JEFFREY LIONEL DAHMER:

A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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PHOTOGRAPH OF JEFFREY LIONEL DAHMER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY AS CASE STUDY RESEARCH

CHAPTER 3

PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 4

ALFRED ADLER'S INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

CHAPTER 5

THE LIFE OF JEFFREY LIONEL DAHMER

CHAPTER 6

SERIAL MURDER

CHAPTER 7

PRELIMINARY METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 9

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:
THE PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF JEFFREY DAHMER

CHAPTER 10

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:
THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF JEFFREY DAHMER

CHAPTER 12

LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

ABSTRACT

Serial crime is an element of society that continues to disturb and fascinate scholars. There is thus a need to understand the uniqueness of serial murderers and their psychological development. The field of psychobiography is a qualitative approach to uncover the story of an individual life through greater understanding of psychological concepts. Psychobiographical research is invaluable in the application of theory to the finished lives of exemplary or enigmatic individuals to develop and test theories of human development.

Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer (1960 – 1994), a cannibalistic serial killer who killed 17 young men, served as the single psychobiographical subject in this study. Dahmer was selected based on interest value, his uniqueness and the lack of a specifically academic and psychologically focused case study on his life. A qualitative psychobiographical research method was utilized in this study. The primary aim of the research was to explore and describe Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan. This was achieved by applying Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of staged developmental crises to the lifespan developmental process and Adler's (1929) dynamic individual psychology to provide a more comprehensive idiographic interpretation of Dahmer as an individual.

Jeffrey Dahmer's life history was uncovered in this psychobiographical case study research through the systematic and consistent collection, analysis and interpretation of life history materials, which highlighted five significant historical periods: (a) Childhood of Fantasy, (b) The Quiet Loner, (c) Hiatus – or Build-up, (d) Seeking a Compliant Partner and (e) Arrest, Trial and Death. The two theoretical frameworks were used to discern, transform and reconstruct his life into a coherent and illuminating narrative of his psychological movement through life. Alexander's (1988) model of identifying salient themes was used to analyze data for analytical generalization (Yin, 1994). A conceptual framework derived from the two theoretical perspectives was constructed to organize and integrate data and to guide the presentation and discussion of the findings of the study in an integrative and comprehensive manner.

The findings suggested that both theoretical perspectives considered the biopsychosocial as well as cultural and historical influences of situations and experiences in Dahmer's personality development throughout the lifespan. Adlerian theory indicated that Dahmer held a socially useless lifestyle whose movement was guided purposively towards a fictional goal

of godlikeness through creative, concrete expressions of personal superiority. Eriksonian theory held that Dahmer remained in role confusion, which was viewed as a functional, fragmented identity to survive in society and achieve a fantasy. Thus, both theories indicated, despite their different conceptualizations, that Dahmer's personality development was ultimately not socially beneficial.

The study of Dahmer's personality development has provided a positive demonstration of the value of both Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories to understand the processes of personality development in an individual life. It has further highlighted the uniqueness of individual responses to life tasks and consequently unlocked the possibility of perceiving people and their actions differently. Recommendations were made for future research undertakings that utilize a psychobiographical research design and methodology to uncover, illuminate and reconstruct the lives of enigmatic personalities.

Keywords: Psychobiography; Jeffrey Dahmer; personality development; Adler; individual psychology; Erikson; psychosocial development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Chapter Preview

In this introductory chapter a general orientation to the research study is presented. The research problem is stated and the importance and aim of the study are described. A briefly documented reflection of the researcher's personal passage is also provided. In conclusion, an overview of the chapters in the study is given.

1.2 General Orientation to the Research Study

In this study the researcher explored and described Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer's (1960 – 1994) personality development throughout his historical lifespan. Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development was conceptualized and interpreted from an integrated perspective that utilized both staged and dynamic concepts. The psychobiographical study was conducted to holistically investigate the personality development of this enigmatic individual – and thus reinterpret Dahmer's psychological movement through life.

Two theoretical models were used to conceptualize and interpret the personality development of Jeffrey Dahmer. The first model is the psychosocial personality theory proposed by Erik Erikson (1950). The second model is that of Alfred Adler's (1929) individual psychology. A detailed discussion of the respective personality theories is provided in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. The complementary use of the two theories provided a more effective platform from which to elucidate Dahmer's personality development. By analyzing Dahmer's personality development against various developmental concepts, a more comprehensive description and understanding was achieved.

The research is classified as a psychobiographical case study design and methodology. This involved the systematic use of the theories of psychosocial and individual personality development to discern, transform and reconstruct Jeffrey Dahmer's life history into a coherent and illuminating academic and psychological narrative. The life history materials that were collected, and the biographical content analyzed, were comprised predominantly of published materials written on Dahmer. The collected materials – books, academic articles and limited Internet sources – also included transcripts from court cases and interviews.

1.3   Problem Statement

During the last two decades there has been an increased emphasis on qualitative research where individuals serve as the focus of study (Ashworth, 2003). In a global society that experiences many challenges and changes, the past – and its exceptional figures – may be crucial to the understanding of contemporary society. Investigations in the socio-cultural history of these individuals and their contributions are valuable in the interpretation of lives (McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a). Investigating personality development over the lifespan through psychobiographical study is a means to reinterpret an individual's lived life (Carlson, 1988; McAdams, 1988). Thus, as the person's actions are perceived differently, so too, can the impact of the individual upon society be more fully appreciated or understood.

Crime is a pervasive element in society. Thus, the criminal, too, must be understood. In evaluating personality development over time, the criminal is an example of a person who displays apathy to the socially-orientated world. Crime may be an expression of evil, indifference or angry deprivation – and exists at the expense of society. Of the various groups of criminals, few have ever attained the sensationalized status of the serial murderers. The time taken to capture the serial murderer and the immense suffering caused provides an aspect of crime that requires further exploration. The serial murderer's crimes are unique – each bearing the psychological signature of the killer to reveal an aspect of his torment.

The interpretation of the person requires more than a mere psychodiagnostic classification. Rather than merely viewing each serial murderer as an antisocial personality, the entire person needs to be reinterpreted. By viewing the individual in a more holistic manner, the researcher is able to explore and describe the individuality that underlies the intensity of the crimes exhibited.   The retrospective exploration of a serial murderer's personality development over a lifespan may highlight important aspects of development.   Serial murderers have special significance in the study of personality development, as scholars have long been fascinated by the dissonance of the sane mind's capacity to perform heinous acts.

In an effort to understand an individual's personality development from an approach that emphasizes a holistic perspective, the psychobiography is invaluable (Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999). Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories were combined to provide a eugraphic and holistic approach to viewing the individual in contrast to the traditional psychodiagnostic view. The exploration of the whole being's personality development is a way to explore the

complexity of personality and the motivations in behaviour (Alexander, 1990; Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999; Schultz, 2005a).

The two theoretical models used in the study provided a holistic view of personality development. Erikson's (1950) theory holds that individuals respond to age-relevant crises and Adler (1929) held that each person constructs his own meaning and creative lifestyle throughout the lifespan. Although research has been done to explore personality development in each of these theories, they have not been previously combined to provide a holistic view of the individual. Owing to the developmental nature of personality recognized by both theories, the investigation into the development of the constituent constructs could be illustrated in a longitudinal and in-depth study throughout the life of the person. Such an illustrative study would be further enhanced when the subject under study has generally been known as an enigmatic figure that lived a unique and controversial life that requires rich description and exploration (Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994). Jeffrey Dahmer can be viewed as such an individual, as his life was considered unique even amongst his murderous contemporaries (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

The value of studying individual lives has been recognized and advocated by many scholars (Alexander, 1988; Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Roberts, 2002; Runyan, 1982a; Schultz, 2005a) who understand that individual lives are rich in personality, developmental and psychohistorical importance. Indeed, Elms (1994) argued that psychobiography is not merely a way to do biography, but also a way to conduct psychology. He noted that psychologists have much to learn from studying one whole human being or life at a time. Psychobiographical studies allow the researcher to trace human development in ways that are impossible in longitudinal research and provide a high degree of consensual validation beyond traditional clinical case studies (Carlson, 1988).

Owing to growing interest in and increased concern about the life course and lived experience of the individual, psychobiographical research has become a valuable approach in qualitative research in the past two decades (Roberts, 2002). However, in this time psychobiography has also been confronted by various challenges, including criticisms about its generalizability (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b) and a lack of exposure to its methodology (Roberts, 2002; Runyan, 1982a; Stroud, 2004). Despite its predominant neglect, within South Africa, too, there has been a recent increase in the use of this insightful approach to understand and reinterpret individual lives (Fouchè, Smit, Watson & van Niekerk, 2007;

Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b; Stroud, 2004). Previous under-utilization of this method meant that psychologists ignored a proven and effective approach to study personalities who have made extraordinary and often controversial contributions to society.

The researcher decided to follow a psychobiographical research approach to lifespan personality development in response to Elms's (1994, p. 5) call for psychologists to "take hold of psychobiography" and not neglect the responsibility of maintaining quality standards of work produced as psychobiography. Further challenges that served as motivational factors included: (a) the limited number of institutionalized psychobiographical programmes conducted at academic institutions (McAdams, 1994; Roberts, 2002; Runyan, 1988a); (b) the necessity to use a theoretical alternative to the static psychodynamic and psychodiagnostic stance that predominated psychobiographical research (Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b); and (c) the opportunity to conduct extensive self-exploration through the process of studying the life story of another individual (Elms, 1994).

The significant value of psychobiographical case studies has promoted the development and testing of theories related to human development (Alexander, 1988). Psychobiographical studies provide a fascinating and informative opportunity to investigate individual accounts of life experience embedded in socio-historical contexts (Josselson, Lieblich & McAdams, 2003) through the judicious use of life history materials (Carlson, 1988). While it is feasible to examine an individual's life at a particular moment in time, this venture merely represents an arbitrary selection of a part of the whole (McAdams, 1994). Rather, the entire time-bound life narrative needs to be interpreted. By studying a particular subject's life, the researcher is better able to provide idiographic interpretations of the individual's experiences (McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1982a) – and mechanisms that maintained behaviour – through an evocative narration of the subject's lifespan personality development (Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005a).

In psychobiographical case study research the rationale to select a particular personality should include, amongst other reasons, the personality's theoretical significance and interest (Howe, 1997). This means that the results obtained from the intensive study of one personality should enable a feature of an emerging theory to be confirmed or refuted (McLeod, 1994). The personality under study is most often that of an exemplary, enigmatic, controversial or *great* figure, but Elms (1994) noted that lesser figures also demand attention. The psychological study of greatness provides the psychobiographer with a scientific approach to understand how and why particular children develop into unusually competent or

creative individuals (Howe, 1997; Simonton, 1994). Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer was chosen by the researcher to serve as an example of an enigmatic and notorious life in this psychobiographical study for two reasons.

First, a pilot literature study of Jeffrey Dahmer revealed that he was an enigmatic figure whose life story inspires fear and dread – and fascination. Jeffrey Dahmer is an infamous cannibalistic serial killer who killed 17 men and boys in 13 years. The actions of this seemingly docile man gained worldwide attention for the gruesome Milwaukee murders – with his being subsequently labelled as a monster. His actions and eventual capture exposed his extensive impact upon society. Much was publicized about his neighbourhood, his homosexuality, his mostly black victims, his family and the perceived ineptitude of the police who failed numerous times to arrest him. Dahmer died at the hands of a fellow prisoner in 1994, but remains a prominent figure in serial killer lore.

Dahmer's unique lifestyle appears to have theoretical significance and applicability to both Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory and Adler's (1929) individual psychology. Dahmer lived quietly and alone, but also in secret. Indeed, were he never apprehended, he could simply have been another phantom in history. However, since his arrest – and later death – Dahmer's story has been publicized and sensationalized in the media. As psychobiographical literature advocates the need for psychological research on greatness, exemplary lives and exceptional figures (Elms, 1994; Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1983; Simonton, 1994), a study on Dahmer's atypical nature may provide insight into the development of an individual whose infamy is bound to the isolated sub-culture of serial killers – and further provide hypotheses that may be applied to the South African serial murder phenomenon.

The second reason is that no research has been conducted on Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan. Although much has been written on Jeffrey Dahmer, none of the existing literature adopts a formalized academic-psychological focus, nor has any author utilized a psychobiographical case study. The available literature varies from popular magazine articles and fanatical Internet sites to book accounts of the murders and academic articles that attempt to gain understanding or meaning into singular instances of Dahmer's existence. The absence of a consistent psychological framework results in a fragmented view of the individual that lacks a psychological complexity and holism. However, the existing literature does render a generally sound foundation from which to explore, describe and

investigate Dahmer's personality development to gain a more integrated sense of this controversial figure.

Through the exploration of Dahmer's personality development, the use of psychological theory is emphasized as it identifies individual nuances in development. The psychobiographical methodology simultaneously highlights Dahmer's response to life challenges and therefore, differing ways to perceive people and their actions. Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories of personality development were used to conceptualize and reinterpret Dahmer's complex psychological movement throughout his entire socio-historical lifespan. The researcher contends that this theoretical integration will elucidate new and previously neglected dimensions of this controversial figure and thereby provide a more meaningful understanding of his life, personality and motivations.

In conclusion, the research problem is related to four research needs. First, there is a need for the development and establishment of an integrative orientation in psychological research and practice. Second, there is a need to conduct more academically institutionalized psychobiographical research, especially within the South African context. This research should further provide holistic descriptions of the subjects, rather than mere psychopathological classifications. Third, there is a need for more interdependent research between psychology and biography. Psychologists can gain much from studying the lives of great or controversial figures, whilst biographers can benefit from the scientific approach offered by psychological theories of human development. An example of this is the value of researching Jeffrey Dahmer's life and personality from a psychological vantage point. Not only would such a study highlight his personality development – which has been incompletely addressed in previous research on his life – but it would provide an opportunity to *informally test* the content of the psychological theories applied. Finally, describing and redefining the life story of controversial figures serves as exposure to reinterpreting individuals. This facilitates a better understanding of the influence of the psychosocial and historical context that impacted upon individual development.

1.4   Primary Aim of the Study

The primary aim of the research was to explore and describe Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan. Erikson's (1950) psychosocial perspective of developmental crises provided a staged conception of the lifespan developmental process.

The dynamic concepts of Adler's (1929) individual psychology were used to provide a more comprehensive idiographic interpretation of Jeffrey Dahmer as an individual.

Personality is a relative and elusive construct whose investigative focus varies amongst the theoretical views of the different psychological schools. The idiographic stance employed in the study allows for personality development to be conceptualized developmentally and holistically. Thus, the aim of the study was not to prove or disprove Dahmer's optimal personality functioning. Rather, the aim was to explore the nature of his holistic personality development throughout the chronological history of his life.

It should further be noted that the aim of the study was not to generalize the research findings to the larger population through statistical generalization. Rather, through the investigation of Dahmer's personality development over time, this study aimed to generalize the results to the theories used – which is known as the construct of analytical generalization (Yin, 1994). Roberts (2002) suggested that a psychobiographical research methodology may be used to unlock conceptual insights into psychological theory through the collection, interpretation and presentation of biographical data. Thus, analytical generalization provides the opportunity to informally test selected aspects of the theories applied (Martin, 1996; McLeod, 1994) and provides the opportunity to begin the process of further developing existing theory (Fouchè, 1999).

This qualitative psychobiographical study can be described as both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature refers to the provision of a rich and accurate description of Dahmer's personality development over his lifespan that provides an in-depth understanding of his individual case within his socio-historical context. The descriptive-dialogic nature refers to the faithful portrayal and description of a phenomenon and to clarify and informally test the content of specific theories (D. Edwards, 1990), such as the theories of Erikson (1950) and Adler (1929) highlighted in this study.

1.5   The Researcher's Personal Passage

The researcher is deeply interested in individuals' experiences – and their interpretations thereof – as they live in and impact upon the world. More specifically, the researcher has always been fascinated by the enigma and decadence of individuals in society: "I like persons

better than principles; and I like persons with no principles better than anything else in the world" (Wilde, 2001, p. 6).

Psychobiographical research is a scientific approach that provides the opportunity to gain insight into the lives of exemplary and enigmatic individuals (Howe, 1997) whose stories have, for various reasons, surpassed their own time and survived through history. The current research study developed out of a personal interest in Jeffrey Dahmer and a desire to understand his personality development more comprehensively. In the effort to gain a deeper understanding of the driving forces that characterized Dahmer's life, the psychobiographical study enabled the researcher to simultaneously reinterpret history (Munter, 1975) and the unique individual – captured in his own time and context – from a psychological vantage point.

In considering the individual as the subject of analysis, the researcher evaluated different theoretical perspectives that would facilitate the construction of a life narrative. Erikson's (1950) formulation of the identity across the lifespan provided the opportunity to trace Dahmer's development into the serial killer identity that he came to represent. Further, the researcher was drawn to the creative conceptualization of the lifestyle (Adler, 1929) and the purposiveness of that lifestyle to characterize individual uniqueness for such an enigmatic individual. In evaluating his own experience, the researcher recognized his own belief that every person constructs an individual lifestyle – within social moral prescriptions and a search for meaning – that enhances a perceived quality of life, while taking responsibility for individual thoughts, choices, feelings and actions in the interaction with perceived reality.

During his formative years, the researcher was exposed to an investigative and problem-solving environment. From watching others, the researcher developed an intense interest in the psychological functioning of individuals – with a penchant for trying to understand deviant cases. As such, his interest has always been on aspects of personality, psychopathology and serial murder and their valuable use to understand individuals. The researcher contends that insights into personality development may be gleaned through the evaluation of the lives of exceptional or enigmatic figures, such as Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer is often considered a frightening and yet a fascinating aberration whose deviant acts not only shocked society, but threw into sharp relief the existing dichotomous view of serial murder (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997). It is this ambiguity that sparked the researcher's desire to understand the whole, dynamic person – rather than to merely assign the static label of

antisocial personality disorder. Thus, the interest in the individual guided the researcher to propose this topic for the undertaking of a dissertation.

1.6 Overview of the Study

This study consists of 12 chapters, the first being an introduction and problem statement. Chapters 2 through 6 are literature review chapters. A theoretical overview of qualitative and psychobiographical case study research follows in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 provide a concise discussion of Erikson's (1950) psychosocial and Adler's (1929) individual theories of personality development, respectively. In Chapter 5, a comprehensive historical overview of the salient aspects of the life of Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer is presented and described. Chapter 6 provides a brief exploration into the serial murder phenomenon.

The problems and issues related to psychobiographical methodology are discussed in Chapter 7. This chapter serves as a precursor to the psychobiographical design and methodology discussed in Chapter 8.

The findings and discussion are presented in Chapters 9, 10 and 11. Chapter 9 is a discussion of the results as they relate to the psychosocial personality development of Jeffrey Dahmer. The results and discussion related to the individual personality development of Dahmer are provided in Chapter 10. Chapter 11 provides an integration of the findings as applied to the holistic nature of Dahmer's personality development over his lifespan. Chapter 12 concludes the study and provides a discussion of the value and limitations of the study. Furthermore, it provides recommendations for future research in the fields of psychobiography, personality and investigative psychology.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY AS CASE STUDY RESEARCH

2.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter seeks to enrich the reader's understanding of psychobiography as case study research. The chapter initially describes the qualitative research paradigm wherein psychobiography is situated as well as its links with life history, biographical and narrative research. The second part of the chapter focuses on the relationship between psychology and biography. A brief overview of the developmental trends in psychobiography precedes the definitions and descriptions of psychobiography and its distinction with related concepts. Finally, the characteristics and value of psychobiographical case study research are presented.

2.2 Qualitative Research

2.2.1 Qualitative and Case Study Research

Qualitative research is interdisciplinary, multi-paradigmatic and multi-method in focus (Struwig & Stead, 2004) and may be seen as a set of iterative and interpretive practices without a single definition or methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rudestam & Newton, 2001). The recent interest in qualitative psychology (Ashworth, 2003) has emphasized the investigation of the dynamic relationship between individuals and their world through research into lived experiences, behaviour, emotions and cultural phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Qualitative research is thus useful to generate deeper comprehension of the meaning of events, situations and actions (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Flick (2006) described the traditional quantitative paradigm as a nomothetic approach that is used to isolate theoretical and cause-and-effect relationships by quantifying phenomena for generalization via descriptive and inferential statistics. Social researchers are, however, confronted with new social contexts and perspectives that require new methodologies and more inductive strategies (Willig, 2001). The human psyche, for example, is qualitatively different to the subject matter of the natural sciences, which is physically and materially measureable (Polkinghorne, 1983). Qualitative studies are concerned with how participants make sense of their conduct and how this knowledge influences their ongoing interactions (Maxwell, 1996).

Qualitative research focuses on the naturalistic setting wherein events and actions occur, enabling researchers to access the unique interactive processes of the particular case investigated (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This focus on a specific case is centred on the investigation of the confluence of contexts – such as the psychological, cultural, historic, political and economic – wherein individuals act and emphasizes the influence that the overall context has on the individual's actions (Maxwell, 1996). In this way researchers seek to determine whether contextual influences or forces impact the individual case in order to generate greater understanding of the phenomenon under question (Creswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995).

The qualitative paradigm is an interpretive and holistic approach that emphasizes an idiographic description of reality (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Patton, 2002). Qualitative researchers emphasize the use of words to interpret data and assign significance. Words, especially when ordered into meaningful stories (Stake, 1995), are better suited to capture and communicate the complexities and subtleties of human experience (Tutty, Rothery & Grinnell, 1996). Qualitative data sources include interviews, documents, films, focus groups and archival information (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Struwig & Stead, 2004). The interpretation of textual information is provided through *thick* descriptions (Geertz, 1973), which are rich, detailed narrative reports of subjects' perceptions, understandings or accounts of a phenomenon. Qualitative research, in essence, is concerned with meaning in context through the interpretation of data (Neuman, 2003) and not to generalize results to a population (Ashworth, 2003). Qualitative researchers tend, therefore, to be concerned with the quality and texture of experience whose contextual descriptions facilitate the generation of novel insights, hypotheses and understanding (Parker, 1999; Willig, 2001).

Qualitative methods can be used to generate categories to understand human phenomena (Polkinghorne, 1991) and investigate the interpretation and meaning that individuals give to their context and the events they experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) in order to examine motifs, themes, distinctions and ideas (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). As a qualitative approach, psychobiography (a) takes into account the socially constructed nature of reality and the close relationship between the researcher and the object of study; (b) acknowledges both the context that influences the inquiry and the value-laden nature of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Hart, 1998; Rudestam & Newton, 2001; Willig, 2001); (c) focuses on process,

rather than outcome (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002); and (d) emphasizes meaning (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Willig, 2001).

There is a strong underlying sense in the qualitative paradigm that social meaning and significance are distorted when materials are quantified or the larger context ignored (Fouché & de Vos, 2005). Qualitative researchers thus pay attention to exceptional cases or idiosyncrasies within the data in order to gain more complete understanding of a phenomenon (Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Willig, 2001). The psychobiographical study of an individual subject's socially constructed experiences requires intensive study and idiographic descriptions of the unique, immanently defined content of real events (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This implies that the same events or behaviours have different meanings in different cultures or historical periods and that the subject's creation of meaning is context sensitive.

Parker (1999) described qualitative research as an interpretive study of a specified issue or problem in which the researcher is seen as the main instrument in the research process – and therefore central to the sense that is made. The researcher actively seeks a rich, in-depth understanding of specific cases by engaging the data in a naturalistic setting to facilitate a truthful insider perspective of social processes (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Parker, 1999; Tutty et al., 1996). The researcher's values are integral to the process and thus the researcher cannot be completely objective or value-free as reality is not viewed as external to the researcher (Struwig & Stead, 2004; Willig, 2001). Researcher reflexivity (see section 8.8) requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process (Stroud, 2004; Taylor, 1999).

Qualitative researchers tend to use a case-oriented approach to capture the essence of a situation or the inner life of the individual (Willig, 2001). A case study explores a bounded system (Stake, 1995) or case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of content-rich information (Creswell, 1998). The bounded system is situated by time and place, and it is the case itself that is investigated (Creswell, 1998). For the purpose of this study, the bounded system is an individual: Jeffrey Dahmer. To contextualize the instrumental case, the individual's life story is situated within its physical, socio-cultural and historical context (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995) through the use of various public documents and reports.

Psychobiographical research is an idiographic approach that utilizes an in-depth case study to generate insights about the dynamics of a particular case through a narrative description. The psychobiographical case study is valuable in the development and revision of theory to guide further empirical investigation (D. Edwards, 1990; Lowman, 2001; McLeod, 1994), but has few claims to wider representativeness or generalizability of the findings (Willig, 2001). A psychobiographical case study is a powerful historical and psychological tool wherein an analysis of core themes is conducted and an interpretation of the life narrative uncovered (Creswell, 1998; Elms, 1994) to provide a detailed description of the individual case. The next section briefly explores psychobiography as a form of life history research and its links with biographical research and the narrative approach.

2.2.2   Life History Research

A psychobiographical study can be described as a form of life history research. Plummer (1983) described life history research as the full account of an individual's life in the person's own words. Runyan (1982a), however, distinguished between life history research as a method and as a subject matter. As a method, the respondent recounts his life story, but as subject matter, it concerns the sequence of events and experiences in a life, from birth to death. Life histories as subject matter deal more specifically with problems in analyzing and interpreting the course of experience in individual lives (Runyan, 1982a). The latter approach is closely linked with psychobiography, whereby an individual case study is used to provide a detailed account of one life within its specific context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The life histories of enigmatic or great individuals provide rich narratives and portraits of individual life stories, including turning points and core themes (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

In general, the life history design implies (a) a concern for the subjectivity of the individual's experience; (b) a focus on process and change by recognizing the ambiguous and chaotic nature of reality; (c) a holistic perspective of the biographical experience with regards to socio-cultural and historical life; and (d) use of the method as a historical tool to draw upon personal documents directed at understanding the human element (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Roberts, 2002; Simonton, 2003). Tierney (2000) described the goal of life history as the "investigation of the mediating aspects of culture, the interrogation of its grammar and the decentring of its norms" (p. 546) in the attempt to build knowledge in the social sciences primarily on the subject's lived experience.

A strength of this method is that it weaves together the changing biography of the individual and the social history of that subject. Babbie and Mouton (2001) noted that there is agreement that the life history approach can be used to generate new theory and test existing ones and that it is particularly useful to provide insights into the total subjective and personal dimensions of human experience. The life history is a style of research that advocates engaging individuals, accurately describing the way they express their understanding of the world and an analysis of such expressions. Life history research and its derivative, psychobiography, may thus be seen to embody "the true spirit of the qualitative approach to the study of human behaviour" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 286).

2.2.3   Biographical Research

A biography is the written history of a person's life (L. M. Smith, 1998), which emphasizes the experiences and views of the researched (Roberts, 2002). Biographical research is presented in various forms, such as life history, life story, memoir, autobiography and case study (Denzin, 1989). Mills (1970) noted that a biographical study enables one to grasp history and biography and the intersection between the two in society. Biographical research thus seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives and provide interpretations of the accounts they give of their past, present and futures (Roberts, 2002). However, L. M. Smith (1998) warned that biography contains elements of ambiguity, complexity, uncertainty, value conflict and uniqueness and should thus be viewed more abstractly than a prescriptive craft or process.

The appeal of biographical research is that it employs diverse interpretive methodologies to account for individual life experiences within contemporary cultural and structural settings (Roberts, 2002). The biographer, having chosen a unique subject, engages with the collected data and takes cognizance of the multi-dimensional facets that permeate the life of the subject (Roberts, 2002) – and ultimately becomes familiar with the essence of the individual. Biographical research deals with the collection and interpretation a range of empirical biographical data such as letters; official and personal documents (Allport, 1942; Plummer, 1983; Simonton, 2003; Yin, 1994); and oral, visual and multimedia sources (Roberts, 2002). Insight and creativity are therefore crucial in the construction and writing of lives (Hart, 1998; Richardson & St Pierre, 2005; Roberts, 2002).

2.2.4 Narrative Research

Barthes (1977) noted that narrative is present in every age, in every place and every society, which implies the need to understand lives within their historical context. McAdams (1985, 1994, 1996) argued that humans provide their lives with a sense of meaning and purpose by constructing internalized narratives of the self, or life stories, that influence thinking and actions geared towards the future. The increasing attention paid to individual narratives has resulted in a focus on individual experience and meaning (Roberts, 2002) as well as identity (Atkinson, 1998; McAdams, 1996, 1997; Schultz, 2005a).

Josselson (1995) argued that the narrative approach brings the researcher more closely to the investigative process in the interpretation of the raw data of experience. Life narratives examine the interaction between the individual and society (Fischer-Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1997) and the interpretations of experiences within specific socio-cultural contexts (Roberts, 2002; Schultz, 2005a). Further, the narrative approach emphasizes the storied nature of lived experience; the importance of multiple perspectives within the context-bound, socially constructed nature of reality; the impact of the researcher on the research process; and the temporal nature of human activity (Muller, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1995).

McAdams (1994) contended that life stories provide much of what Erikson (1950) defined as ego identity whereby individuals internalize integrative life narratives in late adolescence and young adulthood and continue to work on these narrative identities. Personal myths – that individuals act upon 'as if' they are true (cf. Adler, 1929) – are also evident in life narratives (McAdams, 1994, 1996; Olney, 1972) as elements of an individual's self-conception. Psychosocially constructed and reformulated over time, narrative identities are evolving personal and cultural expressions of what it means to live a life worth living (Roberts, 2002). The individual narrative allows insight into how individuals compose their lives through symbols, metaphors and explanations (Roberts, 2002). Psychobiography may thus be described as an uncovered story of an individual life (Elms, 1994) structured with psychological theory (McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1982a).

In the following section the development and evolution of the field of psychobiography is explored. Thereafter, psychobiographical research is defined and contrasted with related concepts. Finally, the methodological considerations and value of psychobiography are discussed.

2.3   Psychobiographical Research

2.3.1   Trends in the Development of Psychobiography

In scientific psychology, the interest in quantitative methods traditionally overshadowed the interest in the study of life histories (Runyan, 1982a). Life histories therefore received less methodological attention and were relatively less influential (Runyan, 1988a). Despite philosophical, literary and other explorations of the individual, modern social scientists have tended to omit the subject's humanity by pursuing causal, objective accounts of generalized behaviour patterns (Rustin, 1999; Simonton, 2003). The individuality and diversity of human meaning have been relegated to a secondary concern.

However, the increased influence of postmodernism and the growth of narrative analysis have revitalized the emphasis on individual meaning and choice and added a storied and time dimension to the research process (Roberts, 2002; Stead & Subich, 2006; Stroud, 2004). In biographical research individuals are seen as creators of meaning in their daily lives, who act according to these meanings to make sense of social existence (Stanley, 1992). The development of biographical writing has shown the use of psychological principles to explore the influences of life and contextual interactions on the individual's perceptions (Yow, 1994).

Prior to the 20th century, literary biographers rarely employed psychological concepts to interpret their subjects (McAdams, 1994). Records of the lives and deeds of the rulers of ancient Egypt, Babylonia and Syria sacrificed accuracy and in-depth study in an attempt to glorify the subjects (McAdams, 1994). McAdams (1994) argued that history is concerned with the description and interpretation of a particular phenomenon and events in the past, but noted that biographers tended to neglect their subject's human failings, imperfections and their inner lives of feeling, desire and fantasy. This lack of psychological depth is further evidenced in Plutarch's (A.D. 46? − 120?) *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans,* the medieval hagiographies of Christian saints and the idealized testimonials of the lives of great men and women written during the Victorian age (McAdams, 1988).

The emergence of psychoanalysis provided the opportunity to explain how childhood desires and frustrations informed the strivings of adult life (Runyan, 1982a). In 1910 Freud published *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*, which heralded the first true affiliation between literary biography and psychology.   Freud called his study a

psychobiography, in contrast to prevailing pathographies. The pathography was one form of psychoanalytic biography that aimed to expose neurotic drives hidden in the lives and works of famous and influential people (Scalapino, 1999). Freud, however, suggested that psychobiographers examine the way a given psychic concern spanned both a neurosis and a creative masterpiece. Freud's *Leonardo* was an attempt to illustrate the dynamics underlying creativity. This, however, proved problematic as the psychodynamic argument that the images that da Vinci created arose solely from an infantile wish, seemed difficult to prove (McAdams, 1988; Scalapino, 1999). The assumption that Leonardo's creativity stemmed from early childhood conflict created a fixed and undirected description of the individual artistic process that was destined to be distorted (McAdams, 1988). Despite its methodological weaknesses (Elms, 1994; McAdams, 1988), this influential work redefined the mission of both psychology and biography as applied psychoanalysis (Runyan, 1988a). Psychobiography thus emerged to yield new insights beyond traditional biography.

A number of the earliest psychobiographical studies included analyses of Shakespeare as revealed through Hamlet (Jones, 1910), Richard Wagner (Graf, 1911) and Martin Luther (P. Smith, 1913). The number of psychoanalytic biographies escalated during the 1910s and 1920s, which led to numerous attacks on the method. Despite a criticism of reductionism, psychobiography undulated in the use of psychodynamic explanations. Early attempts included Morton Prince's *Psychology of the Kaiser: a study of His Sentiments & His Obsessions* (1915) and G. Stanley Hall's *Jesus, the Christ, in Light of Psychology* (1917). In the 1920s a number of noteworthy studies, such as *Abraham Lincoln* (Clark, 1923), *Samuel Adams* (Harlow, 1923) and *Edgar Allan Poe* (Krutch, 1926) were written (Runyan, 1988a).

Studies conducted in the 1930s on writers such as Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Moliere, Nietzsche and Rousseau and public figures such as Caesar, Lincoln, Napoleon, Darwin and Alexander the Great continued Freud's notion that psychobiography could be used to discover universal laws or mechanisms (Runyan, 1988a). During this decade, Henry Murray called for the study of personology, which is the intensive study of individual subjects through the study of life narratives (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; McAdams, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1988). Murray collected autobiographies from his subjects in order to conceptualize personality as the summative influence of complex aspects of each life narrative. Allport (1942), together with his students, also influenced this period with the emphasis on idiographic methods and the use of personal documents (Runyan, 1982a, 1983).

The period between World War II and the mid-1960s marked a decline in the study of individual lives, but the interest did not cease. The 1940s witnessed a relatively slow period, with exceptions such as Guttmacher's (1941) study of George III and Langer's (1943) *The Mind of Adolf Hitler,* which was only published in 1972 (Runyan, 1988a). Runyan noted that the 1950s were characterized by a slowly renewed production of psychobiographical research and the 1960s indicated a rise in psychobiographical analyses of writers, artists, musicians, politicians, religious leaders, scientists and others (Fouchè, 1999). Most notable during this time, Erikson wrote *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis* (1958) and *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Non-Violence* (1969), which showed both a more rigorous methodological and self-conscious application in psychobiography and are thus regarded as examples of psychobiography's maturation.

Runyan (1988a) indicated that there has been an increase in psychobiographical publications, especially since the 1970s. This proliferation paralleled the growing institutionalization of the field, as indicated by the development of professional organizations, conferences, speciality journals and dissertations. Roberts (2002) attributed this increase to factors such as (a) a growing interest in the life course; (b) a disillusionment with static approaches to data collection; (c) the increased concern with lived experience and how best to reveal and express it; and (d) the growing popularity of qualitative research in general. In recent years psychobiography has developed an eclectic, but differentiated self-conception that is characterized by "biographical studies that make explicit use of any kind of formal or systematic psychology" (Runyan, 1988a, p. 296).

There is a growing awareness that both traditions of psychology and biography make essential contributions to unravelling and understanding human lives. This is indicated by the fact that numerous psychologists have drawn upon biographical sources of information and that scholars in each area have drawn upon psychobiographical interpretations of leading figures in their respective fields (Runyan, 1988a). As a result, a symbiotic alliance has developed between psychology and biography. The field of psychobiography represents this synthesis, albeit an 'uneasy alliance' (Elms, 1994). Psychobiography is multi-disciplinary, crossing professions such as psychoanalysis, psychiatry, political science, academic psychology, literature and the arts, psychohistory, anthropology and religion (Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Simonton, 2003) and draws on various theories of personality, abnormal, cognitive, developmental and social psychology.

Contributions made in the field of adult personality development, life history research in psychopathology and lifespan development has provided a rich and diverse tradition to draw upon in the study of lives (Fouchè, 1999). As a result, much work in recent years has focused on examining how the life course is influenced by socio-structural, demographic and historic conditions (Runyan, 1982a). However, Runyan (1982a) and Schultz (2005a) highlighted the limited amount of psychobiographical work in institutionalized academic psychology and noted that it is relatively unusual to find formal academic training in psychobiography.

Within South Africa only a limited number of psychobiographies have been undertaken in the past within institutionalized academic psychology (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). There have been a few theses, dissertations and treatises conducted at the Department of Psychology of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and Rhodes University's Department of Psychology. These psychobiographical research studies have been conducted on a wide variety of influential figures through the use of various theories of lifespan development, particularly those of Levinson (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1978) and Erikson (1950) (Fouchè, Smit, Watson & van Niekerk, 2007). Researchers have studied the lives of, amongst others, Jan Christiaan Smuts (Fouchè, 1999), Steven Biko (Kotton, 2002), B. J. Vorster (Vorster, 2003), Mother Teresa (Stroud, 2004), H. F. Verwoerd (Claasen, 2006), Karen Horney (Green, 2006) and Hansie Cronjé (Warmenhoven, 2006).

Fouchè and van Niekerk (2005a) suggested that South African academic institutions utilize psychobiographical research more often as a research design and methodology in the study of individual lives. The significant value of psychobiographical case studies has been advocated by various scholars in the field of life history research for the development and testing of theories related to human development (Fouchè, 1999).

2.3.2 Psychology, Biography and Narrative

Human beings are naturally biographical organisms who reflect on individual life events and the social contexts in which they occurred. Humans provide their lives with a sense of meaning and purpose by constructing internalized self-narratives, or life stories (McAdams, 1985, 1994, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1988). As storytellers, humans differ from other organisms in that they can anticipate their individual and societal futures and recount their individual pasts (Elms, 1994). This narrative capacity is expressed in various forms of communication, such as legends, myths, history and motion pictures (Fouchè, 1999; Sarbin, 1986).

Psychobiography is an indispensable method of social inquiry (Elms, 1994; Hones, 1998; McAdams, 1994) used to capture life narratives situated in time. Biographical research topics are congruent with the assertion that man can only be understood – if at all – within his social and historical context. Historical records contain a wealth of information about human behaviour across diverse socio-cultural and temporal strata. According to Hones (1998), the integration of historical, psychological, sociological and cultural perspectives in the description of lives is hermeneutical, which reflects an important goal in interpretative social science. The first step in examining historical documents or the text of spoken words or human behaviour is to learn the meaning from the people studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Josselson, 1995; Neuman, 2003; Sarbin, 1986).

Records on historical personalities hold information of immense practical importance for researchers who focus on germane social issues, such as human violence (Simonton, 2003). The histories and life stories of famous, enigmatic and paradigmatic figures (Fouchè, 1999; Howe, 1997; McAdams, 1988) have fascinated scholars in the varied disciplines of biography and scientific psychology. Both disciplines have tried to determine how individual developmental differences occur, for example, in this study, to understand how Dahmer's personality development deviated so markedly from society. The interpretive process becomes the researcher's means to weave data into discussions of significance. Both traditions have tried to discover (a) how the life course of individuals can be fully understood (Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1982a); (b) how to elucidate the most effective method to observe the evolution of a single life over time (Howe, 1997; McAdams, 1988, 1994); and (c) how particular children develop into unusually competent, exceptionally creative and productive individuals (Howe, 1997; Simonton, 1994).

The essential contribution made by both traditions is indicated by the numerous psychologists, interested in individual development, who have drawn upon biographical sources in following human development. Similarly, many biographers have engaged in psychodynamic theorizing associated with psychobiography (Howe, 1997). However, the apparent complementarity in the use of these traditions is punctuated by a tenuous relationship. The interdisciplinary relationship or 'uneasy alliance' (Elms, 1994) between psychology and biography is indicative of the biographical approach's occupying a traditionally ambiguous and somewhat controversial status in psychology (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Runyan, 1982a).

Personality psychologists such as Alfred Adler (1870 – 1937) and Erik Erikson (1902 – 1980) suggested that psychologically informed biography is probably the best means to capture a human life situated in time (McAdams, 1994). However, personality psychologists have not traditionally viewed themselves as biographers (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Elms, 1988). Scientific psychology emphasizes the necessity of reliable evidence and uses conceptual paradigms of developmental and personality psychology as frameworks within which to trace and explain the typical patterns of human development (Howe, 1997). Academic psychology tends to be theory-centred, concerned with developing general conceptual and theoretical analyses of various classes of psychological phenomena, such as in the areas of developmental, social, personality, abnormal, cognitive and biographical psychology (Jacobs, 2004).

Psychologists have thus abstained from conducting detailed study of individual lives, thinking that such studies did not contribute to the formulation of more general truths (Rosenwald, 1988). Simonton (2003) noted that in striving to produce universal scientific knowledge, psychological researchers use participants from the same social and historical context as the researcher. Simonton instead argued that the use of historical records would yield information about human behaviour in a great diversity of cultures and historical periods – as evidenced by the psychobiographical study of individual lives. McAdams (1988) and Schultz (2005a) have indicated that the study of the whole person is again prevalent. By exploring the narrative dimensions of human development, psychologists move away from logico-deductive modes of experience (Bruner, 1986) in order to gain a more holistic understanding of the reality in which individuals perceive themselves to function. Psychobiography thus appears to reflect the important emergence of narrative, story and biography as guiding frameworks to study human development and to understand human behaviour (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a; McAdams, 1988).

A biography may be described as a structured account of a life, written by another, usually according to literary conventions (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Prior to the 20th century, literary biographers rarely employed psychological concepts to interpret the lives of their subjects (McAdams, 1994). Indeed, many biographers continue to omit a psychological viewpoint and the use of psychological theory was relegated to a secondary aim (Roberts, 2002; Schultz, 2003). Rather, biography tends to give credence to what is distinct or unique in a particular individual (Howe, 1997). The biographical methodology is thus considered more

subjective and lacking in structure for clear and rigorous scientific study (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Runyan, 1982a). Biography is further criticized for relying on the intellectual supports of literature, the arts and history when mapping out the progressive course of an individual's life (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a).

The biographical tradition is defended with counter-arguments that (a) the critics of the single-case study method hold an overly narrow view of science; (b) good biographical studies are highly illuminating; and (c) psychologists who study individual lives neglect their intellectual responsibility if they dismiss biographical research (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a; McAdams, 1994). Nonetheless, the past two decades has witnessed the increased interest in and a growing acceptance of biographical and autobiographical approaches among personality psychologists and other social scientists (Bertaux, 1981; Elms, 1994; McAdams & Ochberg, 1988; Runyan, 1982a; Schultz, 2005a). The study of life histories and life stories has facilitated the revitalization of the narrative form of inquiry (Chase, 2005; M. J. Edwards, 2004; Stroud, 2004) such that human lives and other social phenomena are seen as texts to be interpreted (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Chase, 2005; Fouchè, 1999).

Psychologists, biographers and linguists hold various definitions for the concept, narrative, based on each field's prevailing theories and research orientation (Chase, 2005; Bruner, 1990). Bromley (1986) conceptualized a narrative as an orderly series of events that take the form of a story and emphasizes description rather than explanation. Sarbin (1986) raised the possibility that narrative could be considered a root metaphor to understand human behaviour and experience; a possibility that Schultz (2005a) noted has taken hold. Significance is given to the personal, temporal and contextual quality of connections or relationships that honour the complexity of a life lived as a unified whole. Narrative research focuses on the individual, whose life may be understood through recounting and reconstructing the life story (Chase, 2005; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1995). Clandinin and Connelly (1994) argued that people live, modify and re-create stories in the process of telling so that learning occurs for them and for the researchers who collect, re-tell and write the stories.

2.3.3 Psychobiography: Definitions and Descriptions

Bromley (1986) described a psychobiography as a biographical study wherein psychological concepts, methods and findings play a major role. As a means to collect, analyze and discern life stories, psychobiographical research allows the in-depth study of the

whole person in time and context through the narrative of individual experience (Runyan, 1988a). This advancement in the understanding of interesting individual lives is a growing major objective in psychology and the social sciences more broadly (Elms, 1994; Josselson, Lieblich & McAdams, 2003; Runyan, 2002).

In the study of individual lives, psychologists must listen to their subjects' stories with the aim to discern the central, underlying story that animates any particular person's life (Fouchè, 1999). In this way they deal with either autobiography or biography (McAdams, 1988). A psychobiography is conducted through the psychologist's explicit use of formal psychological theory and research to interpret individual lives (Runyan, 2002). Therefore, psychobiography may be viewed as "the systematic use of psychological (especially personality) theory to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story" (McAdams, 1994, p. 699).

McLeod (1994) described psychobiography within the context of a qualitative narrative case study, which is concerned with clarifying and understanding the stories people tell about their life experiences. As an engaging discipline that seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals, psychobiography emphasizes the importance of subjective accounts individuals give of their past, present and future (Roberts, 2002). Life stories may be gathered through interviews, diaries or journals, letters and biographical material (Runyan, 1982b; Willig, 2001). The materials deemed relevant for psychobiography are personal documents that create a biographical sketch of an exceptional individual within a psychological, social and historical context (McLeod, 1994; Plummer, 1983; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b). Thus, psychobiography fundamentally serves to shed light on both inner, subjective experiences and the connection between life and theory (Schultz, 2005a).

Howe (1997) argued that psychobiography is a way to conduct psychological research through the extensive use of biographical data in order to examine the growth of original thinking, creativity and productivity in unusual individuals. Carlson (1988) referred to psychobiography as longitudinal life history research into the personality development of exemplary and finished lives. According to J. W. Anderson (1981a, 1981b), a psychobiography involves both longitudinal and cross-cultural research of the psychological dimensions of a historical figure through the application of psychological theory – usually developed in the 20th century – to cross-culturally investigate subjects of earlier eras.

Despite the various dimensions in its description, the essence of psychobiography was encapsulated by McAdams (1994) as the "study of an entire life, from birth to death, with the aim to discern, discover and formulate the central story of the entire life, a story structured according to psychological theory" (p. 12). The term, psychobiography, might be more clearly understood when compared with other closely related and possibly confusing terms. Thus, a brief description of related concepts is discussed in the next section.

2.3.4   Psychobiography and Related Concepts

2.3.4.1   Autobiography, Biography and Psychobiography

Autobiography refers to the documentation of an individual's life – or a part thereof – authored and interpreted by the individual (Bertaux, 1981; Bromley, 1986). An autobiography shares the properties of a biography, drawing on a variety of sources (Bertaux, 1981; Bromley, 1986; Roberts, 2002) but retains a high level of inescapable subjectivity and bias. The author may refer to objective records and facts, but due to the subjective perspective tends to be necessarily selective and biased (Roberts, 2002). A biography, in turn, refers to the account of a person's life written by someone other than the subject under study (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). Biographers usually have little psychological training and write from a literary perspective. A biography may or not involve the co-operation of the subject and may or not be scientifically comprehensive and accurate (Fouchè, 1999).

Psychobiographical research is the systematic application of psychological theory to study a person's entire lifespan, focussing holistically on the person (Bromley, 1986; McAdams, 1994). A single-case research design and psychobiographical research both investigate in-depth phenomena and provide illuminating descriptions thereof. This facilitates theory-building through the development and refinement of concepts and may be used for theory testing by confirming or disconfirming theory (D. Edwards, 1990).

2.3.4.2   Life Histories and Life Stories

Bromley (1986) described life history as a "scientific reconstruction and interpretation, based on the best evidence available, of major formative, critical and culminative episodes in a person's life" (p. 8). Life history studies are valuable in providing information on social experience (Runyan, 1982a) through the collection of oral or written autobiographies from a

sample of people who share some similarity, such as lifestyle choice (Fouchè, 1999), in order to identify common patterns that facilitate an understanding of the group (Bertaux, 1981; Watson, 1976). The focus is to examine relationships, similarities and patterns across many lives (Bromley, 1986; McAdams, 1994), which differs from a psychobiographical study that concentrates on the uniqueness of a single life (Rosenwald, 1988).

As noted previously in section 2.2.2, Runyan (1982a) highlighted the controversy about the value of studying life histories and the uncertainty whether to consider life histories as a method of data collection or as a subject matter to be investigated through various methods. The former conceptualization refers to the use of various research methods such as archival research, longitudinal research or experimental research on individual lives. The latter refers to the sequence of events and experience over the course of an entire life.

A life story is the biographical account of a person's life – either oral or written – as told by the individual (Bujold, 1990; McAdams, 1996; Runyan, 1982a). This subjective chronicle of important past events facilitates the construction of an imagined future (Schultz, 2005b) by providing a semblance of meaning and direction. McAdams (1997) noted that content of the life story embodies a person's identity and both develop and change over time. As a fairly complete narration of one person's life experience as a whole, it highlights the most important aspects, events and relationships (Atkinson, 1998; Bromley, 1986; Cole & Knowles, 2001). The essential feature is the subjectivity of the author's personal thoughts, feelings and motives (Fouchè, 1999), whereby a storied narrative is the linguistic form that preserves the complexity of human action within its interrelationship of temporal sequence, human motivation, chance occurrences and a specific socio-cultural context (Polkinghorne, 1995). The story serves as a natural package to organize different kinds of information and therefore emphasizes meaning rather than fact (Bromley, 1977; Coles, 1989; Howard, 1991).

2.3.4.3 Psychohistory, Historical Psychology and Historiography

Runyan (1982a, 1988b) highlighted that there is considerable confusion about the scope and definition of psychohistory, because of underlying tensions between the disciplines of history and psychology. Runyan (1988b) suggested that the relationship is not characterized merely by co-operation and recognition of mutual interest, but also by suspicion, misunderstanding and occasional hostility. History is concerned with the study of human action and experience in circumstances in the past, and psychology is the scientific study of

human behaviour and experience (Louw & Edwards, 1994; Runyan, 1988b; Simonton, 1994). Runyan (1982a) explained that psychohistory is the application of psychology to history, just as psychobiography is the application of psychology to biography. Psychohistory can be described as the explicit application of formal psychological theory to interpret historical events (Reber, 1985; Runyan, 1988b; Schultz, 2005a). This historical endeavour is further interpreted within political, social and cultural events – often from a psychoanalytic perspective (Loewenberg, 1983).

Historical psychology is broadly described as a historical exercise in psychology (Berg, 1995; Loewenberg, 1983; Runyan, 2003) that emphasizes the history of psychological phenomena and the history of thought about psychological development and the important formative and cumulative influences of the life course (Runyan, 1988b, 2003). Historiography or historical research is past-orientated research that seeks to illuminate a question of current interest through the intensive study of material that already exists (G. Anderson, 1990; Simonton, 2003). Historical research extends beyond a simplistic rendition of facts drawn from various sources such as government documents, newspaper editorials, photographs and films. Historiography may be described as a systematic collection and objective evaluation of data related to past occurrences, in order to explore and reconstruct past information into a meaningful set of historical explanations (Berg, 1995; Cohen & Manion, 1994; Denzin, 1978; Wallbank, 1985).

2.3.4.4 Personality Assessment and Psychobiography

Personality assessment relates to the measurement and evaluation of lives in progress (Fouchè, 1999). Personality assessment focuses on what the person is like in the present and analyzes the forces that help to shape that product, such as psychological traits, values, worldview, personal identity or modes of thinking that characterize the individual and differentiate individuals from one another (Caprara & Cervone, 2004; Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005). Psychobiography may be described as the study of lives already lived (Carlson, 1988) and attempts to provide explanations for aspects of life history that cannot be easily derived through the use of common sense of simple psychological principles (Alexander, 1990). Both psychobiography and personality assessment therefore demand the inclusive description of a personality in time and the influence of social contexts. However, these two approaches present a variety of differences in approach and interest (Alexander, 1988, 1990). Most

notably, they differ in that a lived life eliminates the problem of prediction and tends to lead directly to the importance of the problem of understanding (Alexander, 1990; Van Os, 2006).

Carlson (1988) indicated that life history materials constitute a perfect laboratory to develop and test psychological theory. The judicious use of these materials permits the psychobiographer to consider various socio-cultural contexts, avoid the inconvenience of informed consent and achieve a high level of consensual validation (Fouchè, 1999). Psychobiography thus allows researchers to trace human development in ways that surpass static personality assessment or other clinical case studies (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a).

2.3.4.5 Psychological Case Study and Single-Case Experiment

A psychological case study refers to the scientific reconstruction and interpretation of particular events within a particular subject's life through the use of available evidence. As one of the oldest methods of research, the case study is undertaken in response to a problem in understanding or one that requires practical action (Yin, 1994). Bromley (1986) noted that the psychological case study deals with particular events or emotional episodes, whilst psychobiography focuses on the whole person's life history over time. Thus, if a researcher's aim is to describe the whole story of a single person's life and experience in order to develop interpretations from these, the case study method is extremely useful (Runyan, 1982a, 1982b; Yin, 1994). The case method – discussed later in this chapter – is a research methodology that falls under the domains of life history and narrative.

The single-case experiment refers to the study of one or more aspects of one subject, under closely controlled conditions (Bromley, 1986; Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) described the single-case experiment as analogous to a single experiment where the principles of hypothesis testing are employed. McLeod (1994) indicated that the single-case experiment (n=1) is a method that is often used within the cognitive or behavioural traditions through the administration of a standardized assessment on a number of occasions: before, during and after intervention. An advantage of experimental research is that it uses pre-defined measures to control and assess pre-defined variables (Yin, 1994). The aim is to record and assess specific changes that are attributable to the application of a specific intervention in order to draw definite, accurate and valid conclusions about causal relationships (Gerdes, 1989). However, Simonton (2003) argued that strictly controlled laboratory conditions create a socio-cultural vacuum which produce results that differ from the natural setting.

Although psychobiography differs in various ways to the psychological case study and the single-case experiment discussed above, all three are types of individual case study research that share fundamental characteristics inherent to wider case study research (Fouchè, 1999; McLeod, 1994). By maintaining the integrity of the psychobiographical methodology and the process by which it unfolds, the individuality of the subject in question can be preserved (Maxwell, 1996). Further, adherence the principles of the qualitative research design results in an understanding regarding the interplay of actions, events and meanings that emerge (Stake, 1995). These insights are thus shaped by, and derived from, the unique circumstances of the case itself (Maxwell, 1996). An overview of the characteristics of case study research – in which psychobiography is essentially grounded – is discussed in the following section.

2.3.5   Characteristics of Psychobiographical Case Study Research

Case study research can be described by listing the characteristics that differentiate it from other related strategies, such as field study, action research and ethnographic study (Cavaye, 1996). This section briefly overviews the characteristics of case study research in terms of case method, epistemology, research objective, research design and research method. Case study research is the intensive investigation of a singular unit – be it a person, group or organization – bound within a time and contextual setting (Runyan, 1982a; Stake, 1995; Willig, 2001; Yin, 1994). The interaction of the unit of study within its context is significant; life history research on individual lives is a prime example. Babbie and Mouton (2001) noted that many researchers consider life history research as a specialized form of case study. Similarly, Cozby (1997) noted that psychobiography is an especially good example of case study research.

2.3.5.1   Case Method

Case study research is an approach that uses the case method. The case method is a term that describes a way to systematize observation (Neuman, 2003; Struwig & Stead, 2004). The case method is characterized by a lack of explicit control and manipulation of variables as it (a) aims to gain an idiographic understanding of the case within its peculiarity (Hart, 1998; Willig, 2001); (b) uses a variety of qualitative tools and techniques for data collection and analysis (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a; Willig, 2001); (c) draws attention to contextual data through a holistic perspective on the various dimensions of the case; and (d) contributes to knowledge by relating findings to generalizable theory (Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) noted that

case research is particularly suited to situations where it is impossible to separate the phenomenon's variables from their context, whilst Neuman (2003) noted that case studies are invaluable in researching rare populations.

2.3.5.2 Case Research Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the researcher's belief about the way that knowledge is constructed (Willig, 2001). Alternative views of reality – such as the interpretive and positivistic paradigms – rely on different assumptions about the nature of knowledge and demand different approaches to the research (Hart, 1998). Case study research is extremely versatile (Willig, 2001) and can be used in both traditions. Case research can be used within a qualitative paradigm to try to understand the nature of a phenomenon and to elicit meanings from seemingly complex social behaviours (Cavaye, 1996; Struwig & Stead, 2004; Yin, 1994), such as in the case of psychobiography. However, case research can also be employed in a quantitative study where pre-defined variables are measured according to pre-defined measures (Parker, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Willig, 2001). An example of a research design in which this epistemology is used, is the single-case experimental design (Yin, 1994). Psychobiographical research, as a form of case study research, is an interpretive practice. Interpretive research is not used to explain human behaviour in terms of universal or nomothetic laws, but used to understand and interpret meanings and intentions that underlie everyday human actions within their context (Schurink, 1988; Willig, 2001).

As a research endeavour, the case study contributes uniquely to knowledge about the individual and social phenomena (Yin, 1994). The need for case studies arises from the desire to understand complex social phenomena and case studies allow an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 1994). Further, case studies have a temporal element and thus focus on change and development (Willig, 2001). The case study researcher takes a holistic perspective and perceives the world as an integrated system that does not allow the study of its parts in isolation (Stake, 2005; Willig, 2001) and thereby generates idiographic insight into the phenomenon.

2.3.5.3 Case Research Objective

Case research can be used to describe phenomena, build theory and test existing theoretical concepts and relationships (Cavaye, 1996; Fouchè, 1999; McLeod, 1994; Willig,

2001; Yin, 1994). Rather than to enumerate statistical frequencies, case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions. This is known as the construct of analytical generalization and is analogous to the way a scientist generalizes from a single experiment to theory (Yin, 1994). Willig (2001) stated that when case studies are used to generate new theory, they can facilitate conceptual refinement of emerging theoretical formulations or can lead to the discovery of new insights and interpretations into social and psychological processes, which may give rise to theoretical foundations and hypotheses. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) noted that Freud's psychoanalytic case studies constitute a clear example of the relationship between case studies and theory development.

The case research process is one of inductive discovery wherein the researcher conceptualizes and richly describes phenomena (D. Edwards, 1990; Neuman, 2003; Willig, 2001). Conceptualization is achieved by generating hypotheses and developing explanations for observed relationships (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). These statements about relationships provide the basis to build theory (Bromley, 1986; Cavaye, 1996). Glaser and Straus (1967) described grounded theory as a formalized approach to inductive case research. Grounded theory suggests that theory emerges as the researcher collects data regarding a phenomenon and tries to explain, interpret or render meaning from the data (Neuman, 2003). In order to facilitate theory emergence the researcher enters the field without a priori hypotheses. As the researcher collects data, it is coded and categorized to facilitate abstraction and theory construction (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In contrast to the discovery process, quantitative testing is concerned with the validation or disconfirmation of existing theory. The deductive process is a means to test cause-and-effect relationships according to a natural science model (Yin, 1994). The researcher uses theory to phrase theoretical propositions and logical hypotheses or predictions derived from theory. The propositions are tested by collecting and comparing the data from the observed reality with the expected outcome or theoretical proposition (Colborn, 1996). In the case of psychobiography the researcher may have as research objectives, the discovery and/ or testing of theory – and could therefore use either, or both, inductive or deductive case research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Bromley, 1986; Fouchè, 1999).

2.3.5.4   Case Research Design

Yin (1994) described research design as a logical sequence that connects data to the study's initial research questions and its eventual conclusions. As a form of research, case study is characterized by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used (Stake, 1995). Case study designs vary in their complexity as some involve the study of a single case, whereas others involve the study of multiple cases (Yin, 1994). Thus, within these types there are single and multiple units of analysis.

The study of the single-case enables the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in-depth and thereby provide a rich description to reveal its deep nature (Cavaye, 1996). Further, the single-case study enables theory building by developing and refining or confirming and disconfirming concepts against real-world data (D. Edwards, 1990; Yin, 1994) and an opportunity to gain access to more specialized populations (Neuman, 2003).

Multiple case studies may not enable the same rich descriptions as studies of single cases, but they enable the analysis of data across various cases (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). This enables the researcher to verify that findings are not merely the result of idiosyncrasies of the research setting (Bromley, 1986; Cavaye, 1996; Yin, 1994). The number of cases to be studied in this design is not pre-determined, but dependent on (a) the amount of knowledge generated after studying a case and (b) how much new information is likely to emerge from studying further cases (Eisenhardt, 1991). The research question and the data collected determine when the researcher has collected sufficient data for appropriate analysis.

A psychobiographical study is most often in the form of a single-case research design whereby the researcher approaches the life history of a biographical subject. However, life history research could at times involve a multiple-case biographical design where the researcher conducts comparative biographical studies of subjects by bringing intensive, exploratory interviews into conversation with one another (Martin, 1996; Rosenwald, 1998). Multiple-case designs have proven useful in the biographical study of career development (Bujold, 1990) and the comparative study of leaders (Gronn, 1993).

2.3.5.5   Case Research Method

Case research method relates to the type of research tools and techniques that may be used to collect empirical evidence (Cavaye, 1996; Cozby, 1997). The strength of case study research is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence such as documents, artefacts, interviews and observations (Yin, 1994). The researcher needs to carefully consider the unit of analysis and select methods of data collection and analysis that will generate suitable materials for the case study. Bromley (1986) and Yin (1994) noted that there are two basic types of data collection methods: (a) nomothetic or quantitative methods based on numerical data and (b) idiographic or qualitative methods based on verbal data. The majority of case research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Willig, 2001).

Qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities (Willig, 2001) and that the world is a subjective function of personal interactions and perceptions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Parker, 1999; Willig, 2001). This implies that the world needs to be interpreted, rather than measured and that values and beliefs underlie individuals' perceptions in their interaction with the world. In order to assign phenomena with meaning, qualitative researchers explore, richly describe and understand each phenomenon within its context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Direct, in-depth knowledge of a research setting is vital to achieve contextual understanding and thus case methods are associated with interviews, verbal data and observation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; D. Edwards, 1990; Stake, 1995).

A wide range of diverse methods of data collection and analysis exist. Multiple sources of information that are rich in context, including documents, interviews, observations, archival records, artefacts and photographs may be used (Cavaye, 1996; Struwig & Stead, 2004; Yin, 1994). Psychobiographical studies primarily use qualitative evidence in the form of personal documents (Plummer, 1983; Simonton, 2003; Willig, 2001), diaries, letters and recorded information (Alexander, 1990; D. Edwards, 1990). The psychobiographical study of finished lives focuses on a biographical sketch of the life history of a subject within a psychological paradigm and the socio-historical context (Runyan, 1982a, 1988a; Schultz, 2005a).

Berg (1995) suggested that historical researchers have two major sources of data from where they can extract data. Primary sources involve the oral or written testimony of the subject under study or eyewitness accounts by those present at the given time in history

(Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). These are usually original artefacts, documents and items related to the direct outcome of an event (Yin, 1994). Secondary sources involve the oral or written testimony of people not immediately present at the time of an event. These sources represent second-hand accounts of someone, an event or development. Examples of such sources include biographies, textbooks, articles, newspaper stories and oral histories of individuals or groups (Fouchè, 1999; Runyan, 1982a; Strydom & Delport, 2005a; Yin, 1994).

As mentioned previously, case research may also have a quantitative dimension. McLeod (1994) described the single-case experiment and the single-case quantitative study as examples of case research methods based on evidence. In these studies, changes and outcomes are assessed with procedural measures – such as checklists, indices or questionnaires – that reflect evidence in the form of ratings or numerical indicators such as frequencies over time (McLeod, 1994; Willig, 2001; Yin, 1994).

This section was not exhaustive in its description of case study research. The objective was to provide a contextual overview of case research, wherein psychobiography shares underlying principles and characteristics. The significant value of the case study method to study the life histories of individuals, as in psychobiography, has been advocated by many researchers (Alexander, 1988; Carlson, 1988; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1982a). Psychobiography is a means to collect, analyze and discern individuals' life stories and to develop and test theories related to human development (Elms, 1994). The more specific advantages of life history research, and specifically psychobiography as a qualitative and narrative case study that uncovers lives, are discussed in the following section.

2.3.6   The Value of Psychobiographical Life History Research

2.3.6.1   The Uniqueness of the Individual Case within the Whole

Gordon Allport (1942) introduced the nomothetic-versus-idiographic distinction into personality psychology as a way to champion an increased study of the uniqueness of the individual. The idiographic approach emphasized the individual (Runyan, 1982b), where the nomothetic generalizations of positivists were neither desirable, nor possible (Elms, 1994; Gerdes, 1989). Whereas the nomothetic approach identified characteristics common to all individuals, the idiographic approach emphasized individuality, the organization of processes within the person and the identifiable patterns about single lives that transform a case into an

intelligible narrative (Runyan, 1982b). This idiographic view is consonant with Levy's (1970) assertion that the concept of personality owes its existence to man's psychological tendency to seek meaning in his experience.

The idiographic approach was criticized for its dichotomous classification of the particular and general, without providing a satisfactory explanation for the individuality of the whole person (Elms, 1994; Hermans, 1988; Rosenwald, 1988; Wallace, 1989). This criticism is illustrated by Kluckhohn and Murray's (1953, p. 53) classic dictum: "Every man is in certain respects (a) like all other men, (b) like some other men, (c) like no other man". Most research in psychology is concentrated on the first two instances which are nomothetic, but psychobiography embraces the latter stance.

In response to criticism, Allport replaced the term idiographic with morphogenic, which refers to studying individualized patterning processes of the whole personality and emphasizes the individuality of the whole person – rather than the individuality found in single elements (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982b, 1983). Psychobiographical research has a morphogenic nature that allows the researcher to investigate and provide a unique and holistic description of the individual (Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982b). According to Runyan (1982a) and Wallace (1989) this individuality is grounded within the subject's whole socio-historical context.

2.3.6.2 The Socio-Historical Context

The value of life history research to uncovering the larger contextual and sub-contextual influences on human development has been researched and emphasized by various scholars of social science (Fouchè, 1999; Mouton, 1988; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b). The telling of a life story creates that life consistent with cultural, social and historical contexts (McAdams, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1988). The use of life history materials provides a framework to uncover cultural influences on human development through the detailed consideration of the individual subject within the richness of the entire socio-historical context in which he lived (Carlson, 1988; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a). By using this approach to research the subject, a more holistic description of Jeffrey Dahmer becomes possible. The unique description and understanding of the individual provides the researcher with a larger contextualized background from which to portray the subject's socio-historical culture, process of socialization and family history (Roberts, 2002; Runyan, 1982a).

2.3.6.3   Process and Pattern over Time

A third value of life history research is the fuller descriptions and understanding of behavioural processes and developmental patterns (Mouton, 1988; Runyan, 1982a). Psychobiographical research is conducted on finished lives in order to trace patterns of human development and behaviour that can be fully described across an individual's lifespan (Carlson, 1988; Gronn, 1993). This longitudinal research provides an integrated and more comprehensive picture of personality and human development over time (Alexander, 1990). The researcher is provided with a more comprehensive understanding of the 'personality in action' (Fiske, 1988), which allows the researcher to record different dimensions and processes of personality functioning at any time or situation.

2.3.6.4   Subjective Reality

Life history research provides the psychobiographer with in-depth exposure to the subject's inner experiences, thoughts and feelings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The Adlerian perspective proposes that objective reality is less important than how reality is interpreted and the meanings attached to experience (Corey, 2005). The researcher thus enters the subject's *lifeworld* (Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Josselson, 1995; Willig, 2001) in the attempt to understand the individual's life story and personal myths that construct it (Adler, 1929; McAdams, 1996). Watson (1976) suggested that an individual life story be understood as a subjective document to elucidate subjective reality. The knowledge and understanding of subjective reality allows the researcher to develop a level of sympathy and empathy with the subject (Runyan, 1982a; Schultz, 2003). This insight forms the basis upon which to construct an emotionally compelling narration of the individual's life story. Goodson and Sikes (2001) argued that if conducted successfully, the life history forces a confrontation with other people's subjective perceptions of the subject.

 2.3.6.5   Theory Testing and Development

Carlson (1988) stated that finished lives enable psychobiographers to trace human development and that the life history material provides an ideal laboratory to test and develop theories of human development. Theory plays an important role in case research as it guides (a) the identification of objectives and design in data collection, (b) the conceptualization and

(c) the operationalization of case data within the framework of theoretical constructs (D. Edwards, 1990) and acts as a template for generalization (Yin, 1994).

Analytical generalization is used to compare the empirical results of the study to a previously developed theory in order to test, extend and develop it further (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Yin, 1994), rather than to make a statistical inference to a population. Insights gained from psychobiographical case study research can thus be used to highlight conceptual complexities in the understanding of individual lives that prompt research and theory refinement (Schultz, 2005b). Psychobiography as a means of life history research has further proven to be valuable in the informal testing and development of theory in gerontology and aging, career development and the emergence of genetic predispositions in the health development of leaders (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005a; McAdams, 1994).

Despite the intuitively appealing claim that people may be best understood within their biographical contexts (McAdams, 1994), and in spite of the aforementioned advantages of psychobiographical research, biographical approaches are often criticized for their design and methodology (Runyan, 1982a). The critique of the psychobiographical approach and the suggestions that scholars could follow to minimize these challenges are discussed in Chapter 7.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided a contextual foundation and theoretical overview of psychobiographical research as a subject matter, which focuses on the study of enigmatic lives. The narrative nature of the social world was discussed and the necessity to explore the idiographic interpretations and meanings that individuals bring to their life histories. Chapter 3 provides an overview of personality and developmental psychology and focuses predominantly on Erik Erikson's (1950) psychosocial development theory. The aim of this chapter is to facilitate an understanding of the complex nature of personality and begin the process of guiding the conceptualization of Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development across his entire lifespan.

CHAPTER 3

PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter explicates the first theoretical orientation used to explore and describe Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development. The initial part of the chapter discusses the concepts of personality and lifespan development. Thereafter, Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development is extensively described, discussed and criticized and its implication for psychobiography explored. Erikson's theory provides a staged conception wherein to operationalize Dahmer's personality development across lifespan.

3.2 Personality and Lifespan Development

The meaning of the word, personality, has evolved over time (Millon, 2004) but may be generally described as the "constantly changing, but nevertheless relatively stable organization of all physical, psychological and spiritual characteristics of the individual which determine his or her behaviour in interaction within the context in which the individual finds himself or herself" (Meyer & Moore, 2003, p. 11).

A personality theory is a logically consistent, conceptual framework to describe, explain and predict human behaviour (Meyer & Moore, 2003). Various personality theorists differ in their view of human nature and therefore emphasize different aspects of personality development. Despite the variety of theoretical orientations, there exist commonalities between the theories that suggest that they are complementary, rather than contradictory, in their description of human behaviour. Thus, while no single theory can fully explain the complexity of behaviour or the developmental process (Craig & Baucum, 2002), a composite view may be a more effective way to organize and integrate human behaviour in order to highlight individual differences.

A developmental perspective examines human development and change throughout the lifespan (Santrock, 2001; Shaffer, 1999) that occurs through the ongoing interaction between changing individuals and their changing world. According to Santrock (2001) developmental psychology provides various frameworks through which developmental changes are systematized and interpreted, areas of development are distinguished and an entire lifespan is

divided into meaningful stages. An essential idea in development is the life stage, an age-graded segment of the lifespan that is demarcated by developmental changes that are a mixture of biological, psychological, social, historical and evolutionary influences across time (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Jepsen, 2004; Meyer & Moore, 2003; Millon, 2004).

Evolution throughout the lifespan involves stability and change, continuity and discontinuity, progression, regression and flux (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Stroud, 2004). As such, time is a defining feature of the individual's change as it guides an infinitely complex series of temporally related activities across the lifespan (McAdams, 1997). Individual development is embedded within the individual's socio-cultural and historical context (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Jepsen, 2004; Morris & Maisto, 2002) and therefore cultural differences emerge quite significantly during the various phases of the lifespan (Kagitcibasi, 2004). Individual development across the lifespan is multi-directional and multi-dimensional within the socio-historical context (Alea, Diehl & Bluck, 2004). Development in any one period can be best understood in the context of the whole lifespan (Erikson, 1950, 1963a; Meyer & Moore, 2003) to explain how individuals engage with society and form their identities, personalities and even psychopathologies (Millon, 2004; Morris & Maisto, 2002).

The developmental perspective recognizes that individuals continue to grow and mature in predictable, incremental ways throughout life (McAdams, 1994) such as the development of cognitive abilities in children to solve more complex problems. Developmental psychology further views children as active agents who influence and moderate their environments (Caprara & Cervone, 2000). Lifespan developmental theorists contend that a wide range of internal and external factors – such as genetic and cultural elements, respectively – together influence the individual's unique developmental path (Caprara & Cervone, 2000; McCrae et al., 2000; Santrock, 2001). Development is therefore seen as a cumulative process across a series of genetically pre-determined stages in various socio-cultural contexts, where each stage's adaptive capacity differs qualitatively from the previous one (Louw & Edwards, 1994).

Runyan (1982a) highlighted the special relevance of developmental psychology in psychobiography because of its emphasis on the description and explanation of behavioural and structural changes over the lifespan. This developmental focus facilitates the investigation of personality development, psychopathology, socialization processes, culture and family history (Runyan, 1982a). In order to study the complexity of a finished life, a

story-like narrative can be used to organize and interpret individual development (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Strack, 2005). The detailed description of development can contribute to the understanding, definition and description of important developmental principles that shape individual lives and their evolution over time (Runyan, 1982a; Santrock, 2001).

Personality is a complex pattern of deeply embedded psychological characteristics expressed in almost every area of psychological functioning (Millon, 2004). When all the individual's personality characteristics and psychosocial stressors are taken together, they form a complex, but logical picture of the entire person. When this is considered in relation to specific biographical details, the result is an understanding that links the developmental past, present and future. To determine what separates individuals, such as Dahmer, as enigmatic or influential figures requires a great deal of biographical information (Millon, 2004). The case study involves compiling large and intricate amounts of information on the individual (Yin, 1994) in order to provide a rich, descriptive portrait of the changing and whole individual in a socio-cultural and historical context for in-depth study.

The following section is an exploration of Erikson's life and its relation to the development of the psychosocial theory. The section also highlights the critique of psychosocial theory and Erikson's contribution to the field of psychobiography.

