

A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY OF PAUL JACKSON POLLOCK

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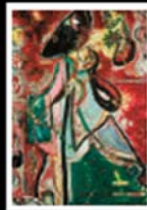
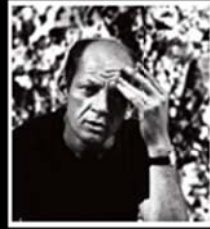
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The reproductions of photographs and paintings on the previous page are sourced as follows (left to right, top to bottom):

Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner (Spring, 1998, p. 43).

Jackson Pollock smoking (Friedman, 1995, central photographic insert)

Pollock with hand up (Jackson Pollock, n.d.).

Pollock and Krasner walking with dog (Engelmann, 2007, p. 2).

Central Pollock portrait (Emmerling, 2009, p. 2).

PAINTINGS BY JACKSON POLLOCK (bottom of page, left to right):

Stenographic Figure, 1942 (Emmerling, 2009, p. 43).

The Deep, 1953 (Emmerling, 2009, p. 83).

The Moon-Woman, 1942 (Emmerling, 2009, p. 16).

Blue Poles: Number 11, 1952 (Spring, 1998, pp. 108-109).

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ABSTRACT

While the value of psychobiographical research continues to be debated, interest in this area is growing on an international basis. From the ever increasing number of studies being conducted in connection with academic institutions in South Africa, the vitality and worthiness of studying lives lived in conjunction with the applicability of psychological theories is showing itself to be an exciting world in which to participate. This particular research study aimed to explore and describe the developmental life stages of Paul Jackson Pollock. Pollock was, and continues to be, a controversial figure in the art world as there is much debate over the artistic merit of his paintings. Unconventional in all that he did, Pollock challenged the art world by moving beyond paintbrush and easel to throwing paint across canvasses laid out on the floor. Around these emerging artworks he would move in a staccato dance, mesmerising those present by the way he made art immediate using his entire body to create the abstract image. Pollock is credited with being the pioneer of abstract expressionism in the United States, and to date his paintings are credited as being among the most expensive ever sold. He struggled with alcoholism and emotional instability throughout his teens and adult life. His alcoholism eventually caused his death at the age of 44 when, while heavily intoxicated, he drove his car into a tree a few metres from his home.

No known literature has adopted an exclusively psychological stance when studying the life of this individual. The progression of Pollock's lifespan development was filtered through Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. Erikson's (1950) theory takes a holistic, biopsychosocial approach to human development, with an emphasis on ego development. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources to enhance internal validity, and the data was then analysed according to Miles and Huberman's 1994 general approach, taking Alexander's (1990) nine identifiers of salience into necessary consideration. Using this framework, it was found that Jackson Pollock's development coincides with Erikson's theoretical psychosocial stage constructs, lending weight to Erikson's theory.

While Pollock's life paralleled Erikson's (1950) theory in many ways, the theory failed to provide enough definition with regards to constructs and intrapsychic processes. However, this study has also shown that there is great value and relevance to be found in Erikson's (1950) theory, even though it was developed over fifty years ago.

Keywords: Psychobiography; Jackson Pollock; Erikson; ego development; creativity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Chapter Preview

In this introductory chapter the reader is presented with a general orientation to the research study, and the context of the research is described. The psychobiographical approach to research in the field of psychology is introduced and a brief outline of Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages is also provided. This overview of Erikson's theory is provided to orientate the reader to the theoretical structure that facilitated and guided the process of data analysis and the study in its entirety. A brief account of Jackson Pollock's life is also given. Lastly, a description of the researcher's primary aim in conducting this study is included. In conclusion, an overview of the chapters comprising the study is provided.

1.2 Context of the Research

1.2.1 The Study of the Individual

As actor-musician Danny Kaye once said, "Life is a great big canvas and you should throw all the paint on it you can," (Danny Kaye quotes, n.d.) so an individual life is a creative expression of all that is within and without. And if life is a creative act, so too is the interpretation of it. To provide a definitive account of such a life may be impossible but nevertheless researching and studying lives lived provides an opportunity to gain insight into the vast realms of the human personality.

1.2.2 The Psychobiographical Approach

Psychobiography is the utilisation of psychological theory to provide an in-depth interpretation of a life (McAdams, 1988, 1994; Runyan, 1984; Schultz, 2005). A psychobiography is a qualitative, longitudinal case study of one person's life and is, at times, cross-cultural in nature (Anderson, 1981; McLeod, 1994). As McAdams (1994) states, the heart of the biographer's task is to interpret data on that specific person in order to "discern, discover, or even formulate the central, organising, animating story of that person's life" (p. 2), elucidating that this form of research encapsulates the spirit of psychology because it aims to gain insight into the complexity of the human personality (Welman, 2009).

While there has been a growing interest in the psychobiographical approach in recent decades (Elms, 1988; McAdams, 2000; Runyan, 1982), it has historically been a highly underrated and neglected method of research (Stroud, 2004). There is a critical debate over the value of this type of research (Lejeune, 1989; Stanley, 1992), with some concerns about this approach to research centring on the fact that some psychobiographies tend to be reductionistic and narrow in focus (Anderson, 1981; Schultz, 2005), and for their lack in generalisability (Roberts, 2002; Runyan, 1984).

However, the value of studying lives lived as a way to improve the understanding of various psychological concepts and phenomena cannot be overlooked (Roberts, 2002; Schultz, 2005). Furthermore, during the period 2005 to 2009, a series of life history studies have also been undertaken (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2009, in press). Psychobiographical studies that have been conducted in South Africa at a number of South African academic institutions include Mother Teresa (Stroud, 2004), Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (Claasen, 2007), Isie Smuts (Smuts, 2009), and Emily Hobhouse (Welman, 2009). This study of Paul Jackson Pollock aims to contribute to the development of the psychobiographical research method in South Africa.

1.3 Overview of the Theoretical Framework for this Study

The theory selected for this psychobiographical study is Erikson's (1950) developmental theory of psychosocial stages. Erikson focused on the adaptive abilities of the ego, and his theory presents a picture of how personal and social crises provide the necessary challenges for healthy growth to occur within the individual (Hook, 2002). Erikson stressed these psychosocial aspects of development as extending beyond childhood because human personality is determined not only by childhood experiences, but also by those of adulthood (Erikson, 1978). As Erikson stated, "If everything goes back into childhood, then everything is somebody else's fault and taking responsibility for oneself is undermined" (Sadock & Sadock, 2003, p. 211).

At each developmental stage an individual is faced with the task of establishing a balance between the self and the social world (Corey, 2005). A crisis is much the equivalent to a turning point in an individual's life in which they are faced with a developmental task that they either resolve or fail to master. Thus, to a large extent, an individual's life is the result of the choices they make at each of these stages (Corey, 2005). These stages follow an epigenetic course, in that each one must be satisfactorily resolved for development to proceed smoothly (Erikson, 1965, 1968).

Erikson's (1950) theory has been selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is a psychodynamic theory and therefore accounts for unconscious processes and intrapsychic conflicts (Corey, 2005). Secondly, Erikson recognises the influences of culture and identity on the individual and therefore takes a holistic approach (Slater, 2003). Thirdly, Erikson expresses optimism about human potential, and in this way is more interested in psychological health than pathology (Slater, 2003). Finally, Erikson's (1950) theory incorporates the aspect of creativity, which seems to be involved in the issues surrounding identity development (the fourth stage) and generativity (the seventh stage). Following from this, "the creative act also promotes the discovery or creation of the self" (Dollinger, Clancy Dollinger & Centeno, 2005, p. 315), which has particular relevance with regards to Jackson Pollock.

1.4 Primary Aim of the Research

The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe the life of Paul Jackson Pollock according to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. A secondary objective was that aspects of Erikson's (1950) theory of human development be informally evaluated by applying it to Pollock's life. This was in an effort to provide possible explanations for the choices Pollock made that make up the life events and experiences of his life story within the context of psychobiography.

1.5 The Researcher's Personal Passage

The psychological study of what makes an individual extraordinary provides the biographer with a scientific approach to exploring why and how particular children develop into competent or creative adults (Howe, 1997; Simonton, 1994). The current research developed out of a personal interest in Jackson Pollock, and a need to understand the controversy that surrounded him as a person. In B.H. Friedman's (1995) biography on Pollock, Friedman concludes with the following:

At the same time as we appreciate [Pollock's] gifts, we must face the typicalness of [his] fate in a society which wastes lives and automobiles with equal callousness. This is not to say that Pollock [was] "suicided by society" but that a self-destructive society nourished his self-destructiveness. Pollock was not murdered; he did not murder himself; but in his death, as in his life, he has accomplices (p. 261).

The dynamics between human psychology and the social arena are of particular interest to the researcher and Pollock, unwittingly, provided an opportunity to explore this in more detail. While it is best to avoid prosaic language in a scientific study, for this researcher the

combination of tragedy and extraordinary human talent caught up in a somewhat mythically-woven story, were very enticing and provided the impetus for this study.

1.6 A Brief Introduction to Paul Jackson Pollock

Paul Jackson Pollock was born on January 28, 1912 in the small western town of Cody, Wyoming, in the United States of America. He is credited with being one of the artists to “take American painting out of its provincial impasse and into successful rivalry with European modernism” (Frank, 1983, p. 105), by developing his celebrated ‘drip’ technique. This style of painting involved dripping and pouring fluid, enamel, aluminium, and oil paint from sticks and hardened brushes on to large pieces of unprimed canvas that were tacked to the floor of his studio (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Priming is an absorbent coating which provides an absorbent surface for the paint to adhere itself to, therefore unprimed lacks this surface preparation (The artist’s canvas, 2005). However, for all Pollock’s creative impetus, his life was bracketed by severe binge drinking and alcoholism. In August of 1956, while driving under the influence, Pollock crashed his car into a clump of trees and was killed. He was 44-years-old (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Pollock was an individual and artist who will be remembered as much for his art, as for his brooding appearance, with an ever-present cigarette perched between his lips or dangling from his fingers. He was an artist who challenged the boundaries. He was a man who spent his adult life attempting to navigate through an unwieldy landscape of inner torment, childhood chaos, and addiction, using art as a vehicle.

1.7 Data used in the Collection of Material

Various data sources were consulted through the course of this research in order to obtain information on the life of Paul Jackson Pollock. These included primary sources such as copies of Pollock’s paintings and personal letters, as well as secondary sources (documents produced by others) such as the following:

1. B.H. Friedman’s (1995, originally published in 1972) biography titled *Jackson Pollock: Energy made visible*.
2. Elizabeth Frank’s (1983) contribution to the Modern Masters series, *Pollock*.
3. Ines Janet Engelmann’s (2007) biography on Pollock and his wife Lee, titled *Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner*.

4. Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith's (1992, originally published in 1990) extensive and Pulitzer-winning biography, *Jackson Pollock: An American saga*. This biography has been utilised as a core source of information due to the considerable detail the authors have provided on Pollock's entire life.

1.8 Outline of the Structure of this Study

The study consists of seven chapters, the first being an introduction. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical overview of psychobiography and the relationship between psychology, social constructionism, and biographical research. Chapter 3 is dedicated to a discussion on Erikson, providing an overview of his theoretical constructs of the human lifespan. The methodological considerations, and the research design and methodology followed in this study are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. In Chapter 6, the life history of Paul Jackson Pollock is described and explored, together with the findings of this study. Finally, Chapter 7 ends off with a discussion on the conclusions and limitations of this research and provides recommendations for further research.

1.9 Conclusion

This introductory chapter served to orientate the reader to the structure of this study, and to provide a broad outline of its aim, which is to explore and describe the life of Jackson Pollock according to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. In Chapter 6, aspects of Erikson's theory that concur with Jackson's life story will be verified, while those areas of child and adult development that question Erikson's (1950) theory will be highlighted. The next chapter provides a discussion on psychobiographical research so as to explain the relationship between the field of psychology and biographical research.

CHAPTER 2

QUALITATIVE AND PSYCHOBIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

2.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter seeks to explain psychobiographical research within the qualitative research paradigm. Much criticism has been directed at psychobiographical research for its lack of quantitative grounding. However, the argument here is that it is psychobiography's qualitative leanings with an emphasis on informed yet reflexive interpretation as well as its theoretical grounding that gives it its potency within research in psychology. Furthermore, a brief history of psychobiography is given, its relationship to biography, and finally, the role and value of case study research as integrated with psychobiography is given.

2.2 Qualitative Research in Psychology

Alexander (1988) makes the comparison of a single, individual personality with the particularity of a human face. He explains that although one can conclude that all faces have the same constitutive elements (a mouth, a nose, two eyes), each face is equally quite unique and identifiable in its own right. Personality is much the same. There are factors about a person's life that enable researchers to generalise to other lives, and there are unique elements about that person's life that serve to enrich or build on theory.

However, as Stake (2005) points out, weaknesses in the research occur when the commitment to generalise is so at the forefront of the research, that attention is drawn away from features that are important to understanding the case in its particularity and individuality. In psychology, qualitative approaches are generally engaged with exploring, describing and interpreting the personal and social experiences of individuals in an attempt to understand their own view of the world rather than trying to test a preconceived hypothesis on a large sample, as would be the case with quantitative research (Smith, 2003). The section below provides a context within which to place qualitative research methods in psychology, and identifies the defining features of such research.

2.3 Defining Qualitative Psychology

There are a number of different approaches to qualitative psychology but behind each approach is a concern with the human experience, in all its richness and detail (Ashworth, 2003). This is not necessarily at odds with quantitative research for there are

times when quantitative researchers provide descriptive statistical accounts and times when qualitative researchers look for causal relationships and comparisons between persons on various dimensions (Smith, 2003). However, as Geertz (1973) is often quoted, qualitative research aims to provide rich or 'thick' descriptive accounts of the phenomena under investigation, while quantitative research is primarily concerned with counting occurrences, volumes, or the size of associations between entities.

Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative approaches diverge with regards to how the data is analysed. Quantitative research requires the reduction of phenomena to numerical values in order that statistical analyses can be carried out while qualitative research involves collecting data in the form of naturalistic verbal reports (e.g., written accounts) and then conducting textual analysis on this data (Smith, 2003). Qualitative researchers, and by extension, biographical researchers, tend to be concerned with meaning – how people make sense of their world and the meanings they attribute to their experiences (Roberts, 2002; Smith, 2003; Willig, 2001).

Because interpretation of an individual's perceptions is conveyed through narrative, most qualitative researchers will place some emphasis on language as this is a fundamental element of human communication, interpretation, and understanding (Murray, 2003; Smith, 2003). Individuals tend to express their sense of their world linguistically and so qualitative researchers place value on analytic strategies that run in conjunction with the symbolic system in which that sense-making occurs (Smith, 2003). With this in consideration, a discussion of 'epistemology' and its related positions will follow, after which the different qualitative approaches along with their theoretical assumptions, perspectives, and procedures, will be discussed.

2.3.1 Major Epistemological Positions

Quite simply, research methodology specifies how the researcher may go about practically studying whatever she or he believes can be known (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). It provides a framework within which to go about approaching, and hopefully answering, the research questions (Willig, 2001). In order to do this, researchers need to delineate what the goal of the research is, and then to justify that goal (Stroud, 2004). For this to happen, researchers need to decide on the nature of their relationship with the research, the stance they will take, as well as having a sense of the kinds of things it is possible for them to find out. In other words, they need to adopt an *epistemological* position

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Willig, 2001). An explanation of some epistemological positions follows.

a) Positivism

One epistemological position is that of *positivism*, which suggests that there is a straightforward, knowable relationship between the world (i.e., objects, events, phenomena) and our perception and understanding of it (Willig, 2001). Here the researcher takes the stance that what is to be studied consists of a stable and unchanging external reality and that the aim of such research would be to provide an accurate, objective description of laws and mechanisms that operate in social life (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Willig, 2001). However, it is now generally accepted that observation and description is selective and for this reason our understanding of the world is only partial, at best. There is still some debate about the extent to which our understanding of the world can approach objective knowledge, and arguments put forth range from *naive realism* (akin to *positivism*) to *extreme relativism*, which rejects notions such as ‘truth’ altogether (Willig, 2001).

b) Empiricism

Empiricism bears some resemblance to *positivism*, in that it means to observe directly (knowledge is based on experience) and therefore is couched in an objective standpoint (Chalmers, 1999; Schultz, 2005). Within this epistemological perspective, truth is defined as the “accurate representation of an independently existing reality” (Smith & Hodkinson, 2005, p. 916). In terms of this thinking, knowledge is acquired through the senses and is collected in a systematic way, such as through experiments. Here, theory is constructed in order to make sense of the data collected through observation (Willig, 2001).

As with *positivism*, perception is selective and tends to depend on the purpose of the observation. Furthermore, contemporary empiricists argue that purely theoretical work cannot move one closer to the truth, and that all knowledge claims must be grounded in data. It is important, at this point, to understand the difference between ‘empiricism’ and ‘empirical’. *Empiricism* is the attitude that all knowledge claims must be grounded in data. *Empirical* refers to research involving the collection and analysis of data (Willig, 2001).

c) Hypothetico-deductivism

Hypothetico-deductivism has been one of the most influential alternative theories of knowledge formulated in an effort to contend with some of the limitations and shortcomings of *positivism* and *empiricism* (Willig, 2001). This theory involves putting hypotheses to empirical test (such as through observation or experiment). Findings are then interpreted and the theory is adjusted to fit the newly discovered facts, all the time moving closer to the truth. In this way, progress occurs through a process of falsification where incorrect theories are rejected on the basis of empirical evidence, leaving, over time, correct theories that stand for truth (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Willig, 2001).

However, while *hypothetico-deductivism* describes what happens within the *context of justification* (the arena of objective scientific observations and deductions), it fails to take the *context of discovery* (the social and subjective world of scientists as human beings, with particular histories, experiences, values, and beliefs) into account (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). As Danziger (1990) states, it is not whether the lone investigator can verify his hypotheses in his laboratory but whether he can establish his contribution as part of the catalogue of scientific knowledge in his particular field. The issue becomes one of consensus and consensus is not entirely a matter of logic but is enmeshed in the social and political agendas of the time.

d) Social Constructionism

Social Constructionism, as an epistemological position, insists that we take a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge, and invites us to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world (Burr, 1995). In the late twentieth century, there was a shift away from realist and empirical theories towards more interpretive analyses, centred on the role of language in the production of meaning. It became understood that the connection between linguistic signs and meanings was a socially-agreed upon one rather than a natural one. To this end, where interpretation had been a transparent method of understanding phenomena in the world, it became an end in and of itself, and not just a means of getting there (Ashworth, 2003; Sey, 1999; Willig, 2001, 2003).

According to Burr (1995), "language does not reflect a pre-existing social reality, but constitutes, brings a framework to, that reality for us" (p. 38) and so explaining that the possibility of alternative constructions of the self through language is fundamental to social

constructionism. The same phenomenon or event can be described in different ways, giving rise to different ways of perceiving and understanding it, yet neither way of describing it is necessarily wrong (de Lauwere, 2001). Following from this, research from a social constructionist perspective is concerned with identifying the various ways of constructing social reality that are available in a culture, to explore the conditions of their use, and to trace their implications for human experience and social practice (Willig, 2001). As language and its related meaning are seen to be socially constructed, a closer look at discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis would be beneficial.

2.4 Discursive Psychology and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

According to Burr (1995), peoples' understandings of themselves as people, their identity, can be seen as constantly sought after, contested, validated, and maintained through the use of language. The meaning of any 'signifier' (for example, a word) depends upon the context of the discourse in which it is used. In recent years, discourse analysis has gained popularity and acceptance as a qualitative research method in psychology, and therefore, is worth exploring (Stroud, 2004). Discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis are two versions of the discourse analytic method proposed by Willig (2001, 2003) that are worth considering.

Discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992) is concerned with how versions of reality are constructed, negotiated, and deployed in conversation. Discursive psychology does not seek to produce knowledge of things, but rather an understanding of the processes by which they are talked into being. It is social constructionist in nature, in that it produces knowledge about how particular constructions are brought into being. Discursive psychologists are interested in the ways in which language is constructive and functional, and takes cognisance of the fact that any number of discourses can be in use at any one time (for instance, a medical discourse, a scientific discourse, a philosophical discourse, a psychological discourse). According to the discursive perspective, such a thing as 'the truth' is constructed through language (Stroud, 2004; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim, there are no hard and fast methods for identifying discourses and analysing texts and that, to a large extent, discourse analysis "involves a way of reading that is made possible by our immersion in a particular culture, which provides us with a rich tapestry of 'ways of speaking' that we can recognise, 'read' and dialogue with" (p. 158).

The Foucauldian version of discourse analysis, on the other hand, while also concerned with language and language use, goes beyond the immediate contexts within which language may be used by speaking subjects (Stroud, 2004). Unlike *discursive psychology*, which is primarily interested in interpersonal communication, *Foucauldian discourse analysis* asks questions about the relationship between discourse and how people think or feel (subjectivity), what they may do (practices), and the material conditions within which such experiences may take place (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Willig, 2001, 2003).

Taken one step further, Foucault (1972) was interested in the nexus of possibilities available to a given culture at a given point in history to conceptualise and articulate its own existence. Foucauldian discourse analysis makes very few assumptions about the nature of the world but is rather based on the assumption that discourse plays a fundamental role in the construction of meaning, and that human subjectivity is (largely or wholly) structured through language (Willig, 2001, 2003). It is important to note that discourse analysis is not a method of data analysis but rather alerts us to the role discourse plays in the construction of social and psychological realities, and this, in turn, can help us to approach research questions in an innovative and original way (Stroud, 2004).

In the light of the aforementioned epistemological positions as well as taking discourse analysis into consideration, qualitative research is primarily focused on how people make sense of their world and how they experience events (Roberts, 2002; Willig, 2001). Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible, and in so doing, transform the world. To do this, the qualitative researcher employs a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand with the understanding that each practice makes the world visible in a different way (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). While the subject is trying to make sense of their world, the researcher is trying to make sense of the subject trying to make sense of their world. Therefore, different interpretive stances are possible (Smith & Osborn, 2003). There is no one essence to the person, no one identity, or just one story to be told (Wetherell, 1996).

Qualitative researchers emphasise the socially-constructed nature of reality, and they stress the point that inquiry is value-laden. They study how social experiences are created, and how people give meaning to these experiences (Stroud, 2004). For this reason, qualitative researchers tend to be concerned with the quality and texture of experience, rather than with the identification of cause-effect relationships (Willig, 2001). Furthermore,

those within contemporary psychology who wish to investigate experience in detail will tend to turn to qualitative means to accomplish this (Stroud, 2004). According to Smith (2003), a concentration on human experience as the central topic of psychology seems to lead almost inevitably to qualitative research.

For the purposes of the present study, attention is now turned to the psychobiographical approach to research, which is embedded within the qualitative research paradigm. Within the psychobiographical approach, psychobiography's relationship to biography, the nature of the case study, and the value of life history research and the psychobiographical case study, is looked at in greater detail.

2.5 Psychobiography versus Biography

There are few things more fascinating and informative than hearing, reading or learning about individuals as they traverse the gauntlet of life. Curiosity peaks on hearing about their personal experiences, their individual interpretations of these experiences, and their behaviour in the light of them. As Runyan (1984) so aptly puts it, accounts of lives have a power to move us deeply and, perhaps, "to provide a frame of reference for reassessing our own experience, own fortunes, own possibilities of existence" (p. 3). Psychobiography delineates an interpretive framework by entailing the study of extraordinary individuals over their entire life span, with an aim to uncover and interpret their lives psychologically (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2009, in press; McAdams, 1988, 1994; Runyan, 1984; Schultz, 2005).

Biographical research shares this fascination with the human experience, with the life stories and histories of famous, enigmatic, or paradigmatic figures (Howe, 1997; McAdams, 1988). In this way, both fields, that of biography and psychobiography, attempt to discover how the life course of an individual can be fully understood, and to illuminate the most effective method of observing and recording the evolving of a single life over a period of time (McAdams, 1994). Within the context of social research, biography is becoming increasingly prevalent as a method and form for understanding and representing people's lives (Vorster, 2003). However, most biographers omit a psychological viewpoint, and the use of psychological theory and research is a secondary aim (Schultz, 2003). Advocates of psychobiography see the use of systematic psychology as a significant advance over the commonsense psychology traditionally used in biography (Runyan, 1984).

Psychobiography is essentially grounded in case research (Runyan, 1982). Although biographical research, and by extension, psychobiographical research, differs somewhat

from the case study method, both are forms of case research, and share fundamental characteristics (McLeod, 1994).

2.6 Case Studies

There are various dimensions to consider when looking at case study research, such as the number of cases investigated, followed by the amount of detailed information that the researcher collects about each case studied. The rationale is, 'few cases, more data' for each individual case (Claasen, 2007). Essentially, the case study is not a research method but rather constitutes an approach to singular entities, which may involve the use of a wide range of diverse methods of data collection and analysis. The case study is, therefore, not characterised by methods used to obtain and analyse data, but rather by its focus upon a particular unit of analysis – *the case* (Edwards, 1990; Stake, 2005). The aim here is to capture the uniqueness of a case rather than use it for wider generalisation or theoretical inference (Foster, Gromm & Hammersley, 2000). Case studies have a number of defining features, some of which are discussed below.

2.6.1 Defining Features of a Case Study

The case study involves an in-depth, intensely and sharply focused exploration of an occurrence in context, and arises out of a need to understand complex social phenomena while allowing researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2003). Some of the defining features are as follows:

1. Case studies have an *ideographic perspective* (i.e., the study or explanation of individual cases). The aim of a case study is to understand an individual case in its particularity. This can be contrasted with a *nomothetic approach*, which aims to identify general or universal laws of human behaviour, or what applies to people in general (Cavaye, 1996; Schultz, 2005).
2. As mentioned, case study research takes a holistic approach in that it considers the case within its context (Yin, 2003). This means that the researcher pays attention to the ways in which the various dimensions of the case relate to, or interact with, its environment (Willig, 2001).
3. Case studies integrate information from diverse sources (including documents, interviews, and physical artifacts) to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This may involve the use of a range of data collection and analysis techniques within the framework of one case study (Yin,

- 2003). *Triangulation* (i.e., a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or an interpretation) enriches case study research, as it allows the researcher to approach the case from a number of different perspectives (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003). This, in turn, facilitates an appreciation of the different dimensions of the case under study, as it is embedded within various (social, physical, symbolic, psychological) contexts (Stroud, 2004).
4. Case studies involve the investigation of occurrences over a period of time (i.e., they contain a *temporal* element). According to Yin (1994), “establishing the how and why of a complex human situation is a classic example of the use of case studies” (p. 16). Case studies are concerned with processes that take place over time. This means that a focus on *change* and *development* is an important feature of case studies (Stroud, 2004).
 5. Case studies facilitate theory generation, an essential aspect of case study design (Yin, 2003). The detailed exploration of a particular case can generate insights into social or psychological processes, which, in turn, can give rise to theoretical formulations and hypotheses. According to Willig (2001), Freud’s psychoanalytic case studies constitute a clear example of the relationship between case studies and theory development.

The significant value of psychobiographical case studies has been advocated by many scholars in the field of life history research, including Alexander (1988), Carlson (1988), McAdams (1994), Roberts (2002), Runyan (1988a), and Schultz (2005). Psychobiographical case studies utilise a specific psychological theory to enrich our understanding of an individual’s life, but also serve to investigate a theory’s value and contribute to theory building (Carlson, 1988; Schultz, 2005). As psychobiographical case studies focus on lives lived, a distinction needs to be made between *life story* and *life history* research.

