* trilogy, showing thereby how the symbolic language of those scenes is congruent with the symbolic language of Nietzsche's metamorphoses. Having thus established, in Frommian fashion, how both these instances of symbolic language operate to express the same inner experience as diverse outer events, I turn to the question of what this

means for the reader of the *Jesus* fictions. Thus, I propose “empathetic introjection” as the authorial correlate to what Coetzee has called “sympathetic projection,” or the reader’s “power of projecting oneself into the subjectivity of the other, and thinking and feeling from within him/her.” In addition to my Frommian interpretations, I draw support for this claim from other secondary sources, including especially Jonathan Lear’s treatment of “ironic disruption.” Ultimately, I argue that the *Jesus* fictions represent an instance of transformative education—of “philosophy passed into images” (Camus)—that supplies a source of symbolic language for the reader to empathetically introject through their reciprocal power of sympathetic projection. Put simply: the reader, by encountering the outer events written in conventional language in the manifest content of the *Jesus* trilogy, subsequently internalizes the transformative inner experience written in symbolic language in the latent content of the trilogy. This is Coetzee’s psychagogy, or his careful crafting of evocative images for the reader to absorb.

Panel 2: Session chair, Charles Thorpe

Author: Hoang Minh Uyen Ly, American Polytechnic College

Title: Fromm on Mother’s Nature, Sacrifice, and Social Reproduction

Abstract: In contemporary capitalist society, women's childbirth and housework duties are still seen as sacrifice and love, something they must do. This paper will analyze Fromm's perspective and his analysis on matriarchy, women, and love, especially his work on the Art of loving, Love, Sexuality, and Matriarchy, and through several Fromm’s researchers, to show that women's reproduction work is not a “sacrifice” – in terms of patriarchal society, and criticize aspects of Vietnamese literature - which promote the sacrifices of Vietnamese women. In addition, such "sacrifice" exposes women to exploitation within the framework of the division of labor. At the same time, the article also shows that Fromm's perspective on women and feminism is very similar to Marx's, from criticizing Malthus to criticizing the exploitation of women in contemporary society. This article will contribute to future social developments and the extension of Fromm's theoretical analysis of the 21st century on women and feminism.

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Author: Kalyani Singh

Title: P. Sivakami’s Book, The Grip of Change: Analyses the Sociological Perspective of Erich Fromm’s View

Abstract: This book would actually understand the perspective of caste in the Indian subcontinents, where the idea of caste is most prominent than the life of others. The idea of caste

would have been left the scars on the specific group of society still in the 21st century. So, the Erich Fromm ideas of race, culture and other social perspective would still relevant not for the European or American country but for the country like India. Where, he argues that nationalism is a great threat for civilization, because nationalism believes in chauvinism in order to maintain the legacy of patriarchal pillars of power dominance in this society on which every race, culture, ritual and society rely. This book, *The Grip of Change* would actually show the inner layers of chauvinism of Indian cultural identity, where women of specific community used as bonded labor in the name of flesh or sexual identity. She comes from Dalit community, where women do not choose their life up to their own identity but make sure that their family would have been happy or not with their work. As we know, patriarchy is a universal phenomenon which would postulate the idealism of nationalism so that it would maintain the legacy of culture and ritual, which would clearly dominate the identity and agency of women in this patriarchal domain. So, nationalism would maintain that legacy of patriarchal notion on which anybody could maintain the social norms of this traditional society for sure. So, this book would actually show the theory and idea of Erich Fromm in the name of his Psychoanalytical and sociological point of view, where woman of certain caste would have been harassed and might be harassed by the upper caste men of this society for no reasons. This book shows that, what kind of psychological and mental problems she has been facing since ages in this patriarchal society because of being a Dalit woman. Thus, the idea of Erich Fromm would always been relevant not for the western world but for the Indian society as well.

Author: Amparo Espinosa Rugarcía, amparo@fundacionsru.org 52 55 54032639

Title: Searching Mothers

Abstract: Una de las evidencias más lastimosas de la violencia en México es la de las madres que, a falta de una respuesta adecuada y satisfactoria de las autoridades, se han organizado en grupos para buscar a sus hijas (entre otros familiares) que han desaparecido sin dejar rastro en ocasiones desde hace décadas. A estas mujeres se les conoce como Madres Buscadoras y a los diferentes grupos que conforman se les denomina Colectivos. Este texto ofrece un recuento general de las actividades que las Madres Buscadoras realizan en México y del impacto que su búsqueda ha tenido en la toma de conciencia de nuestra sociedad en torno al papel de las mujeres en el combate del crimen y la violencia. Ofrece así mismo algunas hipótesis derivadas de este estudio que se realiza desde una perspectiva frommiana, básicamente en torno a la esperanza y el vínculo entre la madre y el hijo- a partir del material bibliográfico existente, de grupos de enfoque y de una entrevista a profundidad a una mujer buscadora que encabeza un Colectivo del Estado de Puebla.

One of the most painful pieces of evidence related to the violence in Mexico is that of some mothers searching for their daughters –or other family members–, who disappeared even since decades ago. These women are known as “Seeker Mothers” (*Madres Buscadoras*) and the groups they create and participate in are called “collectives.” Due to the lack of proper and satisfactory answers from authorities, these women had to organize themselves in groups to search for their missing children. This text offers a general recounting of the activities performed by the “Seeker Mothers” and the impact their search has had in terms of social awareness around women’s role

in fighting crime and violence. It also offers some hypothesis derived from Erich Fromm's (a Frommian) approach, particularly around hope and the link between mother and son, based on current bibliography, focus groups, and from a deep interview to a seeker woman leading a collective in the state of Puebla.

Sandra Buechler's Book Presentation

Panel 3: Session chair, Lauren Langman

Author: Sandra Buechler, Ph.D.

Title: Clinical Implications of Fromm's View of Health: Legacies of My Training

Abstract: As I reflect on my clinical training, from 1979-1983, at the William Alanson White Institute (where Fromm was one of the founders) I can distinguish differences between the impact of my Sullivanian supervisors and teachers versus those whose orientation owed more to Erich Fromm. While all my supervisors had some fundamental beliefs in common, such as the centrality of relatedness in human experience, their views of psychological health differed in ways that proved significant in my own clinical practice and theoretical writing. This paper examines the legacies of these training experiences, focusing particularly on the impact of one of my supervisors, who was avowedly Frommian.

The paper begins by discussing the importance of articulating the clinician's understanding of psychological health, and its influence on the definition of a treatment's goals. I contrast my Frommian and Sullivanian supervisors' approaches to issues related to conceptions of health, such as consensual validation, adaptation, anxiety, and character. Citing relevant theoretical passages, I describe how these ideas affect my clinical practice. The remainder of the paper focuses on my experience in supervision with an analyst who identified as Frommian. His supervision had an especially profound influence on my personal and professional development. Some of the ways Frommian concepts (Funk, 2019; Funk and Lechhab, 2023) can inspire today's clinicians and theoreticians will be suggested (Buechler, 2019, 2024, in press).