3.3   Erikson: Life, Theory and Psychobiography

3.3.1   Erikson and Identity

Erik Homburger Erikson (1902 – 1994) was an ego psychologist best known for his theory of psychosocial personality development and the concept of an *identity crisis* (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Erikson was an alienated youth (Coles, 1970) who experienced an identity crisis that facilitated his conceptualization of the psychosocial emphasis on identity (Erikson, 1975; Friedman, 1999; Hoare, 2002). Erikson never knew the identity of his father, but held the fantasy throughout life that his father was Danish royalty (Bloland, 1999). As a Jewish Dane raised in Germany, and later, as a struggling Bohemian artist, Erikson cultivated an image of himself as an outsider (Alexander, 2005; Boeree, 2006a; McAdams, 1994). Erikson's life and work thus exhibited a striking historical alignment. Erikson drew on his identity crisis and the socio-historical forces that impacted his life (Coles, 1970; Friedman,

1999; Hoare, 2002; Welchman, 2000) to formulate the basic motivation for human development as a striving for identity (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b).

Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development (see section 3.4) viewed humans as biological, psychological and social beings that are shaped by a mix of interactive forces (Corey, 2005), which represented a departure from Freud's rigid psychoanalysis. Psychosocial development theory allows for lifelong development and a degree of personal freedom that ascribes a greater role to social influences on development (Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Erikson conceptualized human development and behaviour in terms of an epigenetic principle (see section 3.4.1.1) and interaction with the environment. Erikson divided the lifespan into eight stages, each characterized by a developmental crisis. The healthy resolution of each successive and cumulative stage requires a synthetic balance of the two developmental potentialities for optimal ego development (Erikson, 1963a; Sadock & Sadock, 2003; Welchman, 2000). Each stage involves a reformulation of identity in response to the demands and rewards of the developmental era (Erikson, 1950, 1963a, 1968).

Roazen (1976) argued that Erikson minimized his departures from psychoanalysis because he feared that a clear disagreement might have been an insult to Freud, whom he felt to be both "creative originator" and "mystical father" (Erikson, 1975, p. 29). Erikson anxiously defended his deviation from Freud's perspective by stating that, "I was simply saying in my own words what I had learned [from Freud]" (Friedman, 1999, p. 237) and noted that without psychoanalytic theory he would not have formulated his theory (Capps, 2004). The anxiety of losing a father figure or losing his identity as psychoanalyst links to the theory (Alexander, 2005), as does Bloland's (1999) claim that fame served to overcome shame and doubt to maintain social companionship. Erikson (1975) eventually described the three significant differences between his theory and Freud's as being (a) upward, (b) outward and (c) forward. Each of these differences is briefly discussed next.

3.3.2 Theoretical Departures

Erikson (1950) focused on ego development, which marked a move 'upwards' in consciousness from Freud's emphasis on unconscious drives. Erikson (1950, 1959) described the ego as an executive element of personality that makes co-ordinated or planned functioning possible. At each developmental stage, the ego chooses between the different developmental possibilities and tries to formulate creative solutions to the developmental

crises (Hoare, 2002; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The fundamental process of ego development is emphasized through the adolescent identity crisis, which has become – like Adler's *inferiority complex* – deeply ingrained in social consciousness (Shaffer, 1999). Ego development fosters the individual's sense of identity in the social world (Erikson, 1963a).

Erikson's psychosocial theory secondly focuses 'outward' to the social world that provides opportunities for identity development by providing personal, work and civic roles (Hoare, 2002; Schachter, 2005). Erikson (1950, 1963a) recognized the influence of social factors on development and emphasized the vital interplay between the individual and the context. The psychosocial perspective posited an intra- and interpersonal view in which external cultural and society enter the psyche to preside over norms, views, adaptation and behaviour (Hoare, 2005). The ego thus develops through the mutual regulation of the developing individual and society's culture and traditions (Erikson, 1959; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b; Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Erikson (1950, 1963a, 1968) maintained that in order to understand the complexity of development, the individual must be viewed within the socio-cultural and historical context.

The third difference is that psychosocial development moves 'forward' throughout the lifespan, which promotes a generational connection relevant to modern society. Erikson focused on human integration and emphasized the ongoing process of healthy development wherein the individual is an active agent in his own psychosocial maturation. Erikson (1950) rejected reductionism and argued that should adult behaviour be viewed exclusively in terms of childhood, individuals would not take responsibility for their actions. He also rejected the determinism of psychoanalytic theory and promoted an optimistic view of development. Marcia (2002) noted that perhaps the most compelling aspect of the theory is the individual's ability to rectify difficulties that may have arisen in the course of development. Erikson's identity crisis was central to his life and he demonstrated the maturation of his own identity in later life when he assumed the name Erikson upon becoming an American citizen (Boeree, 2006a; Coles, 1970; McAdams, 1994). Healthy psychological development is more than a mere absence of Freudian negatives from childhood or pathology (Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Healthy functioning is seen in playful imagination and mutual relationships (Erikson, 1963a, 1975). Erikson insisted that mental health requires a person to function holistically as an active and adaptive organism in a complementary, but ever-changing society (Hoare, 2005).

3.3.3   Critique of Psychosocial Theory

The psychosocial theory of personality development has been subject to many of the criticisms of psychoanalytic theory. Owing to the inherent ambiguity in the naming of the pivotal developmental concepts, the theory is difficult to operationalize and lacks scientific rigour (Hoare, 2002; Welchman, 2000). However, over the last 50 years much research has been conducted on identity and its development across the lifespan (Marcia, 2002; Phoenix, 2001; Raskin, 2002). In response to criticism for not explaining the developmental delays and their impact of future development more clearly, Erikson (1974, 1975) claimed that the idiographic nature of development prevented definitive descriptions. This suggests that the idiosyncratic manner in which subjects meet and deal with developmental crises differ significantly – based on existing levels of individual development. Another prevalent criticism is that the theory is predominantly individualistic despite its being based on sensitive cultural observations (Craig & Baucum, 2002). The individualistic aspects of the theory apparently stress personal choice and the conception of the identity at the expense of interconnection and community. However, Erikson viewed the interrelationship between the individual and society as deeply connected to the core of personality (Schachter, 2005).

3.3.4   Erikson and Psychobiography

Erikson (1959) held that psychological conceptualizations and assumptions are inevitably embedded in the descriptions and interpretations of lives. Erikson's comprehensive theory provides an intuitively appealing description of key universal concerns at each period of life. Further, as identity is importantly shaped at later ages, the researcher is more likely to have usable evidence of this period of Dahmer's life to explore his psychological developmental growth (Runyan, 1982a; Stewart, Franz & Layton, 1988).   In an attempt to broaden psychoanalytic understanding, Erikson wrote extensively on the development of prominent people who experienced serious struggles with their own identity – and called this study of historical figures, psychohistory (Roazen, 1975). Erikson (1958) argued that social history and personal psychology converge in the concrete behaviour of 'great' individuals and that one disciplinary focus could help in the clarification of another. Erikson's psychobiographies on Martin Luther (1958) and Mahatma Gandhi (1969) are prime examples of the necessity to view an individual's evolving psychosocial identities within the entire socio-cultural and historical context across time. A comprehensive description of the theory is presented next in order to facilitate a theoretical operationalization of the life of Jeffrey Dahmer.

3.4 Psychosocial Development

3.4.1 The Life Cycle

3.4.1.1 Epigenetic Principle

According to Erikson (1950), individual development is the result of genetic and social influences across a life cycle of birth to old age and death. Erikson (1963a, 1968) advocated an epigenetic principle whereby all development occurs in a sequential progression of eight stages, pre-determined by a genetic 'ground plan' and the demands set on the individual at each life stage by society. The epigenetic model represents a normative sequence of psychosocial gains made at each stage as each new nuclear conflict adds another ego quality of accruing human strength (Erikson, 1963a). Each stage has its own "time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole" (Erikson, 1968, p. 92).

Each psychosocial stage is characterized by a prevailing developmental crisis. These crises are described as critical turning points in life when the individual must choose between the two opposing developmental opportunities to either resolve the conflict or fail to master the developmental task (Corey, 2005; Erikson, 1963a). A favourable synthetic balance of the complementary developmental opposites results in an ego strength that allows the individual to advance to a higher level of development (Erikson, Erikson & Kivnick, 1986; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). If the successful resolution of a particular stage does not occur, all subsequent stages reflect the failure in the form of physical, cognitive, social or emotional maladjustment (Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Erikson et al. (1986) described these as specific maladaptations or malignancies that endanger development. A maladaptive tendency reflects an excess of the positive, whilst a malignancy represents too much of the negative. For example, a maladaptive tendency in the seventh stage is overextension, where individuals act with such generativity that they cannot adequately maintain all their commitments. In the eighth stage, the malignancy is disdain, which is characterized by contempt of life – the individual's own and other's (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson et al., 1986).

Although each stage is characterized by a specific developmental crisis, Erikson (1963a) noted that aspects of each crisis are present in all stages because every human action calls for an integration of these crises. Similarly, personality continually develops and is affected by changes in cognitive and social skills that constantly develop without overt evidence thereof

(Roazen, 1976). The progress of the unfolding personality process develops according to the individual's readiness to "be driven forward, to be aware of, and to interact with a widening radius of significant individuals and institutions" (Erikson, 1968, p. 93). Erikson thus recognized the influence of the demands of society and culture on individual development, and further noted that society provides the correct environmental timing and opportunities for growth. The social demands and opportunities correspond with and complement the developmental period. For example, society expects that a six year old acquire social skills and therefore provides opportunities through schooling (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b).

3.4.1.2 Modes

The concept of modes is central to Erikson's theory and refers to both organ modes and psychosocial modalities (Erikson, 1963a, 1980; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Modes form an important link between a child's psychosexual, psychosocial and cognitive development throughout life. Erikson (1963a, 1974) named the behaviour patterns of the first six years of life, organ modes, which gradually form the prototype for general adult behaviour forms of interpersonal relations and sexual behaviour, known as psychosocial modalities.

The mode of incorporation predominates during the first year of life, when the dominant body zone is the mouth. The attitudes and feelings that infants learn to associate with 'taking in' the world influence later functioning in terms of social interaction, a worldview and attitudes towards knowledge and cognitive functioning (Erikson, 1963a, 1974; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The infant solves the developmental crisis of trust by deciding, based on experience, to what extent it can trust the environment to provide for its incorporative needs (Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Through physical development, infants begin to actively grasp and 'hold on' to the world (Erikson, 1963a; Sadock & Sadock, 2003).

The expulsion mode emerges during the second year of life when children acquire muscle control that enables them to exert control over their lives (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The psychosocial modality reflects the antithesis of 'holding on' or 'letting go', the ratio and sequence of which is decisively important for the development of individual personality (Erikson, 1963a) and attitudes about protection, domination, passivity and destruction (Erikson, 1974, 1980). The increased desire for choice and children's reactions to developing self-control through toilet training influences later behaviour as either the enduring qualities of autonomy or doubt and shame (Erikson, 1963a).

Between the ages of three and six, Erikson (1963a, 1974) noted that sexual organs are extremely important body zones, but that the organ modes extend to the child's ability to take more initiative to 'make' and 'do' more as they move around independently and vigorously. Children also have the opportunity to act against social norms, which arouse feelings of guilt (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). However, these guilt feelings help to drive initiative and curiosity in either active or passive forms. Inclusion is a passive means to form kindred relations with peers (Welchman, 2000), while intrusion is an aggressive form manifested by avid curiosity, genital preoccupation, competiveness and physical aggression (Erikson, 1963a).

3.4.1.3   Ritualization

Erikson (1966, 1977) identified six ritualizations in everyday life, which are determined mainly by culture and hold adaptive value. The first five, namely: numinous, judicious, dramatic, formal and ideal correspond to the first five stages of life; the sixth, ritual sanction, relates to the final three stages (Erikson, 1977). Ritualizations are patterned interactions that occur in recurring contexts and often have a playful character (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Erikson described the play element throughout life, whereby cognitive development and socialization develop into the adoption of a personal and societal ideology (Hoare, 2002). Erikson (1966, 1977) argued ritualizations as a way to reconcile opposites. A ritualization is personal, yet group-bound, providing both distinctiveness and individuality. It is playful and formalized in both its details and the whole procedure. A prime function of the ritualizations are to overcome "ambivalence as well as ambiguity" in life (Erikson, 1977, p. 578).

The ritualization of infancy occurs between caregiver and infant through eye contact, kissing and the repetition of the baby's name (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). In the second year of life, children ritualize punishment and reward as they begin to discriminate between 'good and bad' and encounter the rules of wider society. During the so-called 'play age', children use dramatic ritualization to act out roles and use their imagination to expand their ability to view situations from different perspectives (Erikson, 1977). Formal ritualization in the educational process occurs through repetition of formal behaviour patterns (Erikson, 1966; Welchman, 2000). Children learn how to act in society and learn the basic formulations to solve mathematical problems (Capps, 2004). Ritualization in adolescence relates to the expression, experience and mastery of sexuality, technology and an individual ideology within a wider social context (Welchman, 2000). In adulthood, ritual sanction sees adults enter into ritualization control over children (Capps, 2004; Welchman, 2000).

3.4.2   Psychosocial Stages of Developmental Crises

The eight psychosocial stages are discussed below.   Although the stages are delineated chronologically, these ages merely serve as guidelines.   The epigenetic nature and cultural contributions that impact the individual highlight the idiographic nature and timing of the sequentially staged development across the lifespan.   Stages seven and eight are only briefly discussed, because Dahmer died at age 34.

3.4.2.1   Basic Trust versus Mistrust – Hope (Age 0 – 1)

The first developmental stage covers approximately the first year of life and is characterized by the psychosocial developmental crisis: trust versus mistrust (Erikson, 1950, 1963a).   Development focuses on the organ mode of the mouth and the psychosocial modality of incorporation or 'to get' what is offered as well as to elicit what is desired.   The intakes of food, warmth, love and empirical impressions (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b) thus underlie the multi-dimensional development of interpersonal relationships (McAdams, 1994). Through motor and physical development, the psychosocial modality shifts to 'taking and holding on' to things (Erikson, 1977).   As infants enter the active-incorporative stage, they no longer passively receive stimuli, but actively grasp at the environment (Erikson, 1968).

The extent to which infants learn to trust their environment depends mainly on the quality of the mother-child relationship and not the quantity of food or demonstrations of love (Erikson, 1963a).   If infants' needs for food, affection and attention are generally met by a primary caregiver, they develop a sense of trust in the environment and themselves (Erikson, 1968).   Through various greeting and feeding rituals infants develop faith in the predictability of the world and thus the earliest sense of identity is based on a numinous sense of being present and recognized in the world (Erikson, 1977; Welchman, 2000).   Infants that experience a drastic impairment of basic trust may feel starved not only for food, but also emotional, sensual and visual stimulation (Sadock & Sadock, 2003).   Mistrust reflects the infant's earliest experiences of the social world as threatening (Morris & Maisto, 2002; Sadock & Sadock, 2003), which extends into insecurity in later interpersonal relationships (Corey, 2005).   Erikson (1968) stated that it is against the combined impressions of mistrust – from being deprived, divided or abandoned – that basic trust can establish and maintain itself.

Over-protective parenting may result in the maladaptive tendency of sensory maladjustment where an individual is overly trusting (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson et al., 1986). A worse, malignant tendency of withdrawal is an excessive expression of mistrust and characterized by depression and paranoia (Boeree, 2006a). Ideally, a favourable balance of trust, tempered with a degree of cautious distrust, results in the ego strength of hope. Hope relates to faith in the social environment and in the developing self and is valuable throughout life to deal with disappointments and to face new challenges (Erikson, 1963a, 1968).

3.4.2.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt – Willpower (Age 1 – 3)

The second psychosocial stage, which covers approximately the second and third years of life, is characterized by the developmental crisis: autonomy versus shame and doubt (Erikson, 1950, 1963a). The significance of this second stage lies in the highly dependent child's experience of an autonomous will by discovering his own body and how to control it through muscular control (Erikson, 1968). As physical development proceeds, toddlers have unprecedented opportunities to attain a degree of independence in the world through self-control and movement (Barnes, 1997; Craig & Baucum, 2002; Morris & Maisto, 2002).

Toddlers begin to negotiate the relationship between independent exploration, making mistakes and adherence to social values (Corey, 2005). The conflict between freedom and discipline is exhibited through judicious ritualization (Welchman, 2000) and is necessary for the early development of the superego. Thus, socialization takes place as children learn the behaviours and attitudes of their families and cultures (Hoare, 2002). Erikson (1963a, 1968) noted that parents should encourage children to 'stand on their own feet' in their growing mastery of self, but also to protect them from excessive failure and feelings of shame and doubt. Nonetheless, a measure of shame and doubt is inevitable and necessary to prevent the maladaptive tendency of impulsiveness (Erikson et al., 1986). If parental control promotes dependency, an incapacity to develop internal controls, regression or false progression may compound shame and doubt (Erikson, 1968). The malignant tendency is compulsiveness, whereby the individual feels that everything has to be done perfectly, as prescribed by rigid rules (Boeree, 2006a).

The second stage is decisive for the "ratio between loving good will and hateful self-insistence, between co-operation and wilfulness, and between self-expression and compulsive self-constraint or meek compliance" (Erikson, 1968, p. 109). The appropriate sense of

autonomy and the capacity 'to have and to hold' results in the virtue of willpower (Erikson, 1963a). Willpower is described as the ability to make independent choices and exert self-control (Erikson, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The second stage therefore contributes to identity formation through the individual's courage to be independent and to choose and guide his own future. Just as the first stage leaves a residue on identity formation of "I am what hope I have to give", the second stage echoes: "I am what I can will freely" (Erikson, 1968, p. 114).

3.4.2.3   Initiative versus Guilt – Purpose (Age 3 – 6)

Erikson's third stage is characterized by the developmental crisis of initiative versus guilt, which lasts from approximately age three to six years. The curious child explores new challenges through increased movement, language ability and the expansion of the imagination (Erikson, 1968). Erikson (1963a) noted that during this 'play age', children begin to adopt and apply adult rules and care for younger children. Parents remain crucial as they guide and discipline their children and should encourage curiosity and imagination (Craig & Baucum, 2002). Further, the resolution of the Oedipal conflict promotes the development of the superego and identification with the same-sex parent (Erikson, 1963a).

Through the organ mode of independent movement and eroticization of the genitals, and psychosocial modalities of intrusion and inclusion, children face a conflict between an ability to intrude – through movement, speech and fantasy – and the realization of moral rules that are encouraged through identification (Welchman, 2000). The ritualization of play is demonstrated through children's play-acting gender roles and the imagined future (Welchman, 2000). Initiative is the positive response to challenges and responsibility, learning to master new skills and to interact with peers (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b; Morris & Maisto, 2002). The freedom to act in a personally meaningful manner results in self-confidence and a realistic ambition for the future (Corey, 2005; Erikson, 1963a). If children's attempts at initiative are excessively criticized or they experience too little success, they may begin to feel unworthy, fearful and ultimately lack self-confidence (Erikson, 1968).

The maladaptive tendency is ruthlessness, displayed in the individual's ability to plan his success often at the expense of others; the extreme is the sociopath. The malignant tendency is inhibition of spontaneous action to avoid guilt (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson et al., 1986). The psychosocial virtue of purpose is a favourable balance of the child's enthusiasm 'to do' and

'to make' things and the tendency to be too strict in self-judgement (Erikson, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Boeree (2006a) described this as the courage to act, whilst understanding one's own limitations and being aware of previous failures. The third stage contributes to later identity development in its freeing the child's initiative and sense of purpose for adult tasks that promise a potential fulfilment of a range of capacities. The child thus develops a steadily growing conviction, undaunted by an excessive guilt, that "I am what I can imagine I will be" (Erikson, 1968, p. 122).

3.4.2.4   Industry versus Inferiority – Competence (Age 6 – 12)

The fourth stage, which covers approximately the ages of six to 12, is characterized by the developmental crisis: industry versus inferiority (Erikson, 1963a). In this decisive social stage, school-age children interact with broader society and the expectations placed on them (Erikson, 1963a). Children continually develop their competencies of social interaction, making friends, academia, home responsibility and productive work and also learn tasks for independent living (Barnes, 1997; Morris & Maisto, 2002). The formal ritualizations of behaviour patterns facilitate children's interactions with authority figures and society and are often evidenced in children's playing out occupational roles (Welchman, 2000).

As the child learns to master certain cultural and social skills necessary for adult life, society provides schooling to master the skills of production, co-operation and communication (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson, 1968; Welchman, 2000). In a more technological society, formal schooling is provided to promote the development of literacy and arithmetic. In more traditional cultures, school-age children begin to learn cultural skills through observation and participation (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). A sense of industry is developed by the child's learning to handle the tools of his culture and to collaborate in productive work (Erikson, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Erikson (1968) noted that it is necessary for children to learn the value and pleasure of success in production, but not over-identify with these technical and occupational capacities. Children who do not experience social success or fail to acquire the tools to promote industry experience inferiority. This inferiority is punctuated by a pervasive feeling of inadequacy and the loss of faith in the power to be self-sufficient (Morris & Maisto, 2002).

The maladaptation of this stage is narrow virtuosity, which often occurs when children are pushed to specialize their talents at the expense of broader interests (Boeree, 2006a). The

malignancy, inertia, parallels Adler's (1929) inferiority complex. A child who did not develop social skills may, in later life, fully avoid social interaction – and is therefore inert. The resolution of this stage requires a positive balance of industry with a hint of inferiority to be sensibly humble (Boeree, 2006a). The ego strength of competence is necessary for individuals to participate successfully in the cultural process of productivity and later, family life (Erikson, 1963a). Erikson (1968, p. 127) expressed the contribution of this 'school age' to a sense of identity in the words: "I am what I can learn to make work".

3.4.2.5 Ego Identity versus Role Confusion – Fidelity (Age 12 – 18)

The psychosocial developmental crisis of ego identity versus confusion pervades the crucial transition period of adolescence (Erikson, 1963a, 1963b). Erikson (1963a, 1963b) suggested that adolescence is a time of psychosocial moratorium. Adolescents challenge authority, break dependency and test different roles and ideologies to form a lasting sense of identity in society (Erikson, 1963a, 1974). Erikson noted that society is tolerant and supportive of this moratorium and provides social institutions to facilitate the process (Capps, 2004; Marcia, 1966, 2002; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b).

Adolescents re-examine their lives in light of physical changes, sexual maturity, cognitive development and social expectations (McAdams, 1994; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). They begin to (a) explore the dissonance between how society views them and who they feel they are; and (b) begin to connect previously learned roles and skills into career prototypes (Erikson, 1959). To face the tasks to develop this identity, adolescents need ideally to have resolved the crises of previous stages (Erikson, 1968) to have faith in the world, the will to pursue an imagined future and the competence to work. Erikson noted that the adolescent mind is ideological and that the societal form that supports this stage is an ideological worldview that society presents to the youth for endorsement or repudiation (Capps, 2004). The challenge is thus for the adolescent to find a niche in the world – and therefore it is crucial to realize that the individual and society create identity together (Erikson, 1959).

Erikson (1968, p. 130) argued that "in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity". Adolescents must integrate previous roles, wishes, expectations, skills and the opportunities provided by society into a meaningful and consistent identity. The resultant self-image must provide a coherent pattern of values and attitudes that span social roles (Craig & Baucum, 2002) to provide a sense of inner continuity

and identity to fit into the social world (Erikson, 1958; Roazen, 1976). Once established, a sense of ego identity provides increased confidence to face the positive and negative life events and changes, to develop and maintain relationships and to act and choose according to one's beliefs (Phoenix, 2001). Erikson et al. (1986) warned against a maladaptation of fanaticism where the individual becomes too involved in a role in society or over-identifies with a group or role model and no longer shows tolerance for other worldviews.

Role confusion is best described by the adolescent's asking 'Who am I?' (Erikson, 1959, 1963b; Friedman, 1999; Roazen, 1976). This identity crisis is an experience of a lack of belongingness and identity. The adolescent is indecisive and anxious about his gender identity, social roles and occupational future (Boeree, 2006a). A malignant tendency of repudiation may result, where adolescents reject membership of the adult world and even identity formation. They rather fuse with groups that provide a destructive sense of self, for it is easier to be 'bad' or 'nobody' than not to know oneself (Boeree, 2006a). The ideal synthesis of this crisis is the ego strength of fidelity. Fidelity is the certainty in one's identity, an accepting awareness of other possible choices that could have been made and the capacity to be loyal to social roles (Erikson, 1959, 1963b; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Erikson et al. (1986) described fidelity as the cornerstone of identity, which receives inspiration from confirming ideologies and affirming relationships in the social world.

3.4.2.6   Intimacy versus Isolation – Love (Age 18 – 40)

The developmental crisis of young adulthood, intimacy versus isolation, is based on the choice to be involved in a relationship or not. The development of an ego identity in the previous stage provides the individual with a secure sense of self-definition to risk vulnerability and mutuality with another without the fear of losing oneself (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Marcia, 2002).

Erikson (1963a, 1968) emphasized that the individual's identity must be firmly established in order to share his identity with another person in a mutual and ethical relationship. Unless the person is sure of whom he is, intimacy with another may be viewed as threatening and a perceived loss of self (Erikson, 1959, 1968). A marital relationship is characterized by commitment and love as well as compromises. The individual who avoids the experience of such a committed relationship suffers from identity confusion (Erikson, 1968). This, in turn, may lead to isolation and self pre-occupation as the youth is incapable of risking his identity

by sharing true intimacy. The individual's reaction to the threat of self results in formal, superficial relationships and self-absorption that leaves the person feeling empty or isolated (Erikson, 1963a).

To form an intimate relationship, lovers must be trusting, autonomous, exhibit initiative and industry, be sure of self and exhibit maturity (Erikson, 1974; Morris & Maisto, 2002). The intimate person may be seen as a productive member of society as well as a sexual and loving being. The youth who is not sure of his identity may develop a maladaptive tendency of promiscuity, becoming intimate too freely and without depth in relationships with lovers or friends (Boeree, 2006a). The malignant tendency is exclusion, whereby the individual is isolated from loved ones, friends or the community and develops a lonely and hateful existence (Boeree, 2006a).

The successful resolution of this crisis leads to the ego strength of love, which leads the individual naturally into the next stage (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Love is characterized by an intimate relationship with a member of the opposite sex, sharing a reciprocal trust and cycle of work, reproduction and leisure that promotes the satisfactory development of the couple and their children (Erikson, 1963a). Boeree (2006a) further argued that in the context of the theory, love implies a mutuality of devotion that extends to partners and neighbours. Thus, beyond identity: "we are what we love" (Erikson, 1968, p. 138).

3.4.2.7 Generativity versus Stagnation – Care (Age 40 – 65)

The seventh stage is an important stage that spans the generations (Erikson, 1963a; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The individual develops as an adult and simultaneously guides the development of future generations. The challenge of the seventh stage is to gain insight and awareness of oneself and others and to refocus on the next generation (Erikson, 1968; Hoare, 2002). Erikson maintained that the generative person was the developmental pinnacle for each adult (Hoare, 2002). Generativity is described as the individual's concern to establish and guide the next generation (Erikson, 1959, 1963a, 1968) and may therefore be seen as the capacity for both continuity and renewal (Erikson, 1963a). Hoare (2002) described the psychological growth of this period to involve reaching out to the others in one's world.

This important developmental period is a time when adults, paradoxically, depend on the young because adults 'need to be needed' (Capps, 2004). This need is met through

meaningful participation in the development of society (Erikson, 1963a) – not only through having and raising children, but also through enrichment of self and the lives of others through creative and productive contribution to society. Older generations care for the next and share knowledge, values and culture through socialization (Welchman, 2000). Younger generations, in turn, validate this contribution through ritual sanction and by honouring the legacy bequeathed to them – and thereby encourage older generations to enter the next stage with dignity and grace (Capps, 2004; Erikson, 1964; Erikson et al., 1986).

The successful resolution of the developmental crisis results in the psychosocial virtue of care. Care may be broadly described as "man's love for his works and ideas as well as his children" (Erikson, 1964, p. 131). If previous stages were successfully resolved, the individual finds meaning and joy in the major life activities of career, family and community participation (Craig & Baucum, 2002). Failure to achieve generativity results in a pervasive sense of stagnation and self- and interpersonal impoverishment (Welchman, 2000). The self-obsessed person is concerned with his own health and is trapped in a stagnant life that is boring and lacks purpose. The midlife crisis is evidence of the self-centred nature of this existence (Craig & Baucum, 2002). Stagnation therefore impacts the individual as well as the future generations in society. Thus, Boeree (2006a, p. 13) noted that much of the meaning in life depends on "how we participate and what we contribute".

3.4.2.8   Integrity versus Despair – Wisdom (Age 65 →)

The eighth stage begins at about 65 years of age – depending on one's health and cultural environment – and is characterized by the developmental crisis of integrity versus despair. Erikson (1963a) related this final stage to the first with integrity as the completion and foundation of infant trust. Despite the loss of roles and loved ones and the proximity of death, this period provides the opportunity to attain full self-hood (Erikson et al., 1986; Morris & Maisto, 2002).

Individuals who look back on their lives with a sense of satisfaction, completion and appreciation of having lived with meaning and involvement experience ego integrity (Erikson, 1963a). Individuals who did not resolve previous stages experience a sense of despair, characterized by a fear of death and the desire to re-live their lives (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Erikson, 1963a, 1968). The ego strength resulting from the resolution of the crisis is wisdom, which Erikson (1964, p. 133) described as "the detached concern with life itself, in

the face of death itself". Wisdom is the integration of all previously achieved psychosocial virtues that have shaped the life cycle of the whole and mature person (Erikson, 1968; Friedman, 1999; Hoare, 2002).

3.4.3 Optimal Development

Erikson's view of an optimally developed individual could be described as one who successfully resolved the developmental crisis of each stage – and thus possesses all ego strengths (Erikson, 1959, 1963a; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). The epigenesis of the ego relates to the sequential resolution of developmental crises. Owing to the holistic nature of this theory, Erikson (1950) further noted that aspects of all other crises – manifested according to age, gender and socio-cultural background – are present and must be resolved in each stage. Therefore, optimal development can be achieved in each stage (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Optimal development is further socially orientated in that each ego strength has meaning for the individual and the good of the entire society (Erikson, 1977). The optimally developed person thus appreciates his relation to the wider cultural and historical world (Hoare, 2002).

The young adult, for example, must resolve the major psychosocial crisis of intimacy versus isolation to acquire the ego strength of love, but also experience the positive aspects of each developmental crisis (Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Friedman, 1999). The young adult must trust and hope in a partner and future of the family; requires the willpower to act; must be goal-orientated about educating children; requires competency at work to provide for the family; is reliable; loves and cares for the family; and must possess the wisdom to accept life, his identity and choices (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1980; Hoare, 2002; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b).

3.5 Conclusion

Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of personality development was discussed in this chapter as one guideline to uncover the complexity of personality development. The theory stages personality development across the life cycle through vital interaction between the individual and his environment to develop a sense of identity. In Chapter 9, Erikson's theory will be used to facilitate a better understanding of Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan. Chapter 4 discusses Alfred Adler's (1929) dynamic theory of individual psychology, which will be used to complement Erikson's theory in the conceptualization of Dahmer's personality development.

CHAPTER 4

ALFRED ADLER'S INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

4.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter explicates Adler's individual psychology as the second theoretical perspective to explore and describe Dahmer's personality development. Individual psychology provides a dynamic view of the complex development of personality in a social context. An overview of the holistic view of the individual is first provided to orient the reader to the interrelated and dynamic nature of the theory. The development of personality is then discussed in order to facilitate the operationalization of the theory across the lifespan. Finally, the theory is evaluated and its value in psychobiographical research is explored.

4.2 The View of the Person

Alfred Adler (1870 – 1937) stressed the uniqueness and unity of personality. Influenced by the writings of Jan Smuts (Corey, 2005; Fouchè, 1999), Adler derived the name for individual psychology from the Latin word: *individuum* – which means indivisible – to underscore the emphasis on holism (Mosak & Maniacci, 1989). Adler concentrated on the individual as a functional whole whose personality cannot be understood by studying the components of personality separately (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler (1929) expressed the foundation of individual psychology to be that every thought, feeling and action – whether conscious or unconscious – is a unity.

Adler found purely motivational theories of behaviour insufficient to explain human behaviour (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Instead, he focused on a more cognitive and conscious conceptualization of personality, the *style of life*. Adler (1929) conceptualized the unconscious as simply that which one cannot formulate in clear concepts. The conscious and unconscious are not viewed as separate and conflicting entities, but complementary and co-operative parts of the same reality (Ansbacher, 1982) that are in the service of the individual who uses them to further personal goals (Mosak, 2000).

Adler (1930, 1958) stressed that how the individual subjectively experiences reality and chooses to create a lifestyle is more important than the abilities provided by heredity and the impressions provided by the environment. Individuals thus subjectively determine the

meaning of, and approach to, life. The self-consistency of human action expresses the unity of personality through a lifestyle that characterizes the individual uniquely (Adler, 1930). Lifestyle includes the individual's goal, self-concept, social feeling and attitude to the world (Corey, 2005). The individual's total behaviour reflects the basic views, purpose and any mistaken beliefs in the entire approach to life (Jones & Lyddon, 2003). Adler (1929, 1930) maintained that striving for superiority is the basic motivation of human functioning and viewed all behaviour as purposive, unified and energized by the upward drive towards superiority, mastery and significance from a subjective sense of inferiority. As a child, Adler was sickly and nearly died of pneumonia (Boeree, 2006b). From this early frailty and brush with death, Adler's conceptualization of striving for superiority through compensation is reflected (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a): not only did Adler survive, but became a respected physician and psychoanalyst.

Adler adhered to a teleological perspective to explain human behaviour, which implies that people think, feel and act in relation to the perception of a goal (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a; Watts & Shulman, 2003). Adler's emphasis on goal-directedness was influenced by Vaihinger's (1965) philosophy of *as if*, whereby an unconscious fictional goal provides an intrinsic direction of striving towards superiority (L. S. Smith, 2003). Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) held that early in life children conceive of a life goal or ideal of what it is to be safe, secure and have a sense of belonging (Dinkmeyer, Pew & Dinkmeyer, 1979). The fictional final goal is the individual's imagined creation of success, significance and superiority (Adler, 1929; Corey, 2005; Freeman & Urschel, 2003) that is used to transcend the present state and to overcome any inferiorities and social difficulties.

Although the final goal represents a subjective, fictional view of the future, it organizes and guides the individual's behaviour in the present towards the anticipation of future success (Adler, 1930; Sperry, 2003). The fictional goal provides the person's life with direction, purpose and meaning that the individual acts upon as if it were true. Without the sense of a goal – regardless whether it is unrealistic or unattainable – individual activity would cease to have meaning (Adler, 1929) because this fictional finalism determines the creative choice of what is accepted as truth, how to behave and how to interpret events (Corey, 2005). This subjective reality suggests that events are not experienced as they actually exist, but that individuals creatively experience and respond in a way that is consistent with the final goal (Adler, 1930). As fictional goals are never realized, the individual is in continuous

movement (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Jones & Lyddon, 2003), always becoming (Adler, 1958).

Adler's view of the person as a creative, responsible and purposive social being who acts with purpose (Corey, 2005) emphasized the necessity to investigate the individual within the familial, social and cultural contexts that provide a life with meaning (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958). Adler (1982) posited that each individual has a different meaning of, and attitude towards, success. Each final goal is idiographic and individualized, depending on the circumstances in which the individual was raised and based on the choices made (Mosak & Maniacci, 1989). This goal is creatively selected in response to the child's biased apperceptions about the self, the world and others and guides the direction of compensation (Adler, 1930). These apperceptions or private logic form a self-consistent cognitive and attitudinal stance that organizes and directs movement towards the goal (Mosak & Maniacci, 1989). Adler therefore focused on the continued influence of the beliefs and basic convictions – that are developed early in life – on behaviour (Corey, 2005).

All behaviour, both adaptive and maladaptive, takes place within a social field and is always in line with the self-determined fictional goal (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler (1929, 1930) argued that this ceaseless striving lies at the root of all solutions to life's difficulties and is manifested in the way individuals meet the tasks of life. Adler considered the tasks of life as social in nature and grouped them as: occupational, social and sexual (Adler, 1930; Dreikurs & Mosak, 1966; Ferguson, 2003). The tasks were later extended to five (Mansager & Gold, 2000; Witmer & Sweeney, 1991) with the inclusion of (a) self-regulation or 'getting along with oneself' as a manifestation of social interest (Dreikurs & Mosak, 1967; Meunier, 1990) and (b) 'finding the meaning in life' or spirituality (Gold & Mansager, 2000; Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967).

These social tasks highlight the necessity for co-operation, contribution and social interest – which is an innate potentiality that requires development and encouragement (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a; Mosak, 1984). Adler optimistically refocused his theory and view of mental health on social interest after serving as a medical specialist in the First World War. He held that human nature reaches its fullest potential when people contribute to other individuals and to society as a whole (Barlow & Durand, 2002). Adler (1930, 1958) strongly believed that social interest is essential for human evolution – or humanity might be destroyed by its self-created difficulties.

4.3   The Structure of Personality

Adler (1929, 1930) did not make use of explicit structural concepts to explain human functioning, but viewed personality as a functional whole that moves the individual towards self-determined goals. The unity of personality (Adler, 1929) – the particular lifestyle and goal − is not built upon objective reality, but the subjective perception that the individual holds regarding life (Corey, 2005). Adler held that each individual has constitutional attributes and an innate creative self that interact with the social environment (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). The individual creates a lifestyle that is a unique, creative response to this interaction and reflects development towards an individualized goal of superiority (Adler, 1929). Each of these four concepts, namely: constitutional attributes, social environment, creative self and lifestyle, are described throughout the chapter within a dynamic interaction of unified personality development.

4.4   Constitutional Attributes

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) maintained that individuals develop a prototype for the lifestyle in the first four or five years of life and that all behaviour is in the direction of this prototype. Adler regarded the individual's genetically determined attributes as an influencing, but not decisive, factor on the nature and direction of development (Adler, 1929, 1930; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Genetic inheritance provides the individual with certain abilities that interact with the environment and the creative self to play a role in human development (Adler, 1982). Individuals compensate for real or perceived organic weakness by creatively determining a fictional goal of superiority (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

4.4.1   Inferiority and Compensation

Adler initially emphasized organ inferiority whereby imperfect organs compromise a developing child's self-esteem (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The weakness experienced in relation to a part of the anatomy or physiology stimulates individuals to express the uniquely interpreted organ inferiorities based on previous experiences and co-ordinated towards a subjectively conceived final goal in a compensatory fashion (Adler, 1958). Individuals may creatively compensate for organ deficiencies by (a) strengthening the weak organ beyond others; (b) developing another organ to an extraordinary degree; or (c) they may adapt psychologically by developing supplementary skills (Boeree, 2006b).

Adler later recognized that individuals hold psychological inferiorities (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Boeree, 2006b) that are more important than organic weaknesses. He contended that people seek to overcome feelings of inferiority that may or not have a basis in reality (Morris & Maisto, 2002) as there is little difference between the real and imagined differences (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). The nature of the influence of organ weaknesses thus depends on the individual's perception of, and reaction to, the weakness (Griffith, 1984). Individuals who believe that they are stupid or weak compensate differently and may, for example, (a) overcome and excel at the perceived inferiority, (b) excel in another field, but often retain the inferiority feelings or (c) fail to develop their self-esteem (Boeree, 2006b).

Adler also noted that all individuals experience a natural inferiority as children, whose motivation persists throughout life (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Owing to their small constitution, children are weaker and less socially and intellectually competent than adults. They experience their dependency on adults as inferiority, a 'minus' situation (Adler, 1930). The striving or psychological movement towards superiority, that is, a 'plus' situation is creative and observed in children's play-acting of being adult (Boeree, 2006b). Children develop a prototypical life-plan that contains a belief system and guiding fiction on how to overcome their perceived inferiorities. The constitutional situation is not sufficient to cause the construction of a lifestyle, but provides a present motivation to reach future goals (Adler, 1930).

4.4.2 Complexes

Adler did not consider inferiority as a negative influence, but a motivator for useful striving (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005). However, he recognized that some individuals become so overwhelmed by the forces of their inferiority that they focus increasingly on themselves and develop an inferiority complex (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958). This state of perpetual discouragement is an exaggerated feeling of incompetence in the face of life tasks (Boeree, 2006b). Thus, an inferiority complex does not lead to successful compensation, but stunts further development (Dreikurs, 1967).

Another response to inferiority is the development of a superiority complex (Adler, 1930). Individuals pretend to be superior to others and this false success compensates for an exaggerated state of inferiority that they cannot bear (Adler, 1929). Some individuals display their imagined power and false sense of security through crime or prejudice, whilst others use

more subtle means, such as alcohol and drugs. These individuals cease to be socially interested (Adler, 1958) as they attempt to evade life difficulties, rather than to face them.

4.5   Social Environment

Adler (1964, p. 96) believed that "to be a human being means to feel inferior" and held that human development results from an individual's attempts to compensate for feelings of inferiority and the striving for superiority. Adler (1929, 1930) argued that a general feeling of inferiority develops from a child's first social interactions and is present throughout life. Owing to a small constitution, the dependent infant experiences inferiority in comparison with stronger and more skilled adults in the social environment.

Although events in the environment influence the development of personality, such events are not the causes of what people become (Boeree, 2006b; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler regarded individuals as self-determining beings that give meaning to their experiences in the world and use the experiences to suit their purposes (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Human existence is socially embedded and cannot be understood apart from the social context (Adler, 1964; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005; Dreikurs, 1995; McAdams, 1994). The child's social context includes the cultural values and experiences within the family constellation (Adler, 1929, 1930; Boeree, 2006b; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). The individual lifestyle thus evolves in the social context to create a sense of self in the world.

4.5.1   Birth Order

Adler (1929, 1930) emphasized the importance of birth order on individual development. Birth order itself is less important than the individual's psychological interpretation of this position (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005) and Adler (1958) focused on five different positions: the only child; the first-born; the second-born; the middle child; and the youngest. Adler suggested that certain lifestyles develop as a function of psychological birth position and maintained that individuals should be studied within the early relationships that were used by the creative self to construct a lifestyle (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

Adler (1958) noted that the psychological situation of each child differs as the home environment is experienced differently. As Adler suggested that the lifestyle is relatively set by the age of five (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005; Mosak, 1984) and remains

relatively constant, the family of origin and early childhood experiences contribute to an understanding of the lifestyle (Watts & Shulman, 2003). The interpretation of a person's position in the family influences later adult interactions with the world as children acquire a particular style of relating to others in childhood (Shulman & Mosak, 1977). Each child shows in the lifestyle the result of attempts to adapt to the prevailing circumstances (Adler, 1958). The only, first, second and youngest children are briefly described next.

Adler (1958) described the only child as pampered, who craves to be the centre of attention and spends much time with adults. Adler noted that if children are spaced many years apart, each child will have some features of an only child. First-born children initially receive much attention before they experience 'dethronement' at no longer being the centre of attention (Adler, 1958; Corey, 2005) when the second child is born. Second-born children compete with the eldest and are often ambitious achievers (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler was a second child who was highly ambitious and regarded his brother – incidentally, also named Sigmund – as a rival. Even as a famous psychoanalyst, Adler felt overshadowed by his older brother, a wealthy businessman (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). The youngest child may often be pampered and develop a dependent lifestyle, but nevertheless tends to develop in an extraordinary way (Adler, 1958). Adler (1958, p. 154) stated that impressions set on children from early childhood and the "position in the family leaves an indelible stamp on lifestyle. Every difficulty of development is caused by rivalry and lack of co-operation in the family".

4.5.2 Faulty Lifestyles

Relating to the origin of the lifestyle in general, Adler maintained that developing children process all the impressions they receive – from their bodies and the external environment – and creatively form an opinion of themselves and the world as well as an individualized goal of success (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This process forms a prototypical lifestyle whereby all further experiences are later interpreted. Adler (1930, 1958) suggested that the development of a faulty lifestyle and a mistaken meaning given to life result from a faulty family atmosphere in childhood. Adler (1930, 1958) highlighted three basic conditions that interfere with social interest: (a) physical inferiority, (b) neglect and (c) pampering.

Physical inferiority has the potential to lead to healthy compensation or to the constriction of social interest. Children with imperfect organs must learn to direct their interest towards the benefit of others or risk becoming pre-occupied with only themselves (Adler, 1958).

Neglected, unwanted or unappreciated children do not learn what it is to be loved or to experience co-operation with others (Adler, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Instead, they feel worthless and express inferiority complexes through suspicion, isolation and malice (Adler, 1930). Pampered children are robbed of independence and initiative and develop a parasitic impression of the world (Adler, 1958). They are fearful and attention-seeking and do not learn to gain anything through effort, but expect the world to hasten to fulfil their demands (Adler, 1958). All these individuals are not adapted to face the difficulties in life (Adler, 1930) because they consider only their own welfare and ignore the interests of others. These are usually the criminals, neurotics and suicidal individuals (Adler, 1929) that lack social interest – and therefore lack courage and self-confidence (Adler, 1930; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

4.5.3 Crime

According to Adler (1930, 1958), the failure to function in social and useful channels is illustrated most clearly in the behaviour of criminals. Adler argued that if the life of a criminal were traced, the mistaken attitude towards life invariably began in the family environment. The child's private logic about the self, the world and others (Adler, 1982) fashions the means to perceive and utilize all subsequent experiences (Corey, 2005). The criminal's ideology and intellectual outlook is self-centred and un-cooperative, differing significantly from the social common sense (Adler, 1958). An inferiority complex is demonstrated in the evasion of life tasks in order to achieve personal success (Adler, 1958). The entire outlook is conditioned by a socially useless goal, just as the selection of that goal is conditioned by a lack of courage (Adler, 1930).

Adler regarded criminals as discouraged, that is, lacking in social interest, courage and the self-confidence to face life tasks (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005). Adler (1930), however, maintained that criminals retain a sense of social feeling, but that it is not sufficient to live on the useful side of life. Criminals, instead, show a high degree of activity within their attitude towards life, which is characterized by the willingness to injure others for their own advantage (Adler, 1930). Owing to their inadequate social development, criminals see in the commission of a crime only the possibility of personal success and simultaneously, personal relief from the burden of facing difficult life tasks (Adler, 1958). Criminals make excuses or accuse others for their actions and recognize only the cruelty of a society that does not support them. Every experience is turned into a justification of this attitude, which is

fitted to the criminal's private logic (Adler, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). In order to understand the criminal act, the individual must be understood in context. The goal of the criminal's life directs all his actions and movements – and elucidates the hidden meaning behind various separate acts (Dreikurs, 1995).

4.6 The Creative Self

Adler provided little specific information about the creative self, but described it fundamentally as the individual's free choice to determine goal-related behaviour (Lemire, 1998). The creative self emphasized that humans have the capacity to creatively form their own life goals and plan how to achieve them. Thus, it is not a structural component, but an innate individual capacity of the whole person (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). The courageous, creative individual is thus the architect who constructs a useful lifestyle.

Although objective determinants like heredity and environment, organ inferiorities and early childhood experiences play a role in, and are used by, the child to adopt a prototypical life-plan and goal to overcome perceived inferiority, Adler insisted that the child works in a realm of freedom through this creative power (Dreikurs, 1995). Adler (1927, 1929, 1958) stressed that neither heredity nor environment are determining factors, but that individuals interpret their potential and circumstances in relation to their styled creative power (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956) in order to construct their attitudes to life and relations with the outside world (Adler, 1982). Owing to this creative power, humans are actors who script their own actions, personalities and life stories (Watts & Shulman, 2003) in order to experience individualized meaning in life through their interpretation of events (Adler, 1958).

The individual creatively adapts to felt inferiority (Adler, 1927), which Adler held to be the child's first creative act and therefore a natural condition of the individual (Lemire, 1998). This creative power means that individuals consciously shape the creation of their lifestyles by choosing the meaningful goal they want to pursue (Mosak, 1984). The creation of a unique lifestyle implies the individual's control and responsibility for his actions and goals and the methods to strive towards them in order to contribute to the development of social interest (Mosak, 1984, 2000). The creative self is a dynamic concept that implies psychological movement. Thus, the teleology of human psychological life arises from immanent necessities, but is in its uniqueness a creation of the individual (Adler, 1929, 1930; Mosak, 2000). The present researcher thus recognizes that every individual represents both a

unity of personality and the individual fashioning of that unity through the key components of 'as if' and the fictional final goal.

4.7 The Lifestyle

4.7.1 The Development of the Lifestyle

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) believed that each life is patterned according to a unique style. This lifestyle is the central Adlerian concept, subsuming constancy, unity, creativity, subjectivity and a teleological orientation (Strauch, 2003). Adler did not focus on, or apply, fixed and unalterable traits or conflicts (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Boeree, 2006b; Strauch, 2003) to the individual. Adler instead conceptualized the lifestyle as an expressive formulation of basic convictions, values and personal meaning about life that guides the movement towards a fictional goal of superiority. The lifestyle is unconscious in that individuals' core presuppositions about themselves and about life are not understood (Christopher & Bickhard, 1992). "Man understands nothing about his goal, but pursues it. He understands nothing about his lifestyle, yet is continually bound to it" (Adler, 1982, p. 6).

Although Adler did not stage the development of the lifestyle, he regarded the child's formative years as very important. Adler (1930, 1958) emphasized that individuals are socially-embedded and that the complexity of personality cannot be understood without taking the context into consideration. Through the impressions of heredity and the environment, the creative activity of the lifestyle begins. Experiences within the family contribute to the development of a self-consistent way to perceive, think, feel and behave (Adler, 1929). In the first five years of life, children develop a life goal and prototypical lifestyle to deal with the real and imagined difficulties in life (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The lifestyle plays a determining role in further development – and cannot be easily changed (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Early experiences are not decisive factors, but it is the individual's interpretation of these events that shape personality. These interpretations develop into a private logic, which is a schema of apperception about the self, the world and others (Adler, 1930, 1964; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005; Mosak, 1984).

The lifestyle is not a mere mechanical reaction to the environment (Adler, 1930), but a consistently dynamic and goal-oriented pattern of thinking, feeling and acting that denotes the fundamental premise upon which the person predicates his movement through the world

(Manaster & Corsini, 1982). The individual's creative power guides the selection of this goal and the means to achieve it. An individual may strive for superiority by, for example, striving to dominate or control others and uses inventive means to this end. The actualization of this unconscious fictional goal is the unifying central theme of the person's lifestyle that provides a feeling of belonging and purpose as well as a self-defined superiority (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Even though the goal may be fictional, the individual acts as if it is attainable (Adler, 1929).

The purposeful striving towards the goal provides self-consistency and unity in the personality that characterizes the individual uniquely. Adler (1929) stated that the entire individual is directed by a striving whose behaviour, when taken together, provides the picture of the integrated life-plan and goal. A private logic or private world view that corresponds with or deviates from common sense significantly influences present behaviour in response to the five tasks of life (Boeree, 2006b; Corey, 2005; Mansager & Gold, 2000). Therefore continuity in behaviour and the meaning provided to life may be noted in themes running throughout life (Adler, 1958).

4.7.2   Four Lifestyle Types

Adler (1927, 1929, 1958) maintained that individuals develop unique lifestyles that reflect the unity of thoughts, feelings and actions in every expression of personality. Each style is the "creation of the child himself, who uses his inheritance and impression of the environment as bricks to build his particular avenue for success – success according to his own interpretation" (Adler, 1982, p. 5). Adler (1982), however, described four heuristic characteristic types of lifestyle to classify the attitude and behaviour of individuals towards life tasks. Adler (1982) grouped the types according to the degree of social interest and the degree of movement towards success. Thus, each type retains its style from childhood throughout life as an attitude towards reality and movement towards what the individual thinks or feels to be success.

4.7.2.1   Ruling Type

The first type that Adler (1982) described is the ruling type, which is characterized by a selfish striving for power (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). These individuals work actively to fulfil their goals and exhibit antisocial and power-seeking behaviour, but do not show social

interest (Adler, 1958). The most active of these types display a dominant attitude of "since I cannot be a lover, I am determined to prove a villain" (Adler, 1982, p. 5) through delinquency, tyranny and sadism. Those who are less active hurt others by hurting themselves through suicide, alcoholism and drug addiction (Adler, 1982; Boeree, 2006b).

4.7.2.2 Getting or Leaning Type

The second and most common type of lifestyle is the getting or leaning type that shows low activity, but high social interest (Adler, 1982). Although they adopt community-oriented goals, they pursue them by relying on others to take initiative (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). They are often charming, but use their charm to lean on others to help them through the tasks of life because they lack independence and enterprise (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

4.7.2.3 Avoiding Type

Individuals who display the avoiding lifestyle type show low activity and low social interest. They often hold antisocial goals, are lazy and passive-aggressive (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). They find success by avoiding a solution to life's tasks and avoiding life and social interaction. Instead of struggling, they 'side-step' difficulties in life in an effort to avoid defeat (Adler, 1982) and thereby retreat into their personal worlds (Boeree, 2006b). Both the getting and avoiding types often display their lifestyle through neurotic and psychotic symptoms (Adler, 1982).

Adler (1982) stated that these three lifestyle types exhibit what he called the *useless* side of life. Individuals who use useless lifestyles struggle to solve the five life tasks of occupation, love, friendship, self-regulation and spirituality as they lack the ability to co-operate and contribute to society (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

4.7.2.4 Socially Useful Type

The socially useful type shows high activity and high social interest. These individuals cope with the life tasks within a well-developed framework of social interest (Adler, 1958, 1982) and are optimistic about the future. They often develop in a family atmosphere of co-operation, trust and respect (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). They struggle and strive actively for the solution of problems in a way that contributes usefully to others (Adler, 1982).

4.8   Striving for Superiority

Adler (1927, 1929, 1930, 1958) regarded striving for superiority, perfection or significance as the overall motivation of human development. The striving for superiority is activated by a felt experience of inferiority from early childhood and family experiences that lead to attempts to overcome the inferiority through compensation (Adler, 1929, 1930). Striving for superiority underlies all solutions to life difficulties and is manifested in the way that individuals meet life tasks (Adler, 1929; Manaster & Corsini, 1982). Adler's reaction to his childhood and adolescent experiences of death and weakness made him a living example of this aspect of the theory (Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

The unique ways that individuals develop a style of striving to compensate for a perceived weakness constitutes individuality (Adler, 1929; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005). Striving for significance underscores the fundamental meaning-making activity of an individual (Jones & Lyddon, 2003) who strives to master the tasks of life. Adler argued that striving for superiority is based on individual, subjective goals that display either a healthy or unhealthy dynamic (Jones & Lyddon, 2003). The innate, ceaseless striving towards mastery characterizes the dynamic process that is human existence (Adler, 1930). Therefore, striving is predicated on what is purposeful and meaningful to the individual. Striving for superiority manifests in two ways: as (a) striving for power and (b) social interest. Adler (1929) argued that the striving of each actively moving individual is towards overcoming, not for personal power, but to contribute to the development of the human community.

4.8.1   Striving for Power

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) conceptualized human behaviour in terms of compensatory strivings for superiority.   In response to perceived inferiority – natural, organic and psychological – individuals strive in the direction of a creative, individualized goal of success. The nature of the individual's inferiority depends on the perception of, and reaction to, the perceived weakness (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Inferiority activates a striving for power. This originates much of the child's efforts to posit a goal that provides comfort and safeguarding for the future, and which directs a style of life that appears suitable to achieve this goal (Adler, 1929, 1930; Jones & Lyddon, 2003; Mosak, 2000). This steady self-enhancement takes individually differing and creative forms (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). For example, individuals may

seek superiority through political power or fame. In order to attain political power, however, one individual may work extremely hard at the goal, another may rely on influential acquaintances, whilst a third may be disparaging to any opponents. The creative self is uniquely inventive.

Individuals give meaning to their lives through their contributions to society made in response to the tasks of life. The individual's ceaseless striving for power follows a line of activity that raises him from an inferior position to the superior position that has been chosen or created (Ansbacher, 1992; Corey, 2005). Individuals strive in the direction of their fictional goal because of the creative power of life which expresses itself in the desire to develop, to strive, to achieve and to compensate for a defect in one area by striving for success in another (Adler, 1930, 1958; Manaster & Corsini, 1982). Through this teleological striving, every bodily and psychological movement is made to co-operate under the unity of personality (Adler, 1958; Ansbacher, 1992).

4.8.2   Social Interest

The premise of Adlerian theory is that the individual strives to overcome a perceived inferiority through a unified lifestyle. The experience of weakness or inferiority as a 'minus' situation serves as an unyielding impetus to strive towards a unique goal of superiority (Adler, 1929). In general, humankind compensates for weaknesses through the development of intellectual, technological and social structures (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler (1964) maintained that social interest is the main characteristic in all actions. Individuals thus pursue their goal purposively and co-operatively, which is an important dynamic in the view of the whole and complex person (Jones & Lyddon, 2003).

Ansbacher (1992) argued that social interest is perhaps Adler's most significant concept, which relates to (a) an awareness of being part of the human community; (b) identification and sense of belonging in the social world; and (c) an individual attitude to deal with the social world. Social interest can thus be described as the innate desire to serve the community and as striving for community with all of humankind (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Although Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) considered social interest as an inborn potential, he maintained that it needs to be developed consciously. This social feeling can best be defined as the ability to "see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, to feel

with the heart of another" (Adler, 1964, p. 42). With this social interest present, the individual learns that both comfort and discomfort are part of living (Jones & Lyddon, 2003).

The individual develops according to the self-consistent lifestyle arising from the creative power's perception of the world and view of apparent success (Adler, 1958). This conception of success is related to the necessity of social connection for well-being (Manaster & Corsini, 1982). Social interest develops through socialization and identification with the family, peers and the community (Jones & Lyddon, 2003). The early parent-child attachment relationship is integral in the development of the lifestyle (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and fulfilment of the basic needs of security, acceptance and worth (Jones & Lyddon, 2003). The view of the individual as socially embedded (Adler, 1929) focuses on the child's learned behaviour whereby a sense of belonging, co-operation and contribution (Corey, 2005) is acquired in the family and widening social context. This patterned movement towards success suggests that all new experiences are interpreted according to the individual's private logic and lifestyle (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1964). As adults, Adler (1964) argued, individuals can only act with courage in the face of life tasks if they feel unity with humankind.

Adler regarded social interest as the standard against which the lifestyle may be gauged as adaptive or maladaptive (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Manaster & Corsini, 1982). As the fundamental indicator of mental health (Adler, 1929, 1930; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a), social interest is observed in the socially useful lifestyle. Individuals who exhibit this lifestyle are empathic, make active and co-operative contributions to society and assume a courageous attitude towards life (Adler, 1929; Leak & Leak, 2006). Adler divided all the problems of life into three parts: "problems of behaviour toward others, problems of occupation, and problems of love" (1982, p. 4). The absence of social interest results in self-absorption, egocentricity and an over-identification with the self that results in intra- and interpersonal difficulties (Adler, 1930; Leak & Leak, 2006). Individuals who lack social interest are not prepared to deal with the five cumulative challenges of life and retreat from their responsibilities into self-exterminating acts such as crime (Adler, 1929; Ansbacher, 1992).

Adler de-emphasized psychopathology (Corey, 2005; Maniacci & Sackett-Maniacci, 2002; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a) and focused on discouraged individuals, such as neurotics and criminals, who lack social interest and therefore strive towards a goal of personal superiority for individual triumph and success. The individual's upward striving and social interest acts with automatic certainty to colour every thought and action, away from self-

centred interest (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler argued that as social interest increases, feelings of inferiority and alienation diminish so that social interest directs all striving towards the healthy and socially useful side of life (Corey, 2005). Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) held that this increased connection with humanity results in a decrease in self-created difficulties such as war, prejudice and persecution.

4.9 Optimal Development

The optimally developed person is seen as being continually creative and courageous in the face of the pervasive social challenges of life (Adler, 1958, 1964; Massey, 1986). Through a socially useful lifestyle, these individuals exhibit a high degree of social interest and courage to strive for superiority over their difficulties in a way that benefits society (Adler, 1927, 1930, 1958; Corey, 2005). Adler (1964) regarded social interest – a deep sense of fellowship in humanity – as the essence of mental health, the barometer of useful functioning and the ultimate requirement for human evolution. According to Adler (1929, 1930, 1958), an optimal situation for development is a family environment of co-operation and trust that fosters a sense of social contribution.

Individuals who lack social interest are motivated by, and interpret events through, their idiosyncratic private worldview and intelligence (Adler, 1964). The strivings of such discouraged individuals are self-centred and result in poor inter- and intrapersonal functioning (Adler, 1964). In contrast, the optimal individual is more adaptive and his private logic aligns with common sense to function in a useful, co-operative, productive and task-oriented manner (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005; Lemire, 1998; Mosak & Maniacci, 1989). The most adaptive fictional finalism incorporates realistic expectations into an imaginative narrative about the future, capable of sustaining and stimulating the individual's strivings for superiority through social interest (Adler, 1958; McAdams, 1994).

4.10 Evaluation of the Theory

4.10.1 Critique

Adler's conceptualization of personality development was progressive for the Freudian period (Mosak, 1984, 2000). Adler contributed to the view of the person as socially embedded and emphasized the necessity to evaluate the individual within the socio-cultural

and historical context. One of the greatest contributions of Adler's work is its wide influence on psychology, particularly its integration into humanistic (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a), cognitive-behavioural (Watts, 2003) and existential-phenomenological perspectives (Corey, 2005). Individual psychology further contributed to the importance of the family constellation, birth order, early memories and dreams in human development (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

Adler's commonsense theory is parsimonious, but Meyer and Viljoen (2003a) noted that Adler's style of writing was anecdotal and that he did not provide a clear exposition of the theory. The theory is not viewed as scientifically rigorous because the basic concepts remain relatively vague and difficult to validate empirically (Boeree, 2006b; Corey, 2005). However, in the last 20 years there has been increased research into the effectiveness of Adlerian theory (Corey, 2005; Watts & Shulman, 2003). This has especially been brought about by the *Journal of Individual Psychology*. Adler (1964) was wary of his developing theory being unwittingly incorporated into the prevailing ideologies of the time. Later Adlerians, such as Dreikurs, Mosak and Corsini, were instrumental in the development of the theory. The 'neo-Adlerians' crucially recognized both the versatility of the theory and its necessity to be modified to address modern social, political, psychological, sexual and spiritual issues (Corey, 2005; Mansager & Gold, 2000; Mosak, 2000; Watts, 2003).

Adler stressed the importance of social interest for the evolution of humankind and advocated for the unity of personality through the construction of a lifestyle whereby all thoughts, feelings and actions are purposively guided by a fictional goal of security, mastery and success (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler (1982) held that early experiences were crucial in the formation of personality, but did not view heredity or environmental influences as deterministic. Instead, he argued that each child has the creative capacity and agency to create his own being in the world. This optimistic focus on health and co-operation through essential social interest emphasized free will and choice in the teleological view of development (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a; Mosak, 2000). The present researcher thus heeds the implication that each personality is self-created.

However, Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) suggested that early in life children determine their lifestyles – whereby all further experiences are interpreted – but do not have the same freedom as insightful, decision-making adults. Rather, the child creates an unconscious goal and image of future perfection and strives along a personal narrative that the individual acts

out as if it were true. Christopher and Bickhard (1992) argued that the philosophy of 'as if' bypasses how the child chooses a lifestyle and how the choice persists throughout the lifespan. Thus, if one accepts the teleological perspective, individuals are determined by their ideals, goals, values and fictional finalism. Individuals have therefore, as Adler (1929, 1930) insisted, the freedom to choose their creative responses to each situation that they have viewed according to their subjective perception of reality.

4.10.2   Adler, Freud and Erikson

Adler was one of Freud's most favoured disciples before his break from the psychoanalytic tradition in 1911 (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Boeree, 2006b). Adler's increasingly optimistic and socially-constructive theory contrasted with Freud's deterministic psychosexual theory that emphasized childhood sexual drives. Freud debunked Adler's theory as a form of 'ego psychology' that emphasized consciousness and failed to sufficiently highlight the construction of neurosis (Colby, 1951; Fiebert, 1997). Massey (1986) argued that Erikson – the most noted ego psychologist – could be considered a 'neo-Adlerian' as his psychosocial theory holds many Adlerian themes such as social relations and striving for self and community-oriented success.

Fundamentally, Adler and Erikson emphasized the development of the ego through the dynamic construction of the lifestyle and the staged development of identity, respectively. Adler (1982) noted that the ego is nothing more than the style of the individual and held that the individual's form of creative activity is the lifestyle. Erikson (1980, p. 160) characterized ego identity as a process that involves the "more or less actually attained but forever-to-be revised sense of reality of the self within social reality".

Adler (1929, 1930) and Erikson (1963a, 1968) maintained that the individual is socially embedded and that the complexity of the personality can only be understood within the socio-cultural and historical context. The theories further include a timed perspective and personal mythology into the development of personality (McAdams, 1994, 1997), which is invaluable in the idiographic view of the individual. Erikson and Adler presented theories of individual development that assume that an individual's life is a patterned psychosocial unity that integrates the past, present and future, while striving for narrative unity and purpose as life evolves over time (McAdams, 1994).

4.10.3 Psychobiography

Adler (1958) focused on early recollections – whether real or imagined – to uncover the individual's lifestyle. Adler was interested in the individual's own narrative and story-making activities (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Hester, 2004) and emphasized that individuals generate a unique narrative that gives meaning to their lives (Adler, 1964). Early recollections cast light on the individual's "story of my life" (Adler, 1958, p. 73), which serves as a metaphor for the current view of the world (Corey, 2005). Adler focused on how these goals, private logic, attitude to life tasks, values and basic mistakes (Mosak, 2000) continue to create problems or guide the individual throughout life (Corey, 2005). A lifestyle can thus be conceived as a personal mythology that the individual lives as if it is true (McAdams, 1996, 1997; Mosak, 1984, 2000). The individual's myth is a repeated story that warns and comforts; trains him on the fictional goal; and prepares him – by means of past experience – to meet the future with a pre-tested style of action (Adler, 1958).

An Adlerian psychobiography promotes understanding over explanation (Pozzuto, 1982). The theoretical dynamism and flexibility allows an interpretation of the complexity of an ever-changing subject. The subject, therefore, must be understood within the socio-cultural and historical context and from a subjective view of reality to emphasize individual lifestyle within the bounds of teleology (Adler, 1930, 1958; Pozzuto, 1982). Individual psychology is valuable in psychobiographical research as it views a life in light of its end (cf. Carlson, 1988), because the fictional goal renders this comprehensible. An Adlerian psychobiography thus focuses on individual creativity and explores heredity and environmental influences within the perception of reality.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter explored Adler's individual psychology as the second theoretical perspective to uncover the complex personality development of an enigmatic figure. The dynamically interrelated concepts that comprise the socially-embedded individual emphasize a holistic and teleological view of the individual. The lifestyle is viewed as the individual's striving to compensate for a perceived inferiority towards a goal of success that unifies all behaviour. In Chapter 10, individual psychology will be applied to Dahmer's life to promote a greater understanding of his personality development across his lifespan. The next chapter provides

a comprehensive historical overview of the life of Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer to simultaneously highlight both Dahmer's movement though life as well as the uniqueness of his life.

CHAPTER 5

THE LIFE OF JEFFREY LIONEL DAHMER

5.1   Chapter Preview

This chapter provides a historical overview of the life of Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer. Dahmer's lifespan is presented over a historical period of approximately 35 years, from his birth in 1960 to his death in 1994.

The dearth of information regarding Dahmer's life is characterized by a level of factual and chronological ambiguity.   Not all the historical facts could thus be triangulated. However, the social constructionist nature of the psychobiographical narrative integrates a multi-dimensional perspective with a relatively consistent chronology of Dahmer's development. It is the present researcher's contention that the life of an enigmatic individual cannot be ignored because of historical discrepancies, but rather that it further motivates the necessity to make psychological sense of a unique subject.

5.2   The Significance of the Life History Context

The American serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer, is one of the most notorious serial killers of all time (Burgess, 2006; Palermo, 2004; Tithecott, 1997).   The actions of the infamously named *Milwaukee Cannibal* (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) shocked a nation that was wearily accustomed to the atrocities of serial murder (Douglas & Olshaker, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).   Although his sanity was contested at trial, there is little controversy about his intellect or prowess as a serial murderer. Few can dispute his impact on the social consciousness regarding the reality of serial murder. Indeed, Dahmer's acts of sexual assault, mutilation, cannibalism and necrophilia "seemed to have captured all the horror of serial and sexual killings during the last quarter-century and rolled them together into one" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, p. 276).

Dahmer has been the subject of several biographical texts and investigative documents that attempted to reveal his life history. However, as Dahmer has often been portrayed as little more than a murderer and immortalized as a monstrous icon of evil, it is apparent from the literature review that elements of his personality and life are still shrouded in mystery and misinterpretation.   Thus, in order to achieve a more complete understanding of Jeffrey

Dahmer and grasp the interactional components of his personality development and behaviour, the salient aspects of his life must be chronicled. In order to afford Dahmer due respect as a psychobiographical subject through a comprehensive life narrative, the researcher heeds the impression that "serial killers are not monsters; they are human beings with tortured souls. The tragedy of serial homicide is its dichotomy – serial killers kill because they suffer, and by killing cause immense suffering" (Pistorius, 2000, p. 5).

The importance of studying lives within the context of the socio-historical and cultural environment in which the individual lived is vital to uncover the unique life narrative (Elms, 1994; McAdams, 1994, 1996, 1997; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b; Schultz, 2005a). Further, developmental theories and theories that focus on the description and classification of personality have indicated that life forces such as family, religion and interpersonal interactions play an important role in the development of personality (Caprara & Cervone, 2000; Santrock, 2001). Similarly, the theories of psychosocial personality development (see Chapter 3) and individual psychology (see Chapter 4) have highlighted the significant role of biological, psychological and social forces on personality development. For these reasons it is necessary to provide a historical sketch of the life of Jeffrey Dahmer.

5.3 Historical Periods over the Lifespan of Jeffrey Dahmer

The literature review on the life of Jeffrey Dahmer revealed five distinguishable, but interrelated, periods of development throughout his lifespan. The historical periods are grouped in a way that allows a certain amount of transition between significant developmental stages and the salient aspects and events in Dahmer's life. These periods relate to systemic influences on his life that range from the pre-natal and childhood family environment to major socio-historical events in his lifetime, which can be viewed according to psychosocial and individual personality development. Each of these historical periods and the relevant biographical elements are presented in the ensuing subsections. Owing to Dahmer's infamy, an additional sixth period, 'Beyond Death', is also briefly explored.

5.3.1 Childhood of Fantasy (1960 – 1972)

"When I was a little kid I was just like anybody else" (Masters, 1993, p. 31)

Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer was born on May 21, 1960, at the Evangelical Deaconess Hospital in Milwaukee (Dahmer, 1994). At the time of his birth, his parents lived in his paternal

grandparents' house in West Allis, Wisconsin. Lionel Dahmer, his father, was a graduate student studying for his master's in analytical chemistry. His mother, Joyce Dahmer (née Flint) was a homemaker, but previously employed as a teletype machinist (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Lionel was an analytical thinker, whilst Joyce was significantly more emotional (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Joyce became pregnant shortly after the marriage and experienced a difficult pregnancy, which strained the marital relationship (Dahmer, 1994). Joyce experienced extended bouts of nausea, vertigo, headaches and a peculiar physical rigidity during the pregnancy that the doctors treated with medications that included morphine and Phenobarbital (Dahmer, 1994).

When Jeffrey was brought home from the hospital he had a corrective cast on his leg, which he wore for about four months (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). In all other respects, he was a normal, healthy baby. Joyce never settled into breastfeeding and within a week gave up altogether (Dahmer, 1994). As the tension mounted between Joyce and her mother-in-law, Lionel, Joyce and Jeffrey moved into a house on the east side of Milwaukee (Dahmer, 1994). While Joyce stayed home to dote on Jeffrey, Lionel continued his studies. By that time, Jeffrey babbled happily and was a bubbly child who revelled in his spider walker. He played with his many stuffed toys and wooden blocks that stacked carefully – and then pushed over suddenly (Dahmer, 1994). At 18 months, Jeffrey walked alone for the first time. He displayed a precocious interest in animals and had a goldfish and a pet turtle (Masters, 1993). Soon after he turned two, Jeffrey had memorized his first prayer (Masters, 1993).

The family moved to Ames, Iowa, in September 1962, when Lionel began to study towards his PhD at Iowa State University. The move to the new house did not seem to bother Jeffrey, who was content to sit in his room with his stuffed toy animals (Masters, 1993). In fact, the move into a rural environment brought new pets and insects for Jeffrey to watch. The relationship between Lionel and Joyce worsened and Lionel spent increasingly more time in the laboratory in order to avoid heated and often physical arguments (Dahmer, 1994). During the first year in Iowa, Jeffrey was prone to ear and throat infections and also had mild pneumonia (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

At other times, Jeffrey was a happy, ebullient child who enjoyed family outings to the zoo (Dahmer, 1994). He was an eager and expressive youngster who loved to play on the swing and in the sandbox and to be read to in the evening (Dahmer, 1994). He played with large blocks and rode on a small tricycle. One night, while Lionel and Jeffrey were riding bicycle,

Jeffrey noticed an injured nighthawk. In keeping with his fascination with animals, he insisted that they take it home. The Dahmers nursed the bird until they could eventually release it – to Jeffrey's delight (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

As his work intensified, Lionel spent longer hours at the laboratory and Joyce remained at home. The family seemed to live past each other, catching Jeffrey only as he raced through the house or when they sat together at dinner (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He seemed a healthy and robust child. However, in the Spring of 1964, before his fourth birthday, Jeffrey underwent an operation for a double hernia, apparently as a result of a birth defect (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Owing to the extreme pain of the surgery, he asked his mother if his genitals were cut off (Dahmer, 1994; King, 2004; Masters, 1993). After the operation Jeffrey appeared more vulnerable and subdued. During his slow recovery he sat in complete silence in the living room for long periods, hardly stirring (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

In the Fall of 1964, Lionel swept the remains of small animals, which were killed by civets, from under the house. He placed the bones in a bucket and brought them into the house. Jeffrey gathered the tiny bones and stared at them intently (Dahmer, 1994). He seemed oddly thrilled by the brittle, crackling sound they made as he repeatedly dropped them to the floor (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), "like fiddlesticks" Jeffrey laughed (Dahmer, 1994, p. 53). Lionel recalled his passing belief that the fascination with bones may lead to a medical or research career or nothing (Dahmer, 1994) as Jeffrey was previously disinterested on a visit to the laboratory.