2.7 Life Stories and Life Histories

According to Atkinson (1998), storytelling is a fundamental form of human communication as “we often think in story form, speak in story form, and bring meaning to our lives through story” (p. 1). And as Atkinson goes on to say, when we tell a story from our own life, we increase our working knowledge of ourselves through reflection. Therefore, a *life story* (i.e., an account of a person’s life) is a written or oral account of a life or segment of a life as told by that individual (Atkinson, 1998; Denzin, 1989; Schultz, 2005). *Life history*, on the other hand, refers to the collection, interpretation, and report writing of the ‘life’ (the life

history method), in terms of the story told. It is the construction of the past experience of the individual (from various sources) to relate the story (Roberts, 2002). The rendering of lived experience into a *life story* is one interpretive layer, but moving to *life history* adds a second layer and a further interpretation (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Therefore, the term *life story* is commonly applied to the story narrated by the author, while *life history* implies the later interpretive, presentational work of the researcher (Roberts, 2002). In the next section the trends in the history of psychobiography are briefly described. This is followed by a discussion on the more specific advantages of psychobiographical case studies.

2.8 A Concise History of Psychobiography

Psychobiographers assume that individuals are worth knowing in a deep way (Schultz, 2005). This form of research emerged in early 20th century Vienna with the promise to elicit new insights which had been hitherto unexplored in traditional biographies (Scalapino, 1999). Up until this point, most biographies had taken the form of idealising testimonials but with the development of psychoanalysis, biographers could do more than just admire, they could now begin to theorise how childhood desires and frustrations informed the strivings of the adult life (McAdams, 1988; Vorster, 2003).

The first psychoanalytic biographies took two forms, that of *pathography* and that of *psychobiography* (Scalapino, 1999). *Pathographies* aimed to expose the neurotic drives hidden in the lives and works of famous and influential persons, the most well-known practitioner of this style of biography being Lytton Strachey. However, Strachey tended to denigrate eminent Victorians such as Florence Nightingale by finding selfish compulsions at the root of their good deeds (McAdams, 1988). Freud was not a supporter of *pathography*, stating that pathographies could not show anything new, and in an effort to distinguish his own study of the life span from pathography, coined the term 'psychobiography' (Scalapino, 1999).

Rather than dissect great works in order to merely diagnose the author's neuroses, Freud proposed a dual focus. He suggested that the psychobiographer examine the way a given psychic concern generated both a neurosis as well as a creative masterpiece (Vorster, 2003). However, in Freud's study of Leonardo da Vinci and in trying to explain the effect of creativity, he believed he was obliged to cite a reason for childhood conflict, thereby relying on cause-and-effect reasoning. In so doing, Freud created a fixed, unidirectional description of da Vinci's artistic process that was destined to distort the findings (Elms, 1988).

Despite this reductionistic tendency, the tide of psychobiographical practice continued to ebb and flow. Later in the 1920s, a number of studies were produced by researchers with no formal training in psychology or psychiatry. There was also an upsurge in psychobiographical writing in line with Freud's notion that psychobiography could be used to discover universal laws or mechanisms (Runyan, 1988a). During the same decade, Henry Murray (director of the Harvard Psychological Clinic) called for psychologists to undertake intensive studies of individual subjects, which he termed *personology*, and which focused on studying life narratives (Polkinghorne, 1988; Scalapino, 1999).

The 1940s through to the mid-1960s were a relatively slow period for psychological biography largely due to the upsurge in interest in experimental and quantitative methods (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1984). However some pivotal works were produced during this period, not least of which were Erikson's analyses of Martin Luther (1959) and Mahatma Gandhi (1969), which are generally viewed as prime examples of psychobiography's maturation. In his analysis of Martin Luther, in particular, Erikson looked at the influence of psychosocial issues, and socio-historical themes converged in such a way that the man and the historical moment amalgamated to affect each other in an irrevocable way (McAdams, 1988).

From the mid-1960s to the present, there has been a considerable amount of work in the social sciences related specifically to the study of lives (Elms, 1988; McAdams, 2000; Runyan, 1982, 1984). This growth in interest in psychobiographical studies can be attributed to a variety of factors including a growing disillusionment with static approaches to data collection, and a growing interest in individual lives and how best to communicate the significance of these lived experiences (Roberts, 2002).

Research by Runyan (1988a) has indicated an increase in psychobiographical publications, particularly since the 1970s. This has been accompanied by a growing institutionalisation of the field, as illustrated by the establishment of professional organisations, conferences, speciality journals, and the producing of dissertations in the field.

2.9 The Value of Life History Research and Psychobiographical Case Study

According to Schultz (2005), if psychology should strive for anything, if it hoped to step away from the laboratory, the one-way mirrors, instruments and apparatuses into the uncontrolled world of life, then saying something vital about people, about actual individuals

with unique histories, should be job one. The value and advantages of studying individual lives can be encapsulated into five main areas:

a) The uniqueness of the individual case within the whole

The *morphogenic* (i.e., emphasising the individuality of the person within their own particular context) nature of psychobiographies places an emphasis on the individual as a whole rather than individuality encapsulated in a single element or event (Carlson, 1988; Runyan, 1983, 1988a). This provides space to give a holistic description of the person being studied, providing an in-depth understanding of their uniqueness. Gerdes (1988) concluded that the determination of general laws of human behaviour is neither desirable nor possible.

b) The socio-historical context

Erikson showed, in his own psychobiographical works, how the socio-historical context has an indelible effect on individuals. They, in turn, both affect and are affected by the time and environment in which they live (McAdams, 1988). For this reason, attention is given to the larger context and to the subject's socio-historical cultural experience, socialisation, and family history (Roberts, 2002). Psychobiography acknowledges that there is a crucial, interactive relationship between individuals, their perceptions and experiences, and the historical and social contexts in which these events take place (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

c) Process and pattern over time

Psychobiographies tend to concentrate on *finished lives*. The benefit of this is the opportunity to look at the entirety of the individual's life and their experiences over time, what Fiske (1988) refers to as 'personality in action'. This enables a psychobiographer to closely explore and record different processes functioning at any given time in the individual's life, and in any one or many specific situations. It also provides an opportunity to clarify the previously incomprehensible and suggest previously unseen connections (Runyan, 1984).

d) Subjective reality

With the aid of published interviews, autobiographies and biographies, the researcher is able to enter into the subjective world of the individual, which is crucial to gaining an emotional 'feel' for the subject's life (Runyan, 1984). Much like in therapy, this evokes a

certain level of empathy and understanding that is then translated into a vivid, emotionally compelling, living story for the reader. Conducted successfully, the life history forces a confrontation with other people's subjective perceptions (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

e) Theory testing and development

Psychobiographies provide an ideal opportunity to test and develop various theories of human development. A theoretical orientation indicates the type of variables to be taken into account rather than specifying determinate relationships between variables (Runyan, 1984). This has distinct implications for theory construction and development. Life history material forms an ideal laboratory for validating and developing various theories of human development (Carlson, 1988). Inevitably, new conceptual insights can be gained, or existing theories can be illustrated during collection, interpretation, and the presentation of the research (Roberts, 2002). Ultimately, in psychobiographies, psychological theory cannot explain an individual in their entirety as it is one such view among many (see Chapter 1, section 2.3.1 for a discussion). However, psychological theory offers an opportunity to suggest possible connections between different aspects of a person's personality, enabling the biographer to draw a richer portrait of their subject (Anderson, 1981).

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show that psychobiography is a carefully planned activity that has a strong theoretical grounding as well as established methodological guidelines to focus the study of lives in psychology. The relationship of psychobiographical studies to qualitative research has been briefly outlined, as well as some of the major epistemological positions within qualitative research. Psychobiography's connection to biography, the case study approach, and life histories has been looked at in detail. In terms of studying the life of Jackson Pollock, this theoretical grounding places the research within a specific framework while still allowing for a rich and thorough portrait to emerge from the wash of details that often blur the identity of this well-known individual.

However, in spite of the advantages of psychobiographical case studies, as outlined, this form of research often receives much criticism with regards to design and methodology. A focused look at the methodological criticisms of the psychobiographical approach follows in Chapter 4. Particular reference to Jackson Pollock will be made. His life story, as told by those who came into contact with him, is a mixture of fact and fiction therefore presenting various challenges to the researcher, including sorting the man from the myth. Particular

mechanisms were utilised to minimise these difficulties, as will be explained in Chapter 4. Chapter 3 provides a discussion on Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages with attention given to the development of the theory and its place within developmental psychology.

CHAPTER 3

ERIKSON'S DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

We think in generalities, but we live in details.

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

3.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter is focused on psychosocial development across the human lifespan as proposed by Erik Erikson. A brief retelling of the life of Erikson is necessary in order to provide the reader with a historical understanding of the development of his theory, and is thus given. A discussion on the theory itself follows, which includes both a description as well as criticisms.

3.2 Life Events which Formed the Significant Groundwork for Erikson's Theory

Erik Homburger Erikson was born on June 15, 1902, in Frankfurt. He was the child of a single mother, Karla, who came from a prominent, financially comfortable, Danish-Jewish family in Copenhagen (Alexander, 2005; Friedman, 1999). Karla never revealed the identity of Erikson's father, who had abandoned her before Erik was born, a source of some frustration for him. Anna Freud is reputed to have said that a great deal of Erikson's time in analysis with her was spent on problems related to his concern about the identification of his father (Alexander, 2005).

After Erik was born, Karla moved to Buehl with the baby, and this is where they lived for the first three years of Erik's life, although some of that time was spent travelling through parts of Europe. Karla was a strong-willed, independent woman and Erik saw his mother as beautiful, intelligent, aware of his potential, and entirely supportive (Alexander, 2005; Friedman, 1999; Welchman, 2000). However, Erik remembered his mother as "pervasively sad" (Erikson, 1975, p. 31). For example, on finding his mother crying and unable to exact a change in her mood, Erik reportedly cried with her. In this way he was able to distract her to his needs and consequently, she stopped crying. Furthermore, one might see Erik's moods as being very much dependent on those he was close to, and stemming from the first three years of his life and his relationship with and attachment to his mother. This behaviour was mirrored in a subsequent episode years later involving his daughter, Sue, who, as an adolescent, was crying over the loss of a romance. Unable to comfort her, Erikson began to cry with her. She turned her attention to his needs, stopped crying, and vowed never to

distress him again (Alexander, 2005; Bloland, 1999). Furthermore, when asked once how he felt, Erikson reportedly turned to his wife and asked, “Joan, how do we feel today?” (Alexander, 2005, p. 274). Welchman (2000) wrote that Erikson’s issues around autonomy may, in part, have led to the formation of a continuing theme in Erikson’s own search for autonomy and identity.

During his time in Buehl Erik was surrounded and supported by members of an artistic community who formed part of his mother’s social group, but he had no real contact with age-matched peers. This artistic community no doubt had an influence on Erikson’s later artistic leanings as well as played a role in his theory development (Alexander, 2005). As Dollinger, Clancy Dollinger and Centeno (2005) suggest, the creative act promotes the discovery or creation of the self, particularly in relation to issues of identity. Albert (1990) drew on Erikson’s work, noting that “being creative involves several aims – to be in control of one’s own identity, to see that identity more clearly, to free it from everyday limits [and that creative behaviour] is a demonstration of the legitimacy of one’s identity and talent” (p. 26). Identity was to play a central role in Erikson’s own development, as well as consequently taking pride of place in his theory of psychosocial development.

Erik’s womb of undivided attention and support fell away to some extent when his mother married paediatrician, Dr Theodor Homberger, on Erik’s third birthday, which was accompanied by a move to Karlsruhe. Erik’s opinion of Homberger’s joining the family is illustrated by him saying, many years later, “I had to come to terms with that intruder, the bearded doctor, with his healing love and his mysterious instruments” (Erikson, 1975, p. 27). Furthermore, around 1925, Erikson produced a woodcut depicting himself and his mother and stepfather on honeymoon twenty years earlier. The woodcut shows the couple close together and he, at a respectable distance looking away, expressionless, but with his mouth turned down (Friedman, 1999). Welchman (2000) concluded that the relationship with his stepfather involved a feared and resented intrusion into his relationship with his mother, but also resulted in guilt and the fear of punishment over his energetic intrusiveness and growing initiative – themes integral to Erikson’s proposed third stage of development, *Initiative versus Shame and Doubt*, which begins around the time of year three.

Erik attended *Vorschule* (primary school) from age six to age 10, and *Gymnasium* (secondary school) from age 10 to age 18. In these environments and around children his own age, Erik found it difficult to integrate into the social environment. Although he was born in Germany, his Jewish and Danish background seemed to make him unacceptable to the German children, both Jew and Gentile, and he was summarily shunned and maligned. To

cope with his isolation, he took pleasure in his artwork, mostly by himself. He always considered himself to be someone who approached the world from a visual, artistic viewpoint (Alexander, 2005; Friedman, 1999).

Although his stepfather wished for him to become a doctor, Erik chose to wander around Europe in his late teens and early 20s studying briefly at art schools and painting children's portraits (McAdams, 1994). Erikson (1975) stated that identity problems sharpen with that turn in puberty when images of future roles become inescapable. "I was an artist then," he later wrote, "which can be a European euphemism for a young man with some talent, but nowhere to go" (Erikson, 1964, p. 20). Erik was very appreciative of the time allowed him by his parents, to let him find his way in the world unhurriedly and at his own pace (Erikson, 1975). This was a difficult period in which he experienced a crisis in identity which caused excessive anxiety and occasional panic (McAdams, 1994). These issues are echoed in Erikson's proposed fifth stage, *Identity versus Identity Confusion*. Douvan (1997) had the following to say:

[Erikson's] life as a young person – a wandering, artistic quest for the place in his world that would realise and express his deepest yearnings, thoughts, and needs – instantiated a critical theme of our times: the marginality of youth, the extended period of moratorium, the search for meaning and for fit, the hard work of building an identity that both satisfies an inner need for meaning and continuity and can find acceptance in one's society (p. 16).

However, Erik's life took a turn in 1927 when a friend he had made in his last year of school, Peter Blos, invited him to Vienna to help establish a private school for children in analysis, or children of adults in analysis. In Vienna, Erik found acceptance among intellectuals despite his lack of formal training, while simultaneously having contact with and working with children. Within a short period he was invited to enter child psychoanalytic training at the highly esteemed Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute. He also entered into psychoanalysis with Anna Freud. In 1930, Erik met Joan Serson, she an American psychoanalyst, and the two were married towards the end of that year. Erik now assumed some of the responsibilities related to family life and the care of home and children. The marriage led him into adulthood (Alexander, 2005; Coles, 1970; Friedman, 1999; Welchman, 2000), reflecting his sixth stage, *Intimacy versus Isolation*.

Following completion of his studies in Vienna, Erik immigrated to the United States with his wife and their two children in 1933. In America, Erik practiced as a psychoanalyst for children, and in 1939 became a naturalised citizen. Over the years he worked in both clinical and academic settings, and wrote prolifically (McAdams, 1994). This perhaps laid some of the groundwork for his seventh life stage, *Generativity versus Stagnation*. In 1950, he

published *Childhood and Society*, making him the most influential developmental theorist of the time. Its distinctive creativity was to place children within an articulated framework of the life cycle, and to generate the study of adult development (Stroud, 2004).

While Erikson might have been a confident, pleasant, and good-humoured person in the public eye, his daughter, Sue Erikson Bloland (1999), described the father at home as appearing rather unsure of himself, somewhat inept, and in some ways like an unhappy child. At social gatherings he was known to retreat to his study to write, something which gave him great pleasure. The theme of the outsider that had plagued him as a child was to dog Erikson even with his move to the United States. In 1949 he was awarded a professorship at the University of California at Berkeley but resigned a year later over a controversy that grew up around the imposed loyalty oath that was demanded of all state employees by the government. Erikson refused to sign the oath. He was also very aware of being grouped with the Californian “foreigners”, the “European refugees” (Alexander, 2005, p. 267). According to Douvan (1997), Erikson lived out the position of observer, and his marginal position – his simultaneous commitment to the culture in which he resided and the culture of his origins – provided him a view of the paradox inherent in all human society. It was a source of his profound insight and clarity, as well as his humility. He was clear about his own principles and values but he also knew that he participated in whatever was human.

By 1951, the Erikson's had moved to Stockbridge and to Erikson's appointment at the psychiatric and psychoanalytic institute of Austin Riggs. Here he was able to pursue his writing projects, which included his exploration of psychobiography. In 1960 he was appointed to a special professorship at Harvard University, where he devoted his time to teaching and writing (Alexander, 2005; Friedman, 1999). Over the years Erikson produced a number of psychobiographical studies, the most oft-quoted being his studies of Martin Luther in 1958, and Mahatma Gandhi in 1969. These studies provided Erikson with an opportunity to further explore his developmental theory both in terms of lifespan development, and cross-cultural relevancy (Alexander, 2005; Hook, 2002).

In his later years and with the children grown and out of the house, Erikson, having Joan's undivided attention as well as being able to work in an encouraging, productive environment, flourished. His early dependence on his mother seemed to transfer to Joan, and with her encouragement and support he was able to continue to develop his lifespan theory (Alexander, 2005). Erik Homberger Erikson passed away in 1980, at the age of 78.

When researching the psychobiographical aspects of Erikson's life and work, Alexander (2005) took to asking about him of people who had known him. One day Alexander crossed paths with an individual who had known Erikson very well, and over an extended period of time. When he asked what Erikson was like, the immediate response was "Oh Erik, he was such a baby" (p. 283), perhaps serving as a testament to the profound importance of that stage of his existence to how Erikson's life was lived. Status and honours followed him because of his humanity and his intellectual power, not because he sought them, and he influenced the way we all think about human development (Douvan, 1997). Throughout Erikson's life, he was optimistic about the human condition while still acknowledging recurring crises, times of heightened vulnerability, and increased potential. He took risks and looked for opportunities to remake himself and his work (Slater, 2003), and left a lasting legacy. The next section deals with the formation of Erikson's ideas from which his theory evolved.

3.3 Beginnings: from Freud to America

When Erikson left for America in 1933, he held very strong psychoanalytic ideas which were very much in line with Freud's thinking. However, there were also a number of ways in which his thinking diverged from that of Freud's, even at this early stage in his career (Hoare, 2005; McWilliams, 1994). Erikson (1975) noted that Freud's thought was fixated on beginnings, the view being "backward ... downward ... and inward" (p. 37) to instincts and to pathology presumably originating in infancy. In this way the focus of psychoanalytic thought was on mental illness, failing to ask questions about what it is that brings one forward to healthy development (Hoare, 2005; McAdams, 1994; Slater, 2003). Erikson (1987) saw Freudian thought as holding an "implicit fatalism" (p. 598), a view he did not support.

Erikson (1975), as a means to address what he viewed as the shortcomings of psychoanalytic thought, chose to focus on what he termed "outward, forward, upward" (p.39), with implicit interest in the ongoing process of human development and health, and perhaps most importantly, seeing the person as an agent of his or her own psychosocial maturation (Hoare, 2005; McAdams, 1994; Slater, 2003). According to Erikson (1975), early support or difficulties cannot chart the entire life course, and origins are not prescriptively deterministic. To counter this, he proposed a concept of 'forward' movement, to and through adulthood, holding that the mature ego makes choices borne of post-childhood development. Where Freud emphasised childhood development, Erikson focused on development across the lifespan.

While Freud emphasised the role of the unconscious, and hence the id, in determining behaviour, Erikson focused on the adaptive abilities of the 'ego', with a priority placed on social processes. Instead of an ongoing struggle between conscious and unconscious processes, Erikson considered how personal and social crises provide the necessary challenges for healthy growth to occur within the person (Hook, 2002). Freud saw the individual, after having reached maturity and adulthood, as comparatively closed to further development. "They moved through adulthood as an object journeys through space and time, unaltered by the press of fresh content, changing contexts, altered eras, or different ways of perceiving of oneself in the world" (Hoare, 2005, p. 22). However, Erikson (1975) held that the context of one's social, cultural environment and times, lives within and scripts messages, and meanings onto the psyche. Thus he viewed the human being as moving 'outward' and whose development was influenced by the external, social world (Corey, 2005; Hoare, 2005), hence the psychosocial underpinnings of this theory. As Hoare (2005) summarises, "Erikson's revisions of Freudian thought were based on his view of the human who moves upward in consciousness, outward to the social world, and forward through the lifespan" (p. 30). At this point, a closer study of some of the core tenets of Erikson's theory is valuable.

3.3.1 Epigenesis

Erikson favoured an *epigenetic* ('epi' meaning 'upon', 'genetic' meaning 'emergence') approach to the study of human development. The idea behind *epigenesis* is that everything grows according to a ground-plan, in that each part of the developing organism has a specified time, a critical period, in which maturational growth takes place (Hook, 2002). According to Erikson (1963a), these are moments between progress and regression and that the various stages all exhibit a tendency to *overcome* their respective developmental challenges. For Erikson (1963a, 1980), growth occurs in a regular and sequential manner, moving in an orderly way from one developmental stage to the next. Each stage ties a key social life-challenge (or *crisis*) to a crucial point of physiological development.

As Erikson (1963a) understood it, each human being is at all times a biological organism, an ego, and a member of society, and is involved as such, in three processes of development. Therefore, Erikson argued that understanding the person entailed *triple bookkeeping*. An individual's life needs to be understood on three different levels: (1) the level of the body; (2) the level of the ego, which refers to the person's unique way of

understanding and making sense of their world; and (3) the level of family and society (McAdams, 1994).

3.3.2 Life Stage Development

Following from *epigenesis*, Erikson elaborates on the discrete stages of lifespan development. Erikson (1963a, 1964, 1968) proposes that human identity evolves through eight psychosocial stages. Each stage involves a *crisis*, a turning point or period of decision. The way the crisis is resolved characterises a particular stage either resulting in the person making progress toward integration as an individual and social being, or resulting in fixation, regression, and retardation (Hook, 2002). Through the positive resolution of each stage, a person acquires a *psychosocial strength* (or *virtue*) which ultimately contributes to *identity formation* (Hook, 2002; Massey, 1986). A virtue can be seen as akin to a life skill, what Erikson said as connoting “certain qualities which begin to animate man pervasively during successive stages of his life” (Erikson, 1963b, p. 3). The opposite of a virtue is not necessarily a vice, but rather a developmental deficit, a disorder or dysfunction that manifests wherever an individual has been delayed in the attainment of a virtue (Erikson, 1963b, 1968). A closer inspection of ego development in terms of the virtues, follows.

3.3.3 Ego Development and Identity

Markstrom and Kalmanir (2001) make the observation that while the eight psychosocial stages are the most broadly known components of Erikson’s theory, the ego virtues are less frequently cited. The ego strengths are seen to ascend over the life cycle in correspondence to the successful resolution of the psychosocial stages (i.e., hope from trust, will from autonomy, purpose from initiative, competence from industry, fidelity from identity, love from intimacy, care from generativity, and wisdom from integrity). As mentioned in the previous section, a particular ego strength or virtue becomes possible with successful resolution of the associated psychosocial stage. Some indicators of a successful resolution of the identity crisis are reflected in an individual’s high level of comfort with themselves, having a sense of direction in life, a feeling of continuity of the self, and confidence that significant others will be confirming of the self (Erikson, 1968, 1980). In contrast, “identity confusion is characterised by an inability to latch onto meaningful life choices and roles” (Markstrom & Kalmanir, 2001, p. 180).

Erikson’s idea of a developing ‘ego identity’ incorporates constitutional influences, perceptions of the world and of self, interpersonal points of reference, and patterns of

problem-solving (Massey, 1986). Because the person continues to adapt to life as it unfolds, the content and meaning of mastery changes with new requirements and abilities. In this way, if early origins are not intact, they and related difficulties cannot chart the entire life course. As Hoare (2005) explains, later nurturance and support, or disintegration and exclusion, can alter any beginning course of events. The virtues are seen to hold the ego together and in all the virtues and strengths that are attained, the human being reaches out to the social world and moves upward in consciousness.

3.3.4 Identity and Creativity

In 1988 J.M. Erikson quoted artist Leo Gavel as saying, “every created thing appears with fingerprints somewhere in the finished project like a personal signature” (p. 137) and that “even a portrait of someone else is also a portrait of the artist” (p. 139). Dollinger et al. (2005) investigated the question of whether identity and creativity are empirically related as creativity seems to be involved in issues of identity, particularly in Erikson’s fourth stage (Identity versus Identity Confusion) and seventh stage (Generativity versus Stagnation). Erikson, himself, viewed the creative person as one who thinks visually, is capable of trusting the senses, has a spirit of curiosity and wonder, and who is comfortable with solitude (Hoare, 2002), sentiments which are echoed in all stages, but particularly in the fourth and seventh stages of Erikson’s theory.

Empirical findings by Dollinger et al. (2005) suggest that individuals who explicitly disavow group or superficial identifications may produce more creative products, and those that explore their identity are more likely to be creative than those who take a normative (akin to the foreclosed status) approach. Dollinger et al. go on to say that while there are many qualitative studies that suggest identity and creativity are linked, their findings bolster confidence that these domains are also empirically (i.e., quantitatively) linked. This is echoed in Erikson’s (1963b) choice of language when talking of achieving a sense of identity: “man *creates* his environment” (p. 3), “the authenticity of *artistic* production” (p. 3), and the “*creation* of a sense of sameness” (p. 11). Erikson’s writing has been lauded as being persuasive and creative and he used the devices of poetry (e.g., metaphor, imagery) to carry us along his line of argument. His writing, as much as his ideas, is evocative and richly allusive (Douvan, 1997). One might go so far as to say that Erikson himself found an element of his identity through the creative act of writing.

In summary, while Erikson held strong psychoanalytic views, he diverged from Freud’s thinking by seeing human development as taking place throughout the lifetime;

seeing development as social as well as being psychically influenced; and placing a great deal of emphasis on health and normalcy, as opposed to illness and disorder. In the previous sections of this chapter, intermittent reference has been made to Erikson's psychosocial stages and to some of the components comprising these stages, a more detailed look at the stages now follows.

3.4 Erikson's Eight Psychosocial Stages

As a means of clarifying ego development and identity, Erikson (1950) conceptualised the life cycle in eight, discrete stages, what he originally called 'the eight ages of man'. The ages are based on Freud's description of psychosexual stages of development but with special emphasis on the adolescent task of identity development, and the conflicts of adult development (Slater, 2003). What follows is an explanation of each stage, with reference to the crisis involved in each, and the virtue or ego strength to be attained with successful resolution of the stage. To a large extent, our lives are the result of the choices we make at each of these stages (Corey, 2005).

3.4.1 Basic Trust versus Mistrust (birth to about 18 months)

Virtue:	Hope
Developmental Deficit:	Mistrust
Social Institution:	Religion

The newborn infant enters the world as a vulnerable, helpless creature who is totally dependent on the caregiver, so the first emotional task is learning to trust the primary caregiver, without whom the infant could not survive (Hook, 2002). Erikson's first stage parallels Freud's first stage of libidinal development, termed the *oral stage*. Erikson agreed with Freud that for the first year of life the libido is centred in the oral zone, such as sucking at the mother's breast, or bottle (McWilliams, 1994). In this first stage, the infant learns about both satisfying physical needs, as well as the mutual impact that the primary caregiver and self exert on each other. Obtaining physical nourishment through nursing requires an interpersonal situation in which the infant develops an understanding of what quality of life to expect, and learning that the world is a good and safe place. Simultaneously, the caretaker, who often depends on others for social support in maintaining self-esteem in her role as a mother, is more motivated to provide quality care when she derives gratification from the parent-child interactions (Massey, 1986).

