

Amber Smith  
Sterile  
Annotated Bibliography

Books

Anderson, Brooke. Henry Darger: the Henry Darger Collection at the American Folk Art Museum. New York. Harry N. Abrams Inc, 2001.

This book consisted of detailed, collaged watercolors by Darger. It is filled with destructive images of little girls in war-like environments. Sometimes the girls were the ones responsible for the violence, and at other times adult captains and generals wearing the height of abusive fashion were inflicting the violence on them. Sometimes the girls were fighting each other for power, land, food, or more space on the painting.

Bonesteel, Michael. Henry Darger: Art and Selected Writings. New York. Rizzoli International, 2000.

This book had drawings, but also has detailed information about Darger's life. He lost both of his parents at a young age and had a very bad temper. He hated kids. He threw ashes at one girl and tried to slash another girl with a knife. A while after these acts he felt remorse and became overly protective of children that were younger than him. Darger decided at a young age, that if he didn't like reality, he would create an alternate reality. This resides in thirty years of writing and painting. He existed in his stories and drawings. Sometimes current events were infused into his stories catapulting them into yearlong battle scenes.

Fromm, Erich. The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. New York. Penguin Books, 1977.

Destructiveness. Authoritarians respond to a painful existence by, in a sense, eliminating themselves: If there is no me, how can anything hurt me? But others respond to pain by striking out against the world: If I destroy the world, how can it hurt me? It is this escape from freedom that accounts for much of the indiscriminate nastiness of life -- brutality, vandalism, humiliation, crime, and terrorism. Fromm adds that, if a person's desire to destroy is blocked by circumstances, he or she may redirect it inward. The most obvious kind of self-destructiveness is, of course, suicide. But we can also include many illnesses, drug addiction, alcoholism, even the joys of passive entertainment. He turns Freud's death instinct upside down: Self-destructiveness is frustrated destructiveness, not the other way around.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. Beyond Good and Evil. Great Britain. T. and A. Constable Ltd, 1907.

Nietzsche asserts that there is an "order of rank" according to which the spiritual strength of all people can be measured. Because of this difference between people, it would be absurd to apply one moral code to all people. Nietzsche suggests that the strongest people are marked by a cruelty to themselves, according to which they mercilessly expose their every prejudice and assumption in order to dig more deeply into themselves. At bottom, however, everyone has prejudices.

Miller, Alice. For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence. New York. Staus & Giroux, 1984.

Miller explores the backgrounds of extreme cases of self-destructive and violent individuals to further her theories on longterm consequences of abusive childrearing. Her conclusions about what creates a drug addict, a murderer, even a Hitler, stray far from psychoanalytic dogma about human nature. Miller paints a jolting picture of the violent world each generation helps shape when traditional upbringing, with its hidden cruelty, is perpetuated. She also offers a way out by striving to resensitize the child in the adult, to unlock an emotional life frozen in repression.

#### Internet Sources

Stanford Prison Experiment. Zimbardo. 1999. 13 March 2006  
<http://www.prisonexp.org/>

This experiment was conducted with random volunteers who had no idea what they were in for. A group of college kids were introduced into a prison system where some were given the title of guards and others prisoners. As the experiments progressed the guards started to abuse their power on the prisoners and the experiments had to end. This gave me ideas about control and power being major factors in evilness. When people gain power and control they tend to use it aggressively and in evil ways.

The Scales of Good and Evil. Pickover. 2000. 10 March 2006  
<http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/pickover/good.html/>

This site talked about socially recognized evil and good people. It also delves further into these ideas with Internet discussions after the article. An example of one of these is from Paul Davies, "The problem of evil has baffled theologians and philosophers for centuries. If there is an omnipotent God who is supremely good, why does he not intervene to prevent gross wrongdoing? One traditional answer was to portray the universe as a battleground between opposing forces of good and evil, with humans caught in the crossfire. Another was to argue that evil is the price paid for human free will, which is on balance a greater good. Today, however, more scientific explanations are demanded." This article enforced ideas about having someone or something to blame for evil actions. Also that people want to think someone is suffering from an illness or there is something physically wrong with them when they act evil. People don't focus on positive psychology, or why people are nice and what that is attributed to. We are inherently interested in negativity.

The Psychology of Power and Evil: All Power to the Person? To the Situation? To the System? Zimbardo. 2003. 13 March 2006  
<http://www.prisonexp.org/pdf/powerevil.pdf/>

I was so intrigued by the Stanford Prison Experiment, that I did some more research of Zimbardo and found that he had many articles out that dealt with ideas about evilness. He writes, "To understand anti-social behavior by individuals, which includes violence, torture, and terrorism, I endorse a greater reliance on situational variables and processes than has been traditional in psychology. The dominant dispositional orientation, embedded in a psychology of individualism, focuses on internal factors that people bring into various situations, such as genetic, personality, character, and pathological risk factors. While this perspective is obviously important to appreciating the integrity of individual functioning, it is vital to add an appreciation of the extent to which human actions may come under situational influences that can be quite powerful." I liked this article because it addressed a lot of the same themes we have discussed in seminar. The "Western" idea of individuality; and how separating ourselves can turn people against each other. Also thinking about how different peoples views are and when combined we have this urge to infiltrate ours and denounce theirs. This goes along with the idea of power/control leading to an evil state, such as in the prison experiments.

#### AV Sources

The Smell of Burning Ants. Writ., dir, and prod. Jay Rosenblatt. DVD. 1994.

This was the catalyst for my film during spring quarter. The appropriated images with audio were exceptional and made me want to experiment more with found footage. The image of the dissection also gave me the idea to use autopsy footage and direct animate over it.

The Act of Seeing With One's Own Eyes. Dir, and prod. Stan Brakhage. DVD. 1971.

I actually ran into this film by accident, when studying some of Brakhage's direct animation. This is the exact type of footage I had in mind for my piece. The silence in the film is deafening and makes the footage even more uncomfortable. I cringe whenever I watch the film. I think it's because I haven't experienced death, so in my mind there is no way that the cadaver can't feel all the deep incisions and tearing of flesh.

Decasia- the State of Decay. Dir, and prod. Bill Morrison. DVD. 2002.

This film gave me ideas about film alteration and how the emphasis of the film can be on a process that was actually deteriorating the film. It has enforced my ideas about burying my footage and has made me interested in what role that will play in my film. Will my film partially decompose or will it take over and be the emphasis of my film.

Dir, and prod. Oskar Fischinger. VHS. 1900-1967.

His work in general has been my main influence with direct animation. Long ago I saw a piece of his with abstract shapes and classical music and it has been an inspiration to me up until now. Whenever I view his work I try to unmask the process, which always proves to be difficult. I like his use of color, shape, and sometimes audio. He can bring the most basic shapes to life.

She's All That. Writ, R. Lee Fleming Jr. Dir, Robert Iscove. DVD. 1999.

This popular movie is about a girl who is classified as an outcast. The "popular" high school football captain has to make the school outcast prom princess by the end of the film. Since she is different, and doesn't make an attempt to fit in the popular kids are relentless. In the end the popular boy starts to actually fall for her, but she is still skeptical. In the end they get together because she was destined for greater things and if she didn't that would make viewers feel bad.