As Jeffrey grew taller and more animated, he started to play more games. Notably, he cared little for competition and shunned physical contact (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He preferred games that were non-confrontational and based on themes of stalking and concealment (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). When Jeffrey played games such as 'hide-and-seek' and 'ghosts in the graveyard', he was "totally absorbed" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 57). Although Jeffrey remained very shy, he was not friendless (Masters, 1993). He attended Whittier School and explored the neighbourhood with other boys. They explored an animal research facility (Davis, 1995) and, in the more derelict areas, would throw bricks through the windows of the empty houses. At age six, Jeffrey was brought home by police for this – much to the Dahmers' embarrassment. Jeffrey was scolded (Masters, 1993). Jeffrey continued to play outside, riding on his bicycle, climbing trees and playing on piles of

coal to return home filthy, for another scolding: "When I was a little kid I was just like anybody else" (Masters, 1993, p. 31). Jeffrey also convinced another boy to stick his hand into a hornets' nest to see if there were ladybugs inside (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997).

As their time in Iowa drew to a close, the fighting between Lionel and Joyce escalated (Dahmer, 1994). Around the age of six, Jeffrey began to turn more inward and his mood slowly darkened as he sat quietly and alone (Dahmer, 1994). Still, his fascination with animals and insects continued and his curiosity and imagination were fed by snakes, toads, fish, rabbits and his pet cat, Buff (Masters, 1993). Lionel worked to finish his PhD and Joyce was increasingly reclusive and depressive and experienced another difficult pregnancy. Though no one is aware of how Jeffrey reacted to the fighting there are later suggestions, such a teacher's once commenting that she believed that Jeffrey felt neglected (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992).

One month after Lionel earned his doctorate, the family moved to Doylestown, Ohio. Jeffrey was forced to leave his animals behind, but never discussed his reaction to this. He was progressively more silent, withdrawn and private – and less likely to flash a quick smile (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). However, Jeffrey received a dog named Frisky, who became his faithful companion. Although the move from Iowa to Ohio appeared to exacerbate his inferiority and shyness, it was not as if he were totally morose (King, 2004). He still enjoyed watching cartoons and playing in the yard with Frisky (Dahmer, 1994; King, 2004).

While Joyce was pregnant she spent her time in bed, whilst Lionel occupied himself at work and with household chores. Jeffrey was apparently enthusiastic about having a baby brother and named him David after his birth (Masters, 1993). Masters (1993) reported that Jeffrey was not jealous of David at all, but Schwartz (1992) and Davis (1995) indicated that Jeffrey felt neglected after David's birth.

Jeffrey reluctantly entered the first grade at Hazel Harvey Elementary School in 1966. Similar to his earlier reaction to nursing school, Jeffrey was extremely shy. He appeared almost fearful of others with a concomitant lack of self-confidence (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The little Jeffrey that was once "happy and self-assured … [was] replaced by a different person, now deeply shy, distant, nearly uncommunicative" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 62). Within a month, Jeffrey's teacher brought to the Dahmers' attention that although Jeffrey was polite and did his homework, he appeared uninterested in school, reclusive and profoundly

unhappy (Dahmer, 1994).   Despite her encouragement, Jeffrey did not engage the other children in conversation or play and at break time he simply did "nothing" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 63). Although his parents believed that it was result of the move to Ohio and his inability to adapt to new situations, they tried to involve Jeffrey in more activities and integrate him into the school community (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

In April 1967, the Dahmer family moved to a rented house in Barberton, Ohio (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey – who was able to bring Frisky – sat in the back of the car, neither excited nor frightened, just blank and emotionless (Dahmer, 1994). In Barberton, Jeff showed occasional flashes of the energetic and carefree behaviour he displayed in Iowa (Dahmer, 1994). He befriended Lee, a boy who lived in the house behind his. They played together in the afternoons and went 'trick-or-treating' together. At school Jeffrey showed his continued pattern of disinterest, non-involvement and the seeming inability to trust others (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). On one occasion he did try to connect with another. Jeffrey liked an assistant teacher at the school, because "she was nice to me, I guess" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 71). Jeffrey gave her a bowl of tadpoles, but found later that she gave them to Lee. In revenge for the teacher's betrayal, Jeffrey sneaked into Lee's garage and poured motor oil into the bowl (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997).

The time in Barberton was short-lived. On one afternoon drive in Bath, Ohio, Joyce found the perfect house where they could settle. In May 17, 1968, the Dahmers moved into 4480 West Bath Road, where they spent the next 10 years. The location was idyllic: natural and peaceful and enclosed by a large wooded area (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey participated – though minimally – in the country life and helped to raise the various farm animals (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). As his mostly solitary summer wore on, Jeffrey was afforded ample time to spend on his own pursuits inviolate in the expansive woods. Lionel was increasingly worried that Jeffrey showed very little interest in anything, except these solitary excursions when he appeared to be in a world entirely his own (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Alone in the woods, no one could tell him what to do – or not to – and it became a refuge from the mounting tensions at home (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

Although Jeffrey was not abused as a child (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schechter, 2003), his parole officer indicated that Lionel once telephoned her to tell her that Jeffrey was molested at age eight by another boy who lived in the neighbourhood. She noted that it might be the reason for Jeffrey's difficulty with his sexuality (Davis, 1995; Masters,

1993; Schwartz, 1992). Both Lionel and Jeffrey vehemently denied that the phone call or the incident, respectively, ever occurred (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

When Jeffrey entered Bath Elementary he was characteristically reserved (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995). Jeffrey was described by classmates as both funny and odd (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993). Although Jeffrey was tall for his age, he did not bully other children, but if one were hurt his reaction was to laugh, not help (Davis, 1995). Despite his inability to connect with or trust his peers, adults described Jeffrey as polite and very willing to please (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). At Eastview Junior High School, Jeffrey made superficial friends with a few other boys, among them, David Borsvold (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Adults and classmates considered the tall, skinny, tow-headed boy with big glasses as quiet, reserved and smart, but also different and isolated (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey shunned group activities and sports, but it was not as if he were completely isolated in a corner as his parents tried to involve him in activities in school and socially (Dahmer, 1994; King, 2004; Masters, 1993).

In David Borsvold, he found a kindred spirit with an interest in pre-history, archaeology and geology (Masters, 1993) and the two often cycled to each other's home in the afternoons. One of the games that Jeffrey and David Borsvold played was *Infinity Land* – of Jeffrey's own design – which involved stick men and spirals (Masters, 1993). As each boy manipulated his army of spindly stick men, annihilation occurred if the figures come into too close contact with each other (Masters, 1993). The spirals were drawn over the destroyed figures to symbolize descent into a black hole of oblivion (Masters, 1993).

By 1970, Jeffrey was steeped further into his own oblivion as the family environment was tumultuous (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Palermo & Farkas, 2001). Joyce experienced many physical ailments and increased her medication intake (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Lionel, in turn, remained at work to avoid the turmoil and fights at home (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995). Joyce was eventually hospitalized in a psychiatric institution for a month (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey explained to the police that, "It made me feel on edge, unsure of the solidity of the family. I decided early on I wasn't ever going to get married 'cause I never wanted to go through anything like that" (Masters, 1993, p. 39).

Jeffrey and David remained unhurt through the various fights, but Jeffrey's response was one of increased withdrawal from the family structure into the solace of fantasy (Masters,

1993; Schechter, 2003). Dahmer indicated to police that his parents were under-involved in his life and he reportedly felt guilty about Joyce's emotional disorder (Davis, 1995; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993). He knew that Joyce was depressed after his birth and to ensure that he could not cause further incident, kept to himself, saying and doing very little in an effort to maintain the tenuous calm in the house (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). Masters (1993) articulated that Jeffrey felt he did not belong and that if he were to belong, he would only do harm.

One evening as the family ate chicken for dinner, 10 year old Jeffrey asked what would happen if they were to place the chicken bones in bleach (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). As Jeffrey appeared to show initiative with scientific curiosity, Lionel and Jeffrey carried out the experiment. Jeffrey soon began to experiment with chemicals (Davis, 1995) and had a vast collection of insects in jars of formaldehyde. He learned to use acid to strip the flesh off small animals and preserved the dissected parts in formaldehyde (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Palermo & Farkas, 2001; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey kept his growing collection in an isolated outbuilding on the back part of the property (Dahmer, 1994; Keppel & Birnes, 1997) and fashioned a cemetery behind *the hut* (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). To his boyhood friends, he appeared completely fascinated with the decomposition of these animals until only the bones remained (Flaherty, 1993; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Palermo & Farkas, 2001).

Schoolmates recalled Jeffrey's fascination with the insides of animals and how he used to fillet the fish he caught, completely enthralled by the colour of the innards (Flaherty, 1993; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). "I want to see what it looks like inside. I like to see how things work" (Keppel & Birnes, 1997, p. 304) he apparently remarked. Jeffrey also enjoyed pressing his head against his friends' chests to listen to their heartbeats (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997).

Between the ages of 10 and 15, Jeffrey's posture and demeanour changed even more (Dahmer, 1994). He grew increasingly shy and was very tense when approached by others and would wind a stick nervously around his fingers (Dahmer, 1994). At home he often remained alone, in his bedroom or stared at the television, his expression blank (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey displayed few normal emotions (Martens & Palermo, 2005) and his interests remained limited (Masters, 1993). Lionel tried to draw him out of inactivity, but Jeffrey quickly discarded any new endeavours such as tennis and soccer (Dahmer, 1994; Keppel &

Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey remained unattached during his childhood beyond superficial bonds with schoolmates (Davis, 1995; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey epitomized the outcast who neither belonged to his family nor any social network (Baumann, 1991; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

5.3.2 The Quiet Loner (1972 – 1978)

"The guy wanted to leave and I didn't want him to leave" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 43)

5.3.2.1 Academic and Social Life

By the time Jeffrey Dahmer was 12 years old, he cared little for sports and even less for boyhood academic pursuits (Dahmer, 1994). Although a Boy Scout excursion to New Mexico appeared to intrigue him, he made no effort to stay in the Scouts after his return (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey's interests remained limited and were only expressed in solitude. For a short time he engaged in the more solitary pastime of target shooting with a bow and arrow. However, in keeping with his pattern, he quickly lost interest (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey mostly remained closeted in his room or shambled around the house aimlessly giving the impression that he was purposeless and disengaged (Dahmer, 1994).

During puberty, Jeffrey apparently had one desultory physical exploration with another boy, Eric Tyson, who used to hike and fish with Jeffrey (Masters, 1993). The two undressed, touched, kissed and caressed each other, but went no further (Masters, 1993). They met on three or four occasions, but fear of discovery made them stop (Masters, 1993). As Dahmer's emotional response was generally muted, there is little evidence of either his emotional reaction to his burgeoning sexuality or the family discord (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Between the ages of 12 and 14, Jeffrey rode around the neighbourhood on his bicycle, collecting road kill in plastic bags (Dahmer, 1994; Keppel & Birnes, 1993; Masters, 1993). Secluded in the hut, Jeffrey experimented on the animal remains and later buried them in his private cemetery (Dahmer, 1994). Whereas his father saw only his passivity and isolation (Dahmer, 1994), his brother David once witnessed a dissection and was aware of the cemetery, which he thought of as a kindly service (Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey had no close relationships other than the most casual or convenient (Dahmer, 1994). While the world outside his mind appeared to stagnate and his conversations

narrowed to answering questions with one-word answers (Dahmer, 1994), his onanistic fantasies blossomed (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). At first he fantasized about sex with attractive young men, but Jeffrey admitted that in time he was assailed by visions of murder and dismemberment (Masters, 1993). Social isolation and sadistic images were thus integral to his adolescent development (Masters, 1993; Palermo, 2004; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Tithecott, 1997).

By the end of his time at Eastview Junior High, Jeffrey was marked by an overpowering loneliness that would haunt his existence (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995). His relationship with David Borsvold was ended by Borsvold's mother (Masters, 1993), but 14 year old Jeffrey discovered a new friend: alcohol (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In 1974, Jeffrey went to Revere High School. He played clarinet in the high school band in his freshman year, played intramural tennis in his sophomore through senior years and worked on the school newspaper, the *Lantern*, in his junior year (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). While Jeffrey showed no interest in academics or social activities, he excelled at biology and once convinced a teacher to let him take home the head of a baby pig that he had dissected in class (Masters, 1993). He removed the skin and flesh – and kept the skull (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

In 1975 a group of neighbourhood children stumbled upon the remains of a dog in the woods that bordered West Bath Road. Years later, Jeffrey admitted that he cut it open to see the insides and then – as a prank – mounted the dog's head on a stake (Goleman, 1991; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). He had already shown it to a friend for "shock value" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 114) before it was discovered. The skinned and gutted carcass dangled from a nearby tree and there was a cross made of sticks (Masters, 1993; Schechter, 2003). One boy took a photograph, but never contacted the police. No one connected this bizarre totem to the actions of any individual (Goleman, 1991; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey reported that one of his elaborate fantasies occurred when he was 15 years old (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Dahmer had an obsessive fascination with a jogger who frequently ran past his house. Dahmer was attracted to the man's impressive physique (Davis, 1995) but could not contrive how to meet him – and feared that he would be rejected (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993). As part of the fantasy, he constructed a plan in which he hid in the bushes near the jogger's path. As the man would pass by, Dahmer would leap out, hit

him with a baseball bat and drag the unconscious body into the wood to lie – and eventually have sexual intercourse – with him (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Dahmer wanted the man to be completely at his command, an unresisting object for his lustful worship (Masters, 1993). One day Dahmer took the bat and waited at the side of the road for the stranger to pass (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), but the jogger never did – leaving this particular fantasy unfulfilled. Increasingly, then, the stillness of the dead seemed to become the primary focus of his growing sexual desire (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Tithecott, 1997).

Jeffrey was overwhelmed by apathy and did not pursue casual interests such as music or reading (Dahmer, 1994). Alcohol seemed to be the only antidote (Davis, 1995; Hickey, 1997; Masters, 1993). As Jeffrey ventured further into the comforting abyss of fantasy and alcoholism, his parents saw only a shy adolescent who lacked self-confidence (Dahmer, 1994). In an effort to boost Jeffrey's self-esteem and perhaps reduce his social isolation, Lionel suggested bodybuilding (Dahmer, 1994). This pastime occupied Jeffery for almost a year and afforded him a well-developed physique (Dahmer, 1994) before he discarded the barbell into a mounting pile of normal activities.

Jeffrey made another acquaintance when he was 16, a boy named Jeff Six (Masters, 1993), with whom he drank and did drugs. Their relationship was characterized by a lack of emotional commitment and contact with the real world (Masters, 1993). Jeffrey's school work deteriorated and he frequently attended class inebriated (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). A classmate reported that when they sat together in their sophomore year, Jeffrey drank scotch out of a Styrofoam cup in first period (Flaherty, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). While Jeffrey's interest in road kill was macabre, he disagreed with Jeff Six's intentionally riding over animals (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey apparently never hurt any animals (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

By his senior year, Jeffrey was described as (a) an eccentric loner with an odd fascination with dead animals, (b) a social outcast who had considerable difficulties in relationships with others, (c) an alcoholic and (d) a volatile prankster who was amused only by the bizarre (Egger, 2002; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Goleman, 1993; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Jeffrey was known to stumble drunk around the local Summit Mall, harassing patrons and pretending to have epileptic seizures (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993). Although his classmates laughed at his antics, such as bleating like a sheep (Davis, 1995) or

'acting retarded' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), they were nevertheless wary that "if he went off, you didn't want to be in the way" (Flaherty, 1993, p. 9).

Two of Jeffrey's pranks are most striking. On a school trip to Washington, D.C., Jeffrey used his charm on a governmental aide to engineer a trip for himself and his friends to the office of Vice President Walter Mondale – who was not in at the time (Davis, 1995). When the news of the latest escapade reached the other seniors, they simply shook their heads in amazement and brushed the incident off by saying that he was simply "doing a Dahmer" (Davis, 1995, p. 28). Again his classmates were perfectly content to enjoy his antics from the sidelines, but were cautious of a person who drank in excess and liked to trace bodies on the corridor floors at school (Davis, 1995; Tithecott, 1997).

Jeffrey was a notorious underachiever whose grades fluctuated from A to F, but was known by teachers to be intelligent (Davis, 1995; King, 2004; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) despite his academic non-involvement. For his second, most infamous school prank, Jeffrey – with a grade point average (GPA) of below 2 – edged himself into the yearbook photograph of the National Honour Society. Apparently this stunt was greatly appreciated by other, less academic, students (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). The editor blacked out his face before the yearbook went to print. Whilst his individual photograph showed his fake smile (Dahmer, 1994), this picture was more telling. Jeffrey Dahmer, invisible and veiled, appeared as an ominous peripheral figure forever faithful to his sinister act.

At home, the family environment deteriorated more rapidly (Dahmer, 1994) and Jeffrey dealt with the increasing emotional upheaval in solitude (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). During the various arguments, Jeffrey escaped outside and would hit at the trees with branches (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). In his parents' presence, however, Jeffrey presented his ever-passive demeanour (Dahmer, 1994), his emotional isolation impregnable. When his parents filed for divorce – each charging the other with gross neglect of duty and extreme cruelty (Masters, 1993) – a custody battle raged over David, who was then 11. Jeffrey was 17, almost an adult, but one who appeared completely unmotivated and disinterested in his future (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). At the beginning of his senior year the family discussed Jeffrey's future and impending independence, but he routinely accepted and just as easily forgot their suggestions (Dahmer, 1994).

To his family, Jeffrey was simply increasingly detached and showed no blatant manifestation of any spiritual and emotional descent. Though his apathy extended to his self-expression, he spoke in a monotone voice from a young age and, as David Dahmer explained, it was generally "very hard to get anything out of him … Jeff never showed much emotion outside" (Masters, 1993, p. 43). It appeared as if nothing mattered to him, not school work or social relations in or out of school. He simply stayed in his room, lost in his incommunicable thoughts and consoled by alcohol (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). His restricted affect was increasingly accompanied by a lack of communication. Jeffrey never rebelled, never raised his voice, never showed his anger, never argued – but never seemed to agree with anything (Dahmer, 1994). Instead, as time wore on, Lionel lamented that Jeffrey showed a "passive mask, the inflexible stare that the world has come to know as the only image of my son" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 90).

Throughout Jeffrey's examinations, graduation and prom, the divorce proceedings continued. Jeffrey's effort level sank into a minimum (Dahmer, 1994) and at home, he withdrew even more into an imagined world that existed outside the bounds of human community (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey went to the prom with Bridget Geiger. Although he was not interested in attending, voluntary absence from this hallowed American tradition was unthinkable (Masters, 1993). As Jeffrey had never been on a date and felt no desire to try, the arrangement was contrived by two classmates (Masters, 1993). Geiger did not know Jeffrey personally, but had heard stories of his heavy drinking (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). She agreed to accompany him on condition that he would neither drink nor act strangely on the night (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey turned up at her house, clearly awkward and shy on his first date (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

The evening did not go as planned. Shortly after they arrived at the venue in nearby Akron, Ohio, Jeffrey left the dance for about an hour and the chaperones would not let him back in because they thought he might have alcoholic beverages on him (Davis, 1995). He insisted that he only went to McDonalds and became lost (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's escape from the expectation and routine of the function stranded Geiger. As she looked for a lift home, Jeffrey reappeared and explained his absence. He and Geiger and their two friends spent the rest of the evening at a pub in Bath where they drank sodas and talked (Davis, 1995), before taking Bridget home at 11 p.m., two hours before curfew. Jeffrey shook her hand and wished her goodnight (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

5.3.2.2   Steven Hicks

Just two weeks after his graduation, Jeffrey Dahmer committed his first, apparently spontaneous, murder (Davis, 1995; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Owing to the acrimonious divorce, Jeffrey was deserted – abandoned to his fantasy world. Lionel stayed in a motel and Joyce took David to visit her family in Wisconsin (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

At about five in the evening on June 18[1], 1978, Jeffrey drove home after having been out drinking. He noticed a hitchhiker and was immediately attracted to the young man, Steven Hicks, who had removed his shirt (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey claimed that for several years before meeting Hicks, he had "fantasies about meeting an attractive hitchhiker and sexually enjoying him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 115) and admitted that the idea "came from within" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). Dahmer, swept up in his fantasy, pulled over the car and offered Hicks a lift to the house on West Bath Road where they could drink beer and smoke marijuana. Hicks accepted (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

In Jeffrey's bedroom, they talked, drank and smoked (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey stated that from the time they spent together, he could tell that Hicks was not gay (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). After a couple of hours, Hicks wanted to leave. Dahmer tried to talk him into staying, but Hicks was adamant (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Jeffrey reported that "the guy wanted to leave and I didn't want him to leave" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 43). In an apparently unplanned bid to exercise control over the situation Dahmer fetched the barbell and hit Hicks over the head because he "didn't know how else to keep him there" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). He proceeded to strangle Hicks with the barbell (Davis, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's fright and panic was mingled with excitement and the fulfilment of a perpetual homosexual fantasy twisted by themes of death and possession (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey claimed that he paced around the house before he undressed Hicks's body and masturbated over the corpse (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey admitted that he was sexually aroused by the

[1] The dates reported are cited in various texts as "on or about" and correspond to Dahmer's testimony, police reports and the dates when the victims were last seen.

captivity (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Purcell and Arrigo (2006) argued that his most exciting fantasy had been realized – an attractive, helpless man lay beneath him. Later that night Dahmer hid the body in the crawl space beneath the house. Dahmer could not sleep (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The next day, Dahmer bought a hunting knife in order to dispose of the evidence (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). That night, he slit open the body and masturbated again. He was aroused by the act of evisceration and the sight of the internal organs (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). In a piteous echo of childhood and adolescent experiments, he cut off the arms, legs and head. He triple-bagged each piece in large plastic trash bags and placed the dismembered parts in the car (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). At three in the morning, he drove towards a ravine ten miles from the house where he intended to dump the evidence (Masters, 1993).

In a pattern that would become habitual, Dahmer drank throughout the day as well as during and after the dismemberment. Halfway to the ravine, Dahmer was pulled over by the police for driving left of centre. The police officer, being alone called for backup (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer claimed that he was extremely nervous (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), but his ability to appear calm – his passive mask – was clearly evident enough for the police not to be suspicious. After being tested for drunken driving and having passed satisfactorily, one officer shone a flashlight on the backseat. He noticed the smell and asked what it was (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer told the officers that it was garbage that he forgot to drop off at the landfill. They believed his story that he chose such a late hour because his parents were fighting and he needed to clear his head (Masters, 1993). Dahmer was ticketed $20 (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

After this first escape from the law, Dahmer turned around and headed straight home. He took the plastic bags out of the car and hid them in the crawl space. However, he took the head, washed it off, placed it on the bathroom floor and masturbated in front of it (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He then put the head back down with the rest of the bags – and tried to forget about them (Davis, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993). The next morning he put the bags in a large, buried drainage pipe behind the house. To fit the bags he smashed the bones down and left the evidence there for approximately two and a half years (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer kept no souvenirs of this incident. He burned Hicks's wallet, identification and clothes. He then drove to the bridge over the Cuyahoga River, where he

threw in the hunting knife and the necklace and bracelets that Hicks wore (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

In the months that ensued Jeffrey wept about this incident and apparently prayed for forgiveness (Masters, 1993). He recognized that his "perverted lust" (Masters, 1993, p. 71) had caused the death of Steven Hicks. This lust was built on a foundation of moral inertia, "not caring about other people, not caring about myself" (Masters, 1993, p. 71). After Jeffrey's discharge from the army and his stint in Miami – which will be discussed in the next section – he returned home. While the family was away at work, he opened the drainage pipe, took out the bones and smashed them into small pieces in order to "make a final end of it" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 119). Davis (1995) reported that Jeffrey climbed a rocky cliff and scattered the bones in a 360-degree motion around the area. Jeffrey confessed to this murder after 13 years, recalling a hitchhiker named Steve, a "white guy about 19 years old" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 44) and identified Hicks from a photograph.

5.3.3   Hiatus – or Build-up (1978 – 1987)

"I trained myself to view people as objects of potential pleasure" (Masters, 1993, p. 92)

5.3.3.1   College and the Army

The divorce was finalized on July 24, 1978, with Joyce awarded custody of David. In August, she broke the custody agreement and moved David to Wisconsin (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Joyce asked Jeffrey not to tell Lionel. Later that month, while Jeffrey hosted a party, Lionel and his girlfriend, Shari Jordan, visited the house. Jeffrey, who looked like a "lost little boy" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 94), eventually told Lionel that Joyce and David had left him alone, with no money, very little food and a broken refrigerator. Lionel and Shari moved in immediately. Jeffrey, though ashamed of the family disarray (Dahmer, 1994), respected Shari as an individual (King, 2004).

Although everything went well initially, Shari soon discovered Jeffrey's alcoholism. Shari found Jeffrey passed out drunk and immediately told Lionel. Two weeks later, Jeffrey had appeared to stop drinking, but Lionel and Shari confronted Jeffrey about the theft of two of Shari's rings. Apparently it was stolen by one of Jeffrey's friends and he knew about it. Lionel Dahmer (1994) reported that Jeffrey appeared insulted by the accusation and moved to

leave the room. When Shari commanded him to sit, she glimpsed a flash of rage: "Shari had seen the other Jeff, the one who looked out from behind the dull, unmoving mask" (p. 97).

Together, Lionel and Shari convinced Jeffrey to try the idea of college, though he showed the usual dance of reluctance and sullen acquiescence. In September 1978, Jeffrey was enrolled at Ohio State University in Columbus to study towards a career in business (Dahmer, 1994) and it was there that he learned that Frisky had died (Masters, 1993). Dahmer stayed in Ross House dormitory, room 541, with three roommates. College started off well, but at the end of the first quarter he had dropped out, earning a cumulative GPA of 0.45 (Dahmer, 1994). He returned home in December and Lionel fetched his possessions. Lionel learned from his roommates that Jeffrey remained perpetually drunk and would sell his blood plasma to secure the necessary funds for alcohol (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Further, Jeffrey's behaviour was described as erratic, unpredictable and solitary and he was once questioned about the theft of a radio, watch and money from the dorm (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

As Jeffrey could not return to college, Lionel set an ultimatum: that either Jeffrey stops drinking and finds employment or he joins the Armed Forces. Jeffrey continued to drink and was eventually arrested for drunk and disorderly behaviour (Dahmer, 1994). Lionel drove Jeffrey to the army recruiting office on December 29, 1978, where Jeffrey completed the necessary forms "as if on automatic pilot" (Dahmer, 1994, p 107). On January 12, 1979, he reported for duty in the US Army at Fort McClellan in Anniston, Alabama, hoping to be trained as a military policeman (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). He was reassigned to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, where he was trained as a medical specialist instead (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Ironically, the six week course to be a medic would be the only sustained course of study that he completed – and which he was able to put to deadly use (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

When Jeffrey returned home for furlough, he was in good physical shape and seemed more disciplined, helpful and self-confident (Dahmer, 1994). Dahmer seemed to blossom under the rigid discipline, but the improvement was short-lived (Baers, 2002; Dahmer, 1994). After a pleasant two weeks, on 13 July, 1979, Jeffrey shipped out to Baumholder, West Germany, where he served as a medic. In Baumholder, Jeffrey's alcohol abuse steadily escalated, but for the most part he was able to avoid severe difficulties (Baumann, 1991; Masters, 1993). German police conducted a thorough investigation after his arrest and could not link him to any of the five unsolved murders during the time that he was in Germany

(Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993). Flaherty (1993, p. 14) commented that "alcohol abuse, homosexual pornography, masturbation, heavy metal music and a busy work schedule kept him out of serious trouble".

Army colleagues described Jeffrey as a regular, extremely intelligent individual who was able to joke around (Davis, 1995; Schechter, 2003). However, he was a loner who spoke little about his life at home (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992) which left the impression that he was hiding something. They also remembered his remarkable capacity to drink – and the very different Dahmer who emerged: one who was moody, aggressive and defiant (Baumann, 1991; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). As ever, no one truly knew Jeffrey Dahmer. Jeffrey remained a mystery "who wore the uniform with pride, who had all these brains, was a good medic and was going nowhere fast" (Davis, 1995, p. 56). Eventually, Private First Class Dahmer's hangovers and missed duty days resulted in his discharge under an army regulation concerning alcohol and drug abuse (Hickey, 1997; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). On his discharge, Jeffrey told the squad leader, "Someday you'll hear about me again" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 48).

In March 1981, Dahmer was processed out of the army at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. His possessions were shipped home, but the Dahmers were unsure of Jeffrey's whereabouts until about a month later when he contacted them from Miami. He worked at Sunshine Subs seven days a week. He spent his money on alcohol and was eventually forced to camp out on the beach (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). During this period, Jeffrey befriended Julie, a British woman who worked illegally in the United States. She wanted them to marry to legitimize her position, but neither Dahmer, nor his relatives, approved of the proposed arrangement (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). After six months in Miami, Dahmer finally called home again when he was completely destitute. Rather than send him money, Shari agreed to send an aeroplane ticket home – which he accepted (Dahmer, 1994).

Dahmer alighted the aeroplane drunk and dishevelled (Dahmer, 1994), but he was soon very helpful around the house. One of the tasks he undertook was to insulate the copper pipes in the crawl space. As his work ethic subsided, he fell into a pattern of unemployment and the reliance of alcohol to escape his loneliness and inner torment (Tithecott, 1997), especially after he finally disposed of Hicks's remains. At Lionel's insistence he then began to look for employment. Lionel either dropped him at the Summit Mall or would leave him the car. Being alone again, Jeffrey reverted to drinking and within two weeks of his return he

was arrested for drunk and disorderly conduct (Dahmer, 1994). Over the next weeks his drinking continued and he would often lose his glasses or wallet – or forget where he left the car (Dahmer, 1994). Eventually Lionel and Shari decided that Jeffrey move in with his elderly paternal grandmother, Catherine Dahmer. In return for household help, Jeffrey would have room and board. Lionel Dahmer described Jeffrey's familiar mood as he boarded the bus for West Allis as "resigned, somewhat contrite, generally passive and without emotion, the sense, perhaps, that once again he was being rejected" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 115).

5.3.3.2   West Allis, Wisconsin

Although he was not initially excited at the idea of living with his grandmother (Dahmer, 1994), Jeffrey soon found the arrangement convenient (Masters, 1993) and stayed there from 1982 until 1988. Jeffrey mowed the lawn, shovelled the walkways and helped in the flowerbeds while his grandmother cooked meals. The only prohibition placed on Jeffrey was that he smokes outside (Masters, 1993). The move to West Allis appeared to have its intended effect. Jeffrey appeared to (a) settle down, (b) restrict his drinking, (c) attend Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings and (d) mature (Dahmer, 1994).

Soon after he arrived in Wisconsin, Jeffrey found employment at the Milwaukee Blood Plasma Centre as a phlebotomist. He was required to draw blood from volunteers, using the skills acquired as an army medic (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Although he was not particularly interested, he regarded it as a way to earn money (Masters, 1993). During this time, Dahmer once took a phial and drank the blood (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993), but did not enjoy it or find it sexually stimulating (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997). His employment was terminated after approximately 10 months because of poor performance. In August 1982, Dahmer was arrested and fined for indecent exposure at the Wisconsin State Fair (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey noted that from 1983 he made a conscious attempt to "straighten my life out" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). He began to attend church and read the Bible (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). For almost two years he appeared to succeed in repressing his sexual fantasies (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). This was a remarkable feat in light of his being unemployed and characterized by the same lack of structure that facilitated his previous actions. This time, however, he was supported by his grandmother and the Church and it was generally regarded as a time of hope (Dahmer, 1994). However,

throughout this time he had no close friends, did not appear to trust anyone and never pursued any stable relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997).

On January 14, 1985, Dahmer found stable employment. He was hired as a mixer at the Ambrosia Chocolate Company (Hickey, 1997; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). He worked the graveyard shift six days a week, Sunday to Friday, 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The work was not intellectually stimulating, but provided Dahmer the opportunity to pay rent, while working with fewer colleagues and supervisors and away from the public (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). His employment represented an extraordinary act of stability in a life that careered out of control. He retained his employment throughout his various arrests, until just days prior to his final arrest. He was dismissed for continued tardiness and absenteeism in 1991 (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997).

While Jeffrey sat in the West Allis Library, a stranger dropped a note in his lap: "Come down to the lower level bathroom and I'll give you a blowjob" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). Dahmer, though taken aback, ignored the sexual proposition (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), but his resistance began to erode. Dahmer claimed that within two months his compulsion resurfaced with increased homosexual desires (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He started to drink again and his church attendance dwindled. Dahmer, at 25, was sexually inexperienced and began to seek casual encounters (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). He frequented adult bookstores, gay bars and bathhouses where he could engage in homosexual activities. He was recalled by regulars and club owners as a distant, yet well-manner loner who rarely smiled (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Tithecott, 1997).

Jeffrey began to display increasingly bizarre and volatile behaviour over the next few years (Dahmer, 1994). He was arrested twice in 1985 without the charges being brought to court. His grandmother found a .357 magnum, which Jeffrey said he used for target practice. Lionel confiscated the gun and sold it in Ohio (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey was able to explain away all the other incidents as well: (a) when he stayed away from home for entire weekends he claimed to be in Chicago or that he roamed the local mall (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and (b) when he helped a drunk acquaintance from the basement to the bus stop, he told Catherine that they had passed out drunk (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). As Lionel Dahmer (1994) observed, "He had become that most artful of all deceivers, one who mixes falsehood with just a pinch of truth" (p. 122).

Jeffrey's grandmother also found a fully clothed male mannequin that he used to perform sexual acts and live out his fantasies (Masters, 1993; Schechter, 2003). Jeffrey told Lionel that he stole it on impulse, as a challenge (Dahmer, 1994) – and disposed of it once it was discovered. As the mannequin "didn't satisfy" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122), he spent more time in the bathhouses, but was disinterested in sex. He wanted to find a way to merely spend the night with his companions, to enjoy them and to be in complete control (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He therefore viewed sex as nothing more than a selfish act of gratification. Jeffrey noted that he was still "pretty much on top of the urges, but I wanted to find a way to satisfy without hurting anyone" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122) but "trained myself to view people as objects of potential pleasure" (Masters, 1993, p. 92).

In June 1986, Jeffrey started using sleeping pills as the next step in his experiments to have total control over people without hurting them (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey was prescribed the pills after explaining to doctors that he had difficulty sleeping during the day as he worked the late shift. In a private room at the bathhouse, Jeffrey gave his temporary partners a drink laced with the pills. He experimented with the dosage and eventually used five pills at a time to procure about four hours of complete control to enjoy his unconscious partner (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). While usually unable to achieve an erection or reach orgasm while his partner was conscious (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), Dahmer was sexually aroused by the captivity of the motionless body and his tastes grew increasingly peculiar as his fantasies intensified (Palermo, 2004). He was sexually aroused by the sound of his sleeping lovers' hearts and stomachs (Dahmer, 1994; Egger, 2002; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). He drugged several partners without any harm incurred to them. However, when one of the patrons – who was unwilling to press charges – required medical attention, Jeffrey was banned from the bathhouses (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Jeffrey then began to spend more time in the gay bars that lined Walker's Point in Milwaukee. Dahmer stated that he enjoyed "the excitement of being around people that I didn't know and the chance of meeting some nice-looking guy, the same thing that led me to the bathclubs, the excitement and anticipation of meeting a stranger in the night" (Masters, 1993, p. 96). Yet, he made little effort to socialize and would rather sit alone in a corner drinking and smoking (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). At the end of the night he would sometimes pair up with someone (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) and rent a room at the

Ambassador Hotel, where he drugged his partner. Martens and Palermo (2005) and Masters (1993) described that his interest gradually shifted from the lifeless to the previously living. Essentially, he sought a level of control that could only be derived from the dead, because the living and conscious – with their own free will – became a threat to his fantasy.

An example of this increasingly bizarre desire for control was the 'graveyard incident' that Jeffrey maintained was an effort to avoid killing (Egger, 2002; Hickey, 2005; Palermo, 2004; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997). Jeffrey read in the obituaries about an 18 year old who had died. He went to the funeral home and viewed the body. He found the youth so attractive that he went to the restroom to masturbate (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Once the body was buried, he took a shovel and wheelbarrow to the graveyard to dig up the body. However, he abandoned the idea because the ground was frozen (Flaherty, 1993; Hickey, 1997; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

In September 1986 there was another incident of exhibitionism. Jeffrey was arrested for masturbating in front of two 12 year old boys (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). This resulted in an initial charge of lewd and lascivious behaviour, but was later reduced to disorderly conduct (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey confessed to the incident and five others (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992), but later told his probation officer that he had been drinking and needed to relieve himself (Masters, 1993). He agreed that he had a problem and promised to solicit help (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey was sentenced to one year probation and mandatory counselling for sexual deviance and impulse control (Hickey, 1997; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey conscientiously attended mandatory counselling and probationary appointments, but was monosyllabic and uncooperative, unwilling to speak about his family, his alcoholism or the arrest (Baumann, 1991; Masters, 1993). Masters (1993) reported that Dahmer was found to have a weak self-image and lacked self-worth. He was consequently (a) isolated and disconnected; (b) trapped in the triviality of his employment despite a considerable intellect beyond his lethargic demeanour; and (c) while his life appeared utterly devoid of a grand design or purpose, his goals for himself were not congruent with reality (Masters, 1993).

In the nine years since Hicks's murder, Jeffrey committed no homicides. Along with his escalating criminal career, however, his bizarre fantasies slowly developed (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997) and were facilitated by his alcohol abuse and

experimental rehearsals on his unconscious victims. Soon after his probationary period ended, Dahmer's murders resumed. He killed once in 1987, twice in 1988, once in 1989, four times in 1990 and eight times in 1991 – with the last several murders separated by days.

5.3.4   Seeking a Compliant Partner (1987 – 1991)

"It was just another step … just an escalation, trying something new to satisfy"
(Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139)

5.3.4.1   Steven Tuomi

In November 1987, Jeffrey met Steven Tuomi outside Club 219. The two took a taxi to the Ambassador Hotel, where Jeffrey took a room in his name and the two continued to drink. Jeffrey prepared Tuomi's drink and they engaged in sexual relations before Tuomi fell unconscious. At some point after that, Jeffrey also passed out from drinking too much (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

The next morning, Jeffrey awoke lying on top of Tuomi's body (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Tuomi's head hung over the edge of the bed with blood coming out his mouth. The scene itself told the story: Jeffrey's forearms were bruised and Tuomi had broken ribs. Jeffrey claimed that he had no intention of killing Tuomi and could not recall the incident. "I tried to dredge it up, but I have no memory of it whatsoever" (Masters, 1993, p. 109). Interestingly, Jeffrey was able to recall every murder in detail except for this one, where he could not even remember what happened to the bottle of rum he drank (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997). "I felt complete shock, I just couldn't believe it. Shock, horror, panic, I just couldn't believe it happened again after all those years when I'd done nothing like this" (Masters, 1993, p. 109).

Jeffrey hid the body in the closet and paced up and down, chain-smoking while he conceived a plan. He rented the room for another night and then bought a large suitcase, with wheels, from the nearby Grand Avenue Mall and placed Tuomi's body inside (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey waited, horrified, until one o'clock in the morning before he lugged the body downstairs (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He called a cab to take him to his grandmother's house. The cabdriver helped him load the suitcase in the back (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). At home, Jeffrey stored the body in

the fruit cellar for a week because his family was scheduled to arrive for Thanksgiving (Egger, 2002; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The next Sunday when his grandmother was at church, Dahmer removed the head. He slit open the belly and masturbated as he examined the colours and textures of the internal organs (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He then cut the flesh into smaller pieces that he placed into garbage bags (Egger, 2002; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schechter, 2003). He wrapped the skeleton in an old bedsheet and smashed the bones with a sledgehammer (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). On the Monday morning he threw everything out as trash. Dahmer, however, keep the skull for about a week (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) to fuel and sustain his fantasies (Flaherty, 1993; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993). To clean it he boiled it in Soilex and undiluted bleach (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), but it became too brittle – and after smashing it, he threw it out.

None of Tuomi's remains were ever found (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Although Jeffrey identified Tuomi from a family photograph, the police was unable to positively link Dahmer to his murder. "After that, my moral compass was so out of whack, and the desire, the compulsion was so strong, that I just continued with that mode" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 125).

5.3.4.2   Faltering Independence

On January 17, 1988, Jeffrey met James Doxtator at a bus stop outside Club 219. Doxtator was one of the youths who used to cruise the front of gay bars, looking for a relationship (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993). When Jeffrey met the 14 year old Native American, he thought that Doxtator was Hispanic and 18 years old (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Although he had not planned to pick anyone up (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), Dahmer offered Doxtator $50 to pose for nude photographs, watch videos and have a drink in West Allis (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey and Doxtator engaged in sexual relations. Later, Doxtator indicated that he would need to leave (Masters, 1993). "I found him attractive enough that I wanted to keep him. So I just made him the drink" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 153).

Dahmer strangled Doxtator in his sleep. He hid the body in the fruit cellar. After his grandmother left for church, Dahmer brought him to the bedroom and pretended he was still

alive – and eventually had anal sex with the corpse (Masters, 1993). He left the body in the fruit cellar for a week, but eventually his grandmother noticed the smell, which Jeffrey dismissed as the cat litter bin. However, Jeffrey dismembered the body in the basement where he could wash the blood down the drain and smashed the bones with a sledgehammer (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer boiled the head and bleached the skull, which he kept for two weeks before it became too brittle and was destroyed (Masters, 1993). Doxtator was not identified as a victim until well after Dahmer's arrest. Dahmer could not identify him from pictures (Masters, 1993), but noticed two scars close to each of Doxtator's nipples, about the circumference of a cigarette (Masters, 1993; Schwarz, 1992).

Two months later, on March 24, 1988, Jeffrey met Richard Guerrero in the doorway of the Phoenix Bar (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey's probationary period had just ended. Dahmer offered Guerrero $50 to watch videos and take photographs or engage in sex (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993). At this point, Dahmer claimed that he knew he would kill (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). In Jeffrey's bedroom the two engaged in *light sex*[2] before Dahmer prepared 'the drink'. Dahmer strangled Guerrero in his sleep (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). He performed oral sex on the corpse and masturbated over the body before he dismembered it and disposed of it, as before (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He kept the skull for several months as he diluted the bleach to prevent the skull's crumbling (Masters, 1993). Dahmer later recalled that he saw in the newspaper a photo of the victim and a report that he was missing (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Before then he did not even know Guerrero's name (Masters, 1993).

Catherine Dahmer complained again about the strange smells in her garage and Lionel flew to West Allis to investigate. He inspected the garage, but only found a non-descript thick, black liquid (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey claimed that he liked to conduct experiments on animal carcasses just to see what the chemicals and bleach did (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995).

The following weekend, Easter weekend, Jeffrey brought home Ronald Flowers whom he met outside Club 219 (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Flowers's car would not start and Jeffrey offered that they fetch his fictional car in West Allis. Catherine heard the two enter the house (Masters, 1993) and the next morning witnessed Jeffrey helping the man to the bus

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[2] Dahmer's term for body-rubbing, kissing, masturbation and oral sex.

stop (Schwartz, 1992). Flowers was drugged, but not sexually assaulted (Masters, 1993). This incident of drinking and carousing with men incited a family discussion about Jeffrey's alcoholism and moving into his own apartment (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer also commented that he moved out so that he could live closer to work (Dahmer, 1994) and free of restriction (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

On September 25, 1988, Jeffrey moved into 808 North 24th Street in Wisconsin, taking (a) Guerrero's skull, (b) a long black table and two statues of griffins that he would later use in his shrine and (c) a tape of *Return of the Jedi* (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey was entranced by the character of the *Emperor*, who had complete control over mortals (Masters, 1993) and admitted that he "identified completely with him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 127). Jeffrey later bought yellow contacts to wear in the bars in the hopes that it would imbue him – like the *Emperor* and the central character in *Exorcist III* – with power (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). The next day – free of restrictions – Jeffrey offered 13 year old Somsack Sinthasomphone $50 to pose for pictures in his apartment. He took two pictures of the partially disrobed boy before he offered him coffee laced with sleeping pills (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer fondled the boy and listened to his stomach (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Miraculously, Dahmer let the boy go (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

Somsack's parents took their incoherent son to the emergency room and after it was discovered that he was drugged, contacted the police. Jeffrey was arrested at work for the sexual exploitation of a minor and second degree sexual assault (Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey and a detective went back to the apartment to collect the photographs and cup that Somsack used. Jeffrey claimed that he did not know how old the child was, denied that he touched him and that any drugging was inadvertent as he drank his tablets out of the particular cup (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The police did not find Guerrero's head which was hidden under his clothes in a lower chest of drawers in the hallway (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Lionel was finally faced with Jeffrey's sexual behaviour – and Jeffrey appeared ashamed and depressed (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey later pleaded guilty to second degree sexual assault and enticing a minor for immoral purposes. While he awaited his court appearance on May 23, 1989, he stayed with his grandmother (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

On March 25, 1989, Jeffrey met Anthony Sears at the La Cage bar (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He offered him money for photographs and sex. One of Sears's

friends drove them to West Allis, a short distance from where 'Jeff from Chicago' visited his grandmother (Masters, 1993). The two engaged in oral sex and Sears noted that he would have to leave before long (Masters, 1993). Dahmer prepared the drink for Sears, strangled him in his sleep and had sex with the corpse. As Dahmer liked Sears especially, he preserved the genitals and head in acetone – after he called a taxidermist on how to preserve flesh with the skeleton (Masters, 1993). The rest of the body was dismembered and was disposed of in the garbage (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer used the head when he masturbated and placed it in a small metal trunk, where it began to mummify. The day before his trial, Lionel – believing that there was pornography inside – asked Jeffrey to open it (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey refused, but eventually 'admitted' that there was pornography inside and would open the box the next day. That night, he placed the head and genitals in a cosmetic case and left it in his locker at work. After his release in 1990, he scalped the head (Masters, 1993), boiled it to remove the remaining flesh and painted the skull grey – so that it would look more commercial (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

In court the next day, prosecutor Gale Shelton described Dahmer as a manipulative individual who abused alcohol and was sexually deviant (Masters, 1993). She argued that – based on psychological reports and testimony – Jeffrey showed little insight into his difficulties and believed that his only mistake in the particular case was that Somsack Sinthasomphone was too young (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). She argued that Jeffrey would not mend his ways and that he be sentenced to prison for five years. Lionel Dahmer testified that Jeffrey had problems with alcohol and his lawyer, Gerald Boyle, intimated that, "we don't have a multiple offender here" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 67) as Jeffrey was caught in time. Jeffrey then addressed Judge Gardner, stating that he was an alcoholic and contritely noted that the arrest shocked him, that he understood the nature of his crime and that was ashamed of his behaviour (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey further used his manipulative articulation when he stated that,

> The one thing I have in my mind that is stable and that gives me some source of pride is my job. I've come very close to losing that because of my action, which I take full responsibility for. I'm the one to blame for all of this. What I've done has cut both ways. It's hurt the victim and it's hurt me. It's a no-win situation. (Schwartz, 1992, p. 68)

Jeffrey was ordered to receive psychological counselling and alcohol treatment and was sentenced to five years probation and one year in a work-release programme, which meant that he could walk to work every night (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). After Thanksgiving weekend – when Jeffrey was himself sexually assaulted – he petitioned the judge for early release as he wished to live his life as a productive member of society and stated that, "The world has enough misery in it without my adding more to it" (Masters, 1993, p. 132). Despite Lionel's asking the judge to order Jeffrey to undergo alcohol treatment, Jeffrey was released in March 1990. Over the next years, Jeffrey would meet often with his probation officer, Donna Chester, as per the conditions of his parole (Masters, 1993).

5.3.4.3   Apartment 213

For two months after his release, Jeffrey lived with his grandmother. On May 14, 1990, he moved to 924 North 25th Street, Oxford Apartments, Apartment 213 (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The apartment was located in a derelict and crime-ridden area of Milwaukee where Dahmer was an invisible white man amidst the minority communities. In his apartment – for the next 14 months – Dahmer killed 12 more times, with the occasional new twist (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Jeffrey met regularly with his probation officer, Donna Chester. Throughout the year, Jeffrey displayed increasingly lethargic behaviour (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Chester indicated that Jeffrey appeared depressed and often suicidal, which was perpetuated by his isolation, lack of friends and a life devoid of any interests (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). She indicated that he attended court-ordered group therapy – though he was a recalcitrant participant – and that he had considerable difficulty in managing his finances despite his claims that he worked extra shifts (Masters, 1993). Jeffrey told her initially that he engaged in no sexual activities and later that he only engaged in masturbation (Masters, 1993). He complained from a lack of sleep and in June 1990, spoke openly about his guilt about his preference for male sexual partners (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). During 1990, Jeffrey was also robbed three times and invested heavily in securing the apartment. The second incident, however, occurred after he confused the drinks and awoke the next morning minus three hundred dollars, clothes and a watch (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

On June 14, 1990, Dahmer met Edward Smith at the Phoenix Bar. Dahmer executed his *modus operandi* (MO) perfectly. Dahmer tried to keep the skeleton and skull this time. The skeleton was held in the freezer, but as it retained too much moisture, it was eventually acidified (Masters, 1993). Dahmer tried to dry the skull out by placing it in the oven at 120 degrees for an hour. However, the skull flaked at that temperature. Dahmer considered the death of Edward Smith a complete waste as he was unable to keep any part of him (Masters, 1993) and even destroyed the posed post-mortem photographs (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey identified Smith by saying that Smith wore a headband like an Arab, which earned him the nickname, the Sheikh (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Another curious encounter occurred when Dahmer propositioned Luis Pinet $200 for nude photographs (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Pinet accompanied Dahmer home and they engaged in 'light sex'. Pinet was the first willing partner since Tuomi and consented to meet Dahmer the next day at twelve. Dahmer, however, decided to kill the 15 year old, but as he had no prescription medication he instead bought a rubber mallet. Pinet did not show the next afternoon. Dahmer randomly met him instead that night at the Phoenix bar and the misunderstanding was explained: Pinet understood to meet Dahmer at 12 midnight (Masters, 1993). That night Pinet posed for pictures and while he lay face down, Dahmer hit him with the mallet, but he was not rendered unconscious. Pinet left, but returned ten minutes later to ask Dahmer for money for a cab home. Dahmer attacked him again and tried to strangle him. Eventually Dahmer stopped and the two talked into the morning (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey convinced Pinet not to contact the police and paid for a taxi home. "I just didn't have the ability to do him any harm, I don't know why" (Masters, 1993, p. 149). Ironically, Pinet contacted the police, but as his story had several discrepancies and appeared completely far-fetched, they did not investigate (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The following murder occurred in July 1990[3] (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer met Raymond Smith in the Phoenix Bar and again executed his deadly MO. Dahmer kept Smith's skull and later painted it grey (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer tried to keep the skeleton, but without connective tissue, the skeleton merely fell apart and was therefore

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[3] The timing of the murder of Raymond Smith, a.k.a. Ricky Lee Beeks, was never definitely established. The legal documents in this case cited his murder between Spring and Summer, 1990, whilst the murder of Edward Smith was cited as occurring in the Summer of 1990. The order and dates reported follows the predominance within the collected text.

acidified (Masters, 1993). After two weeks in the acid, the bones were "all slush" (Masters, 1993, p. 142), which Dahmer could flush down the toilet. Dahmer identified Smith from police photos and his dental records matched one of the skulls recovered from the apartment.

In the interim, Jeffrey found an innocent interest. He acquired a 30 gallon fish tank and kept some tropical fish (Masters, 1993). He placed the tank on the black table destined to be his shrine and spent time and care to set it up (Masters, 1993). Masters (1993) reported that the few times that Jeffrey was animated in his speech was when he discussed his fun hobby.

In the early hours of September 3, 1990, Dahmer met Ernest Miller outside an adult bookstore. Dahmer instituted his routine, but only had two sleeping tablets with which to drug Miller (Masters, 1993). Dahmer was especially fascinated by Miller's body (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and was determined to keep him. When Dahmer realized that it was too late to strangle Miller without a struggle, he used a novel approach. After drinking more, he used a knife to slit Miller's jugular vein so that he would quickly bleed to death (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer took many photographs during the dismemberment (Masters, 1993). He kept the head in the fridge for several days so that he could use it to masturbate and later painted the skull (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). He also bleached the skeleton and kept it in his closet (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer disposed of the body, but kept some body parts in the freezer. Most famously – and alarmingly – Dahmer also saved the heart and the biceps for consumption (Baumann, 1991; Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Egger, 2002; Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993; Palermo & Farkas, 2001; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). "It was just another step … just an escalation, something new to satisfy. And I would cook it and then look at the picture and masturbate" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139). Jeffrey explained the cannibalism as a way to make "it feel like they were more a part of me. Sexually stimulating" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139). In response to a question of why he did not just buy skeletons at a medical supply store, Dahmer noted that it "wouldn't be a remembrance – it would have been a stranger" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 150).

Dahmer met David Thomas near *C'est La Vie* on September 24, 1990. Interestingly, the two only talked at the apartment. Dahmer realized that Thomas was not his 'type' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer drugged and strangled Thomas, because he thought that Thomas would be angry when he woke up (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992;

Tithecott, 1997). He dismembered the body and disposed of it completely so that none of Thomas would be included in the shrine. Thomas's family identified him from the various photographs taken during dismemberment (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer continued to see his probation officer and complained about how he 'hated' wealthy people and their financial luck (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Although he lied about his permanently staying at home, alone, with his computer and book, their discussions also turned towards his family (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey claimed that he was wary about spending time with his family – who supported him. He claimed that his father was controlling, that he had nothing in common with his brother and that he had not contacted his mother in years (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, in November 1990, his grandmother contacted him at work which made him feel as if someone cared for him (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

5.3.4.4   The Runaway Train

Dahmer killed Curtis Straughter on February 18, 1991. They met at a bus stop outside Marquette University. Dahmer executed his MO with precision, but this time he handcuffed Straughter and strangled the unconscious Straughter with a black leather strap bought specifically for this purpose (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer kept the genitals, hands and unpainted skull (Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Straughter was identified through dental records and Jeffrey identified him through a photograph (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

In March 1991, Joyce Flint contacted her son for the first time since she abandoned him in 1978 (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). She worked as a counsellor in California and they spoke openly about Jeffrey's being gay – which Joyce accepted. Soon after this exchange, on April 7, 1991, Dahmer met Errol Lindsey outside a key shop. Dahmer again drugged, strangled and performed oral sex on the victim. He saved the skull without painting it (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). There were, however, interspersed occasions when Dahmer did not kill. He spent many evenings alone, reading or watching a video. On several occasions he released a partner whom he did not want to keep with him as they were no longer attractive to him (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Dahmer killed Tony Hughes on May 24, 1991. The two met in Club 219 and communicated by passing each other notes (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Hughes was both deaf and unable to speak. Dahmer offered Hughes $50 to pose for pictures and to watch videos – among them, *Exorcist III*. Hughes was killed, but only later dismembered (Masters, 1993). Dahmer kept the unpainted skull (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

While Dahmer lived and killed in the Oxford Apartments, there were often complaints about noises at all hours and the nauseating smell emanating from his apartment (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). The apartment manager, Sopa Princewill, believed at first that someone had died in an apartment and called the police. When they received no answer at number 205, they kicked in the door – but the person was in jail (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). On May 4, 1991, the police interviewed everyone in the apartment building on the murder of one of the tenants, who lived on the third floor (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Princewill eventually confronted Jeffrey about the smell, who explained that meat in the freezer was spoilt (Masters, 1993). Princewill inspected the freezer and insisted that the contrite Jeffrey fix the problem. On another occasion, Princewill confronted Jeffrey, who explained that his fish tank had malfunctioned. He opened a barrel that apparently contained the water from the fish tank, the stench from which nauseated and nearly threw Princewill back (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Soon afterwards Jeffrey threw out the barrel, which contained a human torso (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). The last time Princewill confronted Dahmer was the day after Hughes's murder, when the body lay in the bedroom (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer's 13th victim was Konerak Sinthasomphone, the younger brother of the boy whom Dahmer molested in 1988. In the afternoon of May 26, 1991, Jeffrey was about to leave the Grand Avenue Mall when he impulsively approached a boy and initiated his familiar routine (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schechter, 2003; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). By this time, Dahmer executed another escalation[4]. He attempted to destroy a person's will through surgery and to keep him in a *zombie*-like state, deprived of independent thought (Egger, 2002; Hickey, 2005; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He claimed that he "didn't want to keep killing people and have nothing left except the skull" (Masters, 1993, p. 176). After he took two photographs and drugged

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[4] There are conflicting reports as to the number of times Dahmer attempted to produce this zombie-like state or who the first victim was. Dahmer reported that it was the twelfth victim (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), which was Hughes. Dahmer claimed that there was no strangling involved in these cases.

Konerak, Dahmer drilled a hole into his cranium and injected muriatic[5] acid into his skull (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Thinking that Konerak was asleep, Dahmer went to a bar for a beer (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Konerak revived soon after Dahmer left and stumbled, naked, to the streets (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He was discovered by three women who attempted to help him. One of the women dialled 911, just before 2 a.m. on May 27, 1991. When Dahmer walked home, he saw Konerak sitting on the sidewalk. Officers John Balcerzak and Joseph Gabrish responded and arrived soon after paramedics had covered Konerak with a blanket. Konerak had only a scraped knee and no other visible injuries (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey claimed that he was very nervous and had to think very quickly (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer produced his picture identification and told the police that he worked at the Ambrosia Chocolate Company. Dahmer told the police that Konerak was his 19 year old lover who had too much to drink. Konerak was too drugged to contradict. Much to the women's distressed protestations, the police believed the calm and persuasive white man. Inside, however, Dahmer felt overwhelmed: "I don't know where I got the sense of calm, I don't know!" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 142).

Each of the officers took Konerak by an arm and walked him to Dahmer's apartment (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). The officers noticed that a smell lingered over the neat apartment, but did not suspect that it was a body or see Hughes's body in the next room (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Konerak's clothes were neatly folded and draped over the sofa and Dahmer produced the two pictures taken earlier in the evening (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Satisfied that Dahmer spoke the truth and to avoid involvement in a dispute between homosexual lovers, the officers left (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's cunning was paramount. He remained apologetic, co-operative and sincere enough to convince the police that nothing out of the ordinary happened in his residence or in his relationship with the young man (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The police officers were convinced that Konerak was an adult, whom they returned to his homosexual lover. They also related this information to the mother of one of the women who had tried to help Konerak (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Officers Balcerzak and Gabrish were eventually fired, but reinstated after an investigation deemed that they acted aptly

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[5] Muriatic acid is another name for hydrochloric acid (HCl), which is a highly corrosive industrial chemical.

considering the situation (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, many have speculated that at least five lives would have been saved had the officers run a background check on Dahmer (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992). They would have found that he was still on probation for child molestation (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993), which may have significantly changed their assessment of the situation.

Dahmer administered the second, fatal injection soon after the police left (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He had sex with the corpse, photographed the dead body, dismembered it and kept the unpainted skull (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schechter, 2003; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Hughes's body was also dismembered and the skull kept (Masters, 1993). Konerak's fate was sealed because, "He was already … damaged, so I decided to kill him and take my chances" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 136). Masters (1993) therefore argued that Konerak died – not to keep Dahmer company – but to silence him. Dahmer disposed of the body in approximately two hours. He dismembered all of the bodies in the bathtub to facilitate blood drainage. He always worked in the nude to ensure that no blood ended up in his clothes (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer posed and photographed many of his victims after death as well as during various stages of dismemberment (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). The pictures taken pre-mortem were just as crucial. In the case of Konerak's murder, Masters (1993) argued that the erotic pose that accentuated Konerak's chest – like those of the men in the posters on the walls – focused Dahmer's attention on possessing the body. The pictures were an aspect of the compulsion and he used them to maintain his fantasies. "Viewing the pictures wasn't as good as having them there, but it gave me a feeling of satisfaction that at least I had something to remember them by" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 156). However, the pictures did not satisfy his cravings completely (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He used the pictures and pornographic materials and the skulls in the periods between the murders, but when they no longer satisfied him, he made a conscious decision to murder (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Dahmer also derived sexual pleasure from the viscera (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). In some instances Dahmer ejaculated into the body cavity and at other times, literally used the internal organs as a masturbatory aid (Masters, 1993). In relating his tale in his emotionless monotone, he noted, "I always feel a little uneasy talking about this. No matter how many times I go through it, it's just sickening

every time I do" (Masters, 1993, p. 160). He was not sickened by the act itself, though, because it was necessary to his fantasy (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992). The pictures served to turn the bodies – the objects he desired – into still images (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993).

Throughout the murders and dismemberment, Dahmer stayed in a "lubricated state" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148) as it made the actions easier. The initial gratification he derived from dismemberment was later merely routine and he admitted that it was "not as pleasurable as having them whole" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148). Describing his perfect partner, Dahmer desired "a well-developed white guy, compliant to my wishes. I would have preferred to have him alive and permanently staying with me" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 157). At the time of Konerak's death, Jeffrey was in serious financial trouble (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Jeffrey spend increasingly more time indulging in his fantasies, cognitions and impulses, which began to significantly interfere with his daily functioning (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

On June 30, 1990, Dahmer travelled to Chicago for the Gay Pride Parade where he met Matt Turner and offered him money to pose nude and watch videos in Dahmer's Milwaukee apartment (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). They took the bus to Milwaukee, where Dahmer eventually strangled Turner with the leather strap (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Turner's body eventually ended in a vat of acid, whilst his head was placed in the freezer in a plastic bag (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey identified Turner from a photograph supplied by Chicago police (Masters, 1993).

In his confession, Jeffrey was significantly contrite about the murders of Hicks and Tuomi as well as that of Jeremiah Weinberger. Dahmer met Weinberger at Carol's Bar in Chicago a week after Turner was murdered, on July 5, 1990. Jeffrey noted that Weinberger was "exceptionally affectionate. He was nice to be with" (Masters, 1993, p. 186). Weinberger's death deviated from the others as he voluntarily spent the night with Dahmer and was the only victim to wake up the next morning (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). In the bar, Weinberger paid Dahmer much unforced attention and was enthusiastic about joining him in Milwaukee for the weekend (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, Masters (1993) reported that at some time during the night Weinberger also spent time with his friends, which Dahmer did not appreciate.

The two travelled to Milwaukee where they spent the entire Saturday together, engaging in oral sex (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer admitted that he drilled Weinberger's skull after he was drugged and poured in boiling water. Weinberger awoke later in the day, groggy and dazed and Dahmer thought that he could "keep him that way" (Masters, 1993, p. 188). Weinberger was left untied (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) and he did not attempt to leave (Masters, 1993). On the Sunday night Dahmer had to work and administered more pills before he shot boiling water into Weinberger's skull. Weinberger was left on the bed. By the next morning, Weinberger lay with his eyes open, dead on the floor (Masters, 1993). Dahmer took photographs during dismemberment, placed the head in the freezer and at first, kept the body in cold water and bleach before removing the skin. The headless torso was later placed in a 57 gallon drum that Dahmer bought on July 12, 1991 (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

Word began to spread that people were disappearing (Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer still met with Chester, although he often missed appointments (Masters, 1993). He admitted to her that his life was dismal and that he would soon be dismissed for absenteeism (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). He suggested that it was a good reason for suicide. He was also bored with discussions about his sexual problems (Masters, 1993).

On July 15, 1991, Jeffrey met and murdered Oliver Lacy. Dahmer saved Lacy's heart to "eat later" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 108). He placed Lacy's head in a box and saved it in the refrigerator (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer also decided to keep Lacy's skeleton to adorn the shrine. In order to spend time with Lacy, Dahmer called in sick to work and the next morning he was suspended pending a review of his attendance record (Davis, 1995; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Jeffrey told Chester that he faced impending eviction and that he was distressed (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). She insisted that he see her, which he did the next day – and admitted to her that he had been drinking (Masters, 1993). Jeffrey was hardly presentable; he was unshaven and had not bathed for about three days before and appeared suicidal (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

By the following morning, July 19, 1990, Jeffrey was unemployed. Jeffrey succinctly later admitted that "it was after losing the job that my dominoes started to fall" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149). Later in the day, Dahmer spied Joseph Bradehoft – who had a six pack of beer under his arm – at the bus stop near Marquette University (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Again Dahmer executed his routine, but left the body on his bed for two days before it was dismembered (Masters, 1993). He placed Bradehoft's head in the freezer

and stuffed the torso in the big blue barrel wherein the bodies of Turner and Weinberger were decomposing (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Bradehoft was later identified through his driver's licence (Masters, 1993).

During that last week, Dahmer showered with two corpses (Masters, 1993) and began to randomly proposition men to join him at the apartment (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). As he would soon be evicted, he was also forced to consider abandoning his shrine; the skeletons; the skulls and heads; and the various body parts (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997) – all of his self-created beauty.

Dahmer had a clear enough vision of the shrine to draw it later for one of the psychiatrists who interviewed him and had already procured many of its essential features. This shrine was composed of the large black table – to be adorned with ten skulls and flanked by two complete skeletons either supported by stands or suspended from the ceiling (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's two griffin statues would complete the shrine (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Incense would burn and the scene illuminated by six blue overhead lamps. Dahmer wanted to purchase a big black chair to sit in front of the shrine (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer explained: "It was a place for meditation, where I could feel I was drawing power from an outside source … I was trying to get in contact with the spirits" (Masters, 1993, pp. 282 – 283). In this transcendental Mecca Dahmer would finally experience "a place where I could feel at home" (Masters, 1993, p. 286). When asked what the shrine was dedicated to, Jeffrey's powerful answer was simple: "Myself" (Masters, 1993, p. 286).

5.3.5   Arrest, Trial and Death (1991 – 1994)

"I really screwed up this time" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 182)

5.3.5.1   Arrest

On July 22, 1991, Tracy Edwards and his friends met Dahmer at the Grand Avenue Mall (Masters, 1993). Dahmer – though nearly destitute at this time – offered each of them $100 to join him at his apartment (Masters, 1993). At trial, Edwards insisted that the invitation was to pose for nude pictures only and that there was no suggestion of homosexual activity (Masters, 1993). Dahmer and Edwards bought beer and the rest of the group would meet them later. Dahmer, however, lied to the others, claiming that he lived at the Ambassador

Hotel (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). At the apartment, they drank and talked (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) while Edwards waited for the rest of the group to arrive. Edwards claimed that Dahmer complained about his having lost his job and was fascinated with his fish (Masters, 1993).

Then, suddenly, Dahmer handcuffed Edwards and apparently threatened him with a knife (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Edwards unbuttoned his shirt in an attempt to placate Dahmer (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Momentarily calmed, Dahmer led Edwards to the bedroom where they watched *Exorcist III*. Edwards claimed that Dahmer began rocking and chanting (Schwartz, 1992) and after threatening to cut his heart out, Dahmer placed his head on Edwards's chest to listen to his heartbeat (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In his final attempt to find a companion, Dahmer was ill-prepared. He did not have any sleeping tablets to drug Edwards who was able to assess the situation, often taking bathroom breaks to find an escape (Masters, 1993). Sometimes Edwards would return to find the sullen Jeffrey he met a few hours earlier. At one point, Dahmer seemed to forget about the handcuffs and Edwards took the opportunity to hit and kick Dahmer. As Edwards dashed to the door, Jeffrey followed, pleading in vain that he not leave (Masters, 1993). Jeffrey made no effort to conceal the evidence scattered innocently around his apartment (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992).

At 11:25 p.m., on the corner of 25th and Kilbourn, police officers Rauth and Mueller were flagged down by Tracy Edwards, the handcuff still dangling from his left wrist. Edwards told them an elaborate tale about a strange man who had handcuffed him. Edwards simply wanted the handcuff removed and to forget about Dahmer (Schwartz, 1992). After they could not remove the handcuffs – which suggested that he had not escaped from other officers (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) – the police officers escorted Edwards to Apartment 213. They were greeted by a tall, sandy-haired white male called Jeff Dahmer. When he opened the door for the police, Dahmer had put on his fair hue once again and allowed them to enter the apartment. The apartment was neat, but a strange odour permeated the atmosphere. Dahmer was initially co-operative, but vague (Masters, 1993). The officers asked that Dahmer produce the key to the handcuffs. He motioned to the bedroom and tried to fetch it himself, but after Edwards stated that there was a knife (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), Mueller went to collect the keys.

In the bedroom, Mueller noticed a large knife under the bed (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and in an open drawer he found the photographs of nude men, some alive, others in various stages of decomposition. Upon realizing that the scenes in some of the Polaroid photographs depicted the very room he stood in, he called to Rauth to arrest Dahmer. Dahmer tried to resist arrest (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and eventually the two officers pinned and handcuffed him. As Rauth called for backup, Mueller opened the refrigerator – where he found the head of Oliver Lacy. A tortured fantasy world collided with reality that night and it culminated in the grotesque reality of murder, mutilation, necrophilia and cannibalism that captivated the world. Thus was born 'Jeffrey Dahmer', an abrupt media depersonalization of a man, apart (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Keppel & Birnes, 1997, Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

At the police station, Jeffrey confessed (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He told Detectives Kennedy and Murphy that he had murdered 16 men in the previous four years. The detectives were still unaware of the crimes that were committed and listened for nearly six hours to Jeffrey's emotionless retelling of how he murdered, decapitated, defleshed[6], disposed of, preserved and cannibalized the victims. The detectives appreciated Jeffrey's candour and shame (Masters, 1993) and recognized that his apparent callous indifference was actually a genuine lack of affect (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In the almost 60 hours that Jeffrey confessed, he also explained that "I was not into torture … This was not a hate thing … This thing had no racism … This was not a homosexual thing" (Ullman, 1992, p. 28).

Murphy testified at trial that 'Jeff' did not appear delusional, but anxious to confess. He stated that Dahmer's confidence grew as he became more adept at fooling the police, taking pleasure in knowing that "he had a private world of his own that no one else knew about. He felt he had this ability to make people see a face of him that he wished them to see" (Davis, 1995, p. 290). He further described Jeffrey as both aware and astonished at his actions (Masters, 1993) and filled with an intense sense of loss when he killed the victims and disposed of their remains (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Kennedy explained to the court that Dahmer, "had no company himself and these individuals would keep him company" (Masters, 1993, p. 229). Jeffrey described that his emotions were mixed while he dismembered the corpses, but the excitement and power of absolute control overwhelmed his

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[6] 'Defleshed' was Dahmer's term for stripping the flesh from the victims' corpses.

fear and shame (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer could but keep the skulls as they "represented the true essence of his victims" (Davis, 1995, p. 287).

Whilst Jeffrey chain-smoked through his confession, the apartment was searched and evidence labelled. The numerous discoveries and paraphernalia included the Polaroid photographs, the 57 gallon drum with three human torsos inside, two skeletons, several skulls, four heads, a freezer that contained human meat, a metal stockpot with male genitalia and hands and another jar with male genitalia preserved in formaldehyde (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). During the cataloguing of Jeffrey Dahmer's lifestyle, the telephone rang. Lionel tried to find Jeffrey and was told by a detective that Jeffrey was involved in a murder investigation. When Lionel saw Jeffrey in jail later, Jeffrey admitted to the murders and stated simply, "I really screwed up this time" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 182).

When Jeffrey was later taken for fingerprinting, his presence inspired absolute silence (Schwartz, 1992). Jeffrey, however, walked facing down, embarrassed at the attention he caused. Over the ensuing weeks, tales of murder and mistakes headlined the newspapers and a trial loomed on the horizon. Through it all, the man remained a mystery. Jeffrey Dahmer, a *persona non grata,* became the centre of attention and a catalyst for a myriad of different reactions in Milwaukee and the world (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

5.3.5.2 Trial

5.3.5.2.1 Charges

Two days after the name of Jeffrey Dahmer was sensationally revealed to the world, Dahmer was charged with four counts of intentional homicide (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991). A dishevelled-looking Jeffrey – not in the traditional orange jumpsuit – entered the courtroom in the Safety Building to be charged with the deaths of the first four identified victims: Matt Turner, Jeremiah Weinberger, Oliver Lacy and Joseph Bradehoft. District Attorney E. Michael McCann requested bail of one million dollars to ensure that Jeffrey could not be released. Jeffrey's attorney, Gerald Boyle, did not object (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey returned to jail – where he was assailed by nightmares (Masters, 1993) – and continued to talk with investigators (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Investigations were

conducted in Miami and Baumholder to try to link him with unsolved murders, but no evidence was found (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). An official statement was also released that Dahmer had only killed in Wisconsin and Ohio – and that if he had killed elsewhere, it would have been divulged (Davis, 1995). While Jeffrey remained secluded on suicide watch in prison, the racial tension that divided the city was palpable (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Minority groups openly criticized the police for their apparent inaction and prejudice – specifically with regard to the Konerak incident. Dahmer's arrest turned Milwaukee into a political battleground, mined with social unrest (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Schwartz, 1992; Ullman, 1992).

Jeffrey was interviewed regarding the murder in Ohio. One of the police officers, Lieutenant Richard Munsey, was shocked to learn that he was the officer who ticketed Dahmer 13 years before. Jeffrey positively identified Steven Hicks as the hitchhiker that was murdered. He was able to detail the event, Hicks's personal possessions and the location where he scattered the bones (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Fragments of bone and teeth were later found at the house on West Bath Road (Davis, 1995; Prud'homme & Cronin, 1991). These were positively identified from DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) and dental records (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). A mere 'missing persons' report had turned into an unsolved murder – and Dahmer alone could provide information to solve it (Masters, 1993).

Similarly, in the cases in Wisconsin, Jeffrey was virtually the investigators' only source. "It's a small, very small thing … At least I can do that … because I created this horror and it only makes sense that I do everything to put an end to it, a complete end to it" (Masters, 1993, pp. 10 – 11). All of the identifications were secured with his help (Masters, 1993); some of them would never have been identified without him, apart from the dental records that matched the skulls. Investigators reported that Jeffrey appeared genuinely surprised when he was informed that Konerak Sinthasomphone was the younger brother of the boy he molested in 1988 (Davis, 1995).