In this stage, if primary caregivers (and this could include both the mother and other adults in the household) provide for the basic physical and emotional needs of the child in a predictable, responsive and sensitive way, the child develops a sense of basic trust (Hook, 2002; Louw & Louw, 2007; Maier, 1988). Erikson (1978) termed *hope* as the virtue resulting from the successful navigation of this stage. Encouraging emerging capacities during these early months of development builds a *basic trust* in self and others (Massey, 1986), as well as helping babies develop the necessary self-confidence to explore their environment (Louw & Louw, 2007). If the infant senses that its basic needs are not being met, an attitude of mistrust toward the world and more particularly, toward interpersonal relationships, results (Corey, 2005; Hook, 2002). Mistrusting infants are usually subjected to erratic or harsh care and cannot depend on the goodness and compassion of others. For this reason, they tend to protect themselves by withdrawing from others around them, and this mistrust is then carried into later relationships (Louw & Louw, 2007).

It is also important to note that experiences of mistrust or insecurity will arise during this first year and the infant will, in turn, experience both trust and mistrust. Healthy development is a function of the balance between the two (Hook, 2002; McAdams, 1994). This basic, developing *ego identity* depends on the recognition that there is “an inner population of remembered and anticipated sensations and images which are firmly correlated with the outer population of familiar and predictable things and people” (Erikson, 1963a, p. 247). Furthermore, Erikson (1968, 1977) stated that society’s concern for personal developmental issues is reflected in and reinforced by social institutions which protect the contributions to ego identities that emerge during each stage. During this first stage, the institution of ‘religion’ is seen to safeguard the trust and hope that begin here.

3.4.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (age 18 months to 3 years)

Virtue:	Will
Developmental Deficit:	Shame, self-doubt
Social Institution:	Law and Order

Once basic trust begins to develop – a trust in their caregivers, in their environment, and in themselves – infants begin to realise that they can determine their own behaviour and they move towards a sense of autonomy (Erikson, 1963a, 1980). However, the infant is still dependent on the caregiver and this means they experience doubt in their own capabilities and autonomy (Erikson, 1963a). The infant’s contrasting feelings about self-capacity and autonomy stem from a range of activities in which infants are involved at this stage of their

development. At this stage, toddlers have a growing awareness of their body and how to control it, particularly as they go about daily activities such as eating, dressing, 'toileting', and moving about (Hook, 2002). This goes hand-in-hand with physical development such as mastering movement and mobility, reaching, walking and climbing (Maier, 1988).

According to Erikson (1963a), parental approval of these activities inevitably boosts the child's sense of self-esteem and competence. However, failures, particularly in toilet training, may be accentuated. Erikson goes on to say that if the child is punished or labelled as messy or bad, this creates a sense of shame and self-doubt in the child which may have detrimental effects on emotional development. If parents promote dependency in the child, the child's ability to deal with the world in an autonomous way is hampered (Corey, 2005). These children tend to over-manipulate themselves, and become excessively self-conscious which may result in obsessiveness, stubbornness, and obsessive-compulsive behaviour (Erikson, 1963a). Sometimes intolerance and irrational fear may be seen as a result of a lack of confidence. Likewise, the development of suicidal tendencies, or antisocial personality disorders may also result (Hook, 2002).

A successful resolution of this stage involves a growing ability to control oneself, and to *hold on and let go* with discretion (Erikson, 1963a). The infant comes to possess the prerogative of choice – to decide for itself on the one hand, or to cling fearfully to parents on the other. The virtue at this stage is that of possessing one's own *will* (Hook, 2002). States Erikson (1963a), "From a sense of self-control without loss of self-esteem comes a lasting sense of goodwill and pride" (p. 254). The social institution seen to safeguard *will* is law and order, a legal system which provides guidelines for the privileges and limitations of *autonomy* (Massey, 1986).

3.4.3 Initiative versus Guilt (age 3-5 years)

Virtue:	Purpose
Developmental Deficit:	Guilt
Social Institution:	Economic endeavour

At this stage of development, the widening social environment begins to challenge the child to be more directed in mastering specific tasks (Hook, 2002). This is because children are increasingly developing locomotor and language skills that enable them to practice initiative (Sadock & Sadock, 2007). As Erikson (1963a) remarks, children at this stage seem to be in possession of a surplus of energy that enables them to forget failures

quickly and to approach new activities with undiminished enthusiasm. Furthermore, at this stage children tend to be fascinated by how the world works, and how they may be able to influence it. Children have an active fantasy life – for them the world contains both real and imaginary entities – and this is important for stimulating learning and creativity.

Sociability is also an important factor, as here the child starts to become a social being in relationship to other beings (Maier, 1988). Connected with this is gender identity that is understood in a social manner through a sense of membership with a particular social grouping (Hook, 2002). According to Erikson (1963a), boys' activities at this age are marked with an intrusive quality as they indulge in intense motor activities, and become preoccupied with the world of actions and things. In contrast, girls at this age tend to be involved in the lives of others and show a willingness to include others, which are qualities which will prepare them for their future maternal role. However, Erikson adds that cultural values and roles are imposed on the developing child and therefore a certain amount of cultural latitude should be allowed for the way in which boys and girls are gendered into certain social roles.

There are certain boundaries that have been put in place by the caregiver and at this stage children have to decide for themselves whether to respect these restrictions or to explore beyond them (Hook, 2002). If children are prevented from making their own decisions, they develop guilt over taking initiative. This prevents them from taking an active role and they tend to let others choose for them (Corey, 2005; Maier, 1988). According to Erikson (1963a), this is the stage where children face the crisis of turning from an attachment to their parents to the slow process of *becoming one's own parent* and supervising themselves. Adult problems that can stem from this phase of development include inhibition or denial (i.e., being concerned about 'sticking one's neck out') or, on the other hand, exhibiting recklessness, showing-off, and gratuitous risk-taking behaviour in an attempt to overcompensate for such inhibitions.

Erikson (1963a, 1980) suggests that moral development primarily takes place during this phase, and cultural values, the tastes, class standards, and traditions of a society all contribute to the child's sense of morality. At this stage the superego not only restricts what is permissible but also fosters positive goals, setting the direction in which the dreams of childhood might be linked to the goals of adulthood. If children are encouraged to take initiative and assume an increasing amount of responsibility (for themselves, for their own bodies, and even, occasionally for their siblings), they learn a sense of *purpose*, which is the successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978). Ultimately children need to learn a balance between taking initiative and respecting boundaries. According to Erikson (1963a),

the social institution correlating to this stage is that of economic endeavour, which takes root in the adoption of ideal role models that children will go on to emulate as they become active participants in the economic life of a society.

3.4.4 Industry versus Inferiority (age 5-13 years)

Virtue:	Industriousness
Developmental Deficit:	Inadequacy/Inferiority
Social Institution:	Technology

During this stage, which corresponds to Freud's latency period, children develop a sense of industry by taking pride in what they produce, which is a result of skills learnt in the previous three stages (Hook, 2002; Sadock & Sadock, 2007). Thus, here children need to consolidate advancements they have made in the previous three stages. This is the period where formal schooling begins and takes place, and where these skills can be established, and gaps can be filled with regards to growth already achieved (Hook, 2002).

According to Erikson (1963a), at some unconscious level the child has realised that there is no workable future within the womb of the family and it must now spread its skills and initiatives across a wider social realm. What follows is that children are preoccupied by the goal of gaining competence, and by mastering certain tasks assigned them by their parents and teachers. The ability to communicate and to productively engage with peers becomes highly valued, as does gaining positive acknowledgement from the peer group. Children are almost constantly 'sizing one another up' by measuring their own skills and worth in comparison to the group (Hook, 2002). The danger lies in the child's sense of *inadequacy* and *inferiority* relative to their social group. If the child fails to develop the ability to set and attain personal goals, particularly in relation to the social group, a sense of inadequacy and inferiority develops (Corey, 2005; Hook, 2002). For Erikson (1963a), inferiority complexes, feelings of unworthiness, inability, and low self-esteem are rooted in this stage of development.

Alternatively, if a child learns to take pride in what they produce, a sense of *competence* develops, which is the successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978). The child's sense of self is enriched by the realistic development of certain competencies and the child begins to appreciate the pleasures of work-completion through attention and diligence (Erikson, 1963a). The child's abilities also begin to reflect the abilities of adults, and at this point childhood ends and young adulthood begins (Hook, 2002). The technology (social

institution) prevalent in a culture shapes cooperative participation in *productivity* (Massey, 1986).

3.4.5 Identity versus Role Confusion (age 13-21 years)

Virtue:	Fidelity
Developmental Deficit:	Role confusion/ego diffusion
Social Institution:	Ideology

This is a time of transition between childhood and adulthood where the individual begins to test the limits, and to establish a new identity in a very different social matrix to the one inhabited as a child. The entire developmental span of childhood must now be left behind, and a whole new set of challenges must be met if the adolescent is to successfully become an adult (Maier, 1988). At this stage conflict centres on self-identity and the meaning of life (Corey, 2005). For Erikson (1963a), the idea of identity centres on being at one with oneself and experiencing a self-consistency, as well as being comfortable with one's social roles and community ties. It is the accrued experience of *all* identifications made – all libidinal investments taken along with abilities developed out of the opportunities offered in social roles.

There are many life choices that will impact the adolescent and influence choice of career, the nature of their relationships with peers, and personal alliances they will be prepared to enter into with others (Hook, 2002). As Hook goes on to say, the key tension at this stage lies in holding together this dispersed array of possible identifications, and in trying to integrate the disparate rudiments of an identity.

It is this psychosocial stage that is the most indicative of the transition between childhood and adulthood. The mind of the adolescent is essentially a mind of moratorium (i.e., a time of experimentation with different beliefs and careers that will ultimately be resolved with an enduring sense of identity) (Hook, 2002). Society needs to afford the adolescent sufficient time and social freedom to experiment with developing identities, yet within a controlled and guiding environment. If sufficient time is not allowed, and the adolescent fails to integrate a central identity, to bring one's moratorium to a productive close, then a result of *ego diffusion* can occur, which is an inability to settle on a stable and well-founded sense of self (Corey, 2005; Maier, 1988). *Ego diffusion*, which is a particularly severe form of role confusion, can lead to social alienation (i.e., social withdrawal of those who are unable to integrate themselves into the society roles and values of their culture).

Lack of resolution at this stage may be linked to substance abuse and to antisocial personalities such as violent criminals (Hook, 2002). Erikson (1980) sees these as roles of deviance, and extreme non-conformity, suggesting *negative identity* formation, or the choosing of an identity opposite to the one suggested by society.

As the adolescent moves towards the resolution of this stage, he or she begins to integrate as a member of society while maintaining a sense of individuality and autonomy (Erikson, 1963a). Therefore, identity development is both psychological and social, and Erikson (1963a, 1978) identified *fidelity* as the virtue that develops on the successful resolution of this stage. In terms of social institution, a meaningful *ideology* in the form of an attractive set of cultural values and ideals supply the imagery required for developing a positive psychosocial identity in adolescence (Massey, 1986).

3.4.6 Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21-40 years)

Virtue:	Love
Developmental Deficit:	Isolation
Social Institution:	Ethical sense/mutual devotion of love

Once the individual has developed a sense of identity, they now look to developing an intimate and mutual relationship with another (Corey, 2005; Hook, 2002). This is more than just sexual intimacy but also involves investing in others, forging romantic relationships, and finding a healthy, well-balanced and developed sense of love. A successful resolution of this stage is achieved if an ability to commit to relationships develops, what Erikson (1978) terms as *love*. Craig (1996) makes the point that the central objective of this stage is being able to share oneself with another, but to do so without the fear of losing one's own identity. To be able to successfully navigate this stage, the individual needs to have developed a stable sense of their own identity, and this stage is therefore dependent on the successful resolution of prior crises. If prior crises have not been resolved, they are likely to reoccur here (Hook, 2002). Failure to develop intimacy at this stage can lead to *distantiation* (i.e., distancing those around one) and a sense of isolation (Corey, 2005; Hook, 2002).

According to Erikson (1963a), the ego needs to be strong so as to fend off the fear of ego loss in the case of close friendships; in the case of inspiration by teachers; in the orgasms of sexual union; and in various close affiliations. As mentioned, the consideration here is the necessity to maintain the integrity of the ego and not let it be incorporated into something or someone else. Erikson adopts Freud's belief that a healthy, normally

functioning adult should be able to 'love and work' well and Erikson sees it as the goal of this stage: the ability to formulate a mature love, and the ability to express a general work-productiveness that does not compromise being a loving person. An 'ethical sense' and the 'mutual devotion of love' nurture a relationship with a loved one (Massey, 1986).

3.4.7 Generativity versus Stagnation (age 40-60 years)

Virtue:	Caring
Developmental Deficit:	Stagnation/self-improvement
Social Institution:	All societal institutions

At this stage, the individual is seen to have largely resolved earlier life conflicts and is now free to direct their attention to the assistance of others, particularly their own children. Furthermore, they may move beyond the family to helping the next generation (Corey, 2005; Craig, 1996; Hook, 2002). *Generativity* also refers, broadly, to productivity and creativity, although Erikson (1963a) stated that neither of these can ever be a proper replacement for the guidance of offspring. It follows that *care* or *caring* is the virtue of this middle adulthood stage of development (Erikson, 1978). This stage is also characterised by a sense of community, as Erikson (1963a) puts it, a willingness to direct one's energies, without conflict, to the solution of social issues.

At this point the individual begins to adjust to the discrepancy between one's dreams and what one has actually achieved. If one fails to achieve a sense of productivity and generativity (and through them, self-enrichment), then this often leads to psychological stagnation (Corey, 2005). These are adults who seem to gain their only pleasures through self-indulgence, who tend to be preoccupied with themselves, and who treat themselves as 'their only child' (Erikson, 1963a). At this stage, all social institutions (e.g., politics, education, medicine, recreation, religion) are supposed to foster generativity toward younger generations.

3.4.8 Integrity versus Despair (about 60 years to death)

Virtue:	Wisdom
Developmental Deficit:	Despair
Social Institution:	Integration of religion, politics, economic order, technology, arts and culture

Erikson (1963a, 1978) saw integrity as something one has gained from traversing the previous seven stages, resulting in the virtue of *wisdom* if successfully resolved. If one is able to look back on one's life and feel that it was worthwhile, that it had value and meaning, *ego integrity* results. Dealing with the fear of death represents an important challenge at this stage of development. On the one hand the individual may see and accept their life as not being the only life in existence but on the other hand, despair comes with the realisation that life has been lived and there are no more second chances (Erikson, 1963a). Failure to achieve ego integrity, but rather to look back on one's life and see it as being a series of misdirected energies and lost chances, can lead to feelings of despair and self-rejection (Craig, 1996).

To some extent, each person must have developed all the previously mentioned ego qualities and must have resolved all the accompanying developmental crises when reaching this developmental stage, although Erikson (1963a) acknowledged that each culture requires a particular combination of these resolved conflicts. Final integrity is only really achieved if the individual participates, to a greater or lesser degree, in the various institutions (e.g., religion, politics, technology, the arts and sciences) that make up their home culture. Erikson concludes with the observation that "it seems possible to ... paraphrase the relation of adult integrity and infantile trust by saying that healthy children will not fear life if their elders have integrity enough not to fear death" (p. 269). An integrated heritage passes on the wisdom of tradition (as encapsulated in societal institutions) (Massey, 1986).

3.5 In Summary of Erikson's Proposed Life Stages

Heretofore, Erikson's theory has been discussed stage by stage, but the impact of the scheme depends not only on its stages, but also on what characterises it as a whole. Welchman (2000) highlighted the principles of the whole scheme as follows:

1. It embraces a complete life cycle viewed within a sequence of stages.
2. The theory integrates biological, psychological, and social processes.

3. The *epigenetic* focus provides an original contribution to the ongoing nature versus nurture debate in human development.
4. Each stage is characterised by a conflict between opposing attitudes. Each crisis (or turning point) needs to be resolved through achieving a balance between the positive and the negative. For this reason, the negative is equally important as individuals need a certain amount of frustration for optimal social development.
5. All the stages are interrelated. The resolution of each stage sets a pattern that is never complete. Each stage is affected by previous stages, and will continue to affect and be modified in later stages.
6. The scheme is focused on normal rather than pathological development, and is therefore intended to show healthy development, which at times is considered to be synonymous with normal.
7. Erikson outlines a link between the stages and institutions in society, e.g., between *basic trust versus mistrust*, and *religion*, or between *industry versus inferiority*, and *technology*.
8. Erikson links a particular ego quality or virtue that is derived from the successful resolution of the nuclear conflict at each stage, e.g., *hope* from *basic trust versus mistrust*, *fidelity* from *identity versus role confusion*.

3.6 A Critique of Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Stages

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Foucault (1972) focused on what discourses are available to a culture at a given point which enables it to conceptualise and articulate its own existence. Furthermore, as Burr (1995) made the point, language does not reflect a pre-existing social reality but rather brings a framework to that reality. With this in mind, psychobiographies serve as a means to investigating a theory's value, and to theory building but, as mentioned by Anderson (1981), psychological theory cannot explain an individual in their entirety as it is one such view among many. At this point, a closer look at a critique of Erikson's theory is necessary in order for the reader to understand the socially-constructed nature of the theory, as well as to keep an objective viewpoint.

3.6.1 Description versus Explanation

It is accepted that while Erikson's theory gives a thorough explanation of psychosocial development (the *how*), it appears to lack a fundamental explanation for *why* changes occur (Hook, 2002). Shaffer (1996) argues that Erikson's theory fails to explain the distinct personality differences that exist between people, and goes on to say that Erikson is not clear enough about how the resolution of each stage impacts on individual personalities.

3.6.2 Too Idealistic

Maier (1988) raises the point that Erikson's theory is sometimes criticised for being too optimistic and idealises descriptions of typical development. The question arises: how does Erikson account for human tragedy and its effects?

It seems that Erikson, in an effort to avoid Freud's determinist thinking, has developed an idealistic theory that, in some aspects, fails to give a realistic or pragmatic account of psychosocial development. In a sense, Erikson overvalues the adaptive and integrative functions of the ego (Lacan, 1977). However, as Douvan (1997) explains, Erikson brought to the table an "inspiring faith and delight in the marvels of diversity," (p. 18) and his theories hold that growth continues into adulthood and that people are capable of intentionally reconstructing the outcomes of hardship and distortion visited on them in childhood.

3.6.3 Gender Assumptions

Much like Freud, Erikson has been criticised for treating the male as the standard of human development with the female featuring only as a variation of the normal path of psychosocial development (Hook, 2002). Maier (1988) goes so far as to suggest that Erikson can be criticised that his proposed development of 'humankind' is, in fact, the development of *male*kind. Not only do Erikson's writings reflect a male bias, but his clinical and research subjects are all male. Erikson's theories may be seen as a limited means of accounting for female development (Hook, 2002).

His later stages prioritise the procreative and maternal qualities that he sees as endemic to femininity, qualities indicative to Erikson of both necessary social roles and personality development within women (Erikson, 1963a). However, as Douvan (1997) points out, Erikson's emphasis on male development reflected his times, and his emphasis on trust, intimacy, generativity, and the importance of feeling and awareness of feelings in healthy development also validate qualities that resonate with women's development. This has been underplayed in academic psychology.

3.6.4 Cultural Bias

Erikson's theories tend to exhibit a number of strong late 20th century capitalistic American values, which may limit the universality of this theory, or its cross-cultural applications. For instance, virtues such as independence, initiative, and industriousness reflect qualities specifically desirable within a competitive, individualistic and capitalist society, rather than reflecting universal values (Hook, 2002). However, it should be noted that Erikson made every effort to investigate the cross-cultural applicability of his theory, such as his psychobiography on Gandhi which entailed travelling to India to discuss development with members of the Hindu population there (Alexander, 2005).

3.6.5 Overly Prescriptive Developmental Values

Erikson (1964) was concerned that his work and his theory might be taken up as a piece of science, an ascending list of developmental challenges that would be “eagerly accepted by some as a potential inventory for tests of adjustment or as a new production schedule in the manufacture of desirable children, citizens, or workers” (p. 59). The argument is that developmental theories are sometimes applied in an overly standardising way, or ‘normalising’ manner, and then often not enough attention is paid to class, race, and gender variables. The result is that the standards of white, male, heterosexual, upper class, and American development are imposed on all children, irrespective of culture, and this process has a tendency to ‘pathologise’ differences across demographic categories (Burman, 1994; Rose, 1991). However, Erikson (1980) was adamant that he had no interest in proposing a new set of norms for development.

3.7 Conclusion

Despite the above-mentioned critiques, Erik Erikson remains one of the leading figures in the field of human development, as well as being the first psychoanalyst to devise a developmental model encompassing the entire lifespan. His is a health-oriented approach emphasising the individual's ability to make changes in order to improve their own lives and social functioning. A central theme in his theory is the establishment of identity specific to the ego, and how identity formation is tied up with creativity. His theory was chosen for this study based on its forward thinking, its emphasis on change throughout the life cycle, and its reference to creativity and identity – themes that are reflected in the life of Paul Jackson Pollock. The following two chapters focus on the methodology and design of this research study.

CHAPTER 4

PRELIMINARY METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Chapter Preview

People, like unfolding poems, may be interpreted in different ways, some even contradictory, and people, like poems, are not so much explained as understood (Schultz, 2005). To this end, qualitative researchers emphasise the socially constructed nature of reality; the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being studied; and the value-laden nature of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Because of the reliance on interpretation and other qualitative methods rather than on the traditional scientific method of research, psychobiographical research has been the object of much criticism (Roberts, 2002).

For this reason, a theoretical discussion of the *methodological issues* and *difficulties* that require careful consideration when undertaking a qualitative psychobiographical study is necessary in order to ensure that the quality of the research process is maintained (Stroud, 2004). This chapter seeks to highlight methodological issues as well as mechanisms for reducing their influence, and aims to carefully consider their specific applicability to the study of Paul Jackson Pollock.

4.2 Methodological Considerations in Psychobiography

4.2.1 Analysing an Absent Subject

4.2.1.1 Explained

Barzun (1974), in explaining the difficulty that psychohistorians face in researching an absent subject, states that the “clues the individual may have left to his once living psyche are the product of chance,” and the “trickle from written remains” (e.g., diaries, letters, literary works) is almost negligible (p. 46). However, Anderson (1981) contends that psychobiographers are at an advantage in several respects, including being able to access informants (by way of interviews, or printed documents) other than the subject; being able to look at the subject’s life in its entirety; and are also free to develop a balanced, well-rounded portrait of the subject that may include aspects of both adaptive and maladaptive behaviour.

Psychobiographers are able to glean information regarding the subject from a number of sources, such as family, friends, colleagues, diaries, public speeches, written books, drawings, photographs, and other creations (Anderson, 1981; Runyan, 1982). As Anderson points out, describing the facts of an individual's life is easy, but merely relating the facts fails to capture the inner essence of an individual. Every individual has a practiced way of presenting him/herself to the world, but underneath the outer self is the "secret self, the inner myth" (p. 475) which shapes it. For the biographer who wishes to unearth the hidden self, taking advantage of all available resources, including psychology, is necessary and imperative.

4.2.1.2 Mechanisms Applied

In order to holistically analyse and develop a well-rounded portrait of an absent subject, the biographical researcher needs to collect and collate personal data relating to the subject of study (Stroud, 2004). This involves making a thorough investigation into what material is available, and can be done through intensive Internet searches. An extensive literature search of documents relating to both Pollock as an artist, and as an individual, was conducted. Works consulted included:

- Biographies written about Pollock including *Jackson Pollock: An American saga* by Naifeh and White Smith (1992), and *Jackson Pollock* by B.H. Friedman (1995). These biographies incorporate extensive interviews with colleagues, friends and family of Pollock throughout his life.
- Books containing interviews with Pollock, as well as close family and friends, such as *Jackson Pollock: Interviews, articles and reviews* by Karmel (1999).
- Books more specifically focused on Pollock's development as an artist as well as analyses of his art such as *Jackson Pollock: New approaches* by Varnedoe and Karmel (1999) and *Pollock* by Frank (1983).
- Documentaries and films directly relating to or about Pollock including *Who the #\$&% is Jackson Pollock?* by Hewitt and Moses (2006) and the award-winning film, *Pollock* by Harris (2000).

4.2.2 Researcher Bias

4.2.2.1 Explained

As the psychobiographical approach to research generally involves long-term and very in-depth study, psychobiographers often experience *countertransference* (Loewenberg, 1969; Stroud, 2004). Countertransference refers to the analyst's (or psychobiographer's) transferring of his/her familiar ways of viewing others, along with unconscious strivings developed during childhood, to the patient (or subject), and thereby distorting the view they have of them (Anderson, 1981). However, this need not be a hindrance.

As Erikson (1971) points out, the advantage of countertransference is that a researcher's own countertransference reactions can offer an indication as to how people who interacted with the subject during his lifetime, may have felt about him. However, the difficulty lies in the fact that the psychobiographer may not understand the sources of his feelings well enough to be able to differentiate between what feelings may be in line with what others may have felt about the subject, and what feelings may be particular to the researcher. Therefore it is important that the researcher regularly and consistently evaluate his/her own feelings and countertransference reactions to the material and to the subject.

Anderson (1991) also suggests that the researcher develop empathy for the subject as this will safeguard against the tendency to be disparaging. There must also be an awareness of the danger of idolising the individual being studied and in this way producing biased findings. Also beneficial is obtaining a second opinion from biographical specialists, on the nature of and interpretation in the findings of the research.

4.2.2.2 Mechanisms Applied

In an attempt to minimise the bias of idealising and/or denigrating Pollock, this researcher purposefully employed the following strategies:

- During the entire biographical study, the researcher consistently explored her feelings and attitudes towards Paul Jackson Pollock. These feelings and attitudes were briefly diarised and noted over the entire literature study, and the data collection and analysis period, and are reflected in Chapters 1 and 7 of this study.
- The researcher discussed feelings and attitudes that developed at appropriate times with the supervisor of this study.

- The researcher consulted with artists and other laypersons regarding the artistic merit and interpretation of Pollock's art. This was in an effort to gain an objective viewpoint, as there was a danger of idolising Pollock's art based solely on who he was as a person as well as on the pivotal role he played in the abstract expressionist movement in the United States. With other opinions, the researcher was able to step back from the material and evaluate her own impressions and opinions of his work.

4.2.3 Reductionism

4.2.3.1 Explained

Psychobiographies tend to be criticised for being *reductionistic* in approach (Anderson, 1981). According to Runyan (1988b), many psychobiographers do not take into careful consideration the complex social, historical, and cultural context within which the individual's life is or was embedded (even though the subject's life is/was strongly shaped by culture or subculture). Furthermore, Schultz (2005) talks about a poor strategy for psychobiographies, that of "psychobiography by diagnosis" (p. 10) (*pathography*), which involves explaining adult character and behaviour exclusively in terms of early childhood experience, thereby neglecting later processes and influences. While childhood is a key to personality, it is not the only key. Pathographic psychobiographies provide critics with the opportunity to say psychobiographies focus on pathological processes, rather than on normality and health (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1988, 1994).

There are a number of ways reductionism can be avoided and minimised. These include the following strategies and precautions:

- utilising multiple sources when collecting and analysing data (Runyan, 1988a);
- avoidance of using psychological jargon to excess (Runyan, 1988a, 1988b);
- avoidance of pathologising the subject by using more health-oriented theoretical approaches by which to analyse the subject's life (Elms, 1994); and
- avoidance of being too simplistic in approaching the subject but rather seeing him or her as a complex person within a specific social context (Anderson, 1981; Howe, 1997).