Author: Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis

Title: From Determined Objects to Fellow Subjects: The Relevance of Fromm for Contemporary Psychoanalysis

Abstract: Contemporary psychoanalysis in the United States has taken a turn to what is considered the "social," represented almost exclusively by a ubiquitous attention to "systemic racism." Psychoanalytic associations, institutes, and journals have all become focused on the

ways in which white supremacy dominates our lives and continuously harms people of color. In this paper I argue that this focus and the already extant, dominating interest in patients' trauma has had unintended consequences for our clinical practice. Increasingly, whole groups of people are seen as thoroughly determined by factors outside of their control, that is, the color of their skin or the misfortune of their circumstances. They often are viewed primarily as victims, or as Fromm suggests, "helpless puppets" overwhelmed by "the powers that determine them" (2009:78-9). I believe that Fromm's concept of a "productive orientation" can be recuperated as an antidote to this movement. Ingredient in his conceptualization is a fundamental understanding of human agency, akin to what psychoanalyst Donnel Stern terms "the feeling that one is choosing one's own life. . . to feel our own hand on the tiller" (2010:102). While we must be fully aware of the ways in which race, social class, and gender form people's experience, our awareness should not foreclose seeing those subjected to discrimination as without autonomy or agency. In our capacity to hold ambivalence and ambiguity, to see individuals as both socially constituted *and* simultaneously unique, we can make use of Fromm's concept of productivity. Rainer Funk describes this as an orientation "toward bringing forth, toward *producing* what is in the human being" (2024:81). I would argue that in this active orientation toward life, in the realization of humans' species being, we can find a means of holding the possibility for transforming determined objects into fellow subjects, victims into citizens.

Author: Michael Thompson

Title: Fromm on the Concept of Psychic Health

Abstract: The concept of psychic health is generally viewed with suspicion by clinicians as well as theorists of psychoanalysis (Zepf, 2018). As a reaction to an authority-based, medicalized model a more postmodern sensibility has set in which sees the idea of psychic health as smacking of "normativity" and squashing real differences and divergence between individuals (Forrester, 2019). I want to suggest a different approach to psychic health developed by Erich Fromm and his idea of healthy relational and ego dynamics based in strivings for autonomy, solidarism and productivity. These strivings, however, can only be accomplished within healthy social structures meaning that another striving must be added: that of ethical awareness (see Black, 2024). A radical psychoanalysis will only become truly possible not when it merely freed people from oppressive norms, but when it is able to make individuals aware of the forms of authority (both in terms of internalized objects as well as external norms and functions) that perpetuate the frustration of their development as vital subjects.

Panel 4: Session chair, Joan Braune

Author: Ayumi Osagawa MA

Title: The Contemporary Significance of Erich Fromm's Psychoanalysis: A Study in Relation to D. T. Suzuki, Zen Scholar

Abstract: Erich Fromm and Zen scholar D. T. Suzuki shared some important similarities between psychoanalysis and Zen in Mexico. In my opinion, the essences they shared are essential and pioneering at a very deep level. I think they have the potential to contribute to the development of contemporary psychoanalysis, especially when considered in the context of contemporary relational psychoanalysis. Of particular importance, I think, is what D. T. Suzuki described in terms of "logic of Sokuhi" and "Oneness" which are the enactment of contemporary relational psychoanalysis. I think it relates to and corresponds to what Mitchell describes in Escher's picture of how the dialectic contributes to enactment in contemporary relational psychoanalysis and how the client and therapist are inseparable within that enactment. The dialectic usually emphasized in contemporary relational psychoanalysis and the contradictions shared by Fromm and D. T. Suzuki are very similar, yet very different. Fromm's and D.T.'s contradiction has no cessation. Fromm's theory contains a mixture of dialectical and dogmatic dichotomies, as well as elements that he shared with Zen contradiction. The cessationist dialectical way of being is different from, but certainly contributes to, what Fromm and D. T. Suzuki shared. And what Fromm and contradiction shared contributes to the understanding of enactment at a deeper level. I see it as a particularly fundamental liberation of difficult deadlock situations. In families and organizations, Fromm and D. T. Suzuki ideas will be helpful in how we can support members who suffer from a dogmatic dichotomy, a way of being that aims only in the good direction. This presentation will examine the potential contribution of Zen elements in Fromm's psychoanalysis to the present day in the context of relational psychoanalysis.

Author: Amjad Hussain, Department of English, National University of Modern Languages Peshawar, KP, Pakistan Email: amjadhussain@numl.edu.pk

Title: Thinking Contemporary Muslim Political Philosophy with Erich Fromm and Muhammad Iqbal

Abstract: Erich Fromm and Dr Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1938), two greatest twentieth century philosophers, have some uncanny common philosophical ancestors through whom a parallel can be drawn between these two contemporaries with Erich Fromm illuminating the reconstructed and recalibrated Muslim political philosophy of Dr Muhammad Iqbal. This is path-breaking study of the common philosophical ancestors of both Erich Fromm and Dr Muhammad Iqbal in order to show how their political and religious thoughts converge. These common philosophical ancestors are Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, and Rumi. Rumi inspired Fromm to formulate his concept of 'humanistic psychoanalysis'. Iqbal also had these same philosophical ancestors. His debt to all of them is profound. But unlike in the context of Fromm, Marx and Nietzsche are considered 'atheists', in the context of Iqbal, rather than social critics in keeping with the mandate of the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt. They are not the metaphors of *Justice* (Marx) and *Meaning* (Nietzsche). Iqbalist scholarship still awaits the arrival of a new conception of these metaphors of Justice and Meaning. The discourse that surrounds the dissemination of Marx and Nietzsche is an imperialist and colonialist one. This is something that Fromm forcefully countered.

Fromm is, therefore, crucial in helping Muslim societies elevate their conception of Marx and Nietzsche allowing them to understand the political philosophy of Dr Muhammad Iqbal that is not separate from the initial spur that brought a continuum to form between Frankfurt School's critical social theory, Derridian poststructuralism, Lyotardian postmodernism, and the postcolonial theory of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak. In the present circumstances, contemporary Muslim societies cannot do without thinking through with Erich Fromm, especially in the postcolonised context of Pakistan, where a military junta controls Pakistan for a compromised political elite. In this intense political wrangling, Dr Muhammad Iqbal is misunderstood by his political ideologues because they are reading him under a discourse. On the other hand, he is appropriated by the Repressive State Apparatus put in place in Pakistan at the moment. Iqbal and contemporary Muslim philosophy needs Erich Fromm's seminal insights.

Submitted by

Author: Nick Braune, Emeritus Professor (Philosophy) from South Texas College on the Texas-Mexico border

Title: Ruth Nanda Anshen, a Philosopher, Includes Fromm in World Perspectives Series

Abstract: Neil McLaughlin, with an interest in how people are received in academia, has asked this question: "Is Fromm really a sociologist?" He believes he is and starts with the obvious evidence that Fromm trained under a great sociologist Alfred Weber. I am in the same bind as McLaughlin, although I have considered Fromm since my early college years to be a philosopher. I prize a 1950s paperback, Essays in Philosophy, which includes one by Fromm, right there with Maritain and Dewey! And as for Fromm's teacher, Alfred Weber, the prestigious Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by Paul Edwards in 1967, has an separate entry on Alfred Weber, "a sociologist and philosopher of history." There was more fluidity back in the early 1920s between academic areas.)

This conference paper admits difficulty classifying Fromm exclusively as this or that. But I show Fromm as in "a circle" of philosophers, in certain ways resisting academic classifications and moving toward "Personalism," a loose theme I borrow from *The Spirit of the Sixties*.)

Ruth Nanda Anshen, with a doctorate in philosophy, worked with a project to unite the "sciences" (a wide use of the term), a project connected to Columbia University. She planned and edited the World Perspectives books. In 1977 when Fromm's *To Have or to Be* came out, readers saw Anshen's *eleven-page* introduction about the World Perspectives series. The series began with French "personalist" Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain, followed by many favorite writers: Moses Hadas, Paul Tillich, Georg Lukacs, Mircea Eliade, Raymond Aron, ect. Of the 55 books in the Anshen's series, there were 49 different writers; but four books by Fromm! Art of Loving, Sigmund Freud's Mission, Revolution of Hope and To Have or To Be.

Anshen knew Fromm's work, having written an insightful five-page book review of Man for Himself for The Philosophical Review in 1948, and having included two Fromm essays in her late-40s book on the family. When *Art of Loving* appeared, she was ready. Interestingly, she brought out another book on "the philosophy of love" – by Martin D'Arcy, S.J.: *The Meeting of Love and Knowledge*.

