

The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness, by E. Fromm

a. People / Organizations:

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b. Quotes:

- "Freud was one of the last representatives of Enlightenment philosophy." - Author (pg. 54)

c. General Notes:

- Preface (pg. 15)

- "...specialists will realize that I have nothing new to offer them in their particular fields..." (pg. 16)

- Introduction: Instincts and Human Passions (pg. 22)

- "[Many] works contain basically the same thesis: man's aggressive behavior as manifested in war, crime, personal quarrels, and all kinds of destructive and sadistic behavior is due to a phylogenetically programmed, innate instinct which seeks for discharge and waits for the proper occasion to be expressed." (pg. 23)

- "There are other reasons to prefer this simplistic answer of an instinctivist theory to the serious study of the causes of destructiveness. The latter calls for the questioning of the basic premises of current ideology; we are led to analyze the irrationality of our social system and to violate taboos hiding behind dignified words, such as "defense," "honor," and "patriotism." Nothing short of an analysis in depth of our social system can disclose the reasons for the increase in destructiveness, or suggest ways and means of reducing it. The instinctivistic theory offers to relieve us of the hard task of making such an analysis." (pg. 23)

- "The distinction between benign-defensive and malignant-destructive aggression calls for a further and more fundamental distinction, that between instinct and character, or more precisely, between drives rooted in man's physiological needs (organic drives) and those specifically human passions rooted in his character ("character-rooted, or human passions"). The distinction between instinct and character will be further discussed at great length in the text." (pg. 26)

- "I shall try to show that character is man's "second nature," the substitute for his poorly developed instincts; furthermore that the human passions (such as the striving for love, tenderness, freedom as well as the lust for destruction, sadism, masochism, the craving for power and property) are answers to "existential needs," which in turn are rooted in the very conditions of human existence. To put it briefly, instincts are answers to man's physiological needs, man's character-conditioned passions are answers to his existential needs and they are specifically human. While these existential needs are the same for all men, men differ among themselves with regard to their dominant passions. To give an example: man can be driven by love or by the passion to destroy; in each case he satisfies one of his existential needs: the need to "effect," or to move something, to "make a dent." Whether man's dominant passion is love or whether it is destructiveness depends largely on social circumstances; these circumstances, however, operate in reference to man's biologically given existential situation and the needs springing from it and not to an infinitely malleable, undifferentiated psyche, as environmentalist theory assumes." (pg. 26)

- "The human passions transform man from a mere thing into a hero, into a being that in spite of tremendous handicaps tries to make sense of life. He wants to be his own creator, to transform his state of being unfinished into one with some goal and some purpose, allowing him to achieve some degree of integration. Man's passions are not banal psychological complexes that can be adequately explained as caused by childhood traumata. They can be understood only if one goes beyond the realm of reductionist psychology and recognizes them for what they are: man's attempt to make sense out of life and to experience the optimum of intensity and strength he can (or believes he can) achieve under the given circumstances. They are his religion, his cult, his ritual, which he has to hide (even from himself) in so far as they are disapproved of by his group. To be sure, by bribery and blackmail, i.e., by skillful conditioning, he can be persuaded to relinquish his "religion" and to be converted to the general cult of the no-self, the automaton. But this psychic cure deprives him of the best he has, of being a man and not a thing. The truth is that all human passions, both the "good" and the "evil," can be understood only as a person's attempt to make sense of his life and transcend banal, merely life-sustaining existence. Change of personality is possible only if he is able to "convert himself" to a new way of making sense of life by mobilizing his life-furthering passions and thus experiencing a superior sense of vitality and integration to the one he had before. Unless this happens he can be domesticated, but he cannot be cured. But even though the life-furthering passions are conducive to a greater sense of strength, joy, integration, and vitality than destructiveness and cruelty, the latter are as much an answer to the problem of human existence as the former. Even the most sadistic and destructive man is human, as human as the saint. He can be called a warped and sick man who has failed to achieve a better answer to the challenge of having been born human, and this is true; he can also be called a man who took the wrong way in search of his salvation. These considerations by no means imply, however, that destructiveness and cruelty are not vicious; they only imply that vice is human. They are indeed destructive of life, of body and spirit, destructive not only of the victim but of the destroyer himself. They constitute a paradox: they express life turning against itself in the striving to make sense of it. They are the only true perversion. Understanding them does not mean condoning them. But unless we understand them, we have no way to recognize how they may be reduced, and what factors tend to increase them." (pg. 30-31)

