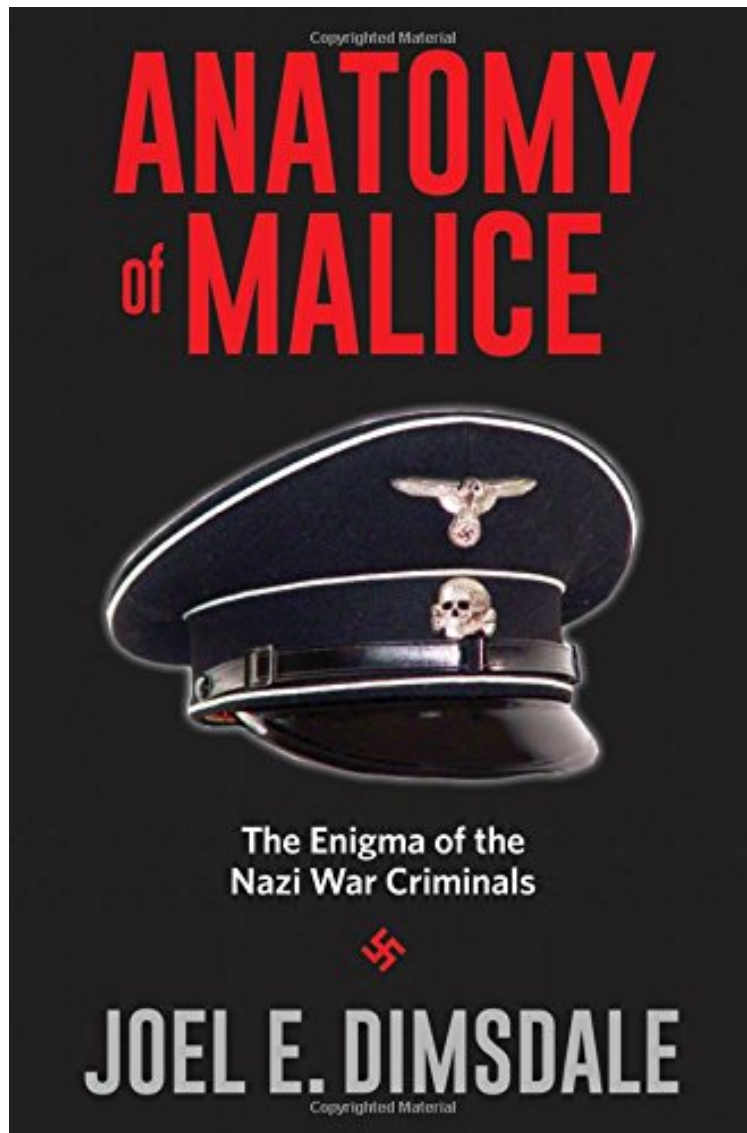


(Read free) Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals

Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals

Joel E. Dimsdale

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#591593 in Books imusti 2016-05-24Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x .94 x 6.12l, .0 #File Name: 0300213220256 pagesAnatomy of Malicetakes us on a complex and troubling quest to make sense of the most extreme evil. | File size: 22.Mb

Joel E. Dimsdale : Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Thoughts on the nature of the mysterious nature of human evil.By Peter S. BradleyAnatomy of Malice by Joel E. DimsdaleThis book was inspired by author Joel E. Dimsdales interest