Her series published "only those spiritual and intellectual leaders" who find a "common humanity more fundamental than any unity of dogma."

Author: Rebeca Aramoni

El Vacío de un Secuestro.

Recalcati (2009)

La caída del muro, precipita un nuevo "status quo" y entramos de lleno en la Era de la Globalización.

A partir de aquí, aparece un nuevo orden mundial y el sistema capitalista se pervierte, volviéndose feroz y desaforado. La Democracia (el poder del pueblo) queda sustituida por la Plutocracia (el poder del dinero). Las antiguas ideologías, los valores, la religión y la ética sufren una importante devaluación. La consigna de las nuevas generaciones es: el "Carpe diem", o sea, vivir al día, de un modo hedonista. Y como complemento, los siguientes imperativos categóricos: "Debes consumir" y "Debes gozar".

Lo que nos enferma es el vacío que estas consignas llevan implícitas. Es el vacío de la Ley, de la Ética, y como consecuencia aparece un vacío del Deseo: No hay ilusión,

no hay motivación, ni metas, ni libido, en terminos freudianos.

¿Qué quiere decir Ley?: Los límites lógicos para el desarrollo armonioso del individuo y de la vida colectiva.

NO SE PUEDE TODO. Los límites son necesarios y estructurantes para una sana evolución del individuo y de la sociedad . No se puede tener todo, comer todo, experimentar todo y que no haya consecuencias. Necesitamos una Ley que nos contenga.

En cuanto al vacío que nos compete en este trabajo, esta directamente relacionado con el vacío que provoca una sociedad descompuesta, putrefacta y corrupta desde las entrañas.

Panel 5: Session chair, Rory Varrato

Author: Jeremiah Morelock

Title: Erich Fromm, Social Media, and Authoritarian Populism.

Abstract: I can give an outline of how I/we use Fromm's theories in my/our book *The Society of the Selfie*, which is about neoliberal society in the era of social media. I discuss his notion of the marketing orientation in relation to a phenomenon I describe as "neoliberal impression management" that, in our social media saturated culture, can be understood in terms of 'personal branding' and tending to one's 'online presence.' I also address the issue of alienation and sadomasochism, in relation to a phenomenon I identify with as 'authenticity strain,' which is part of a dialectical theory of alienation and abnormality that deals with theories of anomie and moral panic. Finally, I give some speculations on how these pathological contemporary tendencies may feed into the rise of authoritarian populism domestically and globally.

Author: Berenice García Tapia, Instituto Mexicano de Psicoanálisis A.C.

Title: The Thumb and Social Media

Abstract: The fundamental difference between the Australopithecus and the modern man hand is the thumb. A difference that comes from the development of this digit in width, strength and folding ability, which made possible to the hominids the use and invention of tools and manipulation of objects, according to diverse studies made by anatomists and anthropologists, some others assure that it was the manipulation of objects the origin of the development of the thumb. Whichever was the order, the thumb represented a constant call and response between creator and creation that generated the improvement in tools that corresponded to the hominids' necessities, while simultaneously allowing new forms of organization that created new necessities to attend to. As a result from this responsive dialogue there has been physiological and, to the means of this presentation, neurological changes in the human being, and it's in the neurological realm that we see its repercussions in the human mind as psychoanalysts.

Under the premise that creator and creation have mutually influenced and changed each other throughout history, we'll try to comprehend the role that social media has taken as a human creation and a platform for social phenomena, but also and foremost, as the stage where we represent our character while simultaneously creating it. Each one of us, whether it be as a user or as a psychoanalyst (since social media has become a factor on the stories our patients share with us), are witness to the benefits of connecting through social media; like its immediate and large scale scope. Which has made possible the organization of social movements, easy access to information, social demands, etc. But at the same time we've been able to witness its adverse effects, since the easy access and large scale scope, comes with the possibility of anonymity, an open door to cyberbullying, sexting and many other modern social phenomena.

So, is it the purpose of social media to function as a stage where we present our character? What implications does it have on the constitution of our "Ego"? How can we perceive this from a psychoanalytic point of view?

Author: Dr. Rainer Funk, Erich Fromm Institute Tübingen

Title: Creativity, Unboundedness, Self-Determination, Dependency on Media, Aloneness... Is There a New Social Character?

Abstract: The marketing character described by Fromm still dominates in many societies and organizations. And yet there are many signs that not only a (group) narcissistic social character is becoming dominant, but also a character that appropriates the possibilities and requirements of the digital revolution and wants to reinvent reality (including the own person) in a self-determined and different way. Which character traits are typical? How does this Ego-oriented character differ from other social characters? What psychodynamics define this character?

Panel 6: Session chair, Ilene Philipson

Author: Lauren Langman

Title: Nature-Nurture: Optimism in Dark Times

Abstract: Erich Fromm, began writing as Fascism was growing, WWII imminent and a Socialist Jew, leave his homeland, Germany. Much of his writing took place after the Shoah, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, McCarthyism and the Cuban Missile crisis-yet his critique of Freud, and even Hobbes, of human nature as aggressive and warlike, "*Homo homini lupus*" never wavered. Today, as genocidal wars take place in Ukraine and Gaza, as Putin rattles nuclear swords, and WW3 might kill 5 billion people, how can we be optimistic? Fromm tells, noting, as Mauricio has shown, for most of human pre-history, before horticulture-agriculture could sustain warrior classes, blood wars were rare. Fromm helps us understand his reality. For a Marxist, most wars, even when seemingly "religious", are based on quotes for increasing wealth and power via military action, or often resisting the aggression from another. But as EF has shown, political economies are mediated via character, itself shaped by early socialization. More specifically, geopolitical conflicts like wars are typically initiated by authoritarian groups/classes/leaders-and as we know, an essential element of authoritarianism is aggression which impels initiation and sustaining conflicts. But that begs the question, how/why do some people become authoritarian? Fromm does not dwell on his aspect, but his concern with character suggests that early socialization is an initial step disposing character, more specifically give what Fromm has suggested, informed by object Relations theory, Klien, Winnicott, Bowlby etc., and more recent perspectives for example Lakoff, we might contrast strict punitive socialization to instill obedience and conformity, often enforced via physical punishment vs more egalitarian , nurturant practice that encourage empathy, caring and sharing. The former, often called "identification with the aggressor" as to Oedipal strivings by young boys, suggest that such childrearing not only fosters weak, insecure attachments, but that such practices may endure for many generations insofar as Horkheimer has suggested. While many factors intervene it becomes important to suggest that most aggressive conflicts are initiated by authoritarian characters, and slash or even when initiated by less authoritarians, certain individual leaders are more likely to go along with rather than resist political economic factors. Historically, antiwar leaders are seen as weak, and often less masculine. Are we doomed? No! Inglehart argued that the progressive movements of the late 60s, antiwar, feminism, gay rights, ecology etc. were the consequences of changing childbearing patterns in part as a result of more educated populations having followed the advice of Doctor Spock, and practicing a more nurturant, empathic, means of socialization. While many factors may have intervened, and while this generation had not been able to turn their "great refusals" (Marcuse) into major social transformation, this progressive trend in lifestyle and values, did continue and in point of fact contribute to the major backlashes catalyzed by the growing adversities brought about by neoliberal global capital. But if we accept a dialectical understanding of history, and see these movements as a "hidden front" (Hegel) then as we look at the Z generation, we can see that they are the largest most progressive generation in American history who have already had major influence electoral politics. What is being suggested is that this generation is the spearhead of a major social transformation away from necrophilic capitalism of today to the biophilic *Sane Society* Fromm hoped for. Inshallah!

