

# The Anatomy of Evil

By Michael H. Stone

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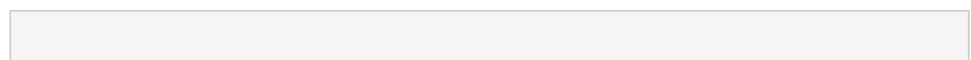
## The Anatomy of Evil By Michael H. Stone

The crimes of Charles Manson, Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, John Wayne Gacy, Dennis Rader, and other high-profile killers are so breathtakingly awful that most people would not hesitate to label them "evil." In this groundbreaking book, renowned psychiatrist Michael H. Stone—host of Discovery Channel's former series *Most Evil*—uses this common emotional reaction to horrifying acts as his starting point to explore the concept and reality of evil from a new perspective. In an in-depth discussion of the personality traits and behavior that constitute evil across a wide spectrum, Dr. Stone takes a clarifying scientific approach to a topic that for centuries has been inadequately explained by religious doctrines.

Basing his analysis on the detailed biographies of more than 600 violent criminals, Stone has created a 22-level hierarchy of evil behavior, which loosely reflects the structure of Dante's *Inferno*. He traces two salient personality traits that run the gamut from those who commit crimes of passion to perpetrators of the worst crimes—sadistic torture and murder. One trait is narcissism, as exhibited in people who are so self-centered that they have little or no ability to care about their victims. The other is aggression, the use of power over another person to inflict humiliation, suffering, and death.

Stone then turns to the various factors that, singly or intertwined, contribute to pushing certain people over the edge into committing heinous crimes. They include heredity, adverse environments, violence-prone cultures, mental illness or brain injury, and abuse of mind-altering drugs. All are considered in the search for the root causes of evil behavior.

What do psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience tell us about the minds of those whose actions could be described as evil? And what will that mean for the rest of us? Stone discusses how an increased understanding of the causes of evil will affect the justice system. He predicts a day when certain persons can safely be declared salvageable and restored to society and when early signs of violence in children may be corrected before potentially dangerous patterns become entrenched.



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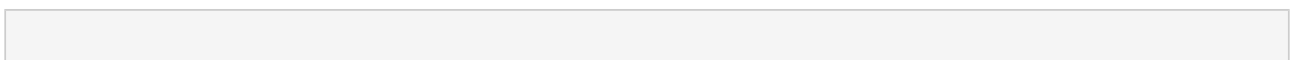
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## Editorial Review

### Review

"For centuries we have defended against the incarnate reality of evil by intellectualizing it, often traveling along the meandering and ethereal avenues of philosophy and theology. Dr. Stone brings evil to earth--the perpetrators, the acts, and the victims--as **a force that is instantly recognizable because it makes our skin crawl.**" --**J. Reid Meloy, Ph.D.**, Forensic Psychologist author, *The Psychopathic Mind*

[P]sychiatrist Stone (Personality Disorders) provides an etymology of evil with case studies of over 600 violent criminals, giving readers a comprehensive picture of the nature and varieties of human evil."

--**Library Journal**, Xpress Reviews; June 26, 2009, Melissa Mallon, Univ. of Pittsburgh Johnstown Lib., PA

"Psychiatrist Michael Stone is the Einstein of Evil. Or, rather, Stone is the forensic psychoanalyst who has journeyed into the strange universe of murder, torture and savagery, to forge a Unified Theory of Evil he calls the 'Gradations of Evil Scale.'...This is a scientific thriller and we are all victims of real Evil, which is why this book is **impossible to put down.** Which of the many suspects will Stone finger for true Evil? Is it Nature or nurture? Or is it brain injury, sex abuse, drugs or the fabled 'Bad Seed?' To give away the ending of such a compelling thriller would itself be an act of evil." --**Kieran Crowley**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Almost Paradise*

### About the Author

Michael H. Stone, MD (New York, NY) is professor of clinical psychiatry at the Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. He is the author of ten books, most recently *Personality Disorders: Treatable and Untreatable*, and over two hundred professional articles and book chapters. He is also the host of Discovery Channel's former series *Most Evil* and has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Psychology Today*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *CNN*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, *NBC News*, the *New York Post*, the *London Times*, the *BBAC*, and *Newsday*, among many other media outlets.

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### **Sandra Fritz:**

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