- "This study tries to clarify the nature of this necrophilous passion and the social conditions that tend to foster it. The conclusion will be that help in any broad sense can come only through radical changes in our social and political structure that would reinstate man to his supreme role in society. The call for "law and order" (rather than for life and structure) and for stricter punishment of criminals, as well as the obsession with violence and destruction among some "revolutionaries," are only further instances of the powerful attraction of necrophilia in the contemporary world. We need to create the conditions that would make the growth of man, this unfinished and uncompleted being - unique in nature - the supreme goal of all social arrangements. Genuine freedom and independence and the end of all forms of exploitative control are the conditions for mobilizing the love of life, which is the only force that can defeat the love for the dead." (pg. 32)

- Part 1 - Instinctivism, Behaviorism, Psychoanalysis (pg. 33)

- Chapter 1 - The Instinctivists (pg. 34)

- "For Lorenz, as for Freud, human aggressiveness is an instinct fed by an ever-flowing fountain of energy, and not necessarily the result of a reaction to outer stimuli." (pg. 38)

- "This hydraulic concept of aggression is, as it were, one pillar on which Lorenz's theory rests; it refers to the mechanism through which aggression is produced. The other pillar is the idea that aggression is in the service of life, that it serves the survival of the individual and of the species." (pg. 39)

- Chapter 2 - Environmentalists and Behaviorists (pg. 55)

- See text

- Chapter 3 - Instinctivism and Behaviorism: Their Differences and Similarities (pg. 94)

- See text

- Chapter 4 - The Psychoanalytic Approach to Understanding Aggression (pg. 102)

- "That Freud's theory is instinctivistic, explaining human behavior as the result of the struggle between the instinct for self-preservation and the

sexual instinct (and in his later theory between the life and death instincts) is too well known to require any documentation." (pg. 102)

- "...what gave Freud his historical significance was the discovery of unconscious processes..." (pg. 103-104)
- "Freud's revolution was to make us recognize the unconscious aspect of man's mind and the energy which he uses to repress the awareness of undesirable desires. Freud showed that good intentions mean nothing if they cover up the unconscious desires; he unmasked "honest" dishonesty by demonstrating that it is not enough to have "meant" well consciously. He was the first scientist to explore the depth, the underworld in man, and that is why his ideas had such an impact on artists and writers at a time when most psychiatrists still refused to take his theories seriously" (pg. 104)
 - "But Freud went further. He not only showed that forces operate in man of which he is not aware and that rationalizations protect him from awareness; he also explained that these unconscious forces are integrated in a system to which he gave the name "character" in a new, dynamic sense." (pg. 104)
 - ◆ "It is the great achievement of Freud not only to have discovered the character traits which underlie behavior, but also to have devised means to study them, such as the interpretation of dreams, free association, and slips of the tongue." (pg. 108)
- "**Psychoanalysis is essentially a theory of unconscious strivings, of resistance, of falsification of reality according to one's subjective needs and expectations ("transference"), of character, and of conflicts between passionate strivings embodied in character traits and the demands for self-preservation.** In this revised sense (although based on the core of Freud's discoveries) the approach of this book to the problem of human aggression and destructiveness is psychoanalytic - and neither instinctivistic nor behavioristic." (pg. 109)