Author: Charles Thorpe, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of California, San Diego Email: cthorne@ucsd.edu

Title: Species Becoming: Human Self-Creation and the Moral Meaning of Globalization

Abstract: In *Man for Himself*, Fromm wrote, “Man’s main task is to give birth to himself” (Fromm [1947] 2003, 180). This paper argues that this assertion by Fromm refers both to the human individual and to the human species, i.e. to ontogeny and phylogeny. It follows from Fromm’s view of the human species, as he put it in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, as “an anomaly, the freak of the universe,” due to the radical underdetermination of human activity by instinct. This underdetermination is the source of human freedom, but also of the “existential contradiction” which characterizes humanness (Fromm, 1973: 225). This species condition of underdetermination, or freedom, is manifested in each human individual. It produces the need for each human individual to create themselves. This is inherently bound up with human sociality, and is displayed in cultural difference as the manifold patterns by which human beings have collectively created solutions to the problem of self-creation. This paper argues that this condition of freedom is inextricable from the “socialness” (Collins, 1998) of human beings, which arises from and develops the human capacity for language. It is also inextricable from human tool-use and the ability to transform nature (Lukács 1979; Thompson ed., 2019). Friedrich Engels’ fundamental insights into the “part played by labor in the transition from ape to man” have been largely confirmed by contemporary recent work in anthropogeny (Wrangham, 2010).

The notion of the human being as anomaly is key for understanding the interwoven cultural and ecological crisis of the present and for the potential of the human species to creatively overcome this crisis by giving birth to itself. Humanity is a social, cultural, and historical species. Humanity has now forged itself into a globally interconnected species. It has transformed the planet into an Anthropocene age. It has produced weapons by which it can instantaneously destroy the world and itself. How does humanity pursue a biophilic solution to its predicament, rather than lapsing into necrophilic destructiveness? Only by giving birth to itself, by becoming what it is: a global *species being*. The latter term, explicated by Fromm in his deep engagement with Marx’s *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (Fromm [1961] 2011) is key to grasping Fromm’s conception of human nature and for grasping the nature of the human condition in the twenty-first century.

Author: Mauricio Cortina MD

Title: Rethinking Fromm’s View of Existential Dichotomies and Basic Human Needs

Abstract: Fromm’s view of human nature is based on postulating a set of existential and historical contradictions. I propose a revision of Fromm’s view of the existential dichotomies (or contradictions) by providing a sociobiological alternative to Fromm’s belief that we are uprooted from nature by virtue of having lost most of our instinctual equipment. According to Fromm a combination of minimal instinctual equipment, an enormous expansion of the neocortex and a very prolonged childhood made humans a “freak of nature”.

I show that humans have *not* lost their instinctual endowment. In fact, we have two powerful social instincts: the attachment bonds we form with primary caregivers and affiliative

bonds we form with groups. Selective pressures supported and further developed these social bonds among small groups of nomadic hunter-gatherers during the 2 million years of our prehistory, making us an ultrasocial and cooperative species. The bonds we form within groups and with other groups make us a highly social, tribal animal, for better and for worse. For better by creating group solidarity and care toward group members and toward groups with which we and have close interactions. For worse when some groups exploit, oppress, or try to eliminate other groups. Social elites and leaders justify the exploitation or genocide by exalting their superior qualities (group narcissism) and dehumanizing or demonizing the groups they oppress, or try to eliminate.

We are the only social species in which the cultural transmission of knowledge has been passed on over hundreds of thousands of years, a form of cultural inheritance that interacts with genetic inheritance. Cultural evolution has made us a constantly evolving and dynamic species expressing different manifestations of our common humanity. With advanced cognitive capacities and the emergence of language, human groups have developed enormous complexity, creating a set of survival and trans-survival or existential needs.

As Fromm and others have noted, we are the only animal that becomes fully aware of its mortality and the fragility of life. To come to terms with this frightful awareness we *must* create systems of meaning that offer explanations and solace to this existential awareness. I present a list of basic human needs that is different from, but also overlaps with Fromm's list of existential needs. I conclude by noting that this new evolutionary and developmental knowledge that I sketch provides a stronger sociobiological foundation supporting Fromm's radical and ethical humanism and putting it in a better footing.

Panel 7: Session chair, Jeremiah Morelock

Author: Kieran Durkin

Title: Erich Fromm and Marxism: A Re-appraisal

Abstract: Erich Fromm was one of the central and best-known members of Twentieth-Century Marxist Humanist Tradition. Responsible for publishing one of the first English-language translations of Marx's *1844 Manuscripts*, he was pivotal in the dissemination of a 'humanist' view of Marx in the English-speaking world. Despite this, his relationship to Marxist thought has not always been studied in rigorous fashion. From Hook (1961) to Marcuse (1966), Kolakowski (1978) to Knapp (1993), Wiggershaus (1994) to Musto (2010), Fromm's relationship to Marxism tends to be characterized as shallow and inconsistent. In this chapter, I try to demonstrate the fuller depth of Fromm's engagement with and contribution to Marxist thought, which consists not merely in the restatement of what Marx had already said, but in an extension of Marx's critique of capital in psychoanalytical and sociological directions. In particular, I argue that Fromm's extension of Marxism can speak to some of the challenges facing Marxism in the present concerning the issue of class consciousness and ideology. Through concepts such as social character, the social unconscious, and a focus of how capital is lived through the experience of values and morality, Fromm provides a heterodox basis from which to revivify struggle.

Author: Tyler Jimenez, University of Washington

Title: Applying Fromm's Criminological Insights

Abstract: In his early work, Erich Fromm (1930; 1931) explored the question of “its significance for the great mass of non-criminals”. Derived from this work are three hypotheses, which we examine using empirical social psychological methods. This presentation will trace a portion of our research program featured in the forthcoming *Credit, Cops, and Cages: A Theory of Capitalist Individualism* (Goad, Jimenez, Jones, Schmitt, Sedivy, & Sullivan, anticipated 2025).

The *Politics of Incarceration* hypothesis posits that as neoliberal governments face crises of legitimacy in the wake of austerity, they reassert their authority through enhanced criminal punishment. Thus, incarceration and other carceral practices should be particularly common and severe in places most impacted by neoliberal austerity. We test this hypothesis by examining at the US state-level the relationship between neoliberalism and carcerality, finding a positive correlation; states with relatively low public funding also tend to incarcerate more of their citizens.

The *Projection of Criminality* hypothesis posits that the prevalence of people suffering under neoliberal austerity should be associated with greater psychological investment in carceral institutions. We test this hypothesis by using multilevel modeling, with state-level neoliberalism predicting person-level attitudes toward the police. We find that people living in particularly neoliberal states also tend to show more positive attitudes toward the police. Additionally, we find that these positive attitudes toward the police are also shared by those who endorse neoliberal ideology.

The *Projection of Inferiority* hypothesis posits that these relationships are structured along racialized lines, suggesting that (White) disciplined selves base the perceived need for policing and incarceration on propagandistic images of (Black, Brown) precarious selves. We test this hypothesis by examining whether race and class moderate the relationship between neoliberal ideology and carceral attitudes. These analyses show that Projection of Criminality tends to occur among upper class, White Americans, and less so among those farther down the race-class hierarchy.

By blending quantitative and qualitative methods, individual and societal levels of analyses, and critical philosophy and empirical social science, these studies represent both a return to and an advancement of Fromm's early criminological work.

