

# The Art of Destruction

by Theodore Dalrymple (September 2012)

When I was about nine or ten years old my father had a bonfire of Victorian paintings. Like many a person who was inclined by nature to hoard, he sometimes had fits of clearing things out to make space, presumably for something else to accumulate. The paintings shared a loft for several years with crates of tinned fruit that he had bought during the Korean War, in the fear that the conflict would spread and rationing re-introduced. He kept the fruit and got rid of the paintings.