- Part 2 - The Evidence Against The Instinctivist Thesis (pg. 111)
 - Chapter 5 - Neurophysiology (pg. 112)
 - See text
 - Chapter 6 - Animal Behavior (pg. 125)
 - See text
 - Chapter 7 - Paleontology (pg. 148)
 - See text
 - Chapter 8 - Anthropology (pg. 153)
 - See text
- Part 3 - The Varieties of Aggression and Destructiveness and the Respective Conditions (pg. 209)
 - Chapter 9 - Benign Aggression (pg. 210)
 - "Man's history is a record of extraordinary destructiveness and cruelty, and human aggression, it seems, far surpasses that of man's animal ancestors, and man is, in contrast to most animals, a real "killer."" (pg. 210)
 - "[M]an's hyperaggression is not due to a greater aggressive potential but to the fact that aggression-producing conditions are much more frequent for humans than for animals living in their natural habitat. This argument is valid—as far as it goes." (pg. 210)
 - "The wish to destroy for the sake of destruction is different. Only man seems to take pleasure in destroying life without any reason or purpose other than that of destroying. To put it more generally, only man appears to be destructive beyond the aim of defense or of attaining what he needs. The thesis to be developed in this chapter is that man's destructiveness and cruelty cannot be explained in terms of animal heredity or in terms of a destructive instinct, but must be understood on the basis of those factors by which man differs from his animal ancestors. The problem is to examine in what manner and to what degree the specific conditions of human existence are responsible for the quality and intensity of man's lust for killing and torturing." (pg. 211)
 - "**Malignant aggression**, though not an instinct, is a human potential rooted in the very conditions of human existence." (pg. 212)
 - "In present-day Western society there is a peculiar interconnection between the narcissism of the celebrity and the needs of the public. The latter wants to be in touch with famous people because the life of the average person is empty and boring. The mass media live from selling fame, and thus everybody is satisfied; the narcissistic performer, the public, and the fame merchants. Among political leaders a high degree of narcissism is very frequent; it may be considered an occupational illness—or asset—especially among those who owe their power to their influence over mass audiences." (pg. 229)
 - "[I]n order to reduce group narcissism, the misery, monotony, dullness, and powerlessness that exist in large sectors of the population would have to be eliminated. This cannot be accomplished simply by bettering material conditions. It can only be the result of drastic changes in the social organization to convert it from a control-property-power orientation to a life orientation; from having and hoarding to being and sharing. It will require the highest degree of active participation and responsibility on the part of each person in his role as a worker or employee in any kind of enterprise, as well as in his role as a citizen. Entirely new forms of decentralization must be devised, as well as new social and political structures that will put an end to the society of anomie, the mass society consisting of millions of atoms." (pg. 245)
 - Chapter 10 - Malignant Aggression: Premises (pg. 246)
 - "**Malignant aggression**, let us remember, is specifically human and not derived from animal instinct" (pg. 246)
 - "I shall try to show that destructiveness is one of the possible answers to psychic needs that are rooted in the existence of man, and that its generation results, as was stated earlier, from the interaction of various social conditions with man's existential needs." (pg. 246)
 - "Man is the only animal who has not only instrumental intelligence, but reason, the capacity to use his thinking to understand objectively—i.e., to know the nature of things as they are in themselves, and not only as means for his satisfaction. Gifted with self-awareness and reason, man is aware of himself as a being separate from nature and from others; he is aware of his powerlessness, of his ignorance; he is aware of his end: death. Self-awareness, reason, and imagination have disrupted the "harmony" that characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, the freak of the universe. He is part of nature, subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends nature. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures. Cast into this world at an accidental place and time, he is forced out of it accidentally and against his will. Being aware of himself, he realizes his powerlessness and the limitations of his existence. He is never free from the dichotomy of his existence: he cannot rid himself of his mind, even if he would want to; he cannot rid himself of his body as long as he is alive—and his body makes him want to be alive. Man's life cannot be lived by repeating the pattern of his species; he must live. Man is the only animal who does not feel at home in nature, who can feel evicted from paradise, the only animal for whom his own existence is a problem that he has to solve and from which he cannot escape. He cannot go back to the prehuman state of harmony with nature, and he does not know where he will arrive if he goes forward. **Man's existential contradiction results in a state of constant disequilibrium.** This disequilibrium distinguishes him from the animal, which lives, as it were, in harmony with nature. This does not mean, of course, that the animal necessarily lives a peaceful and happy life, but that it has its specific ecological niche to which its physical and mental qualities have been adapted by the process of evolution. Man's existential, and hence unavoidable disequilibrium can be relatively stable when he has found, with the support of his culture, a more or less adequate way of coping with his existential problems. But this relative stability does not imply that the dichotomy has disappeared; it is merely dormant and becomes manifest as soon as the conditions for this relative stability change. Indeed, in the process of man's self-creation this relative stability is upset again and again. Man, in his history, changes his environment, and in this