4.2.3.2 Mechanisms Applied

In order to effectively minimise any tendency to be reductionistic in this psychobiography of Jackson Pollock, the researcher approached the study as follows:

1. An extensive and thorough literature study was undertaken. The literature consulted included not only psychological material, but also an in-depth study of literature related to the socio-historical context in which Pollock lived. These included Naifeh and White Smith's (1992) biography of Pollock, which goes to great lengths in explaining the state of America and its cultural and social landscape during Jackson's life, as well as books such as Maroni and Bigatti's (2002) *Jackson Pollock: The irascibles and the New York School*, which not only describes American culture during Pollock's life but also the nature and culture of the art community in that country during his time.
2. The researcher focused on Pollock's human development across his lifetime. While Naifeh and White Smith (1992) take an in-depth look at Pollock's childhood development, most other literature brushes over this time in his life in favour of his development as an adult and as an artist. Consequently, this provided a balance of information regarding both childhood and adulthood enabling this researcher to gain a better understanding of the subject across his lifespan, and in a holistic manner.
3. Erikson's (1950) is a health-oriented approach, thereby avoiding the danger of pathologising the subject.

4.2.4 Cross-cultural Differences

4.2.4.1 Explained

Anderson (1981) points out that psychobiographies are a form of cross-cultural research. However, sometimes the theories that are utilised in psychobiographies are not cross-culturally sensitive, or not applicable to the person under consideration. In order to avoid this shortcoming, the researcher needs to be cognisant of the fact that the subject lived in a different historical context and time, and that research into the subject's particular era would serve to make the researcher more sensitive to the influences of that period.

In order to avoid cultural bias, Anderson (1981) recommended that the researcher undertake extensive and in-depth historical research in order to develop a culturally empathic understanding of the subject being studied. This requires that the researcher consult a variety of data ranging from primary sources (i.e., original artifacts, documents)

and secondary sources (i.e., published documents, newspaper interviews) (Berg, 1995). This enables the researcher to go as far as he/she can in the direction of knowing the culture from the viewpoint of the people who lived in it, especially from the point of view of the subject (Stroud, 2004).

4.2.4.2 Mechanisms Applied

Paul Jackson Pollock lived in a different socio-political, economic, and cultural period to that of the researcher. For example, while the researcher comes from a middle-class, financially-stable background, Pollock grew up in an economically-disadvantaged and considerably unstable environment (as the family moved around throughout his childhood) (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007; Friedman, 1995). Furthermore, during the time that Pollock lived, there were the two world wars as a result of worldwide political instability, which affected him in various ways (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Pivano, 2002). In an effort to understand Pollock's context, extensive reading was done in order to become culturally sensitive to the historical period, the community and the culture in which Pollock lived. This information was extensively included in the above-mentioned books and articles, and was supplemented by conversations with artists to understand the influence the nature of being part of the 'art culture' has on creativity and self-concept. What is beneficial and advantageous is that Erikson developed his theory in America during Pollock's lifetime.

4.2.5 Validity and Reliability

4.2.5.1 Explained

The psychobiographical approach, along with its design and methodology, and its dependence on interpretation, has been widely criticised in terms of validity and reliability, with the scientific, experimental approach more favoured (Edwards, 1990; Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1988a; Yin, 2003). Criticism is often attributed to the 'lack of controls' in case study research, as well as the difficulty involved in generalisation (Runyan, 1988b). Yin (2003) proposes four criteria for assessing the quality of any empirical social research design (which includes case study research and psychobiographies), namely (a) *construct validity*; (b) *internal validity*; (c) *external validity*; and (d) *reliability*. The following strategies and precautions are proposed to meet these tests:

(a) *Construct validity*. This refers to the establishment of correct operational measures for the concepts being studied (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Yin, 2003). As Yin goes on

to say, the researcher needs to carefully select and clearly conceptualise the constructs (or variables) being studied. This selection should be transparent and unambiguous, and should relate to the original objectives of the study. Clear conceptualisation improves the researcher's ability to clarify which of the constructs he/she wants to *operationalise* (i.e., the process by which the researcher translates a conceptual understanding of a construct into observable indicators) during data collection.

- (b) *Internal validity*: This refers to the establishment of a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions (Runyan, 1984). If a study possesses internal validity, then its findings are said to follow in a direct and unproblematic way from its methods (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). To enhance the credibility of the inferences drawn by the researcher, a strategy of *structural corroboration* could be utilised whereby the researcher conducts an in-depth study of the subject material to check for distortions. In addition, *triangulation* (i.e., utilising multiple sources of data) can be used to clarify meaning (Rudestam & Newton, 1992; Stake, 2005). Sokolovsky (1996) identified three types of triangulation: (i) *data triangulation*, which is based on using different sources of data; (ii) *investigator triangulation*, when research is evaluated by several independent researchers; and (iii) *methodological triangulation*, which is based on the utilisation of different methods of research.
- (c) *External validity*: This involves the establishment of domains to which the study's findings can be generalised, thereby extending the findings beyond the confines of the design and study setting (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Runyan, 1984; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Yin (2003) indicated that psychobiographers should not aim to generalise their findings to other case studies or to the larger population but rather to generalise the findings to the theory. This is known as *analytical generalisation*, the aim being to confirm or refute theory.
- (d) *Reliability*: This concerns the replication of the study under similar circumstances (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). To ensure replication of the study under similar circumstances, the psychobiographer could follow a consistent coding scheme during the collection of raw data. By following a consistent and comprehensive coding scheme, the auditability of the themes within the data is enhanced (Rudestam & Newton, 1992).

4.2.5.2 Mechanisms Applied

The primary aim of the study was to explore and describe psychosocial development over the lifespan of Paul Jackson Pollock. For this reason, *internal validity* was not a primary concern as it pertains more to causal (i.e., explanatory) case studies, and is of less importance for exploratory and descriptive case studies.

It was, nevertheless, important to maintain a high level of credibility or truth in making general inferences throughout the study. This was achieved through a prolonged engagement with the literature on the life of Pollock which provided space for an in-depth analysis of the data, as well as cross-referencing information obtained. This prevented distorted interpretations of the literature. Triangulation was also utilised as a means of clarifying meaning.

As a means of preventing low *construct validity*, which is often cited as a characteristic of case study research (Yin, 2003), the researcher conceptualised the stages and developmental processes related to human psychosocial development in a clear and unambiguous fashion. These conceptualisations were based on Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. A matrix (Fouché, 1999), categorising chronological events in Pollock's life in the appropriate psychosocial periods as proposed by Erikson (1950) is provided in Appendix A.

External validity was not a major concern in this study, as the aim did not involve generalising the findings to a larger group (i.e., *statistical generalisation*). However, the findings of Pollock's lifespan development were compared with, and generalised back to the psychosocial development theory proposed by Erik Erikson (i.e., *analytical generalisation*).

In order to achieve a high degree of *reliability*, the researcher utilised a consistent coding scheme for the raw data. This coding scheme consisted of the aforementioned matrix (Fouché, 1999), mapping events in Pollock's life with Erikson's (1950) theory. Furthermore Miles and Huberman's (1994) general approach to analysing data, in conjunction with Alexander's (1990) guidelines for the extraction of salient data, were also used in this process. A detailed discussion and explanation of this coding scheme is provided in Chapter 5.

4.2.6 Easy Genre and Elitism

4.2.6.1 Explained

Runyan (1988a, 1988b) argues against psychobiographies being an easy form of research. To produce a product of worth that fully explores the individual in all their complexities and individual characteristics requires extensive research, thorough data collection, and good literary skill. Another criticism of psychobiographies is that they fall into the trap of elitism, focusing only on individuals who are famous, such as royalty or

politicians. However, Runyan refutes this criticism by stating that psychobiographies are not elitist at all, and although they tend to study individuals who are renowned for a particular reason, they are suited to the study of individuals from any social background. Subjects are generally chosen not for their standing in society, but for their personal characteristics.

4.2.6.2 Mechanisms Applied

Some would argue that a study of the life of Jackson Pollock adds evidence to the elitist criticism. However, although Pollock is credited with leading the abstract expressionist art movement in the United States, his childhood and early adulthood were punctuated with poverty. Even after Pollock received acclaim for his contribution to art, he continued to live in fairly humble conditions, relying very much on grants to supplement a meagre income. Furthermore, Pollock struggled with human frailties, such as alcoholism, from which fame (and in some circles, notoriety) could not protect him (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In response to possible criticisms that a psychobiographical study of Pollock is an easy genre, it should be acknowledged that Pollock was a complex individual. A study of his life entails not only studying the man, but also taking into account the artist who used his paintings as a medium for expressing what he could not seem to express verbally. The temptation is to be caught up in the abundance of prosaic descriptions and interpretations of him as well as his art, and losing the essence of who he was as a human being in the process. This was an enormous challenge throughout the study.

4.2.7 Infinite Amount of Biographical Data

4.2.7.1 Explained

There is often an infinite amount of biographical data on the research subject available to the psychobiographer (Alexander, 1990; McAdams, 1994). Within the limits of accessible and available data, the biographer has the enormous responsibility of selecting which information to include in the narrative (Runyan, 1984). To avoid being overwhelmed by the immensity of the material, and in order to organise and analyse it in a systematic way, Miles and Huberman (1994) propose three linked *subprocesses*, namely (a) *data reduction*, (b) *data display*, and (c) *conclusion drawing or verification*. These processes occur (a) *before* data collection, (b) *during* data collection as early analyses are carried out, and (c) *after* data collection as final products are approached and completed. The collected data in this study

was analysed according to Miles and Huberman's general approach and is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, according to Alexander (1988), personal data can be approached in two distinct ways in order to reduce large amounts of data into manageable quantities. This is accomplished in two ways:

1. Firstly, Alexander (1988) proposes nine guidelines for identifying important units of data. These are *primacy*, *frequency*, *uniqueness*, *negation*, *emphasis*, *omission*, *error*, *isolation*, and *incompletion*. In this way, themes, scripts, and guiding messages can be elicited from the data collected (McAdams, 1988).
2. Secondly, Alexander (1988, 1990) proposes asking the data questions. This technique is used by psychobiographers as a means of sifting through large amounts of data for answers to specific questions, by specifying guidelines for assessing certain categories of information. This approach was utilised by the researcher for this particular study. Alexander's (1988, 1990) two methods are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.2.7.2 Mechanisms Applied

The primary sources of data utilised for this research were published documents and reproductions of Pollock's paintings. The reason for this was that it was convenient and relatively easy to access the material. It also allowed for the opportunity to cross-check, back reference, and engage with the material over a longer period of time (Stroud, 2004). Existing biographies were also engaged with as they provided longitudinal, lifespan information on Pollock, as well as providing an opportunity to collect and analyse more personal information on Pollock as documented by biographers and people who knew him (both personally and professionally).

4.2.8 Inflated Expectations

4.2.8.1 Explained

Researchers need to acknowledge the shortcomings of psychobiographical studies and not see them as an opportunity to rewrite history or theory, but rather to present one of many ways of understanding a person's life and personality in the light of theory (Anderson, 1981). Thus, psychobiographers need to be aware of the shortcomings of the approach and

must recognise that psychological explanations do not replace, but rather add to other explanations (Vorster, 2003).

4.2.8.2 Mechanisms Applied

The focus of this study was aimed at highlighting or speculating about the psychosocial development of Jackson Pollock, and was achieved by integrating his life with Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. Although there are limitations to a study conducted almost entirely from a psychological perspective, applying this type of theory to Pollock seems appropriate as he spent much of his adult life in some form of therapy (Emmerling, 2009; Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003; Spring, 1998). From this point of view, this was a realistic expectation of this study in terms of what the study aimed to achieve.

4.3 Conclusion

Psychological research is, at last, beginning to acknowledge the value of qualitative methods of study (Smith, 2003). This chapter has aimed to outline how this particular study has gone about ensuring the highest possible degree of validity and reliability. The importance of taking criticisms of the qualitative and psychobiographical approach seriously and proposing methods of minimising and, in some cases, eradicating these issues has also been discussed. This is as an effort to produce a psychobiography of high quality and good design. In the following chapter, the research design and methodology of this psychobiographical study of Paul Jackson Pollock, is presented.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter serves to present the *primary aim*, *research design* and *method*, and *psychobiographical subject* of this particular study. In addition, the *research procedure* and *data collection* methods are described. Finally, the *data analysis* approaches and procedures are elaborated upon. In conclusion, the value of the inclusion of *reflexivity* within qualitative research is briefly highlighted.

5.2 Primary Aim of the Research

The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe the life of Jackson Pollock according to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. According to Edwards (1990), the nature of a psychobiographical study entails the detailed and accurate description of the individual case, with the aim of providing an in-depth understanding of that case within a specific social setting. In this way the *exploratory-descriptive* (i.e., to develop hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry) nature of the study is reflected within the primary aim.

A secondary objective was that aspects of Erikson's (1950) theory of human development be informally evaluated by applying them to Pollock's life. In this study, the *descriptive-dialogic* (i.e., meaning that emerges between people) approach involves a form of dialogue between the exploratory-descriptive findings on the one hand, and the conceptualisations and theoretical propositions of the theory of Erikson (1950) on the other hand.

5.3 Research Design and Method

This study is situated within the qualitative research paradigm and may be described as life history research (Runyan, 1988a). Furthermore, it utilises a single-case interpretive research method (Yin, 2003). This study aims to provide a holistic description of the life of Paul Jackson Pollock within his socio-historic context, in what Elms (1994) refers to as a *morphogenic* research method. As previously mentioned, in *morphogenic* research, the subject's characteristics are highlighted in a holistic manner rather than as a sequence of isolated events. More specifically, the research method can be classified as psychobiographical in nature as a single case is studied over an entire lifespan and the

method of inquiry aims to transform Pollock's life into a coherent and illuminating story through the systematic use of a psychological theory.

5.4 The Psychobiographical Subject

A life lived is what actually happens. A life experienced consists of the images, feelings, sentiments, desires, thoughts, and meanings known to the person whose life it is....A life as told, a life history, is a narrative, influenced by the cultural conventions of telling, by the audience, and by the social context (Bruner, 1984, p. 7).

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 disaster, and after the Twin Towers had come crashing down in New York City, a local newspaper spent the rest of the year printing over 1800 portraits of victims in conjunction with paragraphs touching on these individual's personal qualities, habits, favourite activities, and plans. The world was captivated. These portraits of the victims offered a freeze-frame of what our narratively constructed identities might look like in aggregate. The homeliness and familiarity of this narrative material was deeply moving because we all use it to talk about ourselves every day (Eakin, 2008), illustrating that there is a relational aspect to studying other human beings. Case studies are typically directed at gaining an understanding of the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of a particular case in all its complexity, and one of the rationales behind selecting a particular individual for study is related to the individual's significance and interest (Stroud, 2004).

This study is a single-subject qualitative psychobiography, with the subject having been selected via purposive (i.e., non-random) sampling based on interest value and the significance of his life (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Jackson Pollock was selected on the basis of his celebrated creativity as well as his well-documented yet controversial life (e.g., Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Hunter, 2002; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Varnedoe, 1999). Furthermore, Pollock's life appeared to have theoretical significance and applicability to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. Although there has been a great deal written about Pollock, none of the existing literature adopts a specifically psychological focus, and no known formalised academic psychobiographical case study of Pollock exists.

5.5 Research Procedure and Data Collection

The data collected was obtained from several information sources. These included *primary* documents (i.e., documents, such as paintings, produced by the subject), and *secondary* documents (i.e., documents produced by others). This documentation included

books written about Pollock, visual media, and international articles about, and interviews with Pollock.

For case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 2003). Yin goes on to list some of the benefits of documentation, for instance, (a) documents are helpful in verifying correct spellings and titles; (b) documents offer an opportunity to corroborate or contradict information from other sources; and (c) documents are easily accessible. However, the researcher needs to be alert to biased material which may negatively influence the outcome of the study. Utilising multiple sources minimises the potential impact of author bias while simultaneously allowing for data triangulation, which enhances the internal validity of the data collected (Yin, 2003).

5.6 Data Analysis

Several strategies were utilised as a means to organise, analyse, and interpret the data collected, and in an effort to enhance the reliability of the study's findings. The general approach proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was followed as a framework for data analysis.

Miles and Huberman (1994) propose a strategy of data analysis by way of three linked *subprocesses* (*data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification*), and which is not limited to only the analysis stage of research but is utilised throughout the course of the research. That is, these subprocesses occur *before* any data is collected, *during* the research planning stage (during data collection when initial analysis takes place), as well as *after* data collection has been completed and the research is being collated into a cohesive whole.

5.6.1 Data Reduction

This takes place throughout the course of the research and entails condensing information into a manageable entity. This already begins when the researcher decides on what is to be studied and then narrows the focus through the utilisation of a research question, a conceptual framework, and sampling. Once the data has been collected, theme clustering takes place to narrow the body of information further, in order that analysis can take place (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

5.6.2 Data Display

This is an organised and concise assembly of information that allows for conclusion drawing. In viewing a reduced set of data, the researcher is able to formulate hypotheses about its meaning (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Relevant data will be displayed using Erikson's (1950) eight stages of development and Pollock's life will be displayed in close approximation to these stages. In this way, themes and patterns that emerge can be identified.

5.6.3 Conclusion Drawing and Verification

This subprocess involves the researcher making interpretations from the displayed data and then formulating meaning from it. A number of strategies can be employed here including comparison, contrast, noting of themes, and use of metaphors (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman point out that verification entails checking for biases that can occur in the process of drawing conclusions. If data verification does not take place during the data analysis process, a number of shortcomings can arise. These include: data overload, which may lead to the researcher missing important information or skewing the analysis; salience of a first impression or a dramatic incident; overconfidence in some data, especially when one is trying to confirm a key finding; co-occurrences taken to be correlations or to have a causal relationship; false base-rate proportions: extrapolation of the number of total instances from those observed; unreliability of information from some sources; and over-accommodation to information that questions outright a tentative hypothesis.

Poggenpoel (1998) suggests a number of ways to address and thereby avoid biases. These include: checking for representativeness; checking for researcher effects; triangulating and weighing of the evidence; searching for contrasts and exceptions to extreme; attempting to rule out false conclusions; attempting to confirm key findings; and searching for rival explanations and for negative evidence. In considering the research design and methodology of this proposed study, these tactics appear to be well represented, thereby suggesting that the procedure is sound.

To avoid being overwhelmed by the immensity of the material, and in order to organise and analyse it in a systematic way, Irving Alexander (1990) proposes nine guidelines for identifying important units of data. As mentioned previously in Chapter 4,

these nine guidelines are *primacy*, *frequency*, *uniqueness*, *negation*, *emphasis*, *omission*, *error*, *isolation*, and *incompletion*, and are discussed in the following section.

5.6.4 Alexander's Guidelines for the Extraction of Salient Data

a) Primacy

This is a moment of a 'first' in someone's life, a first incidence on which they build all other behaviour and motivation. For instance, Naifeh and White Smith (1992) relate how Pollock and his brother Sande would work on different road crews as young teenagers, jobs that were organised by their father LeRoy. Among much older men, Pollock and Sande were anxious to establish their manhood, their equality in the rough and tumble crew. When Pollock was 15, Jay (one of the crew) pushed a bottle of liquor across to the boys and it was at this moment that Pollock took his first drink and began a lifelong struggle with alcohol addiction. It was a habit that directly influenced keeping and losing work as he grew older, that introduced him to psychoanalysis, that both encouraged and stifled his creativity, and which eventually led to his death.

Another pivotal moment came after Pollock and his wife, Lee Krasner, moved to The Springs on Long Island. Pollock began laying canvases on the floor of his studio, and so began his career-changing experimentation with what became known as his 'drip paintings' (Friedman, 1995; Greenberg, 1967; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). These primary moments in Pollock's life shaped the artist and the man in ways that not even he could have predicted, and had an indelible effect on his psychosocial development.

b) Frequency

This refers to that which occurs frequently. The frequency with which something is reported is often an indication of increasing certainty surrounding it and its importance. An example of this is the frequency with which Pollock's contentious relationship with his mother Stella is mentioned, as well as his chronic alcoholism and his inability to draw (Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003; Hunter, 2002; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

c) Uniqueness

This refers to that which is singular or odd to that particular person. Alexander (1990) suggests that the baselines with which examined material is being compared, be considered,

since uniqueness can be observed in the departures from the generally accepted language, and in assumptions about what is viewed as normal. These baselines tend to stem from general cultural expectations. *Uniqueness* refers not only to verbal expression, but also to the content of what is being expressed (Vorster, 2003). Pollock most often disregarded criticism of his art but became vehemently annoyed when his work was described in an article as unmeaning 'chaos'. Pollock immediately sent back a telegram stating, "No chaos damn it" (Frank, 1983, p. 79). He was adamant that there was no chaos, no accident in his art, which perhaps says as much about the man himself as about his art (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

d) Negation

This is that which is the opposite, and often represents repressed or unconscious material. There may be a particular belief or understanding of an individual which is in fact the opposite in reality. Pollock was believed to be a highly private individual, who left no journals but rather only a score of letters, and a scattering of postcards and business-related notes on his untimely death (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). However, Lee Krasner, in an interview with Bruce Glaser (1967) and commenting on Pollock's paintings, stated that the painter's way of expressing himself is through painting, not through verbal ideas. From this viewpoint, Pollock was not as private as the public generally believe. He left a great many journals, but they are non-verbal ones, they are his art.

e) Emphasis

This refers to that which is either over- or underemphasised. Overemphasis is usually seen when something that is held to be commonplace receives a great deal of attention, while under-emphasis arises when something that seems important receives little attention. In regards to the literature available on Pollock, the researcher found that there was an over-interpretation of Pollock (i.e., the artist and the man) which presented a challenge when attempting to discover and draw out that which was underemphasised. This point becomes clearer in the Findings and Discussion chapter (Chapter 6).

f) Omission

This refers to that which is missing from the picture, that element of a person's life which seems to have been omitted when considering their lifespan. Alexander (1988) mentions that attention to affect is commonly omitted. There is a great deal of literature on

Pollock's art, on his development as an artist, on his volatile moods and on his alcoholism, but what is missing from the picture is Pollock's voice.

g) Error of Distortion

This refers to the presence of mistakes – be they related to facts in general, or to the person. Lee Krasner, in an interview with du Plessix and Gray (1967) stated that there is a lot of myth surrounding Pollock, one being the myth of suicide and that Pollock intentionally drove his car into a tree which resulted in his death and the death of one of his passengers. Krasner pointed out that the road was well-known to be dangerous and that she herself had skidded off that road at some point. Soon after Pollock's death, the state highway department fixed the road.

h) Isolation

As a mark of salience, *isolation* is best recognised by the criterion of 'fit'. It refers to that which stands alone or does not fit with the information as a whole, leaving one asking the question, "Does this make sense?" The researcher found most of the collected material on Pollock to be relatively similar and coherent in content. There were no significant sections or themes in the collected material that 'did not fit' or that could be interpreted as isolated.

i) Incompletion

This refers to that which has not been finished, and this can often be seen when closure has not been achieved. Pollock's life was unexpectedly cut short when he was killed in a car accident while driving under the influence of alcohol. In the year just preceding his death, he produced almost no work, and drank constantly (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Varnedoe, 2002). This leaves an incomplete picture of the man, this abrupt ending preventing art critics from being able to holistically traverse his development as an artist. Furthermore, many of Pollock's paintings were unsigned and in recent years various paintings are beginning to surface with claims that they are Pollock's, with much debate surrounding their authenticity (Hewitt & Moses, 2006). Therefore the amount of paintings he produced is unknowable and the collection will be forever incomplete.

The nine identifiers of salience outlined above provided this researcher with guidelines for approaching the collected materials in a relatively consistent and systematic

fashion. Furthermore, this procedure enhanced the reliability and auditability of the collected data.

5.7 Reflexivity

The relativism of discourse theory makes it difficult to justify adopting one particular 'reading' of an event or text rather than others. As discussed in Chapter 2, discourse analysis cannot be seen to reveal an objective 'truth' lying within the text. It needs to be acknowledged that research findings are open to other, potentially equally valid, readings (Burr, 1995). As Ashworth (2003) points out, research focuses not so much on individuals' perception of a lifeworld as on their construction of it. The person is a sense-maker. Research should be seen as a joint product of researcher and researched (what may be termed 'reflexivity'), and psychology itself needs to be seen as part of cultural activity, emerging from a particular period in the history of a certain society and which cannot be detached from the interests and concerns of that society.

Meaning is not, therefore, the creation and the property of the subject or participants in the research, or the observers of the research, nor is it the creation or the property of the researcher. It is the product of the interdependent relationship between the research, the subject or participant, and the observer, and the result of the collaboration between them (Stroud, 2004). For this reason, this study does not claim that the knowledge created by the research has universal meaning or that the analysis of the data by the researcher is final. This should be kept in mind when considering the findings as presented by the researcher in Chapter 6. While every effort has been made to produce informed, theoretically-sound findings, from a social constructionist perspective other interpretations may be equally valid (for more on this subject, see Chapter 4, section 2.3.1).

5.8 Conceptual Framework

This refers to the development of a descriptive framework for organising and integrating the data of the case study, which is in line with the original purpose of the study (Yin, 2003). In order to facilitate the process of the data revealing itself, the researcher needed to categorise the most salient available data. This was achieved by developing a conceptual matrix by which to categorise the core data and indicators of life stage development over Pollock's life according to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages, and this is schematically represented in Appendix A. The horizontal columns are used to

represent the periods of historical development in Pollock's life. Conversely, the vertical columns are used to represent the process of life stage development.

The conceptual matrix described in Appendix A aided the researcher's efforts to remain systematic and consistent during the process of data analysis (Vorster, 2003). Each life stage was investigated, and the processes of psychological development that appeared to be occurring during each life stage were then explored in terms of what is postulated in Erikson's (1950) theory in terms of each life stage. As discussed in Chapter 3, Erikson (1950) places emphasis on the psychosocial aspect of development. Therefore, during the course of the research, attention was given to social influences and life experiences that may have impacted on Pollock's psychological development.

5.9 Ethical Considerations

Elms (1994) highlighted the limited existence of ethical guidelines for psychobiographies, but suggested that information obtained be treated, and documented, with respect. Some ethical issues that have been noted include the invasion of privacy as well as the potential embarrassment or harm to the subject, and to his or her relatives and associates (Runyan, 1984). This study was conducted in accordance with the 1976 ethical guidelines set out by the American Psychiatric Association that state that psychobiographical studies may be carried out on, preferably, long dead persons with no close surviving relatives who might be embarrassed by unsavoury revelations (Elms, 1994). Pollock died in 1956. Furthermore, only published material available in the public domain was utilised and careful consideration was taken when presenting and interpreting information gathered in the process of this research.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the research method and design as well as the subject of this particular psychobiographical study. In addition, the primary aim, research procedure, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures were described, as well as the role of reflexivity in interpretive research. While lying at the heart of the biographer's task is to interpret data on a specific person in order to discover the central, animating story of that person's life, this interpretation and formulation may take on multiple forms of explanation and re-explanation as the process is refined. For this reason a system of 'cheques and balances' is built into this process in order to ensure that the meaning of alternative life narratives is interpreted within a stable context or setting (Claasen, 2007). To this end,

Chapter 6 endeavours to present a discussion of the findings of this study in a comprehensive and integrated manner by weaving together and integrating Paul Jackson Pollock's life story and Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Rather than containing a centre of interest, equal value is placed on every section of the image, which in turn creates an impression of virtual unboundedness (Emmerling, 2009, p. 7).