Author: Jeffrey Nall

Title: Change Agents, Martyrs, and Mental Illness: How Erich Fromm's Conception of Healthy Humanity Upturns Conventional Ideas about Who's Sick

Abstract: Russian dystopian novelist, Zamyatin, wrote, “The world is kept alive only by heretics: the heretic Christ, the heretic Copernicus, the heretic Tolstoy.” The problem, as existentialist psychologist Rollo May observed in *The Courage to Create*, is that agents of change are typically condemned in the present and only retroactively exalted as saints and

exemplifiers of moral, spiritual, and human excellence by the dominant society. Throughout history the charge of abnormality, insanity, or mental sickness has been a chief rationalizing weapon to denigrate agents of change and thwart their efforts. Similar charges are currently being made against protest efforts to halt Israel's siege of Gaza which has resulted in the deaths of more than 15,000 Palestinian children. The charge of mental sickness was particularly directed at the 25-year-old U.S. Airman, Aaron Bushnell, who self-immolated on February 25, 2024, in protest of his government's support for the war. Applying Erich Fromm's conception of mental wellness and human excellence to analyze Bushnell's death and the wider opposition to the Gaza war we reach very different conclusions. Fromm's conception of human productivity and "pathological normalcy" enables us to assess social movements and individual agents of change with greater vision and accuracy than is offered by common sense thought. Specifically, Fromm rejects conformity and conventional success-centered behavior as the basis for determining mental wellness and rightness of action. Instead, he advances an existential emphasis on living and making choices that exemplify the ends of life and not simply the means; in a word, living in the being-mode. Fromm's humanistic theory of healthy humanity enables us to recognize and affirm the humanity of agents of change in the present and not only posthumously.

Roger Frie's Book Presentation (*"Edge of Catastrophe: Erich Fromm, Fascism and the Holocaust"*)

Panel 8: Session Chair, Chiara Berra

Author: Zeinab Shariatnia, PhD student of Islamic Mysticism with major of psychology of religion and mysticism: University of Imam Khomeini, Tehran, Iran

Title: The influence of "personality" on forms of religiosity based on Erich Fromm's theory of Personality (Case Study: Analyzing the personality typology of "Rozbahan Baghli" and "Hasan Basri")

Abstract: One of the aspects of human being is its psyche which is like a nature to be studied from inside not outside. Of the fields of study progressed in this way is psychology, a subfield of which titled as "psychology of personality" has been able to come to acceptable results in this field through concentrating on human similarities and differences in behavioral activities. Eric Fromm is a psychiatrist with a social, post-Freud approach who, as one of the theorists in this field, has dealt with this issue based on the psychodynamic and psychoanalytic approach. In this approach great emphasis is put on "past growth factors" and also "motivational concepts" have noticeable importance so that no subject about "personality" is considered useful without evaluating its basic motivational signs which are rooted in human's unconscious. He believed that, with the emphasis on the two issues of "genetics" and "learning", social-environmental cultural experiences are effective on the formation of human personality.

In this study our purpose of presenting “psychology of personality in Eric Fromm’s view point” and its relationship with “religion” is that dimensions of religious people’s personality, like other people is “a effective variable” in their understanding of religious attitude. In another word, humanistic changes and religious tendencies re rooted in psychological types and based on people’s different psychological types their paths of religious are completely different. In conclusion, recognizing religious people’s personality type can have scientific and wisdom value. Since among religious people, mystics and their special ways of religiosity has always been under discussion and attention, we are to analyze the relationship between “personality” and “religiosity” among this group of religious people. The relationship between “personality” and “religiosity” of mystics can be analyzed in different ways such as: What is the relationship between the type and personality factors and behavioral tendencies of mystic people? Is there a relationship between individual differences in behavior and personal traits of individuals? And can personality type can determine the behavioral tendencies of mystic people?

The present study based on psychological findings of Eric Fromm in the field of “personality” in individual cases deals with the analysis of the relationship between “personality types” of 2 great mystic figures “Roozbahan Baghli” and “Hassan Basri” with their behavioral tendencies. In other words, we are trying to practically use the personality theory of Eric Fromm for better understanding of the religiosity of these two Muslim mystic figures and their relationship with their personality types.

Author: Maor Levitin

Title: Erich Fromm and Contemporary Prophets

Abstract: This paper engages Fromm’s relationship to the prophetic, asking whether Fromm’s treatment of the prophetic in his writings can shed light on its relevance and significance today, and specifically on what it might look like in a contemporary context. In his own time, Fromm did not shy away from identifying real life prophets, Bertrand Russel being a case in point, so there should be no doubt that Fromm’s interest in the prophetic extends beyond the merely allegorical. The first section of the paper asks whether it is possible to identify contemporary examples of prophets (and priests) using Fromm’s criteria for the prophet, as articulated in essays such as “Prophets and Priests.” If so, what distinguishes the individuals in question, from characterological and ethical vantage points? What is their attitude and relationship to the radical transformation of society? In raising these questions, this paper seeks not only to facilitate the identification of contemporary examples of the prophetic but to ask whether Fromm’s work justifies making prescriptive claims about the prophets’ role in history, and whether this role is to be understood as being variable or universal in character. At the same time, one of the other aims of this paper is to extend and nuance Fromm’s conception of the prophetic and its purpose using insights drawn from other aspects of Fromm’s thought, including his commitment to humanistic universalism, the distinction he makes between rational and irrational authority, his analysis of the martyr, and the concept of the productive character structure. The second section makes the case that Fromm’s conception of the prophetic is *augmented* by other aspects of his intellectual edifice. The paper concludes by briefly and critically comparing Fromm’s conception of the

prophetic with two other prominent articulations of the significance of the prophetic in the Jewish tradition, those of Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig.

Author: Dr. Nuzhat Khurshid, York University

Title: Religious Humanism as Love and Reason

Abstract: Secularism is a pillar of Western philosophy that is starting to unravel – whether at the theoretical level or sociological, we see that religion is not fading into the horizon as was expected. Philosophy, as reproduced in the academy, continues to perpetuate the myth of secularism as an overarching condition of critique itself.

Fromm's work on the humanistic roots of religion, specifically Judaism, pushes back against the idea that the "revolutionary spirit of freedom" can only come from secular critique. However, his description of God as "a historically conditioned expression of an inner experience" and his primary focus on humanism as "the capacity of man to develop his own powers and to arrive at inner harmony" gesture to the lack of structural critique in Fromm's understanding of a faith-based humanism. I argue that a robust conceptualization of religion as a revolutionary force requires a) an understanding of the role of reason in eclipsing religious humanism and b) an understanding of religion as also capable of reason. According to Charles Taylor, it was the emergence of an exclusive humanism based on reason that allowed for the flourishing of secular thought in the West. I will outline the inward *and* other-directed nature of exclusive humanism, as described by Taylor, and highlight the role of reason in both. After this, I will draw on Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Tufayl to show that religion is more than an inner feeling – it can have rational implications for social and political life. Methodologically, utilizing secular, Jewish and Islamic thinkers in my essay will enable a multidisciplinary analysis that can encourage dialogue and thinking across borders.

I propose to supplement Fromm's "internal" view of religious humanism with a structural understanding of religion as capable of universal forms of reason. This can form a substantial critique, both at the subjective *and* objective levels, of the secular bias in the academy and Western philosophy. It can also offer insights into the revolutionary potential of religious thought – not just as individual experience, but as a political and social force for change.

Author: Ido Ben Harush

Title: The Messianic Politics of Erich Fromm

Abstract: This paper explores the religious underpinnings of Erich Fromm's critique of the State of Israel, highlighting how his perception of Judaism informs his political views. The paper centers on a comparative analysis between Fromm's most developed interpretation of Judaism in *You Shall Be as Gods* (1966) and his critiques of Israel's political realities in personal letters and

lectures. This juxtaposition reveals a profound coherence between Fromm's conception of Judaism and his political insights. His perspectives on Judaism's diasporic essence, resistance to secular authority and power, and the interpretation of messianism are shown to be integral to his political criticisms of the State of Israel. This analysis challenges the conventional perception of *You Shall Be as Gods* as mere biblical exegesis, uncovering its acute political connotation, especially in Jewish politics. It also disputes the notion that Fromm's criticisms of Israel equate to a rejection of his Jewish identity. Moreover, the paper positions Fromm's critiques of the state of Israel within a broader critique of Zionism made by early 20th-century German-Jewish intellectuals, including Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, and Martin Buber. This contextualization not only reasserts Fromm's relevance in Jewish political thought but also contributes to the broader discourse on German-Jewish political theology. By acknowledging Fromm's contributions to this tradition, the paper advocates for a more inclusive recognition of the German-Jewish intellectual heritage, shedding light on the evolution of this tradition in the diaspora, particularly in North America.