process he changes himself. His knowledge increases, but so does his awareness of his ignorance; he experiences himself as an individual, and not only as a member of his tribe, and with this his sense of separateness and isolation grows. He creates larger and more efficient social units, led by powerful leaders and he becomes frightened and submissive. He attains a certain amount of freedom—and becomes afraid of this very freedom. His capacity for material production grows, but in the process he becomes greedy and egotistical, a slave of the things he has created. Every new state of disequilibrium forces man to seek for new equilibrium. Indeed, what has often been considered man's innate drive for progress is his attempt to find a new and if possible better equilibrium. The new forms of equilibrium by no means constitute a straight line of human improvement. Frequently in history new achievements have led to regressive developments. Many times, when forced to find a new solution, man runs into a blind alley from which he has to extricate himself; and it is indeed remarkable that thus far in history he has been able to do so. These considerations suggest a hypothesis as to how to define the essence or nature of man. I propose that man's nature cannot be defined in terms of a specific quality, such as love, hate, reason, good or evil, but only in terms of fundamental contradictions that characterize human existence and have their root in the biological dichotomy between missing instincts and self-awareness. **Man's existential conflict produces certain psychic needs common to all men.** He is forced to overcome the horror of separateness, of powerlessness, and of lostness, and find new forms of relating himself to the world to enable him to feel at home. I have called these psychic needs existential because they are rooted in the very conditions of human existence. They are shared by all men, and their fulfillment is as necessary for man's remaining sane as the fulfillment of organic drives is necessary for his remaining alive. But each of these needs can be satisfied in different ways, which vary according to the differences of his social condition. These different ways of satisfying the existential needs manifest themselves in passions, such as love, tenderness, striving for justice, independence, truth, hate, sadism, masochism, destructiveness, narcissism. I call them character-rooted passions—or simply human passions—because they are integrated in man's character. While the concept of character will be discussed at length further on, it will suffice here to say that character is the relatively permanent system of all noninstinctual strivings through which man relates himself to the human and natural world. One may understand character as the human substitute for the missing animal instincts; it is man's second nature. What all men have in common are their organic drives (even though highly modifiable by experience) and their existential needs. What they do not have in common are the kinds of passions that are dominant in their respective characters - character-rooted passions. The difference in character is largely due to the difference in social conditions (although genetically given dispositions also influence the formation of the character); for this reason one can call character-rooted passions a historical category and instincts a natural category. Yet the former are not a purely historical category either, inasmuch as the social influence can only work through the biologically given conditions of human existence." (pg. 253-255)