On August 6, 1991, Jeffrey – then 15 days sober and far more presentable (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) – appeared in court again. He was charged with a further eight counts of intentional homicide. The judge supported McCann's request for a higher bail. He acknowledged the severity of the charges and the violence detailed in the criminal complaint (Davis, 1995). He set bail at five million dollars. On August 22, 1992, three final charges

were brought: two counts of murder[7] for the deaths of James Doxtator and Richard Guerrero and one count of intentional homicide for the death of Edward Smith. Thus, Jeffrey was charged with 15 counts of murder in Wisconsin and one count of murder in Ohio. He was not charged with the attempted murder of Tracy Edwards, nor was he charged with the death of Steven Tuomi (Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

On January 13, 1992, the legal proceedings took another interesting turn. Against his lawyers' advice (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) Jeffrey pleaded guilty but insane. Thus, an abbreviated trial would be conducted wherein Jeffrey's guilt would not be in question, but rather his medical condition (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Instead of having to prove that Jeffrey did not commit the murders, Boyle described one of the most horrific tales of murder and mutilation in the attempt to convince the jury that Dahmer was insane. Regardless of the outcome of the trial, Jeffrey would be 'locked away' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). If he were found insane, he would be remanded to a mental institution where he could petition his release every six months (Johnson, 1992; Masters, 1993). The jury had to decide (a) whether Dahmer suffered from a mental illness at the time of each of the fifteen counts of murder and (b) if so, whether he had the mental capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or the ability to conform his actions to the law. If he were found guilty, Dahmer would spend the rest of his life in a state prison (Davis, 1995; Johnson, 1992; Masters, 1993).

5.3.5.2.2 Opening Gambit

The Safety Building was once more inundated with television crews and spectators on January 27, 1992. The start of proceedings was delayed for two hours while Judge Laurence C. Gram's court was searched for bombs. Metal detectors were used and each individual searched. An eight foot high bulletproof barrier was even erected to separate Dahmer from the seated audience (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Each day of the trial, Jeffrey was so heavily shackled before leaving the cell that deputies brought him to a private courtroom entrance in a wheelchair. The chains were then unlocked and he would remove his glasses before he strolled into court (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Boyle had to prove that Jeffrey was insane, whilst McCann had no burden of proof, but merely had to show that Dahmer knew right from wrong. Jury selection took three days, with 12

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[7] In 1989, Wisconsin changed its legal terminology from murder to intentional homicide. Doxtator and Guerrero were murdered in 1988.

members selected along with two alternatives. However, of the seven men and seven women selected, there was only one African American juror – much to public disagreement (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

In their opening statements, Boyle and McCann described two different Jeffrey Dahmers. Boyle emphasized that Jeffrey's obsession was "body form, not colour" (Masters, 1993, p. 227) and revealed that Jeffrey kept the skulls, cannibalized body parts so that the victims "would become alive again in him" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 195) and attempted to create zombies, "people who would be there for him" (Davis, 1995, p. 286). Boyle summarized: "This was not an evil man, this was a sick man" (Masters, 1993, p. 228). McCann described Dahmer as a calculating killing machine who merely served his sexual preferences. He emphasized the visible vestiges of control, preparation, choice and cunning that pervaded Dahmer's story in order to attribute evil to Dahmer, rather than mental disease (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He noted that Dahmer was able to drug and murder his victims and function under intense pressure to con the police (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) – and emphasized that Dahmer preferred a live, pliant body (Schwartz, 1992).

Tracy Edwards testified after Detectives Murphy and Kennedy. He described how Dahmer changed into a totally different person to the one he met earlier in the evening (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Thereafter, scores of casual acquaintances as well as three would-be victims testified to their experiences. Dahmer was generally regarded as somewhat strange, but nevertheless, a polite and harmless individual who never raised any suspicion (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Officers Balcerzak and Gabrish described Dahmer as a masterful manipulator who completely convinced them that Konerak was his friend (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992).

5.3.5.2.3   The Psychiatrists

In an insanity defence, the battle of the psychiatrists takes centre stage. Unfortunately, the seven experts who testified occasionally contradicted themselves and disagreed with one another in their assessments of Jeffrey Dahmer's mental state (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Most disconcerting was that the psychiatrists could not adequately define insanity (Ullman, 1992), but one must recognize the difficulty of objective evaluation of an individual's inner world and functioning.   Throughout the testimonies, Dahmer sat

impassively, facing forward, a seemingly detached spectator in a bizarre trial (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

The three defence psychiatrists – doctors Berlin, Becker and Wahlstrom – appeared to agree that Dahmer suffered from a mental disease, but disagreed about the extent to which he lacked control over his behaviour (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dr Becker testified that Dahmer knew right from wrong, but that he was so obsessed by necrophilic compulsions that he could not conform his conduct to the requirements of the law (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). However, the prosecution noted that Dahmer did not kill everyone who entered the apartment. Dr Wahlstrom argued that Dahmer was delusional. He cited that the (a) intended construction of a shrine that would imbue Dahmer with financial and social success (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and (b) the belief and continued efforts to create zombies that would remain his personal friends and possessions (Schwartz, 1992) were examples of his distorted thought processes.

Dr Palermo, a court-appointed psychiatrist, described Dahmer as an organized, non-social lust murderer who killed in a methodical and shrewd manner (Davis, 1995; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Schwartz, 1992). Palermo found that Dahmer acted out his aggressive tendencies against the men to whom he was attracted, but feared who would reject him (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Palermo, 2004). Palermo argued that Dahmer wanted to destroy the source of his homosexual attraction to the victims. Dahmer thus acted out of lust, not for companionship, but to silence a potential accuser (Masters, 1993). Palermo was the only psychiatrist not to take Dahmer's confessions at face value (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). He doubted that Dahmer wanted to build a shrine, that he cannibalized victims and that he attempted to lobotomize the victims before death. However, instead of exploring Dahmer's duplicity, he dismissed the claims out of hand. Dr Palermo was also the only person to whom Dahmer reacted. Dahmer was annoyed that Palermo had not listened to him after Palermo asserted that Dahmer was afraid to go to prison because he might be attacked by African American inmates (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dr Friedman, a second court-appointed psychiatrist, did not believe that Dahmer acted against his homosexuality, but rather that the murders were an effort to continue the relationships (Masters, 1993). Similar to Dr Becker's emphasis on Dahmer's being shy about sex, introverted and fiercely protective of his parents (Masters, 1993), Friedman highlighted Dahmer's sense of loss at the experience of each death (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dr Fosdal testified for the prosecution that Dahmer had a sexual disorder and that it explained his behaviour, but that it could not cause him to lack the capacity to know right from wrong (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Five of the six psychiatrists thus claimed that a mental disease was present. Dr Fosdal agreed with Dr Wahlstrom's assertion that "[Dahmer] didn't like killing and he wanted to keep the victims alive in a zombie state. He talked about not liking it and drinking at times to overcome that dislike" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 206) and was thus not a sadist. He provided some insight into Dahmer's morality when he explained that Dahmer killed victims because they were "very special" (Masters, 1993, p. 255).

Dr Dietz, the final psychiatrist to testify, provided the prosecution's *coup de grace*. He testified that Dahmer chose to act out his paraphilic tendencies in order to spend more time with the victims (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dietz described Dahmer's actions as calculated, such as his (a) preparing the sleeping tablets in order to drug victims and (b) his preserving his favoured victims for later sexual contact. Dietz also noted that Dahmer was not a sadist as he did not torture the victims and that murder was distasteful to him – which is the reason that he drank (Masters, 1993). Even Dietz, however, conceded that the last two homicides showed Dahmer's lack of being able to conform his conduct to the law, but ascribed this to intoxication. Dietz's testimony held that Dahmer's abnormality of mind did not substantially affect his mental or emotional processes (Masters, 1993).

While the psychiatrists delved – though only superficially – into Jeffrey Dahmer's psyche, he listened impassively. He was at once the least and most prominent figure, an enigma who was not at all what he appeared. Although generally reviled, his deflated appearance generated sympathy (Baers, 2002; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Gradually spectators began to see Dahmer as human (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992) and in the second week of trial his vulnerability was undeniable and felt (Masters, 1993). Comments were made – even by the victims' families (Masters, 1993) – if he seemed tired or dishevelled. Jeffrey, however, began to relate to his defence council and to see them as friends and retained some vestiges of humour. Masters (1993) reported that one day Jeffrey had not bothered to shave and while being wheeled down the corridor a woman screamed when she recognized him. Jeffrey, unperturbed, merely told the guard, "I guess I should have shaved" (p. 242). Similarly, during jury selection Boyle showed the court a tabloid newspaper that reported that Jeffrey had eaten his cellmate (Johnson, 1992; Schwartz, 1992). "We all laughed, especially Jeffrey Dahmer. I could see how so many were taken in by him," admitted Schwartz (1992, p. 191).

5.3.5.2.4   The Verdict

The jury listened to the testimony for two weeks.   In his closing argument, Boyle described Jeffrey as a "runaway train on a track of madness" (Masters, 1993, p. 268) and asked the jury to consider whether the following description constituted normalcy:

> Skulls in a locker, cannibalism, sexual urges, drilling, making zombies, necrophilia, disorders, paraphilia, drinking alcohol all of the time, trying to create a shrine, showering with corpses, going into the occult, having delusions, chanting and rocking, picking up road kill, having obsessions, murders, lobotomies, defleshing, masturbating two, three times a day as a youngster, going and trying to get a mannequin home so he could play sex with a mannequin, masturbating into open parts of a human being's body, calling taxidermists, going to grave yards, going to funeral homes, wearing yellow contacts, posing people who are dead that he killed for pictures.   (Schwartz, 1992, p. 212)

In an equally powerful close, McCann asked the jury to remember the victims and to realize that Dahmer was not a runaway train, but the engineer, who killed for sexual pleasure. "Don't be fooled by him. He fooled the police … He's fooled a lot of people, including the court who gave him probation for sexual assault. Please, please, don't let this murderous killer fool you" (Masters, 1993, p. 270). The jury deliberated for five hours and returned with a 10 – 2 vote of guilty on all 15 counts of murder, which is sufficient for conviction in an insanity trial (Johnson, 1992; Schwartz, 1992).

The victim impact statements made before the sentence was read provided further incident. While most of the families retained their composure, Errol Lindsey's sister, Rita Isabel, screamed and shouted, charged the defence table and lunged for Jeffrey (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He sat perfectly still as deputies rushed to protect him. The judge refused to allow more statements. Then Jeffrey spoke in his quiet voice to the absolutely silent courtroom (see Appendix B), reflecting in his quiet voice what he felt:

> Your Honour: it is over now. … I didn't ever want freedom. Frankly, I wanted death for myself. … I take the blame for what I did. … I am so very sorry. … I am prepared for your sentence … I ask for no consideration. (Schwartz, 1992, pp. 216 – 219)

In a final diversion, the judge provided his own thoughts on the case – a view that resembled that postulated by Dr Palermo – before he handed down the sentence (Masters, 1993). Three

months after he was sentenced in Milwaukee, Jeffrey was found guilty of the murder of Steven Hicks in Ohio – and a 16th life sentence was added. Taken together, Dahmer was sentenced to 957 years in prison. He served less than three (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

5.3.5.3 Death

Jeffrey – as prisoner 177252 – spent much of the first year at the Columbia Correctional Institute in an isolated 96 cell section of the prison where his freedom was severely limited (Gleick & Alexander, 1996). He was forced to wear shackles when not locked in his eight by ten foot cell. He sat alone and bored (Davis, 1995; Gleick & Alexander, 1996) in protective isolation, because prison officials feared that another violent inmate might kill him. In March 1992, a prison psychiatrist prescribed Prozac and Jeffrey was placed on suicide watch after a razor blade was found in an envelope in the trash, which he took "in case it got too bad in the future" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 237).

Jeffrey received an enormous volume of letters after his incarceration. The contents of the letters ranged between sexually explicit love letters, autograph requests, hate mail and religious attempts to save his soul (Dahmer, 1994). Though a few were from the more disturbed individuals, a majority of the letters reflected the vast sadness of the world (Dahmer, 1994). The letters were more often sympathetic than threatening and would bear out that he was not alone in his alienation (Baers, 2002; Dahmer, 1994). However, Jeffrey was kept isolated and soon he wanted more human contact – even if he had to put up with the taunts of other convicts, who he either invited to a 'Cannibals Anonymous' meeting (Gleick & Alexander, 1996) or jokingly warned to leave him alone, because "I bite" (Davis, 1995, p. 301). The prison officials extended his world a little by assigning him to a unit reserved for inmates with emotional disturbances. Jeffrey, who had taken the guise of the model prisoner, was allowed several magazines and books; a Bible; two phone calls and three guests a week; a television and a radio in his cell; and was permitted to socialize with other inmates, eat meals in a communal setting, attend classes and work (Davis, 1995; Gleick & Alexander, 1996; Masters, 1993).

Jeffrey received monthly family visits and he started reading the Bible. He slowly changed his view from atheist and evolutionist to creationist and eventually, Christian (Dahmer, 1994; King, 2004; Phillips, 1994; Ratcliff, 2006). Jeffrey delved into religion to the extent that he was allowed to be baptized in the prison's whirlpool under the watchful eye

of the prison warden and two guards on the same day as a solar eclipse and the execution of John Wayne Gacy (Ratcliff, 2006). He met with Reverend Ratcliff every Wednesday for Bible study. Lionel Dahmer maintained that Jeffrey had truly converted to religion while in prison (King, 2004) and Ratcliff (2006) held that Jeffrey had been forgiven by God.

On July 3, 1994, Jeffrey was attacked during a prison chapel service. A Cuban prisoner whom he had never met used a toothbrush honed into a knife to try to slit Jeffrey's throat, but only caused a scratch. Jeffrey refused special protection (Palermo, Palermo & Simpson, 1996; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) and was not removed to solitary confinement. Instead, prison authorities concurred with Jeffrey's assessment of his being at "no undue risk" (Davis, 1995, p. 302). Soon afterwards, Jeffrey was allowed to appear on national television, notably the NBC Dateline interview with his father that aired the day after his death. Davis (1995) commented that "Dahmer had entered the realm of legend ... Dahmer was in prison, but America had few prisoners who could match his celebrity, which still seemed to be blossoming three years after his multiple convictions" (p. 303).

Beginning in November 1994, Jeffrey and two other inmates, Jesse Anderson and Christopher Scarver were assigned to janitorial detail in the gym area (Davis, 1995; Gleick & Anderson, 1996; Palermo et al., 1996). At 7:50 a.m. the three were escorted to their designated work area, where they were left unsupervised for approximately 20 minutes – which prison authorities reported to be routine (Davis, 1995; King, 2004; Palermo et al., 1996). At about 8:10 a.m. Jeffrey was found on the floor of the staff bathroom covered in blood, with severe head injuries. Jeffrey died en route to the Divine Saviour Hospital. He was pronounced dead at 9:11 a.m. as a result of 'massive crushing head injury due to or as a consequence of extensive skull and facial fractures [from] blunt force assault' (Findadeath.com, n.d.; Palermo et al., 1996).

Prison authorities investigated whether Dahmer was the target of a conspiracy, but Christopher Scarver admitted that he attacked Dahmer and Anderson. There was an initial belief that the murders were racially motivated: Dahmer and Anderson's murders involved a racial bent. However, Scarver explained that he believed that he was the son of God and that a family of voices told him who he could trust and not (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schechter, 2003; Terry, 1994). He used a 20 inch by 2.5 inch bar attached to the Roman chair used for sit-ups in the weight room, which he had hid in his pants (Palermo et al., 1996). Scarver stated that he first attacked Dahmer who was cleaning the staff locker room, striking

him on the right side of his head before beating him to death. He added that Dahmer did not emit a sound (Palermo et al., 1996). Incidentally, these two deaths were the first murders in a Wisconsin prison in eight years. The life of Jeffrey Dahmer was finally over, but his legacy endured. In what was possibly a final con (Davis, 1995; Gleick & Alexander, 1996; Tithecott, 1997), Dahmer had again exploited the systemic failure that characterized his life – to his own end.

5.3.6   Beyond Death (1994 →)

"Someday you'll hear about me again" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 48)

Following Jeffrey's arrest and subsequent murder in prison, the tangible signs of his crimes were also destroyed. The Oxford Apartments where Dahmer lived and killed many of his victims was bought by Marquette University and razed in 1992. There were plans to turn the site into a memorial garden, but no such garden exists. The site is now a vacant lot enclosed by a tall chain link fence. The Ambrosia Chocolate Company relocated in 1992 – a move unrelated to Dahmer – and the building was demolished (Kissinger & Ortiz, 2001).

A judge ruled that Jeffrey's estate be liquidated to raise money for the relatives of 11 victims who had claims against the estate (Hansen, 1996; Kissinger, 1996). An auction of Dahmer's estate, including: two sets of handcuffs, 57 gallon drum, freezer, refrigerator, a drill, four knives, heavy-duty chemical resistant gloves, four saw blade and a handsaw was scheduled in 1996 (Hansen, 1996; Kissinger, 1996). Fearing the creation of a Jeffrey Dahmer museum or bringing further notoriety to Milwaukee, a civic group – under the enticement of real estate magnate, Joseph Zilber – raised $407 225 to buy Dahmer's collection. The possessions were incinerated and the money distributed amongst the families (Hansen, 1996).

Dahmer's disclosure of mutilation and cannibalism and the televised court proceeding fired the popular imagination and helped to spawn a cottage industry of books, graphic novels, trading cards, figurines (Baers, 2002), the popular Dahmer masks for Halloween (Kissinger & Ortiz, 2001) and semi-biographical movies, such as *The Secret Life of Jeffrey Dahmer* (1992), *Dahmer* (2002) and *Raising Jeffrey Dahmer* (2006). Dahmer was often listed as one of the most evil people of the last century. In October 2007 – almost 13 years after his death – Dahmer was still noted as one of the world's most deadly serial killers (Reuters, 2007).

After his death, Jeffrey was ironically involved in one final controversy: a custody battle of his own. Lionel and Joyce fought over their son's remains. Jeffrey's body remained evidence in a criminal investigation for over a year, during which time Joyce Flint wanted Jeffrey's brain to be studied regarding the biological factors or neurological roots associated with antisocial behaviour. The judge ruled in Lionel Dahmer's favour in December 1995, citing that in accordance with Jeffrey's last will and testament, he must be cremated. His ashes were divided between his parents (King, 2004; Schechter, 2003).

Catherine Dahmer died in December, 1992 while Jeffrey was in prison. Joyce Flint died of cancer in 2000. Lionel and Shari Dahmer live in Medina, Ohio, and still suffer the burden of being – as they did just after Jeffrey's arrest – "the Dahmers" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 169). Lionel published his retrospective book on Jeffrey's life, *A Father's Story*, in 1994. Apparently after Jeffrey read the book, he asked, "Dad, why couldn't you have put in more of the good stuff?" (Chin, 1994, p. 41). David Dahmer lives in anonymity (King, 2004).

Ressler and Shachtman (1997) accurately commented that many felt that Jeffrey's violent death was a fitting end, whilst others were annoyed that Scarver cheated the public out of its right to have Dahmer suffer for many more years. Jeffrey Dahmer is perhaps one of the most sensationalized serial killers (Davis, 1995; Egger, 2002; Garber, Matlock & Walkowitz, 1993) and notorious sexual offenders that society has ever encountered (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). The name of Jeffrey Dahmer may always evoke the searing images and explicit tales that riveted the American nation – and even the world – in 1991, along with Jeffrey's own pale, affectless expression and the faces of his many victims. Still, not everyone lost sight of the fact that no matter how monstrous his acts, Jeffrey Dahmer was – in his profoundly unique and disturbed way – human (Baumann, 1991; Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997; Ullman, 1992).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the major socio-historical events in the life of Jeffrey Dahmer, in order to satisfy the aim of the study. The findings and discussion of psychosocial personality development and individual psychology over the life of Dahmer are discussed in Chapters 9 and 10, respectively. An integration of these findings is discussed in Chapter 11. Chapter 6 provides a perspectival interlude between the theoretical and historical perspectives presented

previously and the methodology and discussion of the findings of the study that follow. The chapter serves to contextualize Dahmer's development as a serial killer.

CHAPTER 6

SERIAL MURDER

6.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter is a brief exploration of the phenomenon of serial murder. Offender profiling is discussed and three theoretical perspectives on the aetiology of the male serial murderer are explored. Aspects of fantasy and evil in the construction of a serial killer are also highlighted. As highlighted in the previous chapter, Dahmer's acts of serial murder are the basis of his infamy, but these are not the focus of this study. The aim of psychobiography is not to diagnose or label the subject, but to view the development of the entire person. Thus, this chapter attempts to contextualize Dahmer's development as a serial killer.

6.2 The Phenomenon of Serial Murder

The past four decades has shown a proliferation in the study on serial murder (Hickey, 2005; Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Pistorius, 2006). Research in the fields of forensic psychiatry (Hare, 1993, 1996; MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood & Mills, 1983; Money, 1990; Simon, 1996; Palermo, 2004) as well as investigative psychology and policing (Burgess, Hartman, Ressler, Douglas & McCormack, 1986; Canter, 1995, 2000; Canter, Alison, Alison & Wentink, 2004; Douglas, Burgess, Burgess & Ressler, 2006; Labuschagne, 1997, 2001; Pistorius, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler, Burgess & Douglas, 1992) have focused on various aspects of the serial murder phenomenon. Various typologies of serial murder have been constructed and the aetiology of serial murder posited in terms of biological, neuropsychological, psychodynamic, psychopathological, socio-cultural and systemic theories (Holmes & De Burger, 1988; Pistorius, 2006).

According to Pistorius (2006, p. 75), a serial killer is:

> A person or persons who murders [sic] several victims, usually strangers, at different times and not necessarily at the same location, with a cooling-off period in-between. The motive is intrinsic; an irresistible compulsion, fuelled by fantasy which may lead to torture and/ or sexual abuse, mutilation and necrophilia.

Ressler et al. (1992) classified serial killers as either organized or disorganized offenders based on crime scene evidence. They attribute distinguishable characteristics to each type,

but warned that some offenders exhibit characteristics of both. Organized crime scenes reflect evidence of a repetitive, well-planned and skilfully executed production clearly distinguishable from the spontaneous and chaotic actions of disorganized offenders. Organized offenders are more likely to (a) use restraints to control and dominate their victims; (b) commit sexual acts with live victims; and (c) transport both the body and weapon used to and from a crime scene (Ressler et al., 1992).

The disorganized offender is more likely to (a) leave evidence and weapons of opportunity at the crime scene; (b) symbolically position the dead body; (c) perform sexual acts post-mortem; and (d) try to depersonalize the victim (Ressler et al., 1992). Although this classification is useful as a way to conceptualize the crime scene evidence, recent criticism has noted the apparent continuum of organization in general (Canter et al., 2004; Pistorius, 2002, 2006), with many offenders tending to become more disorganized as their actions escalate. Dahmer, for example, committed his last six murders in the space of five weeks, growing increasingly volatile and careless (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

According to Burgess (2006, p. 461) there are, at any given time, "between 35 and 50 serial killers in the United States ... [which] is a conservative estimate. About a dozen serial killers are arrested each year". The Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) National Centre for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) identified a total of 357 serial killers in the United States from 1960 – 1991. South Africa, with its almost 50 serial killers in the last two decades (Hodgkiss, 2004; Pistorius, 2006), is one of the top five countries in the world in terms of serial murder (Hickey, 2001; Pistorius, 2002). Ressler and Shachtman (1997, p. xii) noted the horrific nature of serial murder in South Africa as "among the worst in the history of crime". Ressler further highlighted that "attributes of the murderous mind are evident even in a culture so different from that of the United States, usually thought to be the only place where there are the kind of murderers who can be described as serial killers" (p. xiii). From this statement, researchers should take cognizance of the influence of the differing factors in the socio-cultural environment that may contribute to the development of the South African serial killer.

In 1994, the Investigative Psychology Unit (IPU) was constructed under the auspices of Dr Micki Pistorius, a clinical psychologist, to assist the South African Police Service (SAPS) in the apprehension of serial murderers. Serial murder is notorious for its being time and resource intensive (Hodgkiss, 2004; Pistorius, 2006) due to the limited number of clues and

the initially apparent lack of motive (Ressler et al., 1992). Despite its modern fingerprinting databases and a world-first automated DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) database and DNA processing system, the SAPS suffers from a lack of resources in terms of both money and equipment (Hodgkiss, 2004). However, the IPU has had an excellent success and conviction rate since its inception (Pistorius, 2006).

A significant drawback in the South African context is *linkage blindness* (Egger, 1984). Investigators are often unable to identify a series of offenses (Pistorius, 2006), which makes the detection of patterns of offending more difficult and time consuming (Hodgkiss, 2004). Pistorius has advocated the need for a specialized database system such as the United Kingdom's CATCHEM (Centralized Analytical Team Collating Homicide Expertise and Management) or the FBI's VICAP (Violent Crime Apprehension Programme) which analyzes information about unusual, serial and violent crime. VICAP, for example, serves as a resource centre to disseminate information as well as to identify patterns within violent crimes (Witzig, 2006) to assist law enforcement to identify, locate, apprehend, prosecute and incarcerate violent offenders (Ressler et al., 1992).

Ressler et al. (1992) described murder as a form of interpersonal violence that represents a terminal disruption in social equilibrium. Labuschagne (2001) noted that it is not merely the individual whose behaviour is pathogenic, but that the whole social system – wherein serious crimes are regularly committed – is pathological. As such, serial murder must be viewed as a part of the social system. Rather than to treat serial murder as an isolated factor, it is necessary to identify the role it plays in society in order to reach a satisfactory understanding of the phenomenon (Labuschagne, 2001).

6.3 Offender Profiling

Offender or criminal profiling may be viewed as a way for law enforcement to focus its investigation on a likely suspect (Labuschagne, 2001; Pistorius, 2006; Ressler et al., 1992). The profile does not establish the identity of the offender (Geberth, 2006; Pistorius, 2006), but is a valuable tool employed in conjunction with sound investigative techniques. Geberth (1981, 2006) described profiling as an educated attempt to prepare a biographical sketch of an offender based upon information taken from the crime scene and victimology, which is then integrated with known psychological theory. Offender profiling or investigative psychology is thus an investigative technique used to identify major personality and

behavioural characteristics of offenders based on crime scene dynamics – both the physical and the psychological (Pistorius, 2006). The constructed profile is used to highlight the motive of the murder, which serves to decipher the serial killer's fantasy. This crucial fantasy, in turn, is later used by detectives as an interrogation tool (Pistorius, 2002).

Although the victim selection of serial murder often appears random, it is symbolic and has idiosyncratic significance to the serial killer (Pistorius, 1996, 2000; Ressler et al., 1992). The victimology report is an important aspect in the construction of the profile. The victimology report includes a complete history of the victims' lifestyles, family structures and employment (Douglas et al., 2006) as well as their habits, appearance and personalities (Pistorius, 2006) as these may contribute as conscious reasons for their being chosen as victims. The investigative psychologist must uncover the idiosyncratic reasons for victim selection as this reveals more about the killer's psychological structure and helps to clarify the motive (Pistorius, 2006).

The serial killer's *modus operandi* (MO) refers to how he operates in order to perpetrate the crime (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). This learned behaviour may evolve into increasingly violent behaviours or may deviate only towards the end of the murder series as the killer becomes more disorganized (Ressler et al., 1992). When linking cases, the MO plays an important role, but should not be the sole criterion because offenders may alter their MO through experience and learning (Douglas & Douglas, 2006a). Nevertheless, the signature aspect of each murder remains the same: the ritual may evolve, but the theme persists (Douglas & Douglas, 2006a) and serves as perhaps the most crucial psychological link in the understanding of a serial murderer (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Pistorius, 2006).

Every serial killer has a signature, a calling card (Keppel & Birnes, 1997) or stated differently, a psychological imprint that he leaves on every crime scene. The signature or repetitive personation (Douglas & Douglas, 2006b) is any unusual behaviour by the offender beyond that which is necessary to commit the crime (Douglas & Douglas, 2006b; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). The offender's psychological investment in the crime scene is evidenced through, for example, posing the victim (Keppel & Birnes, 1997), mutilation or souvenirs that are taken to facilitate reliving the fantasy later (Burgess, 2006). The general tendency among signature criminals is to evolve (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Signature criminals believe that through the evolution of sexual experimentation they will find greater gratification. The signature is demonstrated through repetitive ritualistic behaviour across crimes. This

ritualistic behaviour is symbolic, compulsive and often scripted (Hazelwood & Burgess, 1987; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Pistorius, 2006; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Douglas and Douglas (2006b, p. 33) noted that "most violent crime careers have a quiet, isolated beginning within the offender's imagination". Once offenders translate their fantasies of murder, mutilation, domination, control, abuse and humiliation into action in reality, they exhibit the violent behaviour required to gratify the fantasy (Burgess et al., 1986; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler et al., 1992). The signature evidenced in the crime scene is based on necessary elements to manifest the fantasy (Douglas & Douglas, 2006a). Although the signature may be refined – such as the lust murderer's increased mutilation of victims over time (Keppel & Birnes, 1997) – the core of the fantasy does not change, but becomes more elaborate and more violent as the murders progress. The present researcher therefore contends that the unique, consistent signature can be described as elements of a fantasy that the serial killer is psychologically compelled to satisfy in order to achieve gratification.

Dahmer's MO was to solicit a young, usually black, male homosexual to return with him to his apartment (Davis, 1995). Dahmer often would pretend to be a photographer and offered the victims money to pose nude (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). This MO of targeting members of a transient, minority community shows a high level of sophistication and organization. Once in the apartment he drugged the victims. Many of the victims were strangled, but as his signature evolved, he began to drill holes in their skulls to pour in muriatic acid in an attempt to create zombies (Masters, 1993). This progression and escalation of the signature is further evidenced in the post-mortem mutilation, cannibalism and necrophilia that were a crucial part of Dahmer's fantasy, but unnecessary in order to commit the murders (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Pistorius, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The next section describes three differing models on the aetiology of serial murder. The models show considerable overlap in basic content. As each recognizes the importance of fantasy in serial murder, a brief description of use of fantasy in serial murder is provided.

6.4 The Aetiology of Serial Murder

6.4.1 Fantasy

Fantasy may be described as the blueprint for serial homicide (Burgess et al., 1986; Holmes & Holmes, 2002; MacCulloch et al., 1983; Money, 1990; Pistorius, 2006; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler et al., 1992). Fantasy is regarded as the fundamental aspect that accounts for extreme deviation from what is typically considered normal sexual activity (Hickey, 2005). A factor that distinguishes normal from abnormal images is the nature and content of the fantasy. Ressler et al. (1992) noted that abnormal fantasies observed in serial offenders contain only images of aggression and sadism.

Brittain (1970) explored fantasy as an element of sadism in serial offenders, noting that these isolated individuals are prone to kill, especially when their self-esteem is challenged. MacCulloch et al. (1983) demonstrated that sadistic fantasies drive sexual criminals into compulsive sexual behaviour. MacCulloch et al. found that serial offenders experienced recurring masturbatory fantasies of cruelty and aggression, which serve as an internal mechanism in the development and maintenance of serial offending. When sexual arousal is associated with sadistic fantasy, offenders are increasingly conditioned to act out ritualistic manifestations of the violent fantasies (MacCulloch et al., 1983). This habitual behaviour is based on cognitive impressions that underlie the fantasies (MacCulloch, Gray & Watt, 2000).

Burgess et al. (1986), Prentky et al. (1989) and Ressler et al. (1992) extended the cognitive model to introduce the role of fantasy as an internal motivation for repetitive acts of sexual violence. Furthermore, fantasy was explored as a driving mechanism in relation to personality traits and the individual's cognitive mapping that is integral to the generation of sexual images that produce violent behaviour (Ressler et al., 1992). Serial offenders typically practice trial runs of how the fantasy is imagined before acting it out. The fantasy world is a highly sexualized realm constructed around themes of power, control, violence and mutilation (Hickey, 2001; Simon, 1996). As reality can never match the ever-evolving fantasy (Burgess et al., 1986; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), offenders are motivated to restage the offence. The more the behaviour is rehearsed, the more power it acquires and the stronger the association between the fantasy content and sexual arousal (Prentky et al., 1989; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

A serial offender typically has a blunted self-esteem and lacks appropriate sexual socialization (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). The fantasy serves as a retreat, which perpetuates the offender's isolation (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992). Hickey (2005) argued that when a person's sense of self and identity are most arrested or negatively constructed, the offender's image-making process becomes more aggressive, sadistic and violent. The fantasies become scripted, ritualized acts wherein control, torture and subsequent mutilation serve to appease the insatiable fantasy appetite (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). The execution of the crime thus heightens the offender's excitement by acting out the scenario of eroticized anger and power. However, this gratification is ephemeral (Hickey, 2005; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Studies on compulsive masturbation indicate that it reinforces and sustains the fantasy system of violent and aggressive imagery (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006) with alcohol, drugs and pornography serving as facilitators (Hickey, 2001). In order to understand the fantasy, the nature and content must be explored. Dahmer's manipulation of his mutilated victims' corpses served as a "transgressive art ... as *stasis,* an action arrested in time, frozen in an instant ... capturing at once the forces at work in the killer's fantasy and his idealization of sexual gratification, death and pleasure" (Keppel & Birnes, 1997, pp. 351 – 352).

Serial offenders are completely committed to their world of fantasy instead of reality (Burgess et al., 1986; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). The more practiced they become in bringing back trophies from the real world into the fantasy world, the more they learn to shift back and forth with greater skill (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992). The isolated fantasy world and its sexually gratifying behaviours become a substitute for healthy human relationships (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). The individual becomes so immersed in erotic and perverse fantasies that he eventually loses all contact with reality, only to find himself suddenly compelled to actualize the full sexual image in reality. This process happens repeatedly and compulsively by drawing human objects into the fantasy world (Hickey, 2005). According to Keppel and Birnes (1997), by the time Dahmer was apprehended:

> He had gone so far into the world of fantasy murder, he had gone almost to the end of a continuum of violence and into a black hole which no one had ever explored. He'd gone into the world of human cannibal and practising necrophile, a man who trained himself to be a master of guile and camouflage and to live his life inside a tabernacle of the dead. (p. 331)

6.4.2   The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Motivational Model

The motivational model was developed based on interviews with 36 incarcerated serial murderers (Burgess et al., 1986; Ressler et al., 1992). It is used by the FBI as part of a step-wise approach to evaluate the crime scene and profile an offender, particularly into the organized/ disorganized classification. The motivational model has five dimensions: ineffective social environment, formative years, patterned responses, actions towards others and feedback filter. Each of these is briefly discussed next. The researcher noted that the motivational model and Adler's (1929) individual psychology coincide, particularly in their emphasis on the cognitive nature of behaviour regarding creative choice and control.

6.4.2.1   Ineffective Social Environment

In their view on the ineffective social environment, the FBI profilers focused on dysfunctional families. As children, serial killers grow up in negative environments where early family interactions are characterized by negligence, violence and alcohol and drug abuse. Ressler et al. (1992) found that serial killers were often eldest children who had no positive role models. Interpersonal relationships are seen as dysfunctional, reflecting failed social attachment. The parents tend to ignore, rationalize or normalize pathological behaviour (Ressler et al., 1992) such as Dahmer's parents' not responding to his extreme withdrawal and macabre fascination with dissection (Davis, 1995). Often the father abandons the family or, more importantly, is emotionally absent. The maternal relationship is generally described as ambivalent. The child is emotionally isolated and the deficient family interaction is translated into later friendships – or a lack thereof (Ressler et al., 1992).

6.4.2.2   Formative Years

The experience of trauma in the formative years and neglect of the child's resultant distress shapes developing thought patterns (Ressler et al., 1992). These traumas may either be direct physical, sexual or emotional abuse or indirect, such as witnessing familial violence or violent sexual images (Ressler et al., 1992). Unsuccessful resolution of the trauma results in desensitization, the formation of negative social relations and the experience of decreased positive affect and increased emotional detachment. The child escapes into a fantasy world committed to violence, aggression, domination and reversal that provides a sense of control (Burgess et al., 1986). Palermo, Palermo and Simpson (1996) noted that Dahmer's actions

provided him with a sense of control, which appeared strikingly absent from his individual reality. Fantasies initially focus on the first murder itself, whereas afterwards the fantasies are focused on how to improve the way the murder is executed (Burgess et al., 1986; Pistorius, 2000; Ressler et al., 1992). Thus, Ressler et al. (1992) argued that the motive for sexual murder is the means to act out the fantasy.

6.4.2.3   Patterned Responses

The role of thought and fantasy in the motive and behaviour of the serial killer is a crucial factor in serial crime, especially sexual murder (Ressler et al., 1992). In response to early trauma and neglect, fantasies emerge as a place to express emotions and control regarding others. The power of life and death and the realization that one decides whether to control, injure or kill is thus an early experience for these offenders. The idiosyncratic fantasy is experienced as thoughts, images, feelings and internal dialogue (Ressler et al., 1992); may have themes of domination, rape, power, control or mutilation (Burgess et al., 1986; Simon, 1996); and manifests visually in daydreams and nightmares (Hazelwood & Douglas, 1980). As a fixed, negative and repetitive cognitive structure or map, it serves primarily to reinforce and evolve the patterns necessary to commit sexual murder (Burgess et al., 1986).

The serial killer is totally committed to the powerful and secret aggressive reality (Burgess et al., 1986). The preference for aggressive and revengeful fantasy and its centrality in the thought patterns of serial offenders is displayed in their lack of insight into the impact of their actions and lack of empathy with others (Ressler et al., 1992). Burgess et al. (1986) and Ressler et al. (1992) argued that early sexual and vengeful pre-occupations and actions indulged in through the re-enactment of trauma or repetitive egocentric play develops the conscious justification for murder and rehearses the killer's actions. Thus, the individual's fantasies are conscious thought patterns that are considered the motive for sexual murder (Ressler et al., 1992). As the fantasy reaches a point where it causes considerable stress, the killer is ready to act out the conditioned behaviour (Burgess et al., 1986).

6.4.2.4   Actions towards Others

Serial killers act out their fantasies against people and animals. The repetition of early patterned behaviour reflects the killer's private, internal view of the world (cf. Adler, 1929). Their thoughts of dominance in childhood are observed in destructive play, theft and the triad

of arson, enuresis and cruelty to animals (MacDonald, 1963; Ressler et al., 1992). With these early rehearsals of future abuse unchecked, they serve to reinforce and develop the adolescent's violent thoughts of rape, murder, sexual murder, mutilation and necrophilia (Ressler et al., 1992). Owing to their erratic behaviour they fail to form friendships, develop empathy or learn to control their impulses (Ressler et al., 1992). Although they are able to relate to others superficially, they are ultimately self-preoccupied loners absorbed in their own thoughts (Ressler et al., 1992). After the first murder the serial killer has departed from fantasy and crossed the boundary into reality. Dahmer commented that, "Once it happened the first time, it just seemed like it had control of my life from there on in" (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast).

6.4.2.5   Feedback Filter

The feedback filter is a negative and destructive mechanism whereby serial killers learn. The lonely teenager acts out and gets away with tentative antisocial acts: "the lie that is not found out; the cruelty to an animal, which does not have any ill effects on his own life; the fire that burns brightly; the frightening of a younger child that is not reported" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, p. 98). The effects of these accomplishments become incorporated into his fantasies, which are pushed to intense levels of violence. Similarly, each murder provides them with feedback on how to improve the next murder so that it resembles the perfect fantasy. As adults, serial killers act out their fantasies and measure their performance in relation to the fantasy (Burgess et al., 1996; MacCulloch et al., 1983). Burgess et al. (1986) noted that reality is never as perfect as fantasy and the serial killer thus continues to strive to achieve perfection. The first murder is a departure from the fantasy, to which the offender is committed, into the real world. Through the feedback filter, the serial killer justifies earlier actions, identifies errors and makes corrections that preserve and protect the internal fantasy world (Ressler et al., 1992).

The increased arousal and experience of dominance, power and control feeds back into the patterned responses and filters earlier actions into a certain way of thinking. The expertise to avoid detection and punishment feeds back into the patterned responses to enhance the details of the fantasy life (Ressler et al., 1992). For many serial killers the murder is so well rehearsed that everything is perceived to be under control. Dahmer would kill in his home, ensuring that there were no witnesses. However, this overconfidence often leads to

carelessness (Pistorius, 2006), such as when Dahmer allowed Konerak Sinthasomphone and Tracy Edwards to escape (Masters, 1993) – with the latter leading to his arrest.

6.4.3   Pistorius' Theory

Pistorius (1996) posited a psychoanalytic approach to serial murder that has facilitated the use of profiling serial offenders in South Africa. Serial murder investigations are notorious for their lack of physical evidence (Pistorius, 2002; Ressler et al., 1992) and the motive for these crimes is hidden as it is psychological in origin (Pistorius, 1996, 2006). Pistorius contributed an analysis of the psychological motivation underlying the crime in order to assist the investigator's eliciting a confession when interviewing the suspect. The conviction of a serial killer often relies on confession, the pointing out the crime scenes and revelatory facts known only to the perpetrator (Pistorius, 2006). Pistorius (1996) argued that violent criminals – like anyone else – will respond to someone who understands them. Thus, the more an investigator understands the subject, the more likely he is to confess. Pistorius (2006) emphasized that understanding the motive must not be confused with condoning behaviour.

Pistorius (1996, 2000) agreed with Ressler et al. (1992) that elements of childhood abuse and the early development of sadistic and revenge fantasies play a role in the aetiology of serial murder. However, she disagreed that the motive can be explained at a cognitive level as conscious thought processes. The case studies of most serial killers indicate that they cannot explain the reasons that they murdered their victims (Pistorius, 2000), but they ascribe the murders to an impulse or urge over which they allegedly have no control. Pistorius (2000) contended that the motivation lies at a deep, unconscious psychological level – and that the serial killer is unaware of this. With reference to the definition of a serial killer (see section 6.2), she noted an 'irresistible compulsion', which refers to this external force that serial killers believe take control of their will and force them to commit murder. She argued, however, that this urge is their own subconscious – which they can control – as proven by 'cooling-off periods' wherein they commit no murders (Pistorius, 1996, 2000).

Pistorius' function as an investigative psychologist was to decipher the serial killer's idiosyncratic fantasy from the crime scene (Pistorius, 2000). Pistorius (1996) drew on psychodynamic theory to answer the question of why of two boys, from the same family and exposed to the same environment – including emotional, physical and sexual abuse – and

external factors such as poverty and illness, only one would become a serial killer. She argued that the internal reaction to adverse external circumstances is crucial and that the fantasy points to a fixation that gives a key to understand the killer. Again, the better he is understood, the more likely he is to be caught. Pistorius could generalize the psychodynamic theory to the cases she worked on with the South African police. Interestingly, she could not apply this psychodynamic viewpoint to female serial killers, but instead successfully applied Maslow's hierarchy of needs to this population (Pistorius, 2004).

Pistorius' theory posits that the male serial killer fixates in one or more of the five psychosexual developmental phases, which are: oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital (Freud, 1952). An early fixation germinates into a particular sexual and aggressive fantasy within the killer's subconscious. During the latency phase, serial killers do not develop a conscience to repress the fantasy and fail to learn to socialize and therefore treat humans as objects. A lack of conscience allows the fantasy to emerge into the conscious (Pistorius, 2000) in order to be rehearsed in real life. The adult serial killer is conditioned by years of repetition of fantasies that were rewarded by masturbation and sexual gratification (Burgess et al., 1986; Pistorius, 2006). He is addicted to the feeling of being an omnipotent god in his fantasies. As soon as the serial killer's self-esteem is challenged or threatened, he has to act out his fantasy in order to restore the mental homeostasis (Pistorius, 2000, 2002, 2006).

Pistorius (2000, 2002) found that serial killers repeat what is done to them either directly or symbolically in order to master a childhood trauma. The passive-active role reversal process and compulsion to repeat the trauma influences the serial killer's idiosyncratic victim selection (Pistorius, 2000, 2002). Victims may represent the killer himself or he may avenge his suffering on victims who represent the original tormentor (Pistorius, 2000). There is also a correlation between the serial killer's early fixations and the fantasy acted out on the crime scene (Pistorius, 2006; Prentky et al., 1989).

A manifest example of a fixation in the oral stage is cannibalism, which indicates a severe identity crisis (Pistorius, 2006). The killer employs a primitive means to incorporate the identity of the victims by physically consuming them. Dahmer commented that cannibalism was "the next step, an attempt to make them a part of myself" (Philips, 1994, Television Broadcast). The anal phase is related to power and control. Anal sadism is associated with mutilation of the victims, whilst an excessively neat crime scene indicates obsessive-compulsive ritualism (Pistorius, 2006). The phallic stage relates to the child's subconscious

sexual desire for his mother and his subconscious aggressive fantasies towards his father (Freud, 1952), which results in castration anxiety. Successful resolution of this stage results in the child's identifying with the father figure. However, a fixation in this stage is evidenced by leaving phallic instruments at a crime scene or committing necrophilia (Pistorius, 2002). The necrophile only feels safe to be intimate with a dead person, because the dead cannot reject or humiliate him (Pistorius, 2006; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Pistorius (2000, 2002) argued that all serial killers fixate in the latency phase. These children are lonely and lack positive male role models. For the developing serial killer, sexual and aggressive fantasies are not repressed during latency, but become more defined and conscious as the child continues his masturbatory practices. These children fail in the socialization process and therefore act only to satisfy their aggressive and sexual impulses. They treat their victims as mere objects that exist solely for the gratification of their needs (Pistorius, 2006). During the genital phase children may either resolve earlier fixations or experience a total identity crisis resulting in the inability to form mature sexual relationships (Pistorius, 2006). The link between Pistorius' theory and Erikson's theory is therefore also evident. When the serial killer's ego and self-esteem are threatened by rejection or pain, the original childhood trauma is triggered and he feels the irresistible urge to act out the powerful fantasy, which is the way he attempts to restore psychological equilibrium (Pistorius, 1996).

The following section is based on recent literature related to lust murder. As the importance of fantasy and two theoretical models of serial murder that resemble the theories employed in the study have been discussed, the next model provides a specialized view of Dahmer's development as a lust murderer.

6.4.4   The Psychology of Lust Murder

Purcell and Arrigo (2006) provided an integrated theoretical framework to conceptualize lust murder as a distinct subcategory of serial homicide in which paraphilia functions as the underlying motive. A paraphilia is an intense, recurrent and sexually arousing fantasy characterized by ritualistic behaviour (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000). Abnormal paraphilic behaviour occurs when an individual needs and depends on the aberrant fantasy for sexual arousal and gratification (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Research on the components of most paraphilic behaviour such as: fantasy, compulsive masturbation and facilitators, such as alcohol, drugs and pornography (Hickey, 2001; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006),

has demonstrated that these are critical to motivate, sustain and escalate the violent nature of the fantasy system and subsequent violent and deviant sexual conduct (Hickey, 1997, 2005; McGuire, Carlisle & Young, 1965; Prentky et al., 1989).

Dahmer has been described as the quintessential lust murderer (Palermo, 2004; Tithecott, 1997). Purcell and Arrigo (2006) applied their integrative model on lust murder to Dahmer's life story. The integrated model is predominantly based on the FBI's motivational model and Hickey's (2001) trauma control model. At the extreme end of the paraphilic continuum is lust murder or erotophonophilia. Erotophonophilia is described as the acting out of sexually sadistic behaviour, wherein killing is an integral part of the sexual excitement (Hazelwood & Douglas, 1980; Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Simon, 1996). Serial offenders establish a violently sexualized relationship in their minds that they have rehearsed repeatedly while masturbating. The drive for lust murder is the sexually aggressive images and cognitions (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Ressler et al., 1992). Hickey (2001) suggested that the relationship between thought patterns of aggressive fantasies and sexualized death develop early in life and exist in a context of social isolation. Each time the fantasy is acted upon, increasing levels of sadistic deviance and sexualized violence are required in order to reach sexual gratification (Burgess et al., 1986; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

The lust murderer is motivated by the need for ultimate sexual gratification and uses torture to achieve sexual climax (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). The orgasm and sexually sadistic nature by which it is reached symbolizes complete domination over the victim – whether alive or dead (Hazelwood & Douglas, 1980). Asphyxiation, blunt force and stabbing are often used to kill victims (Canter et al., 2004; Hodgkiss, 2004; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), whilst post-mortem mutilation, dissection and evisceration are common (Palermo, 2004). Paraphilias typically associated with lust murder include: (a) picquerism, which is the profound desire to stab, wound or cut the victim, usually the genitalia or breasts; (b) vampirism; (c) anthropophagy, which is characterized by ritualized and sexualized violence and cannibalism for ultimate erotic pleasure; and (d) necrosadism, which is the murder of another in order to commit necrophilia for sexual fulfilment (Egger, 2002; Hickey, 2005; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Palermo, 2004; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). The escalation in overt erotic aggression is linked to the fantasy system of the offender, who associates sex with violence (Hickey, 2005; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The elements of the integrated model on lust murder include formative development, low self-esteem, early fantasy development and paraphilic development. These elements comprise a paraphilic process in which increasingly violent fantasies emerge and gradually manifest in criminal behaviour (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). An initial stressor triggers an unresolved trauma from the past resulting in the individual's retreating into the paraphilic process where comfort and relief are found (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Typically there have been preceding trials whereby individuals attempted to preserve, satisfy and modify the internal thought process. As a result of the feedback loop, individuals experienced sexual satisfaction and an increased need for erotic stimulation (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

When violent erotic imagery no longer sates sexual desires, the offender behaviourally manifests sexual deviance and sexualized criminality (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Coupled with masturbation, these actions become reinforced in the fantasy system maintaining increasingly violent sexual imagery and conduct. The intensity, duration and frequency of the process for each individual depends on the effects of the (a) aetiological elements of formative development, low self-esteem and early fantasy and the (b) interactive agents of fantasy development, facilitators and orgasmic conditioning. This paraphilic process is applied to Jeffrey Dahmer.

6.4.4.1 Formative Development

In evaluating predispositional factors, social, psychological and biological factors are evaluated. Dahmer experienced a social breakdown in his familial environment, which contributed to his felt emotional and psychological neglect (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Although biological predisposition is nearly impossible to determine, biological theory takes into account Lionel Dahmer's antisocial behaviour and Joyce Dahmer's psychiatric condition and drug use during the pregnancy. Further, the insights of Money (1990) and Canter et al. (2004) have highlighted that sexual sadism is influenced by the stimulation of certain neurological pathways.

Hazelwood and Douglas (1980) noted that this period is crucial to the personality structure and development of serial offenders, especially regarding positive attachment. Traumatic events in formative development can adversely affect the development of a positive ego identity (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Dahmer's emotional trauma apparently resulted from a lack of healthy parental involvement and the effects of their marital discord (Dahmer, 1994;

Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer's parents were uninvolved and unaware of Dahmer's dissection of animals, early alcoholism and struggle with his sexual orientation (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

6.4.4.2   Low Self-Esteem

The adverse consequence of unresolved trauma in formative development has debilitating emotional effects, such as feeling of inadequacy, personal failure and low self-esteem (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).   Purcell and Arrigo argued that Dahmer's inability to reconcile environmental and psychological demands fuelled his growing emotional deprivation, frustrations, abandonment and social isolation.   In order to escape the immense pain of the feelings of rejection and helplessness, he constructed an elaborate and eventually self-sustaining fantasy system (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

6.4.4.3   Early Fantasy Development

The internal behaviours most frequently associated with the serial offender's development include daydreaming, compulsive masturbation and social isolation (Hickey, 2005; Ressler et al, 1992).   Dahmer's fantasies centred on homosexual interactions, but progressed and intensified to eventually include the possession of a totally compliant, unconscious lover who would never leave his side (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   His fantasies were themed with aggressive cognitions about death, mutilation and dismemberment – and these early fantasies were sustained by masturbation and other facilitators such as alcohol, drugs and homosexual pornographic material (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).   Purcell and Arrigo thus concluded that social isolation, sexually aggressive fantasy and reliance on pornography, alcohol and drugs became a self-perpetuating process.

6.4.4.4   Paraphilic Development

A lack of social and sexual bonding at an early age could produce feelings of inadequacy, driving the person into a world of fantasy and isolation and increasingly ritualized behaviour (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).   The classical conditioning of felt sexual arousal and sadistic fantasy reinforces and habituates the paraphilic process (MacCulloch et al., 1983; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).   Dahmer was a social outcast (Masters, 1993) who struggled with his sexual orientation.   His inability to establish meaningful social and sexual bonds of attachment,

coupled with a perception of failure, catapulted him into a world of aberrant sexual fantasy (Hickey, 2001; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer displayed a wide range of paraphilias, with his increasingly violent fantasies showing a parallel in his behaviour. Dahmer's necrophilic impulses functioned as a way to avoid rejection (Hickey, 2005) and allowed him to gain complete control and domination over his victims.

McGuire et al. (1965) recognized that masturbation and orgasm serve to maintain and intensify fantasy. There is little information surrounding the overall fantasy structure and Dahmer's orgasmic conditioning process, but Purcell and Arrigo (2006) argued that due to the progressively violent nature of his sexual crimes, the orgasmic conditioning process is consistent with the behaviour of a lust murderer.

Dahmer's use of facilitators such as alcohol, drugs and pornography promoted a lifestyle of self-perpetuating facilitative behaviour (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006), particularly after his discharge from the army. The activity of using facilitators to fuel and sustain erotic desires is a habitual process by which ultimate sexual satisfaction is realized (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). For Dahmer, the facilitators became indispensable components of his masturbatory fantasies and led him to kill repeatedly, dissect his victims' bodies and even consume human flesh (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Internal and external stressors and the specific childhood traumata they signify are sustained through masturbation, facilitators and fantasy (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Offenders are motivated to respond to stressors based on their cognitive perception of the situation (Burgess et al., 1986). Lack of parental involvement in Dahmer's life left him isolated and abandoned, whilst his adolescent struggle with his sexual identity left him feeling deviant and immoral (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Each of these events significantly impacted upon his self-esteem (Egger, 2002; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). In response to increasing social failures that triggered early traumata and the lack of ego resources and social support, Dahmer retreated into fantasy to find relief (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006) and experimented with actualizing his fantasies (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Paraphilic behaviour acts as a reinforcer and feeds back into the fantasy system (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler et al., 1992). As the fantasies become increasingly violent, the paraphilic stimulus increases in intensity, duration and frequency. Purcell and Arrigo (2006) argued that Dahmer's capacity for murder was enhanced by his feelings of dominance,

power, control and arousal over his victims through necrophilia, necrosadism, cannibalism, mutilation and souvenir fetishism.

6.5 Profiling Jeffrey Dahmer

Based on the theories presented above, there appear to be various ways to conceptualize and profile a serial offender. Essentially, the crime scene evidence is used to construct a profile of the serial killer's idiosyncratic fantasy. Dahmer, however, was never profiled. In general, the organized killer plans the murder consciously and displays control of the victim at the crime scene, while the disorganized offender is less consciously aware of a plan and the crime scene reflects haphazard behaviour (Ressler et al., 1992). When Ressler interviewed Dahmer he noted that "Dahmer was neither a classic 'organized' or a classic 'disorganized' offender; while an organized killer would be legally sane, and a disorganized one would be clearly insane under the law, Dahmer was both and neither – a 'mixed' offender" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 107 – 108).

Dahmer achieved maximum success in that he could take his victims without the police being aware of his actions (Keppel & Birnes, 1997). His victim selection of black, male homosexuals was a further departure from traditional serial killings of white females by white serial killers (Ressler et al., 1992; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997). The fact that black and homosexual populations were considered a minority also contributed to the duration of his serial killings. Dahmer also left no crime scenes and therefore no forensic evidence to elucidate his fantasy. Whereas most serial killers dump their victims at locations far removed from their everyday lives, Dahmer was attached to his victims and kept the bodies in his home because he was lonely (Pistorius, 2006). Once Dahmer was arrested, the exploration of his actions and the realization that he exhibited so many traditionally unrelated dynamics "helped rewrite the book on signature crimes" (Keppel & Birnes, 1997, p. 265).

6.6 Evil

Of final consideration in this cursory exploration of serial murder is Peck's (1983, 2005) concept of human evil. Simon (1996) maintained that evil is an endemic potentiality in humankind, but that this does not advance the state of knowledge. Silver (2001), however, argued that because evil is a consistent element of human nature and the desire for control, its importance should not be ignored. The term, *evil*, has been assiduously avoided in

psychiatric and legal terminology as it could precipitate a slide from clinical to moral judgement (Carey, 2005). Further, the notion of evil is likely to evoke a supernatural causation, rather than to take into consideration the biological, psychological and social influences on behaviour. The term cannot be clearly defined because of phenomenological meanings that individuals attribute to the word based on specific socio-cultural experiences (Hare, 1993; Peck, 2005). Still, there are incidences of unambiguous evil – such as genocide at Auschwitz or My Lai – that promote the generalized conception of evil (Shore, 1995).

Carey (2005) reported that a limited number of forensic psychiatrists have begun to conceptualize select individuals as not merely disturbed, but evil. They are perceived as evil in that their deliberate, habitual savagery defies conventional psychological explanation or treatment. Owing to the nature of forensic work, these psychiatrists have been forced to reflect on the concept of evil (Carey, 2005). Peck (1983) described this evil as an internal or external force that seeks to kill life or liveliness. These individuals impose – through overt or covert coercion – their wills upon others and are therefore unable to empathize with other human beings. Thus, other people are merely perceived as objects to be manipulated for the individual's own gratification (Peck, 2005). By relating this information to the previously discussed perspectives on serial murder, the present researcher contends that a discussion of human potential for evil is necessary in the evaluation of serial murder.

Peck (1983) ascribed four general characteristics to the evil person. First, the person projects his perceived evil onto others and then tries to remove that sin from others. Dahmer's identity crisis and hostility towards his own homosexuality has been argued as a motivation for his victim selection and actions (Palermo et al., 1996). Dahmer, however, denied his use of homosexuality – or race – as a justification for murder (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Secondly, Peck argued that evil individuals maintain a high level of respectability and must lie incessantly to maintain this façade. Cleckley (1982) aptly termed this the *mask of sanity*, which Dahmer displayed in his being a masterful manipulator. Not only was Dahmer able to lure his victims to his apartment, he was once able to convince a judge of his contrition (Masters, 1993) and convinced the police that Konerak was his lover (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). As seen in Chapter 5, this high level of manipulation was a decisive factor in his being found sane in criminal trial.

The third characteristic is that the evil individual is consistent in his sins. Peck (1983) maintained that evil persons are characterized not by the magnitude of their sins, but by their

consistency. The present researcher contends that this can be related to the serial killer's signature left at the crime scene. The signature, born from and compelled by fantasy underlies all actions in order to restore mental equilibrium through ritualized and scripted actions for psychological and sexual gratification. Finally, Peck argued that the evil individual is unable to think from another's perspective. The socially detached individual cannot empathize with society and develops a private cognitive map that relates to how the individual perceives and therefore interacts with the environment and gives meaning to events (Adler, 1929). Peck therefore argued that evil arises from free choice and is part of a conscious thought process that can be controlled (Ressler et al., 1992) – as evidenced by cooling-off periods between murders (Pistorius, 2000).

6.6 Conclusion

In this psychobiographical study on Dahmer, it was necessary to discuss the serial murder phenomenon in order to view Dahmer within the context of his infamy. The chapter was not meant to detract from psychobiographical research or to pathologize or sensationalize the subject, but to highlight the various criminological and biographical viewpoints from which Dahmer has previously been discussed. In the following chapter the preliminary methodological considerations of psychobiography are discussed. These considerations are necessary precautions and strategies that must be recognized and implemented in order to conduct 'good' psychobiographical studies (Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999).

CHAPTER 7

PRELIMINARY METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Chapter Preview

The goal of psychobiographical research is to expand and enrich idiographic understanding of the individual in context. In this form of qualitative research, the value-laden and socially constructed nature of reality is recognized (Burr, 1995). In order to ensure that the quality in the research process and the trustworthiness in its findings are maintained, this chapter presents a theoretical discussion of the methodological issues and difficulties related to psychobiographical research. The first part of the chapter highlights methodological criticisms inherent to psychobiographical research as well as recommendations to minimize their effects. The second part of the chapter discusses the specific application of these considerations to the psychobiographical study on the life of Jeffrey Dahmer. Finally, the ethical considerations related to psychobiographical research and their implications for this research study are explored.

7.2 Methodological Considerations in Psychobiographical Research

Over the last two decades the field of psychobiography has flourished and evidenced significant advances in understanding exemplary lives (Elms, 1994; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a). However, since its modern inception with Freud's (1910) *Leonardo*, psychobiography has received much criticism. These criticisms are based on noted transgressions of scientific psychology or history – or both (J. W. Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1988b). Even the most ardent proponents of psychobiographical research have admitted that the various criticisms are justified. It therefore remains a challenge to write a *good* psychobiography as even the best-intentioned psychobiographers face major constraints and obstacles that usually do not confront other researchers (McAdams, 1994).

Despite the significant methodological advantages of psychobiographical research (see section 2.3.6), a considerable body of literature has been identified (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b; Howe, 1997; Izenberg, 2003; Meissner, 2003; Runyan, 1982a, 1983) that highlights the disparity between the potential and actual execution thereof. J. W. Anderson (1981a) noted that many of these criticisms are inherent to the methodology of psychobiographical studies, whilst Runyan (1982a, 1983) indicated that

others relate to the idiographic approach to the study of individual lives. Meissner (2003) further highlighted that psychobiographers are caught within the paradoxical commitment to the exploration of the inner meaning of controversial and great historical figures, which holds the methodological dilemma that history does not readily reveal the layers of meaning and unconscious motivations inherent in the subject's life.

Before the commencement of a psychobiographical study, it is the researcher's responsibility to be aware of the criticisms and potential obstacles inherent to this approach. These difficulties are discussed below as major methodological considerations that need to be overcome – or at least, minimized – in order for the psychobiography to qualify as good or exemplary (Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005a). Each consideration is discussed in turn and suggested strategies to reduce the influence of these difficulties are provided.

7.2.1 Researcher Bias

One of the most serious threats to the psychobiographical methodology is the psychobiographer's tendency to idealize or vilify the biographical subject (J. W. Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1988, 1994). Research literature reports that complete objectivity and dispassionate engagement in the life of any biographical subject is impossible (J. W. Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1994; Meissner, 2003; Schultz, 2005b). Owing to the long-term and in-depth nature of psychobiographical study, the researcher may develop intense and complicated emotional responses to the subject. Meissner (2003) warned that the biographical subject may become a projection more of the author – as in Freud's *Leonardo* (Elms, 1994; Elms & Song, 2005; McAdams, 1988) – than the subject.

At times psychobiographers may idealize the subject and enjoy the status of being connected to an exalted figure. At other times, psychobiographers may find fault with the subjects in order to convince themselves that they are smarter, saner or friendlier than the subjects (J. W. Anderson, 1981a). These counter-transference reactions (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Meissner, 2003) are often unconscious or non-deliberate and the authors may actually believe that they are only identifying and describing the subject's personality. Thus, Erikson (1974) suggested that psychobiographers apply a level of *disciplined subjectivity* to recognize the subjective nature of interpretation and to be self-reflective on the impact of perceptions, emotions and personal history that are inevitably linked with qualitative

psychobiographical research. This can be further achieved through data immersion and de-emphasis on pathological terminology and theory (Elovitz, 2003).

In order to minimize the difficulties and counteract the criticism of researcher bias, the following five general strategies could be implemented. Elms (1994) and Elms and Song (2005) noted that the researchers should choose a subject about whom they feel considerable ambivalence, that is, a mixture of approval and disapproval, as a way to counter premature conclusions and remain objective. Bearing this in mind though, J. W. Anderson (1981a) indicated that the researcher should develop a degree of empathy with the subject to safeguard against the tendency to be disparaging. J. W. Anderson (1981a, 1981b) further suggested that psychobiographers continuously examine their feelings towards their subjects. This could be presented as an appendix to the written work to describe the feelings, biases and the way in which it was decided to write about the particular person. A fourth strategy may be to enlist the help of the subject's intimate acquaintances and other biographical specialists by allowing them to comment on the degree of subjectivity exhibited in the writing (J. W. Anderson, 1981b; Schurink, 1988). Also, should the subject still be alive, the subject should be allowed an opportunity to auto-critique the document and comment on the nature of the researcher-subject relationship (Schurink, 1988).

7.2.2 Reductionism

Reductionism, of which there are various forms, is the second major criticism against the psychobiographical methodology. Runyan (1988b) and Capps (2004) noted that there tends to be an overemphasis on the application of a fixed psychological formula in psychobiography, which may omit important external social and historical facts from the comprehensive analysis of the life of a historical figure. As reductionism is used to explain complex processes with a single causal reasoning, Schultz (2005a) argued that psychobiography succeeds when it does the opposite, namely: "tracing mysterious gestalts of thought and action back to a variety of biographical vectors" (p. 12).

Reductionism is first noted in the explanation of adult character and behaviour predominantly in terms of early childhood experiences, thereby neglecting any later formative processes and influences (Capps, 2004; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b). Given that the continuity and consistency of personality from childhood into adulthood is controversial in personality and developmental psychology, the psychobiographer should recognize that early

experiences involve complex – but not necessarily deterministic – choices and processes (Adler, 1982; Alter, 2002).   Whilst childhood is doubtless integral in personality development, it is never the only key to personality (Schultz, 2005a). Erikson identified this second form of reductionism as *originology* (J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Erikson, 1969; McAdams, 1994).

Psychobiographical studies have also been criticized for excessive focus on psychopathological processes at the expense of normalcy, health and creativity (Alter, 2002; J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Elms, 1988, 1994; Fouchè, 1999; Runyan, 1988b), which McAdams (1994) referred to as *overpathologizing*.   Meissner (2003) noted that this reductionism distorts the researcher's ability to illuminate the complexity of the inner life of a subject. The pathographic orientation, which appears especially evident in the psychoanalytic psychobiographies, ignores the complexity of a subject's social, historical and cultural context and reduces an entire life to a neurotic tendency (Runyan, 1988b; Scalapino, 1999). Instead, a life should be evaluated holistically, that is, in terms of the individual's strengths and weaknesses.

Psychobiographers can minimize difficulties related to reductionism by engaging in extensive research through the use of multiple sources during data collection and analysis (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b). Atkinson and Delamont (2005) further suggested the use of various methods of data analysis, which would elucidate the social and cultural diversity of the particular subject. The resultant interpretation should be a synthesis of the psychological with the socio-historical to achieve evidence beyond mere psychological reductionism (J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1988b). Runyan (1988b) and Elovitz (2003) recommended that the researcher avoid the use of esoteric psychological jargon and rather use psychological terminology sparingly.   This would reduce the probability that the researcher would explain all facets of an individual's life in solely reductionistic terms.

Elms (1994) suggested that psychobiographers employ a eugraphic approach to research whereby normality and health are emphasized. As this approach contrasts the traditional pathographic alternative, the researcher would avoid overpathologizing the subject (McAdams, 1994). This further promotes a holistic view of the individual as a complex personality (Howe, 1997) that has been influenced by various factors within the prevailing socio-historical context.   A full understanding and explanation of human action and

experience cannot ignore the fact that human beings are active agents with a degree of reasoned self-determination within the societies in which they are embedded and active (Danziger, 1990, 1997). The consequences of human agency are that human actions and experiences are meaningful, intentional, rational, authentic and normative (Martin & Dawda, 2002). Rather than to assume that a reductionistic psychological analysis can encapsulate personality, the study of individual lives emphasizes a move away from reductionism towards complexity (Elms, 1994).

7.2.3   Cross-Cultural Differences

Psychobiography is a form of cross-cultural research given that the historical subject's culture traditionally deviates markedly from contemporary culture (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b). Thus, the cross-cultural criticism holds that modern psychological concepts would not necessarily be applicable to a subject's behaviour on account of their not being necessarily cross-culturally sensitive. Runyan (1982a) noted that this critique is common to all biographical and historical writing.

Runyan (1982a) warned that psychobiographers must recognize the context-bound nature of psychological concepts and examine which concepts of theories may be universally applied across cultures and periods. To further minimize the cross-cultural difficulty, J. W. Anderson (1981a, 1981b) recommended that psychobiographers undertake extensive historical research of the prevailing time and social culture in order to develop a culturally empathic understanding of the subject. The researcher should therefore understand the culture from the viewpoint of those individuals who lived in it – especially from the subject's point of view – to interpret the meaning of specific actions or statements (Neuman, 2003). This may be achieved through the literature review or by interviewing people (J. W. Anderson, 1988; Greeff, 2005) who shared the subject's cultural values. Thus, Runyan (1982a, 2003) asserted that psychobiographical interpretation is an intellectual endeavour that must draw not only on theories that hold universally, but also on group and context-specific generalizations and the extensive idiographic study of the particular individual.

7.2.4   Analyzing an Absent Subject

In psychobiographical research, the biographer traditionally must assemble a portrait of the absent subject from predominantly written sources (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b;

Izenberg, 2003; Schultz, 2005b). Some researchers have thus reasoned that psychobiographers are disadvantaged by limited information because they seldom have direct contact with the subject under study. However, psychobiographers hold advantages over, for example, a psychotherapist in their investigation of an individual life (J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Elms & Song, 2005; Runyan, 1988b).

Psychobiographers are advantaged with access to information that covers the individual's entire lifespan as well as various informants other than the subject (Elms, 1994). The informants may be closely acquainted with the subject or biographers who have studied and documented a subject's life. Further, psychobiographers may draw information from various sources, such as family, friends, diaries, written works, photographs and other creations (J. W. Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Izenberg, 2003; Runyan, 1982a). Nonetheless, J. W. Anderson (1981a, 1988) indicated that the ultimate possibility for psychobiographical research is when a living subject may be interviewed.

The psychobiographical analysis of an absent subject to test theoretical concepts is advantaged by a greater availability and variety of information (J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Munter, 1975). J. W. Anderson (1981a) highlighted that the psychobiographer has the unique opportunity to observe behavioural patterns longitudinally – in terms of their eventual effects – and can therefore offer a more balanced description of the subject. Further, the biographer is not restricted by informed consent (Carlson, 1988) or the need to uphold a continuous therapeutic atmosphere. Indeed, Elms (1994) noted that the psychobiographer does not need to disguise the subject's identity as the main point of most psychobiographical research is to provide a clearer understanding of the psychology of a public figure.

7.2.5   Elitism and Easy Genre

Apart from criticisms related to its design and method, psychobiographical research has also been criticized as being elitist and an easy genre (Runyan, 1988b). The psychobiographical focus on royalty, heads of state, the privileged or individuals considered 'great' (Simonton, 1994) is criticized as a means to ignore the experience of the masses (Runyan, 1988b; Schultz, 2005b). However, towards the understanding of enigmatic figures in society, emphasis needs to be placed on human – and more specifically, personality – development (Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1988b) in order to enrich the scientific body of knowledge in psychology.

Runyan (1988b) noted that although it may be virtuous to learn about the oppressed and neglected, social class should not be confused with the level of aggregation. Runyan explained that large-scale experiments and detailed biographies could and should be conducted on individuals and groups irrespective of social class. As psychobiography is an approach that is suited to studying individual lives from any social stratum, the subject should be chosen according to personal characteristics, rather than social class. The criticism of elitism therefore depends simultaneously on the person being studied and the interpretation offered by the qualitative psychobiography (Runyan, 1988b).

A second argument against biographical research is that some critics consider it too easy a genre. Runyan (1988b) and Elms (1994) countered this allegation with the argument that superficial biographies are easily written, but that to write a good biography is an extraordinary challenge. Schultz (2005a) noted that a good psychobiography is a cogent and comprehensive narrative of consistent and viable data that elucidates the mystery of an individual's life. A good psychobiography therefore demands: extensive research of numerous sources to understand the subject's socio-historical context; sound psychological knowledge; and substantial literary skill (McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1988b).

7.2.6   Infinite Amount of Biographical Data

Psychobiographers are often faced with an infinite body of available biographical information (J. W. Anderson, 1981b; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005b). J. W. Anderson (1981b) proposed a split-half strategy to handle data, by dividing it into two parts. One part is used to identify and examine the intended theoretical propositions and constructs, while the second part of the material is examined to compare and test it with the theoretical propositions identified in the first body of material. The psychobiographer may, for instance, split the data into categories of published and archival materials where identified constructs and hypotheses in the former are sought and either confirmed or contradicted in the latter.

Alexander (1988) suggested that personal data can be approached in two distinct, but complementary ways, in order to reduce the data to manageable quantities. The psychobiographer may first identify salience by sorting the raw data into nine categories and then further scrutinize the relevant data. These nine principle identifiers of salience are: primacy, frequency, uniqueness, negation, emphasis, omission, error or distortion, isolation and incompletion. The second method to approach the data involves asking the data a

question (Alexander, 1988, 1990). This latter technique allows the psychobiographer to sort the vast amounts of data to answer specific questions, by specifying rules and guidelines to assess the categories of information. For example, a psychobiographer interested in assessing family constellation would extract all instances where the subject interacts with family – and then specify the guidelines by which these interactions would be assessed.

In this study Alexander's (1988) model was adapted and applied to the analysis of the biographical material on Jeffrey Dahmer. Therefore, a more detailed discussion of this method is provided in Chapter 8.

7.2.7   Inflated Expectations

The psychobiographical literature examined suggested that inflated expectations are not prevalent within the psychobiographical paradigm as yet and that it is rather a fear of critics than a specific widespread problem (Fouchè, 1999). However, J. W. Anderson (1981a) noted that there are some psychohistorians and psychobiographers who occasionally view the psychobiographical approach as a research panacea.

Psychobiographers should be mindful of two particular limitations of psychobiographical research. First, psychobiographers should recognize that psychobiographical explanations do not replace, but rather supplement existing explanations. Second, the psychological explanations should be recognized as merely speculative (J. W. Anderson, 1981a; Elovitz, 2003). Meissner (2003) noted that the psychobiographer's creation is merely an approximation of a historical figure, which remains uncertain and heuristic – rather than definitively factual. J. W. Anderson (1981a) advised that psychobiographers be aware of the various limitations to the approach and admit that they cannot claim to have reported and interpreted the entire complexity of another's life.

7.2.8   Validity and Reliability Criticisms

The most prevalent criticism against the idiographic methodology of psychobiographical research is against its validity and reliability (Runyan, 1982a, 1983; Yin, 1994). From a qualitative perspective these criticisms relate to the trustworthiness of the study, where the processes of judging truth and logic in a qualitative study are shaped by the knowledge-generating process.

Specific criticisms against the case study method pertain to the lack of controls and difficulty in generalization (Runyan, 1982a, 1983, 1988b; Yin, 1994). In order to counter this criticism, Yin (1994) argued that four tests common to all social science research methods, namely: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability, can be used to measure the quality of the case study design. To ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research, Guba (1981) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) insisted that the qualitative findings be judged and found (a) systematically congruent with the context or valid; (b) not subject to aberrations in the research process or instruments, that is, reliable; and (c) not open to charges of bias or prejudice of the research, but objective. As such, the latter three constructs proposed by Yin (1994) are replaced with credibility, transferability and dependability. The fourth criterion of a trustworthy study is confirmability. The strategies and precautions to meet the five aggregate constructs are discussed below.