Panel 9: Session chair, Chiara Berra

Author: Dr. Rudy Leal McCormack, Lecturer at Sam Houston State University
Department of Political Science

Title: Mending the Separation - The Courage to Hope, Even If the Hour is Late

Abstract: "I put before you today life and death, and you chose life!" – Deuteronomy
"To hope means to be ready at every moment for the not yet born, and yet not become desperate if there is no birth in our lifetime." – Erich Fromm, *Revolution of Hope*
Introduction

This chapter moves from reinterpreting eco-neurosis (EN) as a diagnosis of political development fashioned as a maladaptive sado-masochistic character and how that has changed the collective ecological unconscious (CEU). The abrupt change to the CEU is a transformation of repression to separation both in human and more-than-human life. The connecting thread among humans, more-than-human and EN is the psychic function deeply rooted in the CEU that is stressed and stretched by capitalogenic activity. Now, I move to collective and individual blueprints to mend the long-established separation causing harm to both human and more-than-human life. Favorable growth and development can exist within the CEU. In other words, this form of repressed transformation is a dynamic factor that may change a person's neurosis as "healthy" or "unhealthy" forms by changing the social and ecological factors around them.

The focus of this third chapter centers on timeless and present ways in which to move beyond – even temporary relief – from the stranglehold of our current illusion of a static, unchanging appearance and realize that reality is fungible, and manifold. In other words, intentional tactics for a profound shift and elevation in consciousness and in human action or, what Fromm believed, as making the unconscious conscious out of an illusion that paralyzes the flourishing of all life. I begin by embarking for a renewed sense of hope in a hopeless present day. Indeed, to mend the separation experienced as EN, contemporary humanity needs to shift its values of hope and possibility, beyond what our sick society is capable of offering. In what follows, I will examine Fromm’s method of solving the separation throughout his collection of works: I do this by focusing on his ethos of revolutionary hope; then to the juxtaposition of the “being” as opposed to the “having” mode of experience; afterward, I focus on the ethical orientation of biophilia, then I enumerate his humanistic activity-oriented alternative. Secondly, I provide an updated Frommian prescription in mending the separation in two dimensions: dimension one is a structural dimension that demonstrates changes to the current psycho-social order to reinvigorate an ethos for a flourishing of all life. The second dimension is agential and based on the experiential proximity of what a person can do immediately in the present. Both approaches work best when applied in tandem if we want to mend the separation experienced as EN; also, recognizing that moving beyond the logic and mentality of global capitalism is integral for healing individual/collective mental health and maintaining a planetary balance within the web of life.

Author: Ayesha Hussain, Student and Trainee Psychotherapist, Ambedkar University Delhi

Title: The Art of Psychotherapy: The Personal and Social Healing in the Psychoanalytic Aesthetics of Eric Fromm’s Therapeutic Vision

Abstract: This paper presentation would discuss critical ideas in Eric Fromm’s works as they speak to psychoanalytic aesthetics i.e. a field engaged in the continuous exploration of the coinciding origins of the mental processes involved in the making of psychoanalysis and art and contributing to the understanding of clinical work as an aesthetic transformation. The paper would begin with elaborating on how his personality theory relates to psychoanalytic theories of psychogenesis, especially that of the British School and the independent group. It would proceed to discuss what it means to have a Frommian lens in the clinic i.e. a site which, in Fromm’s expansion of the spectrum on which to locate the ‘state of the psyche’ in terms of pathology, health and living, is revealed as a psychosocial one where the clinical cannot be divorced from the social and the political, and therefore the critical, and in that also the very vital i.e. the aesthetic experience of living. Fromm’s writings facilitate a seeing of the clinical encounter as the tryst with total social phenomenon and thus as the reason for the clinical imperative of responding to the context of the person to be non-negotiable. The paper would lay out what can be inferred from the Frommian corpus about the devitalized lifeworld of the patient by elucidating human suffering vis-à-vis post-modern living, the pre-requisites of being a psychotherapist, and the aesthetic of the mobius of the patient-therapist relationship. In doing so, the paper would show how the Frommian vision of psychotherapy speaks to other

western relational models of psychoanalysis including but not limited to the Bionian, Winnicottian, and Bollasian, and eastern healing traditions like Buddhism and Sufism, yet preserves its own unique position while providing an ethos of aesthetic renewal urgent and valid both inside and outside the clinic.

Author: Nils Bischof (Since 2023, he is a member of the board of the International Erich Fromm Society and the editing board of 'Fromm Forum' in German and in English language)

Title: "'Productiveness' as 'Play': A New Approach to Fromm's Humanistic Ideals?"

Abstract: The character orientations identified by Erich Fromm, and later Rainer Funk, provide elucidating insights into specific cognitive and behavioral tendencies. Nonetheless, there are only few hints at how "productiveness" is already fundamental to each orientation and thus could be fostered in an adequate way. There seems to be a wide gap between Fromm's humanistic ideals and the so-called non-productive characters, caused by the explanatory structure of his 1947 book *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*. But taking into account that "productiveness" is really about an ideal and almost unexceptionally occurs –as Fromm says – mixed with a different character orientation, not only therapists need to ask: Is there a way to understand those in-betweens, those distinct and present potentials, which may possibly just be nurtured to grow "productiveness" within a person? Whilst "play" usually is not considered as a "productive" kind of activity in society nowadays, the perspective changes, if we dare a look into the history of cultural philosophy starting with Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller—who famously claimed it was the only refuge for humans to be human completely. After a biologicistic turn (e.g. Herbert Spencer), the first decades of the 20th century show a great return and advancement. "Play", again, became a key to understand the making of culture, and a unique way of thinking creatively, productively, and in particular humanly. Summing up the theories of Frederik Jacobus Johannes Buytendijk, Johan Huizinga or Roger Caillois, the term "play" features: voluntariness, lack of external interest, biophile reciprocity, unpredictability, consciousness of its symbolic nature, community foundation, concomitance of tension and relief, and –as a general condition of the named –shapeliness regarding space, time, stakes, and rules. This contribution expounds on the similarity, and perhaps identity, between Fromm's concept of "productiveness" and the "play"—a seemingly familiar phenomenon. It opens a new debate on how different forms of the latter could be identified with character orientations: Could it be helpful to lead exploitative energies into competitive playing, or hoarding tendencies into collecting-based card games? Or would this, quite the contrary, strengthen non-productive aspects of the character?

Panel 10: Session Chair, Mauricio Cortina

Author: Sandra Paredes Angeles, Student in psychoanalysis training in the sixth semester. Mexican Institute of Psychoanalysis IMPAC. Founded by Erich Fromm.

Title: The Search for Mental Health in A Social Network Context

Abstract: How can Fromm's ideas help us respond to current social problems and crises? Answering this question becomes interesting and complicated because the current barbaric context puts a significant challenge ahead, it is not only about citing and talking about Fromm's ideas, but also about respecting our ethical and political stance in the various social areas in which we live. Those of us who are psychoanalysts and mental health researchers with their humanistic proposal. For my part, I firmly believe that one of the best ways to rescue Fromm's thought is through psychoanalytic therapy, by continuing to see patients as an equal part of our own. When Erich Fromm changed the psychoanalytic technique and introduced his concept of social character, he was not immersed in a world of social networks and distorted or excessive communication. The objective of my work is to develop a proposal to think about human beings and their new social condition from Fromm's theory. Give it a meaning of hope again, which can be obtained in the therapeutic space. I will talk about how this space has evolved, but that does not mean that it has stopped being ethical, genuine and humanistic. Sandra Paredes Angeles Student in psychoanalysis training in the sixth semester. Mexican Institute of Psychoanalysis IMPAC. Founded by Erich Fromm.