- "Man, aware of his separateness, needs to find new ties with his fellowman; his very sanity depends on it. Without strong affective ties to the world, he would suffer from utter isolation and lostness. But he can relate himself to others in different and ascertainable ways. He can love others, which requires the presence of independence and productiveness, or if his sense of freedom is not developed, he can relate to others symbiotically—i.e., by becoming part of them or by making them part of himself. In this symbiotic relationship he strives either to control others (sadism), or to be controlled by them (masochism). If he cannot choose either the way of love or that of symbiosis, he can solve the problem by relating exclusively to himself (narcissism); then he becomes the world, and loves the world by "loving" himself. This is a frequent form of dealing with the need for relatedness (usually blended with sadism), but it is a dangerous one; in its extreme form it leads to some forms of madness. A last and malignant form of solving the problem (usually blended with extreme narcissism) is the craving to destroy all others. If no one exists outside of me, I need not fear others, nor need I relate myself to them. By destroying the world I am saved from being crushed by it." (pg. 262)
- "The existential split in man would be unbearable could he not establish a sense of unity within himself and with the natural and human world outside. But there are many ways of reestablishing unity." (pg. 262)
 - "To forget oneself, in the sense of anaesthetizing one's reason, is the aim of all these attempts to restore unity within oneself. It is a tragic attempt, in the sense that either it succeeds only momentarily (as in a trance or in drunkenness) or, even if it is permanent (as in the passion for hate or power), it cripples man, estranges him from others, twists his judge-ment, and makes him as dependent on this particular passion as another is on hard drugs." (pg. 262)
 - "Another solution to man's existential split problem is quite characteristic of contemporary cybernetic society: to be identified with one's social role; to feel little, to lose oneself by reducing oneself to a thing; the existential split is camouflaged because man becomes identified with his social organization and forgets that he is a person; he becomes, to use Heidegger's term, a "one," a nonperson. He is, we might say, in a "negative ecstasy"; he forgets himself by ceasing to be "he," by ceasing to be a person and becoming a thing." (pg. 264)
- "Man's awareness of himself as being in a strange and overpowering world, and his consequent sense of impotence could easily overwhelm him. If he experienced himself as entirely passive, a mere object, he would lack a sense of his own will, of his identity. To compensate for this he must acquire a sense of being able to do something, to move somebody, to "make a dent," or, to use the most adequate English word, to be "effective." We use the word today in referring to an "effective" speaker or salesman, meaning one who succeeds in getting results. But this is a deterioration of the original meaning of "to effect" (from the Latin ex-facere, to do). To effect is the equivalent of: to bring to pass, to accomplish, to realize, to carry out, to fulfill; an effective person is one who has the capacity to do, to effect, to accomplish something. To be able to effect something is the assertion that one is not impotent, but that one is an alive, functioning, human being. To be able to effect means to be active and not only to be affected; to be active and not only passive. It is, in the last analysis, the proof that one is. The principle can be formulated thus: I am, because I effect." (pg. 264)
 - "The adult, too, feels the need to reassure himself that he is by being able to effect. The ways to achieve a sense of effecting are manifold: by eliciting an expression of satisfaction in the baby being nursed, a smile from the loved person, sexual response from the lover, interest from the partner in conversation; by work-material, intellectual, artistic. But the same need can also be satisfied by having power over others, by experiencing their fear, by the murderer's watching the anguish in the face of his victim, by conquering a country, by torturing people, by sheer destruction of what has been constructed. The need to "effect" expresses itself in interpersonal relations as well as in the relationship to animals, to inanimate nature, and to ideas. In the relationship to others the fundamental alternative is to feel either the potency to effect love or to effect fear and suffering. In the relationship to things, the alternative is between constructing and destroying. Opposite as these alternatives are, they are responses to the same existential need: to effect." (pg. 266)
- "What is usually overlooked is the fact that there is a different kind of stimulus, one that stimulates the person to be active. Such an activating stimulus could be a novel, a poem, an idea, a landscape, music, or a loved person. None of these stimuli produce a simple response; they invite you, as it were, to respond by actively and sympathetically relating yourself to them; by becoming actively interested, seeing and discovering ever-new aspects in your "object" (which ceases to be a mere "object"), by becoming more awake and more aware. You do not remain the passive object upon which the stimulus acts, to whose melody your body has to dance, as it were; instead you express your own faculties by being related to the world; you become active and productive. The simple stimulus produces a drive—i.e., the person is driven by it; the activating stimulus results in a striving—i.e., the person is actively striving for a goal." (pg. 269)
 - "The significance of activating and simple stimuli is crucial for the problem of learning. If learning means to penetrate from the surface of