6.1 Chapter Preview

Jackson Pollock died on August 11, 1956 in a car accident that was to claim both his own life and that of one of the passengers in his car. He was 44-years-old. Pollock was drunk at the time, depressed, and some have even suggested suicidal. While he had achieved a certain level of fame during his short life, his death guaranteed a legendary, if on some levels mythical, status. The paintings that he had struggled to sell while alive became sought after and prices rose to as-yet unheard of levels for art. While Pollock had said very little in his life, those who knew him had much to say. He was described as aggressive, depressed, explosive, self-destructive, neurotic, schizophrenic, an alcoholic, angry, controversial, creative, a visionary, a friend, a husband, a son, kind, gentle, and loving. However, if there was one person who understood that reality is constructed, and that there is a multiplicity of meanings inherent in it, it was Pollock. What follows is a study of his life transposed on to Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages, and in this way a particular meaning will be offered in line with the aim of the research, which is to explore and describe Pollock's life. Findings are presented, not as conclusions, but as the summary of the researcher's particular questions of the data.

6.2 Findings and Discussion

In order to be as structured and as thorough as possible the following should be noted:

- All letters and conversations quoted, are quoted verbatim in order that Pollock's voice, as well as the voices of those around him, be heard in earnest. For this reason, some quotations contain explicit language, and letters quoted have spelling errors and vernacular abbreviations.
- Great effort was made to avoid 'name dropping' in regards to the company that Pollock kept – an aspect of the utilised sources that the researcher found to cloud the portrait of Pollock himself. Nevertheless, mentioning some names was unavoidable and all names that are mentioned were either friends of Pollock, art critics, or fellow artists.

- While the fact that Jackson was an artist cannot and should not be overlooked, the researcher chose to focus primarily on the man (for more on this aspect, see Chapter 7, section 7.7), which was in keeping with the aim of the research. Little reference is made to specific artworks.
- Further, Table 1 below provides a graphic reflection of the way in which the researcher chose to represent and structure the findings and discussion of this study. Using the matrix given in Appendix A as a guide, Pollock's life was firstly divided into five main biographical headings. These five main headings were then subdivided in accordance with Erikson's (1950) proposed psychosocial stages. In the sections below, each of these five main headings will encompass a brief explanation of the relevant psychosocial stage, a detailed biographical account of Pollock's life at each given stage, and a discussion of the findings by the researcher. The reader is reminded that a more detailed explanation of Erikson's stages can be found in Chapter 3, section 3.4.

Table 1

A Graphic Reflection of the Structure of the Findings of the Study

BIOGRAPHICAL MAIN HEADING	ERIKSON'S PROPOSED PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGE	BIOGRAPHICAL SUBHEADINGS
<p>The Childhood of Jackson Pollock (1912 – 1930)</p> <p><i>This section maps Pollock's life from birth to 18-years-old.</i></p>	<p>Basic Trust versus Mistrust (birth to about 18 months)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And baby makes five • Discussion of the First Stage
	<p>Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (age 18 months-3 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will too • Discussion of the Second Stage
	<p>Initiative versus Guilt (age 3-5 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out into the world • Discussion of the Third Stage
	<p>Industry versus Inferiority (age 5-13 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A family on the move • Discussion of the Fourth Stage
<p>The New York Years/The Developing Artist (1930 – 1942)</p> <p><i>This section maps Pollock's life from age 18 to 30 years, and focuses on his changing artistic style, as well as his developing relationship with Lee Krasner.</i></p>	<p>Identity versus Role Confusion (age 13-21 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for Fit • Surrogacy and Direction • Discussion of the Fifth Stage
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ever closer, ever further, ever closer
<p>Personal and Professional Milestones (1942 – 1946)</p> <p><i>As Pollock's life becomes more enmeshed in Lee Krasner's, so he begins to distinguish himself in the art community.</i></p>	<p>Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21-40 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Map
<p>Marriage and the Long Island Years (1946 – 1952)</p> <p><i>This section relates more of Pollock's life in regards to his marriage to Lee Krasner, as well as to his rise to fame and notoriety.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tied • Discussion of the Sixth Stage
<p>The Final Years (1952 – 1956)</p> <p><i>Pollock's last few years are focused on here, as his chronic drinking increases and his productivity as an artist decreases.</i></p>	<p>Generativity versus Stagnation (age 40-60 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to from here • Discussion of the Seventh Stage

6.2.1 The Childhood of Jackson Pollock (1912 – 1930)

6.2.1.1 Basic Trust versus Mistrust (birth to about 18 months)

Erikson (1963a) saw trust as a state of being and responding, in which the infant trusts the continuity of the external world and outside providers as well as has trust in itself to cope with urges. Crucial to achievement of this sense of basic trust is the relationship with the primary caregiver, most often the mother. If basic trust is not achieved, mistrust is the result and is a consequence of inevitable natural frustrations, parental inadequacy and absences (Welchman, 2000). Ultimately a balance between the two embodies a successful resolution of this stage.

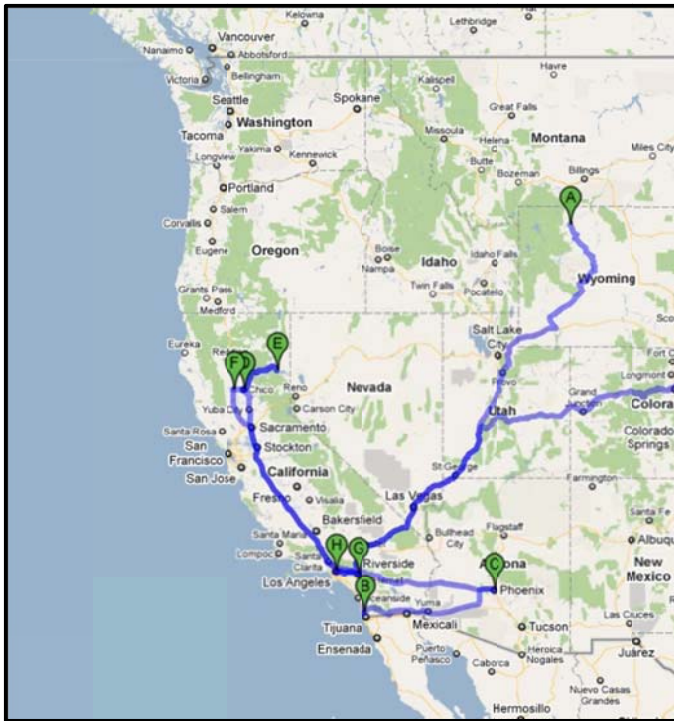
And baby makes five

Paul Jackson Pollock was born on January 28, 1912 in Cody, Wyoming. He was the fifth of five boys, and as a result of a difficult birth, Jackson's (he dropped the use of 'Paul' on moving to New York City in 1930) mother, Stella, was unable to have more children (Gray, 2003; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Jackson's older brothers were Charles, Marvin Jay, Frank, and Sandford (called 'Sande') (Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992), and each would play some role in his future, both as an artist and in the man that he would become.

While much has been made of the place where Jackson was born: Cody having been named after the famous cowboy and entertainer, Buffalo Bill Cody, and an American western town on the cusp of being Europeanised, the Pollocks were not cowboys although they were certainly 'country folk' with an appreciation for the natural order of things. Jackson's father, LeRoy, was a farmer and land surveyor, while Stella hankered after refinery and civilisation (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

To understand Jackson better, a short description of his parents is necessary. LeRoy Pollock (born McCoy but who had been adopted at a young age following the death of his parents) has been described by his sons as a gentle, shy, sensitive man who worked hard and loved the land. He was no match for his robust, stern, and determined wife who indulged her sons unconditionally, and who would not speak to their father for days should he discipline the youngsters (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Frank, the middle child, said of his father years later, "Mother had him pretty well throttled," and he was "a beaten man" by the time he reached middle age (Landau, 1989, p. 109). Theirs was

not a happy marriage, all the more compounded by financial difficulty (Stella was particularly extravagant when it came to clothing and house decorating) and an inability to make an economic success of the various business ventures they pursued (Engelmann, 2007). According to Friedman (1995), Jackson's two parents represented much of the ambivalence – a mixture of tenderness and aggression, inwardness and outwardness – that would exist in Jackson and intensify throughout his life.



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This map was adapted from the following source: Google Maps. (2010). Retrieved December 12, 2010, from <http://maps.google.co.za/maps?hl=en&tab=w>.

At the time of Jackson's birth, the Pollocks had already decided to leave Cody, in part due to LeRoy's health difficulties related to the cold. While LeRoy went in search of work in California, Stella travelled with her five boys to visit her family in Tingley, Iowa – a trip which took near on nine months - and then, shortly after returning to Cody, left to join LeRoy who had found temporary work in National City, California (refer to map). Because of the challenges of these long trips with four mobile boys and one infant, Stella was unable to devote much attention to her youngest child. As Naifeh and White Smith (1992) state, "except in rare moments of privacy, Jackson was denied the usual breast-feeding and, for much of his first year, experienced his mother from the perspective of a piece of cherished baggage" (p. 44), with her face hidden behind the veil she always wore while travelling.

The reunion in National City was not a happy one, largely because of LeRoy's inability to obtain permanent work. By August of 1913 (when Jackson was 18-months-old), the family was again on the move, this time to Phoenix, Arizona where LeRoy purchased a small plot of land for farming (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Spring, 1998).

Discussion of the First Stage

Late in 1942, Stella Pollock visited Jackson (then about 30-years-old), in New York City. Although he had been drinking for many years by this time, the imminent visit from his mother clearly caused him a great deal of anxiety as he went on a drinking binge for several days before landing in Bellevue (a psychiatric hospital in New York) on the day of her arrival. This was not unusual behaviour for Jackson preceding visits from his mother (Friedman, 1995). These regular events give some indication of the relationship between these two. While Stella was a model mother in many ways, as Gray (2003) writes, "[Stella's sons] grew up fearful men and served her all their lives, each son clinging fast in inner servitude" (p. 51).

Pollock's early months in which he should have discovered a secure and safe environment, found only movement and change, instability and an emotional and a somewhat physical distance from his mother. When their relationship should have been tantamount to attachment and safety, it was, by all accounts, lacking. The doting and controlling mother withheld the breast, and in it the nourishment and security it would have provided. Years later, Jackson would find that nourishment in alcohol, suggesting a fixation in this stage of development. In October 1929, when Jackson was 17-years-old, he wrote to Charles and Frank stating, "People have always frightened and bored me consequently I have been within my own shell" (Friedman, 1995, p. 12). As he grew older he tended to be non-verbal and withdrawn, as well as shy except when very drunk (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992), reflecting Erikson's proposed behaviour should an individual not be able to find a balance between trust and mistrust.

The only lengthy period when Jackson managed to cut down on his drinking quite considerably, was on seeing a Dr Heller on Long Island, New York between 1948 and 1949. When his wife Lee asked him how it was that Dr Heller had been the one to help him stop drinking, Jackson reportedly answered, "He is an honest man, I can believe him" (du Plessix & Gray, 1967, pp. 48-51). Perhaps this gives us some insight into how Jackson viewed other people and the world in general: for the most part as an unsafe place filled with people he simultaneously reached out to (in friendship and support) and rejected (in violence and destructiveness).

However, to state that Jackson was left without hope would deny Erikson's (1975) focus on "outward, forward, upward" (p. 39) (for elaboration on this point, refer to Chapter 3, section 3.3). Throughout his life, Jackson would revisit and challenge his ambivalence about trusting and not trusting the world and people around him, for example his relationship with Lee Krasner.

6.2.1.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (age 18 months-3 years)

This stage, as pointed out by Welchman (2000), is linked to a physical development of muscular maturation, and to the generalised modes of holding on and letting go. If this is achieved, a sense of will develops. If not, shame and doubt dominates. Shame is often exhibited in self-consciousness which may result in a loss of self-control. Balance is ultimately the successful resolution of this stage.

I will too

The farm in Phoenix, Arizona, to which the family moved in August of 1913 was a sprawling 20 acre plot which housed both crops and animals, and which LeRoy worked hard to capitalise on the farm's yields. Stella, for her part, cooked and sewed for her family. For his first few years, toddler Jackson spent a good deal of time following at his mother's heels round and about the house, particularly the kitchen. Too young to join his brothers in working on the farm, his domain tended to be limited to the house. Once, when he was given the chore of feeding the chickens, he was so overwhelmed by them crowding in on him and squawking at him that he was after that only expected to collect the eggs. Participation in any other farmyard work was limited to observing. Predominantly, however, Jackson was regarded as too young to make any real contribution to the farm. Furthermore, he would often see his brothers urinating in the fields, or in the far corners of the barnyard, competing to see who could reach the furthest. Too young to compete, Jackson would retreat to the outhouse and sit in privacy to urinate – a habit that persisted for the rest of his life (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

As much as LeRoy attempted to have his older sons participate in the running of the farm, Stella actively encouraged the boys' other pursuits – whether it was Jay's schooling or Charles' paper route and his art classes. LeRoy, unable to make men of his boys and to successfully tear them away from Stella's mothering, withdrew further into his work.

According to Sande, whenever his father left the farm, Jackson would stand at the gate and cry (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

When the boys walked to the fields, they walked in order of age, their rank reflected in the implements they were given charge of: LeRoy would walk in front with the horse, next came Charles with the plough, Frank with a hoe, Sande with a shovel, and Jackson “tagging along behind without the dignity of even a shovel over his shoulder” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 60). This ranking was also reflected in the way Stella divided her sons into the ‘high steps’ (Charles and Jay), Frank somewhere in the middle, and the ‘low steps’ (Sande and Jackson). The high steps and Frank were usually given farmyard duties, while the low steps were assigned to assisting Stella in the kitchen. Other duties and privileges were also divided in this way, and Jackson was very much regarded as the ‘baby’. He was known to stand at the kitchen door or at the edge of the fields and beg to be given a task to do. When work was allocated to the boys, Jackson’s constant refrain would be “I will too” (p. 61) which became a favourite taunt in the family as the years went on.

Discussion of the Second Stage

Great emphasis is placed on the child achieving a sense of autonomy in this stage. When looking at Pollock’s development during this period, and based on the reports by his brothers, a picture appears of a child over-protected, maligned in terms of his age, and derided when attempts were made to assert independence and develop his abilities. In terms of the effects of this psychosocial environment, Pollock’s adult life illustrates periods of self-consciousness and what some described as suicidal behaviour. Doubt in his own abilities also promoted a certain amount of dependency, which played a detrimental role in his emotional development. As Charles’ wife Elizabeth would later state, Jackson found a ‘mommy’ in Lee. Furthermore, Jackson, even as an adult, was always submissive in his mother’s presence, illustrating what Harris (2000) suggests, that Pollock never grew up.

However, Pollock’s choice of career, and his original contribution, suggests that he revisited this stage and unconsciously challenged the outcome. Perhaps one of the most explicit displays of defiance (and perhaps a sense of finally having caught up with his brothers) was how Pollock, on many occasions, entered rooms where others were gathered, and would urinate either in the fireplace or in the middle of the floor. On occasion he would be naked (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

6.2.1.3 Initiative versus Guilt (age 3-5 years)

According to Welchman (2000), Erikson distinguishes initiative from autonomy in that initiative adds a quality of understanding, planning and wilfulness to being active and on the move, as well as participation in a social group. As Welchman goes on to explain, the enjoyment of new locomotor and cognitive capacities may lead to manipulation, which provokes a reaction from parents and siblings. This in turn may lead to guilt over goals contemplated and acts initiated.

Out into the world

Sande was the one member of the family that gave Jackson the attention he craved. Furthermore, Sande stood in stark contrast to the self-contained, detached mother by being high-spirited, adventurous, and hot-headed. This membership into a social group initially tempered the youngest's sense of separateness from the family and its daily activities but by 1915, and when Jackson was about 3-years-old, he was put into Sande's charge thus indelibly changing the hierarchy in their relationship (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In 1916, however, Jackson had an opportunity to take some initiative. While versions of the story differ between sources, what does emerge is the following: Sande and an older neighbourhood friend, Charles Porter, were playing in the barn, largely ignoring the four-year-old Jackson. In an attempt to be included, Jackson collected a small log and placed it on the chopping block. As he reached for the axe nearby, Porter reminded him he was too young to handle the axe and so Porter offered to cut the log. When the blade came down, it caught Jackson's little finger above the last knuckle and severed the fingertip. While there is some mystery regarding what happened to the fingertip (possibly eaten by a large rooster), what does emerge is that Jackson, perhaps from shock, never cried, while Sande vomited (Naifeh & White Smith, 1990).

Another event happened about a year later when Jackson was accompanying his mother to town. A huge bull escaped its pen and charged the buggy they were travelling in. The horse reared, overturning the buggy and throwing its occupants to the ground. Jackson was inconsolable, sobbing hysterically until a passing farmer stopped to help and slapped the child to stop him crying (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

However, Jackson found one way to reconstruct his world, placing himself in a more pivotal position. He had a great joy for playing 'house' or having tea parties, which he would

do with either Evelyn Porter (a little girl of similar age living down the road) or Sande. In these scenarios, Jackson always insisted on playing the mother, his playmate always cast as the father (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). As Emmerling (2009) suggests, Pollock's personality was, in part, shaped by his mother's dominant character. However, while Stella could be dominant, she placed no restrictions on the boys and did not reprimand them for misbehaviour of any kind (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In terms of the family's financial situation, their stability was on a downward turn as LeRoy's produce consistently failed to sell at market and he was driven to sell it door-to-door. This was a fact that was kept hidden from Stella as LeRoy would dispose of the left-over produce before reaching home. Charles, at the age of 14, observed his father's desperation and sensed that the family may have been moving towards bankruptcy. The strain began to appear in the form of arguments between Stella and LeRoy and an even more concerted effort on LeRoy's part to hold on to the parenting responsibility of his sons. However, Stella was unmoveable and at this pivotal point in the family's ailing economic situation, the father began to withdraw (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Discussion of the Third Stage

Some of the primary aspects of this stage centre on social grouping, initiative and self-supervision (Corey, 2005; Maier, 1988). A successful resolution involves a balance between taking initiative and respecting boundaries (Erikson, 1978). Pollock's behaviour, from this point until his death, suggests ambivalence in all these areas.

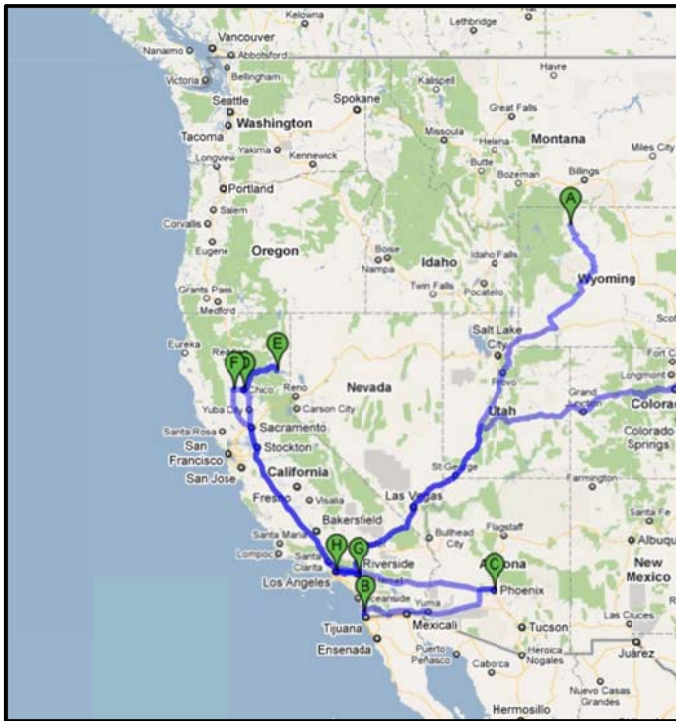
Even at this stage Jackson was attempting to cast himself in the role of parent – as can be seen by his tea parties with Evelyn and Sande. However, his attempts at becoming his own parent were ultimately thwarted when he was put in Sande's care. Sande's role of rescuing and protecting his younger sibling developed into the caregiver who would put Jackson to bed after too much drinking and aggressive behaviour, in their adult years. Initiative, such as the episode in which part of his finger was severed, while woven into various stories by Jackson over the years, still resulted in a certain level of guilt and shame – illustrated by the fact that if Jackson put a handprint on a painting years later, he would draw in the missing tip of the finger (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Coupled with this was Sande's inability to emotionally contain Jackson's finger being chopped off – he threw up. This suggests that the parent (i.e., Sande) could literally not stomach the child's (i.e., Jackson) initiative.

Throughout his teen years and his adult life, Pollock would engage in reckless, risk-taking behaviour – whether it was driving too fast and being involved in car accidents, starting fist-fights with other men, or ripping paintings off the walls in other artists' exhibitions. He would constantly push the boundaries but when someone challenged him back, would immediately back down, suggesting ambivalence. Nevertheless, Pollock developed a sense of purpose which became embedded in economic endeavour – making a success of his artistic self.

6.2.1.4 Industry versus Inferiority (age 5-13 years)

This is generally the time that the child will begin attending more formalised education and it is during this stage that the child begins to move beyond the family and looks to the mastering of skills for work production. This also involves co-operation with others (Welchman, 2000). As Welchman goes on to say, danger for the child lies in discouraging him in his pursuits, or the child may identify too completely with the world of work, becoming a slave to it and to those who are in a position to exploit it.

A family on the move



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This map was adapted from the following source: Google Maps. (2010). Retrieved December 12, 2010, from <http://maps.google.co.za/maps?hl=en&tab=w/>.

Unable to stem the economic downturn, LeRoy and the family watched as the farm was auctioned off on May 22, 1917. Jackson was five-years-old. However, Stella had not been idle during this time and had taken the impetus to investigate better schooling for the boys, which she believed would be found back in California. She made it clear to LeRoy that the move was non-negotiable. However, his accompanying the family was. He agreed to go, but as Frank later stated, "It was the end of my dad" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 72).

Stella found a house she liked in Chico, California, on a plot largely devoted to fruit trees, which LeRoy took to farming (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). In this environment Charles pursued his art more actively, which influenced six-year-old Jackson to the extent that he would make every attempt to emulate his older brother in later years. Of course Charles' new lifestyle meant less time with the family, a fact that was not lost on Jackson who would often follow his older brother around until eventually Charles, annoyed, would tell him to go home (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In September of 1918, Jackson joined Sande at the Sacramento Avenue School and while mornings were spent in the confines of two big rooms containing four grades per room, afternoons presented opportunities to go swimming in a nearby creek, play ball games, and explore the outdoors. However, with the signing of the Armistice in November 1918, marking the end of World War I, the price of farm goods around the world dropped as the troops no longer needed supplies. Farmers like LeRoy who had borrowed heavily on their mortgages during the war, fell into enormous debt. Stella decided that the family would move, starting up again somewhere else (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

A small hotel with some land attached was purchased in the town of Janesville, almost 200 kilometres from their first Californian home. In early 1920, the family moved to Janesville where LeRoy tried his hand at farming a handful of sheep while Stella ran the hotel. Marvin Jay and Charles chose to stay behind in Chico to attend high school. In Janesville, Jackson lived a somewhat isolated existence as the weather of the town was characterised by short summers and long, frigid winters that curtailed any exploration or socialising of any kind. The Janesville school was a one-room set-up which, when recalled by those who attended, was a battleground where the children and the teachers were openly aggressive towards one another (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Unable to make friends, Jackson spent most of his time exploring the hotel itself. However, a Native American housekeeper would tell the boys the Indian legends and explain to them how through

fantasy, dance and ritual, the Indian people found a way to release anxieties and defeat fears.

During this time LeRoy began drinking more as the sheep farming failed to make any profit. By early 1921 he took up work as a land surveyor and, except for infrequent visits as the years went on, walked out on the family (Hunter, 2002). Jackson was ten-years-old. Stella packed up the boys and moved to Orland, not far from Chico, while LeRoy sent money to support his family. By the end of that year, Charles had quit school in his final year to move to Los Angeles with an aim to get involved in the art world. Not long after, Marvin Jay also quit school and went to work with his father as a surveyor. Frank distanced himself from the family by attending high school in Chico, leaving only Jackson and Sande at home with their mother. During this time Jackson began to grow up as he and Sande became known as a mischievous twosome who resembled two young cowboys as they hunted and explored the Orland area. However, it was Charles' art career that fascinated Jackson more than anything, as well as the magazines containing art reproductions that Charles would send from Los Angeles. Both Jackson and Sande began to sketch and talk of becoming artists when they grew up (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Unable to maintain the high cost of the property in Orland, Stella again made plans to move – this time to return to Arizona where LeRoy had found a surveying job. Here Stella took a housekeeping job and after that came to an end, worked as a cook but by 1924 the family moved again, this time to Riverside, California. In Riverside, Stella withdrew from parenting, allowing the boys carte blanche in terms of activities. Jackson began to cling to Sande even more than before and as Sande's artistic merit began to emerge, he too became a role model for the pre-teen Jackson. To friends, Jackson also seemed to be competing with Sande, both for attention and for approval (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Discussion of the Fourth Stage

As the family moved five times during this period, Jackson had little opportunity to form the external social groupings which Erikson (1963a) theorised as a necessary development of this stage. However, Jackson had a very important pairing with his older brother, Sande. As mentioned in the previous stage, Sande provided an environment which stood in contrast to Stella's refinery. The boys shared an interest for the outdoors, were identified as a twosome wherever they went, and both aspired to be artists like their older brother Charles.

An unfortunate aspect of this grouping was that Sande inadvertently played two roles – that of peer, as well as that of parent. This was a dynamic that had been established years earlier, and would essentially give Sande the ‘one-up’ position. While Sande may have provided Jackson with positive acknowledgement, Jackson was constantly measuring his own skills against Sande’s (who was already beginning to show artistic merit). Unable to ultimately keep up with the more extroverted and, on some levels, more talented older brother may be seen as a precursor to Jackson’s later feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.

Furthermore, as Welchman (2000) points out, the danger of this stage is a child identifying too much with the ‘world of work’. In this case, this can be seen as being an artist. As an adult Pollock seemed to be his happiest when painting and producing paintings. If he received positive reviews, his mood and sense of self-efficacy was buoyed, if criticised he became incensed and volatile. He associated painting with life and not painting or being able to paint, with death. “Being [an] artist is...living,” he told his father (Frank, 1983, p. 17). Art also possibly offered a release for Pollock, much like the housekeeper had described how the Native Americans used fantasy to release anxieties.

Nevertheless, Pollock was able to take pride in what he produced, and certainly developed a sense of industriousness. As with the previous stages and crises however, he vacillated between a sense of accomplishment and an overriding feeling of failure. Following from this stage his adult life would show him as going back and forth between industriousness and a sense of inferiority.

6.2.1.5 Identity versus Role Confusion (age 13-21 years)

In this pinnacle stage between childhood and adulthood, the adolescent sees a job forthcoming and a career waiting. Time is spent in developing new friendships and identifying with particular social groupings, all the while juggling possible new obligations and restrictions in an effort to fulfil an increasingly adult role in society (Coles, 1970).