7.2.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is the first and perhaps the most important criterion (Krefting, 1991) of trustworthiness. It is based on methodological rigour, the credibility of the researcher and the philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2002). Its quantitative counterpart, internal validity, relates to establishing a causal relationship between conditions (Neuman, 2003) and is considered more relevant to explanatory or causal studies than exploratory or descriptive case studies (Yin, 1994).

The investigative nature of the interpretive process of psychobiography requires that the researcher identify and interpret recurrent themes in data related to a single life. Credibility can therefore be enhanced by the researcher's integrating loosely connected or atypical data into a logical, holistic picture (Krefting, 1991). The structural coherence and corroboration that underlie credibility can be achieved through prolonged exposure to the data, in-depth research and checks for any distortions (Rudestam & Newton, 2001) and submersion in the multiple realities of human experience (Krefting, 1991). The structural corroboration of the meanings inferred and conclusions drawn must be internally substantiated and self-evident from the way that data is displayed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988).

In order to further credibility, a critical analysis of multiple sources of data should be conducted (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). Willig (2001) commented that case study research, such as psychobiography, should always involve triangulation. Triangulation is a powerful

strategy to enhance the quality of research, particularly credibility (Krefting, 1991). The principle of triangulation is that the convergence of multiple perspectives provides mutual confirmation of data to illuminate themes or theory and to ensure that all aspects of the phenomenon are investigated (Flick, 2006). This multiplicity minimizes the distortion from a single source or biased researcher as data is cross-checked (Krefting, 1991; Tindall, 1999).

Tindall (1999) mentioned four useful types of triangulation that could enhance credibility as they illustrate the deeper meaning within the study for maximum valid interpretations. Data triangulation maximizes the range of data that contributes to the complete understanding of the subject, which increases the accuracy and decreases the chance that findings are based on biases or misperceptions (Schultz, 2005a). Similarly, referential adequacy of holistic, context-rich materials such as photographs, videotapes and audiotapes provide background meaning to support data analysis, interpretations and audits (De Vos, 2005). The second type is triangulation of methods, which allows for more holistic data collection. Theoretical triangulation recognizes the complexity and multiple nature of reality in the evaluation of a single life. Finally, investigator triangulation is used when different evaluators provide multiple perspectives into the interpretation of data (Tindall, 1999).

Krefting (1991) suggested the use of peer examination to enhance credibility. Peer examination resembles investigator triangulation in that colleagues provide additional insights into the evolution of the study. Peer examination contributes to another vital method, reflexive analysis, which enhances credibility. Reflexive analysis provides an opportunity to describe how the researcher's perspective shaped the research (Taylor, 1999). As a participant whose emotional responses must be reviewed in the identification of recurrent themes and values in the representation of reality, the researcher must evaluate the influence his background and perceptions have upon data collection, organization, analysis and interpretation (Willig, 2001). By journalizing intentions, notes, decisions, rationales and interpretations the researcher acknowledges his central position in the construction of knowledge and thus increases credibility in the interpretive process (Krefting, 1991; Taylor, 1999; Willig, 2001). Reflexive analysis is discussed in more detail in section 8.8.

7.2.8.2 Transferability

The second qualitative criterion of trustworthiness is transferability, which is used to judge the extent to which findings may be applied to other contexts (De Vos, 2005; Krefting, 1991;

Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1988) proposed this as an alternative to external validity in recognition that not all qualitative studies can be generalized. A prevailing criticism of the idiographic approach is, indeed, that it is difficult to generalize the findings (Runyan, 1988b) and notably arises when the case study researcher attempts to select a representative case (Yin, 1994). Willig (2001) argued that in case study research representativeness is not an issue because the aim of the research is most often to understand the internal dynamics of a singular case in-depth. Rather than to generalize findings to a larger population, case study researchers should employ analytical generalization whereby the findings are generalized to a broader theory – in order to confirm or refute the theory (Yin, 1994). Transferability is thus a less significant criterion in psychobiographical research where the findings are viewed as being of inherent descriptive worth (Fouchè, 1999; Stroud, 2004), representing one life perspective to be generalized to a theory (Yin, 1994).

As external generalization is not the aim of the qualitative approach, the researcher need only supply a sufficient database for other researchers to evaluate (Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). This database further increases the reliability of the results. In order to achieve a level of transferability, thick descriptions – often through triangulation of methods and sources – should be provided (Krefting, 1991; Rudestam & Newton, 2001) to aid in the interpretation of the complex issues addressed. This allows those readers, who are stimulated to conduct further research, to make a transferability judgement (De Vos, 2005; Krefting, 1991) about the appropriateness of applying the findings in other settings.

7.2.8.3   Dependability

In qualitative research, trackable variability (Guba, 1981) and atypical situations provide valuable opportunities to learn from, rather than control, information. The criterion of dependability is therefore invoked, rather than reliability. Dependability in qualitative research relates to the consistency of findings within the study's epistemology (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988), where the recommendations and conclusions are consistent with the presented data. Krefting (1991) argued that there must therefore be a fit between the research question, data collection procedures and analysis techniques to present all the interpretive elements with purpose and focus.

In order to ensure dependability, Flick (2006) indicated that the research process be documented in comprehensive detail – thereby emphasizing thick descriptions of the

procedures used. To facilitate this process, Yin (1994) suggested that as many steps as possible should be operationalized and that a case study protocol that specifies all the operational steps be compiled. By following a comprehensible and systematic coding procedure, the auditability and dependability of the themes extracted from the data would be enhanced (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). This means that the data is coded in such a way that others can understand, and arrive at, similar conclusions.

Further suggestions to enhance dependability include: (a) to consult supervisors and methodologists throughout the research process; (b) the use of a code-recode procedure whereby the research can, after two weeks, recode information to compare thematic extraction (Krefting, 1991); (c) triangulation – to ensure an inclusive exploration of the multiple realities of subjective experience (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988; Willig, 2001); and (d) an audit, which also enhances confirmability (Flick, 2006).

7.2.8.4   Confirmability

The fourth indicator of trustworthiness is neutrality, which is indicated in qualitative research through data and interpretational confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988). Confirmability is the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the information and conditions of research, free from researcher bias (De Vos, 2005). Krefting (1991) noted that neutrality in data is achieved when credibility and transferability are established.

The audit is a major strategy to enhance confirmability and dependability (Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). According to Yin (1994), a chain of evidence must be produced whereby the process of uncovering evidence – through the appropriate consideration of all relevant data – can be traced. Should this objective be achieved, Yin (1994) argued that the construct validity would have been determined and the overall quality of the study increased. Krefting (1991) suggested that research can be subjected to an audit. The aim of the audit is for an external auditor to follow the study's progression and understand the decision-making process and nature of the interpretations (Creswell, 1998; Flick, 2006; Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). The auditor determines whether other researchers, when faced with the data, would draw similar conclusions (Krefting, 1991). Further suggestions to increase confirmability are the use of reflexive analysis and triangulation to test the strength of ideas, guard against bias and help to ensure accurate evaluation of research findings (Krefting, 1991; Taylor, 1999).

7.2.8.5   Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to the establishment of the correct operational measures for the concepts studied (Yin, 1994).   The objective of the study should be used to guide the selection and conceptualization of the constructs and variables to be used.   By clearly conceptualizing which indicators would be operationalized during data collection, the researcher ensures that the intended theoretical constructs are measured (Neuman, 2003).

7.3.   Methodological Considerations Applied

The aforementioned methodological issues and difficulties were carefully considered in this psychobiographical study on Dahmer.   The relevant application of each criticism and the mechanisms to minimize the difficulties is discussed.   It should be noted that certain methodological considerations, such as reliability and validity, are intertwined with the study's design and methodology.   These considerations are therefore discussed further in Chapter 8: 'Research Design and Methodology'.

7.3.1   The Researcher's Bias

In the attempt to minimize the potential of idealizing or denigrating the research subject, the researcher purposefully employed several strategies.   Upon starting the research process, the researcher was ambivalent towards Dahmer as a human being, but fascinated by and driven to understand his individuality and uniqueness.   The extensive research on Dahmer's historical life and socio-cultural context provided the researcher the opportunity to explore his feelings and attitudes towards Dahmer as these developed throughout the biographical study.   These reactions were journalized throughout the study for reflexive analysis (see section 8.8).   Further, the researcher regularly discussed his reactions with the supervisors of this study to uphold balance between empathy, subjectivity and objectivity.

7.3.2   Reductionism

To avoid producing a reductionistic psychological perspective of Dahmer, the researcher heeded Elms' (1994) warning that inattention to context can distort psychological interpretations.   Through the use of multiple sources, an extensive study of both the psychological and socio-historical materials related to Dahmer and his cultural context was conducted.

To facilitate a better understanding of Dahmer's complexity the researcher employed a developmental perspective through the use of Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development and Adler's (1929) individual psychology. By investigating Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan, the researcher was better able to understand the complexity, multi-dimensional and context-dependent nature thereof. The present researcher therefore contends that the lifespan perspective minimized the criticism of originology by emphasizing the complex and contingent nature of personality development that extends beyond childhood.

Owing to the nature of Dahmer's notoriety, this psychobiographical case study was also susceptible to a pathographic perspective. However, the developmental nature of the study facilitated a more holistic view of Dahmer's development and thereby countered the chance of overpathologizing. Both theories used in the study acknowledged the importance of biological, psychological, social and cultural-historical factors in Dahmer's personality development. Thus, Jeffrey Dahmer can be appreciated for his complexity and not merely as a personality reduced to a mere psychological description.

7.3.3   Cross-Cultural Differences

The researcher shared no similar cultural characteristics to Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer lived in a significantly different global, economic, socio-political and cultural period to the researcher. Thus, the researcher recognized the need to reduce cultural bias. In an attempt to bridge the gaping chronological and cultural divide and develop a historical empathy with Dahmer, the researcher's literature study included readings of the historical, political and cultural texts related to the time in which Dahmer lived. The socio-historical events related to Dahmer's life, career and murders were discussed in Chapter 5.

The researcher acknowledges the difficulty in applying modern psychological concepts and theories to subjects from previous eras. Although both Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories were posited in the first half of the 20th century, they both emphasize the importance of society and culture on the individual's development. Whereas psychosocial development has a staged genetic disposition, individual psychology recognizes the importance of individual choice in the construction of a lifestyle that may resonate with or contradict the cultural norm. Despite these theorists' cross-cultural awareness, their theories are inherently individualistic (Corey, 2005; Morris & Maisto, 2002). The present researcher,

however, did not perceive this to be a disadvantage because of the idiographic nature of the study and the individualistic American culture in which Dahmer developed.

7.3.4   Analyzing an Absent Subject

In order to analyze an absent subject and base interpretations on a more complete view of the whole individual, the researcher collected a wide range of biographical data on Jeffrey Dahmer.   Thus, the criticism that the psychobiographer has less personal data has been largely overcome through an extensive literature study, including documents of a more personal and intimate nature.   Amongst the myriad of sources collected were various books, such as *The Man who could not Kill Enough* (Schwartz, 1992), *The Shrine of Jeffrey Dahmer* (Masters, 1993) and *An American Nightmare: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story* (Davis, 1995); various newspaper and magazine articles; two televised biographical reports; and an informal biography, written by Dahmer's father, Lionel (1994).

7.3.5   Elitism and Easy Genre

Various critics might argue that a psychobiographical study on Jeffrey Dahmer is an elitist endeavour – and unnecessary within the South African context.   A related comment might therefore be that there are a sufficient number of biographical studies on Dahmer and that further exploration of an American serial murderer's life is exploitative.

Dahmer was selected as the subject of this study predominantly based on his actions and fascinating personality, rather than his membership to any social grouping.   The 'Milwaukee Cannibal' – as Dahmer has been called – cannot be described as one of the American privileged.   A review of the literature yielded that the general impression of Dahmer, prior to his arrest, was the rather hackneyed 'guy next door' stereotype (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   Dahmer's infamy was catalyzed by his arrest and the graphic details surrounding the murders.   Thereafter, he was regarded with disdain and disgust – as an icon of evil and mystery. Thus, the criticism of elitism does not appear justified in the application to the study on Dahmer.

In response to the study's relevance within the South African context, the researcher contends that South African society would benefit from the scientific and developmental study of an individual whose life was characterized by unintelligible violence.   South Africa

is a country rife with crime, including the second highest serial murder rate in the world (Pistorius, 2002). By investigating Dahmer's unique case – as with the idiographic study of any public figure – the researcher aimed to enrich the understanding and further development of psychological theory related to personality development and its application within the investigative and forensic psychology fields.

In response to the second comment, the majority of the biographies on Dahmer were not psychologically-orientated but rather emphasized his crimes and the mystery surrounding him. To date, only Masters's (1993) and Purcell and Arrigo's (2006) presentations of Dahmer were conducted in a semi-biographical style. Whilst Masters attempted to trace and elucidate Dahmer's development as a serial killer, Purcell and Arrigo concentrated on Dahmer as an example of a lust murderer (see Chapter 6).

In response to the criticism that a psychobiographical study on Jeffrey Dahmer is an easy genre, the researcher would disagree. In order to enhance the credibility of the study the researcher triangulated data sources and theoretical perspectives (see section 7.3.8). The multiplicity of data sources – each explored in terms of both the psychosocial and individual personality perspectives – increased the amount of salient data that needed to be collected and analyzed. The multi-dimensional nature of Dahmer's personality and uniqueness of Dahmer's life made this study a complex enterprise.

7.3.6 Infinite Amount of Biographical Data

The primary sources utilized in this study were published materials. These materials were more convenient to access and provided the unique opportunity to cross-reference information and engage with the material on an extended basis. The diversity of published materials included academic and professional articles published on Dahmer; newspaper publications; video footage; and books and biographies that chronicled his lifespan.

The reason that archival data was not included was that many biographers have examined and incorporated the majority of these materials into their published works. Further, the archival records – such as those protected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation – were not easily accessible or retrievable. The advantage of including biographies in the literature study was that these provided the opportunity to collect and analyze personal, psychosocial and lifestyle data documented by biographers who either had direct contact with Dahmer or

those who were in contact with him. Examples of direct contact that were accessed included: (a) biographical video footage of interviews with Dahmer after his arrest that were analyzed in terms of his report of the murders as well as integrated family video recordings that provided more historical and family background from which to view his development, (b) Lionel Dahmer's (1994) book, *A Father's Story* and (c) Robert Ressler's (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) *A Report from the Abyss*, which is an interview with Dahmer.

7.3.7   Inflated Expectations

This researcher recognizes and admits that the case study on Jeffrey Dahmer was primarily conducted from a psychological vantage point. Thus, the study cannot – and the researcher does not – claim to have uncovered the full complexity of the lifestyle and psychosocial development or, indeed the inner life mysteries of a uniquely intriguing individual such as Jeffrey Dahmer.

7.3.8   Validity and Reliability Criticisms

7.3.8.1   Credibility

The primary aim of the research was to explore and describe the complex psychosocial and individual personality development of Jeffrey Dahmer across his lifespan. As such, internal validity was not a major focus of this research study because it is more relevant for causal or explanatory case studies.

However, the researcher recognized that it was important to maintain credibility (Flick, 2006; Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988) to make general inferences throughout the study. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement with, triangulation and in-depth analysis of the multiple sources of biographical materials related to Jeffrey Dahmer. This increased the structural corroboration. The various data sources were examined and cross-referenced to minimize any distorted interpretations (Flick, 2006). Theoretical triangulation was used through the complementary use of the psychosocial and individual personality development theories. Further, investigator triangulation was employed. The supervisor and co-supervisor provided the researcher with constructive critique on the data analysis and collection procedures.

The researcher also engaged in reflexive analysis throughout the study by journalizing his thoughts, feelings, hypotheses, questions and frustrations. In addition to its facilitating the audit, the researcher utilized the journal in order to remain constantly aware of how he – as research instrument – influenced the way that data was collected, analyzed and interpreted.

7.3.8.2 Transferability

The criterion of transferability was not a major concern in this study because the research aim was not to generalize the findings to a larger population through statistical inference. Instead, Dahmer was selected as a unique, complex personality whose life and development were intensively documented and investigated. The findings on Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development were compared with and generalized to the psychosocial and individual personality theories through analytical generalization.

7.3.8.3 Dependability

In order to enhance dependability, the researcher employed a systematic and consistent coding scheme to sort the raw biographical data. The coding system consisted of a conceptual and operational matrix wherein the relevant salient evidence was placed and evaluated. The conceptual framework was grounded upon the psychosocial and lifestyle constructs – as well as Alexander's (1988, 1990) guidelines to extract salient data. A more detailed discussion and exposition of the conceptual framework is provided in Chapter 8.

7.3.8.4 Confirmability

Owing to the iterative process of qualitative research, a continuous audit was used. The research supervisors acted as auditors who evaluated the researcher's work to determine the interpretational confirmability of the research. An audit trail (Krefting, 1991) was maintained by keeping a meticulous record of the process of the study. The researcher kept all documentation regarding raw data; data reduction and analysis; data reconstruction and synthesis; process notes; and materials related to intentions and dispositions to facilitate the audit. Documentation and resourced justification for decisions were made available to the research supervisors to follow the study's progression and understand the decision-making process and nature of interpretations. Reflexive analysis and triangulation methods were further used to enhance the confirmability of the study.

7.3.8.5 Construct Validity

In order to overcome a criticism of low construct validity in this case study research, the researcher conceptualized the components of psychosocial and lifestyle development in a clear and unambiguous fashion. The conceptualizations were based on the research literature on psychosocial development (see Chapter 3) and individual psychology (see Chapter 4). In order to operationalize each construct, a clear set of guidelines was composed and paralleled with the historical eras in Dahmer's personality development over his lifespan. The conceptualizations and operationalizations are discussed further in section 8.7.2.

Sections 7.2 and 7.3 examined the various methodological considerations inherent in psychobiographical research, provided suggestions to minimize these difficulties and explored their relevant applications to the study on Dahmer. In addition to these considerations, the psychobiographer is faced with various ethical considerations throughout the research study. The next section is a discussion of the important ethical considerations inherent to the psychobiographical study of lives and the application of these ethical principles within the present study.

7.4 Psychobiographical Ethics

7.4.1 Psychobiographical Ethics Explained

As a window into a subject's private world, the nature of a psychobiographical study raises ethical concerns about privacy and confidentiality (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982a). The psychobiographer, as a collector of lives, orders data into a coherent and balanced portrayal of an individual's lived life. The psychobiographer is thus forced to consider and resolve the ethical considerations of the research during the preparations of the case study (Elms, 1994). Elms (1994) noted that the first issue that arises relates to choosing whether the psychobiographer will study living individuals or those already deceased. Further issues that arise may relate to questions about what kind of data is permissible to use (Fouchè, 1999), for example, officially archived materials, materials deemed suitable by a subject's family or all available material. Also, the psychobiographer who aims to publish the findings must decide what goes to print, whether the publication is to be a diplomatic, but honestly-phrased presentation or only what the subject's family wishes to hear (Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999).

Elms (1994) highlighted that there are few explicitly stated ethical guidelines for psychobiographical research – and noted the limited involvement of the American Psychological Association in this regard. The American Psychiatric Association, however, has paid greater attention to the ethics of psychobiography and psychohistory. Runyan (1982a) reported that in 1976 the American Psychiatric Association set up a taskforce to formulate ethical guidelines after psychiatrists' opinions were polled about Goldwater's fitness to become the American president. The resultant guidelines were ethically stipulated and are presumed to still be in effect.

These ethical guidelines stipulated that, firstly, psychobiographies should ideally be conducted on long-dead individuals, who preferably have no close surviving relatives who may be embarrassed by any revelations (APA, 1976). Secondly – and with greater ethical concern – psychobiographies may not be conducted on any living person without his prior consent to being studied or interviewed, information collected, or any subsequent publication of findings (APA, 1976). Runyan (1982a) noted an interesting exception to this latter guideline, whereby psychiatrists may ethically prepare official psychobiographical profiles of significant international figures or criminals whose personality development requires understanding in the interest of national safety and security.

Although the aforementioned guidelines do not significantly emphasize confidentiality, Elms (1994) suggested that the psychobiographer should treat all intimate knowledge and documentation with respect. Further, Elms noted that every psychobiography needs to be ethically justified to some degree. He stated that "ethical psychobiography doesn't just avoid the unethical; it adds to our human understanding of ourselves and other human beings" (p. 255).

7.4.2   Psychobiographical Ethics Applied

The researcher chose to study a deceased individual, Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer, which posed fewer ethical considerations. However, the researcher heeded Runyan's (1982a) warning that psychobiographical studies as a whole pose various ethical concerns. The issues, as applied to this study, included privacy and the potential embarrassment to the subject's family. The information collected on Dahmer (see sections 7.3.4, 7.3.6 and 8.6) was based predominantly on published materials that exist in the public domain and are freely accessible. Elms (1994) noted that the psychobiographer has a similar right in research as a journalist to access public

sources. No informed consent from close family was required because of the academic nature of the study and that it is not intended for publication. In addition to this, Dahmer's living relatives have contributed to the plethora of information about him. Owing to the nature of Dahmer's case and its public scrutiny as well as the data sources accessed, there will be no embarrassing revelations. The researcher aimed to produce a valuable academic study with an accurate narrative conceptualization of deeper psychological issues within the specific case of Jeffrey Dahmer.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the importance of recognizing preliminary methodological issues and the minimization of criticisms associated with psychobiographical research methodology. Further, the researcher explored the need to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research as well as the ethical considerations of psychobiography. In Chapter 8, the research design and methodology of this psychobiographical case study are presented.

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

8.1 Chapter Preview

Qualitative research is an iterative process that aims to expound and describe the relationships between people, objects and situations in order to elicit the meanings attributed to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rudestam & Newton, 2001). In this chapter the research design and the psychobiographical subject are presented and the research objectives and method are described. Further, the data collection, extraction and analysis procedures are delineated and discussed. In conclusion, a brief overview of the strategy of reflexivity in qualitative research is explored.

8.2 The Research Design

The present research study on the life of Jeffrey Dahmer may be generally described as life history research (Plummer, 1983; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b) with a qualitative single-case research design (Yin, 1994). Life history research tracks the course and variety of experiences in an individual life (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Runyan, 1982a) and a single-case design is used to test, clarify or challenge the propositions of a theory, particularly against a unique individual case (Yin, 1994). Thus, the research design may be specifically defined as a single-case psychobiographical study over an entire lifespan (Fouchè, 1999). The design serves as a means of inquiry into an individual case through the systematic use of psychological theory to coherently reconstruct and reinterpret a life through an illuminating narrative that contributes to both knowledge and theory-building (McAdams, 1988, 1994).

This qualitative psychobiographical study can further be described as both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature refers to the provision of a rich and accurate description of Dahmer's personality development over his entire lifespan that provides an in-depth understanding of his individual case within his socio-historical context (Fouché & de Vos, 2005; Gilgun, 1994; Neuman, 2003). The descriptive-dialogic nature refers to the faithful portrayal and description of a phenomenon and to the clarification and testing of the content of specific theories (D. Edwards, 1990; Martin, 1996; McLeod, 1994), such as the theories of Erikson (1950) and Adler (1929) highlighted in this study.

8.3   The Psychobiographical Subject

The American serial killer, Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer (1960 – 1994), served as the single case whose life history was uncovered in this psychological biography. The biographical and socio-historical particulars of the life of Jeffrey Dahmer were discussed in Chapter 5. Dahmer's exceptional case is evidenced by his unique personality and life trajectory, which contributed to the mystery and controversy that still surrounds him (Davis, 1995).

A non-probability sampling procedure, purposive sampling, was employed to select the psychobiographical subject.   In purposive sampling, the researcher's judgement is particularly prominent in determining the characteristic attributes desired and to ensure the richness of data (Strydom & Delport, 2005b). Neuman (2003) noted that purposive sampling is effective in conjunction with case study research where (a) the case is especially unique; (b) a part of a difficult-to-reach or specialized population; or (c) where the study's purpose is less to generalize to the larger population than it is to gain a deeper understanding of a type or specific individual. Jeffrey Dahmer – a cannibalistic serial murderer who killed 17 men and boys in 13 years – serves as the single individual selected for study in this qualitative case study. He was selected on the basis of interest value; his unique and contradictory nature; and his controversial lifestyle.

Life history research and psychobiographical literature advocated the need for psychological research on greatness, exemplary lives and exceptional figures (Elms, 1994; Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1982a; Schultz, 2005a; Simonton, 1994). The rationale for conducting this psychobiographical research was thus informed by a pilot literature study of Dahmer that revealed that he was an enigmatic and controversial figure whose life story inspires fear and dread – and fascination (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997; Tithecott, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). The literature review also highlighted that Dahmer's personality development appeared to have theoretical significance and applicability to both Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory and Adler's (1929) individual psychology. Finally, the literature review – which included a review of databases, such as NEXUS, PsycLIT, EBSCOhost and Social Sciences Citation Index – revealed that no psychobiographical research has been conducted on Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan. Further, none of the previous biographies on Dahmer have captured the holistic nature of Dahmer's personality and life or adopted a formalized academic-psychological focus.

The psychological study of exceptional individuals provides the psychobiographer with a scientific approach to understand the various influences and developmental contexts of a specific individual's life (Howe, 1997). Case study research provides the opportunity for the systematic analysis of the complexity of a lived life (Carlson, 1988; Huysamen, 1994; McAdams, 1994) in order to conceptualize the individual's experiences and thereby develop idiographic interpretations (Runyan, 1983). Interpretation in qualitative study means to assign significance or a coherent meaning (Josselson, 1995; Neuman, 2003) that reflects the view of the individuals studied, that is, how they viewed the world and defined situations.

In the qualitative interpretation of historical documents or the text of spoken words or human behaviour, the researcher must ideally learn about the individual's motivations for his actions. Adler (1929) believed that one must be "in possession of an intimate knowledge of the whole individual, so that an understanding of one part becomes possible only after we have understood the whole" (p. 5). The adequacy of interpretation is therefore evidenced by the researcher's data immersion producing a profound understanding of the data and its interrelationships (Krefting, 1991). The researcher therefore aimed to construct a cogent narrative by eliciting an underlying coherence and contextually congruent sense of meaning from the salient biographical information.

8.4 Research Objectives

The psychobiographical life history research conducted in this study was a combination of the inductive and deductive traditions. The inductive approach is demonstrated in the primary objective of the study: To explore and describe Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development across his entire lifespan in terms of Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development and Adler's (1929) individual psychology. This objective reflects the exploratory-descriptive nature of the study in that it involved the in-depth exploration and thick description (Geertz, 1973) of an individual case situated within a specific socio-historical context (D. Edwards, 1990; Yin, 1994).

The deductive approach is reflected in the secondary objective of the study: To informally test the content of the psychosocial and individual personality theories. This objective reflects the descriptive-dialogic nature of the study, which involves a process of informally validating or disconfirming theoretical propositions and conceptualizations by comparing research findings with the expected outcomes or theoretical models (D. Edwards, 1990;

Fouchè, 1999). The descriptive-dialogic approach thus involves a *dialogue* (D. Edwards, 1990) between the exploratory-descriptive findings and the theoretical concepts and propositions. The principle of analytical generalization was used to operationalize the informal testing of the theoretical models (Cavaye, 1996; McLeod, 1994; Yin, 1994).

8.5 Research Method

The psychobiographical research method can be described as qualitative-morphogenic in nature (Elms, 1994). As previously discussed (see section 2.3.6.1), this method refers to the conceptualization of individuality within both the nomothetic and idiographic approaches (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1983; Wallace, 1989). This research method and its complementary single-case design emphasize the individuality of the whole person (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982b, 1983; Schultz, 2005a) through the holistic, qualitative description and interpretation of a single, time-bound, socio-historical entity.

The qualitative methodology of psychobiographical research presents the researcher with numerous challenging obstacles (Fouchè, 1999). These were discussed in Chapter 7 as preliminary methodological considerations that the researcher has identified, recognized and attempted to surmount in this psychobiographical study of Jeffrey Dahmer.

8.6 Data Collection Procedures

The basic units of analysis in the psychobiographical study on Jeffrey Dahmer were biographical materials collected in accordance with the primary aim of the study. The data sources used to collect evidence on Dahmer's life included a variety of published materials as well as select audio-visual media. The biographical materials were defined and demarcated as either primary or secondary sources. Primary sources are materials produced by the subject (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Plummer, 1983; Strydom & Delport, 2005a), including excerpts from interviews. Secondary sources included biographical literature produced by others that focused on Dahmer's life history, development, personality and individuality across his lifespan. The reasons that primarily published materials – as opposed to archival data – were used have been discussed earlier (see section 7.3.6).

The search for, selection of and collection of published data sources on Dahmer were conducted via the Internet and the information-system services at the Library of the Nelson

Mandela Metropolitan University. Several published documents were retrieved from the journal and book collections in various South African universities to supplement the researcher's existing library of film and text related to Dahmer's life. The diversity of used data sources that were collected and consulted were referred to in sections 7.3.4 and 7.3.6 and are indicated in the Reference List. The advantage of fully documenting all the data sources is that it enhances the study's reliability during the data collection phase (Fouchè, 1999; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This provides other researchers with an existing database that can be accessed for later inspection (Yin, 1994).

The analysis and interpretation of biographical materials allowed the researcher to engage with an inaccessible and enigmatic subject at a deeper level. The use of personal documents confronts the researcher with more truthful and detailed information to uncover the intricacies of the subject's worldview that the data was not necessarily designed to reveal (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Plummer, 1983; Simonton, 2003; Strydom & Delport, 2005a). Further advantages of collecting and analyzing published materials in this psychobiographical study were that published materials are (a) stable data sources that could be reviewed repeatedly; (b) useful to verify dates and the correct spelling of names and titles; (c) able to corroborate information from other sources for factual accuracy; (d) relatively accessible; and (e) convenient to access and retrieve in the researcher's own time (Rudestam & Newton, 2001; Yin, 1994).

Yin (1994) did, however, indicate that published materials are subject to the disadvantage of author bias. Especially in light of the sensationalized context of Dahmer's life, the material may have been reported in a biased fashion which thereby compromises its credibility. To overcome author bias and to enhance the internal validity and objectivity of the study, multiple sources of published materials were collected and consulted (Krefting, 1991; Willig, 2001; Yin, 1994). This triangulation of data sources (Neuman, 2003; Tindall, 1999) aided the process of data corroboration (see section 7.2.8). To further prevent and overcome distorted interpretations of the literature, reflexivity (see section 8.8) and investigator triangulation – whereby the research supervisors provided comments and feedback on the data collection and analysis procedures (see section 7.3.8.1) – were used.

Potentially the most difficult task that confronts the psychobiographer is the examination, extraction, categorization and analysis of the collected materials (Alexander, 1988, 1990;

Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005b). The following section is a discussion of the data extraction and analysis procedures utilized in this study.

8.7 Data Extraction and Analysis Procedures

A human life is a dynamic collaboration of events across a lifespan that contribute to the full view of the person of interest. There are certain events in an individual's life that are judged central or defining – and combined, form a major component of personality (Schultz, 2005b). The more ambiguous and complex the personality, the more complicated the task is to nuance. Data in qualitative analysis is usually in the form of textual narrative that can be analyzed by extracting emergent themes or constructs (Creswell, 1994; Schurink, 1998). Qualitative data analysis emphasizes the words and phrases in a subject's vocabulary that capture and elucidate meaning (Creswell, 1998; Neuman, 2003).

The psychobiographer is faced with an excess of fact and opinion and must clearly demarcate what content may be set aside and safely ignored and which content will be privileged (Schultz, 2005b). Once gathered, a central problem is to order the information in a way that reveals the data it contains (Alexander, 1990). The utility of psychobiography is to highlight salient events of an individual life and apply psychological theory in order to organize the data into a compelling narrative. The psychobiographer, thus, must be sensitive to the clues in the data that suggest how the story of a person's life is to be discovered, created and told (McAdams, 1994). The individual's life must be understood within its particular social, cultural and historical context – and not merely reduced to causal notions of early experience or force-fitted into theory (McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a). Psychobiographical sophistication is based on the complementarity between data and theory, where the researcher has applied psychological theory to interpret the complexity of a human life (Alexander, 1990; Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a).

Yin (1994) described case study analysis as the process of examining, extracting, categorizing and recombining evidence. Yin advised that the collected data be approached from a systematic and general analytic stance and proposed two strategies: (a) data analysis guided by the theoretical approaches and objectives and (b) a case description. In the first strategy, the researcher relies on the theoretical orientation and research objectives to identify and selectively focus attention on salient data in the collected material. This requires the researcher to raise questions that will provide answers to, or insight into, both the objectives

of the study and the content of the theoretical approaches utilized (Fouchè, 1999). A more detailed discussion of this strategy and its related processes are provided in section 8.7.1. The second strategy is to develop a descriptive framework to organize and integrate case information. An example of this specific analytic technique is to develop a conceptual matrix that facilitates data extraction (Fouchè, 1999). This strategy is discussed in more detail in section 8.7.2.

8.7.1   Alexander's Model

Alexander's (1988, 1990) model to organize, prioritize and analyze biographical data follows a similar analytic structure to that proposed by Yin (1994). Alexander's model was utilized in this study as a way to extract core-identifying units, which are also referred to as themes or schemes, from the biographical data. The extraction of these core units occurred through two methods: (a) 'asking the data questions' by extracting and systematically categorizing information into themes of personality development that correspond to the theories used to achieve the aim of the study; and (b) 'letting the data reveal itself' by identifying salient data that helps to reduce information into manageable quantities. The use of this method increased the trustworthiness (Krefting, 1991; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of the study as a vital dialogue was created between the extracted data and the theory (Alexander, 1990; D. Edwards, 1990) for analytical generalization (Yin, 1994).

8.7.1.1   Questioning the Data

The first method used to approach the collected materials involved 'asking the data questions'. This technique facilitated the sorting of large amounts of information to answer questions operationalized within the personality theories applied in order to reveal critical information about the person under study (Alexander, 1988, 1990). The researcher approached the collected materials on Dahmer with two general questions that served to extract relevant core identifying units that attain the objectives of the study.

The first question is: "How is personality development conceptualized in this study?". To answer question one, the researcher conceptualized Dahmer's personality development across his lifespan according to (a) Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of personality development and (b) Adler's (1929) individual psychology. A comprehensive theoretical and literature review of the two theoretical frameworks highlighted the complementarity of the two

perspectives. Both Erikson and Adler emphasized the biopsychosocial nature of personality development as well as the importance of the individual's choice of response to life events. Yin (1994) argued that clear conceptualizations in case study research enhance the operationalization of significant units of analysis. A detailed discussion of the definitions, descriptions and characteristics of the contents of each of the theories were provided in Chapters 3 and 4.

The second question is: "How will a dialogue be created between the data extracted and the content of the theories of personality development applied in this study?". To answer the second question, the researcher implemented the technique of analytical generalization (see section 2.3.6.5). Through the process of informally testing the applied theories, the researcher critically compared the extracted units of information with the conceptualizations and propositions of Erikson's (1950) psychosocial development theory and Adler's (1929) individual psychology.

For example, the collected data on Dahmer indicated that his disregard for human life was indicative of his lack of attachment (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Tithecott, 1997). This social detachment is characteristic of isolation in Eriksonian theory (see section 3.4.2.6) and a ruling lifestyle in Adlerian theory (see section 4.7.2.1). In this regard, the collected data and an aspect of each theory coincide. However, neither theory describes the development of these two constructs to the extent that they exhibit a psychological need for mutilation, cannibalism and necrophilia. The dialogue between the theoretical content and collected data thus also presents a degree of uncertainty. The researcher contends that this vital dialogue creates the possibility and scope for future research and clarification of such lacunae in personality theory.

8.7.1.2 Letting the Data Reveal Itself

The second method of data extraction is 'letting the data reveal itself'. During the examination of collected materials, the researcher took cognizance of the manner in which authors imparted the significance of the content in their written work. Here the construct, *significance*, refers to principle identifiers of salience (Alexander, 1988; Fouchè, 1999; Schultz, 2005b). The researcher used a set of rules – designed to identify which sections of the material required further scrutiny – to sort the raw data and reduce it to manageable proportions (Alexander, 1988, 1990). Alexander (1988, 1990) postulated nine guidelines to

extract salient data. These guidelines provided the researcher with an overall impression of what information or descriptions were significant in terms of the study. Each guideline is described below and an example provided as to how the researcher applied it to the database of this particular study.

1. *Primacy* refers to the fact that information presented first is commonly perceived as being most important or foremost in mind (Elms, 1994). In psychotherapy, the first few moments of any communication are seen as crucial to unravel what ensues and in writing, paragraphs are begun with a topic sentence whose meaning is elaborated in the sentences that follow (Alexander, 1990; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b). Elms (1994) considered early memories, first experiences and an autobiography's introductory remarks worthy of special attention. These provide the foundation upon which further communication is built and an initial sense of the themes that may emerge (Schultz, 2005b).

   The notion of primacy is evidenced when, at the age of 18, Dahmer murdered his first victim, Steven Hicks. This incident would initiate a pattern of emotional and behavioural reactions. Dahmer was initially frightened at his extreme behaviour (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) before he sexually assaulted Hicks's corpse and disposed of the body as he had practiced on road kill. This was also the first time that Dahmer was almost caught and therefore demonstrated his ability to remain calm under extreme distress and successfully manipulate the police. Dahmer – though unable to name his later victims – could identify Hicks by name, stating, "You don't forget your first one" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 197). This instance of his fantasy emerging in reality thus heralds his genesis as a serial killer. "That one impulsive night ... Nothing's been normal since then. It taints your whole life. After it happened I thought that I'd just try to live as normally as possible and bury it, but things like that don't stay buried" (Masters, 1993, p. 70).

2. *Frequency* refers to the repetition of information. Repeated or obsessive reference to a message or incident is an indication of increased certainty regarding its importance (Alexander, 1988). Although monotony may decrease awareness or perceived importance of a message, the significance thereof should be investigated (Elms, 1994). Further, Schultz (2005b) suggested that psychobiographers should focus on their

subjects' obsessions. Obsessions, he argued, tell fundamentally revealing stories, the importance of which to the subject must be explored.

The literature review on Dahmer's life revealed that a majority of the authors repeatedly marvelled at how remarkably normal Dahmer was and emphasized that the actions of the 'Milwaukee Cannibal' both repulsed and fascinated a nation (Davis, 1995; Egger, 2002; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). "His very normalcy was insulting. ... People were not prepared to imagine that insanity may be invisible" (Masters, 1993, p. 20). Further, frequent reference was made to Dahmer's obsession with bones, internal organs and the inner working of the human machine (Davis, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

3. *Uniqueness* refers to departures in the collected information that are worth closer inspection because they are unusual or singular (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). Obvious examples are often preceded by exclamations of 'nothing like this has happened to me before' or 'the strangest thing happened to me' (Alexander, 1988, 1990). The researcher must also notice more subtle expressions of discrepancy within the body of biographical data. Alexander mentioned that the use of various comparative baselines of normalcy in accepted language or cultural expectations facilitates the identification of indicators of uniqueness.

An instance of uniqueness in Dahmer's life occurred during his time served in the work-release programme in 1989. Dahmer claimed that he was embarrassed to face his family for Thanksgiving Weekend and went out drinking instead. On this occasion Dahmer was drugged and violated with a candle (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer claimed that he did remember feeling like a victim, but that the abduction had no effect on his later crimes (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

4. *Negation* refers to that which is denied or tuned into its opposite (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). A subject's perception of who he is, is as important as his emphasis on who he is not (Elms, 1994). Negation statements are often indicators of possibly repressed or unconscious material (Alexander, 1988; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b) or 'truths' that the person wants others to believe – or wants to believe himself (Elms, 1994). Essentially, the subject is "protesting too much" (Schultz, 2005b, p. 47) against a

psychological or biographical fact. It is this disavowal – that may be a confirmation of its opposite – that raises further inquiry.

An example of negation is illustrated in the contrast between Dahmer's actions and insistence that he neither enjoyed the killing nor wanted the victims to suffer (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). A further example is that upon his apprehension, Dahmer was eager to make a full confession to the police and investigating psychiatrists. Dahmer stated that he wanted to "get it all out on the table" (Masters, 1993, p. 216). However, his answers remained monosyllabic (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), reflecting a life that was characterized by habitual emotional distance and resistance to intimate communication (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He would later claim that, "It's a relief not to have any secrets anymore" (Masters, 1993, p. 216), yet he is still enshrouded in mystery.

5. *Emphasis* refers to information that has been unduly stressed or noticeably underscored. Alexander (1988) noted that information may be overemphasized, underemphasized or the emphasis misplaced. The psychobiographer must be aware when a mundane event is afforded excessive attention; when a major life experienced is glossed over with deficient comment; or when irrelevancy is stressed with undue force (Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005b), respectively. A literature review of Dahmer's life revealed that whilst his actions have been sensationalized, biographers have generally underemphasized his personality development and misplaced emphasis on the trial and the failure of the psychiatrists to define sanity or effectively classify Dahmer.

6. *Omission* refers to that which is missing – particularly the absence of expected content (Schultz, 2005b). Elms (1994) called this the 'Sherlock Holmes' rule whereby questioning what is missing, a vital clue in the puzzle of the whole life may be identified. The nature of the omission must be investigated for its repetitive properties (Alexander, 1990). Alexander (1988) noted that in favouring rich descriptions of actions or events, affect is most often neglected in biographical data. Documentation of Dahmer's actions has been gruesomely detailed, but the existing materials lack in-depth exploration of Dahmer's inner world and emotions. The present researcher holds that whilst Dahmer's fantasies have been ostensibly discussed, his primitive spiritual being – evidenced in

cannibalism, his intended shrine, 'Infinity Land' as well as his latent religiosity – has been omitted, accentuating his mysticism.

7. *Error or distortion* refers to the presence of mistakes, often related to person, place or time (Schultz, 2005b). From a psychoanalytic perspective, errors may highlight hidden motives or conflicts (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994) that beg closer attention. Dahmer's confession and subsequent interviews showed minor discrepancies. Dahmer had difficulty with identifying the victims as he claimed to merely view the victim as "an inanimate object" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 158). This inability to identify victims beyond knowledge of where and when he found them or what he did to each (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) emphasizes his objectification and depersonalization of the victims. Further, there were significant inconsistencies in the various texts about details regarding Dahmer's life. The sensationalism of Dahmer's cannibalism, for example, which involved his eating the bicep of one victim (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; King, 2004; Masters, 1993), did not reflect the moniker of 'Milwaukee Cannibal'.

8. *Isolation* refers to information that stands alone or does not 'fit' (Alexander, 1988; 1990). Important material is contained in instances where one questions the sense or logic of information within the presented context (Elms, 1994). Schultz (2005b) argued that such instances serve as markers whose optimal purpose is to uncover the deeper meaning of the isolated fragment of the unconscious. The researcher found that most of the collected material on Dahmer to be relatively similar and coherent. However, Schwartz (1992) noted that Dahmer contacted the families of several victims confessing that he had killed their loved ones. In the context of (a) Dahmer's actions apparently not being driven by the desire to torture (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993); (b) the particular instance noted occurring a year after the murder of a victim of whom Dahmer did not even keep photographs (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); and (c) his reticence to communicate or confess (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) marks this section as one that may be interpreted as isolated.

9. *Incompletion* refers to that which is not finished. Incompletion is essentially an indication of a topic that is introduced, but terminated without closure (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). The outcome lacks an explanatory means-end relationship (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b), that is, one is left with the distinct impression that an essential aspect

required to understand the person is lacking. Schultz (2005b) described instances of incompletion as avoidance of certain thoughts or actions and any associated potentially negative emotional consequences. Dahmer admitted that on the night he was arrested he thought of destroying his burgeoning collection of souvenirs to perhaps start afresh with a partner (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Torn about having to part with his precious keepsakes, Dahmer was arrested before he could destroy his collection and potentially enter a new era in his life outside Apartment 213. Instead, he was arrested without killing Edwards and felt condemned, as he articulated, to a "sense of total, final hopelessness ... a life of nothingness, years and years of bland desperation" (Masters, 1993, p. 217).

The nine identifiers of salience provided the researcher with guidelines to reflect on the collected material in a consistent and systematic fashion (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Fouchè, 1999). By following the guidelines to extract salient data and asking questions related to the theoretical perspectives and research aim, the researcher attempted to establish a consistent analytic approach in order to enhance the study's trustworthiness (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b). The researcher further developed a conceptual framework as a matrix of categories wherein to contextualize the information and facilitate data analysis towards a greater understanding of the psychobiographical subject. The use of a systematic model based on the theories applied served to enhance the auditability of the study (Fouchè, 1999). The next section provides a more detailed discussion of this conceptual matrix.

8.7.2 A Conceptual Framework and Matrix

Miles and Huberman (1994) indicated that a clear working framework is essential in the data management process. Data management is the systematic, coherent process of data collection, storage and retrieval (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thus, in order to facilitate the process of the data's revealing itself, the researcher developed a conceptual framework to organize and integrate psychobiographical data in relation to the personality theories applied in the study. A matrix was used to categorize the stages of Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory and the components of Adler's (1929) individual psychology across the major life periods over Dahmer's lifespan. These periods facilitated a consistent and systematic method whereby the collected data was used to illuminate Dahmer's personality development. This 'Matrix of Personality Development across the Historical Lifespan of Jeffrey Dahmer' is schematically presented in Table 8.1.

In Table 8.1, the vertical columns represent the personality theories applied in the study and the horizontal rows represent the major historical periods over Dahmer's lifespan. Once the relevant salient data of Dahmer's life was uncovered, it was recorded and conceptualized within this descriptive systematic framework.

Table 8.1

Matrix of Personality Development across the Historical Lifespan of Jeffrey Dahmer

PERIODS IN HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT					
	Structure of Personality		Development of a Lifestyle		Motivational Dynamics	
	Constitutional Attributes	Social Environment	Individual's Creative Contribution		Compensation as Striving for Superiority	
	Creative Self	Lifestyle	Creative Self & Constitutional Factors	Creative Self & Social Environment	Striving for Power	Social Interest
	Guided by Fictional Goal					
	PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT					
	Trust vs Mistrust (0 - 1)	Autonomy vs Shame/ Doubt (1 - 3)	Initiative vs Guilt (3 - 6)	Industry vs Inferiority (6 - 12)	Identity vs Confusion (12 - 18)	Intimacy vs Isolation (18 - 40)
Childhood of Fantasy (0 - 12)					▨	▨
The Quiet Loner (12 - 18)	▨	▨	▨	▨		▨
Hiatus - or Build-up (18 - 27)	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Seeking a Compliant Partner (27 - 31)	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Arrest, Trial & Death (31 - 34)	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	

The first or top set of vertical columns represents Adler's (1929) individual psychology. During the collection, extraction and analysis of salient biographical information related to Adlerian theory, the researcher focused on the experiences that shaped and influenced Dahmer's construction of his individual lifestyle. As such, the development of his particular lifestyle was evaluated within the main constructs of structure, development and motivational dynamics as well as the guiding fictional goal that underlies this theoretical perspective. Each of these constructs was previously discussed in Chapter 4.

The second set of vertical columns represents Erikson's (1950) psychosocial personality theory, in terms of the six psychosocial stages that Dahmer experienced. During the collection, extraction and analysis of salient biographical data related to Dahmer's psychosocial development, attention was paid to the developmental crises that correspond to Dahmer's social and psychological development. The psychosocial stages and the development of identity were discussed in Chapter 3.

The horizontal rows represent the historical lifespan dimension of the matrix. Operationalized, the first period of 12 years was divided into Erikson's first four stages, the second period corresponds with the fifth stage and the final three periods fall under the sixth stage of intimacy versus isolation. Owing to the dynamic, interrelated nature of Adlerian theory – represented by the broken lines – the guiding fictional goal and the interactive aspects of structure, development and dynamics were evaluated within the tasks of life in each historical period. The five historical periods – demarcated according to the historical overview of Dahmer's life in Chapter 5 – provided a longitudinal portrait whereby to trace psychosocial and individual personality development. Yin (1994) described this chronology as a 'time-series' approach whereby the researcher can trace developmental trends or changes over time.

Most of the biographies on Dahmer covered much of his life, but rarely followed a consistent chronological structure. The historical periods thus provided the researcher with a systematic and consistent approach whereby relevant materials were evaluated within each periodic context. Not all the collected materials were in the form of biographies, but also included journal articles, interview excerpts, newspaper articles and video footage that were further evaluated within the socio-historical periods to which they referred (Fouchè, 1999; Plummer, 1983; Yin, 1994). The consistency of the chronological timeline enhanced the reliability of the data analysis process (Carlson, 1988; Fouchè, 1999; Miles & Huberman,

1994; Yin, 1994) and facilitated the researcher's making interpretations and drawing meaning from the displayed data in the descriptive framework of Dahmer's lifespan.

The researcher recognized that various theoretical perspectives may view the collected information differently. The conceptual matrix served as a means to integrate the various life forces and psychological development to reconstruct and interpret the complex pattern of Dahmer's personality development throughout the conceptualized life periods. In investigating each life period according to the two theoretical orientations, attention was also given to relevant life forces, such as family, education, religion, community and life experiences that may have impacted upon Dahmer's personality development. Both the psychosocial and individual psychology perspectives emphasize this multitude of influential socio-cultural and historical factors in individual development.

8.8 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is perhaps the most distinctive feature of qualitative research (J. A. Smith, 2003; Tindall, 1999). The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the researcher and the researched are collaborators in the construction of knowledge (Ashworth, 2003; Taylor, 1999; Tindall, 1999) and description of meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Willig, 2001). Reflexivity or reflexive analysis urges researchers to acknowledge, explore and demonstrate the way in which their perspectives and involvement in the context and process of research influences and informs the research findings (Silverman, 2001; Taylor, 1999; Willig, 2001).

Roberts (2002) described qualitative biographical work as imaginative, that is, creative, image-laden, exploratory and reflexive, wherein researchers are participants whose lifeworlds are integral to qualitative research. Researchers' failure to be critically aware of their central position in the social construction of knowledge (Tindall, 1999) or the complex relationship between the researcher and subject in terms of experiences and their descriptions of social realities (Maturana, 1991) can undermine the validity of research (Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001). Reflexive analysis may be described as researchers' awareness of their contribution to the construction of meaning throughout the research process (Wilkinson, 1988; Willig, 2001) as well as the acknowledgement of the impossibility of complete objectivity (Hart, 1998; Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001).

Reflexivity ensures that the entire research process is scrutinized and that researchers continuously review their role in the research, which discourages impositions of meaning and thus promotes validity (Willig, 2001). Reflexive analysis is used to assess the influence of the researcher's background, perceptions and interests on the qualitative research process (Krefting, 1991). This critical reflection allows researchers to assess the restrictions they impose on research (Stroud, 2004). Researchers' assumptions and judgements are based on the world in which they live and these subjective perceptions are loaded with personal meanings created in the collaboration with others in specific contexts (Stroud, 2004).

Personal reflexivity relates to the researcher's reflection of his values, experiences, interests, beliefs and social identity that shaped the research (Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001). Epistemological reflexivity encourages researchers to reflect on the assumptions about the world and about knowledge employed in the course of research and helps to think about the implications of such assumptions for the research findings (Hart, 1998; Willig, 2001). Reflexivity recognizes that each reader will create a new meaning (Parker, 1999). Meaning is therefore the product of the interdependent collaboration between the subject, researcher and observers (Stroud, 2004). The collaboration between the researcher and subject should be shared in order to invite other researchers to think differently about their way of practice and research (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Richardson & St Pierre, 2005).

In order to maintain reflexivity, the researcher used a journal (Krefting, 1991; Tindall, 1999) to describe, explore, reflect and interpret his experience within the context of the research. The researcher examined his choice of topic, initial purpose and intention, experiences, notes, decisions, rationales, feelings and interpretations. Krefting (1991) noted that in journalizing thoughts and feelings researchers may recognize any preconceived assumptions and biases in order to alter the way in which data is collected and interpreted, which further enhances the credibility of the study. Brief reflexive analysis was integrated into the introduction and problem statement in section 1.5 as 'The Researcher's Personal Passage' as well as the limitations and recommendations of the study in section 12.5 as 'General Thoughts and Remarks'. These sections are provided to allow the reader the opportunity to judge the context and perspectives wherein the research was shaped (Tindall, 1999) and to re-analyze material and possibly develop alternative interpretations and explanations.

8.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the research design and methodology of this psychological biography on Jeffrey Dahmer's life were discussed. Specific attention was given to the 'questioning' of the data, identifying salience and the use of a conceptual framework to categorize data. The results of this study are discussed in the three chapters that follow. Chapter 9 is a discussion of the findings on Dahmer's psychosocial development. Chapter 10 provides a discussion of the findings related to Dahmer's personality development according to individual psychology. Chapter 11 is a summative chapter that integrates the findings based on the personality theories applied in the study.

CHAPTER 9

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:
THE PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF JEFFREY DAHMER

9.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter, the psychosocial personality development of Jeffrey Dahmer is presented and discussed. First, a conceptual outline of the presentation and discussion of the findings is provided. Thereafter, each of the six life stages that Dahmer experienced is separately explicated according to the conceptual matrix described in Chapter 8. Owing to the qualitative nature of the biographical format and the accretion of the stage theory, the chapter is quite comprehensive.

9.2 Conceptual Outline for the Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The presentation and discussion of findings in a psychobiographical case study involves a biographical account of the subject's life history within the context of the selected psychological theory (Bromley, 1986; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1988; Schultz, 2005a). The exploratory, descriptive and dialogic nature of the psychobiographical research design and methodology (see sections 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7) requires that the collection, extraction, analysis and presentation of salient biographical data is conducted within the context of the theoretical approach to the subject (Fouchè, 1999). D. Edwards (1990) referred to this as the descriptive-dialogic approach to the discussion of research findings.

Owing to Dahmer's death at age 34, the first six developmental stages proposed by Erikson (1950) are presented and discussed separately across each of the five historical periods throughout Dahmer's lifespan. Referenced examples that relate to each of the presented developmental crises are provided. These examples are discussed in relation to Dahmer's identity development, by exploring the developmental opposites and potential ego strengths of each crisis; malignancies and/ or maladaptations; and the modalities proposed by the theory. The value of this psychobiographical case study research is thus that Dahmer's life may be seen in light of its end. Therefore, each stage is also enriched with examples from Dahmer's later life that supplement its exploration to provide a more holistic view than one restricted by either (a) a lack of information on a particular stage or (b) the reductionism of a life to merely distinct psychological concepts.

9.3 Dahmer's Psychosocial Personality Development

9.3.1   Childhood of Fantasy

9.3.1.1   Stage 1: Basic Trust versus Mistrust (Age 0 – 1)

9.3.1.1.1   Trust

The first psychosocial stage, which spans approximately the first year of life, is characterized by the developmental crisis: basic trust versus mistrust (Erikson, 1950). According to Erikson (1950) the development of trust is based on the quality of relationship between the infant and the primary caregiver: in this case, between Jeffrey Dahmer and his mother, Joyce. The development of the attachment bond is an important aspect of emotional and social development as it promotes contact and intimacy (Erikson, 1968; Shaffer, 1999).

Infants test the environment and the response elicited from the caregivers shape not only expectations, beliefs and attitudes about interpersonal relationships, but also a pattern of behaviour (Erikson, 1950, 1963a). The interaction with, and feedback from, the environment creates a sense of reality and an estimation of self-worth and self-esteem (Erikson, 1968; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Infants therefore learn (a) whether the primary figure can be depended on to consistently satisfy the needs of sustenance, care, contact and a sense of safety (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Erikson, 1963a) and (b) a representation of self – a numinous sense of being (Erikson, 1977) – and whether or not that self is the type of person to whom anyone is likely to react positively (Erikson, 1950, 1963a).

Dahmer's early emotional development is naturally not recorded nor is the quality of his early relationship with his mother. The available literature indicated that Joyce had trouble with breastfeeding and stopped after a week (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). This incident should not be overvalued, but it is necessary to consider the effect of the withdrawal of contact. Whilst some children may be easily comforted with the bottle, others may experience this change as rejection and abandonment (Masters, 1993). As the development of trust is incorporated in this oral stage, it follows that Dahmer's perception of this rejection and distance are likewise incorporated into the view of the external world and place in the world – and gradually presumed as natural.

A secure attachment facilitates the development of basic trust in the environment and one's own trustworthiness. Trust is thus a state of being and responding (Erikson, 1968), based on the mutuality of giving and receiving (Erikson, 1963a). The researcher hypothesizes that Dahmer failed to acquire the mutuality inherent in the positive resolution of this stage as his later behaviour showed a marked inability to trust in relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's interactions with others remained superficial throughout his life (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The most striking instances were evidenced in his interactions with partners and victims. Dahmer's sexual experimentation in the bathhouses indicated that he did not enjoy consensual sexual intercourse, but preferred to drug his partners so that he could enjoy their still bodies as he desired: "I looked at it as an experience of taking. There wasn't any mutual giving, not in my mind anyway. I was always quite selfish" (Masters, 1993, p. 93). Similarly, the act of murder may be viewed as an expression of extreme self-indulgence, with complete disregard for others and the lacking capacity to risk a reciprocal relationship (Ressler et al., 1992).

If the environment is perceived as unresponsive or characterized by abandonment or neglect, mistrust develops (Erikson, 1963a). Although infants eventually learn to adjust to this state of failed mutuality, there is increased potential for a generalized negative view of the social world (Erikson, 1977; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). As a child, Dahmer was neither troublesome nor especially demanding (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) which suggested that either he displayed an early, inner deadness or possibly that he learned not to expect much attention from his primary caregivers. Dahmer's experience of these early, natural frustrations regarding parental inadequacy and absence may have resulted in a sense of deprivation and abandonment. These diffuse experiences may not have been balanced by a significant experience of integration, but rather tainted by the potential threat and lack of social meaning in relationships. Erikson (1968) noted that early frustrations and experiences of mistrust are accompanied by the experience of rage, with fantasies of total domination or even destruction of the sources of pleasure and provision – and that such fantasies and rages live on in the individual and are revived in extreme states and situations.

9.3.1.1.2 Physical Development and the Environment

An infant's interaction with the wider social environment is crucial as the child becomes more active and physical development proceeds (Erikson, 1963a, 1977). The available literature of Dahmer's life indicated little information pertaining to his physical development

during this stage. The researcher suggests that the lack of information reflected that it is unlikely that Dahmer's physical development significantly impacted upon his personality development. Whereas the lack of trust in the environment might have inhibited the exploration of the environment Dahmer explored around the house (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer (1994) reported an incident where Jeffrey had fallen over and was swept into the house and comforted. The literature therefore highlighted that whilst Dahmer's behaviour exhibited withdrawal and mistrust, he did not grow up in a completely neglectful and uncaring environment. Bearing this in mind, one must recognize that the infant Dahmer may have perceived the nurturance as relatively inconsistent – despite Lionel Dahmer's assertion that Jeffrey's mother was home and "seeing to his every need" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 42).

Infants that experience the social world as threatening – based on interactions with inconsistent, neglectful or rejecting caregivers – are less equipped to cope with stressful situations because of negative experiences about their ability to control the environment and about the lack of dependability and trustworthiness of others (Erikson, 1963a; Corey, 2005). The researcher contends that this may be seen in Eriksonian terms as a lack of hope. Consequently, when mistrusting individuals are faced with stressful or threatening situations, they lack the personal and interpersonal resources required to effectively regulate their emotions and manage the situation successfully (Erikson, 1950, 1963a).

9.3.1.1.3 Dahmer's Mistrust

Erikson (1963a) argued that mistrust characterizes individuals who withdraw into themselves when at odds with themselves and with others. The researcher interpreted this in terms of the holistic view of the theory to indicate that such individuals lack the development of an early consistent sense of self that can be risked in interaction with others. As a means of adaptation in response to the environment, these individuals withdraw from people around them, the perceived hostility of the world and the danger of interpersonal relationships (Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Santrock, 2001).

Dahmer, paradoxically, killed so that he would not be alone. Dahmer killed many of his victims after they stated that they wanted to leave him, which he viewed as rejection and abandonment (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). The researcher viewed this as a potentially scripted trigger for the murders. Dahmer was able

to keep their bodies for a short time and retained souvenirs of most of the victims – their essence, as he described it (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

9.3.1.1.4 Dahmer's Withdrawal

Erikson described an excess of mistrust as the malignant characteristic of withdrawal (Boeree, 2006a). Perhaps the most pervasive aspect of Dahmer's behaviour throughout his life was withdrawal and isolation from relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), which he took to his own idiographic extreme. When the family moved into the house in Bath, Dahmer experienced the bliss of solitude while playing in the woods. At age 10, he distanced himself even further from the family as he feared for his mother's health (Masters, 1993). By the time he lived with his grandmother (see Chapter 5), Dahmer had no friends or significant relationships and later, responded to partners and victims through drugging and murder, respectively (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

Dahmer's withdrawal became most apparent from the age of six, when he fell into a more darkened and increasingly fearful mood (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He showed significant difficulty at being viewed as the 'new kid' in school and this compounded his extreme shyness (Masters, 1993). Whilst a teacher viewed him as feeling neglected and incapable of engaging with others, his parents believed that he had difficulty with change (Dahmer, 1994). However, the researcher holds that one of the most interesting aspects of Dahmer's personality was his ability to adapt to different situations and even be able to form superficial relationships. He was described as withdrawn, shy and lonely and his father later realized that he "suffered near total isolation" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 66). Dahmer – though one might argue that he never truly connected with his family – became increasingly estranged and resigned after his brother's birth (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Whereas he was hardly demanding and accustomed to the home situation, his brother demanded much of his parents' time and therefore Jeffrey fell increasingly into the background (Dahmer, 1994).

9.3.1.1.5 Hope

Owing to the basic sense of mistrust and the idiographic expression of withdrawal, psychosocial theory holds that Dahmer did not develop the ego strength of hope. Hope is characterized by the sensible faith in the environment and the developing self as well as the

hopeful belief that future challenges and disappointments can be dealt with successfully (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b).

Dahmer's friendships throughout his school career were limited and superficial. Despite Dahmer's being described as isolated, lonely, shy, awkward and withdrawn (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997) he still seemed to be able to form crucial – or perhaps, necessary – relations with peers. At Eastview Junior High, Dahmer even displayed trust to the extent that he brought David Borsvold to the periphery of his fantasy life by sharing his 'Infinity Land' (Masters, 1993). Any friendship or social interaction requires (a) a sense of trust in another; (b) the risk and hope to be accepted; and (c) the trust in oneself to risk initiation or involvement (Erikson, 1974; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). The researcher suggests that although Dahmer experienced his early interactions with a sense of mistrust, he still held the intrinsic ability to trust to a minimal degree. However, the experiences of betrayal over years of socialized experience (see Chapter 5) – no doubt doubly felt because of a fear of rejection – resulted in his increased withdrawal from relationships in adolescence and eventual absence of relationships in adulthood, beyond the most superficial.

Dahmer's adolescent and adult behaviour showed an ever-decreasing trust in the environment and future. At school, where he already feared the rejection of peers, he reached out to, and was betrayed by, a teacher. His reaction to kill the tadpoles (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) that represented his trust, his hope or maybe his final innocence was vindictive and incisive. In the weeks prior to his arrest, Dahmer's was progressively more depressive, detached and lethargic (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and apparently considered suicide because he believed that his life could not improve (Masters, 1993). Dahmer did not seem to trust or hope in the future or himself and throughout his life story it was evident that Dahmer did not cope well with disappointment (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Erikson (1968, p. 114) formulated the contribution of the first stage to identity as: "I am what hope I have to give". The view of the infant Dahmer and the murderer, Jeffrey Dahmer suggested the following narrative conceptualization: I have no hope, certainly none to give – I am empty. However, the contradictions in Dahmer's nature cannot be contained by such absolutes. Even when Dahmer committed his 15th murder (see section 9.3.4.1.6), he still allowed Weinberger a dangerous amount of trust – though it would be inevitably 'betrayed'.

However, this suggested that there was still hope for Dahmer and, perhaps, hope in Dahmer. The ambiguity inherent in such a powerful word such as hope highlights the necessity to consider (a) the degree of resolution of each crisis, that is, its idiographic balance and development of its ego strength and (b) to decide whether hope – that indispensable final gift to humankind still contained in Pandora's Box – is truly mutable.

9.3.1.2 Stage 2: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (Age 1 – 3)

Before the discussion of Dahmer's development in the second stage can be addressed, the researcher must highlight that the developmental delay of withdrawal impacts upon the second stage. Erikson (1950, 1963a) held that if the individual experiences an exceptional environment a previous delay may be overcome. However, the epigenetic principle holds that the unsuccessful resolution of a previous stage will impact on all later development (Erikson, 1950; Sadock & Sadock, 2003). The impact of the malignancy of withdrawal that is apparent throughout Dahmer's life, however, cannot be easily gauged in terms of its impact upon the second stage – or the accruing impact upon personality development in general. As each individual would experience a delay – or resolution – idiographically, this suggests that identity development is open to a wide range of possible interpretations and permutations.

9.3.1.2.1 Autonomy

During the second psychosocial stage, toddlers must develop a sense of independence and minimize feelings of shame and doubt (Erikson, 1950). Through increased muscular control, physical development provides the highly dependent child with a sense of autonomous will. There is little specific information regarding Dahmer's motor and physical development during this stage and thus his successes and failures are not well documented. Jeffrey was described as a healthy and vigorous child who (a) played outside, (b) sat contentedly in his room with his toys or (c) watched animals (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Parents are important figures in this stage as they must allow their children to exercise increasing autonomy, but deal carefully with failures so that the child's self-confidence is not compromised by overwhelming shame and doubt (Erikson, 1963a, 1968). Dahmer's exploration does not seem to have been restricted, which suggested that he was able to construct an individual sense of confidence and autonomy. However, the researcher recognized that the shortage of information makes it difficult to judge his degree of

autonomous will through muscular control – and its impact on personality development. As toddlers negotiate independent exploration and making mistakes, they are exposed to social, cultural and familial values and standards of behaviour (Corey, 2005; Hoare, 2002). This, in turn, leads to the potential for failure and feelings of shame and doubt about their abilities and sense of independent being (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Welchman, 2000).

9.3.1.2.2   Shame and Doubt

Although there is little information regarding Dahmer's experience of shame and doubt, the researcher argues that Dahmer did experience this aspect of the developmental crisis. Dahmer's demeanour at his various arrests or being caught at various infractions (see Chapter 5) was often described as embarrassed (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), contrite (Dahmer, 1994) and ashamed (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). It is important to note, however, that Dahmer used his contrition and embarrassment. For example, before his being sentenced for sexual molestation he addressed the judge and appeared "very contrite. He told the judge that he understood the nature of his crime and that he was ashamed" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 138). Whether or not he used contrition merely as a mask, Dahmer's embarrassment and shame – though only at being caught – suggested that he experienced a sense of shame and doubt during this stage. Further, the researcher argues that judicious ritualization (Erikson, 1977) occurred through family socialization as Dahmer's was able to understand right from wrong (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

This view of Dahmer's experience of shame and doubt can be further augmented by taking into account the developmental 'backlog' from the first stage. Erikson (1968) suggested that excessive shaming may lead to a secret determination to 'get away' with things when unseen. The researcher argues that – at least in terms of Dahmer's later life – he implemented the isolation and withdrawal as a way to avoid shame, which itself requires a certain amount of initiative. In childhood and adolescence, withdrawal into the woods or fantasy world, respectively, could have provided an isolated haven where no shaming was possible. As the fantasy world is completely isolated and unknown to others, Dahmer could not be ridiculed for his 'living' in fantasy. Taken further, this suggests that in this fantasy retreat there were no parents or any social conscience to contain the content of the fantasy. Thus, although Dahmer experienced a sense of shame and doubt, it could be argued that he did not develop a 'precocious conscience' (Erikson, 1950) despite his knowledge of right and wrong.

It is interesting to note that Dahmer's peers and his brother were aware of his experimentation with the animals' remains (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), but that his parents and other adults remained ignorant. This may again be a function of his withdrawal and the general view of Jeffrey, quiet and alone in the woods. His father claimed that if he knew about the dissection of animals, it would have been a 'red flag' to him (King, 2004), but it could also have been – as it was viewed by others – just another aspect of Dahmer's oddity and curious sign of interest. When Dahmer's family discovered his alcoholism, the gun, the mannequin and the suspicious black liquid he was embarrassed, but he was competent enough to dismiss these incidents (Dahmer, 1994). It appeared as if even his sense of shame and doubt were smothered by his ability to conceal.

9.3.1.2.3 Impulsivity and Compulsivity

The maladaptive characteristic of this stage is impulsivity, which is evidenced in a person's acting without consideration of his abilities (Boeree, 2006a). Dahmer did not display this impulsivity in his daily life. The researcher has decided to make a distinction between (a) Dahmer's daily life and (b) his life of fantasy and the murders. In general, Dahmer seemed to lack the initiative required for impulsive action and in adulthood performed menial labour well below his intellectual capacity (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). However, there were occasionally impulsive acts, such as his stealing a mannequin (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). When his rash actions resulted in arrests, they reflected an aspect beyond impulsivity. He was careless; he may have acted with knowledge that he could do what he wanted through initiative and competence, but he did not consider his actions with the same care as the murders. A disinhibiting factor that may be highlighted in these instances is intoxication, but Dahmer also performed the murders while under the influence of alcohol (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

The murders themselves were highly organized and ritualistic. The level of sophistication required a great deal of initiative and competence practiced through earlier experiments. Dahmer described the murders as either (a) planned, that is, based on a decision to find a victim or (b) unplanned or random encounters (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), such as with Doxtator, Sears and Konerak Sinthasomphone. These unplanned instances were followed by a carefully executed and ritualized pattern, which alludes to the compulsivity required to satisfy the fantasy. The malignancy of compulsivity is not readily apparent in Dahmer's daily life, either. He did not display a need that every action had to be done perfectly,

prescribed by rules, lest his world fall apart (Erikson, Erikson & Kivnick, 1986). Instead, he showed an individualized level of autonomy in the maintenance of his life characterized by isolation and menial work.

Dahmer felt powerless to resist his fantasies – particularly after the second murder. Dahmer stated that, "By that time my moral conscience was so shot, so totally corrupted, that that was my main focus in life. These were my fantasies" (Masters, 1993, p. 111) and that "It was a definite compulsion, because I couldn't quit" (Masters, 1993, p. 111). However, it must be recognized that Dahmer consciously acted on these compulsions. Though he had previously succeeded in suppressing his deviant thoughts and enjoying drugged partners, he quit the struggle and embraced the growing malignant thoughts. "These thoughts are very powerful, very destructive, and they do not leave. These are not the kinds of thoughts you can just shake your head and they're gone. They do not leave" (Masters, 1993, p. 112).

Dahmer's actions reflected not only an attempt to take control of others, but also to create a semblance of control in his life. At the same time, the compulsive repetition of the *modus operandi* (MO) or ritualization was an attempt to achieve the perfection of the fantasy. Thus, the researcher argues that there was a parallel in development of compulsivity in (a) the need to perfect the fantasy and (b) the creation of a signature, which comprised the compulsive acts required to perfect the fantasy beyond the actions needed to kill (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Pistorius, 2006). The perfection of the fantasy pervaded his thoughts and behaviour and the faint traces of morality were gradually extinguished. Erikson (1968) noted that the power derived from obsessive behaviour must be measured in terms of the extent to which the psychosocial modalities are mastered or whether the rules master the ruler. The latter instance would logically lead both to compulsion and compulsivity. The researcher argues that, paradoxically, Dahmer sought control in his world and exercised control over the individuals who entered into his fantasies, but it was he who was controlled by it.

9.3.1.2.4 Willpower

The second stage is decisive for balance and control. The ego strength of willpower is the ability to make independent choices and exert self-control (Erikson, 1963a; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). A discussion of Dahmer's willpower is fundamental to his entire identity and being. According to Erikson (1950) only a positive balance of autonomy over shame and doubt can result in willpower. As previously discussed, Dahmer showed a certain amount of autonomy

and experienced a minimal amount of shame and doubt. One could thus possibly argue that Dahmer had a positive balance of autonomy over shame, but that the required balance for the ego strength of willpower is necessarily idiographic.

In terms of Dahmer's autonomy in his childhood and adolescence he remained isolated, aloof and ambivalent. Dahmer's behaviour may be described as dependent in that he took little initiative and appeared to have little purpose for the future (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). While Dahmer may not have overly relied on his parents to take control of his life, they tried to involve him with others in childhood, convinced him to attend college and sent him to the army (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Ambivalence and disinterest may be more apt terms to use for Dahmer. His patterned behaviour of acquiescence (Dahmer, 1994), limited involvement and regression into apathy may be related to a confluence of impressions of the various stages: withdrawal; shame and generalized ambivalence; and apathy and disinterest in the next stage. Perhaps one of the earliest autonomous decisions Dahmer took was his moving to Miami rather than to return home to face the shame and embarrassment of again having failed his father, who his army colleagues noted that he wanted to please (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993).

Dahmer's autonomy increased as he started to live alone, but perhaps not enough to argue for a positive balance to result in willpower. However, due to the ambiguity of the term, Dahmer displayed a level of willpower in his ability to make independent choices and the ability to exercise self-control. Dahmer was able to maintain his employment throughout the majority of the murders and – despite his claimed compulsion to kill – exercised his willpower in the decision not to kill certain partners (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The contradictions are again important in this instance as Dahmer felt the compulsion to kill, but chose not to, often because the partners did not satisfy the fantasy (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Only David Thomas was killed without his fulfilling the fantasy (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's contradictory behaviour was thus possibly fundamental to his sense of identity. One must recognize that Dahmer could retain a sense of right and wrong, but could still be compelled by – and choose to act on – the need to perform the evil in his fantasies.

Dahmer's choice to kill may be seen as a possible attempt to take control of the situation, but this is also a breakdown of his existing control on reality and the intrusion of fantasy.

The control is thus related to the fundamental struggle between the compulsion and the attempts to resist. He claimed that he was "completely swept along with my own compulsion. I don't know how else to put it. It didn't satisfy me completely, so maybe I was thinking another one will … the numbers started growing … and just got out of control" (Masters, 1993, p. 198). Bearing in mind the characteristics of impulsivity and compulsivity, it could further be argued that when Dahmer committed the last murder and the failed attempt when he was caught, he was so swept up in his compulsion that he became impulsive. "If I hadn't been caught or lost my job, I'd still be doing it, I'm sure of that. I went on doing it … in spite of the anxiety and lack of lasting satisfaction" (Masters, 1993, p. 195).