phenomena to their roots—i.e., to their causes, from deceptive ideologies to the naked facts, thus approximating the truth - it is an exhilarating, active process and a condition for human growth. (I do not refer here only to book learning, but to the discoveries a child or an illiterate member of a primitive tribe makes of natural or personal events.) If, on the other hand, learning is merely the acquisition of information mediated by conditioning, we are dealing with a simple stimulus in which the person is acted upon by the stimulation of his need for praise, security, success, and so forth. Contemporary life in industrial societies operates almost entirely with such simple stimuli. What is stimulated are such drives as sexual desire, greed, sadism, destructiveness, narcissism; these stimuli are mediated through movies, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and the commodity market. On the whole, advertising rests upon the stimulation of socially produced desires. The mechanism is always the same: simple stimulation - immediate and passive response. Here lies the reason why the stimuli have to be changed constantly, lest they become ineffective. A car that is exciting today will be boring in a year or two—so it must be changed in the search for excitation. A place one knows well automatically becomes boring, so that excitement can be had only by visiting different places, as many as possible in one trip. In such a framework, sexual partners also need to be changed in order to produce excitement." (pg. 270)

- ◆ "I believe that one can formulate a law based on neurophysiological and psychological data in reference to the difference between the two kinds of stimuli: the more "passivating," a stimulus is, the more frequently it must be changed in intensity and/or in kind; the more activating it is, the longer it retains its stimulating quality and the less necessary is change in intensity and content." (pg. 271)
 - ◊ "It is much easier to get excited by anger, rage, cruelty, or the passion to destroy than by love and productive and active interest; that first kind of excitation does not require the individual to make an effort—one does not need to have patience and discipline, to learn, to concentrate, to endure frustration, to practice critical thinking, to overcome one's narcissism and greed." (pg. 271)
- "The problem of stimulation is closely linked to a phenomenon that has no small part in generating aggression and destructiveness: boredom." (pg. 272)
- "It seems plausible to speculate that man, being still less determined by instinct than the chimpanzee, would have been a biological failure if he had not developed a substitute for the instincts he lacked. This substitute also had to have the function of instincts: enabling man to act as if he were motivated by instincts. This substitute is the human character. Character is the specific structure in which human energy is organized in the pursuit of man's goals; it motivates behavior according to its dominant goals: a person acts "instinctively," we say, in accordance with his character." (pg. 282)
 - "The concept of social character is based on the consideration that each form of society (or social class) needs to use human energy in the specific manner necessary for the functioning of that particular society. Its members must want to do what they have to do if the society is to function properly. This process of transforming general psychic energy into specific psychosocial energy is mediated by the social character." (pg. 283)
 - "...character is a human phenomenon..." (pg. 284)
- "The discussion of man's existential needs has shown that these can be satisfied in different ways. The need for an object of devotion can be answered by devotion to God, love, and truth—or by idolatry of destructive idols. The need for relatedness can be answered by love and kindness - or by dependence, sadism, masochism, destructiveness. The need for unity and rootedness can be answered by the passions for solidarity, brotherliness, love, and mystical experience—or by drunken-ness, drug addiction, depersonalization. The need for effectiveness can be answered by love, productive work—or by sadism and destructiveness. The need for stimulation and excitation can be answered by productive interest in man, nature, art, ideas—or by a greedy pursuit of ever-changing pleasures." (pg. 284-285)