Looking for fit

Jackson was an intense, moody and rebellious teenager (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995). Lee Krasner once remarked that whatever Jackson felt, he felt it more intensely than anyone she had ever known. When he was angry, he was angrier; when he was happy, he was happier; and when he was quiet, he was quieter (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In 1927, when Jackson was 15-years-old, he and Sande joined their father for a surveying job on the rim of the Grand Canyon. During this trip, and while surrounded by a group of seasoned surveyors, Jackson and Sande did their best to fit in with the older men, and one way to do this was to drink – at this point mostly wine and beer. Relatively small amounts of alcohol would have the adolescent (and later, the adult) heavily inebriated to the extent that he would pass out, an early indication of his physical intolerance for liquor (Emmerling, 2009; Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Spring, 1998). What is most marked is that alcohol would evoke a personality change in Jackson – while drinking or drunk he was known to be self-destructive, aggressive, and generally out of control (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003).

After the surveying expedition, Jackson began a period marked by conflict with authority and being either suspended or expelled from various schools (Frank, 1983; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Pivano, 2002). In March 1928 the family moved to Los Angeles, California where Jackson enrolled in Manual Arts High School. However, between March 1928 and September of the same year when Jackson officially started at Manual Arts, he ostensibly disappeared for six months, only to return to his mother's home in September 1928 (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Very little is known as to what transpired during this period.

At Manual Arts, Jackson's interest in art became formalised through the tutorship of Frederick Schwankovsky, the art teacher. 'Schwanie', as he was called, introduced his students to theosophy and Krishnamurti (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995). While not a religion that Jackson actively subscribed to in the years to come, principles that preached happiness through self-discovery appeared to leave their impact on an individual that would make a career of self-exploration (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Spring, 1998).

While Jackson might have found a niche among the art students, it brought him criticism from the sporting department who were keen to recruit him – due to his stature – for football. Together with art fellow students, Jackson staged a protest in the form of a manifesto criticising the faculty. For this and other infractions, he was summarily expelled while friends who had participated were only suspended for a short period (Friedman, 1995).

In January 1929, Jackson wrote a letter to his brother Charles in which he expressed frustration (writing is kept in Jackson's print),

This so called happy part of one's life youth to me is a bit of damnable hell. if i could come to some conclusion about my self and life perhaps there i could see something to work for. my mind blazes up with some ill[us]ion for a couple of weeks the[n] it smoalters down to a bit of nothing[. T]he more i read and the more i think i am thinking the darker things become (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 147).

Later in 1929 he returned to school, only to be humiliated by a group of football players who accosted him in a hallway, forcefully cut his hair, and dragged him to the bathroom where they forced his head into a toilet. After being summoned to the football coach to give a reason as to his refusal to play football, Jackson and the coach (in Jackson's words) "came to blows" and he was once again expelled (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 145).

After this year of rebelliousness, humiliation and an episode in which he and his father had a fist fight, Jackson fell into a period of depression, before returning to Manual Arts in January 1930. By the start of the second semester in February 1930, Jackson was permitted to attend only two art classes and then on an ungraded basis. Furthermore, while his classmates displayed great skill with regards to drawing, Jackson lagged behind considerably (Hunter, 2002). He was all too aware of his weakness, writing to Charles,

"...my drawing i will tell you frankly is rotten it seems to lack freedom and rhythem it is cold and lifeless. it isn't worth the postage to send it...altho i feel i will make an artist of some kind i have never proven to myself nor any body else that i have it in me" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 150; Friedman, 1995, p. 13).

However, with the arrival of Charles and Frank from New York in March 1930, Jackson heard all about the city and Charles' admired art teacher, Thomas Hart Benton. When the two older brothers prepared to return to New York in early September, they urged Jackson to join them. Now 18 years of age, and with talk of being an artist in New York to provide the impetus, Jackson readily agreed. On the trip, the brothers decided between them that Paul Jackson Pollock was too long a name for an artist and so 'Paul' was dropped and Jackson officially took on the name 'Jackson Pollock' (Frank, 1983; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

6.2.2 The New York Years/The Developing Artist (1930-1936)

6.2.2.1 Identity versus Role Confusion (age 13-21 years) (cont.)

Surrogacy and direction (1930 – 1933)

At the end of September, 1930, almost a year after the Wall Street Crash of 1929, Jackson enrolled at the Arts Student League under the tutelage of Tom Benton. Benton rejected *avante garde* art in favour of a purely American style, Regionalism, which glorified the American Midwest and its working-class inhabitants (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007; Spring, 1998). Benton took to Jackson immediately, this ‘cowboy’ from Wyoming possibly embodying the American identity Benton aimed to capture in his paintings (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007; Spring, 1998). Jackson was greatly influenced by Benton at the time, with the few early oils of his that remain very much in Benton’s regionalist style. However, in response to a questionnaire in 1944, Jackson would state, “My work with Benton was important as something against which to react very strongly, later on; it was better to have worked with him than with a less resistant personality who would have provided a much less strong opposition” (Jackson Pollock, 1944, p. 14).



Going West (Emmerling, 2009, p. 15)



ver

The painting on the left (*Going West*) illustrates Jackson’s attempt at regionalism, and very much influenced by Thomas Benton’s style (pictured right, *The Ballad of the Jealous Lover of the Lone Green Valley*). In the right-hand picture, the harmonica player in the centre at the bottom is a painting of Jackson Pollock.

However, no amount of attention or training could give Jackson the skill of drawing that he spent so much time trying to master (Emmerling, 2009; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Jackson was known to labour over drawings, working and re-working them at length. Classmate Axel Horn (1966) wrote, “[Jackson’s drawings] were painfully indicative of the continuous running battle between [him] and his tools” (p. 83). Another classmate recalled Jackson throwing his pencil down in frustration and shouting, “I’ve had enough. I gotta get the hell outta here” and then running from the studio (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 165). Nevertheless, Jackson through Benton developed a strong sense of vocation, going so far as in February 1932 to write to his father, “I think I’ll make a good artist – being a artist is life its self – living it I mean” (Frank, 1983, p. 17; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 237).



Untitled (Self-Portrait)

(Emmerling, 2009, p. 1)

Sometime between 1930 and 1933 Pollock painted a self-portrait – an aged child’s face with an expression that has been described as “tormented” (Emmerling, 2009, p. 12),

“haunting” (Frank, 1983, p. 19), and “with loathing in his eyes” (Gray, 2003, p. 95). This can be seen against a backdrop of the Great Depression which resulted in a great struggle to earn a living, particularly as an artist, and living in Charles’ very artistically-capable shadow. Letters to Charles, when Jackson visited California in 1931, hinted at even other frustrations, “Dad still has difficulties in losing money – and thinks I’m just a bum” (Friedman, 1995, p. 23). Coupled with this was Jackson’s difficulty with finding words in social situations. He struggled to participate in conversations about art, giving the impression of being “just plain dense” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 167) while Benton, in his autobiography, described Jackson as developing a language block that found him struggling to articulate his ideas and opinions (Benton, 1969).

However, what did help Jackson to find the words was alcohol. When sober, he deferred to his classmates and was quiet in their company. When drunk, he would provoke others through criticism of their talent and questioning their manhood while he himself became belligerent and violent. He would work himself up into rages that seemed to enable him to make comments he could not make while sober (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Stories relating how Jackson had tried to throw friends and/or fellow artists off roofs and out of windows, about holding an axe to a woman’s head, and a rumour that a friend he was staying with woke up one night to find Jackson standing over him with a knife, fall somewhere between hearsay and truth. However, while Jackson never hurt anyone seriously, and stopped baiting once hit, his alcohol consumption – and with it, his change in character – was certainly not going unnoticed. Certainly not by the police as he was arrested on a number of occasions for his antics (Engelmann, 2007; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). “Jackson always left you with a feeling of emptiness, as if he was living in an abyss,” one friend commented (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 250).

On March 5, 1933, shortly after Jackson’s 21st birthday, LeRoy Pollock died in his estranged wife’s arms. News of his death reached New York via telegram and when Frank, Charles and Jackson met up at Charles’ studio for a moment of silence, Jackson was calm. Due to finances, all three were unable to attend the funeral but a few days later Jackson mailed a short letter in which he wrote, “I really can’t believe Dad is gone” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 255), and in another letter to Stella, “I always feel I would like to have known Dad better...many words unspoken – and now he has gone in silence” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 242). Frank in an interview years later stated, “Dad deserved a better break than he got” (p. 236). Whatever the brothers’ feelings might have been, they all turned down invitations from their mother to return to California for the summer after their father’s death.

Towards the end of 1933 Jackson rented a room in a brownstone in New York and for the first time in his life, attempted to live on his own. He also stopped writing letters home and stopped talking to friends of Charles' accomplishments. For all that Jackson appeared to be asserting some independence, alcohol remained a constant companion, made all the more easier by its legalisation in December of 1933. In this time Jackson also moved away from the Art Students League and Benton's influence, to focus more on sculpture. All of his artistic efforts remained incomplete except for one, a face with eyes closed, emerging from the stone. It appears to be the face of a dead man. The question of whether it is homage to Jackson's father, or a depiction of Jackson's own state of mind is one that will remain unanswered.

Discussion of the Fifth Stage

This period of Pollock's life is marked by conflict with authority as even he realised that this "damnable hell" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 147) was part of growing up and figuring out who he was. While he knew his drawing ability was lacking he was not discouraged, writing to Charles, "I feel I will make an artist of some kind" (Friedman, 1995, p. 13). What is seen at this stage is that Pollock was beginning to form an identity for himself, that of artist, to the extent that he equated being an artist as living life (Frank, 1983; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). To this end, he achieved a certain level of self-consistency, what Erikson (1963a) would see as the individual being at one with oneself. However, Pollock never seemed to settle on an identity, playing 'belligerent alcoholic' with as much energy as playing 'brilliant artist'.

According to Hook (2002), a lack of resolution at this stage may emerge as substance abuse or an antisocial personality disorder. While Jackson clearly had difficulties with substance abuse – more likely to have stemmed from early childhood, as well as antisocial behaviour, it is the researcher's opinion that he embraced neither identification which once again indicates an ambivalence. Ultimately Jackson seemed unable to integrate, both psychologically and socially.

To return to findings by Dollinger et al. (2005) (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.4), individuals who disavow superficial identifications may produce more creative products. In 1944, in an argument with artist Hans Hofmann, Pollock attempted to explain his idea of the image and how, if the artist painted out of themselves, they would create an image larger than a landscape. However, Hofmann suggested that Jackson rather paint from nature to which Jackson responded defiantly, "I *am* nature" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 486;

Spring, 1998, p. 54). Lee Krasner later explained that he meant he was total, that he was undivided (Wallach, 1981). As Dollinger et al. (2005) continue, those individuals who explore their identity have more creative potential than those individuals that take a normative approach.

6.2.2.2 Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21-40 years)

As Coles (1970) states, “intimacy becomes the challenge of the twenties or early thirties” (p. 133). However, if there is no commitment to this intimacy, a sense of isolation may develop. This ‘distantiation’ can be seen as a readiness to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems to pose a threat to one’s own (Welchman, 2000). Alternatively, the individual may reach a point where they are able to be productive and have an ethical sense of the world, which does not compromise being a loving person (Massey, 1986).

Ever closer, ever further, ever closer (1933 – 1941)

Late in 1933, Jackson’s drinking binges came to a head with an arrest after he had become uncontrollable in a nightclub and then had assaulted a policeman. The Pollock family agreed that he would return to living with Charles and his wife, Elizabeth. A letter from Frank to Charles expressed a mixture of frustration and resignation, “I had hoped Jack would spring out for himself this year but I suppose conditions make the present set-up the wiser” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1990, p. 255). Charles redoubled his efforts to keep Jackson sober while a visit to Tom Benton and his wife on Martha’s Vineyard provided a brief respite but Benton would describe Jackson as carrying “something of an aura of unhappiness about him” (p. 256).

The Great Depression was at its height (Pivano, 2002). With prices rising, millions out of work, a civil war in Spain and the ascension of Adolph Hitler in Germany, historian Edmund Wilson (cited in Naifeh & White Smith, 1992) wrote, “there was a tremendous sense of foreboding and darkness. *The Decline of the West* hung over [New York] city like a dark cloud” (p. 262). The Depression had also affected the Pollock family, with Sande (who was living with Stella) out of work in California, and the family with barely enough money to put food on the table.

Elizabeth, who made no secret of her antagonism toward Jackson, eventually banned him from the apartment, forcing him to find other lodgings – a coldwater flat

elsewhere in the city. Sande arrived in October 1934 and moved in with Jackson. The two brothers found jobs working as janitors at a local school, earning \$10 a week and burning their furniture when the flat got too cold (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Sande once again took on the role as Jackson's caretaker, and while both drank heavily, it was Jackson who became uncontrollable. However, with Sande nearby, Jackson always had someone to ensure he got to bed safely or kept him in check when the need arose, which was often (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In August 1935, the government set up the Federal Arts Project (FAP), hiring New York artists to create art works for public buildings. With the American art market almost non-existent six years into the Depression, the project enabled artists to focus on art and to even make money from it. More notably however, it created a community of which Jackson became a part. He joined the FAP in 1935 and took on work as a muralist (Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983; Hunter, 2002; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Charles and Elizabeth left New York in 1935, and Jackson and Sande moved into the Eighth Street apartment. Jackson's mood seemed buoyed by the fortuitous chain of events, and while the drinking continued, the self-destructiveness became less evident to those around him (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). In May 1936, Jackson attended 'experimental' workshops held by Mexican painter David Siqueiros. Siqueiros moved Jackson away from Benton's regionalism to experimenting with enamel and industrial paint, and using a spray gun to shoot paint at a canvas laid on the floor. During this time Jackson was also exposed to European abstract and surrealist art through exhibitions held in the city (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

The art that Pollock produced during this period relied heavily on symbolism (serpents, skulls, female images) and reflected many of the preoccupations of surrealist art such as the convergence of the inner and outer worlds (Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983). Years later when asked of his use of symbols and where they came from, Pollock stated "the source of my painting is the unconscious" (Leisner, 1995, p. 28). However, just what those symbols meant, only Pollock ever knew although many critics and friends made attempts at interpretation, as well as to define them.

Along with the ease of financial security created by regular employment with the FAP, came change. Sande asked his long time girlfriend Arloie in California, to marry him. She agreed and the two were married in July 1936, leaving Jackson as the last single brother (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Jackson, apparently unsettled, went

to stay with friends out of the city. This lasted until October when he was involved in a car accident. Sande, in a letter to Charles, wrote, "Jack had the misfortune of colliding with some bastard and as a result the old Ford has been permanently lain to rest" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 296). This would not be the last accident that Jackson would have, but after this one, he returned to the city only to pick up with his drinking at various local bars. By midnight he was generally drunk and Sande and Jackson's old school friend Ruben Kadish were left trawling the streets in search of him. As per the long-established ritual, Sande would take Jackson home, sit him down with a cup of coffee and soothe him as he vacillated between violence and sobbing until he fell asleep. By December his nightly drinking forays had extended to three or four days at a time (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Jackson's work with the FAP was also affected. In a letter to Charles he wrote, "Not having much luck with painting. Got my last painting turned back for more time – they didn't like the form in the water – if it had been a good picture I wouldn't have consented" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 302). While Jackson was slipping, the Pollock family began again to rally. Charles suggested Stella come to stay in New York but Sande dismissed the idea, privately confessing to Charles that such a move "would be fatal for Jack" (p. 302). By January 1937, Sande suggested Jackson see a psychiatrist. As he wrote to Charles, "Troubles such as his are very deep-rooted, in childhood usually, and it takes a long while to get them ironed out" (p. 303). However, the family were divided on whether Jackson wanted to be helped or whether he wanted to be taken care of (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

The drinking, however, continued. In June 1938 Jackson was dropped from the FAP for continued absences and on June 11, he was admitted for acute alcoholism to Bloomingdales, a division of New York Hospital. He remained there until late September (Frank, 1983; Spring, 1998). At Bloomingdales, Jackson was encouraged to participate in occupational therapy while his psychiatrist, Dr James Wall, searched for homosexual messages in Jackson's artistic images. Jackson managed to secure a discharge date for September 30, and although Wall related the whole process as being very successful, Jackson himself considered the whole experience "a waste" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 320). According to Arloie, Jackson did try to stay sober but the first time a friend offered him a drink, he took it (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

By October the world was on the brink of a second world war, the Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities was on a witch-hunt for suspected communists, and Jackson was struggling to be re-admitted into the FAP. By the end of November he succeeded, but with a cut in pay, while continuing with several follow-up visits with Wall

(Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Drinking again, Jackson grew more and more depressed until in January 1939 he entered psychoanalysis with a Jungian, Dr Joseph Henderson (Pivano, 2002). Only in his first year of practice, Henderson later admitted that he was not sure how to work with Pollock. The two had very little to talk about until Jackson brought a drawing. For the next two years Jackson would bring one or two drawings to the sessions which Henderson then sought to interpret using Jungian theory and archetypes, interpretations which Jackson would quietly listen to but not comment on (Friedman, 1985; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Henderson refused to talk of Jackson's past or his continued drinking, and focused entirely on the drawings he was brought. Jackson, for his part, used the sessions to grow his artistic and psychological vocabulary while sidestepping self-analysis altogether (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Henderson later admitted, in an unpublished essay, "I wonder why I neglected to find out, study, or analyse his problems in the first year of his work...I wonder why I did not seem to cure his alcoholism" (Spring, 2007, p. 37). Nevertheless, Jackson appeared to be affected by these sessions, writing to Charles in mid-1940, "I haven't much to say about my work and things – only that I have been going thru violent changes the past couple of years. God knows what will come out of it all – it's pretty negative stuff so far" (Frank, 1983, p. 37). However, almost a year later, in 1941, Sande wrote Charles, "We are sure that if [Jack] is able to hold himself together his work will become of real significance [sic]. His painting is abstract, intense, evocative in quality" (p. 37), suggesting that Jackson's work was coming into its own.

For all Jackson's verbal reticence, his intelligence was unquestioned by those who knew him well. According to Henderson, "Basically uneducated, he took in a lot and his intuition was highly developed" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 358) and according to fellow artist Ruben Kadish, "[Jackson] had a very professional eye...he understood the intensity of paintings. The image was the only thing that mattered" (p. 358). Although Jackson was "half overseas" (p. 359) a good part of the time, descriptions that included "brilliant" (p. 359) and "genius" (p. 359) were frequently used when referring to him.

In June 1940, Jackson was laid off the FAP (now the Works Progress Administration or WPA) and a week later a close maternal confidante, Helen Marot, passed away (Friedman, 1995). He began drinking even more heavily which, in turn, negatively affected his artistic productivity. He reportedly told a friend that he "wanted to paint very badly...it was just no longer possible" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 360). Henderson left New York in

September 1940 and referred Jackson on to Dr Violet Staub de Laszlo who, like Henderson, used Jackson's art as a way to engage him in therapy.

Germany had invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, marking the beginning of World War II. By 1941, able-bodied American men were being drafted. Jackson persuaded de Laszlo to request deferment on psychological grounds. She was initially unwilling, believing that "the army would be good for Jackson, that it would make a man of him" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 363) but finally capitulated. Jackson was eventually classified 4-F, unqualified. He later told a friend that the army "rejected" him because he was "neurotic" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 363). In October he was reinstated on the WPA and had managed to get his drinking temporarily under control. However, the WPA was struggling and laying off artists on suspicion of their being communists, and Sande's wife announced she was pregnant leaving Jackson with a shaky support base. Nevertheless in November 1941, Jackson was invited by John Graham, a curator, artist and author, to participate in an exhibition of American and French painters that would open in January the following year. It was an exhibition that was also to include Picasso, Matisse, de Kooning, and Jackson's future wife, Lee Krasner (Frank, 1983; Friedman, 1995; Spring, 1998). In December the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, dragging America into the war but in its wake, also accelerating the movement of the international art world to American shores (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

6.2.3 Personal and Professional Milestones (1942 – 1945)

6.2.3.1 Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21-40 years) (cont.)

On the map

Lee Krasner (1908-1984) was, like Jackson Pollock, an artist but more established in the art community than Jackson. Where Jackson struggled to verbalise his thoughts and participate in social dialogue, Lee was known to be forthright and articulate (Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983; Spring, 1998). On hearing that this relatively unknown artist, Jackson Pollock, would also be participating in the Graham exhibit, Lee decided to pay Jackson a visit at his Eighth Street apartment.

Accounts as to what transpired during this meeting differ in the retelling. In some interviews Lee would say she was "overwhelmed" (du Plessix & Gray, 1967, p. 49) and "stunned" (Gruen, 1967, p. 230) by what she saw in Jackson's art but a close friend, John

Myers, recalled that Lee came away unconvinced of his artistic ability but found Jackson to be “the most beautiful thing that ever walked on two feet” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 394), and in a letter to George Mercer described Jackson as “magnificent...tremendous” (p. 394). Over the next few months, Jackson and Lee began spending more time together. According to Elizabeth Pollock, Jackson had found a “mommy” (p. 396) while friend Ethel Baziotis remarked that they were “psychologically embedded in one another” (Landau, 1981, p. 202).

Jackson was less verbose on the subject but once said to Arloie that he thought Lee was a very good painter for a woman (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Nevertheless, her response to his art became an important aspect of his personal and professional development (Greenberg, 1957; Spring, 1998). In 1953, as Pollock himself stated, “Without Lee I wouldn’t have survived long. I’d be dead if it wasn’t for her” (Potter, 1985, p. 175).

The painting that Pollock exhibited in the Graham exhibition in January 1942 was ‘*Birth*’ and while interpretation remains elusive – although many critics have ventured a guess – the painting’s title does well to mark Jackson’s first real publicised appearance on the New York art scene (Engelmann, 2007). Amid well-known European painters, it was inevitable that the Americans garnered little interest from critics, although, notably, Pollock was mentioned in passing (Lane, 1942). A week after the opening Jackson celebrated his thirtieth birthday.

Lee took to introducing Jackson to the more affluent members (dealers, gallery owners, buyers) of the New York art community. For all her enthusiasm, Jackson remained almost completely mute in social circles, leaving her to make conversation. On one occasion, Lee and Jackson had dinner at Mercedes and Herbert Matter. When Mercedes left to attend to the baby, Lee made her exit in the hopes that Jackson and Herbert would talk. While the women panicked over the silence emanating from the living room, the two men were, in fact, becoming good friends. As Herbert Matter remembered, “Jackson said, ‘It’s really a wonderful time to be living.’ That gave us plenty to think about the rest of the evening” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 397). Others were less forgiving of Jackson’s quietness, seeing it as a lack of intelligence. When art critic Clement Greenberg first met Jackson and after Lee claimed Jackson to be a great artist, he described Jackson as “look[ing] embarrassed. He had a nice, open face. He didn’t say much and smiled reluctantly” (p. 398).

While Jackson's career was moving in new directions, Sande was struggling professionally. With help, he managed to find a job in Connecticut and made plans to move his family there, but not before a visit from Stella Pollock. The night before she was to arrive, Jackson disappeared. Sande managed to trace him to Bellevue Hospital and fetched Lee from her apartment to help. At Bellevue it was reported that they had found Jackson blacked out on a street somewhere. Sande instructed Lee to get Jackson to bed, to feed him eggs and milk, and to pull him together for dinner with Stella that evening. When Jackson opened his eyes, Lee asked, "Is this the best hotel you can find?" (Friedman, 1995, p. 57; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 400). The mantle for Jackson's care had fallen to Lee.

Stella spent three months in New York although she and Jackson never spent a night under the same roof. According to Lee, Stella made no comments about Jackson's art but did seem to take pride in his artistic friends (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). During this time Sande left New York with his small family, left the Eighth Street apartment to Jackson, and left the care of Jackson to Lee. As one family member commented, "[Sande] had devoted a hell of a lot of time and energy to taking care of Jack. In some ways his life was blighted as a result. I don't think that's too strong a word to use" (p. 401).

In August/September of 1942, eight months after meeting Pollock, Lee moved into the apartment, marking the beginning of a very productive stage in Jackson's career (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). It was also at this time that Jackson was introduced to Peggy Guggenheim, one of the foremost collectors of contemporary art. After arriving in New York from London in 1941, Guggenheim opened a gallery, Art of this Century, which she described as a "research laboratory for new ideas" (Emmerling, 2009, p.35). The gallery officially opened in October 1942, almost coinciding with the closure of the WPA. Thanks to the efforts of friends like Herbert Matter, and Guggenheim's manager, Howard Putzel, Jackson's art was brought to the gallery-owner's attention. Putzel's encouragement led Guggenheim to include Jackson in a collage exhibit (Jackson's contribution has since been lost). However, Guggenheim was underwhelmed by Jackson's art, referring to one painting, *Stenographic Figure* as "dreadful" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 444).

In early 1943, Guggenheim made the decision to exhibit up-and-coming American artists, who were invited to submit paintings for panel selection. The exhibition would provide a much-sought after opening for American artists to enter into a world that had thus far been dominated by the European art crowd. The art dealer was unconvinced of Jackson's potential to be selected but one juror, celebrated artist Piet Mondrian remarked of Jackson's

submission, “I think this is the most interesting work I’ve seen so far in America...You must watch this man” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 444). It was enough to influence Guggenheim, who promptly included *Stenographic Figure* in the March exhibition.



Stenographic Figure

(Emmerling, 2009, p. 43)

While reviews were positive, the painting failed to sell. In July, Jackson wrote to Charles, “Things really broke with the showing of that painting. I have a year’s contract with The Art of this Century and a large painting to do for Peggy Guggenheim’s house. [The canvas] looks pretty big, but exciting as hell” (Friedman, 1995, p. 58). Jackson was also offered a solo showing, which would take place in November 1943 (Friedman, 1995; Hunter, 2002).

While interpretations of Jackson’s paintings remain subjective at best, many art critics view his painting *Male and Female* (circa 1942, and showing two figures depicting male and female – as to which is male and which is female is still debated) as linked to Jackson’s steady relationship with Lee (Emmerling, 2009; Landau, 1989), while others see it as a move in Jackson to embrace both his masculine and feminine characteristics (Friedman, 1995). However, what is more significant is that the painting already showed some of the dripping and splattering techniques that were to become Jackson’s trademark (Friedman, 1995).

The titles of other paintings such as *Guardians of the Secret* (1943), *Pasiphaë* (1943), and *Blue (Moby Dick)* (1943) along with the paintings’ symbolic imagery have led to much-debated interpretations. However, even at this early stage of his career, it should be noted that the titles of Jackson’s paintings were rarely his own (Emmerling, 2009; Naifeh &

White Smith, 1992). In fact, they were often suggested by his wife and friends. Lee reported that when a friend suggested *Pasiphaë*, Jackson merely asked, “Who the hell is Pasiphaë?” (Emmerling, 2009, p. 42), thus demonstrating that the titles of the paintings bear little relevance to the intended content of the paintings. For the most part, they are merely an afterthought.

In the catalogue for Jackson’s November exhibition, his talent was described as “volcanic...unpredictable...lavish...explosive”, going on to say, “What we need is more young men who paint from inner impulsion without an ear to what the critic or spectator may feel – painters who will risk spoiling a canvas to say something in their own way” (Emmerling, 2009, p. 46). At the exhibition, Lee had ensured that Jackson was dressed in suit and tie but could not prevent his inebriation. While he weaved back and forth to the bathroom, or stood stiff-legged staring at the floor, Lee stood at the front desk handing out catalogues and answering questions but forever keeping an eye on him (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

The reviews for the show were reserved but approving. Clement Greenberg (1943) equally reserved and somewhat critical on the one hand – “Being young and full of energy, he takes orders he can’t fill” (p. 621) and “Pollock’s titles are pretentious” (p. 621), on the other hand saw fit to state, “[Pollock’s paintings] are among the strongest abstract paintings I have yet seen by an American” (p. 621). Two years after Pearl Harbour, America was heavily involved in the war and there was one aspect of Pollock that united critics, he was an American, his paintings being described as containing an “American fury” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 466) and his entrance on the art scene as “a sense of history on the march” (p. 466). Nevertheless, only one painting sold.