When Dahmer faced the stressors of unemployment and impending eviction, he became careless. Dahmer also faced the dilemma of having to destroy his souvenirs (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) but he remained generally reactive and delayed this in favour of the fantasy – which resulted in his being 'forced' to relinquish the collection. The researcher contends that Dahmer's contribution to his characteristic behaviour in this stage and overall identity development may be argued to be: I am ambivalent. The researcher therefore posited that Dahmer failed to acquire the basic psychosocial modality of being able to regulate 'holding on and letting go' (Erikson, 1968). Despite his autonomous will and the ability for independent living, Dahmer's indecision, dependence and reactivity to events in life may be seen to have developed as a pervasive pattern of ambivalence about his future, his abilities and his interactions with society.

9.3.1.3   Stage 3: Initiative versus Guilt (Age 3 – 6)

The psychosocial crisis of the third stage is for the play-age child to develop a sense of initiative without too much guilt. Through increased physical and cognitive development children become more curious and resourceful in exploring the environment and discover how they affect it, tackle new challenges and join in activities with other children. Erikson (1963a) held that this stage "sets the direction towards the possible and the tangible which permits the dreams of early childhood to be attached to the goals of an active adult life" (p. 258).

9.3.1.3.1   Initiative

Initiative adds to autonomy the quality of understanding, planning and assailing a task for the sake of being 'on the make' (Erikson, 1968). Children play and explore the world with freedom and purpose guided by ideas and imagination. Therefore, initiative may be viewed as the energy to approach tasks with increased direction. Children are capable of imagining a future reality, taking responsibility and learning skills (Erikson, 1977).

Between the ages of three and six, Dahmer was described as curious and animated (Dahmer, 1994), although he was later progressively more passive. He explored the derelict parts of town (Masters, 1993) and the woods around his home in Bath and was fascinated with animals and "how things work" on the inside (Keppel & Birnes, 1997, p. 304). Despite the scarcity of information about Dahmer's physical development, the researcher suggests that it was at least developmentally appropriate and did not negatively impact his personality development.

Erikson (1968) held that during this 'play age' imagination and fantasy are vital aspects of the child's developing realistic ambition and purpose. Erikson (1977) noted that the dramatic ritualization of this stage sees children play-act, that is, take the initiative to make the imagined real.   Although the content of his imagination at this stage cannot be known, the literature indicated that the nature of Dahmer's play was based on games of concealment, such as 'hide and seek' and noted his aversion to confrontational play (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). From the available information it did not appear as if Dahmer displayed an intrusive mode (Erikson, 1963a) – except, perhaps, in his curiosity or his unknown fantasies.

However, the researcher contends that Dahmer did not necessarily display the mode of inclusion either. Inclusion is the quiet receptivity to imaginative material, which when viewed in terms of Dahmer's withdrawal and the power of fantasy in his life is necessary to consider. Inclusion also relates to forming tender relationships (Welchman, 2000). Dahmer did not appear to show care for other children as evidenced by his convincing one boy to place his hand in a hornets' nest (Masters, 1993). If this is the early indication of his manipulation, this manipulation may be construed as the inclusive modality of his making himself more charming (Erikson, 1977). Dahmer seemed to be able to manipulate others throughout life (see Chapter 5). This may have been either by a prodigious ability to convince others of his conviction or their being too trusting of him. It follows then, that if the

latter is accepted, that there was an aspect of Dahmer's identity with which others could connect. At trial, it was evident that whilst he was generally reviled, the public could not help but notice his normalcy (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) – and eventually, even recognize his tortured soul.

In holding with a view of Dahmer's having a more inclusive modality, Dahmer seemed rarely to bother anyone (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The initiative that children take is sanctioned and guided by parents who serve as points of identification for moral values and are important in the development of a sense of guilt. Thus, concomitant to the child's growing initiative and taking responsibility for his actions, he can also feel guilt for these actions. The third stage is vital for the development of a moral sense, usually through identification with the same-sex parent. Lionel Dahmer (1994) admitted that he was often both physically and emotionally absent. Though its influence should not be taken out of context, this may have impacted upon Dahmer's development of gender identity and his social and moral sense. In terms of the development of gender identity, Dahmer had no other male role models to imitate or provide socialization. Instead, he saw his father in snatches or occupied with trying to placate or calm his mother (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Whilst Lionel's reasons may have been the welfare of the family, it is unclear how young Jeffrey would have interpreted them. During this stage, this view of family life and his position in the family may have been perceived as continued rejection or the expected norm.

9.3.1.3.2 Guilt

If children's attempts at initiative are excessively criticized they experience a sense of guilt and a lack of self-confidence (Erikson, 1963a). There is little information about Dahmer's initiative landing him in trouble. He was scolded for breaking windows in the derelict buildings (Masters, 1993), but his emotional reaction is omitted. From the previous stage, it is likely that he was embarrassed and knew that he had misbehaved, but might have responded in the same way as when he was scolded for dirtying his clothes when he played in coal (Masters, 1993). Similarly, when Dahmer convinced another child to place his hand in the hornets' nest, there is no mention of his emotional reaction or guilt except that he stated years later that "it was a rotten thing to do" (Masters, 1993, p. 31).

The researcher argues that just as initiative requires the 'activating' of independence (Erikson, 1963a), so, too, guilt requires the same activation from a sense of shame and doubt. As Dahmer's initiative was mostly solitary and unnoticed exploration, it suggested that he rarely took responsibility or experienced guilt for his independent actions such as his exploring the animal research facility (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Further, if Dahmer failed to develop a conscience or sense of morality guided by identification with adults, his imagination and thoughts were therefore undeterred by an inner voice of self-observation, self-guidance and self-punishment. As an adult Dahmer showed a sense of apathy towards life – his, and others' – and showed very little guilt for his actions (see Chapter 5).

However, Dahmer was not without an understanding of his guilt and took a measure of responsibility for his actions (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). From an early age, Dahmer had trouble with expressing his emotions (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993) and when he was arrested he provided candid testimony of the murders, but relayed the information in his usual inexpressive monotone. It should further be noted that the interviewing detectives and most of the psychiatrists responded to his manner and ultimately trusted his testimony (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer, for his part, noted: "I don't even know if I have the capacity for normal emotions or not because I haven't cried for a long time. You just stifle them for so long that maybe you lose them, partially at least. I don't know" (Masters, 1993, pp. 41 – 42).

9.3.1.3.3   Inhibition and Ruthlessness

The malignant tendency of this stage is the inhibition of spontaneous action to avoid guilt (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson et al., 1986). Erikson (1968) argued that the value of childhood as a source of human anxiety should not be ignored and that conflict over initiative is expressed later as self-restriction that prevents the individual from living out his inner capacities. Dahmer's exploration at this stage and the previous assertion that he developed only a slight sense of guilt suggests that Dahmer was not inhibited in his ability to 'go after' and 'to play' (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson et al., 1986). However, the researcher recognized that while Dahmer may not have been inhibited by the avoidance of, or feeling of, guilt, his increasing shyness and general withdrawal from relationships or interesting endeavours (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) cannot be ignored in the consideration of the contribution of this stage.

The maladaptive tendency of this stage is ruthlessness, which refers to the individual's initiative to achieve his goals at the expense of others (Erikson et al., 1986). This maladaptive tendency highlights an important consideration in holistic personality development. Owing to the appeal to use the term for a serial killer, Dahmer's initial degree of ruthlessness – if at all – should be considered for this stage and later personality development.

Between the ages of three and six, there are three incidents mentioned in the literature that might indicate a level of ruthlessness: (a) the hornets' nest, (b) throwing rocks through windows of abandoned buildings and (c) trespassing on the grounds of the research facility. The researcher was aware of the risk of pathologizing these incidents and noted that these events – while important in the view of Dahmer's total development – could also be seen as mere boyhood pranks. It should further be noted that ruthlessness implies planning and activity towards a goal (Erikson, 1968). Thus, the researcher argues that if each of these were conducted toward goals of, for example, (a) manipulation without confrontation, (b) childhood bravery or (c) curiosity, respectively, then the malignancy of ruthlessness would demand still greater planning and initiative. As this type of intrusive behaviour is not characteristic of Dahmer (see section 9.3.1.3.1) – despite the limited information about his about his exploration – the researcher is of the opinion that Dahmer did not display the maladaptive tendency of ruthlessness during this third Eriksonian stage.

9.3.1.3.4 Purpose and Ruthlessness

The favourable balance of the child's initiative over guilt results in the ego strength of purpose (Erikson, 1963a). This is characterized by the child's courage to actively strive for goals with purpose and confidence. The difficulty in establishing whether Dahmer developed this vital ego strength is based on individual development as well as the degree of resolution – which Erikson did not describe or discuss. Dahmer's sense of initiative in this stage outweighed his sense of guilt, which should ideally result in the ego strength. Dahmer, however, did not show any overt purpose or realistic ambition or goals for the future. Instead, Dahmer was seen as "purposeless and disengaged" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 77) and later as an intelligent underachiever (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

As a serial killer, Dahmer showed ruthlessness. Dahmer experimented with drugging his partners (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997), just as he experimented with

dissecting the animal remains in adolescence. Whereas one could argue that dismemberment of animal remains was not necessarily ruthless, it showed initiative and had a purpose – at its most sedate, to satisfy a curious interest that he lacked in all other aspects of life because his apathy even extended to his emotional expression (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's experimentation became important rehearsals in the execution of his MO. His behaviour thus showed a high level of planning – and industry – and hints at his goal: Dahmer desired (a) an unconscious partner like the jogger; (b) a body, such as his graveyard attempt; and eventually, (c) a partner, a zombie, a sex-slave that would not leave him (see Chapter 5).

Dahmer's willingness to initiate partnerships to serve his own selfish, "perverted lust" (Masters, 1993, p. 71) indicated that his ruthlessness developed from pranks and drugging to murder, dismemberment, manipulation, necrophilia, cannibalism and crude lobotomies on live victims to induce a zombie-like state where victims are robbed of their free will (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Beyond their implicit planning and initiative, the murders also served a purpose: to create constant, non-judgemental companionship. However, despite the goal-directed nature of the behaviour or its possible purpose to satisfy Dahmer's compulsion and mental equilibrium – or even the secondary gain of constructing the shrine – the purpose was not socially motivated.

9.3.1.3.5 Fantasy

Cognitive development is also crucial during this stage. There is little specific information about Dahmer's cognitive development, but the literature indicated that Dahmer attended a nursery school as well as kindergarten (Masters, 1993) where he was always considered the 'new kid' (Masters, 1993). This early view of being different in the eyes of others is also crucial in the development of self-confidence and identity, especially within Dahmer's pattern of withdrawal. As Dahmer was considered curious and intelligent (Masters, 1993) – although disinterested in academic achievement – the researcher is of the opinion that his cognitive development was at least age-appropriate.

Perhaps a more important consideration for Dahmer is his imagination or the development of fantasy. The third stage is associated with (a) the expansion of the imagination as a means to contain and express new experiences and (b) guilt and misunderstanding (Erikson, 1968). Erikson maintained that parents crucially guide and discipline their children and should

encourage curiosity and imagination. Lionel Dahmer took Jeffrey to a laboratory following his interest in animal bones, but Jeffrey showed no great interest. Lionel Dahmer's later attempts to involve Jeffrey in sport or group activities in the school age and adolescence were met with reticent participation and eventual abandonment (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). This behaviour appeared to be patterned from the ambivalence in the second stage and augmented by a pervasive apathy and disinterest in this stage.

Owing to the power of Dahmer's fantasies throughout his life, his imagination may not have been tamed or shaped towards ambition for the future. Erikson (1968) noted that the contribution of the initiative stage is the freeing of the child's initiative and sense of purpose for adult tasks that allow fulfilment of a range of potential capacities. The child learns moral responsibility, insight into the functions and roles which permit his responsible participation and pleasurable accomplishment in using cultural tools in the next stage. However, the researcher argues that Dahmer instead began to live his life in his head. When Dahmer first entered school he was uncommunicative and seemed to do nothing (Dahmer, 1994), but this isolation suggested that it was far more likely that he was increasingly drawn into his fantasy world. For a child who was distanced from others, this self-constructed and controlled fantasy without external sanction or internal conscience, could have been extremely alluring.

This stage has been permeated with contradictions and various potential outcomes for further development, which makes it difficult to claim whether the stage were successfully resolved. Dahmer's growing conviction towards identity development in this stage reflected Erikson formulation of "I am what I can imagine I will be" (Erikson, 1968, p. 122) for with his intelligence and the power of his imagination, he could be anything he wanted. However, the difficulty arises in Dahmer's ambivalence towards an early notion of a goal or ambition. Thus, the researcher argues that the contribution of this stage was *potential*, but at the same time it contributed to Dahmer's identity development as a generalized apathy towards life.

9.3.1.4   Stage 4: Industry versus Inferiority (Age 6 – 12)

The fourth stage, which covers approximately the ages of six to 12, is characterized by the developmental crisis of developing a capacity for industry while avoiding an excessive sense of inferiority (Erikson, 1950). During this stage children learn to tame the imagination and are exposed to a widening social radius and increased social expectation. Children aim to master the skills required for adult life and society provides the necessary schooling to help

develop competencies of social interaction, education and productive co-operation (Erikson, 1950; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). They combine with others for the purpose of construction and planning and show the willingness to profit from teachers and to emulate ideal prototypes (Boeree, 2006a; Erikson, 1968).

The formal ritualization of education facilitates interactions with authority figures, peers and wider society (Erikson, 1977). Children begin to identify with social co-operation as play turns to work; games to competition; and free imagination is focused as attention to detail (Erikson, 1968). School-age children learn the value and pleasure of success in production, accomplishment and completion as they become collaborators in the productive process. The psychosocial modality of this stage is thus the ability to 'make things together', even perfectly, beyond the imagination and planning of the previous stage (Erikson, 1963a, 1968). The child's energy and resilience for action and completion result in perseverance and a work ethic (Erikson, 1968).

9.3.1.4.1   Social Environment

Erikson (1950, 1964) described the school age as a socially decisive stage characterized by interactions with teachers and peers, but recognized that parenting styles also contribute to the development and expression of complex emotions. Dahmer described his parents as under-involved in his life (Masters, 1993) and added to Dahmer's initial pattern of withdrawal, his teachers noted that he appeared neglected, and even more isolated after David Dahmer was born (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

At age 10, Dahmer's withdrawal from the family was exacerbated by his mother's depression. He apparently felt responsible for the relapses (Masters, 1993) and responded through increased withdrawal. He did very little to upset his parents and did not communicate his feelings to them (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). This alienation from the family circle also extended into his wider social environment, such that the isolation provided him with solace in the woods, his fantasy world and later, his apartment (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997).

The progression into the fourth stage is determined by the epigenetic principle (Erikson, 1950), but Erikson (1968) also stated that industry may be hampered in this stage by either the child's not being prepared for the stage by the family situation or current interference in

the stage. Dahmer's apathy and fixation on imagination and withdrawal suggested his not being adequately prepared for this stage. Thus, Dahmer's being 'forced' to attend school and the neglect that resulted from his brother's birth may have negatively influenced his increasingly resigned and secretive nature.

Erikson (1963a, 1968) noted that children become aware that they are perceived and treated by others in a certain way. This early form of prejudice (Erikson, 1968) was evident in Dahmer's being (a) the "new boy" (Masters, 1993, p. 29), (b) described as "funny and kind of odd at the same time" (Davis, 1995, p. 22) and (c) "a little different, a little bit strange" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 40). Bearing in mind Dahmer's posited existing mistrust – where each new school was another potential site of betrayal or rejection – this continued distantiation from peers may have impacted negatively upon Dahmer's social estrangement and sense of self-worth.

From about the age of six, children face choices about how to interact with groups and peers. Children who are fearful of new situations and their inherent psychological risk are less likely to socialize (Erikson, 1964, 1977). The literature indicated that Dahmer rarely interacted with others or initiated relationships outside those that pre-existed within the family (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). On his first day of school, Dahmer was fearful and nearly speechless: "He had been replaced by someone else, a different person, now deeply shy, distant, nearly uncommunicative" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 62). At school, Dahmer displayed behaviour that could be described as psychological hesitation as he shunned any engagement with other children and appeared to do "nothing" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 63). The researcher interpreted Dahmer's response to the environment as a retreat into his imagination or a fantasy world where he could feel safe. This may thus be seen as either a regression to the safety of fantasy of the third stage, or reflected a child who was still in the third stage and therefore responded according to his developmental level.

9.3.1.4.2 Inferiority

The literature indicated that Dahmer was described by teachers as neat, polite and eager to please (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and completed the assigned tasks, but without any interest or special investment (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995). He thus showed the potential and capability but no interest in academic – or social – engagement. Children who do not experience success are left with a sense of inferiority, whereby they feel that they will never

'be any good' (Erikson, 1963a) and that their personal goals cannot be accomplished or are not worthwhile.

Erikson (1968) noted that while children require a measure of solitude, they reach a point where they desire the co-operation and social interaction of others. Participation and competition during the school age facilitates the child's learning socially accepted and prosocial behaviours through interaction and connection with others (Barnes, 1997; Erikson, 1968). Throughout his childhood, Dahmer had various playmates in the various towns, such as Lee and David Borsvold (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, because of Dahmer's lack of friendships throughout his life, the researcher suggests that Dahmer did not experience a positive emotional connection with others and that experiences of betrayal – such as the incident with the goldfish (see Chapter 5) – instead confirmed the intractability of the world and contributed to his increased withdrawal.

9.3.1.4.3   Friendships

As with the previous paradox regarding Dahmer's sense of control, the researcher argues that Dahmer's inadequacy in relationships formed a foundation for his destructive behaviour. The researcher contends that it is an inadequate personality – without a strong sense of willpower – that craves power. Despite Dahmer's potential ability to form superficial friendships or his potential to succeed at academics, he instead fearfully withdrew from the will, initiative and industry to achieve success. Inevitably, such withdrawal results in frustration and a cycle of violence "so characteristic of man and yet so dangerous to his very existence" (Erikson, 1968, p. 122). Jeffrey Dahmer had little or no self-image to validate his existence (Masters, 1993) and experienced few successes to contest this view. Instead, he remained in his own fantasy world (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

There is little information beyond Dahmer's first interactions at school, but his friendship with Lee is significant as Dahmer appeared socially inert. The friendship with Lee may have been one of the earliest signs of social industry and his need for accepting friendship or companionship. The researcher's greatest difficulty in this stage has been to explore the reasons that Dahmer would seek friendship if he were content in his isolated fantasy world. Erikson's (1968) belief in the need for participation does not appear to be a driving force in Dahmer's actions. Instead, the social emphasis of this stage rather creates a sense of expectation. Dahmer was expected to socialize – and his not doing this was noticed by his

teachers, his peers and his parents (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer, who already was considered different, therefore drew unwanted attention to himself and his parents and teachers tried to intervene. Lionel, for example, tried to involve him with other children and encouraged his participation in various sports such as tennis and soccer (Dahmer, 1994), but Dahmer was not interested (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Thus, as Dahmer was faced with the daunting prospect of school every day, the researcher tentatively suggests that these superficial relationships served as his adaptation to the fact that one has to live in society with other people. However, the researcher did not ignore that Dahmer's desire for recognition and belonging could have spurred his interaction with others and thereby potentially positively impact personality development and self-esteem. Dahmer, for example, reached out to a teaching assistant who Dahmer noted "was nice to me, I guess" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 71) and he "got kind of attached to her" (Masters, 1993, p. 35). However, the teacher betrayed his fragile trust and independent action. Dahmer's response to kill the tadpoles (see Chapter 5) showed a level of vindictive and aggressive ruthlessness to this rejection that was evident in the later murders.

9.3.1.4.4   Industry

When Dahmer was approximately nine years old, he befriended a group of children at Eastview Junior High, among them, David Borsvold. Dahmer and Borsvold shared an interest in dinosaur bones and participated and competed in the school science fair (Masters, 1993). Although it is not indicated the level of collaboration exercised in the project, the unprecedented level of friendship and pride in industry of this period indicated that Dahmer was not completely overwhelmed by inferiority. Dahmer's industry was also later channelled into the first experiments with chicken bones at age 10 (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) that his father performed. Afterwards, the experimentation became a more solitary pursuit. Dahmer also shared his game, 'Infinity Land', with Borsvold. The game was of Dahmer's own design and the researcher posits that whilst it may reflect his still relying on his imaginative play, his sharing the game indicated a level of success in communication, co-operation and production.

Erikson (1968) argued that a generalized state of inadequacy, resulting from the failure to identify skills and tools to complement one's talents or failure to identify with one's peers, may result in work inhibition. Erikson (1950) noted that the worker role becomes important at this stage as children begin to apply their learned skills and realize actual roles that were

previously play-acted by focussing their attention on details and learning to contribute to society. Dahmer appeared neither to develop a sense of apprenticeship or fellowship in this period nor the apparent need for the thrill of destruction. Erikson (1968) described the latter condition as 'positive', that is, related to the activity: the delinquent acts out in company what the isolate suppresses. Dahmer, instead, seemed to have failed to acquire what Erikson (1963a) described as the enjoyment of work and pride in doing at least one endeavour well.

However, in the next stage – or perhaps at the close of the current stage – Dahmer maintained his curiosity about 'how things work inside' and experimented on the animal remains, linking the fantasy of the third and the industry of the fourth stages. Dahmer did not display narrow virtuosity, which is a specialized precocity that outdistances identity development. Interestingly, though, Erikson et al. (1986) suggested that if this precocity or interest were removed from the individual's life, the life would appear empty. After Dahmer's arrest, if one were to remove his curious experimentation from his development, the researcher contends that the same emptiness could be evidenced. Further, this emptiness may have stemmed from the earliest mistrust and withdrawal that is characteristic of Dahmer's nature.

Dahmer's academic, social and occupational inhibitions did not reflect a lack of potential, but rather his exclusion from competition in play and work through which he could build the individualized sense of achievement, work identity and meaning expected of this stage. Dahmer exhibited this work inhibition in his willingness to take on menial labour below his intellectual capacity (Davis, 1995; Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) as well as his not devoting himself to a productive adult life of love and work as Erikson (1950) presented as ideal identity development. The combination of Dahmer's sense of inadequacy and the increasing unwillingness to risk communication, co-operation and production, moved him towards the malignant characteristic of this stage, inertia. The researcher, however, does not argue that Dahmer displayed inertia as it implies a near-total absence of industry. Although Dahmer showed significant reticence, his potential and limited number of successes did not suggest a state of inertia.

9.3.1.4.5 Competence

The ego strength of this stage is competence, which encompasses both the individual's awareness of his skills, abilities and intellect and the willingness to apply them towards co-

operative participation in a productive adult life (Erikson et al., 1986). The researcher holds that Dahmer failed to acquire this sense of competence for social productivity as (a) he failed to adequately resolve the previous three stages and (b) his inferiority outweighed the little industry that he showed. Thus, although Dahmer acquired a number of skills, such as the ability to form superficial relationships, he did not develop the ego strength of competence.

Erikson (1968) noted that the individual gains "the capacity to learn how to be, with skill, what one is in the process of becoming" (p. 180). The stage is therefore viewed for its contribution to Dahmer's personality development and simultaneously, his practical competence as a serial killer – rather than his future occupational competence. The serial murderer is not just a one-dimensional entity, but his prowess lies in the ability to be both a murderer and to show an acceptable façade as a member of society. The researcher therefore examined the contribution of this stage as two separate, but interconnected, conditions.

According to Erikson (1968), the contribution of the fourth stage is: "I am what I can learn to make work" (p. 127). Dahmer's industry showed the ability to form superficial relationships and academic potential throughout the school age and into adolescence. Thus, the researcher observed that what Dahmer learned to make work may have been the ability to live in a society that he felt completely isolated from – and that provided no sense of belonging or a definable ambition for the future. The contradiction inherent to Dahmer's personality is evident again; he could only achieve this endeavour through minor successes at academic and social interactions. Dahmer's interactions and identifications facilitated the construction of an adaptive strategy to survive in society. The emphasis is on *survival*; Dahmer learned to survive – but not necessarily to fit – in society. The researcher recognized that the construction of such an adaptive and organized view of personality may only be crystallized in the next stage and therefore formulated this view by recognizing Dahmer's powerful fantasy life. Dahmer – as a child possibly dominated by imagination and fantasy – was confronted with the social expectation of the fourth stage and therefore adapted to it by pretending.

If one were to argue that Dahmer learned, with skill, to be the serial killer he became, then the social interaction of this stage may have contributed to Dahmer's learning how to be for and with others, how to pretend and ultimately, how to manipulate. The researcher based the assertion on Dahmer's ability to act below suspicion through reserve and withdrawal and to thereby foster a situation where Dahmer showed just enough industry for others to be

satisfied with his minimal involvement. Dahmer's minimal involvement was evidenced throughout his interactions: (a) at home he helped only "as long as not much was expected of him" (Masters, 1993, p. 37); (b) he cared little for school, academic pursuits or even casual interests (Dahmer, 1993; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and (c) "he showed no interest in other people" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 78) and developed only superficial relationships with his fellow schoolmates.

The intriguing aspect of Dahmer's manipulation is that he did not exude charm, but managed to sway others into believing him through his reserved manner (Dahmer, 1994; Schwartz, 1992). Added to this are two further considerations. First, Dahmer's peers were aware of his alcoholism, pranks and dissection of animal remains and simply accepted it as part of who he was – although they were wary of him (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Second, Dahmer was also able to convince a judge of his contrition (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and he conned the police numerous times, such as with the murders of Steven Hicks and Konerak Sinthasomphone (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and yet he was described in childhood and adolescence as shy, isolated and uncommunicative (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer therefore learned at some point to blend into the expectation of the environment and display the required minimum engagement that would later become the patterned expectation of his conduct and the manipulation in his communication.

Dahmer's developing initiative and industry helped to perfect his MO as a murderer. Dahmer's ability to create superficial relationships and his prowess at dismemberment and experimentation may be seen as skills or rehearsals. Dahmer's perverse sense of pride at his ability to kill, dismember and dispose of bodies (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) indicated a growing sense of industry and ruthlessness as his identity aligned more with his 'serial killer' identity than his 'Average Joe' identity. In order to survive in society, it appeared therefore that Dahmer learned to act in a way that would not separate him any more from his peers. Dahmer's behaviour showed to the world – his parents, peers and co-workers – a conceivable mask. That, perhaps, was Dahmer's skill: not only to let people see what they want to see, but also the acceptance of more peculiar behaviours that served as distracters from his true self and the extent of his isolation. At its negative extreme, the researcher suggests that Dahmer 'learned' to manipulate the hope that others afforded him.

Dahmer expressed his lack of industry when he stated after his arrest: "I should have got a college degree and gone into real estate and got myself an aquarium, that's what I should

have done" (Masters, 1993, p. 220). This reflects Dahmer's inferiority in his belief that he could never complete anything of value or that his accomplishments, such as his medical training or his sustained employment, were not worthwhile (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). The extension of this assertion is that Dahmer lacked the adequate notion of productivity for social contribution because of the failed emotional connection with society.

Bearing in mind Dahmer's murders, this raises the consideration that through the felt inadequacy, his sense of destructive industry may have paralleled Dahmer's increased ruthlessness over time. Dahmer killed with a cunning and unmeasured ferocity and yet, felt a loss at the disposal of each victim (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and tried therefore to keep parts of them. Dahmer noted, for example, that he felt "rotten" about Edward Smith's murder because he retained nothing of him and considered the death a true waste (Masters, 1993, p. 146). The extent of Dahmer's fantasy world is recognized in his sense of perverse pride at his work and the callous belief that a murder would not be wasteful if a trophy were retained. This unfeeling world of murder that Dahmer created is juxtaposed against the success of the murder itself. If Dahmer's aim were to have a partner who would never leave his side, each murder was in itself evidence of his failure to acquire either a willing or unwilling partner – and with each murder, he escalated his desires and the violence required to fulfil the fantasy.

9.3.2   The Quiet Loner

9.3.2.1   Stage 5: Ego Identity versus Role Confusion (Age 12 – 18)

Erikson (1950) was the first theorist to articulate the important construction of the ego identity in the process of personality development. Although identity development occurs throughout the lifespan, the most salient identity formation occurs during adolescence as the developmental crisis of ego identity versus role confusion. Erikson maintained that the search for the accrued confidence in a new sense of continuity and sameness – which in this period includes sexual maturity – involves the integration of identity elements ascribed in earlier childhood identifications into a more clarified self-image that has meaning for the self and others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a career.

Erikson (1950, 1963a) noted that the successful resolution of this stage requires a positive resolution of the previous crises, as each preceding ego strength provides a specific

contribution to identity development. However, the researcher argues that this implies that each stage could also contribute to a particular estrangement from identity. Dahmer's prevailing mistrust, for example, may have resulted in or compounded his autistic inability to establish mutuality. Therefore, the 'negative' contributions undermine future identifications and their integration in adolescence. According to the theory, unless Dahmer experienced an optimal environment to successfully synthesize each of the previous stages, Dahmer would not have been able to construct an integrated ego identity.

A significant difficulty with expressing Dahmer's personality development is linked with the fact that Erikson did not sufficiently articulate the nature of such estrangements on personality development. The researcher therefore notes that the nature of the discussion of Dahmer's personality development is open to myriad of uncertainties, despite Erikson's (1950) more definite exposition of the extreme and optimal aspects of the theory.

9.3.2.1.1 Identity Formation

The process of identity formation emerges as an evolving configuration that is gradually established by the selective assimilation of identifications and successive ego syntheses throughout childhood (Erikson, 1959). Erikson (1950) argued that with the onset of puberty and its concomitant social, psychological, cognitive and physiological changes, the adolescent becomes preoccupied with the question of identity. Erikson (1950) noted that adolescents become concerned with (a) the dissonance between their self-image and what they appear to be in the eyes of others and (b) begin to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier into career prototypes for a projected future. The first four stages provided tentative identity crystallizations that made the individual feel and believe as if he approximately knew who he was and build expectations for the future (Erikson, 1963a). However, in adolescence, the individual finds that such self-certainty is challenged.

In terms of Dahmer's personality development, this perspective would be geared towards Dahmer's early realization of his developing self-image being different to the generalized view of who society expected him to be. Dahmer lacked the necessary faith in himself and the world that would foster an investment in ideas wherein it would be worthwhile to prove himself trustworthy. His behaviours were mostly solitary and secret (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), which indicated that he was not motivated towards an anticipated future and did not aspire to a significant occupation.

Instead, Dahmer was passive, ambivalent and reactive through two predominant responses. First, the response to internal tension or a negative situation was withdrawal – both physical and emotional – which was often facilitated by alcohol use. Dahmer responded to his parents' fighting by retiring to the solace of the woods and hitting at trees (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The second response was a minimalist reaction to expectations. For example, Dahmer participated in activities like bow-hunting and tennis because his father suggested them, but quickly lost interest – if there were any interest initially – and then ceased the activity. For Dahmer the status quo was stasis, until an expectation needed to be appeased with some effort for a while (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993).

The ego's function is to integrate the psychosexual and the psychosocial aspects at a given level of development (Erikson, 1963a, 1968) and at the same time to integrate the relations of newly added identity elements to those already in existence. Erikson (1950) thus described identity as the ego's accrued ability to integrate all the significant identifications, wishes, drives, expectations, favoured abilities and skills with the opportunities provided by social roles. At the end of adolescence or in early adulthood, the youth's final identity is a composite of all significant identifications from the past that have been altered in order to make them into a single, unique, meaningful and reasonably coherent whole (Erikson, 1950).

Kotton (2002) noted that a part of identity development is influenced by the individual's name. When Dahmer was named Jeffrey Lionel, there was no apparent significance other than his second name being his father's. For years Dahmer's name held little significance except to those acquainted with Jeffrey's disengaged manner and strange interests. However, in an ironic reversal, it is society that views Dahmer's name as a moniker of cannibalism. Whatever its earliest potential meaning may have been, the researcher suggests that 'Jeffrey Dahmer' now translates into an identity of evil – and upon deeper investigation, torment.

9.3.2.1.2 Role Confusion

Adolescents who fail to form a central identity or unified self-image experience a state of role confusion (Erikson, 1950, 1959). Role confusion is characterized by not having an integrated sense of self and confusion about one's place in the world or, stated differently, regarding one's suitable social role as an adult (Erikson, 1950, 1963a; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b). Whereas a strong identity promotes the growth of self-confidence to face life

challenges, role confusion may manifest in behaviours such as running away or criminality or lead to a prolonged moratorium (Erikson, 1963a, 1968; Marcia, 1966, 2002).

Dahmer did not show any overt criminality during adolescence, but he regularly consumed alcohol and drugs (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer was neither violent towards humans nor animals, but he would play pranks or 'act retarded' and dissected animal remains (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Further, Dahmer did not run away from home or play truant from school, but was disinterested in both family interaction and his school career (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). The researcher argues that Dahmer's behaviour indicated the fundamental duality in his nature and therefore indicated a moratorium characterized by a lack of proactive choice and a subtle disregard for social institutions and authority figures (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) – which Erikson (1950, 1963a) described as the malignancy of repudiation (see section 9.3.2.1.7).

9.3.2.1.3 Ideology

Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory recognized the importance of the socio-cultural impact upon identity development. The individual's socio-cultural identity in adolescence is firstly based on the socialized value orientation of the dominant culture of which he is a part (Erikson, 1968; Morris & Maisto, 2002). This cultural identity begins at interactions with caregivers and continues throughout life. Dahmer was raised in an individualistic culture, based predominantly on production and success, but his life course did not follow this cultural ideal (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's behaviour was individualistic in that he acted mostly for his own gratification rather than towards a community orientation. However, the extent of Dahmer's individualism was isolation even from his family and the possibility of intimate relations with friends.

Erikson (1950, 1963a) indicated that adolescents respond to the ideological outlook of a social structure that provides them with a sense of order, orientation and the affirmation and cultivation of an individual value system (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Erikson, 1958, 1963a). Adolescents try to identify attitudes and values that cut across their previous childhood roles of, for example, friend, student and athlete, as an integrated identity to present to society. In this search for continuity and identity, adolescents often clash with those closest to them and the rules of society (Erikson, 1950).

Dahmer did not clash with his family or law enforcement as this would have required a level of initiative and industry. His behaviour was more passive, solitary and unnoticed. He only needed to pretend a little at home, just enough for his parents to see him as quiet, un-rebellious and purposeless (Dahmer, 1994) and they remained oblivious to his alcohol and drug abuse (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). His teachers considered him an intelligent underachiever who had troubles at home (Masters, 1993), but not as a discipline problem despite his famed pranks at school (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). This raises an interesting consideration of whether Dahmer's behaviours and his association with Jeff Six may be viewed as delinquent in the prevailing circumstances. Similarly, then, Dahmer's dissection of animal remains may not be seen as delinquent as it remained secreted from adults. However, his classmates were aware of his fascination with bones and internal mechanics, which identified Dahmer as different or odd (Davis, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993).

Adolescents defend against role confusion by identifying with heroes or by joining cliques (Erikson, 1950) in an attempt to ward off a sense of identity loss. Dahmer, in contrast, was mostly isolated from his peers (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and participated in school activities only briefly (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). The researcher suggests that the superficiality of Dahmer's relationships prevented his experiencing a sense of acceptance and a fit in society that would provide a sense of belonging. The researcher therefore viewed the more active or 'social' aspects of Dahmer's behaviour as an adaptation into society so that he might not appear to be completely deviant, but remained essentially isolated.

Dahmer was an adolescent during the 1970s when the predominant cultural antagonists to the value of work and family were reckless abandon and drug use. Dahmer began to drink at the age of 14 (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) as a way for him to retreat to the solace of a realized 'Infinity Land'. As such, the adolescent Dahmer was neither guided towards, nor committed to, the ethical standards of a productive adult life. He did not show the 'ideological mind' of adolescence as he did not appear to commit to a societal ideology wherein to find a niche in the world. Instead, he appeared disengaged from society (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992) without friendship or career ambition (Dahmer, 1994; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Following from this perspective, Dahmer's values were more likely skewed towards self-gratification and self-preservation. This type of 'survivalist'

orientation in society can be uniquely viewed for Dahmer, because without a conscience to provide a moral anchor, it is plausible that any action is possible and justifiable to him.

Dahmer faced the cultural expectation that he must finish school, attend college, enter a successful career and raise a family (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). However, Dahmer's role confusion – or more specifically, the identity that he portrayed to others – did not fit this cultural expectation. Instead, Dahmer experienced an identity crisis. The researcher argues that Dahmer's identity crisis may be seen as a state of deprivation as it exuded a lack of a sense of belonging. Without acceptance the youth is socially destitute and it appeared as if Dahmer gradually took on more negative identities. For example, Dahmer's pranks were often at the expense of both others and himself, but they promised attention and recognition – even if it were more negative. Dahmer provides an interesting dichotomy of a social loner who was famed for 'doing a Dahmer' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's strange sense of humour (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) was exercised through pranks to express one of the views that his peers held of him.

Erikson (1950) focused in particular on the importance of (a) occupational identity and (b) gender and sexual roles as the foundation of ego identity. In order to further explore Dahmer's identity crisis more specifically, these two aspects are discussed next.

9.3.2.1.4 Occupational Identity

Erikson (1950, 1968) noted that the inability to settle on an occupational identity is the major disturbance in youth. The individual therefore needs to form a career identity that realistically reflects his abilities. Dahmer, however, displayed neither the initiative nor the industry of occupation. As an adolescent, Dahmer did not find any summer or part-time employment, but rather stayed at home (Dahmer, 1994) where he could spend time alone to dissect animal remains or stay closeted in his room (Dahmer, 1994; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Dahmer's later employment history showed a similar resignation to his perceived hopelessness at advancement or an improvement of his financial situation (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer was not motivated to attend college, but enrolled in young adulthood as a business major at his father's insistence – and only remained for one dismal semester (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). As discussed in the fourth stage, Dahmer possessed the potential to succeed in a variety of fields, but apart from an un-pursued interest in biology, a

general disinterest prevailed (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Owing to the social nature of the theory, this could suggest that Dahmer was unable to invest any effort in his interest in a way that sublimated his talents and skills into a more socially-orientated endeavour. This raises two further interactional considerations regarding social productivity.

First, the nature and extent of Dahmer's behaviour and fantasy may have progressed beyond the possibility of social connection or an occupation that mollified the dominant social desirability. Second, there is the important consideration of occupation itself. It is unlikely that Dahmer or his social community would have considered any value in his being, for example, a taxidermist. Similarly, because of Dahmer's lack of academic involvement it is unlikely that he would have aspired to be a doctor – albeit a mortician. The researcher holds that this disbelief is evidenced in the National Honour Society photograph prank (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Despite his considerable intellect, Dahmer did not appear to have faith in himself or his occupational future (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) but chose to include himself in this particular photograph with all the other academic achievers.

Although the prank itself may be an unconscious disavowal of an academic identity or indeed, a confirmation of his potential, Dahmer thrived on the conditioned disbelief that others held of him. Thus, he survived because others failed to (a) notice that he was more intelligence – and would consequently expect more academically or socially – or (b) recognize that he was truly deviant and would therefore reject him more. Self-preservation through subterfuge appeared thus to become an expected norm for Dahmer. The researcher holds that Dahmer's later occupations, including being a sandwich maker in Florida, a phlebotomist in West Allis and a labourer in a chocolate factory in Milwaukee (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997), did not reflect his talents and merely served his identity as occupational place-holders to present to society. This is discussed further in Stage 6.

9.3.2.1.5 Sexual Identity and Fantasy

The establishment and acceptance of gender and sexual identity is a critical task of adolescence (Erikson, 1963a, 1968). Dahmer had no strong male role models outside the family and his father, Lionel, was often physically and emotionally absent (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The family environment was described from an early age as tense because Lionel and Joyce often fought (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer indicated that, "I

decided early on that I wasn't ever going to get married 'cause I never wanted to go through anything like that" (Masters, 1993, p. 39). It is likely that the relationship between Dahmer's parents may have impacted upon his gender identity as well as his generalized view of family and his existing beliefs about relationships.

A significant aspect of Dahmer's identity crisis is the confusion about his sexual identity. Erikson (1963a, 1968) noted that role confusion based upon a doubt of sexual identity may result in delinquent behaviour. Although Erikson did not fully explain this, he noted that adolescents may form a complete negative identification with "gangs of young homosexuals, addicts and social cynics" (Erikson, 1968, p. 176) as a collective attempt to seek the relief of identity. Dahmer, therefore, provided a further contrast. Whilst Dahmer could be described as an addict, he neither identified with any social group nor identified himself as homosexual (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer showed no overt confusion or curiosity about his sexuality, but merely displayed a general disinterest in women and was extremely shy and uncomfortable on his single date at prom (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Thus, according to Erikson (1963a), Dahmer's not integrating his homosexuality into his identity would be viewed as positive. However, this raises two important considerations. First, if a denial of self – or the expression of that self – is positive then identity cannot be expressed, but is restricted to the socio-cultural dogma of the age. The socio-cultural climate in which Dahmer was raised compounded the pressure and confusion regarding his burgeoning sexuality. Dahmer stated that, "In the township where I was at, homosexuality was the ultimate taboo. It was never discussed, never. I had desires to be with someone, but never met anyone that was gay, that I know of; so that was sexually frustrating" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117). The second consideration follows that Dahmer's denial of that self may have compounded his fantasies about young men, murder and death (Masters, 1993). These morbid fantasies, which eventually became the life that Dahmer lived, are naturally negative and destructive to society. The researcher recognizes that it may not result in the same destructive behaviours that Dahmer committed, but it indicated that the individual would live in role confusion – and therefore not become a productive member of society that can love, work and later, care.

Dahmer remained sexually untried and emotionally distanced throughout adolescence (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). His solitary and desultory

'sexual' experience was at the age of 13, with another boy. Although the incident should not be given excessive weight, it is necessary to explore its possible connection with Dahmer's later sexual behaviour.

The experience with Tyson appeared to be a purely explorative exercise without any emotional connection (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). As such, the experience may be viewed in light of the fantasies as a contributing factor to Dahmer's view of a sexual relationship and the objectification and exploration of the male body. Further, due to the Freudian foundation of Eriksonian theory (see Chapter 3), the exploration of each others' bodies may be linked to the Oedipal experience where the doctor explored Dahmer's body. The possibility exists that such an experience can be magnified in a period of awakening sexuality and, combined with the earlier argument that Dahmer's aggressive and sexual fantasies did not entirely abate during the school age, may have intensified the experience.

Dahmer indicated that he began to fantasize about attractive young men at about the age of 14 (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), which is also the approximate age when he began to drink (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). Owing to the view of homosexuality in his community, Dahmer possibly perceived homosexuality as deviant (Masters, 1993). Even if the socio-cultural climate were different, it remains unlikely that Dahmer would have been comfortable to speak about his sexuality. Dahmer had already established a pattern of non-communication whereby he was not readily able to articulate his feelings to anyone, probably not even himself. When his father questioned him about his homosexuality after his arrest for molestation, Dahmer stated that he never discussed his sexual orientation because he believed that Lionel would not understand (Dahmer, 1994). Years later, when his mother re-established contact with him, he admitted that he was homosexual and she accepted this (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993).

For most of his adolescence, Dahmer abused alcohol possibly as a means to effectively drown out the family tumult (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and, perhaps, the increasingly violent homosexual fantasies that he possibly considered socially and religiously deviant in the predominant socio-cultural climate (Masters, 1993). However, there is another consideration in that whilst Dahmer may have tried to drown the fantasies, it is the oblivion and abyss of his mind where he constructed his fantastical world of control. This contradiction could imply that Dahmer did not want to drown out the fantasies per se, but rather distance himself from a reality wherein he felt he did not belong.

Over time, Dahmer's fantasies grew more elaborate and infused with images of death (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). The nature of Dahmer's relationships served to keep others from knowing his true self, but also resulted in his not having intimate friends with whom to share or communicate his sexual curiosity. The incident with the jogger (see Chapter 5) indicated Dahmer's willingness to act on fantasy and his fearful response to potential relationships. The content of the fantasy revealed Dahmer's view of the jogger as a mere object for his gratification. Dahmer wanted to 'lie with him' (Dahmer, 1994) and this imagined relationship showed no possibility of mutuality. Instead of Dahmer's sexuality developing ideally – in terms of Erikson's (1959, 1964) theory – from exploration to mutuality, the fantasy showed that he was fixated on the body as an inanimate object to be explored as a sexual aid. Dahmer's solution to achieve his desire through violence was a growing willingness and ruthlessness hitherto unseen.

A further aspect that needs to be explored is the sexualization of mutilation. Dahmer's experimentation and exploration with the animal remains and his curiosity about internal mechanics appeared to have become associated with his fantasies about young men. When Dahmer killed Hicks (see next section), the two are most noticeably reinforced even though Dahmer dismembered the body as a way to destroy evidence. Dahmer's arousal at the captivity and the masturbation with the body served as a conditioning experience (MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood & Mills, 1983; Prentky et al., 1989; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). It is likely that the sexualization of evisceration occurred before the murder – and it became a signature aspect of his later killings. However, it is not clear when Dahmer linked dismemberment with sexual gratification through his fantasies or curiosity.

9.3.2.1.6   Steven Hicks

The murder of Steven Hicks represented an escalation of the fantasy to the point where it breached into reality. This first murder will be carefully considered in terms of its contribution to identity development as well as its connection with the previous stages as it serves as a template for the later murders. As such, the researcher holds that in order to understand the murderer, one must necessarily explore the first murder.

The day that Steven Hicks was murdered Dahmer lived, abandoned, in the house in Bath. Dahmer had been out drinking in the afternoon when he noticed the hitchhiker. It is important to recognize first that alcohol may have played a disinhibiting role in this scenario,

but cannot be argued as a cause for the murder – as was suggested for the last two murders that Dahmer committed (Palermo, 2004; Tithecott, 1997). Instead, Dahmer showed magical thinking when he relayed the story: "I wasn't looking for anyone – but, about a mile away from the house, there he was! Hitchhiking along the road. He wasn't wearing a shirt. He was attractive" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). Dahmer stated that in the preceding years he had fantasized about picking up a hitchhiker and on this particular day – abandoned, inebriated and with transport – the fantasy was realized.

Dahmer offered Hicks a lift and the promise of beer and drugs (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). In this way, Dahmer began his effective MO whereby he offered the victims what they wanted and/ or needed. The later murders showed Dahmer's ingenuity and organization in being able to augment the lure according to the individual, such as his offers of money in general, photography for the aspiring models and the continued promise of alcohol or sex (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). The pre-existing fantasy that Hicks magically embodied increased the power of the fantasy and may have guided the purpose in Dahmer's actions. The most important aspect, however, is Dahmer's willingness to act on his fantasy. Therefore, even though the murder of Steven Hicks may be considered as 'unplanned', it was not un-fantasized.

Dahmer took Hicks home – just as he did with the other victims – where they enjoyed each others' company, despite the fact that this encounter was not sexual (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Hicks's intention to leave, however, seemed to become a trigger or a script that was often evidenced in the later murders. "I, uh, didn't know how else to keep him there other than to get the barbell and to hit him, over the head, which I did, then strangled him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). Dahmer's choice to hit Hicks over the head may be seen firstly as a crude originator to his drugging the victims and secondly, shows his willingness to use violence to achieve his ends as he did with the jogger. The act of strangling was also repeated in most of the later murders – and as it often results in erections in men, may have been employed specifically to that end (Masters, 1993).

Considering these actions in Eriksonian terms, (a) Dahmer's decision to kill was an exercise of his willpower, (b) towards a selfish and fantastic purpose, (c) executed with competence, (d) in response to a perceived betrayal or rejection. Therefore, the researcher suggests that this murder can be viewed within the combined realm of the degree of resolution Dahmer exhibited in the various stages. When considered in terms of the fifth

stage of identity versus role confusion, this act of murder can be seen as repudiation of society and an informal confirmation of his deviance. Dahmer exhibited his contempt of society and its ideologies in favour of a self-constructed fantasy world, but his social behaviour did not show this overt repudiation. Instead, as will be discussed in the sixth stage, his occupational and intimate relationships displayed this more open repudiation.

Taken further, the murder itself may have threatened Dahmer's sense of self in that it may have increased his confusion regarding his sexual orientation as well as his 'place in society', doubly felt because of the necessary acceptance that underlies this stage. Immediately after the murder Dahmer was "very frightened" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117). He was therefore aware that his actions were wrong, as argued in the second stage, but he was aroused "by the captivity" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117). Dahmer then undressed the body and masturbated on it. Dahmer claimed that later, such as when he frequented the bathhouses, that he could not achieve an erection unless the partners were unconscious (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997). This highlighted Dahmer's need for an inanimate object or a unilateral relationship that, as he described, "revolved around having complete control" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116).

Although Dahmer was inebriated and admitted to being scared, he showed a high level of both sophistication and, in a sense, reality checking. He knew that it was necessary to hide the evidence. He dismembered the body and hid it. Dismemberment appeared to be the most logical recourse as it was his carefully practised art. However, Dahmer tried to remove the evidence entirely and was nearly caught whilst driving out to a ravine (Masters, 1993), where another aspect of Dahmer's identity emerged.

Dahmer's demeanour while the police questioned him about the bags in the back seat was calm. The passive mask (Dahmer, 1994) that he had perfected through interactions with his family served him well. Dahmer, though inebriated, successfully lied to the police by using the partial truth of his needing to escape the family discord. Dahmer claimed that he was extremely nervous, but did not show it. Similarly, when Konerak escaped years later, Dahmer remained calm although "it was such an overwhelming situation that – I don't know where I got the sense of calm, I don't know!" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 142). The researcher argues that Dahmer had practised this type of lie so often that it became his social mask. However, Dahmer eventually became so lost in those lies that he was unable to find or express his true self – and headed for a startling denouement. Dahmer finally destroyed all

evidence that Hicks existed, which is a remarkable show of competence for such a passive, apathetic individual. His actions were based on survival in reality. During the later murders, Dahmer decided to keep souvenirs of his victims – usually their skulls – so that he could retain their essence (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Perhaps the most obvious, but necessary aspect that needs to be highlighted is that Dahmer's actions were not socially motivated. The researcher has explored the murder by viewing aspects of the theory mostly independent of their inherently socially-motivated nature and therefore the terms do not fully represent Erikson's (1950) conception. This highlights the ambiguity of the terms, such as the contrast between (a) Dahmer's competence to kill, which requires considerable skill and industry and (b) Erikson's (1950) formulation of its being the use of skills, abilities and intellect towards co-operative social participation. The researcher suggests that the murder of Steven Hicks, which was the accumulation of his adolescent fantasy, added considerable strain to Dahmer's view of self at the end of this period and therefore perpetuated his role confusion.

9.3.2.1.7 Repudiation

At the extreme of role confusion is the malignant tendency of repudiation, where adolescents reject membership of the adult world (Boeree, 2006a). Based on Dahmer's role confusion, it could be argued that the rejection of adult society could have served as a selfish, antisocial act whereby Dahmer could live in his fantasy or imagination as a child who does not mature. Lionel Dahmer (1994) described Jeffrey's attitude in adolescence:

> He never argued, but neither did he ever seem fully to agree with anything. It was as if nothing mattered to him, neither school work nor social relations in or out of school. And yet, even this did not manifest itself as a form of rebellion. Rebellion would have demanded some measure of belief, some expression of his personal convictions. But Jeff was beyond rebellion, and he had no convictions about anything. (pp. 82 – 83)

The murder of Steven Hicks, at the end of adolescence, may be seen as the ultimate repudiation of social norms, mores and values. The murder in adolescence, the molestation and disorderly conduct charges in young adulthood and the murders in adulthood may be indicative of Dahmer's distantiation from a society that he perceived as threatening.

Erikson (1963a) noted that a repudiated self cannot offer loyalty and fears the fusion of love or sexual encounters. Therefore, in terms of psychosocial theory, Dahmer's role confusion precluded his making a committed decision about his identity whereby he could 'be himself' and 'share himself with another' (Boeree, 2006a) and lead naturally into the sixth stage. According to the literature, Dahmer did not experience the adolescent notion of falling in love as a way to project his self-image and have it more clearly defined. He did not show any interest in women (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993) and did not have any true friends. His relationship with Jeff Six was unemotional and based on drug and alcohol use (Masters, 1993). The few earlier 'friendships' were gradually lost during adolescence (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and very few of his peers interacted with him as he was perceived as too odd and volatile (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1997).

Erikson (1963b) further argued that the work inhibition in repudiation relates to a career inhibition as every exertion of skills is suspected of binding the individual to the role and status suggested by the activity. Dahmer did not participate in any work-related activities during adolescence (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) except if one were to consider the dissection and burial of animals remains his form of industry. It is unclear whether Dahmer's inhibition is related to his not wanting to be tied to a specific occupation, but the extent of Dahmer's apathy suggested instead a lack of hope in the future. Dahmer did not reveal any plans for the future, but dutifully participated in a discussion of his impending independence and college career at the start of his senior year in high school. Lionel Dahmer, however, noted that, "We had fallen into a pattern. My suggestions would be made, routinely accepted, then forgotten" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 89). This general pattern was one of Dahmer's most characteristic responses to any social pressure or expectation.

Erikson's (1968, p. 130) statement that "in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity" therefore raises two important considerations regarding Dahmer's development. First, the extent to which Dahmer would have 'felt alive' would have been subsumed under his connection to others. Dahmer showed little emotional connection – even to his loving grandmother whom he knew cared for him (Masters, 1993) – and may have felt an inner deadness in society. Essentially, this provides the view of the person *without* society; Dahmer lived outside of societal values and connections, whilst pretending to be a productive member of society. As such, Dahmer's attempts to draw attention to himself as a prankster may have indicated his need for that

crucial acceptance from his peers – even if the view projected to his peers did not reflect his true identity. The pranks were a manifestation of his dark humour (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997) and although his pranks were appreciated, their nature – when combined with his alcoholism and experiments with dissection – did not provide true acceptance, but rather a level of uneasy tolerance.

Despite this repudiation and role confusion, it does not imply that Dahmer was a non-entity who had no identity. Erikson (1950, 1968) conceptualized the psychosocial moratorium as a state of role confusion and thus Dahmer's 'negative' identity implied this lack of ego integration. The second consideration therefore relates to Dahmer's role confusion as it manifested as a number of different selves. Dahmer's self-image was not that of murderer and society only provided that association after his arrest. Instead, Shari Dahmer's calling Jeffrey a "lost little boy" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 94) may have been perhaps the most heartfelt description as it encompassed the abandonment, sorrow and aimlessness of Dahmer's social, occupational and sexual existence. Dahmer maintained his pretences in society and his isolation within, and for, himself to construct an identity that provided some sense of belongingness. The researcher considered this a fractured or fragmented identity that was in itself, a platform from which to interact with others.

9.3.2.1.8 Dahmer's Fragmented Identity

Dahmer's role confusion was evaluated in terms of the various roles that he played. Dahmer was a son and brother; student and peer; and a member of society. However, the subtleties that Dahmer displayed in presenting himself in all these roles were not based on a secure identity. In order to explain this, the researcher must contrast Dahmer with an 'ideal' example, such as an individual's identity being that of an athlete. The individual relates to his family, friends and society from this perspective and faces expectations based on this view of self that is congruent with others' view of him. Therefore, the synthesis of fidelity is evidenced as a core or central identity that filters into (a) how the individual responds to various situations and expectations; (b) how he is viewed by others; and (c) how he interacts with others (Erikson, 1950, 1963a)

Dahmer, in contrast, showed a *fragmented* identity. The emphasis on the word, fragmented, not only relates to a sense of incompleteness, but also – for Dahmer – to the various masks that he presented to society. Whilst there was a generalized view of Dahmer

as a 'normal guy' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), his interaction in each situation showed what appeared to be different persons to different situations or people. Whereas the integrated identity responds to various situations from a core self-image, Dahmer adapted to various situations by presenting a view of himself that satisfied the condition – at the least. Dahmer hardly interacted with his peers, but he had friends (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and his pranks were often appreciated by his classmates (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997).

However, the researcher recognizes that despite the apparent minimalist, survivalist adaptation, a basic view of Dahmer still emerges. Instead of an integrative view of a gay teenager with a morbid fascination with animals and a rich fantasy life, he chose to be all and none of his social roles: (a) at school Dahmer played the academic and alcoholic prankster (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), (b) to his closer 'friends' he revealed his morbid fascination with the inner working of animals (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and (c) to his family, he remained un-rebellious, disengaged, purposeless and uncommunicative (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Underlying his reaction to these situations was Dahmer's passive, apathetic view of the world that reflected his fear of relationships and a lack of association. Thus, the researcher holds that Dahmer possibly experienced a lack of belongingness, which was compounded by his homosexual fantasies.

Dahmer's role confusion can thus be seen as a loss of centre or a dispersion of self-images, where – rather than an integrated whole – different identities are shown to the world. The posited fragmented identity therefore highlights the difficulty to reconcile the different roles into a consistent and coherent whole and recognizes that this particular patterning of the previous crises is his identity. Dahmer was able to camouflage into the background as the quiet, only slightly strange, underachiever who received more pity from others than disdain (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer exhibited this talent at trial by his blending into the background as the unwilling feature, while attention was focused elsewhere (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Therefore, one could argue that perhaps his greatest ability – which was integral to his identity – was to chameleon to his environment in order to be perceived as the clichéd, 'guy next door'.

9.3.2.1.9   Fidelity

Erikson (1950, 1959, 1963a, 1977) held that the ideal synthesis of this stage results in the ego strength of fidelity, whereby individuals experience their integrated identities as an optimal sense of psychosocial well-being.   These individuals (a) know and accept other possibilities within themselves, (b) feel at home in their bodies, (c) experience a sense of knowing where they are going and (d) possess an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from significant others (Erikson, 1968).

In terms of Erikson's formulation, Dahmer did not develop fidelity as he was unable to construct an integrated ego identity or foster a sense of loyalty to a social role (Erikson, 1950).   However, the researcher holds that Dahmer was committed to the image that he projected to society as both fundamentally disengaged and yet, sufficiently average that he would not be fully rejected.

The researcher tentatively argues that Dahmer developed a sense of identity during adolescence.   However, this identity was neither socially motivated nor a positive integration of past identifications and roles.   Instead, the fragmented identity displayed (a) the dissonance between Dahmer's self-image and society's views and expectations of him as well as (b) his ability to hide significant aspects of his nature which suggested that his pretence served as a functional façade.   Dahmer's lies to the people who were part of his enclosed world were evidence of his lack of – and actions for – 'fit' with society.   Thus, in Eriksonian terms, Dahmer was not committed to the sexual and occupational roles that would facilitate his being a productive member of society.

Owing to the lack of integration and the pervasive role confusion, the researcher therefore argues that Dahmer remained in a psychosocial moratorium (Erikson, 1963a, 1977; Marcia, 1966, 2002).   In the next stage, Dahmer's personality development is therefore necessarily viewed in terms of the moratorium, that is, in light of identity development as well as the crisis of the sixth stage – as prescribed by the epigenetic principle.

9.3.3   Hiatus – or Build-up

9.3.3.1   Stage 6: Intimacy versus Isolation (Age 18 – 34)

9.3.3.1.1   Introduction

The developmental crisis of the sixth stage is essentially based on the choice to be involved in a relationship and to achieve a degree of intimacy or to remain in isolation (Erikson, 1950).   The ages of the adult stages are not clearly defined as individual and cultural differences abound.   The researcher demarcated Dahmer's entry into the sixth stage in young adulthood – at about age 18 – and Dahmer remained in this stage until his death.   During this stage, individuals are recognized as adults as they settle into occupations, relationships and community roles (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Erikson, 1950, 1963a, 1968).

According to the epigenetic principle, Dahmer moved into the sixth stage even though he was in a state of role confusion (Erikson, 1963a, 1968), that is, he had not established an integrated ego identity.   Individuals without an integrated identity appear to be doomed to fail to achieve intimacy without an exceedingly favourable environment to promote the development of the favourable synthesis of this stage as well as each preceding strength. Whereas the ego strengths would ideally have accrued into a positive identity, Dahmer's 'failed' resolutions of the previous stages have, instead, accrued into hindrances.   Essentially, therefore, both the fifth and sixth stages are focal for Dahmer during this period, instead of the sixth stage alone being ascendant.

Erikson (1950) separated the psychosocial task of achieving intimacy from achieving identity and argued that it builds on the establishment of identity.   Thus, success in establishing intimacy is affected by the extent to which the five earlier conflicts were resolved. Erikson (1950, 1963a) held that only with a secure sense of self-definition could an individual risk vulnerability and ethical mutuality with another without the fear of losing a sense of personal identity.   Erikson (1963a) described intimacy as closely tied to fidelity; intimacy is the capacity to commit to concrete partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may demand compromises.   Isolation, in turn, refers to the distantiation from all the forces – that is, instances of true fusion or self-estrangement – that the individual deems a threat to his personality (Erikson, 1950, 1963a).

Erikson (1950, 1963a, 1968) argued that individuals should be able 'to love and to work'. Erikson emphasized both the development of the ego strength of love within a balanced identity and the individual's focus on a career. Thus, Erikson conceptualized an adult as a productive member of society as well as a loving being who requires the vital strengths of trust, willpower, purpose, competence and fidelity.

According to Erikson (1950, 1963a), work did not mean that the individual loses the capacity to be a loving being. Instead, the individual is committed to a view of self in the world and a work ideal, but not at the expense of the ability to love. In order to understand work, it may be viewed situationally. For Dahmer, for example, at college it may be related to academics or specific training in the armed services. Therefore, the work provides a sense of identity beyond status and remuneration (Erikson, 1968). In turn, love represents both sexual and genital love – the latter being a committed relationship with another person wherein to 'lose oneself and find oneself in another' (Boeree, 2006a).

9.3.3.1.2 College, Army and Florida

9.3.3.1.2.1 College

Shortly after Hicks's murder, Lionel returned home and soon discovered Jeffrey's alcoholism. Jeffrey was encouraged to attend college to study business (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) as it was an aspect of the cultural expectation that he study, find employment and raise a family. The time at college also served as part of a psychosocial moratorium. Erikson (1963a) noted that a psychosocial moratorium is a time when individuals can develop and crystallize a solid identity. However, Dahmer was not enthusiastic about college (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) but rather continued to respond to his father's suggestions for his life. Thus, although Hicks's murder was an important aspect of Dahmer's developing identity, it did not bring about an immediate change – that is, a solidification of his identity – but may have gradually accrued in his personality development.

Whilst at college, Dahmer was faced with the memory of Hicks's murder. He noted that it was one of the only times that he cried and prayed (Masters, 1993). He later claimed,

> That night in Ohio, that one impulsive night. Nothing's been normal since then. It taints your whole life. After it happened I thought that I'd just try to live as normally

as possible and bury it, but things like that don't stay buried. I didn't think it would, but it does, it taints your whole life. (Masters, 1993, p. 70)

He responded with characteristic withdrawal, especially through the use of alcohol. He was alienated from his roommates by rumours of theft (Masters, 1993), isolation and his erratic behaviour when intoxicated (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Despite his seeming lack of purpose in education – and, by extension, being a productive member of society – Dahmer showed initiative and industry in acquiring funds for alcohol, such as selling his blood plasma (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Dahmer was also informed that his dog, Frisky, had died (Masters, 1993). Dahmer stated that he felt 'blue' when "my dog died" (Masters, 1993, p. 101) and "No, I didn't cry. I loved her, she was a great dog, but no, I didn't have any strong emotions" (Masters, 1993, p. 74). Despite the last comment, the researcher noted that Dahmer's ability to say that he loved his pet was astounding as he made no such claim about others. Dahmer was interested in and cared for animals (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) from his earliest childhood – and he chose their remains for his initial experiments. If one were to anthropomorphize Frisky, she provided Dahmer with companionship as (a) he could trust that she would not abandon him and (b) she accompanied him on his many solitary ventures in the woods (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). This devotion is important as it may reflect (a) Dahmer's need for a constant companion who can be trusted as well as (b) the power held through ownership.

Dahmer's time at college was short-lived and therefore did not provide an adequate moratorium to build on the failures of the previous stages or allow the development of an integrated identity. Dahmer's continued isolation in this social setting reflected Erikson's (1963a, 1968) view that individuals who did not develop an identity are unable to face the risk of self-abandon in a relationship. Thus, Dahmer's isolation indicated the malignant tendency of exclusivity, which is characterized by the avoidance of experiences of true fusion because of the fear of ego loss (Erikson, 1963a). This incapacity to take chances with one's identity results in a deep sense of isolation and self-absorption (Erikson, 1963a). Dahmer's exclusivity was against his family and peers into a lonely existence outside of communication and intimacy (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

9.3.3.1.2.2   Army

When Dahmer returned from college, he was expected to find employment (Dahmer, 1994), but continued to drink to the point where his father set an ultimatum for him to work or join the army (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).   Dahmer was taken by his father to be enlisted in the new year where he filled out the forms "as if on automatic pilot" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 107).   Dahmer thus continued to accede to his father's wishes, rather than to be proactive in his own life.   Dahmer's time in the army may also be seen as part of his moratorium, specifically because the army has specific ideologies, such as teamwork, to which individuals are exposed.   Dahmer adapted to the situation as he limited his alcohol use (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and acquired a well-developed physique and seemingly more discipline (Dahmer, 1994).

Dahmer was initially interested in becoming a military policeman, but eventually became a medic (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   Whilst his being a medic was more congruent with his previous interests, he did not appear to view it as a competence to be developed with the purpose of entering a medical field as was evidenced in his disinterest in being a phlebotomist (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Whilst stationed in Germany, Dahmer began to drink heavily and colleagues noted that he became aggressive, defiant and dangerous when drunk (Baumann, 1991; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993).   In addition, Dahmer developed an interest in homosexual pornography and kept himself isolated from others (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993).   Dahmer's isolation indicated that he was not prepared to risk his identity in interactions with others and therefore continued the malignant tendency of exclusivity. However, as he was required to interact with others, Dahmer also showed the maladaptive tendency of promiscuity.

Erikson (1968) argued that promiscuity is characterized by an individual's forming superficial relationships with others, which was indicative of Dahmer's colleagues' belief that he was hiding something from them (Davis, 1995).   Dahmer used the same adaptation as before in that he continued to joke around (Davis, 1995; Schechter, 2003) and feigned enough interest – for a short while, at least – as a mask to his fragile fragmented identity such that he did not risk others' knowing him.   His army colleagues noted that he was fun to be around when sober, intelligent and performed his duties well, but stated that he was "going nowhere

fast" (Davis, 1995, p. 56) which paralleled comments about his adolescence (see section 5.3.2). This continued purposelessness or apathy and superficial interactions with others indicated that Dahmer did not develop a solid identity. Finally, his alcoholic behaviour resulted in his being discharged.

9.3.3.1.2.3 Florida

Dahmer moved to Florida, where he worked as a sandwich-maker. He used the money from this menial labour to maintain his alcoholism. The decision to go to Florida rather than return home may have been (a) a desire to avoid his parents after his failure in the army and/ or (b) an attempt at independence. Army colleagues noted that Dahmer desired to please his father (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993) and he may have wanted to avoid facing his father's disappointment. Thus, in Eriksonian terms, Dahmer may have wanted to avoid the shame and doubt associated with returning home and/ or his seeking independence. Dahmer did not inform his parents of the move to Florida, but only contacted them a month after his arrival and then only at irregular intervals (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

During his stay in Florida, Dahmer befriended a British woman, Julie, who wanted to marry him (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). However, Dahmer was not attracted to her and their relationship remained formal (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Thus, Dahmer retained his promiscuity in his relationships, but also exclusivity because of their limited number. Dahmer's apparent lack of purpose or identification with a work role was reflected in his continued alcoholism and he eventually returned home when it left him destitute. It could be argued that Dahmer's return home marked another failure: at independence. In terms of the second crisis, such a doubled experience of shame and doubt could increase the malignancy of compulsivity which was reflected in Dahmer's continued alcoholism at home (see Chapter 5). Dahmer thus remained in a state of role confusion as he failed to foster an integrated, positive identity to which he was committed and that could be shared with others in relationships or in a work environment.

9.3.3.1.3 West Allis

Dahmer's return home was marred by his lack of initiative to find employment (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He did not work to develop any particular skills or show industry, but continued to drink. As such, he remained dependent on his parents, but showed little remorse

for the difficulty he caused his parents when he drank (Dahmer, 1994). His simultaneous inhibition and isolation from the tasks of work and love indicated the same state of role confusion displayed before, which was compounded by his alcoholism. Dahmer was eventually arrested after a bar fight and subsequently sent to live with his grandmother. Dahmer (1994) described Jeffrey's reaction as "resigned, somewhat contrite, generally passive and without emotion, the sense, perhaps, that once again he was being rejected" (p. 115). This suggested a familiar sense of Dahmer's failure to satisfy his parents within the expectations of his being an adult.

In West Allis Dahmer found employment as a phlebotomist. Although this was more in line with his training in the army, Dahmer's disinterest resulted in his eventual dismissal (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Thus, Dahmer's competence appeared to be cancelled by his apathy and continued drinking. Erikson's (1950, 1963a, 1968) concept of identity and its integration into social and work environments held an implicit value to society. However, in Dahmer's role confusion he did not appear to view work as a form of social and/ or personal status wherein to interact with others or as a contribution to society.

After an arrest at the state fair, Dahmer "started going to church with my gramma. I wanted to straighten out my life. Went to church, read the bible, tried to push out any sexual thoughts at all and I was doing pretty well for about two years" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). The mutualism between Dahmer and his grandmother, Catherine, meant that Dahmer helped around the house for his room and board. In this continued moratorium, Dahmer was afforded the opportunity to experiment with his identity – as is usually evident in adolescence. Dahmer took on a religious ideology in his continued experimentation with his identity.

Dahmer's choice of religion was interesting as it was both a (a) contrast to his previous behaviour and (b) based on another 'parental' figure's mould. The fragmented identity dealt with the situation by adapting to a comfortable situation by taking on the necessary traits required to survive or to enjoy the benefits of the situation. Dahmer's father and grandmother were devout Christians (Masters, 1993) and Jeffrey's reformation was predicated on his stopping or, at least, restricting his drinking as well as purging thoughts of homosexuality (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). It might thus be argued that he took on traits in which he felt himself previously a failure and a religious identity provided him that implied solace.

Dahmer took on the ideology of religion to the extent that it could be described as the maladaptive tendency of fanaticism. Fanaticism involves the individual's being too involved in a role in society or the over-identification with a group that no longer shows tolerance for other worldviews (Erikson et al., 1986). While Dahmer was neither involved in society nor necessarily intolerant of worldviews, he chose to invest his time solely in the pursuit of controlling his alcoholism and sexual thoughts through isolation and religion (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Whilst this religious ideology is not necessarily wrong, a maladaptive tendency suggests that the ego identity that is formed will not have the ego strength of fidelity. It further suggests that because there is no fidelity in this identity, it could more easily be broken.

As Dahmer was in the sixth stage, the considerations of work and love were also paramount. For the greater part of this period Dahmer did not work, but was dependent on Catherine. There was little information regarding Dahmer's attempts to find employment, but it was indicated that he did not actively search for work and did not attempt to develop any skills for employment (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Thus, he showed little initiative or industry, but exercised exclusivity and willpower in order to maintain his new ideology.

Dahmer's relationships during this time were limited. His grandmother appreciated his help around the house and his parents were satisfied that he was not in trouble (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). There was a woman in his church group who was interested in him, but Dahmer was not interested in pursuing any relationship with her (Dahmer, 1994). It could be argued that Dahmer's new identity was not one in which he felt fidelity as he was still unable to risk his identity with another. This further suggested that his identity was not one in which he was necessarily comfortable and thus not a solid identity. His apprehension also extended to his sexual orientation, which he denied, perhaps in order to please his parents and grandmother and the beliefs to which he was indoctrinated. As it appeared that Dahmer was not committed to the new identity, it could be argued that the fanaticism was merely a functional façade within his fragmented identity for survival. The researcher argues that it was therefore a temporary existence – a moratorium – that attempted to hide Dahmer's role confusion.

However, Dahmer was able to maintain this new identity for a two year period (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992) with little stability in his life. Dahmer eventually found employment at the Ambrosia Chocolate Company (ACC) where he worked

night shifts. Dahmer's working at night provided the opportunity to interact with fewer co-workers (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He maintained superficial relationships in the workplace, which reflected his exclusivity – and provided him with continued anonymity. The work was menial labour, but his inclusion in the workforce allowed him to contribute to the household and he claimed – if only to impress a judge – that it provided him with a measure of pride and structure (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

One night Dahmer was propositioned at the library by a man. He thought, "'This was ridiculous, it would take more than that to' – and I laughed it off, didn't think much of it. But sure enough, after about two months, I started, the compulsion, the drive. Increased sexual desires. I started drinking again" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). He began to frequent bookstores, where he had his first anonymous, sexual experience with another man (Masters, 1993). Dahmer began to experiment with his sexual identity in a way that he did not attempt in adolescence, which was facilitated by his being in a city in a different socio-historical and cultural climate. However, it should be noted that his relationships did not include mutuality, but only the satisfaction of sexual desire (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). His active pursuit of his desires indicated an increase in his initiative and industry in the 'real world' to complement his inner fantasies satisfied by masturbation. The researcher suggests that this experimentation with his identity could have indicated a break in his religious ideology. It could be argued that his increasingly powerful fantasies – and his success at achieving his desires – were in themselves a developing ideology.

Dahmer noted

> At that time, I was pretty much on top of the urges, but I wanted to find a way to satisfy without hurting anyone. So I joined the bath club, went to the gay bars and tried to satisfy with the mannequin. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122)

In the bathhouses, Dahmer preferred to have his partners completely subdued so that he could do whatever he desired, which included listening to their hearts and stomachs as they slept (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In order to achieve this, Dahmer experimented. Dahmer showed initiative and industry in his obtaining sleeping pills from doctors. He experimented with the dosage in order to render his partners unconscious (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). In his experimentation with his sexual identity and the desired control to satisfy his fantasies, Dahmer reached the point where he could not reach orgasm unless his partners were completely subdued (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer's increased activity also indicated an increase in his ruthlessness in that he was willing to manipulate and control his partners. He also showed the willpower to not kill – as yet. He attributed his stealing the mannequin and his attempt to procure a corpse as a form of control (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). However, his experimentation on his partners was ruthless and this aspect of his personality guided his industrious efforts to fulfil the desired fantasy which appeared to give him purpose. Dahmer's previous experiences and new experiments provided him with the competence to explore his desires in the bathhouses and later, when he was expelled from them (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992), in the gay bars where he would pair up with a partner at the end of the evening (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer experimented with and moulded his developing identity based primarily on his sexual desire for an attractive, male partner that he could control. Dahmer developed a ritual that he compulsively followed: (a) he worked; (b) drank; and (c) lured partners for his sexual gratification (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). His behaviour – as discussed in the following section – culminated in the murder of 16 individuals and showed a more lasting stability or fidelity. However, as the murderous aspect of his personality was not shared with anyone other than his victims, it could be argued that Dahmer stayed in role confusion. The fragmented identity thus still appeared to be 'intact' as he still necessarily interacted with his grandmother, parents, colleagues as well as the partners who he lured for his sexual gratification. Thus, it might be tentatively argued that the 'serial killer' aspect of his personality was developed as he acted on his fantasies in secret, whilst at the same time he still portrayed the same docile, apathetic manner in his other relationships. The dualistic nature of Dahmer's personality is thus a fundamental aspect of his fragmented identity.