- "I propose to call rational any thought, feeling or act that promotes the adequate functioning and growth of the whole of which it is a part, and irrational that which tends to weaken or destroy the whole. It is obvious that only the empirical analysis of a system can show what is to be considered rational or irrational, respectively." (pg. 295)
- "Man's instinctual drives are necessary but trivial; man's passions that unify his energy in the search of their goal belong to the realm of the devotional or sacred. The system of the trivial is that of "making a living"; the sphere of the "sacred" is that of living beyond physical survival—it is the sphere in which man stakes his fate, often his life, the sphere in which his deepest motivations, those that make life worth living, are rooted." (pg. 298)
- "**Individuals live in a society that provides them with ready-made patterns that pretend to give meaning to their lives.** In our society, for instance, they are told that to be successful, to be a "bread winner," to raise a family, to be a good citizen, to consume goods and pleasures gives meaning to life. But while for most people this suggestion works on the conscious level, they do not acquire a genuine sense of meaningfulness, they do not make up for the lacking center within themselves. The suggested patterns wear thin and with increasing frequency fail. That this is happening today on a large scale is evidenced by the increase in drug addiction, by the lack of genuine interest in anything, in the decline of intellectual and artistic creativity, and in the increase of violence and destructiveness." (pg. 299)
- Chapter 11 - Malignant Aggression: Cruelty and Destructiveness (pg. 300)
 - "Destructiveness appears in two forms: spontaneous, and bound in the character structure" (pg. 302)
 - "I propose that the core of sadism, common to all its manifestations, is the passion to have absolute and unrestricted control over a living being, whether an animal, a child, a man, or a woman. To force someone to endure pain or humiliation without being able to defend himself is one of the manifestations of absolute control, but it is by no means the only one. The person who has complete control over another living being makes this being into his thing, his property, while he becomes the other being's god. Sometimes the control can even be helpful, and in that case we might speak of a benevolent sadism, such as one finds in instances where one person rules another for the other's own good, and in fact furthers him in many ways, except that he keeps him in bondage. But most sadism is malevolent. Complete control over another human being means crippling him, choking him, thwarting him. Such control can have all forms and all degrees." (pg. 322)
 - "Sadism is one of the answers to the problem of being born human when better ones are not attainable. The experience of absolute control over another being, of omnipotence as far as he, she, or it is concerned, creates the illusion of transcending the limitations of human existence, particularly for one whose real life is deprived of productivity and joy. Sadism has essentially no practical aim; it is not "trivial" but "devotional." It is transformation of impotence into the experience of omnipotence; it is the religion of psychical cripples." (pg. 323)
 - "Sadistic character traits can never be understood if one isolates them from the whole character structure. They are part of a syndrome that has to be understood as a whole. For the sadistic character everything living is to be controllable; living beings become things. Or, still more accurately, living beings are transformed into living, quivering, pulsating objects of control. Their responses are forced by the one who controls them. The sadist wants to become the master of life, and hence the quality of life should be maintained in his victim. This is, in fact, what distinguishes him from the destroying person. The destroyer wants to do away with a person, to eliminate him, to destroy life itself; the sadist wants the sensation of controlling and choking life. Another trait of the sadist is that he is stimulated only by the helpless, never by those who are strong. It does not cause any sadistic pleasure, for instance, to inflict a wound on an enemy in a fight between equals, because in this