The canvas that he obtained for Guggenheim’s mural was an enormous 6 x 2.4 metre construction – suitable for Guggenheim’s apartment but oversized for Lee and Jackson’s flat. Secretly they knocked out a wall and carried the debris out in buckets at night so that the owner would not notice (Engelmann, 2007). Jackson faced the empty canvas, first for days then for weeks, and eventually for almost six months, making no mark on its surface and growing noticeably depressed. The day before the painting was due (in January 1944, for a party for Guggenheim), Jackson began to paint. Years later he told a friend, “I had a vision. It was a stampede” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 468). While the original image, according to Jackson, pictured “every animal in the American West...cows and horses and antelopes and buffaloes. *Everything* is charging across the goddamn surface” (p. 468), the result (15 hours later) veiled any intended imagery. Instead, the canvas is

awash with bold swirls of black, blue, white and yellow paint, what Guggenheim (1983) described as “a continuous band of abstract figures in a rhythmic dance” (p. 296).

As soon as the paint was dry, Jackson rolled up the canvas and headed to Guggenheim’s apartment to install it. The canvas turned out to be too long, panicking Jackson who repeatedly phoned Guggenheim at the gallery over the next couple of hours, frantically insisting she return to help with the installation. Sleep deprived and in an anxious state, Jackson began drinking (having found Guggenheim’s hidden alcohol cabinet). By the time the canvas was cut down and mounted on the wall, Jackson was drunk. Staggering naked into a room where Guggenheim’s flatmate was holding a party, he unzipped his pants and urinated into the marble fireplace (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). According to Lee, “Only some part of [Jackson] knew he was terrific” (Landau, 1989, p. 155).

As Jackson began another alcoholic binge, his career was beginning to take shape. A number of his paintings appeared in travelling exhibitions, and in May 1944, the Museum of Modern Art purchased one of Jackson’s artworks. Guggenheim also renewed Jackson’s contract, and while it ensured a steady income, failed to sufficiently cover bills. *Art & Architecture* asked Jackson for an interview in which interviewer Robert Motherwell helped Jackson to formulate answers. His rising success also posed a great cost. Friends pulled away, some resentful of his fame. As one friend remarked, Jackson had been caught in “the web” – dealers and directors “always ready to snare an artist and devour him” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 477). In a conversation in a bar, Jackson spoke to a friend “about the source of inspiration and about the limits of working from the unconscious...a problem when you have plumbed the depths in how to go beyond that level and produce further content” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 491).

His family believed Jackson was not earning the money he should have been, leaving him caught between expectations and disappointments. Jackson drank even more, picking fights in bars, urinating in the middle of crowded barrooms, and not painting. Lee, who had resumed painting herself, gave up on her endeavours and devoted herself to pulling Jackson back from the brink (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Towards the end of 1944, Jackson began seeing Dr Elizabeth Hubbard, a medical doctor who treated her patients from a psychological as well as homeopathic perspective (Pivano, 2002). The sessions provided enough impetus for Jackson to begin painting again and to produce enough paintings for a March 1945 exhibit planned at Art of this Century. While art critics were more enthusiastic about the showing than they had been before, some reviewers still complained about the difficulty in understanding what the work was all about, and comparing Pollock’s “nervous, if

rough, calligraphy” to “baked-macaroni” (Tyler, 1945, p. 30). Only Clement Greenberg dared to praise Pollock unequivocally, declaring him the strongest painter of his generation but it was not enough to lift Jackson out of his drinking binges and frustration (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Lee delivered an ultimatum to Jackson: either they get married or they separate. Jackson agreed on marriage. After a restful summer on Long Island where Jackson drank heavily but was considerably more relaxed, Lee suggested moving to the Island. At first Jackson balked but a few weeks later, changed his mind and announced the planned move to friends and family. According to friend Dan Miller, “Pollock didn’t basically move to [the country], he was moving away from something...he told me that himself” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 502).

On October 25, 1945, Jackson and Lee Pollock were married in the Marble Collegiate Church in New York and on November 3rd, the couple left the city for Fireplace Road, The Springs (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007). While the changes may have offered new possibilities for Jackson, according to Jay Pollock’s wife, Alma, “the marriage did what it was supposed to do, it gave Lee more control” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 504).

Through the winter the Pollock’s fixed up the house, planted a vegetable garden and explored the island. And while Jackson’s April 1946 exhibition was muted, critics were kinder and Greenberg proclaimed the show to be a transition (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). For the first time in many years, Jackson had a newfound sense of stability in his new surroundings, of which Lee was an integral part (Hunter, 2002).

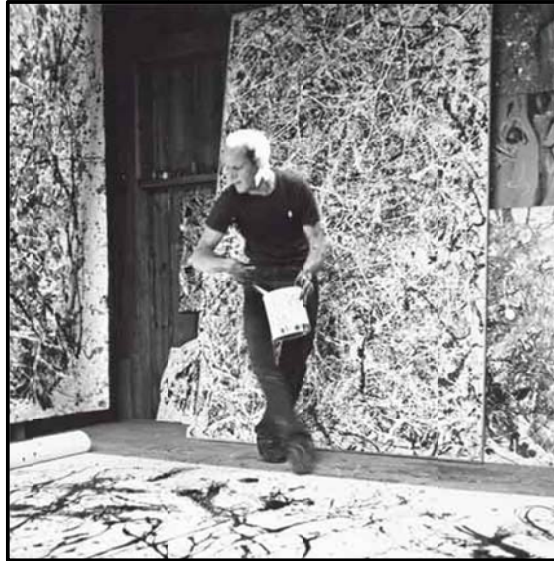
6.2.4 Marriage and the Long Island Years (1946 – 1952)

6.2.4.1 Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21-40 years) (cont.)

Tied

Jackson had initially begun using an upstairs room as a studio but because of space constraints, moved his studio to an outside barn in June 1946. Here he was able to experiment with larger canvases, which he not only propped up against the wall but also placed on the floor, enabling him to study them from different angles. Clement Greenberg was enthusiastic about the paintings Jackson began to create on the floor, and encouraged

him in these new endeavours. Jackson obliged (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). As Lee later reminisced, “I think that living in Springs allowed Jackson to work. He needed the peace and quiet of country life. It enabled him to work” (Du Plessix & Gray, 1967, pp.48-51).



Jackson Pollock painting in his studio

(Spring, 1998, p. 85)

Guggenheim announced she was closing the gallery and returning to Europe, leaving Jackson one last opportunity for a show with her, which would take place from January 14 to February 1, 1947. Motivated by the show, Jackson worked hard to produce material while still finding time to frequent local bars where he befriended a few of the Springs' inhabitants. Jackson also suggested starting a family but Lee flatly refused, citing Jackson's drinking as a reason. Initially Jackson went into a rage over the issue but he soon let the matter go (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Instead, he literally poured his energy into his art – pouring, dripping, and flinging paint on and across canvases at his feet (Engelmann, 2007). While it was not the first time an artist had used the 'dripping' technique, Pollock was the first to utilise it to create an entire painting (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Speaking of his technique, Jackson said, “On the floor I am more at ease. I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting” (Spring, 1988, p. 54). As Frank (1983) states, each painting of Jackson's is unique without any lapsing into formula. “Painting is self-discovery,” Jackson once said, “Every good artist paints what he is” (Rodman, 1961, p. 82).

While Jackson enjoyed the baking and gardening, while he (like his mother) enjoyed the finer things in life, those who witnessed his painting described him as a farmer hovering

over his fields. The paintings represented his rocks, trees and his earth. As Herbert Matter pointed out, “Art was [Jackson’s] landscape” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 540).

In May 1947, Guggenheim closed her gallery but not before arranging Jackson’s contract handover to gallery-owner Betty Parsons. Lee and Jackson, meanwhile, settled into a routine in Springs where Lee cooked and entertained guests while Jackson painted. Jackson might have created but Lee made it possible (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). By January 1948, Jackson’s confidence and creativity were pushing him forward to his first exhibition with Parsons. However, reviews for the show were largely negative. Furthermore, the last cheque of Guggenheim’s monthly stipend for Jackson arrived in February. Facing dire financial straits, Jackson took to paying grocery bills with paintings and considered finding employment. Fortunately he became the recipient of the Demarest Trust (a small financial stipend available to deserving artist) which provided some financial stability (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

This was a period of relative idyll and calm in Jackson’s life. He and Lee would spend relaxing weekends socialising with the Matters and Gustaf and Vita Peterson. Jackson would enthral children and adults alike with stories of his youth, hunting in the desert, jumping trains, and of a much-loved dog Gyp. As Vita later recalled, “[Jackson] played with our kids like he was one of them. He had that gentleness himself, a childlike quality that children were attracted to” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 561). And while some proclaimed Jackson to be quite mute, others commented that Jackson spoke with “unflagging, manic brilliance” (Hoberman, 1986, p. 11). Said Irving Howe, “I used to think, when visiting his studio, suppose I were suddenly to drop dead, would he stop talking?” (p. 11). Surrounded by these friends, and others, Jackson seemed to find a surrogate family, and brothers to replace those missing. Lee and Jackson, meanwhile, settled into a push-and-pull relationship, taking turns in giving orders, yelling abusive comments and playing victim or persecutor (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

As Jackson’s personal confidence grew, so too did his creative confidence. Paintings which were generally named by friends and associates, were given numbers by Jackson from 1947. For instance, *Lavender Mist* became *Number 1, 1950*. As Lee explained, “Numbers are neutral. They make people look at a picture for what it is – pure painting” while Jackson added, “I decided to stop adding to the confusion...Abstract painting is abstract. It confronts you” (Roueché, 1950, p. 16). The numbering was done to avoid giving too much weight or meaning to the paintings, to distance the paintings from outdated notions of content (Frank, 1983; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Spring, 1998). As Jackson stated in a

1949 *Life* article, “If [the critics would] leave most of their preconceived notions at home and just look at the painting, they’d have no trouble enjoying it. It’s just like looking at a bed of flowers. You don’t tear your hair out over what it means” (Seiberling, 1949, pp.42-45).



Lavender Mist: Number 1, 1950

(Engelmann, 2007, p. 58)

Lee returned to painting after an almost two year hiatus. Initially supportive, Jackson’s enthusiasm soon evaporated. Lee would remark to friends that her enthusiasm for his work was far greater than his for her work. When Jackson took friends such as Harry Jackson into Lee’s studio, he would make comments such as “That’s Lee’s little painting” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 571). Lee took note of the dynamics and took to painting only in the mornings, when Jackson was asleep. Coincidentally, although the two events were not necessarily connected, Jackson began drinking more heavily again. With ninety dollars of the Demarest Trust, he bought a rundown Model A Ford, which gave him mobility. As Stella Pollock commented in a letter to Frank, “[Jack] has a Ford Coupe, and he should not drink & drive [or] he will kill himself or someone” (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 572). However, one day towards the end of 1948, the car would not run. Jackson, tipsy, decided to ride his bicycle home from the store, carrying a case of beer under his arm. The bike hit a patch of gravel, and slipped out from under him. His arm was cut by the broken glass of the beer bottles, which sent him to the medical clinic to be stitched and resulted in him meeting Dr. Edwin Heller, who knew about Jackson’s drinking and who said he had a cure (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

While Heller prescribed tranquilisers for Jackson, the art world was beginning to boom in America and magazines such as *Life* began to dictate what essentially was art, and

what was not. However, what was more interesting to the media in general, was the human element – and they were looking for a story (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). By way of an introduction, Jackson's January 1949 show led to several of the paintings being sold. It was enough to garner interest from *Life* magazine, which, in August 1949 ran a two-page full colour spread (with an additional half a page in black-and-white) titled *Jackson Pollock: Is he the greatest living painting in the United States?* (Engelmann, 2007; Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). The article gave Jackson the celebrity he seemed to crave, but also thrust him into an equally critical limelight. While art critics Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg debated the direction in which art in America was moving, Pollock's individuality became a footnote. In other words, lauding or criticising Jackson's art was merely a means to an end, an opportunity to publicise art in general. For someone who equated himself with his work, misunderstandings and attacks on his art were received as personal commentary. He began to grow increasingly self-conscious and uncomfortable in the media spotlight (Friedman, 1995). As Jackson once said to Lee, "I feel like a clam without a shell" (1995, p. 140).

Stella Pollock wrote copious letters to friends and family announcing the *Life* article, but of Jackson's brothers, only Sande openly acknowledged Jackson's newfound fame. In Springs, Lee and Jackson were inundated with visits from friends, who found Jackson to be "embarrassed" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 597) and "a little ashamed" (p. 597) of the article and attention he was receiving. However, privately he revelled in it, arranging to have a hundred copies delivered to his door. His November showing at the Parson's gallery was a successful one which attracted many new faces to the once insular art world. As fellow artist, Willem de Kooning commented on the opening night, "Jackson has finally broken the ice" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 598).

It has been widely reported that Jackson stopped drinking for a two year period, while being treated by Dr Heller. While he did manage to go for weeks between drinks, Lee (in an account given years later) stated that Jackson never gave up drinking altogether. In fact, Jackson himself revealed to friend Axel Horn that he kept a bottle of cooking sherry buried in the backyard during this period (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Nevertheless, public displays of drunkenness came to a temporary end and when Lee asked Jackson how it was that Heller had such an influence on him, Jackson responded, "He's an honest man, I can believe him" (du Plessix & Gray, 1967, pp.48-51). Jackson managed to stay relatively sober as the tide of celebrity engulfed him, even going to so far as to be outwardly unmoved by the death of Dr Heller in a car accident in March 1950 (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992)

In fact, 1950 turned out to be Jackson's most prolific year, producing over 50 paintings which not only honed his drip technique but indirectly demanded that fellow artists who, up to this point had dismissed him, to now acknowledge his contribution. When the abstractionists decided to protest an upcoming juried competition at the Museum of Modern Art for its anti-abstract bias, it was Pollock's name they needed. In November 1950 Jackson travelled to New York to sit for a photograph (featuring 15 artists) for *Life* magazine. The photograph, titling the group as *The Irascibles*, appeared in January of 1951. Not only did it garner the group a lot of attention, but gave Jackson even more stature (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). As Bruno Alfieri wrote, "Pollock has broken all the barriers between his picture and himself...Each one of his paintings is part of himself...But what kind of a man is he? – What is his inner world worth?" (Alfieri, 1950, page unknown). Alfieri (1950) went on to suggest Jackson as Picasso's heir. The attention seemed to please Jackson. As one friend, Betsy Zogbaum noted, "He wasn't a smiler as a rule but that summer [1950] it seemed like he was smiling every time I saw him" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 609).

Through it all, Lee remained Jackson's voice, providing the conversation in his silences and summarising reviews for the crowds that invariably gathered around him. She also never apologised for his silences, his insults or profane language, and always insisted he was a "genius" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 612) and therefore allowed to do anything he desired. While Jackson confidently proclaimed himself to be the greatest and best, to a friend he confided, "I've been out to so many parties, I don't feel like a painter anymore" (p. 612). At this pinnacle of public attention, Jackson met photographer Hans Namuth who asked to photograph Jackson while painting. Namuth had little interest in Jackson's art but was very interested in the artist (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). In July and August 1950, Namuth took a series of photographs of the artist at work (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

However, the public attention did little to protect Jackson from critical reviewers. When *Time* magazine published an article titled *Chaos, damn it!* in which Alfieri's piece was extensively quoted, including Alfieri's allusion to Jackson's paintings as chaotic, Jackson was incensed. He quickly sent off a telegram stating "No chaos damn it" (Friedman, 1995, p. 160; Letters, 1950, p. 10). Further, any money that Jackson was making was being poured into the house and then over-extended on. And then too there was the purchase of a second-hand 1947 Cadillac convertible (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). The *Life* article that had asked if Jackson was perhaps the greatest living painter, had ultimately reawakened his insecurities. "They only want me on the top of the heap so they can push me off," he

confided to a friend (Potter, 1985, p. 114). To Clement Greenberg, he described a nightmare in which he was standing at the edge of a cliff and his brothers were trying to push him off (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Among competing artists, Jackson's name became a source of contempt, dismissing him as a "freak" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 631) and "irrelevant" (1992, p. 631). Friend Conrad Marca-Relli stated, "[Jackson] felt that [other artists] hated his work, or they thought he was a phony, and all that made him distrust them" (1992, p. 631). By 1950 Lee was also beginning to paint again, a source of mild irritation for Jackson who complained to a friend, "Lee keeps copying me and I wish she'd stop" (1992, p. 640). In July 1950, Jackson invited his family to Springs for a reunion which, according to Lee Krasner, left Jackson alternating between dreaming of winning over his family and the conviction that the reunion would end badly.

Jackson and Lee spent the visit recounting his victories, reading articles and preparing lavish, expensive meals for a family largely disinterested in Jackson's accomplishments. In an interview years later, Jackson's niece, Jeremy, recalled, "The family thought he was pulling everybody's leg. They didn't take him seriously as an artist" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 647). The reunion failed in Jackson's eyes and he spent the rest of the summer of 1950 withdrawn, and convinced fellow artists, his family and even Lee had abandoned him (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In August, Namuth suggested making a film to capture Pollock's method of painting. The initial product, a seven-minute long black and white film, was unimpressive but Namuth enlisted the help of a film editor and for the next few months, he began filming in earnest (Engelmann, 2007; Frank, 1983; Spring, 1998). Jackson allowed Namuth complete control of the direction, even to the point of the director suggesting Jackson paint on glass in the frigid outdoors. Once-natural gestures by Jackson such as stirring paint or a cigarette being discarded, were shot and reshot, each movement choreographed to the last minute detail (Friedman, 1995; Gray, 2003; Varnedoe, 2002). Between shoots, Jackson spent most of his time in his studio, producing very little work. At one stage he invited Lee into the studio, and pointing at the now celebrated painting, *Lavender Mist*, asked her, "Is this a painting?" (Hunter, 2002, p. 60; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 649), illustrating a rising doubt in his abilities and achievements.

Filming finally came to an end on November 25, 1950 – a bitterly cold day on which even Namuth realised that Jackson was full of tension unrelated to the cold. When Namuth

announced that filmed was complete, Jackson headed straight for the house and reached for the bourbon. After downing a tumbler-full, Jackson announced to Namuth and others present, "This is the first drink I've had in two years" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 652). More drinks followed as Namuth attempted to direct Jackson to stop. Jackson pointed at Namuth accusingly. "I'm not a phony," he shouted, "You're a phony" (Emmerling, 2009, p. 76; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 652). The argument went back and forth as Jackson and Namuth seated themselves at a dinner table housing a number of guests. Unable to contain the anger any longer, Jackson stood up and gripped the end of the table with both hands, threatening to upturn it. "Now?" he asked over and over angrily until eventually Namuth shouted, "Jackson – this you must not do!" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 653). The table was lifted, glasses and food crashing to the floor, until the whole structure fell on its side. Jackson stormed from the house and as the backdoor slammed, Lee stated, "Coffee will be served in the living room" (Friedman, 1995, p. 165; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 653).

At his November 28, 1950 exhibition, Jackson was surrounded by fans, individuals less interested in his paintings than they were in the *Life* magazine celebrity. Jackson stood immobile and sober. Later he commented, "People don't look at you the same, and they're right. You're not your own you anymore...whatever the hell you are after that, you're not your you" (Landau, 1989, p. 262). The show was a failure in terms of sales, and in January 1951, in a letter to Ossorio, Jackson revealed that he was drinking and depressed: "Last year I thought at last I'm above water from here on in – but things don't work that easily I guess" (O'Connor & Eugen, 1978, p. 257; Varnedoe, 2002, p. 100). Facing depression, Jackson and Lee consulted a number of professionals, among them a psychiatrist who prescribed antabuse and a chemist who persuaded Jackson that his problem could be solved by establishing a proper balance of gold and silver in his urine (Friedman, 1995).

While Pollock explored new styles in his painting where black was the predominant colour, he also convinced Parsons to show Lee's work. Both 1951 shows failed to impress critics (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). The 'black paintings', as they became known, were a return to more explicit imagery for Jackson. Friends commented that he was worried about the images returning, and seemed overwhelmingly unsure of himself. By summer Jackson was binge drinking and in June 1951, admitted himself to a private clinic for alcohol abuse. It was not enough to stem the drinking, nor enough to placate friends who had rejected him for his drunken outbursts. Rumours of Jackson picking up women in various drinking establishments began to surface as he continued to drink. On the night of December 28, considerably inebriated, Jackson attempted to drive home. On

approaching an intersection, the car veered off the road and eventually hit a tree. The bonnet of the car accorded, sending the engine through the dashboard and the steering wheel to pin Jackson in the chest. After a few dazed minutes, he climbed from the wreck and wandered off into the darkness to find help (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In January 1952, Jackson's contract with Betty Parsons expired, and he moved to the gallery of Sidney Janis in April of the same year. However, the move did not settle Jackson who became self-destructive, twice almost setting fire to the house. By the winter of 1952, Lee was beginning to dissociate herself from Jackson when he became too difficult at social gatherings. In retaliation Jackson would hurl vulgar insults at Lee in public, and at home the two were continuously locked in abusive, yelling fights. While Lee always maintained that Jackson never hit her, the black eyes and bruises witnessed by friends contradicted her story. Unable to control Jackson on her own any longer, Lee called Stella. Stella's arrival in October was enough to get Jackson back to painting long enough to produce work for his first Janis show in November, which Clement Greenberg used as the impetus to say that Jackson's ten-year run was over. As if to punctuate this, a retrospective of Pollock's work was held in Vermont a week after the Janis opening. To friends, 40-year-old Jackson Pollock was noticeably sombre as he gazed at some of his most celebrated paintings from just a few years before.

Discussion of the Sixth Stage

Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages, while offering a unique and creative way of looking at development, sometimes proved to be limiting when researching the life of Jackson Pollock. This came to the fore when faced with this period of Pollock's life. Like interpretations of Pollock's paintings sometimes cloud the picture of the man, so too does Erikson's creative writing and vague definitions (Welchman, 2000) cloud and therefore limit the opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the individual. As Erikson (cited in Stevens, 1983) stated in an interview, "I've read it over and over again that people felt something, found [my theory] very good and found it very convincing and afterwards they didn't quite know what I had said" (p. 112). The researcher was, at times, torn between the attractiveness of Erikson's vague simplicity and the theory's lack in fully explaining Jackson Pollock's intrapsychic complexity (for future research recommendations, see Chapter 7, section 7.7). Nevertheless, Erikson's (1950) theory is valuable in that it highlights Pollock's chaotic ambivalence during this period. As a means to illustrate this, a lengthy description of the turmoil that dominated Pollock's life during this period was necessary.

In order to navigate this stage of *Intimacy versus Isolation*, the individual needs to have developed a stable sense of self. While Pollock was committed to his art and to his identity as an artist, it was an identity that placed heavy emphasis on the opinions of those surrounding him. In order for him to be able to commit himself to his relationship with Lee in a manner that provided balance, prior stages would have had to have been resolved.

A number of difficulties begin to emerge in earnest during this time. Due to Pollock's earlier ambivalence, particularly in the *Initiative versus Guilt* and *Industry versus Inferiority* stages, he had developed a pattern where he often let Sande make decisions for him. This mantle was passed to Lee, which ultimately set the tone for an imbalance in the relationship. As Erikson (1968) noted, a sense of inferiority may be experienced because of wanting "mommy more than knowledge" and preferring "to be the baby at home" (p. 124). Furthermore, while Pollock had requested to be deferred from army conscription, the 4-F Unqualified label, stood to question his sense of competency – as a human being on equal footing with others around him. Pollock himself used the word 'rejected' to explain his deferment, giving some indication of his own view of why events had turned out as they had.

Nevertheless, he continued to challenge the shortcomings of his childhood years. When he decided to marry Lee, he insisted on a church wedding even though the Pollock family in which Pollock had been raised, according to Lee Krasner, had been anti-religious (Hunter, 2002). As Lee went on to say, "I felt that Jackson, from many things he did and said, felt a great loss there" (du Plessix & Gray, 1967, p. 49), and his wedding perhaps provided an opportunity to revisit this 'loss'. Two difficulties arose in this pairing, however. Firstly, Lee played the role of both sexual partner and mother which confused the boundaries of their relationship, and secondly, that the pairing failed to produce offspring. One of the aims of this stage is building a mutually sharing relationship for procreation (Massey, 1986), but unfortunately Lee and Jackson diverged on this point (Harris, 2000; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). It is the researcher's opinion that both these issues would have placed strain on the couple and called into question the much-needed balance that is required in partnerships.

While Pollock found a certain pride in his productiveness, once more his family failed to approve of his initiative. As his niece Jeremy had stated, the family did not know what to make of Pollock's art, art which was also then criticised by the media. Pollock and his artworks became a commodity, all the more emphasised by Namuth's hefty direction. When Jackson asked Lee if *Lavender Mist* was a painting, not a good painting, but merely a painting, doubt was clearly beginning to surface. Perhaps this called into question for

Jackson the wisdom of his initiative and willingness in exploring a completely new way of presenting art. Pollock was facing a 'what next?' dilemma (Varnedoe, 2002) which, in the researcher's opinion, must have felt overwhelming to an artist who has painted from within himself, who, in his own words had "plumbed the depths" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 491). To Jeffrey Potter, Pollock had confided, "On a good day my work feels like that – alive, strong, all me" (Landau, 2002, p. 83) but it was evident to all around him and to Pollock himself that by the early 1950s, those good days were few and far between.

As shame and doubt began to dominate, Pollock's run-ins with the law and his ability to respect boundaries also dominated. Previously attained feelings of competence and with it industriousness failed to protect him from an overriding sense of inferiority that was beginning to surface.

6.2.5 The final years (1952 – 1956)

6.2.5.1 Generativity versus Stagnation (age 40-60 years)

This stage proposes a link between the generations as generativity is primarily a concern in guiding the next generation – be it one's own children, or making a creative contribution to society as a whole. Failure to navigate this stage may lead to a pervading sense of stagnation and self-impoverishment which the adult then looks to the child to redeem. Successfully navigating this stage leads to a positive sense of generativity (Welchman, 2000).

Where to from here

In January 1953, Jackson burst into an exhibition of an old school friend and ripped paintings from the wall, a performance he repeated a few weeks later at another exhibition. Positive reviews from his November 1952 exhibition did little to lift him. According to fellow artists he was repeating himself and the articulate, cultured Willem de Kooning was hailed as the embodiment of a good painter. "The whole art world was talking about de Kooning," recalls friend and fellow artist Nicholas Carone, "Jackson was all through. They were building up de Kooning and slaughtering Pollock" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 714). Nevertheless, de Kooning and Jackson remained friends and could still be seen at the local pub, passing a bottle back and forth. "Jackson, you're the greatest painter in America," de Kooning would say, to which Jackson would respond, "No Bill, *you're* the greatest painter in America" (Solomon, 1987, p. 241).