9.3.4   Seeking a Compliant Partner

9.3.4.1   Stage 6: Intimacy versus Isolation (Age 18 – 34)

9.3.4.1.1   Introduction

The fourth historical period spans from Dahmer's second to the 17th murder. According to the epigenetic principle (Erikson, 1950), Dahmer remained in the sixth stage of intimacy versus isolation throughout this period as an adult. Owing to the nature of his identity

development during the previous period, his fantasies and the 'serial killer' aspect of his identity were increasingly powerful. However, because it was not shared with society he remained in role confusion – that is, the fragmented identity – in order to function as both a serial killer and a member of society.

9.3.4.1.2 Rage

In November 1987, Dahmer committed his first murder in nine years. The murder was unplanned as Dahmer had simply followed his usual routine. He had paired up with Tuomi after a night out drinking. Dahmer stated:

> He was a nice-looking guy. Asked him back to the hotel room. We drank. … Made him the drink. He fell asleep, and I continued drinking … and I must have blanked out because I remember nothing before waking up in the morning. He was on his back, his head was over the edge of the bed, and my forearms were bruised, and he had broken ribs and everything. Apparently I'd beaten him to death. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 123)

This murder differed from the first in that it displayed Dahmer's rage more clearly. Dahmer claimed that he was "shocked" and noted, "Where that rage came from or why that happened, I don't know. I was not conscious of it. Why I had the rage, why I took it out on him, I don't know" (Masters, 1993, p. 109).

Despite his being "extremely horrified" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 124) and "wondering what to do, how to handle the situation" in his "complete shock … horror, panic" (Masters, 1993, p. 108), Dahmer hid and later transported the body before he dismembered it at home (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). "I hated to have to do it at all" (Masters, 1993, p. 110) Dahmer noted, although he kept and boiled Tuomi's skull. Dahmer initially used the skull as a masturbatory aid (Masters, 1993) before it was discarded with the trash (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's anxiety at the murder may have been an indication of either a slight sense of guilt or fear at the possibility that he could be caught. However, the power of the act and its continuance through the use of the skull resulted in the increased compulsion to act out his fantasies. Dahmer noted, "After that, my moral compass was so out of whack, and the desire, the compulsion, was so strong, that I just continued in that mode" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 125).

> After the fear and the terror of what I'd done had left, which took about a month or two, I started it all over again. From then on it was a craving, a hunger, I don't know how to describe it, a compulsion, and I just kept doing it, doing it and doing it, whenever the opportunity presented itself. (Masters, 1993, p. 113)

Dahmer's last statement is important in his unique use of language as he deflects the guilt of his ruthlessness from himself. He was industrious and opportunistic and his desire to fulfil his fantasies showed that he had purpose when he – most often – created the opportunities in which he could satisfy those desires (see Chapter 5). Dahmer's identity for this period was thus centred on the murders, which was necessarily facilitated by the innocuous identity he projected to the outside world. The aspects of fantasy and reality began to bleed together in order to maintain the duality in his fragmented identity.

9.3.4.1.3   Independence

Dahmer continued to live with his grandmother and received promising appraisals for his work at the ACC (Masters, 1993). He also continued his pattern of bringing home men late at night and/ or killing them, such as (a) Doxtator, of whom Dahmer noted that he found "attractive enough that I wanted to keep him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 153) and (b) Guerrero (see Chapter 5). Dahmer hid these murders by dismembering the bodies in the garage and keeping short-lived souvenirs (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). When his father investigated a mysterious substance in the garage, Dahmer lied, stating that he experimented with animal remains out of curiosity (Davis, 1995; Dahmer, 1994). However, Catherine was increasingly bothered by his bringing home men (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and Dahmer soon found himself an apartment in the city nearer to his work, which provided a renewed chance at independence (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

On Dahmer's first day in his new apartment, he "Wanted some sexual activity. Saw him. An attractive guy. Offered him fifty dollars for some pictures. He agreed. I took two pictures, give him the drink, and thought he was out. He got away, and the police came" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 126). Dahmer was arrested at work, to his embarrassment and shame, as his co-workers would know that he was homosexual (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Further, his father was also confronted with his homosexuality. Dahmer relayed,

> He asked me if I was gay and I told him yes, and he accepted it fairly well. He didn't get upset or anything about it. He just acted surprised and wondered why I'd never

told him before and I said I didn't tell him because I was embarrassed. (Masters, 1993, pp. 129 – 130)

Although the socio-historical and cultural period had changed somewhat from Dahmer's childhood and adolescence regarding homosexuality (Masters, 1993), the socialization of those periods remained an important aspect of Dahmer's identity development. Dahmer's family's religious views also played a role in his identity development, which included sexual identity. His sexual identity development was focused on his fantasies that helped to avoid his being 'embarrassed' or experiencing feelings of shame and doubt. His sexual identity was only later realized in culturally deviant ways to which Dahmer increasingly added the elements of his fantasies. Dahmer's homosexuality was a fundamental aspect to his choice of victim, but also represented an aspect of his life that he tightly guarded against others' knowing. It might be argued that within the fragmented identity, it was central both to the murders – that is, his 'serial killer' identity – and to the identity that he projected to others through his avoidance of acknowledging his sexual orientation.

According to the positive nature of Erikson's (1950) theory, Dahmer's father's and his co-worker's knowledge and possible acceptance of his homosexuality could have facilitated a return to the fifth stage to create a more solid identity. However, Dahmer continued to function within his fragmented identity and escalated the nature of the murders. It might be argued that his self-perceived 'compulsion' to kill was a more powerful and immediately satisfying answer to the fundamental Eriksonian question: 'who am I?' (Erikson, 1950, 1959). As such, Dahmer held a level of fidelity in his fragmented identity as the clichéd 'guy next door' serial murderer.

While Dahmer awaited trial, he killed Sears and kept Sears's head and genitals as souvenirs (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) because "him I like[d] especially well" (Masters, 1993, p. 136). Dahmer's notion of intimacy did not involve mutuality – which is built on the success of positive resolutions of trust, identity and intimacy – but regarded his victims as objects he could keep with him forever (Masters, 1993; Phillips, 1994). Dahmer served a 10 month work-release programme that allowed him to work at night (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer did not kill anyone in this period, but returned to his previously inconspicuous behaviour. This indicated that Dahmer had the willpower to avoid killing. However, it should also be noted that this could also have been based on his being under observation. He thus adapted to a situation in which he could not afford to kill by controlling

his actions, which indicated both his restraint and organization. Dahmer petitioned a judge for early release by copying down a pleading letter written by another inmate (Masters, 1993) that indicated that Dahmer was contrite and willing to take responsibility for his actions. This opportunism may be seen as a form of initiative and industry through his continued manipulation of others.

9.3.4.1.4   Signature

After his release from prison, Dahmer moved into his grandmother's house before settling into Apartment 213 where he soon killed Edward Smith and Raymond Smith by first luring them with elaborate ruses and drugging them (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In addition to the skeletal souvenirs that Dahmer kept he photographed the victims before they died and during dismemberment. He used the photographs as ways to relive the murders (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992) just as he did with the skulls he had collected.

9.3.4.1.4.1   Cannibalism

Dahmer's next murder indicated a departure. He lured Miller to his apartment and tried to drug him, but did not have enough medication to keep Miller sedated for long (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He then turned to his previous experience as a medic and severed Miller's jugular vein. Just as the MO was adapted in this case, the signature showed development. Dahmer stated,

> Saved the heart. The biceps. Decided to put – cut 'em into small pieces, washed 'em off, put it in clear plastic freezer bags, and put 'em into my storage freezer, just as an escalation, trying something new to satisfy. And I would cook it, and then look at the picture and masturbate. … It made it feel like they were more a part of me. Sexually stimulating. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139)

In terms of Eriksonian theory, the researcher argues that cannibalism can be viewed in two ways. The first is that cannibalism can be viewed as a primitive form of incorporation (Erikson, 1963a) in which the victim's identity is incorporated by being eaten. In this instance, Dahmer would have incorporated the identity of an attractive, homosexual male. The second interpretation could be seen as a form of oral sadism (Erikson, 1963a) in which the eating of the victim's flesh would signify his destruction – and by implication, the killer's

destruction of that part of himself which he cannot reconcile within himself or society. Dahmer recognized an aspect of the former instance through his desire to keep the victim alive as a part of him. This sexualization of death and sustenance as well as his need to control and keep his victims indicated the progression of his fantasies. Dahmer stated that, "I just wanted to have a person under my complete control and uh, keep them with me as long as possible, even if it meant, just keeping just a part" (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast). Dahmer's ruthless willingness to kill for his own benefit suggested an escape from his isolation by enacting his violent fantasies and, through the cannibalism, felt that he would be drawn closer to his victims.

9.3.4.1.4.2   Dismemberment, Necrophilia and Souvenirs

Before Dahmer killed some of the victims, he engaged in 'light sex' (see Chapter 5) with them. After their deaths, Dahmer engaged in necrophilia with the bodies (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992), which included oral sex because many of the strangled victims had erections (Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's fragmented identity implied that he was unable to share himself truly with another and thus his compulsivity was indicated through his need to act out his fantasies with victims who would not reject him. He achieved this by using their dead bodies as objects that he could control for his sexual gratification.

As such, Dahmer showed an aspect of exclusivity in the lack of mutuality in his relationships and his manipulation of his victims' bodies. Through murder, Dahmer gained absolute control over his victims whereby his sexual fantasies could be expressed. However, it should be noted that it is his fragmented identity that was also crucial to reach the point where he could execute a kill. He relied on his ability to interact with the victims, to lure them to the apartment and to occasionally engage in sexual activity and listening to their hearts and internal organs (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) before he killed them. Thus, in Eriksonian theory, necrophilia was another expression of his control, ruthlessness, mistrust of mutuality – and its consequent withdrawal, exclusivity and promiscuity – and the industrious purpose to satisfy his fantasized sexual desires.

In addition to cannibalism and necrophilia, Dahmer kept souvenirs – although they did not always last – of his later victims. However, Dahmer only kept the photographs of Thomas during dismemberment. Dahmer claimed that he killed Thomas as Dahmer thought Thomas

would be angry when he woke up (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer used the camera to capture his victims in poses that imitated the posters on his apartment walls. The photographs showed various poses that "accentuate their physiques" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 134) and were "just a way to exercise control and to make them look the way I wanted them to. … I'd use them to masturbate" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 134). The photographic souvenirs thus served as real-life pornography that allowed Dahmer to relive the control he held over those he considered attractive. As such, the use of the photographs and the souvenirs mirrored aspects of cannibalism and necrophilia in the underlying need for control as well as the objectification of others for sexual gratification.

Dahmer claimed of one of the photographs that, "I just wanted to get a good picture of his face so I could remember how he looked" (Masters, 1993, p. 158). Of another picture that accentuated his victim's chest he stated, "How nice he looked, how I wish I could have kept him another way" (Masters, 1993, p. 159). These mundane comments about portraits of death emphasized Dahmer's view of his victims as mere objects for his gratification and to serve as remembrances of control. However, Dahmer also noted of Sears, "If I could have kept him longer, all of him, I would have" (Masters, 1993, p. 139). Despite his desire for a 'living victim', Dahmer appeared to believe that retaining a part of an individual was at least a satisfactory compromise rather than a waste (Masters, 1993).

The photographs taken during dismemberment then provided the final objectification of the victim. The researcher speculates that rather than risk true fusion with other individuals, Dahmer reduced them to objects that existed only has he allowed them to, in his own creation, for his own desires. However, even the photographs were insufficient to stay his compulsively acting out the fantasies and steep further into the repudiation of his membership of society: "True, it didn't satisfy whatever craving I had or I would have stopped doing it. Things just went from bad to worse" (Masters, 1993, p. 161).

Dahmer also photographed one victim's head with the mouth open before he would place his penis into it (Masters, 1993). Such necrophilic acts were evidenced further through dismemberment. Therefore, dismemberment is seen as part of Dahmer's MO and signature. Building from his practiced knowledge of dissecting animals and disposing of bodies Dahmer also used dismemberment to prolong his sexual gratification. He claimed that he cut open the bodies to reveal the internal organs as he "wanted to see what someone looked liked inside"

(Masters, 1993, p. 159). However, he proceeded to place his hands inside the body to (a) feel the viscera, (b) ejaculate into the body, (c) lower himself into the body to have intercourse with the internal organs and/ or (d) to pull out the intestines to use as a masturbatory aid (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Tithecott, 1997).

9.3.4.1.5   Control

Whilst Dahmer continued to live and kill in his apartment, he continued to work. However, Dahmer's performance at work was hampered by his falling asleep on the job (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and his often taking sick days in order to dismember his victims' bodies (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Erikson (1963a) argued that work productiveness in the sixth stage should not preoccupy the individual to the extent that he loses the right or capacity to be a genital or loving being. However, in Dahmer's case, it appeared that his work productiveness was possibly hindered by his incapacity to be a productive member of society.

In addition to his work, Dahmer regularly saw his parole officer, Donna Chester, to whom he spoke about his (a) sexual identity; (b) financial problems, (c) difficulty relating to his father, (d) that his grandmother had contacted him at work, which made him feel that someone cared for him and (e) that his had mother re-established contact (Masters, 1993). The researcher noted that Dahmer shared more with his parole officer about his troubles than with others, perhaps because he was required to see her regularly (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, this relationship harkened back to Dahmer's curious relation with Julie in Florida (see Chapter 5). Although much of the interaction with Chester was shrouded in lies to keep his true identity and actions hidden, there was nonetheless a connection he shared with her that appeared different to the promiscuity and exclusivity reserved for others.

Although Dahmer continued to kill victims, such as Straughter and Lindsey, he also displayed control. On various occasions, he chose not to kill, such as with Pinet (see Chapter 5). Dahmer noted that,

> Well, sometimes – very seldom – I'd get very drunk, and come back with someone who wasn't as attractive as I'd thought they were, and I'd have a hangover in the morning and they'd leave. Other times I wouldn't have them killed, but I just don't want to be with them. That happened three or four times. Other nights I didn't want

anyone and I'd just go back and watch a video, read. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 127)

These few potential victims were saved by Dahmer's control and lack of physical attraction to them. However, it should also be noted that potential others were spared by his not wanting a sexual partner at the time which suggested control and willpower beyond his claim that "the compulsion overrode everything" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 126).

As Dahmer kept souvenirs of the murders he was able to re-live the fantasies and murders by "using the pictures of past victims. The videotapes, the pornography videotapes, the magazines. I didn't have any elaborate fantasies before I went out" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 156). However, Dahmer would eventually consciously decide to find new victims because "the pictures weren't as fulfilling as actually having someone there … but it gave me a feeling of satisfaction that at least I had something to remember them by" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 156). Dahmer intended to use the skeletal souvenirs in the shrine as confirmation of his power over the captured victims (see section 9.3.4.1.7).

9.3.4.1.6   Attraction and Zombies

Dahmer continued to escalate and develop in his actions as the victims continued to increase (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He began to use acid to dispose of the bodies. He had to explain to his landlord about the smell of putrefied flesh in his apartment – once with a body lying in the next room. Dahmer used plausible ruses such as (a) his fish tank's having malfunctioned and (b) that the meat in the freezer had gone rotten (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

However, Dahmer also began to use the acid in an attempt to create zombies (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer noted about his attraction and his desire for his victims, "I would have liked to have, like on the videotape, a well-developed white guy, compliant to my wishes. I would have preferred to have him alive and permanently staying with me" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 157). As such, he began to drill holes into his victims' skulls and injecting the acid. Hughes died almost instantly, but Sinthasomphone was able to escape the apartment whilst Dahmer went out to drink. Dahmer found the disorientated Sinthasomphone on the streets, surrounded by people and emergency personnel (see Chapter 5).

Dahmer appeared calm and convinced the police officers that Sinthasomphone was his lover and at the apartment showed them Sinthasomphone's clothes and pictures taken earlier (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997). Dahmer's industrious use of this well-practiced façade masked him as innocent, but slightly embarrassed by what had transpired. This is a vital aspect of Dahmer's identity in that he was able to function in both his fantasy world and the outside world. He had a measure of competence in making others believe him through a quiet, unassuming manner that drastically contrasted his seething ruthlessness and repudiation of the society to which he pretended to belong.

At the apartment, Dahmer injected Sinthasomphone for a second time, which killed him instantly (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Ressler noted that Dahmer betrayed a hint of "perverse pride" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 136) in his industry when he noted that he dismembered the body in the bathtub in approximately two hours and kept the skull as a souvenir while the rest was acidified. The mounting collection of skeletons and skulls would soon give rise to a new fantasy, the shrine, but Dahmer first decided to change his MO slightly. In a continued display of his organization and initiative, Dahmer found his next two victims, Turner and Weinberger, in Chicago and brought them back to the apartment (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer noted he did not intend to torture victims but rather that, "It was always eliminating of their consciousness through drugs and eventually death" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 137). It could be argued that Dahmer's destruction of his victims' consciousness or identity served as a way to ensure his own tentative fidelity in his fragmented identity. He wanted to incapacitate their willpower and subjugate them to his desires rather than to risk true fusion with another identity as his identity was not secure. However, he did not believe that it was realistic to keep his victims merely drugged and claimed, "That's why I started drilling. 'Cause drugging was not working" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 138). Dahmer claimed, in retrospect, that it was "getting out of control" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, 148) but despite this admission he failed to stop because, "I wanted to get that zombie technique" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149). Thus, Dahmer's compulsivity was increasingly powerful and may have started to overwhelm his willpower.

Dahmer's 15th victim, Weinberger, provided him a momentary success with the 'zombie technique' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

Weinberger and Dahmer were apparently mutually attracted to each other (Masters, 1993). Dahmer noted that Weinberger was "exceptionally affectionate. He was nice to be with" (Masters, 1993, p. 186). However, the literature indicated that it appeared as if Weinberger had betrayed Dahmer's sense of 'trust' when he connected with others in the bar (Masters, 1993). The researcher holds that Erikson's (1950) first stage of trust versus mistrust is crucial to Dahmer's view of others. The researcher argued that Dahmer failed to resolve the stage with an ego strength of hope and instead showed withdrawal. The description of this incident hinted at Dahmer's perception that a relationship involved uncontested devotion and therefore highlighted his objectification of others to achieve control through death and 'ownership' through souvenirs. Trust can thus be seen as much as an ideal as the unattainable fantasies. The hope that Dahmer should have had for any partner was tainted by the slightest or even imagined rejection. Despite Weinberger's interest in accompanying – and perhaps, staying with – Dahmer (Masters, 1993), he became merely an object for Dahmer to own.

At the apartment Dahmer drugged Weinberger before injecting boiling water into Weinberger's skull because, "I wanted to see if I could find a way of keeping him with me without actually killing him" (Masters, 1993, p. 188). Whilst Weinberger remained in that zombie-like state, he made no effort to leave the apartment (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). This suggested that Dahmer was not rejected. From a twisted sense of intimacy it might be argued that their conversations provided Dahmer with a sense of belonging with an individual who had witness the ruthlessness of his identity. However, the second injection that Dahmer used, because he had to go to work, proved fatal and left Dahmer isolated with nothing but to dismember the body.

9.3.4.1.7 Dominoes, Alcohol and the Shrine

Dahmer's desire for a zombie was an aspect of what he desired in a perfect partner: "The person would have had to be totally compliant, willing to do whatever I wanted" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 130). His victims were thus sacrificial experiments to satiate his need for immediate gratification as Dahmer claimed that, "I didn't have much time to go looking, I was working six days a week, I had time restrictions, and I wanted something right away" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 130). Despite his previous organization and his routine, Dahmer appeared less attached to reality and acted more impulsively to achieve his fantasy. Further, he claimed that he was always in a "lubricated state" as it "seemed to make it easier"

to dismember the bodies even though "it got to be routine" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148). In an apparent breakdown of his tentative willpower, the compulsivity of achieving the fantasy seemed to lead to increasingly impulsive behaviour.

Dahmer thus quickly found a new victim, Lacy, whose murder resulted in his dismissal from the ACC. "I decided to spend the night with him, thought I'd still have a job in the morning. But that did it" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 150). Dahmer's impulsivity to achieve his fantasies had resulted in his thinking being careless. "I thought I could avoid detection. It was after losing the job that my dominoes started to fall" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149). Without the stability of his work routine or an immersion in the 'real world', Dahmer grew ever more exclusive in his relationships and began to neglect his well-being (Masters, 1993). "It just seemed like it went into a frenzy this last month. Everything really came crashing down" (Masters, 1993, p. 190).

Despite his unemployment, Dahmer still spent money on alcohol and continued to lure victims (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He also envisioned the construction of a shrine or power centre, which Dahmer simply noted would be dedicated to, "Myself" (Masters, 1993, p. 286). Dahmer outlined his vision for the shrine quite clearly (see Chapter 5) and noted that,

> The maintaining of the skulls was a way to feel I had saved at least something of their essence, that I wasn't a total waste in killing them. The skeletons I was going to use for the temple but that was never the motivation in killing them, that was an afterthought. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 129)

Nevertheless, Dahmer intended to "develop some sort of incantation or ritual, to tap into power, spiritual power" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 150) in order to tap into another level of awareness in order to attain success in love and finance (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) – the very things he claimed to his parole officer that he was jealous of in others (Masters, 1993). Dahmer therefore showed much imagination, planning, initiative and purpose – from the third and fourth stages – as well as the breakdown of his willpower into a compulsive ruthlessness to realize this endeavour. Thus Dahmer's identity development continued to show role confusion because his possible ego strengths, malignancies and maladaptations were not socially beneficial.

Whilst it is important to note that Dahmer would be the centre of this shrine, he chose to use his captured victims as crucial pieces to execute this feat. He wanted to include those

individuals who had seen the most violent – and perhaps, truer or exposed – aspects of his identity in order to garner this individual success in a society that he seemed to repudiate. Furthermore, the quote in the preceding paragraph is also interesting where Dahmer claimed 'that I wasn't a total waste in killing them'. Though it has been previously noted that Dahmer remained ruthless and considered murder a waste only if he could not retain a part of the victim, here Dahmer hinted at his own worth in the murder. It was he who was not wasted by the killing if he could keep parts of his victims with him. This selfish notion indicated Dahmer's inability to live in mutuality in society or to trust in others and risk 'true fusion' with his identity. "Once I was at the apartment, I was already deep into a mode of doing things – and I never met anyone that I felt I could trust in that kind of relationship" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 129).

Dahmer killed his final victim, Bradehoft, shortly before his arrest. Despite his lack of organization and control, he was still able to execute this final murder (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's impending eviction created another dilemma:

> I was going to have to move out and find somewhere to put all my possessions. Should I get a chest and put what I wanted to keep in that, and get rid of the rest? Or should I put an end to this, try to stop this and find a better direction for my life. That's what was going through my mind that last week. (Masters, 1993, pp. 190 – 191)

Dahmer noted that the notion of discarding his acquired possessions left him with a profound sense of loss (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) as if there were an implied intimacy in his keeping souvenirs.

In terms of Eriksonian theory, this period highlighted aspects of each of the previous stages. Dahmer remained withdrawn and exclusive from society in order to facilitate his functioning as a serial killer. He therefore also failed in the capacity to trust and hope in others or himself. His attempts at independence in the 'real world' were overshadowed by failures and he began to act out his need for control by bringing victims into his fantasy world (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer was inhibited by an inferiority and fear of relationships, but his ruthless creativity built his industry and purpose with each attempt to satisfy his fantasies as was evidenced through the development from drugging, murder and dismemberment to necrophilia, cannibalism and creating zombies (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Further, Dahmer remained in role confusion, but his fragmented identity allowed him the opportunity to interact with the society he repudiated in order to exercise his individual control. However, in his relationships there was little intimacy. He held up a passive mask in his daily interactions with his family and co-workers, but showed an initially charming but fatal 'serial killer' identity when he killed. His promiscuity in the number of relationships was balanced by the exclusivity in his reserve from mutuality as he was unable to form any lasting relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). It may be argued that only his selected victims may have learned his true nature and identity in this time. His compulsivity to realize his desires (see Chapter 5) drew him further into his own 'Infinity Land' and the increasing impulsivity to attain it culminated in his eventual arrest (see next section).

9.3.5   Arrest, Trial and Death

9.3.5.1   Introduction

This final historical period in Dahmer's life extends from the night of his arrest until his death in prison. According to Erikson's (1950) theory, Dahmer remained in the sixth stage of intimacy versus isolation throughout this period.

9.3.5.2   Arrest

9.3.5.2.1   Capture

Dahmer was finally arrested in July 1991 when Edwards escaped the apartment (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). On the night, Dahmer's behaviour vacillated between enthusiasm, depression and inciting terror (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). When Edwards returned with the police, Dahmer was able to affect his 'Average Joe' identity again (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He spoke calmly to the officers in his familiar tone of embarrassment and contrition (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). When the officers found the photographs in the bedroom, he panicked and fought them only briefly as he claimed that it was, "just the realization that there was no point in trying to hide my actions anymore. The best route was to help, help the police identify all the victims and just make a complete confession" (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast).

Dahmer noted of his arrest that:

> I think some higher power got good and fed-up with my activity and decided to put an
> end to it. … If I hadn't been caught or lost my job, I'd still be doing it, I'm quite sure
> of that. I went on doing it and doing it and doing it, in spite of the anxiety and the
> lack of lasting satisfaction. (Masters, 1993, p. 195)

Dahmer's need for 'lasting satisfaction' was never realized as he was unable to forge – and
thus share – a solid identity with another. Instead, he acted on his fantastical desires by
employing his fragmented identity to his own ends. Dahmer's identity development up to
this point thus indicated how the accrued failures of the previous stages represented a
continued role confusion that he sought to escape by killing because, "Nothing else gave me
pleasure towards the end, nothing … I could not get pleasure from going out to eat, I just felt
very empty, frustrated, and driven to continue doing it" (Masters, 1993, p. 189). Further, the
breakdown in his willpower and concomitant increase in impulsivity meant that finally he
"was just driven to do it more frequently … until it was just too much – complete overload. I
couldn't control it anymore (Masters, 1993, p. 189).

9.3.5.2.2 Confession

In custody, Dahmer confessed to incredulous investigators about all of the murders
(Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He also helped the police to identify each of his victims,
which would otherwise have been impossible. Dahmer noted that, "It's a small, very small
thing …. At least I can do that … because I created this horror and it only makes sense that I
do everything to put an end to it, a complete end to it" (Masters, 1993, pp. 10 – 11), which
indicated his recognition of guilt. In the end, all of Dahmer's victims were positively
identified, save Tuomi, for whose murder Dahmer was never charged as there was no
evidence (see Chapter 5).

Dahmer's arrest may be viewed as a way for him to return to the previous crises posited
by Erikson (1950) as it signified the end of his dominant 'serial killer' identity. Dahmer's
secret life was gradually exposed and he was apparently relieved at this chance for catharsis.
He recalled the events of the previous years with candour – and possibly a hint of shame – as
well as callous indifference in his lack of affect (Masters, 1993). Dahmer, commented, "I do
have remorse, but I'm not even sure myself whether it's as profound as it should be. I've
always wondered myself why I don't feel more remorse" (Masters, 1993, p.186). This lack
of remorse holds in terms of Dahmer's previous resolution of the crises in that he was able to

experience some shame about his actions – especially once caught – but not much guilt about their ruthlessness.

Dahmer's confession was not solely to the police officers, but also to psychiatrists. The literature indicated that they were mostly taken aback by his calm monotone (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer spoke openly with his father about his homosexuality and the murders, starting with a childishly simple, "I really screwed up this time" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 182). On the subject of his homosexuality, Dahmer noted previously that he had not told Lionel because he was embarrassed (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's embarrassment here is also possibly tied to two other aspects: (a) his inability to trust others and (b) the social and familial climate in which he was raised. However, this new freedom caused by his arrest provided the potential to return to previous crises in order to try to resolve them more adequately towards the optimal identity development.

Dahmer's arrest had further implications to his identity development than merely answering the question of 'who am I?'. Owing to the nature of Erikson's (1950) theory, socio-historical aspects need also to be considered. Dahmer was instantly notorious because of the media who revealed a singular aspect of his personality to the world. Dahmer was thus faced with the opportunity to re-build his identity while it was branded in print as a serial killer and 'Milwaukee Cannibal'. In the following months, while the truth of this could not be denied, various interviewers and members of the public began to see the other facets of his fragmented identity that had for so long sustained in anonymity (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

9.3.5.3 Court

Dahmer's imprisonment meant that he was isolated from the outside world and his familiar antidote, alcohol. By the time of his third arraignment and his court appearances, Dahmer was sober (Masters, 1993). It might be argued that this was positive aspect of his arrest and potential to resolve the previous crises, as Erikson (1950, 1963a) would argue.

Dahmer's affect in court was muted (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) but for a few exceptions. Dahmer was insistent that, "I was not into torture. … This was not a hate thing. … This thing had no racism. … This was not a homosexual thing" (Ullman, 1992, p. 28). It is interesting that Dahmer chose to nominate his actions as 'a

thing'. It indicated a repudiation of both society and his actions and, quite possibly, his continued distantiation from them because of his inability to meet the crisis of intimacy versus isolation.

Dahmer chose not to take the stand in his own defence.

> I'm not going to get up on the bench and say anything, that's for sure, no way. As far as I'm concerned, there is no defence. I see no hope. It's just completely hopeless from my standpoint. I'm not going to sit up in front of all those people and answer questions. (Masters, 1993, pp. 215 – 216)

Dahmer's sense of shame and doubt here seem particularly important. One could argue that he did not want to be a part of the proceedings and may have feared the risk of having to answer for his exposed repudiation of society. Similarly, he noted that he had little 'hope' at all. From his deepest sense of mistrust and failure to attain the ego strength of hope, Dahmer's fundamental identity trait was withdrawal. It was exactly this aspect of his unassuming demeanour that was most fascinating in court as, "He was, to say the least, enigmatic" (Masters, 1993, p. 228).

Dahmer remained isolated in the background while the horrific details were regaled in court (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Interestingly, in the telling, Dahmer's identity was always fragmented and multi-faceted. Although Dahmer remained a spectator at trial, he spoke before the verdict. He eloquently confessed his guilt and expressed contrition for his actions (see Appendix B). Dahmer's speech evidenced his ability to manipulate words – an aspect of his identity that he seemed to utilize to his benefit only when he wanted to avoid detection, shame or embarrassment. Dahmer's competence to manipulate language is interesting as he rarely communicated with others, except in his luring victims. However, he seemed to harness an innate ability to project to others, through words, the contrition and emotion that he was barely able to reflect (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer noted later that "I don't think I'm capable of creating anything. I think the only thing I'm capable of is destroying … I'm sick and tired of being destructive. What worth is life if you can't be helpful to someone?" (Masters, 1993, p. 220). From his last quote it is possible to consider that Dahmer finally realized Erikson's (1950) basic principle that an individual life cannot be separated from the society in which it exists. Whilst prison provided him with another chance to build his identity, Dahmer still pondered his previous actions and

worked to regain his willpower to reign in his 'compulsion' (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

9.3.5.4   Prison and Death

Dahmer began his prison sentence in solitary confinement (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and he was observed for any suicidal behaviour as he commented that, "Death would be preferable to what I'm facing (Masters, 1993, p. 217). Dahmer described prison as "a life of nothingness, years and years of bland desperation" (Masters, 1993, p. 217) and stated that, "It does get to you – the boredom" (Masters, 1993, p. 219). After he was released into the general population, Dahmer was allowed more access to books and the chance to communicate with the outside world who had witnessed his 'serial killer' identity. He also remained in contact with his father and his mother, who both supported him (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Dahmer began to read the Bible again and apparently reformed (Dahmer, 1994; King, 2004). Although this transformation may be seen as a return to his previous fanaticism when he lived with his grandmother, it also provided him with the chance to build his identity. Dahmer was visited weekly by Ratcliff who provided him with the chance to connect with another person as well as build on his faith. It is also important to note that Dahmer felt that Ratcliff accepted him and baptized him. Dahmer thus seemed to develop a level of trust in the minister. The researcher argues that Dahmer able to return to the first crisis – as Erikson (1950, 1963a) suggested of optimal situations – and may have tried to resolve the crisis through an open relationship with his parents and the minister despite prison not being recognized as an optimal situation for positive identity development.

Aside from his characteristic dark humour (see Chapter 5), Dahmer built up a 'model prisoner' identity that was curiously 'trusted' by prison officials. After Dahmer was attacked in the chapel (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006), he refused to re-enter solitary confinement. Perhaps through the use of his displayed reformation or his uncanny ability to manipulate, Dahmer convinced the prison officials that there was "no undue risk" (Davis, 1995, p. 302) and he remained in general population. Dahmer's humour and his ability to manipulate others thus remained stable parts of his identity as he shifted from serial killer to model prisoner to celebrity. The research holds that Dahmer's ability to adapt his fragmented identity was therefore still crucial to his continuing personality development.

Dahmer gave interviews in prison and often commented on his reformation. Perhaps in using his purpose, built on a little more trust, Dahmer used his previously renounced fame to connect with others outside the prison walls. Although Dahmer noted at first that he would prefer not to speak about his actions, they were the springboard for his connection to others. Indeed, Dahmer received many letters from fans and other individuals who felt as though he would be able to understand their predicaments (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). When asked about his compulsions, Dahmer candidly noted that, "I wish I could say that it just left completely, but there are times when I do still, still do have the old compulsions" (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast). Thus, it might be argued that the fragmented identity still existed. Thus it could be argued that Dahmer remained in a state of role confusion, still unable to develop a solid identity to share with others. Instead, he continued to show what others expected from him: the serial killer, expert, soul mate, model prisoner, celebrity and monster (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

As Dahmer would never be released from prison, there was little chance that he could have developed a solid identity to share with another human being. Prison, thus, would not be seen as one of the positive environments in which Erikson (1963a, 1968) argued an individual could return to the previous crises and possibly resolve them. The interviews provided him with the opportunity to speak about the murders and his re-found fanaticism about religion. However, the confines of the prison paralleled his time at his grandmother's house when a religious fanaticism fostered experimentation with his identity. He projected his new identity to serve his need for association, though interviews that discussed the murders and his reformation. From an Eriksonian perspective, this could suggest that Dahmer's desire for belongingness and control were exercised in his manipulation of prison officials through his 'model prisoner' identity.

Dahmer's decision to remain in the general population, however, afforded him little time to re-shape his identity further. He continued to give interviews and to preach his creationist views (King, 2004; Masters, 1993; Phillips, 1994; Ratcliff, 2006). In November, 1994 (Palermo, Palermo & Simpson, 1996), whilst Dahmer worked on janitorial detail in the prison gym, he was attacked and killed by a fellow inmate. In an ironic twist, Dahmer's killer believed that he acted on a mission from God (Terry, 1994).

9.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on Dahmer's psychosocial personality development. The next chapter provides a presentation and discussion of Dahmer's personality development according to Adler's (1929) individual psychology. Whereas the psychosocial theory provided a staged conception of personality development, Adlerian theory provides a more dynamic view of personality development. This dynamic conceptualization refers to the development of an individual lifestyle through the continuous interaction and subjective perception of a variety of biopsychosocial forces.

CHAPTER 10

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF JEFFREY DAHMER

10.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter the individual personality development of Jeffrey Dahmer is presented and discussed. A conceptual outline to the presentation and discussion of the findings is provided first, followed by an introductory view of Dahmer's lifestyle. Thereafter the chapter is structured according to the conceptual matrix described in Chapter 8. The interactional aspects of Adlerian theory are explicated within each of the five historical periods in Dahmer's lifespan.

10.2 Conceptual Outline for the Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The presentation and discussion of Dahmer's individual personality development in this chapter follows a similar descriptive-dialogic approach utilized in Chapter 9. Thus, the collection, extraction, analysis and presentation of salient biographical data in this chapter are conducted specifically within the context of Adler's (1929) individual psychology (see Chapter 4). As such, the research – for the purpose of this chapter – adopts a teleological orientation whereby the purposive nature of the individual's total behaviour, guided towards a fictional final goal or self-ideal, is explicated.

Adler (1929, 1930) did not believe in studying the separate components of personality, but rather viewed the individual as an integrated and functional whole. The researcher recognized the importance of this holistic view and therefore first presents an additional section that provides an initial perspective on Dahmer's lifestyle. This was utilized to construct a lengthy, but necessarily more narrative style of discussion that facilitated the dynamic interaction of the various aspects of the theory in order to illuminate Dahmer's individual personality at each period.

The components of Adlerian theory are presented and discussed as they interrelate over the five historical periods throughout Dahmer's lifespan. The structural components in the development of the lifestyle are discussed first as they illuminate the fictional goal and the line of striving. Thereafter, the lifestyle is explored and discussed as it relates to the

achievement of the proposed guiding fiction. Attention is also paid to the five life tasks noted in Adlerian theory, namely: social, sexual, occupational, self-regulation and spiritual throughout Dahmer's historical lifespan. Referenced examples of salient biographical data related to the lifestyle development proposed Adler's (1929) individual psychology are provided at each historical period.

10.3   Setting the Scene

10.3.1   The View of the Person

Adler's (1929) theory of individual personality development was presented in a narrative and anecdotal style. When Adler counselled clients, he used their current difficulty and solutions to the tasks of life as a guide to evaluate their style of life. The researcher proposes that the period immediately preceding Oliver Lacy's murder and Dahmer's subsequent dismissal from the Ambrosia Chocolate Company (see Chapter 5) until his arrest was the period of greatest tension in Dahmer's life. As such, section 10.3.2 provides a preliminary discussion of Dahmer's lifestyle during that period to illuminate Dahmer's lifestyle – and to guide the view of lifestyle development.

10.3.2   The Tasks of Life

The following exploration of Dahmer's response to the tasks of life is cursory and only serves as a guide to explore the earliest crystallization of the lifestyle. Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) used his clients' reactions to the life tasks to assess the unity of their movement towards a fictional goal. Adler's (1930, 1958) views on criminality and the response to life tasks will thus be used as a guideline to facilitate this examination.

10.3.2.1   Occupational

In this period of tension, Dahmer faced increasing financial difficulties. He used the money that he earned to finance his fantasies and his alcoholism. In addition to his spending, Dahmer's work performance declined (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and he was often absent. This absenteeism threatened the stability of his employment and eventually led to his dismissal. Dahmer's absence was often related to his having murdered the previous night and the need to dispose of the body (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Adler (1958) held that work broadly encompasses everything that an individual does to sustain himself and

to contribute meaningfully to the sustenance of others. Individuals who do not engage in work activities are therefore viewed as discouraged as they have given up on achieving satisfaction through work. A useful occupation thus implies an interest in others and a contribution to their welfare, but Dahmer was ill-prepared to meet the problems of occupation through his restricted actions and a lack of co-operation.

Adler (1958) held that the value of each occupation is individually determined and is valuable in its contribution to the whole of society. Dahmer's work at the Ambrosia Chocolate Company (ACC) was described as menial labour (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) which modelled Adler's (1958) view that criminals often remain unskilled and mostly untrained. In Dahmer's life history, even before his schooling, this block in interest in co-operation was noticeable and his school career was marked by non-interest, despite his being described as intelligent (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). According to Adler's (1929) theory, Dahmer's response to the task of work revealed his own deep sense of the meaning of life. Dahmer's view of work was predominantly a function of his need for money. As such, it lacked the necessary aspects of contribution and co-operation and served only to sustain his actions towards a feeling of personal superiority as he used his earnings to (a) buy materials to continue the murders and dismemberment and (b) buy alcohol (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

10.3.2.2 Social

The social life task refers to the individual's association with others either individually or in community, but excludes marital, sexual or familial commitment (Adler, 1958; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). This task is solved through social interest and co-operation. Adler (1929, 1958) noted that individuals who are not interested in their fellow man have the greatest difficulties in life and provide great injury to others. Dahmer's behaviour showed no sense of fellowship in the human community and was characterized by loneliness and violence. He was further described as depressed (Masters, 1993), anxious about his financial future (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and was an alcoholic (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), which Adler (1958) noted as symptoms of loneliness and rejection.

Adler (1958) stated that the highest degree of insanity is isolation as it displays a great distance from others. If a child feels that – in his own judgement – his environment and the people are hostile and he feels surrounded by enemies, he does not make good friends and is

not a good friend to himself. Dahmer wanted his victims to be his slaves (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) and therefore wished only to rule over others. However, Dahmer was required to interact with others in society and therefore cannot be considered completely isolated. He maintained superficial relationships with his work colleagues (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), his apartment manager (Masters, 1993) and his parole officer (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Adler (1958) commented that criminals could not make friends with society at large, but could form gangs to unite in a common goal. Dahmer, however, did not include others in his actions. It might be argued that his particular lack of social interest excluded this possibility. Similarly, it suggests that his behaviour could not easily be conveyed with understanding in communication. Language is a social creation to connect with others in a common meaning and within the common sense of all mankind (Adler, 1958). Dahmer's actions showed a striving for personal superiority, which indicated a private meaning to life that cannot be understood by society. Thus, Dahmer's isolation and inability to connect with others may be seen as a function of his severe lack of social interest.

10.3.2.3   Sexual

The sexual task of life tends to be intimate, trusting, self-disclosing, co-operative and long-term in commitment and is often characterized by sexual relationships (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). It relates to the preservation of individual and common life – and includes love and marriage (Adler, 1958). Dahmer's courage and degree of co-operation with the other sex was congruous with his style of life. He excluded marriage as an option and turned to homosexual relationships to avoid facing this task of life. Often this exclusion is a fear of criticism and in this escape of criticism all his relations with society are interfered with and every event judged from a private scheme of apperception. Dahmer's exclusion showed a tendency to expect consideration rather than to give it, which Adler (1958) viewed as part of a lack of social feeling and a failure in courage and optimistic activity. This was evident also in his strained relations with his family, who he rarely saw once he lived in Apartment 213 (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's lack of social interest in the sexual task showed that he held what Adler (1930, 1958, 1964) considered an attitude of: 'what can I get out of it'. He acted only for his personal interests and pleasure and could not contribute to any relationship. Dahmer set a

high ideal of love – or more accurately, desire. He desired a sex slave that would be completely compliant to his will (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). This unattainable ideal excluded the possibility of a suitable partner as no one will ever live up to this ideal. Thus, his sex life appeared to follow a path of conquest and acquisition. He regarded his partners as objects to possess and manipulate (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997).

Dahmer's sexual relationships were casual, homosexual encounters that were characterized by the partner's subjugation to Dahmer's will either through being (a) drugged, (b) lobotomized, (c) murdered or (d) manipulated after death through acts of necrophilia or cannibalism (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Adler (1958) noted that abnormalities or incompatible interests in sexual behaviours are induced by a mistaken goal of superiority and a mistaken style of life. As such, Dahmer's response in adult life was, in Adlerian theory, based on previous training and therefore conformed to a style of striving for personal superiority.

10.3.2.4 Self-regulation

Self-regulation is the process through which the individual strives to co-ordinate a long-term pattern of goal directed behaviour to manage the tasks of life within the norms of society (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Dahmer's behaviour suggested that he related to the world from a position of superiority to protect himself from the world and others. Adler (1930, 1964) noted that a private logic or scheme of apperception is the individual's personal beliefs that guide feelings and behaviours. This subjective view of reality is erroneous and the discrepancy with objective reality results in inappropriate behaviour such as violence (Adler, 1958; Boeree, 2006b; Corey, 2005).

Therefore, Dahmer did not get along with, care for, or value himself to the extent where he experienced a sense of self-control or self-worth to be invested in the 'common good' (Meunier, 1990; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Instead, he was distant (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), considered depressed by his parole officer (Masters, 1993) and showed increasingly violent, antisocial behaviour – as evidenced in the escalation of the murders (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006) to satisfy his striving for personal superiority. Dahmer's creative fantasies and experiments on how to control others through the use of drugs (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), murder and

methods of disposing of bodies through dismemberment and acid (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992) further evidenced his lack of social interest.

10.3.2.5   Spirituality

The life task of spirituality is fundamental to Adler's view of man's connection with all of humankind – and indeed, the cosmos (Adler, 1927, 1934). The basis of the task is that the individual behaves within the realm of moral, legal and ethical codes that preserve the well-being of the individual and society (Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). The individual's social interest, in this task, can therefore be viewed as the individual's viewing social contribution as the meaning to life.

Each individual is confronted with the tasks to relate himself to the universe (Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967; Gold & Mansager, 2000) and to contribute to the welfare of all humankind (Adler, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1958, 1964). Dahmer's actions, both criminal and in his daily life, are indicative of his lack of social interest. His hostile disregard for human life indicated a severe lack of social – and, by implication, cosmic – interest. This description of Dahmer's discouragement to solve the tasks of life through co-operation and contribution reflects Adler's (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) view that all of the life tasks are inherently linked and cannot be solved in isolation.

10.3.3   The Unity of Personality

The brief exploration of the life tasks has highlighted aspects of Dahmer's line of movement and the unity within his behaviour. Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) considered the tasks of life to be inherently linked. Dahmer's response to occupation showed an aversion to work, while providing the basics of economic security and a minimal connection with others. His isolation from others suggested that he did not have a social feeling or need for co-operation and contribution. Instead, this isolation helped to maintain his anonymity as a killer.

The murders of the men to whom Dahmer was attracted showed his rejection of the sexual task of life and the basis of his superiority striving for personal power and superiority. Throughout this period his self-regulation maintained his behaviours, against a society that he feared was his enemy. His hostile reaction was against the preservation of life.   Thus,

Dahmer's solution of these life tasks indicated an avoidance and lack of social interest, co-operation and contribution. Adler (1929) held that such antisocial behaviour is based on a block in co-operation or an inferiority complex. As such, Adler (1929, 1958) emphasized the child's earliest development as he claimed that all failures could be identified in childhood, starting with the family environment.

Dahmer's personality development is discussed next. The researcher notes that early recollections and dreams were not available to explore personality development during childhood. The dynamic interaction of Dahmer's constitutional attributes, social environment and his creative power will be explored and discussed in the construction of his private logic, fictional goal and lifestyle. Once this is provisionally formulated, the researcher will evaluate Dahmer's behaviour to trace its purposeful line of movement towards a fictional goal.

10.4 Dahmer's Individual Personality Development

10.4.1 Childhood of Fantasy

Adler (1929, 1930, 1982) held that the individual develops a style of life in the first four or five years, after which the line of striving will be purposive towards a fictional goal. As such, the first historical period in Dahmer's life will be split into two sections. The first will be used to discuss the development of the lifestyle and the second to consider the initial expression of this line of striving.

10.4.1.1 The Development of the Lifestyle

10.4.1.1.1 Natural Inferiority

The child, by virtue of its size, depends on its parents for care and nourishment. Its awareness of its dependence on its parents or caregivers is the first inferiority, which is deemed a natural inferiority (Adler, 1929; Boeree, 2006b; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler viewed this natural inferiority as universal and positive. He argued that all human life is a striving, from a felt 'minus' to a felt 'plus' position, for independence and the power to be self-sufficient towards a sense of superiority. The child's natural experience of inferiority should ideally be guided towards social interest through experiences of contribution of co-operation (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer was born to Lionel and Joyce Dahmer in 1960. According to Adlerian theory, Dahmer was naturally dependent on his parents and experienced this dependence as the first striving towards superiority. This is a basic tenet of the theory that activates the development of the lifestyle through the interaction with the environment and constitutional attributes. It is therefore within the early interactions with his parents that Dahmer began to develop a scheme of apperception and style of life in terms of Adlerian theory (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a).

10.4.1.1.2   Organ Inferiority

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) held that inferiority feelings could be centred on an organic deficiency. Adler (1958) argued that the mistaken meanings drawn from organic experiences were very important to the construction of a scheme of apperception. He noted that if the individual feels deprived and overburdened in trying to overcome the defect, he risks becoming self-centred and egoistic in this pre-occupation. However, Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) did not believe that organ inferiorities compelled a mistaken style of life, but merely a creative compensation within the style of life. Individuals who do not hold goals based on reality do not exercise the time or the freedom to interest themselves in others. Consequently, they grow up with a lesser degree of social feeling and the ability to co-operate (Adler, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

Dahmer spent the first four months of his life with his leg in a cast (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). As he had the cast from birth, it is possible that the child Dahmer may not have been especially aware of any specific difficulties related to having a cast or may he have experienced this as an additional stressor that risked self-centred development. However, as the child's perception of this restricted movement is crucial, this discussion is necessarily speculative.

From a view of organ jargon, the restriction of movement may be seen as an indication of Dahmer's restricted affect and isolation as individuals may develop symptoms based on previous experiences (Adler, 1958; Griffith, 1984). Also, this restriction and dependence is later viewed in Dahmer's behaviour, which suggested a pampered response to elicit attention from his parents, such as when he was ill. Further, this could be viewed as a response to the perceived environmental situation. For example, Dahmer's numerous ear and throat infections (Dahmer, 1994) may possibly have been an indication of his perception of his not

being heard or not receiving attention. This is a possible indicator of his perception of neglect within the family environment. The researcher further noted that as a physical experience it also showed a connection to Dahmer's fascination with the human form. If viewed as a physical concept – rather than exclusively a concept of movement – the emphasis on physical form is tied to the core of his murder fantasies and actions.

In terms of Adlerian theory, if Dahmer felt himself overburdened, it would be difficult for him to feel that the meaning of life is contribution (Adler, 1930, 1958). It therefore indicated that Dahmer turned his focus to attaining personal superiority. This further implied that he lost the hope to play a useful part in life and considered himself personally humiliated by the world. Dahmer's organic inferiorities therefore could have contributed, according to Adlerian theory, to the development of a faulty lifestyle and criminal behaviour as (a) he was pre-occupied with himself and (b) sought opportunities to rule others in a world that he perceived as threatening or humiliating.

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) further noted that organ inferiorities must also be viewed in the child's interaction with his parents, which leads from a discussion about constitutional attributes into that of the family environment. The risk of a self-centred lifestyle is greatest when the individual is occupied with his own sensations and was not trained in co-operation with others. In this training, Adler (1958) held that the mother was the most important figure to help train the child's development away from itself to include the father and other siblings. According to Masters (1993) and Dahmer (1994), Joyce Dahmer experienced severe medical symptoms before Dahmer's birth and further mental health issues following his birth. The Dahmers lived with Jeffrey's paternal grandparents at first and the tension between Joyce and Jeffrey's grandmother, Catherine Dahmer, was considerable (Masters, 1993).

Based on the view that Dahmer did not have a necessarily stable family home environment because of his mother's ill mental health, his father's aloofness and the strife at home (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), it could indicate that Dahmer was not sufficiently trained in co-operation. However, it is important to note that Catherine cared for Jeffrey while he lived with her in these first months and that Joyce apparently doted on her son and kept a journal of his earliest achievements (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The limited and ambiguous nature of the information highlights two important aspects within an Adlerian perspective. Dahmer's subjective perception of the situation was most crucial and therefore, while he may have experienced pampering, he may also have had a subjective experience of

neglect. Each of these aspects of the failures within the family environment is discussed in the following sections.

10.4.1.1.3   The Neglected Child

One of the ways in which children develop faulty lifestyles is through the perception of neglect. Neglected, unwanted or unappreciated children do not learn what it is to be loved and to experience co-operation with others (Adler, 1958; Boeree, 2006b). Adler (1958) argued that there can be no 'pure' type of a neglected child else it would not have survived. In a pure type of neglect, the individual would be isolated, uncommunicative and oblivious to co-operation and association with others. Essentially, the neglected child is one who never found a trustworthy other person (Adler, 1958). The perception of neglect is a powerful indicator of the creative power and the inherent subjectivity of Adlerian theory. Dahmer's isolation, his manipulation of others and the murders indicated that he did not solve the tasks of life through interaction and co-operation with others and displayed an inherent lack of trust and discouragement.

Adler (1930, 1958) held that criminals have not established a spirit of co-operation and have difficulty in socialization as they had no one to win their interest, affection and co-operation. Adler (1958) maintained that the mother's first task is to give the child an experience of a trustworthy other person and to later widen this feeling of trust to include the rest of the child's environment. A perceived neglect may result in generalized feelings of resentment, violence and disregard for social rules (Keppel & Birnes, 1997) through a lack of association within the family and consequently, society. Dahmer's perception of neglect formed his private logic and lifestyle according to these beliefs and expectations of the social environment. This was expressed in an inferiority complex about relationships (see section 10.4.1.1.7), suspicion, isolation and malice. Dahmer's private logic (see section 10.4.1.1.9) indicated that he overrated the difficulties of the tasks of life and underrated his ability to meet them with the aid of others. Therefore, the view of the neglected child suggests that Dahmer viewed the world as a hostile enemy. He thus sought control by acting out in anger against a world to which he was not sufficiently socialized.

Further, Adler (1958) noted that criminals fell into two types: (a) the ugly neglected and (b) the handsome pampered. Both of these conditions hold that the individuals were raised in situations where it was difficult to develop social interest. Dahmer was described as

handsome and a discussion of his pampering follows in the next section. However, the researcher argues that this latter formulation does not preclude the possibility that a perception of neglect can exist in a handsome individual with a pampered response to life. The nature of the inferiority complex allows for the possibility that the inferiority can be built upon the perception of neglect and guide purposive behaviour towards a fictional goal of personal superiority.

10.4.1.1.4 The Pampered Child

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) discussed the pampered child as part of the family environment as a contributor to the mistaken meaning to life and within the context of birth order. Adler (1930, 1958) noted that pampered children are trained to expect that their desires should be immediately met. The pampered chid has not been trained in social interest. His interest is self-centred and he has lost his independence as he never learned the use of and necessity of co-operation. He does not have the courage to achieve his goals or affection through independent effort (Adler, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

Dahmer's life history highlighted an expectation of his being a pampered child because of (a) his isolation through his life; (b) his seeming lack of independence in meeting the tasks of work and fellowship as well as his hostile response to the task of love; and (c) his birth order (see section 10.4.1.1.5). However, the biographical literature did not reveal this expected pampering, but rather showed a perception of neglect (see section 10.4.1.1.3).

The pampered lifestyle shows a limited amount of activity as it is not sufficient to solve the problems of life. This limited activity, such as extreme discouragement, hesitation and isolation (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956), is the child's own creation and therefore this lifestyle can also be found in cases where there appears to be no basis of pampering, but instead where the individuals feel themselves neglected (Adler, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). There is thus a distinction between the pampering situation and the pampering response in the lifestyle – and either may occur independently of the other (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This implied that Dahmer's pampered response indicated that he wanted to be pampered, more than his actually having been pampered. It is vital to note that Adler interposes the creative activity of the individual as the intervening variable between the pampered situation and the pampered response.

Dahmer's perceived neglect and the inferred desire for pampering show a marked similarity in his behaviour towards society. Both of the stated conditions hold that he did not develop a sense of social interest and responded to a perceived hostile society with isolation and violence. Dahmer therefore lacked the creative effort to gain the good opinion of others. Dahmer's private logic facilitated a view of society's betrayal of his expectations and its perceived hostility as proof of his being ill-treated and that he would not succeed in the tasks of life through co-operation as Adler (1930, 1958) described. Adler (1958) further noted that all pampered children suffer from fear. They use their fears to attract attention and build this emotion into their style of life. They use it to secure their goal of regaining a connection with the mother. Dahmer's timidity and isolation was noticed by his parents (Dahmer, 1994) and his teachers in his childhood (Masters, 1993) and he claimed that both of his parents were under-involved in his life (Masters, 1993). This could be seen as goal-directed behaviour to achieve pampering, just as his illnesses may have been in response to the environment.

In a pampering response, Dahmer therefore later sought to easily solve the tasks through avoidance and leaning on others – and when this was not achieved he blamed the environment through the murders that granted his sense of superiority. As such, he desired the opportunity to dominate others in response to a belief that life means, in Adlerian terms, "to be first, to be recognized as the most important and to get everything I want" (Adler, 1958, p. 17) and continued to adopt mistaken beliefs and a line of compensation to this end. The development of his private logic and fictional goal are discussed in further detail in sections 10.4.1.1.9 and 10.4.1.1.10, respectively.

Adler (1958) identified the roots of the criminal pattern in children who were overburdened either through an organ inferiority or neglect or who were pampered. They look for opportunities to rule over others and intoxicate themselves with the feeling of personal superiority. Jeffrey Dahmer showed a confluence of these conditions in his earliest development and his creative power guided the development of his fictional goal and his compensatory strivings. The following section is a discussion of Dahmer's position in the family as it illuminates aspects of his perceptions and experiences within his earliest environment. Adler (1929, 1930) considered birth order dynamically linked with aspects of pampering and neglect and crucial to the construction of the lifestyle.

10.4.1.1.5   Birth Order

Dahmer was the first born child in the Dahmer family. There was a seven year gap between Dahmer and his younger brother, David. Therefore, although Dahmer was the first born, he is likely to have the characteristics of an only child because of the age difference and its concomitant cognitive development (Adler, 1930, 1958). Adler (1958) emphasized that the individual's psychological birth order is the most important aspect to consider. The researcher will therefore consider Dahmer's development as both an only child and a first born in order to evaluate its implications for both his perceived neglect and pampered response.

10.4.1.1.5.1   Only Child

Adler (1930, 1958, 1964) held that the only child was more likely to be pampered and would experience difficulties in later life at no longer being the centre of attention. This reflects the description of the pampered situation which is seen as a failure of life. The individual's limited sphere of action, which is to demand from others, would therefore influence his solution to the tasks of life (Adler, 1958; Ansbacher, 1992; Boeree, 2006b; Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). As previously discussed, there is little information about Dahmer's having experienced a pampered situation. Instead, Dahmer seemed to have held a perception of neglect, which can also be translated into a pampered response to the environment whereby he desired to be pampered because of his perceived deprivation.

10.4.1.1.5.2   First-Born

Adler (1930, 1958) noted that the oldest child is dethroned at, and must adapt to, the birth of a sibling. This dethronement suggests that he must share the attention of his mother and father with a rival. This dethronement makes a great impression as it may be felt very deeply – and this deprivation can mould the entire style of life (Adler, 1958). If the oldest child is prepared and trained to co-operate he may develop a sense of responsibility towards the younger child. If not prepared, he may fight against the change and possibly seek the father's attention or find ways to be superior to the sibling. In his struggle for attention, however, Dahmer was pushed into the background (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and his views on his position in the family may have been confirmed. Dahmer was described as enthusiastic about

his brother's birth and even named him David (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Owing to his age, the impact of birth order was more aligned with that of Dahmer's being an only child.

10.4.1.1.5.3   Dahmer's Position in the Family

Adler (1958) noted that there are no fixed rules in birth order, but that the situation is crucial. He further added that no two children are the same and therefore each child will show in his lifestyle the creative results of his attempts to adapt himself to his own circumstances. Dahmer was raised in the same home as his brother, but the two had vastly differing lifestyles. Jeffrey Dahmer did not show the pure characteristics of either the first-born or the only child.

Adler (1958) argued that the only child is pampered by its mother and considers its father as its rival. In cases where the child is interested more in the father and tries to win his affection and attention it is because the mother's affection was lost (Adler, 1930, 1958). The literature provided little information about Dahmer's early relationship with his mother. Dahmer noted that he remembered that she was always sick in bed (Masters, 1993) and knew about her depression after his birth (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer (1994) indicated times when Lionel and Jeffrey were together, such as Lionel's saving him from being sucked into the mud; reading stories and riding bicycle together; and Jeffrey's spending time with him in the laboratory. Jeffrey, however, noted to army colleagues that he could never satisfy his father (Davis, 1995) and told his parole officer that he thought his father was too controlling (Masters, 1993). Joyce stayed at home with Jeffrey and Lionel stayed out late at night working at his studies. This was often as a way to avoid fights in the home, but Jeffrey was still aware of his parents' strife. This created a situation where the family lived past each other – and his parents only caught glimpses of Jeffrey as he grew older (Dahmer, 1994).

The view of Dahmer's neglect within the family therefore highlights his inability to engage the interest of either parent. In terms of Adler's (1958) view, Dahmer may therefore have become discouraged and believed that he could never win love, attention or affection, which resulted in his reserve and inability to join with others. Thus, Dahmer's perception of his family environment contributed to the development of a mistaken view of life (Adler, 1930, 1958) instead of providing a social situation that enhanced the development of his social interest.

Within the family environment, therefore, Dahmer trained himself for isolation through an initial pattern of being an outsider. Dahmer withdrew from the family environment and became more sullen (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and according to Adlerian theory was thus at increased risk to act out violent aggressive feelings (Adler, 1927, 1930; Corey, 2005; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Unlike the child who has lost the position of power in his own small kingdom at home, Dahmer instead began to create a fantasy world wherein he (a) was entirely engrossed, (b) held the highest authority and (c) would choose whom to include. This indicated the power of fantasy and the associated concepts of power and control inherent to his lifestyle. These responses may have contributed, in his adolescence, to his being incapable of solving his own problems and self-medicating with alcohol before he entered high school (Baumann, 1991; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's isolation was evidenced in his having few friends in childhood and later, throughout school (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Although he was considered by his teachers – the adults – as neat, quiet and polite, he was not interested in school, and did not engage with other children (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He thus displayed some characteristics of the only child.

According to Adler's (1930, 1958) view, Dahmer's lifestyle was already set by the time his brother, David, was born. Owing to his age, Dahmer was prepared for and enthusiastic about his brother's birth (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). However, Dahmer's lack of social interest and his perceived neglect were possibly compounded by his brother's birth. This is indicated by a teacher's noting that he seemed more neglected (Davis, 1995; Schwartz, 1992). While a period of experiencing dethronement would be natural (Adler, 1958), his parents' attention to his brother possibly resulted in feelings of deeper neglect. Added to this, Dahmer's father took on more chores in the house and cared for David while Joyce was ill (Dahmer, 1994). This potentially created a situation wherein Dahmer saw that his parents could provide love and attention to another and lead to increased feelings of neglect and deprivation – which would further serve to confirm his private logic. In response, Dahmer's lifestyle showed compensatory behaviours of isolation, hostility and deprivation that could be based on a severe inferiority relating to interpersonal relationships.

10.4.1.1.6   The Psychology of Use

Adler (1927, 1929, 1930, 1958, 1982) argued that individual psychology was based on the law of movement.   He argued that the unity of the individual's psyche was based on a teleological striving for superiority wherein all behaviours would be purposive towards a fictional goal.   Therefore, once the individual's lifestyle is set – by the age of four or five – based on a private logic and a guiding fictional goal, the individual would act as if that goal were attainable through creative compensations.

The construction of the lifestyle is dependent on the individual's creative power (see section 10.4.1.1.8).   Adler (1930, 1958) held that individuals had the power to perceive situations differently – and therefore considerations of birth order, organic inferiority and failures in the family environment provide subjective experiences within which to formulate a guiding fictional goal.   Indeed, Adler (1958) noted that heredity and the environment contribute to personality development, but held that what the individual chooses to do with his experiences is more important.

In the construction of the private logic, fictional goal and lifestyle, Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) noted that a block of co-operation in an early experience could develop into an inferiority complex.   This inferiority complex illuminates the mistaken view of life and moulds the compensatory path of movement that resounds through the lifestyle.   Chapter 5 served as a historical overview of Dahmer's life, but also highlighted the lack of information in terms of (a) his childhood and (b) his own perceptions and revelations through dreams and earliest recollections about his childhood.   Therefore, the formulation of the lifestyle can only be a tentative hypothesis to be tested.   Thus, the later periods of Dahmer's life history will be used to explore and describe whether his proposed fictional goal (see section 10.4.1.1.10) and lifestyle remained a consistent, purposive unity.

10.4.1.1.7   Inferiority, Inferiority Complex and Superiority Complex

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) held that inferiority feelings are the impetus for the individual's striving for superiority – and that this is a positive aspect of personality development. However, Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) further noted that an inferiority complex can develop when individuals become so overwhelmed by the forces of their inferiorities that they focus increasingly on themselves and are unable to solve the difficulties in life.

Inferiority feelings produce a state of tension and a resultant compensatory movement towards a feeling of superiority. An inferiority complex is based on a lack of social interest and appears before a difficulty that the individual feels unable to solve (Adler, 1929). In each individual the nature of the inferiority is different, but the state of discouragement and resulting tension in the face of difficulties results in compensation towards a goal of personal superiority. The goal is always to be superior to the difficulties, but the methods chosen are merely a self-deception (Adler, 1929, 1958). The individual will appear hesitant, restrict his sphere of action and occupy himself with avoiding defeat rather than making realistic efforts to change the objective situation. Therefore, the inferiority feelings accumulate and the difficulties press on him with greater urgency (Adler, 1958).

A superiority complex can also develop – especially in criminals and neurotics – whereby individuals pretend to be superior to others and this false success compensates for an exaggerated state of inferiority which they cannot bear (Adler, 1929, 1930). This imagined power and false sense of security are indicative of the individual's ceasing to be socially interested as he attempts only to evade life tasks and becomes auto-intoxicated with personal superiority – and this provides only a partial success (Adler, 1958, 1964).

The discussion of Dahmer's organ inferiority, neglect and pampering highlighted Dahmer's fundamental inferiority. Owing to the nature of Dahmer's lifestyle, the researcher argues that it is an inferiority complex – and that Dahmer later showed a superiority complex. Dahmer's inferiority complex seemed centred on his belief in his inadequacy in the realm of relationships. Adler (1958, 1964) described the inferiority complex as a block in co-operation that moulds the individual's private logic, meaning in life and fictional goal – and therefore is the undercurrent of the lifestyle. This implies that Dahmer therefore was discouraged before the tasks of life and found ways to solve them by avoiding their solution in a social manner. He thus appeared to hold a view of the world as his enemy – and strived towards a goal of personal superiority, rather than social interest.

Dahmer's response to his inferiority complex indicated that in his striving for personal superiority he limited his actions to fit his goal. As the goal of superiority is a high ideal it cannot be easily achieved (Adler, 1929) and is further impeded by an inflexible response (Adler, 1958). Dahmer distanced himself from the problems of life and confined himself to circumstances in which he felt able to dominate others, rendering ordinary relationships unsatisfactory. He chose the best tested devices found most effective for his purposes to gain

personal superiority. Adler (1958) noted, however, that even in the restricted movement, the residue of social feeling is seen as it drives individuals to connect with others. Dahmer's relationships with others were characterized by (a) isolation (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992) and (b) murder (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

From this personal sense of achievement, it is clear that society did not benefit from Dahmer's actions as his ambitions were not social. Instead, his inferiority complex guided him against the ordinary tasks of life. This indicated that Dahmer believed that he did not need, as Adler (1930, 1958) held, co-operation and could not achieve love or association. Owing to the social nature of the tasks of life, his strivings reflected the same ideal in (a) his disinterested response to work (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), (b) his apathy towards social relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006) and (c) his dominance in his sexual relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). In particular, Dahmer's emphasis on the sexual life task indicated a concrete expression of his goal in a belief, which Adler (1958, p. 60) described as: "I must have this or nothing". This guided the restrictive role of his fantasies regarding his desired partner and the signature behaviour required for his personal superiority to be satisfied. This indicated that Dahmer had a halting style of life and fear of inadequacy in relationships which reflected that his goal of supremacy and success was set highly against his restricted movements toward personal superiority.

10.4.1.1.8 Creative Power

Adler (1958, 1982) described the creative power as an innate capacity of the whole person. The child creatively interprets his environment and heredity and creates a unique schema of apperception through which events are perceived. This creative schema is how individuals orient themselves to the world and is a personalized sense of meaningfulness, significance and power (Adler, 1929, 1930). The creative power directs the individual's striving towards superiority and supplies it with a meaningful goal. Based on the innate striving to succeed, environmental influences and the creative power, individuals establish a personal style of living that directs their thoughts, feelings and actions. Dahmer's personality was thus self-determined by the meaning he gave to his experiences. As Adler (1929) held that in every expression there is a unity, Dahmer is placed at the centre of meaning as he was the creative participant who interpreted experiences through his creative power.

Aspects of Dahmer's creative power were previously discussed in relation to organ inferiority, the neglected child, the pampered child and inferiority complex. In each of these situations it was Dahmer's creative interpretation of the environment that influenced the view of his development. For example, Dahmer's perception of neglect and his pampering response occurred in an environment where he was not wholly neglected, but felt this neglect to the extent that his lifestyle reflected this perception. The expression of the lifestyle indicates an individual meaning of, and attitude towards, what constitutes success (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958, 1964, 1982; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Boeree, 2006b; Corey, 2005; Mosak, 2000). Thus, from an Adlerian view, Dahmer's mistaken perception of success was broadly related to avoiding or escaping the tasks of life.

In Dahmer's early development, the literature also indicated two significant events whose interpretation may be considered in the construction of his lifestyle: (a) his double hernia operation (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and (b) his playing with the bones of small animals (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   From the view of Dahmer's lack of social interest and his developing private logic and life-plan, the expression and use of these situations is important.

Dahmer's hernia operation was a painful experience where he interacted with doctors. Adler (1958) held that children who encounter death or pain often compensate to be doctors as they try to find a way to preserve life. In Dahmer's case, however, he was not trained towards co-operation or contribution. The power and control that the doctor had over his life and his pain is a noteworthy consideration in light of Dahmer's own experiments with animals and humans. Interestingly, Dahmer claimed that he did not want to hurt others (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) and the psychiatrists at his trial considered his drugging his victims a sign of this (Masters, 1993). It should also be noted that the exploratory surgery was extremely painful and may also be related to Dahmer's own fascination with exploring his victims' bodies (see Chapter 5). Further, the possible organ inferiority response may be significant in that the young Dahmer believed that his genitals had been cut off (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and his overall fascination with the male physical form.

Dahmer's playing with the bones of dead animals could have been viewed merely as a child's curiosity. However, in line with Dahmer's later experiments on the bones of animals and his experiments on his victims, this was potentially more significant. From Adler's (1929, 1958) perspective, this behaviour seemed to be a form of training into a narrowed field

of interest. Dahmer's playing with bones may therefore be seen as his manipulating the bodies of 'things that were alive'. The power, control and manipulation must be considered from the view of Dahmer's perceived lack of power and ultimately, the objectification of his victims. As with the previous event, there is a line of interest in the body, in controlling it and experimenting with it. In line with his inferiority complex to relationships, this was also later reflected in his fantasies to have the bodies of his victims, either unconscious or dead, that he could explore and manipulate (see Chapter 5).

10.4.1.1.9   Private Logic

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) described private logic as the individual's view of himself, the world and others. He noted that this private logic was against common sense, which meant that the individual's compensation towards this private meaning of success was self-centred and would not benefit society. Dahmer thus viewed all situations from this private logic or scheme of apperception and responded accordingly to compensate towards a goal of personal superiority. The researcher argues that Dahmer's private logic held that (a) he was unworthy because of his perceived neglect; (b) the world was a hostile place, full of enemies to be overcome; and (c) people could not be trusted or co-operated with and therefore deserved no contribution.

10.4.1.1.10   Fictional Goal

The fictional goal or guiding self-ideal is a fictitious goal that directs the individual's striving (Adler, 1929, 1982). Adler (1929) noted that an individual's final goal can be traced in fantasies and early recollections, but if "purposely sought it is rarely obtained" (p. 8). The lifestyle, however, indicates clearly its origin in a striving for power and carries within itself the ideal of a kind of perfection and infallibility. The view of Dahmer's private logic indicated an attitude that reflected his taking what he wanted – or thought he deserved – in a hostile world. The central aspects of his criminal lifestyle indicated his need for dominance and power. Dahmer's guiding self-ideal was a fictional image of success, significance, security and a sense of belonging according to Adlerian theory (Adler, 1929, 1982; Dinkmeyer, Pew & Dinkmeyer, 1979) and can be broadly formulated in a common goal found in humankind: a striving to be godlike (Adler, 1958). The ideal of godlikeness suggests a wish to be the centre of attention, a connection with others, immortality and a sense of omniscient power (Adler, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

The most significant block in Dahmer's co-operation – that is, his inferiority complex – was centred on relationships. Thus it follows that his guiding self-ideal would be constructed around the desire for association or a feeling of belonging without the possibility of rejection. The ideal of godlikeness indicates this connection with others. Taken further, Dahmer's control over his victims' lives and deaths provided him with a sense of personal superiority and power in the context of Adlerian theory (Adler, 1958). This power and control is especially important as his choice of a useless lifestyle resulted in his inability to solve the tasks of life through co-operation. The fantasy may therefore be a concrete expression of his goal that he acted to achieve, while at the same time facing the tasks of life in a way to ensure his achievement of the fantasies: a personal success. At an extreme, Dahmer's creative interpretation and striving for this ideal was evidenced in the desire to create mindless sex slaves and to construct a shrine – out of the bones of his victims – to himself (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992).

As the fictional goal can never be attained, it signifies that the individual is always in flux and always becoming (Adler, 1929, 1958). Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964, 1982) held that once the private logic and fictional goal are set, the individual acts as if this goal were attainable. Every expression is a compensatory movement towards overcoming, perfection, superiority and success (Adler, 1982) and shows its uniqueness and unity in the lifestyle. Although Dahmer's unique compensatory movement towards his fictional goal was characterized by a lack of social interest, Adler (1929, 1958) remarked that there are no mistakes in the lifestyle but only mistakes in its development. Dahmer's multitude of creative compensations towards personal superiority in adolescence and adulthood were not in line with social interest (see Chapter 5), but towards personal superiority.

Dahmer's fantasies are essential to the view of his lifestyle and an indication of his fictional goal. Dahmer's lack of social interest – based on his striving on the useless side of life and particularly, the murders – and his willingness to act as if he could attain his fantasies are the basis of his criminal lifestyle. From childhood, he restricted the sphere of his activity and this reflected in his response to each of the life tasks and was evident in his choice of crime. First, he adhered to a particular victim type and approached, murdered and manipulated them in a similar way. Thus, his *modus operandi* (MO) and his signature were constructed within his lifestyle. Second, Dahmer's creative power constantly developed and refined his fantasies to include new scenarios that might achieve an intoxicating feeling of

superiority and the achievement of a self-determined perfection and success. Owing to the nature of the theory, the final goal is an unconscious construction that guides all psychological movement (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958). The teleology of Adlerian theory holds that Dahmer's behaviours were purposively guided toward the achievement of the goal.

