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Quotes by Becker, Ernest

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Ernest Becker (1924-1974). A cultural anthropologist, who did some important interdisciplinary work in his study of the psychology of evil. He is most well-known for his Pulitzer Prize-winning work "The Denial of Death", followed by the posthumously published book "Escape from Evil". A graduate from Syracuse university in New York, he first served as a diplomate in Paris, before taking up studies in anthropology in his thirties. He wrote many books and articles in the field of psychiatry and was an advocate of transactional analysis of mental illness at a time when this was not an opportune view. He was a popular teacher, first at Syracuse and later at UCLA at Berkeley. In his teaching and writing he combined psychology, anthropology, literature and theology in an innovative way. At his untimely death by cancer in 1974 he had been working five years at an interdisciplinary department at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, where he also wrote his masterpiece "The Denial of Death". For more information, see the [Ernest Becker Foundation](http://faculty.washington.edu/nelgee).

When we understand that man is the only animal who must create meaning, who must open a wedge into neutral nature, we already understand the essence of love. Love is the problem of an animal who must find life, create a dialogue with nature in order to experience his own being.

- Becker, Ernest

For man, maximum excitement is the confrontation of death and the skillful defiance of it by watching others fed to it as he survives transfixed with rapture.

- Becker, Ernest



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