in understanding what made the Nazis evil. The question is undoubtedly more a philosophical than technical question, but the technical tools of psychology might provide some insight. In this case, the insight would seem to be slight, albeit the story is very interesting and informative. Dimsdale examines the backgrounds and psychological history of four Nazis in particular, namely Robert Ley, Herman Goring, Julius Streicher and Rudolf Hess. However, before getting to those details, Dimsdale describes the history of the Nuremberg trial and the appointment and conflict between the psychiatrist appointed to examine the Nazi defendants. The conflict between these psychiatrists Douglas Kelly and Gustave Gilbert takes up a large part of the narrative. We are also introduced to Burton C. Andrus, the warden of the Nuremberg facility. Dimsdale makes these characters and their quirks engaging. We also get background on the cutting edge psychological tool of the Rorschach test, which frankly comes across as mumbo jumbo. The debate about the Nazi war criminals was whether they were uniquely depraved in a way that psychology could identify as outside the norms of human nature a position advanced by Gilbert or if they were simply human beings, but perhaps more depraved than the norm Kelly's position. It is not clear that there is an answer, but my sense is that Dimsdale inclines toward Kelly's position. The Nuremberg defendants selected by Dimsdale were odd, but were they odder than most people who had been defeated in war, were being held by their enemies and faced a death sentence? At some point, Rudolf Hess slipped the bonds of sanity, certainly by the time that he flew to Scotland, but much of his performance was either a habit formed to avoid interrogation or an act. Julius Streicher was an unpleasant person, who probably talked himself into his death sentence. (In my review of Julius Streicher: Nazi Editor of the Notorious Anti-semitic Newspaper Der Sturmer I wondered what Streicher had done to merit a death sentence, inasmuch as he was out of power by the time of World War II, and the answer seems to be that he was a jerk during the Nuremberg trial.) Robert Ley was an alcoholic and had a neurologically induced stutter who committed suicide before the trial. Finally, Goring was the most effective of the Nazis but was also addicted to pills and had the greatest claim to being a true psychopath. Dimsdale seems to imply that the traits that these men exhibited could be found in most people. The difference, of course, is that these people were in a position where their lack of internal restraints, and indifference to transcendental concerns, allowed them to permit or assist in heinous acts. For me, what characterized the cadre of Nuremberg defendants was that they were opportunists. They were most willing to adopt those moral values that would enable them to achieve the success they wanted. Nazism was particularly well-adapted to such people since it had at its core the Fuhrer Principle which held simply that a follower had to follow the Fuhrer wherever he led. Dimsdale acknowledges that his quest was inconclusive in his conclusion: I was of course disappointed, but then I started to reflect. Would any archives have answered my questions about malice? The Bible says pointedly The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty (Ps. 74: 80). The poet Pablo Neruda concludes more hopefully: The earth is a bed / blooming for love, soiled in blood. 8 Kelley found some darkness in every person. Gilbert found a unique darkness in some. They were both right. Nonetheless, don't let that prevent you from reading this book. It provides a glimpse into the lives of the Nazi high command, some thoughts on the development of psychology, a sketch of international justice, and some philosophy on the dark issue of human evil. The book is well-written and easily accessible to those with an interest in any of these subjects. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. "The heart of man is evil and desperately wicked." Jeremiah By Marigold Am reading this fascinating book right now....I've been interested in the Holocaust since the age of fifteen when I came home from school one day and my mother had put a copy of THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK in my room for me to read. Later, she gave me a copy of EXODUS by Leon Uris. Upon discussing the books with my Jewish friends (this was the Sixties), I was astonished to learn that they all had near relatives who had died in concentration camps. I mean I was astonished. Here I was, a cosseted Southern girl who was surrounded by so many healthy, vibrant, loving, extended family and naively assuming so were all my friends. The man who catered my wedding was a Holocaust survivor and his tattoo was plainly seen. A wonderful, dear man who was admired and respected by the many, many people who knew him. The question of "How? Why?" the Holocaust could have happened has haunted me all my life. ANATOMY OF MALICE reminds me of another book that attempts to understand the evil among us which is PEOPLE OF THE LIE by M. Scott Peck. Professor Dimsdale's book, however, appears to be THE book that delves into this dreadful mystery of human evil and does so with insight and balance...not throwing the baby out with the bathwater and indicting the entire German people. I had not intended to write this review before finishing the book but I was perusing the other reviews and decided to join in. I really appreciate having found this book. Sally in Virginia 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An interesting read By johnn An evaluation fifty years later of the psychological examinations of four of the Nazi defendants tried at Nuremberg in 1945-46. Nothing had really changed during the intervening years, except for the fact that Rorschach tests are not in vogue now as they were in 1945. The subjects -- Robert Ley, Herman Goering, Julius Streicher and 'Rudolf Hess -- were all psychologically different, their choice by Dimsdale for analysis in his book, I read Gilbert's account of his analyses some fifty plus years ago and was basically unaware of Kelley's accounts. Both Gilbert's and Kelley's books are not available in paperback or Kindle. I felt that it did get bogged down in psychologist double talk at times.

In this gripping and haunting narrative, a renowned psychiatrist sheds new light on the psychology of the war

criminals at Nuremberg

When the ashes had settled after World War II and the Allies convened an international war crimes trial in Nuremberg, a psychiatrist, Douglas Kelley, and a psychologist, Gustave Gilbert, tried to fathom the psychology of the Nazi leaders, using extensive psychiatric interviews, IQ tests, and Rorschach inkblot tests. Never before or since has there been such a detailed study of governmental leaders who orchestrated mass killings. Before the war crimes trial began, it was self-evident to most people that the Nazi leaders were demonic maniacs. But when the interviews and psychological tests were completed, the answer was no longer so clear. The findings were so disconcerting that portions of the data were hidden away for decades and the research became a topic for vituperative disputes. Gilbert thought that the war criminals' malice stemmed from depraved psychopathology. Kelley viewed them as morally flawed, ordinary men who were creatures of their environment. Who was right? Drawing on his decades of experience as a psychiatrist and the dramatic advances within psychiatry, psychology, and neuroscience since Nuremberg, Joel E. Dimsdale looks anew at the findings and examines in detail four of the war criminals, Robert Ley, Hermann Gring, Julius Streicher, and Rudolf Hess. Using increasingly precise diagnostic tools, he discovers a remarkably broad spectrum of pathology. *Anatomy of Malice* takes us on a complex and troubling quest to make sense of the most extreme evil.

Since before the Second World War ended psychiatrists and psychologists have been trying to understand the minds of the Nazi leadership. Dimsdale takes a fresh look at the nature of wickedness, and at our attempts to explain it. This is a must read.

Sir Simon Wessely, Royal College of Psychiatrists