

The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. By Erich Fromm. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973. xvi + 521 pages. \$10.95.

If the reader wishes a multidisciplinary study of aggression (benign aggression) and human destructiveness and cruelty (malignant aggression), he or she can find such a study in this book. Fromm, who has treated his readers to a diverse fare of books on freedom and love, Marx and Zen, religion and socialism, and dreams, presents us with his second study on human destructiveness. *The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil* is expanded, in the present volume, to a discussion of the instinctivist, the behaviorist and the psychoanalytic theories on destructiveness. To refute the former two theories he makes brief excursions into the fields of neurophysiology, animal behavior, paleontology, anthropology. It is not surprising that Fromm presents a third option as to the meaning and source of human destructiveness. While refuting the instinctivist claims he argues that "destructiveness and cruelty are not instinctual drives, but passions rooted in the total existence of man" (p. 73).

After a discussion of benign aggression, Fromm devotes the remaining 250 pages to a description of malignant aggression. It is in this context that he presents a development of his seminal ideas: sado-masochism (the authoritarian personality) and necrophilia. He elaborates his argument with psychoanalytic biographical sketches of Joseph Stalin, Heinrich Himmler and a separate chapter on the arch necrophiliac, Adolf Hitler. The book ends with an appendix describing Freud's theory of aggressiveness and destructiveness.

Some readers might wonder why this book is reviewed in a theological journal. "It is primarily psychology. It is not explicitly theological or religious," the objection states. This objection holds true if an absolute split is made between psychology and religion. It is also a valid objection if religion and psychology are seen as converging at some points and diverging at other points. Here the objector might perceive the task as primarily theological, and affirms that he or she does not have the training or the time to pursue psychology. A third more pragmatic objection could be that "there is so much to consider in religion or theology courses that is explicitly religious or theological that there is simply no time to present the approaches of other disciplines.

On the other hand, a book like *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* can provide an analysis of human cruelty that might be reflected upon theologically. It thus can inform the religious thinker as he or she asks questions about the fundamental source of human distress, the source of evil, and human culpability. Finally, for the person teaching a course in Religion and Psychology and dealing with the problems of human destructiveness, Fromm's work presents an argument that must be included.

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Fittipaldi, S. E., 1975: Review Fromm, E.: *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*
 (1973a, English), In: *Horizons*, Waterloo (Canada) Vol. 2 (Spring 1975), pp. 153.