By Summer, Jackson was producing very little in the way of paintings, and drinking almost incessantly. Old friends from New York such as de Kooning who came to Springs to see Jackson, were turned away by Lee. Jackson vacillated between planting a garden and re-shingling the roof, and terrorising the neighbours with his drunken and abusive behaviour. Stella Pollock was invited and arrived in September 1953, immediately heralding an improvement in Jackson who stopped drinking for most of the month and began painting again. Not much is known of what transpired but Stella left abruptly at the end of the month, and Jackson went back to drinking (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). Due to a lack of material from Pollock, Janis cancelled the November show. It would be the first year that Jackson would not have an exhibition in a decade (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). In December, Lee again asked for Stella but this time Jackson's brothers refused the visit. Jackson managed to produce enough paintings for a February 1954 showing. While reviews were positive of his new work, they rejected his earlier works as impersonal. "They're really painted, not dripped!" wrote Emily Genauer (1954, page unknown), while Clement Greenberg maintained that Jackson had "had a phenomenal ten-year run, but it was over" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 731). Young painters who stopped into the Pollocks for an affirmation from Jackson were generally insulted and criticised. "Why bother with those kids?" he once asked Greenberg (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 732).

In June, while staggering with an equally inebriated de Kooning across the garden, Jackson stepped into a hole and snapped his ankle. The injury tied him to the house for the rest of June and for most of July. While Lee set up her studio downstairs, Jackson gained weight from inactivity (Varnedoe, 2002). In August, Hurricane Carol swept across Long Island, dragging Jackson's studio along with a summer's worth of paintings, out to sea. "When Jackson saw that," said James Brooks, "he broke down and cried like a baby" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 740). Over the next six months Stella was to have three heart attacks, the family were to deny Lee's request to have Stella stay with them, and Jackson was to break the same ankle a second time. Added to this was a repudiation by Clement Greenberg in *Partisan Review*, which publicly traded in Pollock for the up-and-coming Clyfford Still (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). The arguments between Jackson and Lee only intensified, and at Lee's encouragement, in September 1955 Jackson re-entered therapy with psychologist Dr Ralph Klein in New York (Engelmann, 2007; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

In October 1955, Lee had a showing in New York to a favourable reception. A month later, a showing for Jackson was held at the Janis gallery. The show, titled *15 years of Jackson Pollock* featured 16 paintings, 14 of which had been exhibited before (Friedman,

1995). While Janis had avoided using the term 'retrospective', those who were friends and colleagues of Jackson were well aware that he had all but stopped working (Varnedoe, 2002). "There was a lot of feeling that the work was falling apart," recalled Bud Hopkins, "...Pollock was physically, psychologically, personally in terrible shape and...the art as art was in terrible shape, too" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 752). Back on Long Island, Jackson spent his evenings begging drinks from the few bars that still agreed to serve him despite a long-standing reputation for drunken violence. On Christmas eve, Jackson entered a bar in East Hampton where he attempted to start a fight. When the bartender threw him out, Jackson put his fist through the glass pane in the door. He spent the rest of the night in the East Hampton jail (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992).

Around this time, Jackson said to B.H. Friedman (1995), "A man's life *is* his work; his work *is* his life" (p. xx). To Lee he said, "Painting is no problem; the problem is what to do when you're not painting" (Engelmann, 2007, p. 71). Every morning through January and February 1956, Jackson would trudge through the snow to his studio and light the kerosene stove but he did not paint. Compounded with this was the struggle with his health. He had gained a great deal of weight due to his consumption of beer and his anxiety levels caused him to jump at the slightest sound (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992). According to friend Ted Dragon, Jackson would sit on the back porch or stand at the kitchen window staring for hours on end. "At the end, he was turning into a very weird personality" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 757). As Jackson himself remarked, "I'm wild. There's wildness in me. There's wildness in my hands," and then to himself, said, "There was" (Friedman, 1995, p. 228).

In February 1956, 25-year-old Ruth Kligman entered Jackson's life when she walked into the Cedar Bar in New York. Jackson made no attempt to hide the affair from Lee, going so far as to introduce Ruth to the couple's friends. In June Ruth moved to Sag Harbour, just 9 kilometres from Springs, enabling the two to spend more time together – particularly in public. Incensed, Lee decided on a 'trial separation' and with Jackson's assistance, bought a ticket on a ship bound for Europe. She pleaded with Jackson to join her but he refused and on July 12, 1956, Lee left (Emmerling, 2009; Engelmann, 2007; Friedman, 1995). The following week Ossorio bumped into Jackson at the train station. "He was half-blotted , extremely depressed and physically ill, body bloated, ankles swollen, face all red and blotchy," recalled Ossorio. When Jackson saw him, he shouted out, "My doctor's on vacation and Lee's gone. At last, I'm free" (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 782).

Ruth moved in promptly, but within a week Jackson went to East Hampton and arranged to send a dozen roses to Lee's hotel room in Paris. She returned a postcard thanking him for the flowers and telling him she missed him. Towards Ruth Jackson became abusive, slapping her in public and physically throwing her out of his studio (Friedman, 1995). It was enough to encourage Ruth to leave and at the beginning of August she left the house. It did nothing to lift Jackson's mood. On a visit with Marca-Relli, Jackson looked up at the night sky and said, "Life is beautiful, the trees are beautiful, the sky is beautiful. Why is it that all I can think about is death?" (Friedman, 1995, p. 233; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 789).

On August 11 Ruth returned by train, bringing her friend Edith Metzger (Friedman, 1995; Varnedoe, 2002). Once back at the house, Jackson turned down lunch and reached for the gin instead. That evening, Ruth begged Jackson to attend a benefit concert at Ossorio's that he had been invited to. It took her over an hour to convince him. He stopped the car on the way to the concert, and when a friend stopped and asked if everything was okay, Jackson expressed that he was not feeling well. It was not enough to sway Ruth. At a nearby bar, Jackson found a telephone and left a message with Ossorio's maid: he was going to be late. On returning to the car, he found Edith Metzger upset and refusing to get back into the vehicle. Both Jackson and Ruth ordered her back into the car and insisted they were returning home. Reluctantly Edith agreed. According to Ruth's account, Jackson hit the accelerator and raced back to Fireplace Road. Edith was screaming 'let me out' over and over although little could be heard over the noise of the engine (Kligman, 1974). The car hit a bump and careened off the road before flipping, end over end. Jackson and Ruth were thrown from the car, Ruth landing safely in the brush. Edith stayed in the car, which fell upside down on top of her and killed her. Jackson's head hit a tree, and he was killed instantly, what the death certificate listed as a 'compound fracture of the skull' (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992; Spring, 1998). It was August 11, 1956 and Jackson Pollock was 44-years-old.

Discussion of the Seventh Stage

As Pollock began to look back on his life, back on the child who had dreamt of being a great artist and finding his place within his family, and back on the adult who, for a brief moment, had achieved that great pinnacle of success only to have it taken from him on a very public platform, he may have been overwhelmed by the discrepancy between his dreams and reality. He began to stagnate, unable to move forward, and certainly unable to go back.

It is the researcher's opinion that while Pollock died when he was 44-years-old, the aging (both psychologically and physically) which chronic alcohol addiction had brought on, metaphorically moved him into the next stage, that of *Integrity versus Despair*. As Erikson (1963a) wrote, despair comes with the realisation that life has been lived, and that there are no second chances. Any hope that Jackson may have held on to through his life, seemed to have dissipated. As Clement Greenberg saw fit to proclaim, Pollock's ten-year run was over.

Jackson's lifelong ambivalence served as little protection from a society that treated both him and the art that he 'poured himself into' as a commodity. True to Erikson's theorised stages, without a true sense of self, there was nothing to fall back on. This is not to suggest that Pollock committed suicide, but simply that Pollock seemed to give up. To illustrate this, friend Ronald Stein related an incident in which a group (which included Pollock) had been drinking and decided to bicycle to the beach for a swim. Pollock could barely stay upright and crashed a number of times. At one point, he fell over and did not get up. Wearing shorts, Pollock continued to pedal while lying on the ground, with his bare leg scraping on the tarmac. He would not allow anyone to touch him even though he was taking the skin off his legs and elbows. Eventually the friends had to physically restrain him in order to stop him from pedalling (Naifeh & White Smith, 1992, p. 718). So too, towards the end of his life, although Pollock moved from day to day, the vulnerability of an unstable ego identity became more visible and raw. Pollock kept moving on a path of despair and self-destruction until he was physically prevented from doing so, with the car accident that claimed (and in the researcher's opinion, saved) his life.

6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages of development was used to enrich and elucidate on the psychological understanding of important experiences and events in the life of Jackson Pollock. Jackson's lifespan development was discussed according to Erikson's theory, where Erikson divides development into eight discrete stages. These eight stages were used to provide a guideline in describing and identifying those aspects of Pollock's life that made it unique as well as highlighting aspects that illustrated a human commonality. To this end, Jackson's life was in agreement with Erikson's stages of development and highlighted the danger of failing to resolve the crises proposed. The following chapter brings this study to a close by looking at both its value as well as limitations that emerged. Recommendations for further research are also provided.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Chapter Preview

In this final chapter, the research findings are summarised and the limitations of this psychobiographical research are addressed. This is followed by a discussion on the value of this research as well as noting considerations and recommendations for further research. The final conclusions to this study draw the research to an end.

7.2 The Aims of the Study Revisited

The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe the life development of Paul Jackson Pollock according to Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. A secondary objective was that aspects of Erikson's theory of human development were informally evaluated by applying them to Pollock's life. In this study, the *descriptive-dialogic* approach involved a form of dialogue between the *exploratory-descriptive* findings on the one hand, and the conceptualisations and theoretical propositions of the theory of Erikson (1950) on the other hand.

7.3 Summary of the Research Findings

Erikson (1950) conceptualised the life cycle, and therefore development, as eight, discrete stages through which each and every individual moves. The relevance of his theory of human development has been applicable to this study, although some latitude needs to be taken with regards to the individuality inherent in the development of each human being. Erikson's *triple-bookkeeping* approach allowed for a holistic picture of Jackson Pollock to emerge – someone who existed and functioned in three realms, that of the physical (body), psychological, and social. Jackson's very physique created difficulties for him in his adolescence and adult life and how he treated his body impacted greatly on his ability to function within a psychological and social realm. On a psychological level, his social environment had great influence – whether from his family, or from friends, or from the media and the critics. His alcoholism affected his productivity, his self-esteem and his mood. Socially, he presented many different aspects of himself dependant on the company, on his psychological state, and his physical well-being. To ignore any one of these aspects when studying Pollock is to weaken any findings or conclusions made.

What is important to note is that Erikson's (1950) proposed stages each incorporate a crisis, a "conflict [that] implies a balance that is never fully resolved between positive and negative aspects of development" (Welchman, 2000, p.42). This aspect was particularly significant for Jackson Pollock who spent his life vacillating between the two ends of each crisis continuum. Perhaps it is hope that keeps the individual from completely embracing the negative, and humility that keeps them from completely embracing Erikson's (1950) proposed virtue for each stage. Because of Erikson's (1950) lifespan approach, as well as his idea that conflicts are never fully resolved and are revisited throughout life, enabled this study to take Jackson's role in charting his own development into account. Jackson's childhood was a difficult one and somewhat devoid of formal parental boundaries but his adulthood shows an individual who constantly challenged those negative aspects and made many unconscious attempts to revisit and resolve early crises.

Identity is a core tenet of Erikson's (1950) theory and is of particular significance when considering Pollock. He had a great many identities, which included being a gentle, caring individual; an almost mute introvert; a very verbal, brilliant, creative mind; being a great artist; being a belligerent and violent drunk; and being chauvinistic and verbally abusive. While, according to Dollinger et al. (2005), this allowed for amazing creativity, it also presented Pollock with an overwhelming obstacle. When he and his art became a commodity to the American public, when it was passed over like last season's fashion line, Pollock did not have the stable, consistent sense of self to protect him from that nullification. He had nothing to fall back on. The life of Jackson Pollock, in this respect, illustrates the danger of not successfully resolving the Identity versus Role Confusion stage.

7.4 Possible Limitations Related to the Psychobiographical Case Study Method

Preliminary considerations regarding the limitations of utilising the psychobiographical method in research were discussed in Chapter 4. In terms of limitations to this methodology as suggested by Elms (1988) and Runyan (1988b), this discussion included analysing an absent subject, researcher bias, reductionism, cross-cultural differences, validity and reliability, easy genre and elitism, infinite amount of biographical data, and inflated expectations. From a retrospective point of view, these areas will briefly be highlighted.

In terms of *analysing an absent subject*, the researcher consulted with a number of different sources that included biographies as well as printed interviews that were conducted with the subject, in order to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of Pollock. While this

freed the researcher to investigate Pollock as well as his social world, there is no doubt that the research would have been enriched by speaking with Pollock himself. Pollock was not a very verbal individual, leaving limited insight into his internal psychological functioning. Nevertheless, this researcher remained cognisant of the possibility of *researcher bias*, particularly with regards to *countertransference*. Through introspection, as well as by discussing feelings and attitudes with the supervisor of this study, the researcher was able to draw on the value of countertransference while avoiding the shortcomings. In this way, too, while empathy was ensured, idolisation and vilification were avoided.

Reductionism was avoided by consulting with a number of varied sources. A great deal of information is available on both the private and public life of Jackson Pollock, as well as on the socio-historical time in which he lived. Employing a developmental theory provided an added perspective when analysing the data. While Pollock was diagnosed with and was postulated to have had a number of disorders in his lifetime, utilising Erikson's theory, which focuses on the on-going process of human development and health, provided a means to avoid pathologising the subject but rather study him in a holistic manner. *Cross-cultural differences* were assuaged through extensive research, and most biographical information available on Pollock provides in-depth descriptions of his socio-historical context.

With regards to *validity* and *reliability*, the researcher adhered to a sound methodology, as well as a structured, systematic means of collecting and analysing data. One of the means by which this was achieved, was the utilisation of a coding scheme consisting of a matrix in order to map and categorise events in Pollock's development. Alexander's (1990) guidelines for the extraction of salient data provided an added opportunity to ensure accountability when selecting data from a plethora of information available on Pollock, in turn reducing an *infinite amount of biographical data* into manageable quantities. Furthermore, while this abundance of data on Pollock suggests *elitism* with regards to subject selection, it was not so much Pollock's professional achievements but rather his personal, everyday existence that make him an interesting and valuable subject of study.

As the research culminated towards the findings, *inflated expectations* began to emerge for the researcher regarding the temptation to re-write some of Erikson's (1950) theory, as well as to reconceptualise Jackson Pollock in the literature. In order to address these inflated aspirations, the researcher revisited the aims of the study as well as the theory underlying psychobiographical research, as a reminder that the focus of such a study is to present one understanding of Pollock, not to rewrite his life. Taking all the above

considerations into account, and into the extensive work psychobiographical research requires, a criticism of *easy genre* is unwarranted.

7.5 The Value of this Research

7.5.1 The Theoretical Model

Erikson's (1950) theory of human development has been applied in this research as a means of providing a framework within which to explore and describe the lifespan development of Jackson Pollock. In addition, the applicability of Erikson's constructs to the life of Pollock was examined. A lifespan developmental theory provided the researcher with an opportunity to detect patterns and make causal connections, as well as take ongoing ego development into account thereby affording the opportunity for a holistic perspective.

A further benefit of utilising Erikson's theory was to highlight where Pollock's ego development presented similarities in terms of general human development, and where idiosyncratic differences appeared. While no theory of human development can fully encapsulate the entirety of human experience and individuality, Erikson's theory nevertheless provided a practical and comprehensive means by which to analyse and understand Pollock's life.

The theoretical framework enhanced the reliability of the study as it enabled the researcher to systematically extract, contextualise, and analyse the salient biographical data related to Pollock. This resulted in a consistent pattern of data categorisation that enhanced the reliability of this psychobiography. The model also added to the construct validity of the study through delineating clear conceptualisations of the many factors that influence generalised human development.

7.5.2 The Psychobiographical Subject

The inclusion of Jackson Pollock in this psychobiographical study held various advantages. The abundance of available information on him allowed not only for salient information to be extracted from the data, but also could be triangulated and cross-referenced for accuracy.

As evidenced in this study, there is great value in studying the lives of prominent individuals. What becomes apparent is that making great achievements does not require a financially and academically advantaged childhood, an above-average intelligence, or social opportunity. What emerges is the value of drive, self concept, and aspiration, although success in these areas does not protect an individual from self-doubt, insecurity and failure.

7.5.3 Psychobiographical Case Research

This study has offered the first psychological explanation on the life of Paul Jackson Pollock as it unfolded through the developmental stages proposed by Erik Erikson (1950). Studying Pollock's entire lifespan has served to demonstrate Erikson's belief that human development can be divided into discrete stages according to a particular sequence and along average time spans. As this research utilises an explicitly psychologically-based discourse, a different aspect of Pollock's development is highlighted, and a new dimension (Fouché, 1999) is added to the portrait that has been painted.

As Pollock lived in a very different socio-cultural and historical context, material which provided information on the environment in which he found himself, was a significant aspect of the research. It highlights the importance of taking context into account when considering lives lived. Developmental theories which incorporate contextual and social aspects, such as Erikson's (1950) provide a greater scope for a holistic study as well as a more structured framework within which to question the data obtained.

The marrying of biographical study with psychological theory provides an invaluable way to study lives, particularly finished lives, as psychological theory not only provides a conceptual framework but also enables the researcher to look at behavioural processes and patterns across the entire lifespan (Welman, 2009). Psychobiography, therefore, represents the effective amalgamation of psychology and biography as a way to study lives lived (Elms, 1994; Fouché, 1992). Furthermore, this psychobiography contributes to the number of psychobiographies completed within academic institutions in South Africa, adding to the growing interest in this form of research.

7.6 Limitations of this Research

7.6.1 The Theoretical Model

Chapter 3, section 3.6, discusses the criticisms of Erikson's theory in detail. For this reason, in this section, only one other point which has been raised from conducting the research will be discussed.

Erikson's (1950) theory makes allowances for how male and female children are engendered, how their gender identity is formed in their social world. When considering Pollock, some of the ambivalence and identity confusion that he experienced centred on his sexuality. While the theory is broad in terms of gender, future research would do well to look specifically at the gender issue, particularly with regards to homosexuality or bisexuality and how this affects development within Erikson's framework.

7.6.2 The Psychobiographical Subject

The criticisms of selecting Paul Jackson Pollock as a research subject have been discussed in Chapter 4 (see section 4.2.6). As to whether Pollock's development was theoretically related to Erikson's (1950) theory, the findings here were found to be of theoretical significance as well as to be of particular interest to the researcher. Furthermore, Erikson developed his theory during the period and context of Pollock's America so there is a great deal of applicability here.

As the research progressed, the researcher became significantly aware of the difficulties in summarising a life, particularly within the scale and restrictions of a master's research study. While the benefit of this framework forced the researcher to ask only specific questions of the data available, it made for frustration when trying to convey the richness of this (or any) individual's life. To this end, this researcher chose to focus entirely on Pollock's personal development, omitting most information pertaining to his art or the development and interpretation thereof.

As no interviews were conducted with surviving relatives, information gleaned is limited to public documents (biographies, articles and a handful of letters), some of which have presented conflicting accounts of events. The researcher made great use of triangulation methods in order to sift the most relevant (according to the aim of the research) and factual information from the chaff of details and idiosyncrasies.

7.6.3 Psychobiographical Case Research

As discussed in Chapter 4, the psychobiographical research method has been the object of some criticism. Difficulties inherent in psychobiographical research, such as researcher bias, reductionism, cross-cultural differences, criticisms with regards to validity and reliability, elitism and inflated expectations were discussed along with the mechanisms applied in this study in Chapter 4, section 4.2. However, certain limitations to this study need to be highlighted.

While the study has low external validity, which can be seen as a criticism of this approach to research, the aim was not to generalise findings to the population as a whole but rather to focus on analytical generalisation. This method ensures the findings are compared with a theoretical conceptualisation, in this case Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages.

Furthermore, while the researcher made every attempt to provide informed and theoretically grounded findings, these findings were, in part, speculative and contextualised within Erikson's (1950) theory. The addition of other theoretical theories in order to support the findings would have been advantageous. With this in mind, and in keeping with the social constructionist perspective, alternative descriptions would be of value, both here and in future research. This is a positive aspect as it raises more questions in regards to the data available and highlights the nexus of possibilities available in interpreting a life.

7.7 Recommendations for Further Research

Primarily, further research on the life of Jackson Pollock but on a bigger scale, would be a key recommendation. The length of this study limited the amount of information that could be included. A more in-depth study, perhaps at doctoral level, could also make use of additional psychodynamic theoretical approaches to psychological development. While the findings in this study can be utilised as a point of departure for further study, they are not conclusive and should not be considered a final product. Rather they stand as a foundation on which to build a more comprehensive study, a study which could provide greater depth with regards to Pollock's intrapsychic processes.

As previously mentioned, the myths surrounding Pollock required the researcher to pare the information down to more established factual accounts in order to paint a fairly clear and detailed portrait of the man. In combination with the limited length of a masters study,

paring down this information also entailed sacrificing the abundance of information and interpretation on Pollock's art, and development thereof. A psychological study focused predominantly on his paintings would add a new dimension to Pollock's story, and perhaps give a deeper insight into his psyche. Interpretations are best made at the right time and within the context of this aim of this research, this was not the right time. Future research would do well to explore this aspect of the man.

7.8 General Thoughts and Comments by the Researcher

As the researcher traversed the abundance of literature available on Jackson Pollock, what became clearer was how the story of his life, and of who he was as a person, is forever bound up in prosaic narratives. Very quickly the researcher was faced with the unexpected obstacle and almost impossible task of trying to sort man from myth. A great concern centred on how not to profligate the myth. An essay by Verzotti (2009) served to dispel some of these concerns.

In the essay, Verzotti explains an exhibition by Gabriele Di Matteo in which Matteo has made painted reproductions of photographs of Jackson Pollock. In those photographs in which Pollock is pictured with his paintings, Matteo has chosen to leave the canvas in his paintings, blank. According to Verzotti, a true copy of anything, in any form, is impossible. The copy will always contain flaws and therefore, is different from the original. Therefore, the copy takes on value due to its distinctive traits. As the empty canvases serve to illustrate, "that which resists the game of simulation and permits the multiplicity of meanings, is simply the human factor" (p. 316). The lack of possibility of an objective viewpoint does not minimise the value of studying lives, of studying Jackson Pollock's life because, as utilising Erikson's theory shows, there are aspects of a life that ultimately share commonalities with other lives. These are not exact mirror images but commonalities nevertheless.

Research is an exciting process, and researching Pollock's life widened the researcher's understanding of theory and method. However, this researcher felt impeded by the clinical language required in writing up research. This became particularly evident when trying to communicate the rich creativity of the subject. Pollock enjoyed the tactile nature of art and hoped that those who viewed his art would experience it rather than interpret it (Friedman, 1995; Naifeh & White Smith, 1992), so too interpretation of Pollock himself (and of any life) should be made with great care. The researcher has aimed to achieve this.

7.9 Conclusion

While there are limitations to the study, as have been extrapolated on in this chapter and throughout this study, the aims of this study were achieved through exploring Jackson Pollock's life through the lens of Erik Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial stages. The applicability of Erikson's theory to Pollock lends weight to Erikson's theoretical constructs. As this study has aimed to provide a deeper understanding of Pollock, so too, it is hoped, has it added to the development of psychobiographical research in South Africa. Within this framework, the researcher worked at illustrating Pollock's own unique journey and attempted to avoid being deterministic with regards to his development. The psychobiographical approach provides a rich and exciting forum for this area of research.

A study on the life of Jackson Pollock could not be concluded without his voice. In Hunter (2002), he is quoted as saying, "A reviewer a while back...wrote that my pictures didn't have any beginning or any end. He didn't mean it as a compliment, but it was. It was a fine compliment. Only he didn't know it" (p. 60). While this particular study has a conclusive ending, studying the life of Jackson Pollock, and drawing from his own sentiments, has no beginning and no end.

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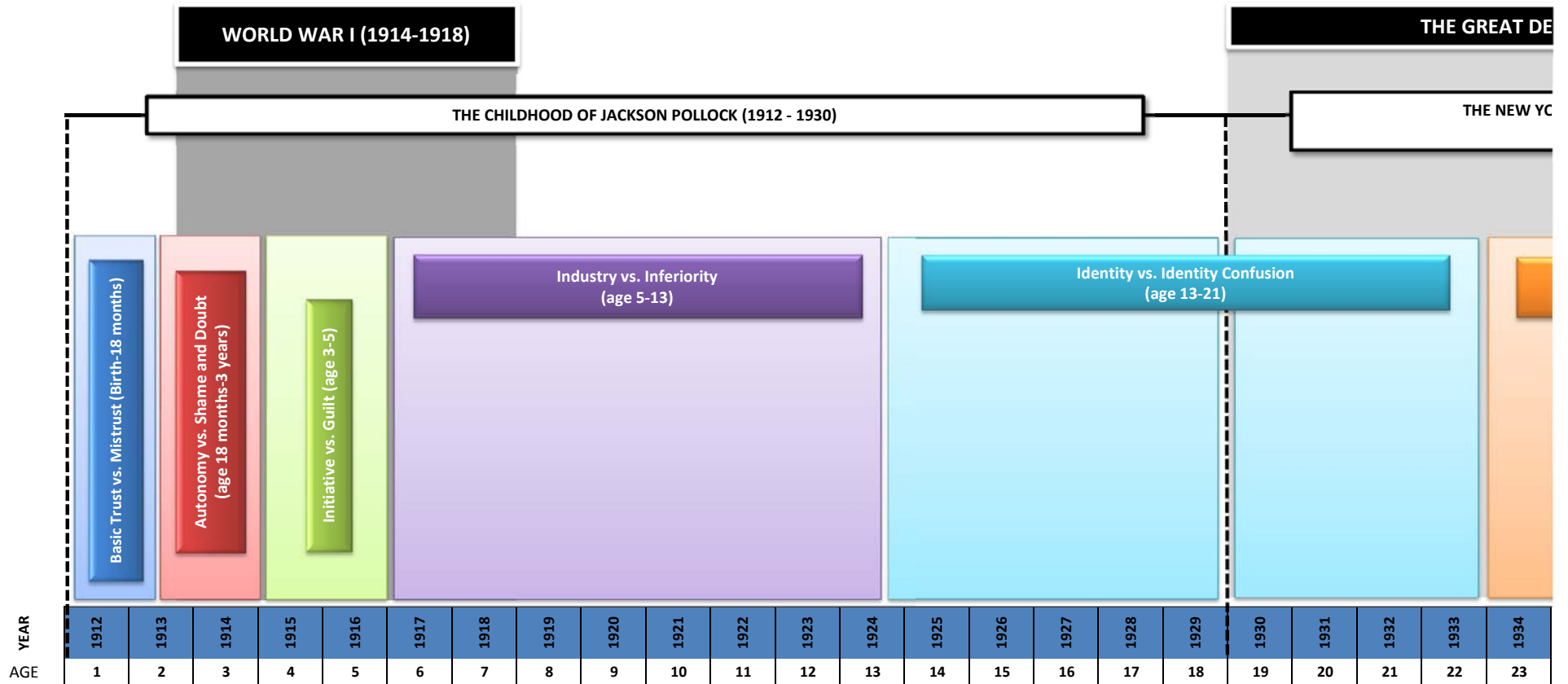
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APPENDIX A

A MATRIX OF JACKSON POLLOCK'S LIFE AND ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT



DEPRESSION (1929-1941)

WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

**WORK YEARS/THE DEVELOPING ARTIST
(1930 - 1942)**

**PERSONAL AND
PROFESSIONAL
MILESTONES
(1942 - 1945)**

**MARRIAGE AND THE LONG ISLAND
YEARS (1945 - 1952)**

**THE FINAL YEARS
(1952 - 1956)**

Intimacy vs. Isolation
(age 21-40)

Generativity vs.
Stagnation
(age 40-60)

1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44