situation the infliction of the wound is not an expression of control. For the sadistic character there is only one admirable quality, and that is power. He admires, loves, and submits to those who have power, and he despises and wants to control those who are powerless and cannot fight back. The sadistic character is afraid of everything that is not certain and predictable, that offers surprises which would force him to spontaneous and original reactions. For this reason, he is afraid of life. Life frightens him precisely because it is by its very nature unpredictable and uncertain. It is structured but it is not orderly; there is only one certainty in life: that all men die. Love is equally uncertain. To be loved requires a capacity to be loving oneself, to arouse love, and it implies always a risk of rejection and failure. This is why the sadistic character can "love" only when he controls, i.e., when he has power over the object of his love. The sadistic character is usually xenophobic and neophobic - one who is strange constitutes newness, and what is new arouses fear, suspicion, and dislike, because a spontaneous, alive, and not-routinized response would be required. Another element in the syndrome is the submissiveness and cowardice of the sadist. It may sound like a contradiction that the sadist is a submissive person, and yet not only is it not a contradiction - it is, dynamically speaking, a necessity. He is sadistic because he feels impotent, unalive, and powerless. He tries to compensate for this lack by having power over others, by transforming the worm he feels himself to be into a god. But even the sadist who has power suffers from his human impotence. He may kill and torture, but he remains a loveless, isolated, frightened person in need of a higher power to whom he can submit. For those one step below Hitler, the Führer was his highest power; for Hitler himself, it was Fate, the laws of Evolution. This need to submit is rooted in masochism. Sadism and masochism, which are invariably linked together, are opposites in behavioristic terms, but they are actually two different facets of one fundamental situation: the sense of vital impotence. Both the sadist and the masochist need another being to "complete" them, as it were. The sadist makes another being an extension of himself; the masochist makes himself the extension of another being. Both seek a symbiotic relationship because neither has his center in himself. While it appears that the sadist is free of his victim, he needs the victim in a perverse way. Because of the close connection between sadism and masochism it is more correct to speak of a sadomasochistic character, even though the one or the other aspect will be more dominant in a particular person. The sadomasochist has also been called the "authoritarian character," translating the psychological aspect of his character structure into terms of a political attitude. This concept finds its justification in the fact that persons whose political attitude is generally described as authoritarian (active and passive) usually exhibit (in our society) the traits of the sadomasochistic character: control of those below and submission to those above." (pg. 325-326)

- "There are thousands of Himmlers living among us. Socially speaking, they do only minor harm in normal life, although one must not underestimate the number of people whom they damage and make thoroughly unhappy. But when forces of destruction and hate threaten to engulf the whole body politic, such people become extremely dangerous; they are the ones who yearn to serve the government as its agents for terror, for torture and killing. Many people commit the severe error of believing that one can easily recognize a potential Himmler from far away." (pg. 360)
- Chapter 12 - Malignant Aggression: Necrophilia (pg. 362)
 - "...reason is more than mere intelligence; it develops only when the brain and the heart are united, when feeling and thinking are integrated, and when both are rational" (pg. 397)
- Chapter 13 - Malignant Aggression: Adolf Hitler, A Clinical Case of Necrophilia (pg. 411)
 - See text
- Epilogue: On the Ambiguity of Hope (pg. 482)
 - "The position taken in this book is one of rational faith in man's capacity to extricate himself from what seems the fatal web of circumstances that he has created. It is the position of those who are neither "optimists" nor "pessimists," but radicals who have rational faith in man's capacity to avoid the ultimate catastrophe. This humanist radicalism goes to the roots, and thus to the causes; it seeks to liberate man from the chains of illusions; it postulates that fundamental changes are necessary, not only in our economic and political structure but also in our values, in our concept of man's aims, and in our personal conduct. To have faith means to dare, to think the unthinkable, yet to act within the limits of the realistically possible; it is the paradoxical hope to expect the Messiah every day, yet not to lose heart when he has not come at the appointed hour. This hope is not passive and it is not patient; on the contrary, it is impatient and active, looking for every possibility of action within the realm of real possibilities. Least of all is it passive as far as the growth and the liberation of one's own person are concerned. To be sure, there are severe limitations to personal development determined by the social structure. But those alleged radicals who counsel that no personal change is possible or even desirable within present-day society use their revolutionary ideology as an excuse for their personal resistance to inner change. The situation of mankind today is too serious to permit us to listen to the demagogues least of all demagogues who are attracted to destruction - or even to the leaders who use only their brains and whose hearts have hardened. Critical and radical thought will only bear fruit when it is blended with the most precious quality man is endowed with— the love of life." (pg. 485)
- Appendix: Freud's Theory of Aggressiveness and Destructiveness (pg. 486)
 - See text

d. Further Readings:

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