Author: Pablo Javier Varela Fregoso, Mexican Institute of Psychoanalysis, A. C.

Title: Authoritarianism, Democracy and Social Character in Mexico

Abstract: Erich Fromm, in his book *The Fear of Freedom*, speaks of authoritarianism as a mechanism of evasion of freedom and as a tendency to abandon independence, to amalgamate with something or someone external in order to acquire the strength that one's own self lacks, that is, to seek secondary links to replace the primary ones that have been lost.

Prior to this book, Erich Fromm, even as a member of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, had carried out a social psychological analysis known as "Workers and Employees on the Eve of the Third Reich", being the first empirical study of the Frankfurt School, designed with the main interest of knowing how many among the German workers and employees were reliable fighters against the advance of Nazism. providing solid data on the direction that the German people would take, resulting in the exile of the members of the Institute for Social Research.

Subsequently, in Mexico, at the end of the 1950s, Fromm carried out a study with Michell Maccoby in a rural community, which was published in English in 1970, and in Spanish in 1973, under the title *Social Character in a Mexican Village*, with a characterological research methodology based on humanistic psychoanalysis. The purposes of this research, according to the authors, were to test a method that would test the application of psychoanalytic theory to social groups; To test the theory of social character and to discover data that could be useful for the prediction and planning of social change.

Historically, Mexico has been under authoritarian governments, from pre-Hispanic times until very recently. With the Mexican Revolution, which began in 1910, a democratic period apparently began, but in reality, it led to "a perfect dictatorship." In 2018 there was a change of regime, and as happened in Germany on the eve of the Third Reich, it would be important to analyze what the predominant social character is in order to understand if we can really think of the birth of an incipient democracy in Mexico.

Author: Matheus Romanetto, PhD Candidate, Sociology Department, University of Kansas

Title: Some Methodological Difficulties in Listening Outside the Clinic

Abstract: The presentation will discuss some methodological problems in applying Frommian concepts to research carried without the techniques devised by Fromm himself. In particular, I would like to present the difficulties I am facing in my own research, which is *thematically* akin to classic Frommian topics (i.e. politically-motivated conflict within families), but relies on a different *method* for producing data than his.

In Fromm's works, the stratification of conscious and unconscious material is conceptualized (mainly) in reference to the way it appears in the clinical interview, as well as in the interpretative questionnaire. Once we change the technique for addressing our subjects, however, the figuration of unconscious processes is modified accordingly. Some kinds of material become harder or impossible to access, whereas others come to the fore, frequently under a new guise. Sociopschoanalytic concepts must then either incorporate new determinations, or find a new way of subsuming the available material under those previously given.

This plurality of figurations of unconscious life is hinted at by Fromm's employment of several subsidiary research techniques (the TAT, the Rorschach etc.), as instruments for controlling the data gathered otherwise. Among them, I am particularly interested in his long-lasting relationship to anthropology – beginning with his theoretical incorporation of anthropological concepts in the 1930s, and evolving into the tumultuous ethnography carried by the Schwartz couple during his 1960s Mexican study. The use of ethnographic material (participant observation, non-clinical interviews, documental evidence) is a marginal trend in Fromm's works, but opens his theoretical output for integration with usual anthropological and ethnopsychiatric approaches (Devereux, Bastide, Bateson etc.) – a trend later developed by Funk et al's pilot study on the "Charaktermauer" in post-DDR Germany.

I would like to discuss the possibilities involved therein by reference to my preliminary interviews on political strife within Brazilian families. There, the occurrences hinting at significant unconscious trends seem to be displaced onto quite surprising spots, not always like the ones we usually count as clinically pregnant. This has implications for our understanding of social unconsciousness and character, which may be derived from the phenomenology and dynamics peculiar to political fantasy and its derivatives.

Author: Dr. Jorge J. Caraveo-Anduaga

Title : La estrategia epidemiológica y la investigación de las ideas de Fromm para la actualidad

Abstract: La estrategia epidemiológica se aboca al estudio de la distribución de un fenómeno o condición en poblaciones humanas y de los factores que influyen en esta distribución. La epidemiología estudia y sintetiza los conocimientos de las ciencias biológicas del hombre, de las ciencias del medio ambiente y de las que se refieren a la sociedad humana. El empleo de poblaciones es el aspecto distintivo de la epidemiología. El uso de las poblaciones se justifica porque desde el punto de vista metodológico, se requiere a una población para realizar inferencias causales acerca de las relaciones entre factores y procesos o estados.

Para que una cuantificación sea descriptiva de un grupo debe corresponder a una proporción de éste. El numerador representa a los sujetos con la característica, y el denominador es el número total de sujetos en la población.

Variables esenciales: tiempo, lugar y persona.

Epidemiológicamente, lo central es encontrar y enumerar los denominadores apropiados para describir y comparar los grupos de forma útil y significativa.

Siendo la unidad de estudio, el ser humano, altamente complejo, el reto es la definición operacional de las variables a considerar y de los modelos pertinentes para su estudio. La interacción con diversas disciplinas resulta esencial dado que nuestra unidad de estudio es un ser bio-psico-social-cultural y espiritual. Abordar cada una de esas esferas es el reto.

Panel 11: Session chair, Rory Varrato

Author: Joan Braune, Lecturer, Gonzaga University

Title: “I Can’t Believe I Have to Say This: Erich Fromm Was Not an Anti-‘Woke’ Free Speech Warrior”

Abstract: This paper addresses how Erich Fromm might engage the current landscape of fascist and far-right resurgence, especially in the United States, with particular attention to how Fromm might view the role of protest and boundary setting, including “cancelation,” in antifascist struggle. Some recent articles (Daniel Burston, Neal McLaughlin, Ilene Philipson) suggest that Fromm might be worried today about a form of cancel culture that could be associated with a form of “left-wing authoritarianism” or with an unhealthy need for “certainty.” Suggestions have been made, for example, that Fromm would be outspoken in defending the need for speech platforms of such right-wing academics as Jordan Peterson and Kathleen Stock, and oppose protests designed to silence them. I argue that using Fromm to defend these concerns overlooks crucial aspects of Fromm’s philosophy and political commitments, and that these can help us better understand how to engage antifascist and antiracist struggle today.

Although Fromm is a defender of certain Enlightenment values, he also sees the limitations of a purely “negative” freedom, as he explains in *Escape from Freedom*. While much

of the modern world enjoys freedom from state censorship of speech and freedom from state imposition of religion, the individual under capitalism is often left alienated, lonely, with a sense of purposelessness making them vulnerable to fascist recruitment. In *The Sane Society*, Fromm begins to imagine a society transcending the limitations of negative freedom. Drawing heavily on John Dewey, Fromm envisions a radically democratic society enlivened through access to education, collective ritual, worker cooperatives, and broad access to cultural goods. The development of these alternative structures and ways of being are crucial to defeating the threat of fascism, I argue. A focus on critiquing attempts by left activists to shut down speakers and events that are contributing to fascist resurgence, not only misses Fromm's deep understanding of the dynamics of fascist mobilization and recruitment—in the end, it lends undeserved credence to those who most want to defeat the humanistic Marxist commitments Fromm represents.

Author: Lynne Layton, Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis and Harvard Medical School

Title: Who Speaks for Fromm in this Political Moment? Psychoanalytic Institutions and the Authoritarian Center

Abstract: Following the murder of George Floyd, in psychology program after program (including one sponsored by the American Psychological Association's insurance company) BIPoC trainees and clinicians testified to the harm they had experienced in their training and other clinical institutions over decades as well as in the present. Noting the overwhelming predominance of white people in their membership, psychology institutions, including psychoanalytic institutes and national psychoanalytic organizations, began to look at themselves and their policies through an antiracist lens. In short order, however, these attempts to address the harm—attempts located, for example, in racial equity task forces, antiracist programming, appointments of DEI officers, changes in curriculum—met with a backlash, leading to institutional crises, resignations, and the seeking out of alternative spaces devoted to the transformation of social and organizational structures outside of the extractive relations of racial capitalism. After giving some institutional examples, I will argue that one typical instance of what I would call the “pathology of normalcy” operating in the backlash is attributable to a version of racism, classism, and a refusal to relinquish power/centrality among those whom Janet Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini have eloquently described as “the tolerant middle,” i.e., those who take themselves as the “reasonable ones” in opposition to “extremists” on both the left and right. I argue that the attack on the so-called authoritarian left is part of this backlash and is an example of what Fromm might have located as a neoliberal social character.

Author: Roger Frie, PhD, PsyD, R.Psych, Visiting Scholar in Sociology, CUNY Graduate Center

Title: Erich Fromm's Fight Against Fascism and Racism

Abstract: This talk will ask what we can learn from Erich Fromm as we seek to understand and respond to the threat posed by fascism and racism today. Fromm was one of the twentieth

century's best known public intellectuals but least understood psychoanalysts. In an era when psychoanalysts sought to keep the individual psyche strictly separate from social and political concerns, Fromm was ostracized for his progressive stance. Fromm escaped Nazi Germany and spoke out about the dangers of fascism, ideas that were published in *Escape From Freedom* (1941). He developed a view of the human psyche as fundamentally social and political in nature and sought to explain why so many Germans enthusiastically supported Hitler. He warned of the dangers of fascism in the United States and remained ever vigilant of right-wing extremism throughout his life. Fromm connected fascism with racial hatred and group narcissism, which he saw as fundamental threats to human society. I will examine Fromm's writings, using examples from his texts that can help us to address the present. How might Fromm's ethical stance and his sense of urgency apply to our current situation?

Panel 12: Session chair, Maor Levitin

Author: Daniel Burston

Title: Psychoanalysis and the Call to Activism

Abstract: Psychoanalysis as originally conceived was premised on the belief that insight into psychic reality would bestow greater self-knowledge and afford patients considerable relief from symptoms in the process. Such insight could only be acquired through a lengthy process of reflection on one's unconscious motives through the analysis of dreams, the transference, resistances, etc. As such, psychoanalytic work has more in common with Aristotle's notion of contemplation (*theoria*) than action (*praxis*). However, the past ten years have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of activist/analysts and the number of psychoanalytic publications, conferences and organizations with an activist orientation. A striking feature of this trend is the paucity of reflection and analysis devoted to addressing the *motives* that prompt people to take up activist causes or join social justice movements. This paper begins by contrasting Freud's attitude toward activism and his theory of human nature with those of Reich and Fromm, and goes on to describe five motives that may prompt people to become activists, namely, 1) humanistic conscience, 2) superego guilt (authoritarian conscience), 3) resentment, 4) the desire to affiliate, belong, find meaning and direction (a "framework of orientation and devotion" and 5) the desire to displace or counteract fears of global catastrophe. It then addresses several scenarios where more than one motive is in play and the conflicts or contradictions these may engender, especially when humanistic conscience is not the *primary* motive that drives the activist's activity. Finally, it addresses the problem of authoritarianism in activist organizations and movements.

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Title: Erich Fromm and the Problem of Oikophobia: A Dialectical Approach to the Legacy of the West

Abstract: The political Left today suffers from an intellectual pathology that can be as dangerous as traditional far-right pathologies. Much of the Left has succumbed to a blind hatred of the West and all things Western. This hatred, dubbed *Oikophobia*, or “hatred of the home,” is in many cases the mirror image of the far-right’s *xenophobia*, or “hatred of the other.” Whereas xenophobia attempts to distance the “other” from what is considered “ours,” oikophobia attempts to distance the Western self from its home in the West. Oikophobia is therefore an extreme form of alienation that manifests itself in a variety of *pathological* critiques of Western civilization, its history, and its intellectual and cultural resources, seeing only that which is necrophilic. Consequently, pathological *xenophilia* often accompanies oikophobia, as a way of signalling to the non-Western other the individual’s abandonment of their Western cultural baggage, and therefore their openness to intercultural social solidarity. This approach to social and political solidarity is extremely flawed, as it abandons those biophilic aspects of the Western legacy that can contribute to a future reconciled and justice-filled society. The work of Erich Fromm plays an important role in the recovery, development, and transcendence of the Western legacy. Like no other, Fromm understood the socio-political plagues of the West, yet he never abandoned the Western intellectual heritage, rooted in Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome, but rather brought them together with intellectual, spiritual, and religious resources outside of the West, especially Buddhism. In this way, Fromm’s work challenges the temptation for Westerners to blindly abandon their Westernity for the imagined “other,” but rather encourages them to embrace the Western legacy and heritage *dialectically*, separating the West’s Golgotha history from that which remains emancipatory and revolutionary. In this paper, I will demonstrate the pathological nature of oikophobia and how it creates self-loathing anti-Western automatons and demonstrate how Fromm’s dialectical attitude towards Western thought and praxis can help us overcome what is ultimately a self-defeating approach to social solidarity and the critique of the “home.”

Author: Lucina Montes, *Seminario de Sociopsicoanálisis A.C.*

Title: Erich Fromm's thought and Relational Psychoanalysis. His contributions to the psychotherapeutic process

Abstract: In this work I will analyze the main concepts of Erich Fromm's thought, as one of the interpersonalists, on which Stephen Mitchell based his construction of the Relational Psychoanalysis model. That is, I will delve into the influence of human relationships in the formation of the psyche, as well as the importance of the environment, the historical context and the need for belonging in mental health. Although psychoanalysis has always identified repetition as an unconscious factor that prevents the healthy psychic development of people, both positions that I focus on in this essay show the deep roots of the need to preserve it for the permanence of the relationship and to feel that one belongs. I will take the main concepts of Dr. E. Fromm's theory as the process of assimilation and socialization; his typology of character where he emphasized the importance of the material conditions of existence and the capacity for production as fundamental factors of the way of relating to nature, the world and humans, basing the “social character” on this. From Relational Psychoanalysis, I link concepts such as mutuality, enactment and self-revelation to broaden the vision towards the social and the way of seeing and feeling oneself in the world. I conclude by raising what for both positions is mental health: belonging. By feeling part of the social group and of the human, the development of individuals can be achieved. Analyzing thus, the best way to promote it from the therapeutic space.

Author: Dean Ray (a community research associate and the coordinator of Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages)

Title: Between Ritual and Atomization: How Indigenous Peoples are using traditional cultural practices to resist fascism and strengthen democracy?

Abstract: Ritual is seen by some scholars as an element of anachronistic cultures, a marker of a bygone era, and an impediment to modernization. However, others, like South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han view rituals as “temporal techniques of making oneself at home in the world”, offering that rituals are essential to stabilizing collective life, permitting the conditions for morality and solidarity. At the same time that rituals are disappearing for vast segments of the global society, the result of neoliberal globalization and the pandemic, fuelling a culture of narcissism and the type of atomization Fromm warned us leads to fascism, Indigenous communities are on an opposite trajectory. They are using rituals to strengthen their democracies and societies. This paper considers these two different trajectories through the work of Erich Fromm, to ask if strengthening ritual might allow for an escape from freedom that permits and sustains democratic forms of life.