10.4.1.2   Narrowed Stable

Adler (1958) noted that "by the end of the fifth year [the individual's] personality has crystallized. The meaning he gives to life, the goal he pursues, his style of approach and his emotional disposition are all fixed" (p. 34) and that "there can be a thousand varieties of striving towards this goal" (p. 58). The remainder of the chapter evaluates Dahmer's response to the tasks of life in order to evaluate his creative striving towards the posited fictional goal.

The researcher viewed the first life task, occupation, in Dahmer's childhood to relate to school. Adler (1958) held that pampered children, at school, exhibit their limited social feeling as they are unwilling to join with other children. Dahmer (1994) noted that from the time Jeffrey reluctantly went to school he appeared to be "a different person, deeply shy, distant, nearly uncommunicative" (p. 62). In terms of Dahmer's private logic, it might be argued that school was 'hostile territory' filled with new enemies armed with weapons of potential rejection. Dahmer's teachers noted that he was polite and very willing to please (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) which is consistent with an only child's being more comfortable with adults (Adler, 1958, 1964). However, they further noted that he was uninterested in school work and mostly unhappy. Adler (1958) noted that children who are only interested in themselves would not be interested in school tasks or teachers, although they might proceed if they received excessive attention. Dahmer was isolated at school just as he was increasingly at home; he refused to engage with others and at break times seemed to do "nothing" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 63).

Adler (1958) noted that the life task of occupation is best solved by friendship, social feeling and co-operation. Dahmer remained unattached during his childhood, bonding only superficially with a select few (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992). One of his elementary school friends was David Borsvold with whom Dahmer shared an interest in geology and dinosaur bones (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's interest in dinosaur bones appeared to be another expression of his interest in the body, just as

with the 'fiddlesticks' and his later experiments (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Another childhood friend was Lee. They cycled and played together. Dahmer stated, "When I was a little kid I was just like anybody else" (Masters, 1993, p. 31). It is necessary to note that Dahmer was not entirely cut off from society and did not display overtly violent tendencies in childhood. However, throughout school his peers considered him as reserved and smart, yet different, isolated and with a strange sense of humour (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; King, 2004; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's childhood was a time when he built for himself a 'narrow stable' (Adler, 1958) to distance himself from the tasks of life. He confined himself to situations in which he felt able to dominate and achieve his goal of superiority. Dahmer's choice of domination was influenced by his training and he would continue to use the device best tested and most effective for his purposes in order to meet the tasks of life with the private meaning of success. One incident tied together Dahmer's reaction to the occupational and social tasks. Dahmer caught and presented a bowl of tadpoles to an assistant teacher who he liked, because "she was nice to me, I guess" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 71) and "she … acted like she thought it was a great gift, so that made me happy" (Masters, 1993, p. 36). However, she gave the tadpoles to Lee. This incident would be a confirmation of Dahmer's private logic that he – and his hard work to collect the tadpoles – was worthless and that he was betrayed. He snuck into Lee's garage and poured oil into the bowl, killing the tadpoles. Dahmer's choice to destroy the object that represented the betrayal was a creative reaction to the rejection in order to achieve a sense of superiority. This behaviour, at age seven, most likely became the narrowed stable to which Dahmer retreated in adulthood.

Dahmer's killing the tadpoles also reflected his only act of violence against animals (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). From an early age, Dahmer was interested in animals. He loved to watch and care for them (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer had several pets – with interesting names – such as a cat named Buff and a dog, Frisky. Though Dahmer's interest in animals later took on a more morbid fascination, his care for them highlighted at least a semblance of spirituality. For example, Dahmer did not enjoy his high school friend Jeff Six's habit of running down dogs with a truck, but enjoyed dissecting the animals that became road kill (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's home in Bath was surrounded by woods, where he collected dead animals and insects. A friend later described Dahmer's collection as "tons and tons of jars of animals and pieces of animals in which he seemed fascinated by the

decomposition" (Flaherty, 1993, p. 7). Dahmer's fascination and solitary experimentation on animal remains – enabled by increasing isolation (see Chapter 5) – was therefore another aspect of his narrowed line of striving that he retained as part of his lifestyle.

As a child Dahmer watched television, was "totally absorbed" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 57) when he played non-confrontational games like 'hide-and-seek' and shunned group sports (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). He also showed a mischievous enthusiasm in Iowa, such as throwing bricks at abandoned buildings. One creative way that Dahmer connected with Borsvold was through playing 'Infinity Land' – a game of Dahmer's own design. The concept behind the game is the destruction of spindly stickmen when they came into close contact with others. That Dahmer included another in this game was important as a potential aspect of social interest and co-operation. However, the game itself represented another aspect of Dahmer's focus on manipulating 'people' to their destruction. Adler (1958) noted that in through friendship, children can learn empathize, but if a child is frustrated, guarded or isolated he does not develop the ability to identify with others. As such, Dahmer's inability to fully connect with others probably indicated that he thought of himself, from an Adlerian view, as the most important being in the world, always anxious to secure his own welfare.

One of the ways that Dahmer exercised his superiority was through isolation. He spent his childhood concealed in the expansive woods that surrounded the house in Bath (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The woods represented a place where he could be entirely alone, untouched by parental control. He could make of his experiences in the woods of whatever he desired while he played with Frisky. While the nature of Dahmer's play or fantasies was omitted in the literature, the striving showed his movement towards his goal of superiority and godlikeness. Adler (1929, 1930) noted that children's play represented the natural striving towards superiority as they always want to be stronger or older. In the same way, Dahmer's isolation into a world that he created and mastered served as his striving towards his goal. However, this striving was a significant compensation towards the avoidance of the tasks of life.

The sexual task of life includes family, sexual relations and ultimately, marriage (Adler, 1930, 1958; Witmer & Sweeney, 1992). Dahmer's isolation allowed him to avoid not only interactions with potential friends, but also his family. The atmosphere in the household was tumultuous. Lionel spent much time at work and later paid attention to maintaining the house by doing chores or caring for David (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) while Joyce was

increasingly distant and reclusive (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). The tension between Dahmer's parents often resulted in heated arguments although the children remained physically unharmed. Adler (1958) noted that children learn about marriage from their parents. If the parents do not co-operate, they cannot teach their children co-operation in preparation for marriage or society. Dahmer's impression of his parents' marriage was therefore probably critical to his view of the sexual task of life.

Dahmer's impression of his parents' relationship was encompassed by his statement, "It made me feel on edge, unsure of the solidity of the family. I decided early on I wasn't ever going to get married 'cause I never wanted to go through anything like that" (Masters, 1993, p. 39). Dahmer's response was thus the avoidance of the sexual task of life and this was expressed through isolation in adolescence and in adulthood through domination of his homosexual partners. Consistent with the neglected child, Dahmer was never involved, nor interested in love – and he never wished to be married. He further noted in his confession that he felt guilty about Joyce's emotional disorder as he was aware that she was depressed after his birth (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's isolation from the family may thus also possibly be seen as a creative compensation because his lack of activity would place him in a position where he would not feel that the family strife was entirely his fault. From the impressions he received and interpreted from his environment, he turned in on himself to focus on his own superiority.

Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) noted that every expression of the lifestyle is evidenced in the individual's emotions and physical demeanour. Dahmer's restraint and isolation was noted in his lack of interaction and an excessive shyness (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). His speech was monotone and he used mostly one- or two-word answers. His movements, too, became increasingly laboured and stiff (Dahmer, 1994) which may be indicative of his avoidance and retreat. He was frequently apathetic and demonstrated few normal emotions (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006) and was branded as an outcast, which only fed his inferiority feelings and confirmed his private logic. As an outcast and loner, he belonged to neither family nor a social network. He thus strived for superiority through self-interest based on practiced, private successes that he could act as if they attained his goal of godlikeness, such as his clandestine experiments on dead animals (Davis, 1995; Hickey, 2001; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

10.4.2   The Quiet Loner

10.4.2.1   Introduction

Adler (1930, 1958) did not believe that adolescence could change personality, but rather held that it provides the growing child with new situations and interests.   Adler thus considered adolescence as a social condition that requires an adaptation in the style of life. As such, mistakes in the lifestyle could reveal themselves as the child faces tension in the task of growing up – and has more freedom and strength to declare his striving. The meaning the child gave to being 'grown up' thus influenced his creative responses to this life period according to his expectations and the way he has trained to face it (Adler, 1958).

10.4.2.2   Activity

Children who are ill-prepared to face the difficulties of life lose the hope in their ability to meet them (Adler, 1958).   Children not trained to meet the social tasks of life seek to solve them by the means of least effort.   To uphold a sense of activity, many adolescents engage in criminal activities – especially if their previous delinquencies lead them to believe that they can be clever enough to avoid being caught.   Crime is an escape before the tasks of life and is usually economically motivated.   Dahmer's adolescence is different as he did not engage in theft or violence towards others (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) but showed more subtle means of ruling over others.

Dahmer collected insects and the carcasses of dead animals.   He dissected the animals, learning how to strip away the flesh and to view the insides.   He preserved some of the organs and had a huge collection of insects.   He also buried some of the bones in his private pet cemetery (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).   In line with Dahmer's striving for superiority, he limited his activity to this interest.   He spent hours alone and in complete control of his self-created world in the hut where he carried out his experiments without his parents ever having noticed (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

Dahmer's mastery in this context provided him with what Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) described as a self-intoxication of superiority.   His actions successfully escaped his parents but his brother, David, thought that Jeffrey's burying the bodies was kindly service (Masters,

1993). Dahmer's peers were also aware of his morbid fascination with animals and this served only to isolate him further from them. In high school, they were especially unsure of how to approach him because of this fascination, his alcoholism and pranks (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer sometimes showed off his collection to his friends. Once they did not believe him about one of the jars' contents. In response to preserve his superiority, he "took the jar and smashed it on a rock and the smell was so bad we all vomited" (Keppel & Birnes, 1997, p. 302).

More expressive of Dahmer's goal for godlikeness was the manipulation of the dead animals. The manipulation of their dead bodies as objects held his interest. Dahmer noted in prison, "If I'd had normal interests and hobbies, like sports or something like that … It would make life more attractive, or fulfilling" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149). Dahmer participated only briefly in solitary endeavours such as tennis or shooting a bow and arrow. His interest in animals developed from watching them and an interest in dinosaur bones to collecting road kill to manipulate (Masters, 1993). Further, he developed the activity from caring for animals to dissecting their remains. Dahmer thus narrowed his activity in an increasingly dark line of movement that eventually culminated in the murders. His practiced behaviour was a skill that gave him a feeling of superiority to the extent that he used it during the murders in order to avoid detection – and thereby increase his superiority over the police.

Dahmer's inactivity showed (a) in society, where he was reserved (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and bashful, often finding a stick to manipulate while he spoke to others (Dahmer, 1994); (b) in a lack of occupational interest indicated by his disinterest in goal-directed academic pursuits (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) and (c) in love, where he was embarrassed and insecure as displayed in his response to girls and his prom date (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer hardly looked at, spoke to or listened to others and did not work or study (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). This indicated that Dahmer was completely blocked to solving his difficulties and left in a situation where no one understood him. To compensate, he engaged in fantasy, with only a remainder of his sexual activity being exercised through masturbation (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997).

10.4.2.3 Homosexuality

Dahmer's first sexual experience was at the age of 13 with another boy who lived in the neighbourhood. The two explored each other's bodies, but stopped when they feared that

they would be caught (Masters, 1993). Whilst this was Dahmer's only 'sexual' experience until he explored his homosexuality in adulthood, it is possible that while this experience held little emotional investment for Dahmer, Tyson's body – the object, not the person – captured his enthusiasm. The social climate during Dahmer's adolescence reflected strict religious views about sexual orientation (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer stated, "In the township where I was at, homosexuality was the ultimate taboo. It was never discussed, never. I had desires to be with someone, but never met anyone that was gay, that I know of; so that was sexually frustrating" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117).

As such – although Dahmer was mostly uncommunicative – he had no one with whom to discuss his feelings or bring into his private thoughts and fantasies. The present researcher argues that Dahmer's inability to speak about his taboo desires and fantasies thus possibly contributed to the severance of his frail connection with the world outside his mind. It was only in adulthood, after he found solace in the anonymity of homosexual relations, that he occasionally acknowledged or spoke about his sexual orientation as with (a) his father after his arrest for molestation, (b) his parole officer, (c) his mother when she contacted him and (d) the psychiatrists who interviewed him (Masters, 1993).

According to Adlerian theory, Dahmer's impression of his parents' relationship was important in that instability and tension influenced his insecurity about his sexual role and the decision to never be married. Adler (1964, 1978) held that homosexuals are characterized by an inordinate ambition and extraordinary caution and fear of life. It might thus be argued that Dahmer may have desired a successful marriage, but feared failure so much that he isolated himself and chose individuals with whom – in the prevailing social climate – he could not have this union. Dahmer's early exclusion of the sexual task was therefore expressed in his choice of sexual orientation according to his individual goal and style of life formed in early childhood. Dahmer's self-centred training was against the opposite sex and interaction in the world for the well-being of humankind. Owing to the interdependence of the life tasks, a failure in this task suggested a failure in the possibility of healthy, socially interested functioning in the others (Adler 1929, 1930, 1958, 1964). Rather than constructive striving, Dahmer followed a goal of personal superiority that resulted in continued self-alienation.

Dahmer showed little interest in women. Although he took a date to the prom (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) this seemed to reflect the expected norm. He did not ask his date to the prom, but it was arranged by a friend (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) as

Dahmer was very shy around women. On the night, Dahmer left, alone, to find food – and possibly to drink (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's leaving his date alone indicated his lack of social interest, that is, consideration for his date and the avoidance of the social occasion. Dahmer returned later that evening to escort her home where he thanked her and shook her hand (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Whilst the atmosphere of the event was tainted by his previous absence, Dahmer's response in a potentially sexual situation was indicative of the avoidance that highlighted his inferiority complex in any relationship.

As a neglected child thinks himself unworthy to attain love through co-operation (Adler, 1930, 1958), Dahmer turned to fantasies of domination and prospective situations wherein the strain and fear of not succeeding were removed. In this hopeless pessimism (Adler, 1978), the expression of his fear was more potent than the power of the opposite sex (Adler, 1930). Adler (1929, 1978) viewed homosexuality as one expression of masturbation as an example of primary or self-interested sexual development. Dahmer's homosexual fantasies, upon which he felt unable to act, developed as a tension in his life that was only relieved through masturbation and did not develop into a mature heterosexual stage as he lacked the sufficient social interest, courage and ability Adler (1929, 1978) held to be crucial to co-operate to face the sexual life task.

In adulthood, Dahmer chose sexual murder as his choice of compensation to power. His move to Milwaukee provided him with the opportunity to explore his homosexual desires. The anonymous nature of homosexual relations at the time fitted within Dahmer's unique adaptation and integration into a social milieu. His partners, however, were ultimately subjugated to his control in line with his fantasies and final goal. The degree to which Dahmer excluded the opposite sex and his actions against his partners reflected his view of the world as hostile and dangerous and he failed to strive towards success on, what Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964, 1982) called, the useful side of life.

10.4.2.4   Alcoholism

Dahmer began to drink around the age of 14 (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). His drinking was not contained within the usual limits of adolescent experimentation. His parents were not aware of his alcoholism until Shari Dahmer found him drunk when he was 18 (Dahmer, 1994), but his peers were aware of drinking habits and were wary of him (Flaherty, 1993;

Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Further, the literature also noted that when Dahmer was 16, he experimented with drugs (Masters, 1993).

Adler (1930, 1958) noted that alcoholics use alcohol as an easy solution to their difficulties and the avoidance of failure. He argued that they do not have the social interest – and therefore the courage – to solve the tasks of life. Thus, Dahmer's drinking may be seen as a personal solution to his difficulties and this behaviour was co-ordinated with his frame of reference on the useless side of life. Dahmer noted that alcohol was a difficulty in his life, but "that was my way of handling the home life. The divorce. And the hits. I drank to blot out the memory. It worked for a while. And it worked even better in the army" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 147).

Adler (1958) commented that the beginning of addiction shows either (a) a feeling of inferiority marked by shyness, isolation, oversensitivity, impatience, irritability; and neurotic symptoms of anxiety, depression and sexual insufficiency or (b) a superiority complex in the form of boastfulness or a malicious criminal tendency and longing for power. In Dahmer's case, he showed his inferiority complex in (a) his shyness in relating to his peers (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992), (b) his isolation in either in his room (Dahmer, 1994) or in the woods with his animal collection (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993) and (c) a level of sexual confusion (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). However, it should also be noted that Dahmer's actions may possibly also have been related to a burgeoning superiority complex through his longing for personal superiority and power.

Dahmer's drinking may have been an aspect of his ruling type of lifestyle wherein he still showed a lesser degree of activity. Alcoholics attack others indirectly by hurting themselves (Adler, 1930, 1958; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Boeree, 2006b) and Dahmer may therefore have used alcohol as a concealed accusation against his parents to fix responsibility and blame on them for his feeling neglected. However, as his parents – and other adults in society – remained oblivious to his drinking (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993), he also gained a position of personal superiority in his success of keeping it from his parents and thus, a confirmation of their disinterest in him.

Adler (1958, 1964) argued that the effect of an addictive substance provides the feeling of being unburdened and serves as a partial solution to the problems of work, fellowship and sex. Dahmer therefore alleviated his difficulties by using alcohol as an escape. He was not a

diligent student despite his being intelligent (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's peers were wary of him as they knew that he was often drunk (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) and did not always appreciate his humour or his interest in dead animals (Masters, 1993). Therefore, his use of alcohol distanced himself from others and confirmed his private logic that others could not be trusted and that they would reject him.

In terms of the sexual life task, Dahmer's use of alcohol could be seen as an escape from his homosexual thoughts. Dahmer lived in a period when homosexuality was not discussed and considered taboo (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). However, in the same way, it might be considered that Dahmer's isolation and lack of consideration for outside rules while drunk provided him the opportunity to engage in his onanistic fantasies. Thus, the use of alcohol could also be argued as a release from his increasingly violent fantasies (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) or a way to avoid the tension of experiencing the fantasies as morally wrong. Whereas alcohol is often associated with disinhibition and the criminal's breakdown of his remaining social interest to commit a crime (Adler, 1958), it is interesting that Dahmer did not act on his fantasies until he was in a high state of tension at the end of his senior year. He only killed Steven Hicks when he was abandoned at home (see Chapter 5) which could have served as both the stressful trigger of rejection and provided the freedom to release his fantasies.

Bearing in mind Dahmer's posited fictional goal and his private logic, his drinking at this age seemed to reflect a paradox. Dahmer apparently desired association, belongingness and control, but felt that the world was a hostile environment. His behaviour was therefore compensatory towards his goal of control and superiority – and confirmed his private logic. However, this chosen behaviour did not seem to satisfy his need for association. Instead, it revealed his lack of social interest, his escape before the difficulties of life and a perceived sense of control and superiority that seemed to further inform the attitude of the ruling type: "Since I cannot be a lover, I am determined to prove a villain" (Adler, 1982, p. 5).

Dahmer continued to drink throughout his life although he was able to regulate himself for a time when he lived with his grandmother and went to church. He stopped only after his arrest (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer explained that he always drank before he sought a victim and "then throughout the evening I'd drink. … I always had a beer in the freezer" (Ressler &

Shachtman, 1997, p. 147) so that he could stay in a "lubricated state" that seemed to make "it [dismemberment] easier" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148).

10.4.2.5   Prankster

Adler (1930, 1958) noted that association is particularly important during adolescence. The literature revealed that Dahmer's peers were disquieted by his alcoholism, but that he had a few friends with whom he maintained superficial relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   As Dahmer was discouraged and retreated before the difficulties in life, he sought to rule over others through the use of various pranks (Davis, 1995; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's pranks were creative expressions of his striving towards superiority.   Dahmer entertained his classmates with antics such as bleating like a sheep in class (Davis, 1995) and stumbling around the local mall harassing patrons and pretending to have epileptic seizures (Davis, 1995; Flaherty, 1993).   On a school trip to Washington, Dahmer was able to secure a meeting with the Vice-President.   This particular incident highlighted Dahmer's ability to manipulate with words and not only actions such as drawing chalk outlines of dead bodies in the corridors (Davis, 1995; Tithecott, 1997).   When news of his success reached the other seniors, they were amazed, but brushed the incident off as his simply "doing a Dahmer" (Davis, 1995, p. 28).   When Dahmer manipulated situations to his own – often humorous – ends, it was appreciated by his peers as well.   Whilst he used the pranks as superiority over them or whoever he played the prank on, it still provided the smallest sense of appreciation and interest in him.   One such prank that was appreciated by much of the student body was Dahmer's cameo in the Honour Roll photograph.   Dahmer was considered extremely intelligent by his teachers and his peers, but nearly failed his senior year (Masters, 1993).   He chose to insert himself into the photograph of the top academic and socially interested children in the school (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).   He had played a prank on the cleverest in the school – a position he chose to forego.

Perhaps Dahmer's most infamous prank, at age 15, occurred in the woods near his home. Dahmer arranged the head of a dog on a stake.   Of this incident Dahmer claimed

> That was just done as a prank. I found a dog, and cut it open just to see what the
> insides look like, and for some reason I thought it would be a fun prank to stick the

head on a stake and set it out in the woods. And brought one of my friends back to look at it and said I'd stumbled upon that in the woods. Just for shock value. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 114)

Dahmer used his practiced craft to show his superiority by manipulating another. This is how Dahmer used his friendships. He used his experiments with dead animals to experiment with people's reactions, which showed his lack of social interest and his distance from the social life task. The use of the dog's gutted body and decapitated head resembled Dahmer's actions in adulthood when he ruled over the life and death of his victims for his own interest and gratification. Further, this act retained longevity in its enhancing Dahmer's superiority complex. It was instantly effective on his friend, but after his arrest the act became legendary. He may have revelled in that others also found the head and photographed it (Goleman, 1991; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993) but never contacted the police. Thus, this bizarre totem was never linked to Dahmer (Goleman, 1991; Masters, 1993) and it provided the same powerful sense of superiority over others as it did years before.

Dahmer's pranks highlighted the way in which he sought control over others and the confirmation of his private logic. Dahmer was uncommunicative, but he was skilled in using words – and actions – in order to attain superiority. His interactions with peers resulted in their viewing him as a little strange and awkward and, because of his alcoholism, a little wary that "if he went off, you didn't want to be in the way" (Flaherty, 1993, p. 9). Essentially, Dahmer donned the 'mask of sanity' (Cleckley, 1982; Hare, 1996) or 'life-lie' (Adler, 1929) that allowed him to be an antithetical entertainer who creatively manipulated others and yet isolated himself from scrutiny that would force him to face his inferiority in relationships.

10.4.2.6 Fantasy

Dahmer displayed no interest in friends, school or his future (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). However, as Dahmer was fascinated by the male form, he engaged in bodybuilding. This exercise afforded him a healthy physique – and lasted longer than the other interests his father encouraged him to pursue – but it was also eventually discarded (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). This solitary endeavour was one of the ways that he isolated himself from his family and it was also in line with his homosexual fantasies. Dahmer dealt with his fantasies and the increasing tension in the home through isolation, masturbation and alcohol (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

When his parents argued, Dahmer would leave the house to find solace in the woods. David Dahmer noted that Jeffrey "never learned to be open with his feelings of frustration … he went out to the forest by himself and cut down trees for firewood" (Masters, 1993, p. 40) to vent his anger. In the house, however, Dahmer was unemotional. David Dahmer noted that it was "very hard to get anything out of him … Jeff never showed much emotion outside" (Masters, 1993, p. 43). He did not rebel, show anger or argue – instead he agreed with everything that his parents decided for him (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey showed only a "passive mask, the inflexible stare that the world has come to know as the only image of my son" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 90). From the Adlerian perspective, this passivity was indicated by Dahmer's desire to be pampered and a lack of courage to face the tasks of life. His muted affect was also an expression of his lifestyle of avoidance as it was a means to isolate him and not face or add to the emotional turmoil in the house.

In his senior year, Dahmer's parents were embroiled in a bitter divorce and a custody battle over David (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Shortly after graduation, Joyce took David away from the family home while Lionel stayed at a motel (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). In one of those long weeks, when he stayed mostly drunk, Dahmer had access to the car. On his way home, he picked up a hitchhiker (see Chapter 5).

Dahmer's homosexual fantasies started in early adolescence and grew increasingly elaborate. The first time that he decided to act on a fantasy was when he was 15 years old (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993). Dahmer developed a fascination with a well-built jogger who frequently ran past the house. Unable to conceive of a way to meet him and in fear of rejection, Dahmer decided to lay in wait in the bushes near the road. He planned to hit the man with a baseball bat, drag the unconscious body into the woods to 'lie with him' and eventually have sexual intercourse with him (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). On the day, the jogger failed to show. Although the fantasy was unfulfilled, Dahmer took the first step into the merger of his fantasy with reality to have the visceral experience of sexual superiority and control that he desired.

Dahmer stated that he also "had been having, for a couple of years before that, fantasies of meeting a good-looking hitchhiker, and ... sexually enjoying him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 115). He claimed that the fantasies "just came from within" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). He admitted that the fantasies included taking someone by force, or possibly murder, and that "it all revolved around having complete control. Why or where it came

from, I don't know" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). Adler (1958) argued that fantasies underlie the creative power of the individual and "stir up feeling in accordance with which the body will act. In this way the feelings of an individual bear the impress of the meaning he gives to life and of the goal he has set for his strivings" (p. 29).

Faced with the tension of being abandoned at home, Dahmer's striving towards his goal of godlikeness and need for superiority escalated and found an outlet. Adler (1930, 1958) held that the individual cannot exist in a state of tension for a long time and would therefore have to act – in line with his direction of movement and within his practiced compensation.

> And that just happened to be the week when no one was home … and I had the car, above five o'clock at night; and I was driving back home, after drinking; and I wasn't looking for anyone – but, about a mile away from my house, there he was! Hitchhiking along the road. He wasn't wearing a shirt. He was attractive; I was attracted to him. I stopped the – passed him and stopped the car and thought, "Well, should I pick him up or not?" And I asked him if he wanted to go back and smoke some pot, and he said, "Oh, yeah." And we went into my bedroom, had some beer, and from the time I spent with him I could tell he wasn't gay. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116)

This murder represented how reality became enmeshed in his fantasy and Dahmer admitted that despite its power, "It scared the hell out of me" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148).

Adler (1929, 1958) noted that criminals often become intoxicated so that they can break through the last of their social interest in order to act. Dahmer, though drunk, formulated a lure that ensured that Hicks would accompany him – and he used variations of this throughout the murders later. It could be argued that the lure was an extra incentive – beyond the implicit trust created by offering a ride – and thus a possible sign of Dahmer's fear that his company might be rejected. Dahmer's intoxication might have contributed as a disinhibiting factor to his decision to invite Hicks to his house, but the fantasy itself was arguably more powerful. The fact that Dahmer happened on an aspect of his fantasy may have created an impression that he needed to fulfil it. However, this was a conscious decision, in line with his striving, that cannot be wholly blamed on alcohol or circumstance. From Dahmer's perception that the world was hostile, neglecting, untrustworthy and rejecting, he would simply have to take what he wanted in order to obtain his goal as Adler (1930, 1958) would explain of the ruling lifestyle.

Hicks's murder highlighted Dahmer's inferiority complex. He was already abandoned at home and Hicks's decision to leave may have been seen as rejection as well as the possibility of halting the fantasy. Dahmer said that, "the guy wanted to leave and I didn't want him to leave" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 43). In response to this rejection, "I, uh, didn't know how else to keep him there other than to get the barbell and to hit him, over the head, which I did, then strangled him with the same barbell" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 116). There was no social interest or potential for co-operation in the situation. In an expression of his ruling lifestyle Dahmer simply acted to achieve what he desired or what he thought he deserved, as Adler (1930, 1958) would explain it. Dahmer thus consummated his narrowed field of movement and his striving through sexual murder.

Dahmer confessed that at first he "was very frightened at what I had done. Paced around the house for a while. Ends up I did masturbate" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117). This sexual release re-enforced the power of the fantasy as Dahmer was sexually aroused "by the captivity" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117). Dahmer returned to the crawl space where he hid the body knowing that "I have to figure out a way to dispose of the evidence. Buy a knife, a hunting knife. Go back the next night, slit the belly open, and masturbate again" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117) because he was aroused at "the internal organs" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 118). Dahmer was conscious of his actions and turned to a practiced skill to solve his dilemma. He carefully dismembered the body, triple-bagged the remains, threw away Hicks's possessions and disposed of the knife in the river (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Years later, Dahmer scattered the shattered bones around the property (Davis, 1995), keeping them always close to home – and he did the same when he kept the bodies and souvenirs with him in the apartment during the later killings (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992).

This murder combined his sexual desire and his fear of and anger at rejection. He used his practiced skills of manipulation and dismemberment to disguise a murder so successfully that he was the only person able to identify his first victim. He had supreme control over Hicks's body, to do as he desired. He also held the powerful memory and sense of superiority of not only the experience, but also his knowledge that he was the last person to see Hicks and that he was not discovered for this crime (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). As this success is another aspect of Dahmer's narrowed line of striving, it followed that years later he would use these events as a template. Thus, adolescence did not appear to serve as an opportunity to

begin his creative and independent solutions of adult life. Instead, his mistaken view resulted in his being ill-prepared for freedom and acted as if he could gratify his own wishes without facing the consequences. When he was helped to accomplish a task he succeeded, but on his own he was timid and failed. Ironically, Adler (1958, p. 196) commented that "such a child is well adapted for slavery, but in freedom he is lost".

10.4.3 Hiatus – or Build-up

10.4.3.1 College, Army and Florida

Soon after Hicks's murder, the deserted Dahmer invited a few of his fellow seniors to his house. Though this seemed uncharacteristic, it could also be viewed as Dahmer's way to distract himself from the thoughts of his actions and, perhaps, an easy way to obtain alcohol as he had no money or food in the house (Dahmer, 1994). When Lionel and Shari moved in, Jeffrey told Lionel that Joyce had taken David away (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Lionel and Shari's moving home was, however, overshadowed by Lionel's spending his time trying to find David (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) as this could be seen as another form of rejection and perhaps Dahmer's perception that David was more loved.

One day, Shari found Jeffrey drunk and told Lionel (Dahmer, 1994). Dahmer promised not to drink, but continued in secret. With his father finally aware of his drinking, Dahmer's continuance can be seen in two ways. The first is that he drank in order to drown out his thoughts and feelings as noted in section 10.4.2.4. The second is that his not being caught again served to increase his sense of power and success over his uninterested parents. During this time, Lionel convinced Jeffrey to attend college like the rest of his classmates. Dahmer's agreement was in line with his previous behaviour. He simply acquiesced to what Lionel wanted – perhaps to please him – but because of a lack of interest would soon halt the endeavours and isolate himself again. Every time he could not complete what Lionel desired for him, it was another perceived failure accompanied by Lionel's disappointment. However, each failure prompted Lionel to try a new avenue to engage Dahmer's interest (Dahmer, 1994) and this could also be seen as part of Dahmer's dependence in a pampered response.

Dahmer seemed initially motivated at college (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). However, he quickly resumed his isolation and intoxication. He found creative ways to solve his monetary situations, such as donating blood in order to obtain money for alcohol

and possibly stealing from his roommates (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's roommates commented that he acted strangely, was an alcoholic and noted once that he re-arranged all the furniture in the room while they were away (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). These actions probably represented a need to rule over his environment for a personal sense of power. His general withdrawal, alcoholism and even moving his moving his roommates' possessions to their displeasure distanced him from the social task and confirmed his private logic.

Dahmer claimed that the only time he felt true remorse for his actions was when he was in college (Masters, 1993). He claimed that it was the only time that he cried over his actions and even resorted to a spiritual relic from his childhood in praying for forgiveness (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's anxiety over the murder and his crying indicated that his level of social interest here was most pronounced. Thus, Dahmer held – as Adler (1958) argued that all criminals do – a thin veneer of social interest that he had to break down through planning the murder and disinhibition through alcohol. Dahmer's resultant displaced anger and alcoholism were thus reactions to social difficulties in which he felt himself unable to cope.

While at college, Dahmer was informed that his dog, Frisky, which his mother believed "[came] first in his heart" (Masters, 1993, p. 34), had died. Although he did not cry, he noted that he was deeply saddened (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's connection with animals appeared to be more in line with a social interest than his co-operation with humans. He seemed to hold a spiritual stance in not hurting animals, but showed little such inclination with his fellow human beings. However, it might also be argued that Dahmer's connection with animals could be viewed as an owner-object relationship. He was the master, loyally accompanied by animals that held no judgement. The researcher argues that Dahmer's desire for association was based on the need for power and thus the word, *belonging*, here is more vital in its connotation. Dahmer may have wanted a sense of belonging, but he also wanted people – as objects – to belong to him, subject to his will and desires. This is possibly indicative of his ideal of godlikeness: he would conquer the hostile world and manipulate the objects that belonged to him to his ultimate design.

After Dahmer's return home from his failed stint at college his alcohol abuse was more pronounced. He used alcohol as a way to avoid facing the tasks of life as he refused to find employment as his father insisted (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993), remained isolated from social company and had no significant relationships. Lionel Dahmer eventually set an

ultimatum for him to find employment or join the army. In 1979, Dahmer enlisted, filling in the documents "as if on autopilot" (Dahmer, 1997, p. 107). He was resigned again to the perceived rejection and responded to his father's wishes. Though he was not interested in this service, Dahmer returned on furlough with an apparently more defined sense of discipline and physical well-being (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). It appeared as though the regimented military lifestyle suited him as Adler (1958) argued that in the military individuals can be provided with a sense of purpose and a line of direction. However, it should also be noted that individuals that display ruling types may seek ways to compensate that involve power (Adler, 1958). Thus, the use of firearms and deadly force may possibly have served to strengthen Dahmer's sense of personal power rather than a sense of camaraderie and service.

Dahmer first tried to become a military policeman, but eventually completed training as an army medic. This again shows his line of movement that involved his interest in the human body and provided him the chance to study and explore anatomy. Dahmer's army colleagues noted that he was highly intelligent, but sensed that he was "going nowhere fast" (Davis, 1995, p. 56). Dahmer's lifestyle thus showed his avoidance of meeting the tasks of work and association – usually through alcohol use and an anger that flared when he was intoxicated. Shortly after his being stationed in Germany, however, Dahmer's pattern of alcohol abuse escalated and he discovered homosexual pornography (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Eventually his alcoholism could no longer be tolerated and he was discharged. He left the army and went to Florida, while his belongings were shipped home. Dahmer's choice to go to Florida could have indicated that he did not want to return home to a disappointed father and/ or it may have been a choice to distance himself from his family. When viewed as an act of independence, however, his life in Florida was not ultimately successful as his alcoholism eventually resulted in his being destitute (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's private meaning of success was not towards a contribution to society. While he successfully escaped the tasks of life at this time, this was tarnished by his need to return home. In terms of occupation, his time in Florida was Dahmer's first experience as part of the division of labour. While his time in school, university and the army served as their own sense of work in terms of action and accomplishment, in Florida Dahmer was forced to find employment. He worked menial labour as a sandwich-maker, which was far below his

intellectual level (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Adler (1930, 1958) noted that success in the life task of work was characterized by its benefit to society. However, for Dahmer's pampered response, it was a means to obtain money for alcohol. As Dahmer was not trained on social interest in work, he avoided it as a path of success.

Dahmer re-established contact with his father and Shari a month after his arrival in Florida, which is indicative of his lack of consideration for others – and perhaps his fear at being rejected for the discharge. While in Florida, Dahmer showed a characteristic lack of interest in relationships (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, he did befriend a British woman, Julie. After his return to Ohio, Julie remained in contact with him for a while, but he was never inclined to marry her (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Dahmer returned to Ohio when he could no longer afford his alcoholic lifestyle. It could be argued that within his private logic, his failure at independence was another significant rejection: one from the entire world. He tried to live on his own, with his avoiding lifestyle and the hostile world responded by taking his independence from him. His response was therefore to place his burden on his parents – as Adler (1930, 1958) argued all pampered children do.

10.4.3.2   West Allis

When Dahmer returned home he was initially 'well-behaved' and helped around the house. However, he quickly resumed drinking and showed no interest in work or social company (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). Lionel encouraged him to find employment, but Dahmer left the house only to drink and was arrested for a bar brawl (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993). After this incident he was sent to live with his grandmother, Catherine, in West Allis. Adler (1958) noted that the pampered child is often despised as no one can continue to carry them as a burden. In this rejection, Dahmer's body language as he boarded the bus reflected his private logic as he appeared "resigned, somewhat contrite, generally passive and without emotion, the sense, perhaps, that once again he was being rejected" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 115).

In West Allis Dahmer found employment as a phlebotomist (see Chapter 5), but was eventually dismissed for poor performance (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Dahmer's response to this task was again apparent as he showed little interest in working with others – even in a field where he was trained. Although Dahmer's lack of interest resulted in his dismissal, it could also be perceived as evidence of rejection as if he were told, 'you are not good enough'. This probably confirmed his private logic and enforced his avoidance of the life

tasks. Thus, Dahmer's belief about work influenced his behaviour and in turn, confirmed his private logic. This is indicative of how the creative power construes situations into a shape consistent with the lifestyle.

Dahmer and his grandmother had an interesting relationship. She cared for him deeply and he was strangely devoted to her. In this care and devotion, he gained a level of association and acceptance. At the end of 1982, Dahmer was arrested at the state fair (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In order to prevent Catherine's finding out, he gave the police his father's address instead. This suggested that he did not want her to think badly of him. However, when asked whether he loved her his response showed his lack of emotional contact stating, "Yup, she's lived in that house for a long time … (She's) a perfect grandmother, very kind, goes to church every Sunday, easy to get along with, very supportive, loving, just a sweet lady" (Masters, 1993, pp. 82 – 83). In 1983, Dahmer made a conscious decision to change: "I wanted to straighten my life out" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). Dahmer's response to his prevailing situation may thus have been a way for him to put on hold his previously negative behaviours in order to continue to enjoy Catherine's love, hospitality and acceptance. However, Dahmer's compensation to this concrete goal showed the same lack of social interest and striving on the useless side of life.

Dahmer (1994) commented that Jeffrey's time in West Allis was a time of hope as he seemed to drink less and was rarely in trouble. Dahmer stated that, "(I) went to church, read the Bible, tried to push out any sexual thoughts at all, and I was doing pretty well for about two years" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). Dahmer's ability to maintain this lifestyle was intriguing as his life showed little structure for almost two years. During this time, Dahmer was unemployed and lived off his grandmother's social service. His attitude towards work was therefore the same and he was a financial burden to his grandmother. Similarly, although he attended church regularly he had no friends with whom to interact and avoided contact with one female parishioner who was apparently interested in him (Dahmer, 1994). Thus, although this time may be considered as more benign, Dahmer's lifestyle still reflected his avoiding and leaning lifestyle (see Chapter 4). His continued isolation may have guarded him against all the difficulties that he believed he could not face. The expression of his lifestyle may have been different, but his line of striving towards his fictional goal remained the same. His isolation and the exclusion of the tasks of life only contributed to a gradual state of tension, one that Adlerian theory (1929, 1958) argued would soon require action.

In 1985, Dahmer found employment at the ACC. Though the job was described as menial labour, Dahmer worked diligently and contributed a little money to the household (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Here, the social beneficence of Dahmer's work is important. The fact that he performed a necessary service could be seen as a contribution – in the broadest sense – to society and to his living with Catherine. However, Dahmer's choice of work must also be considered. While he could have found employment more suited to his intelligence, his view of the task of work limited his sphere of activity. Thus, as Adler (1958) predicted, criminals and pampered children often resort to menial labour. Further, Dahmer worked the graveyard shifts when he had little interaction with others beyond the superficial contact with a few colleagues and his supervisor (Masters, 1993). His colleagues noted that they hardly interacted with him and his supervisor was surprised at his arrest (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer continued in this line of movement until he was propositioned in a local library (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He claimed that he initially was not interested and thought it was ridiculous, but within two months "I started, the compulsion, the drive. Increased sexual desires. I started drinking again" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122). Dahmer's return to drinking and increased sexual thoughts and desires is contrasted with his temporary achievement of his concrete goal through abstinence. The change in Dahmer's line of striving, that is, his frequenting bookstores, bathhouses and bars (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992), seemed to reflect increased activity towards a ruling lifestyle. This suggested that his avoiding his desires and the association with his grandmother was not a sufficient success towards his goal. Although his behaviour would alienate him from his grandmother, Dahmer's desires for sexual domination appeared more powerful. Perhaps, in his private logic, it was a twisted test of his grandmother's affection. Ultimately, Dahmer used this incident as the reason for his behaviour, just as the socially useless blame their problems on others (Adler, 1930, 1958). While he could admit that it was his choice to change his behaviour for the better, he did not accept responsibility for his deviant action (see Chapter 5).

10.4.3.3 Experiments

Although Dahmer still lived with his grandmother, he began to slowly integrate himself into a homosexual lifestyle advantaged by anonymous sexual experiences provided by his favoured haunts (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In the city, Dahmer had more opportunity

to express his homosexual desires and this slowly developed into (a) a more concrete realization of what he wanted from his sexual partners and (b) fashioned the methods required to gain this control over his partners.

One of the most significant elements of Dahmer's behaviour prior to, and central to, the murders was his experimentation. This experimentation was evidenced earlier in his cutting up the bodies of animals, but it was more pronounced in his behaviour towards humans. Dahmer's experiments on his sexual partners were outside the realm of social interest and therefore indicated his private view of success. Though he admitted that he initially "wanted to find a way to satisfy without hurting anyone" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122), he found creative ways to incapacitate his victims so that he could control the encounter. Thus, his solution to the sexual task – as with the other tasks – indicated that his success was based on his feelings of personal power and superiority over others.

At the gay bars Dahmer picked up individuals to whom he was attracted. He often lured them – with the promise of alcohol or money – to another location where they would have sex (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Vital to his development here, is his use of a lure with his partners as it was seen in the first murder years before and in the later murders. Adler (1929, 1958) argued that individuals continue to behave in ways that they have seen are successful. He thus trained himself in the use of this lure and this may be seen as an indication of his limiting his sphere of activity within his criminal striving. As such, it was an important part of his MO and signature. Equally important is the reason for Dahmer's need to use a lure on his partners. Dahmer was described as handsome, but in line with his private logic, did not show much confidence. The use of a lure thus may be seen as a way to ensure that the partner would accompany him.

Dahmer also frequented bathhouses where he could drink and select partners for sex. He began to drug his partners at the bathhouses as he claimed that "a lot of the people I met wanted anal sex and I wasn't interested in that and I wanted to find a way to spend the night with them, enjoy them, without having to perform that" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 120). He showed a high level of sophistication as he convinced different doctors to prescribe the sleeping medication, claiming that he had trouble sleeping as he worked the graveyard shift (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). This premeditated act of acquiring and preparing the drugs reflects Adler's (1958, 1964) view that criminals are sane individuals who plan their crimes. Dahmer's use of the drugs ensured his being able to spend time with

his partners' bodies to enjoy them. Dahmer noted that he experimented with the drugs to ensure its maximum effectiveness to "have control over people without hurting them" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 121). The importance of control in these sexual situations was important as it gave a sense of power and ensured that the partners were unable to fight back, to reject him or remember him.

The growing fantasy of the captured object was more powerful than an intimate relationship. Stated differently, Dahmer's beliefs and his fear of an intimate – and possibly rejecting – relationship helped to refine and empower the fantasy of using humans as objects for his sexual gratification. Dahmer's small amount of social interest is evidence again in the contrast of his claimed attempts not to hurt his partners and his willingness to drug them – as well as his inability to co-operate in a mutual interaction. His actions were compensations towards his own feelings of superiority through the experiences of drugging and sex as well as the knowledge that his victims were unable to recall what happened. According to Adlerian theory, his ability to succeed fed his superiority complex over society and his victims as a possible mask to his own inferiority at relationships. Dahmer noted of his social interest and desire for objects of sexual gratification: "I trained myself to view people as potential objects of pleasure … instead of seeing them as complete human beings. Sounds callous and it is, but that's what I did" (Masters, 1993, p. 92).

In response to his increased fantasies Dahmer masturbated up to four times per day (Masters, 1993). Adler (1929, 1958, 1978) regarded masturbation as a halting sign in the lifestyle as it indicated an avoidance of the sexual task. As an extension of this, Dahmer also once stole a mannequin and "went through various sexual fantasies with it, pretending it was a real person, pretending that I was having sex with it, masturbating and undressing it" (Masters, 1993, p. 91). A further consideration in this creative compensation is his willingness to steal in order to feed his fantasy, despite his telling his father that he wanted to see if he could get away with it (Dahmer, 1994). Dahmer's private meaning of success and superiority is thus reflected again in (a) his ability to steal without getting caught; (b) his ability to lie about to his family successfully; and (c) to use the still mannequin – if only for a few weeks – for his personal gratification.

Dahmer commented, however, that "the mannequin deal didn't satisfy" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 122) and he tried a different approach. He read an obituary of an 18 year old that had died, went to the funeral home to view the body and found it so attractive

that he went to the bathroom to masturbate. He tried to dig up the buried body but abandoned the idea because the ground was frozen (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer claimed that these two events were attempts to avoid hurting others. These incidents may indicate that Dahmer was still sufficiently capable of recognizing a modicum of social interest to not harm others. On the other hand, his actions in the second incident still show a disregard for the sanctity of human life. Sexual sadism is not restricted to acts inflicted on victims before their death, but extends to the manipulation, mutilation and/ or desecration after death (Burgess et al., 1986; Hazelwood & Douglas, 1980; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; MacCulloch, Gray & Watt, 2000; MacCulloch et al., 1983; Money, 1990; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997). The drugging, the mannequin and the dead body highlighted Dahmer's desire for a passive, sexual object to be controlled. To him, "there wasn't any mutual giving, not in my mind anyway. I was always quite selfish" (Masters, 1993, p. 93).

After one partner was hospitalized after a night in one of the bathhouses, Dahmer was banned. He then frequented more bars, where he eventually found most of his victims. Dahmer continued this behaviour at the weekends as he still portrayed the image of the diligent worker – to the extent that he was given a raise (Masters, 1993). At home, although Catherine disapproved of his drinking and staying out late, his behaviour did not result in rejection (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, his success in this line of movement and the possibilities it provided within the concrete goal of his fantasies, served only to increase his desires and socially useless lifestyle. This eventually culminated in the four-year murder spree for which Dahmer's lack of social interest became famous (see Chapter 5).

10.4.4 Seeking a Compliant Partner

The following section is an exploration of the murders. Adler (1958) noted that the mind governs the body against subjective experiences of failure with definite responses. As such, fantasies are in accordance with the individual's training or sphere of activity. In terms of Adler's (1929) theory, Dahmer's muted emotional state (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997) and lack of social interest conveyed his meaning of life and the goal he set for his striving. The individual murders were discussed in detail in Chapter 5 and the details will not be unnecessarily repeated. However, there were specific aspects to some murders that showed either an evolution or de-evolution of his fantasies and behaviour. These are discussed next in the exploration of Dahmer's line of striving in response to the tasks of life.

10.4.4.1 Compulsion

Steven Tuomi was Dahmer's second victim and the first in nine years. Dahmer claimed that he was unable to recall the murder (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997) and as such was never charged for this murder. However, Dahmer was able to provide the police with an approximate time frame and a description of the victim (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Adler (1929, 1958) argued that memory loss – if not the result of an organic cause – is a function of the unity of the mind and body. Dahmer's inability to recall the incident may thus be seen as a safeguarding tendency, but it did not prevent his knowledge of his having killed Tuomi.

Adler (1958, 1964) argued that criminals plan their actions. With planning and justification – and often through the use of alcohol – they break through their remaining veneer of social interest. Dahmer made a distinction between his murders as either planned or spontaneous (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) where he would trawl for victims or when he was approached by the victims, respectively. In terms of Adlerian theory, however, his behaviour was always purposive and this was indicated further by the fact that he found his 'accidental' victims in places where there was a reasonable expectation of 'pickups' (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Tithecott, 1997).

Dahmer and Tuomi went to a hotel where Tuomi was drugged, the two had 'light sex' and Dahmer continued to drink. The following morning Tuomi was dead, with his chest crushed and Dahmer had bruises on his arms but no memory of the incident.   "It's almost like I temporarily lost control of myself. … I have no memory of it" (Masters, 1993, p. 109). This murder was important as it was the first of the killing spree, but it was also different in that the other victims were mostly strangled or lobotomized. The level of anger Dahmer displayed that night was only hinted at previously by his army colleagues and by bar fights. Dahmer's intoxication is again an important factor in the disinhibition to act on his fantasies.

As there is no information on the actual event, it can be surmised that Dahmer responded with extreme anger to a perceived threat. Within Dahmer's line of striving – and his justifications for most of the murders – it could be that (a) Tuomi wanted to leave, (b) perhaps he was uncomfortable with Dahmer's listening to his heart and stomach or (c) he was upset with being drugged. Regardless of the cause, Dahmer's extremely violent reaction to beat Tuomi to death was in line with the fantasies that he had built up. He proved his power

over another person – over life and death – and therefore satisfied his striving for personal superiority.

One of the most significant aspects of this murder is that it may be viewed as a trigger for Dahmer's continued behaviour. Before this murder – which Dahmer apparently had no intention of committing (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) – Dahmer had continued in his characteristic isolation from others at work, society and through anonymous sexual encounters. He practiced a perverse sense of control in only drugging and then enjoying his unconscious partners' bodies and this gave him his sense of superiority. He therefore narrowed his sphere of activity in line with his goal and his lack of social interest. After this murder, however, Dahmer stated that "my moral compass was so out of whack, and the desire, the compulsion, was so strong, that I just continued in that mode" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 125).

Dahmer claimed that the compulsion to control, dominate and ultimately kill "became the drive and focus of my life, the only thing that gave me satisfaction" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 128). He attributed his thoughts to an external force that compelled him to act (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997), claiming "it sure seems like some of the thoughts aren't my own, they just come blasting into my head" (Masters, 1993, p. 112). The thoughts were based on his need to fulfil his fantasy as a concrete goal and indicated the unity of unconscious thought in his line of striving. "These thoughts are very powerful, very destructive, and they do not leave. They're not the kind of thoughts you can just shake your head and they're gone. They do not leave" (Masters, 1993, p. 112). From that time onward Dahmer simply followed his new 'mode', that is, a ruling lifestyle in order to satiate his desires. However, Dahmer's more immediate concern was his having to deal with the dead body in the hotel room under his name.

Dahmer's reaction to the murder was "shock. Just couldn't believe it. Shock, horror, panic, I just couldn't believe it happened again after all those years when I'd done nothing like this" (Masters, 1993, p. 108). He first hid the body in the closet and then paced and smoked, "wondering what to do, how to handle the situation" (Masters, 1993, p. 108). He was able to rationally assess the situation and to act in accordance with the limitations of the situation. He paid for another night in the hotel and bought a huge luggage bag to transport the body.

Dahmer hid the body at home. He slit open the body and masturbated into it before he triple-bagged the body and later, crushed the bones with a sledgehammer before he threw it in the trash (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer kept the skull and bleached it. After several weeks, however, it was discarded because it was too brittle (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's practice with the animals and Hicks's body years before served him again in his disposal of Steven Tuomi. In fact, it served so well that he disposed of Tuomi's body in only two hours and was never tried for the murder – even after he confessed to it (Masters, 1993). Dahmer's sense of personal superiority was empowered by this success and his line of striving was directed towards refining and achieving this powerful goal of godlikeness.

10.4.4.2   Incarceration

Soon after Tuomi's murder, Dahmer killed Doxtator and Richard Guerrero.

> After the fear and the terror of what I'd done had left, which took about a month or two, I started it all over again. From then on it was a craving, a hunger, I don't know how to describe it, a compulsion, and I just kept doing it, doing it and doing it, whenever the opportunity presented itself. (Masters, 1993, p. 113)

The two murders showed the fundamental aspects of Dahmer's MO and his developing signature. Burgess et al. (1986) stated that the serial killer's signature is the unique and extremely rare combination of MO and ritual. Dahmer's killing as his line of striving continued based on his desire for the ritualized fantasy to be lived out perfectly. However, as reality never lives up to fantasy the realization of the fantasy is impossible – and therefore, the striving to achieve the fantasy continues. He lured the victims for the possibility of sex, drugged them, strangled them and dismembered the bodies while keeping their skulls as souvenirs. However, at least one of these skulls was discarded after they became too brittle because of being bleached (Masters, 1993).

Strangulation requires close contact with a victim and requires much physical strength (Hazelwood, 1980; Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Ressler & Shachtman, 1993). Dahmer drugged his victims before he strangled them. Although he claimed it was to prevent their experiencing pain, it was also advantageous as they were unable to fight back. Dahmer's manual strangulation of the first victims was an expression of his power over them. In the later killings, Dahmer's MO evolved and he used a leather strap to make the strangulation more efficient. Adler (1930, 1958) held that all criminals are cowards who do not have the

courage to face life tasks, but intoxicate themselves with the power of dominating others. Dahmer's choice of strangulation links back to the original murder where he strangled Hicks with the barbell. He had the opportunity to experience a godlike ideal in that he literally held his victims' lives in his hands and could feel their deaths.

Dahmer was intoxicated by the sense of power and domination over these victims whom he claimed he killed because they wanted to leave (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's showed an inherent antithesis between his highly organized behaviour and his expectations in a 'partner'. Dahmer was attracted to men in a social climate of prejudice against homosexuals and further, the homosexual community was considered as a minority or high-risk population (Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Ullman, 1992). While Dahmer's choice was based on men to whom he was attracted, it also meant that the anonymous nature of the encounters would make it more difficult to be discovered by the police. Further, as the nature of each encounter was a 'one-night stand' (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997) it was inevitable that his partners would have to leave. As Dahmer murdered in order to keep his partners, it suggested that all of his partners would inevitably be killed as they would have to return to their lives. Interestingly, this was not always true (see section 10.4.4.5).

Another aspect in Dahmer's choice of strangulation should be briefly considered. Often in cases of strangulation, male victims have an erection based on the pooling of blood. Whether Dahmer knew this from Hicks's murder or from his training as a medic or not, it enabled him to perform fellatio on the bodies of several of the victims. This allowed him to continue to use the bodies as props for his sexual gratification other than his normal masturbation upon slitting open the bodies (Egger, 2002; Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). In addition, it should be noted that Dahmer also kept the genitalia of two of his victims in the house as souvenirs to maintain and relive the murders – as with the photos and skulls (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer's increased ruling activity through the murders indicated that the power of the fantasy began to intrude on reality. Dahmer claimed that he experienced:

> An incessant and never-ending desire to have someone at whatever cost, someone good looking, really nice looking, and it just filled my thoughts all day long, increasing in intensity throughout the years when I was living with Grandma. Very overpowering, just relentless. (Masters, 1993, pp. 120 – 121)

Adler (1958) noted that if an individual were to focus all his energy on one life task, it would affect the others as they were interrelated. Dahmer's emphasis on striving for power and superiority in the sexual task of life therefore began to influence the delicate 'balance' that he maintained in the other tasks up to this point.

During these months Dahmer's relationship with Catherine was increasingly strained because of his staying out late. He also maintained his occupation, even though he would use his sick days in order to dispose of the bodies (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Though Catherine was unaware of his activities, she discovered a mysterious black substance in the garage and insisted that Lionel investigate (Dahmer, 1994). Jeffrey scoffed it off as an experiment – just as he had with the mannequin – and was once again able to manipulate his family and inform his own sense of superiority over them. However, after the incident with Flowers (see Chapter 5), Catherine finally asked him to leave her house. Dahmer's striving for superiority therefore resulted in the possible confirmation of his private logic as now even his grandmother confirmed the view that he was not worth loving and that the world was full of enemies who could not be trusted and had to be conquered.

In response to this powerful stressor, Dahmer acted in order to regain control of his life. In a self-described attempt at independence, he moved into the city to be closer to work (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). However, on his first day in a new apartment, he "wanted some sexual activity. Saw him [Somsack Sinthasomphone]. An attractive guy. Offered him 50 dollars for some pictures" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 126). He drugged the boy, fondled him and listened to his stomach before letting him go as he apparently "never intended to hurt him" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 125). Dahmer again used a sophisticated lure to entice the boy into his apartment, but his control in not killing the boy resulted in his being apprehended. Dahmer was arrested at work and was highly embarrassed by his colleagues finding out about his homosexuality (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). The police searched his apartment while the anxious Dahmer feared that they would find one of the skulls. They did not – and this only served to increase his sense of superiority over the police who had again failed to find evidence of murder.

Dahmer's arrest resulted in another significant event: his having to admit his homosexuality to his father. Dahmer related:

> He asked me if I was gay and I told him yes, and he accepted it fairly well. He didn't
> get upset or anything about it. He just acted surprised and wondered why I'd never

told him before and I said that I didn't tell him because I was embarrassed. (Masters, 1993, pp. 129 – 130)

Lionel Dahmer (King, 2004) noted that both he and Shari were already aware that something was amiss when they heard about the mannequin. As Lionel Dahmer was a religious man (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993) this was not something easy to accept. This, in addition to the social belief about homosexuality, was one a significant factor in Dahmer's inability to speak about his fantasies in adolescence. Thus, added to Jeffrey's perception of Lionel's disapproval throughout his life, his choice of sexual orientation was another incremental factor in his private belief about himself.

Dahmer returned to his grandmother's house after his release from jail to wait for the court case. He continued to work and also killed Anthony Sears. Dahmer noted that "him I like[d] especially well" (Masters, 1993, p. 136) and kept Sears's head and genitals in his locker at work. Dahmer's sense of 'liking' is striking in its fatality and leads to an impression that his small amount of social interest slowly diminished. Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) noted that social interest was an inherent capability that would atrophy without being trained in contribution and co-operation with others. Dahmer's expression of his desires showed this atrophy and a parallel in a diminished sense of mental health.

After Dahmer claimed in court that the "one thing I have in my mind that is stable and gives me some source of pride is my job" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 68) he was sentenced to prison on a work-release programme. He did not kill anyone in that time, but used the legal talent of another inmate to petition the judge for leniency to allow him to be a productive member of society. He copied into his own hand: "I have always believed that a man should be willing to assume responsibility of the mistakes he makes in life. What I did was deplorable" (Masters, 1993, p. 132). His prank was successful and he was released after 10 months on condition of abstaining from alcohol and fortnightly visits to his parole officer (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer was again successful in manipulating others for his own sense of superiority and its success resulted in his ability to act, against society, for his goal of godlikeness.

10.4.4.3 Signature

Following Dahmer's release from prison, he moved into his grandmother's house. He later moved into Apartment 213 where he killed the rest of his victims. Dahmer continued to

work at the ACC at night and during the day was mostly at home to play on his computer or indulge in pornography (Flaherty, 1993; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). He visited his parole officer, but was often unkempt and increasingly agitated (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer attended group therapy sessions as part of his probation but did not share any personal information, especially about his family (Masters, 1993). Upon psychological evaluation, a psychologist described Dahmer's life as "very isolated, no friends, hobbies, interests, whole life is dull, sterile, monomaniacally directed, which is excellent breeding ground for depression" [sic] (Masters, 1993, pp. 143 – 144). This lack of self-regulation showed that Dahmer's striving to achieve his fantasy resulted in his not caring for himself or for the image that he projected to others – which had been vital to his success.

Dahmer enjoyed "the excitement of being around people that I didn't know and the chance of meeting some nice-looking guy, the same thing that led me to the bathclubs, the excitement and anticipation meeting a stranger in the night" (Masters, 1993, p. 96). His next victims were Raymond Smith, Edward Smith and Ernest Miller. Dahmer enacted his MO with perfection: he lured, drugged, killed and dismembered. These murders also highlighted his unique signature. A signature is a serial killer's actions that are unnecessary to the kill (Burgess et al., 1986; Keppel & Birnes, 1997), but necessary to the specific ritual. The aspects of Dahmer's signature included necrophilia, taking souvenirs and cannibalism.

10.4.4.3.1 Necrophilia

Adler (1929, 1958) wrote that sexual sadism is an expression of the lifestyle that indicated an avoidance of the tasks of life. Dahmer's behaviour was thus in line with his striving towards his fictional goal. Whereas previously Dahmer achieved his desire by simply drugging his partners, he escalated to violence to ensure that the victims would not leave. His concrete goal to achieve his fantasy required, essentially, a dead body that could be used as an object for sexual gratification. This was his success. Dahmer selected live partners to whom he was attracted to kill in order to achieve the fantasy that would allow him to experience personal power and superiority. For example, while he could not always achieve an erection at the bathhouses, he could stand over Raymond Smith's body to masturbate to orgasm (Masters, 1993).

In addition to using his victims' bodies for sexual intercourse, Dahmer also used them as masturbatory aids (Holmes & Holmes, 2002; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler

& Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). While the dismemberment of the bodies was a part of his MO, it was also a significant aspect of his signature. Dahmer claimed that he "wanted to see what someone looked like inside" (Masters, 1993, p. 159), but his behaviour surpassed this curiosity. Dahmer stated that at first he attained a sense of gratification from the dismemberment, but "it got to be routine" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148) while the sexual activity after death remained "pleasurable" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148). Dahmer would either (a) touch the intestines to achieve an erection and if possibly ejaculate into the viscera or (b) remove the intestines to use as a masturbatory aid (Masters, 1993). Adler (1929, 1930) held that individuals who avoid the tasks of life are merely discouraged. However, the researcher had difficulty to reconcile the description of these acts as mere expressions of discouragement. In terms of the theory, however, this behaviour reflected the avoidance of the sexual life task and in line with Dahmer's creative compensatory movement against social interest, towards his fictional goal of godlikeness.

10.4.4.3.2 Souvenirs

Dahmer took several different souvenirs from his victims, including heads; skulls – which he would sometimes paint to look commercial; genitals; skin; a scalp; and skeletons (see Appendix A). Dahmer believed that the skulls "represented the true essence of the victims" (Davis, 1995, p. 287) and later used them, along with the skeletons for his shrine (see section 10.4.4.8).

Dahmer also photographed the bodies of his victims, both before and after death in order to "accentuate their physiques" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 134). The photographs before death served as reminders of the time he had while the victims were alive and he noted, "I'd use them to masturbate" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 134). The photographs taken after death indicated Dahmer's ability to manipulate and pose his victims to his own design. Essentially, Dahmer created his own pornography with individuals whom he found attractive. Dahmer noted about the posing that his "desires were bestial, obviously. I think my emotions were pretty well seared at that time, as far as any decent emotions" (Masters, 1993, p. 160). Adler (1958) noted that the individual's emotions are always congruent with his style of life. Dahmer's lack of social interest, or rather his self-interest, was so pronounced that he was blunted in the experience of empathy. However, this did not mean that he was unaware that his actions were wrong. "I always tried to not get to know the person too well. Made it seem like it was an inanimate object. Depersonalize them. But I

always knew it was not the right thing to do. I had feelings of guilt" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 158).

Dahmer noted about the dismemberment and photography, "I always feel a little uneasy talking about this. No matter how many times I go through it, it's just as sickening every time I do" (Masters, 1993, p. 160). At the time, though, Dahmer was not deterred by such thoughts and acted as if he could achieve his goal. Dahmer's achievement of his goal through photography can be most clearly indicated in the photograph's ownership. "Viewing the pictures wasn't as good as having them there, but it gave me a feeling of satisfaction that at least I had something to remember them by" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 156). Dahmer posed Edward Smith's body and photographed it, but was not satisfied and finally destroyed them. He told police that he felt "rotten" about the destruction of the body and photographs as he had nothing of him, which he considered a waste (Masters, 1993, p. 146). The researcher holds that Dahmer's belief that he could prolong a relationship through murder was doomed and he was left each time with evidence of his failure and confirmation of his private logic and its consequent isolation.

Dahmer could but capture his victims in the photographs and thereby reduced them to still images that he could use to satisfy his need for personal power and superiority. It crystallized and confirmed his power over his victims and allowed him to re-experience that power and control whenever he desired. The photographs were a partial substitute for his involvement in a relationship and a thus, a partial success as they continued the fantasy until the "pictures weren't as fulfilling as actually having someone there" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 156) and he would consciously decide to find another victim.

10.4.4.3.3 Cannibalism

Dahmer's eighth victim was Ernest Miller, whose murder showed some deviations in MO. Dahmer lured Miller to the apartment, but as Dahmer did not have enough drugs to keep him sedated, he decided to slit Miller's throat as he "couldn't think of any other way" (Masters, 1993, p. 154). From an Adlerian perspective, this change from strangulation to exsanguination is not a change in his style of life. The striving towards the fictional goal is the same and therefore the necessity to slit Miller's throat in the prevailing situation was just another expression of his desire for dominance. Dahmer claimed that he chose to sever the jugular vein as he knew it would be a quick death as "it took him maybe about a minute

before he died" (Masters, 1993, p. 154). While this may be seen as a continuation of Dahmer's not wanting his victims to suffer, it may also be considered that Dahmer's lack of preparation could be seen as purposive as a way to escalate his behaviour and his sense of power.

One of the most important aspects of this murder was that Dahmer turned to cannibalism. Anthropophagy (see Chapter 6) is considered an extreme form of psychosis wherein an individual believes that he must consume another's blood or flesh in order to preserve his own life. Dahmer's choice of cannibalism can be seen in Adlerian theory as an escalation towards the achievement of the concrete goal or fantasy. Dahmer himself noted that the desire "was internal … It was just another step, escalation" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139). Dahmer noted in his blunted monotone that he:

> Saved the heart. The biceps. Decided to put – cut 'em into small pieces, washed 'em off, put it in clear plastic freezer bags, and put 'em into my storage freezer, just as an escalation, trying something new to satisfy. And I would cook it, and then look at the picture and masturbate. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139)

Cannibalism served the same purpose as the necrosadism and taking souvenirs. It served as a way to ensure power over his victims – even after death – and to satisfy his own superiority complex for domination and sexual gratification. Cannibalism, however, has a symbolic element of incorporation as well. In line with Dahmer's striving for godlikeness the possession and manipulation of the bodies and the trophies sustained the fantasy that was slowly bleeding into his reality. Dahmer noted that he only once ate a piece of the bicep (Martens & Palermo, 2005; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). He claimed that when he consumed human flesh, "it made it feel like they were more a part of me. Sexually stimulating" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 139). In this act Dahmer combined two primal urges: sustenance and sex. Dahmer wanted to make Miller a part of him to ensure that there would always be a connection between them. He literally sustained and gratified himself through cannibalism to achieve his godlikeness ideal of connection and association.

This use of cannibalism may also be seen as the start of Dahmer's expression for a 'spiritual' connection with his victims, which is evidenced later in the desired construction of a shrine (see section 10.4.4.8). Dahmer kept Miller's skull as well as his skeleton to this end. It was earlier noted that anthropophagy includes drinking the blood of others. However, when Dahmer was a phlebotomist, he drank a phial of blood, but did not find it to his

satisfaction (Masters, 1993). A possible reason may have been a lack of familiarity with the person whose blood he drank or another may have been that it was not congruent with his lifestyle or degree of fantasy at the time. Dahmer admitted to Ressler that he tried the blood of one of his victims out of curiosity, but did not like the experience nor found it stimulating (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Essentially, Dahmer meant 'stimulating' to be a state of sexual excitement – which was his criterion for continued practice within his line of striving. Interestingly, when Ressler asked whether he ate the human flesh raw, Dahmer answered, "Mr Ressler, I'm not that sick" (Pistorius, 2006, p. 115).

10.4.4.4 Victims

The ensuing months saw a breakdown in Dahmer's ability to maintain a balance between his fantasy world and reality. His performance at work dwindled as he often fell asleep and he told his parole officer, Donna Chester, that he might be fired for absenteeism (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer used all his money to secure his apartment and to buy alcohol and tools for his experiments. Work, therefore, is again seen as merely a means to maintain his avoiding and ruling lifestyle of murder. Dahmer further told Chester that he hated individuals with financial success (Masters, 1993). This is indicative of the pampered response wherein Dahmer may have hated and/ or envied the success of others, but was unwilling to proactively ensure this success for himself.

Dahmer was described as having no interests or hobbies (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992), but bought himself a fish tank. He spent hours marvelling at the fascinating fish that he bought to liven this interest. At home, Dahmer remained drunk and spent hours watching pornography and his favourite movies – including *Star Wars* – and playing on his computer. Dahmer's fascination with the character of the *Emperor* was especially indicative of the ideal of godlikeness and he even bought yellow contact lenses to achieve that presence in the bars. The *Emperor* represented a manifestation of that power as he had "total control, fit in perfectly with my fantasies. I felt … so completely corrupt that I identified completely with him. I suppose a lot of people like to have complete control, it's a fantasy a lot of people have" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 127).

As Dahmer's alcohol consumption and the compulsion to achieve his fantasies increased, he cared less for himself. At one point, he admitted to Chester about his drinking – which

was against his parole – and appeared to her to be suicidal and depressed (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Uncharacteristically, Dahmer spoke to Chester about his homosexuality and about his relations with his family. It is possible that Dahmer came to view her as someone who would listen to him and later, she also tried to help him when he was nearly evicted (Masters, 1993). This seemed congruent to his experience as a child with the teacher who treated him kindly. Dahmer was also contacted by his mother for the first time since she abandoned him when he was 18. He told her about his sexual orientation and she accepted it and promised to stay in contact (Masters, 1993).

Dahmer's main contact with the outside world, however, was with his victims. However, not all of his victims were killed. Dahmer chose to kill or not. This showed a high level of control within his fantasy world – where he was a god – which was in stark contrast to reality where he had little power. Dahmer could therefore choose who he wanted to include in his world and released those who did not satisfy his needs.

> Well, sometimes – very seldom – I'd get very drunk, and come back with someone who wasn't as attracted as I'd thought they were, and I'd have a hangover in the morning and they'd leave. Other times I wouldn't have them killed, but I just don't want to be with them. That happened three or four times. Other nights I didn't want anyone, and I'd just go back and watch a video, read. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 127)

David Thomas was not this lucky, but in a bizarre twist of events, Luis Pinet was (see Chapter 5).

Dahmer killed Thomas after they spent a night together. The literature indicated that although Thomas was drugged, there was no sexual contact. Dahmer realized after they spoke that Thomas was not his 'type' and strangled him because he thought that Thomas would be angry when he awoke (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Although he photographed the dismemberment, Dahmer completely destroyed Thomas's remains so that nothing could be used in the shrine. Dahmer's choice to kill Thomas appeared at first inconsistent with his line of striving. He let numerous potential victims leave, but decided in this instance to kill. However, Dahmer's justification for the deed is important. He feared Thomas's reaction (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). Thus, it may be inferred that the power of the possible rejection was so strong, that Dahmer killed in order to preserve his sense of superiority. This indicated that Dahmer's need to achieve his superiority – and perhaps, a

more momentary need for a feeling of godlike power – slowly overwhelmed his sense of reality. As reality and fantasy bled together, so too did Dahmer's need for power and control which he achieved through his prowess as a serial murderer.

Dahmer lured Pinet to his apartment to take photographs and organized to meet with him again the next day (Masters, 1993). At the second meeting, Dahmer hit Pinet over the head with a mallet, but if failed to render him unconscious. Pinet left but returned to ask for money for a taxi. "I was afraid of letting him go, so we scuffled on the living room floor for about five minutes. We were both worn out. I talked him down. We sat in the bedroom until seven in the morning" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 146). Despite his chances to kill Pinet, Dahmer did not or "couldn't go through with it" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 138). In a contrast to his speaking with Thomas and deciding to kill him, this talk resulted in Pinet's leaving alive. As Dahmer strived towards his goal through killing others in order to feel power and superiority it appeared strange that Dahmer decided to talk Pinet into not going to the police. Dahmer claimed, "I had the knife with me, but I couldn't bring myself to use it" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 138). It might be argued that Pinet's decision to return to Dahmer of his own volition was important in saving his life. The goal of godlikeness is characterized by power, but also by association. Dahmer's talking to Pinet might have created a connection that Dahmer, in a remnant of his social interest, was unwilling to sever.

As Dahmer's tenuous façade of being the typical 'guy next door' began to pale in comparison with his need for domination and power, the fantasy became the focus of his life. After Thomas's death, Dahmer killed Chris Straughter, Errol Lindsey and Anthony Hughes before he started his final spree (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). This spree highlighted a new development in Dahmer's signature. He tried to lobotomize his victims into becoming sex slaves without a will of their own (see Chapter 5).

10.4.4.5   Escape

Dahmer's next victim was Konerak Sinthasomphone. Dahmer met Sinthasomphone in the mall, lured him to the apartment and drugged him before he tried to lobotomize him. Dahmer drilled the skull "just through the bone. Injected him [with acid], he was sleeping" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 132). This unique aspect of the signature indicated a detachment from reality into fantasy. Dahmer's fantasy evolved from its earliest expressions with the

hitchhiker and mannequin. The inanimate, the previously living, no longer satisfied his desires. He wanted a partner who was still alive, but without any will. Dahmer essentially wanted a sex slave who would never leave him and who he could dominate (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Sinthasomphone was able to escape the apartment but, as with all the other crude lobotomies, died (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997).

Before Dahmer's actions are explored, the fortune that favoured him should be briefly considered. There were many incidents when Dahmer was able to escape detection: (a) he was almost arrested while trying to drive Hicks's remains to the tip (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); (b) he was helped by a cab driver to transport Tuomi's body into the boot of the car (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); (c) the police failed to find a skull in his apartment when they searched his house after his arrest for molestation (Masters, 1993); (d) he convinced his father not to look inside a wooden box that contained Sears's head (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); (e) the police refused to believe Pinet's story about the attack (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997); (f) he convinced his apartment manager that the odours emanating from his apartment were the result of rotten meat and that his fish tank was faulty – while Hughes's body lay in the next room (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); and on this night, (g) he convinced the police that Sinthasomphone – the brother of a previous victim – was his drunk lover. They did not find that Dahmer was under probation and returned Konerak to the apartment (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1995; Schwartz, 1992).

In order to discuss these situations the researcher considered Adler's (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964, 1982) view that all behaviour is purposive. This suggests that there are no accidents. These 'close-calls', often as a result of Dahmer's negligence, are therefore purposive. Select incidents will be evaluated in terms of line of striving and Dahmer's private logic in order to evaluate whether this aspect of individual psychology applies to Dahmer's lifestyle.

When Dahmer was arrested for driving under the influence with Hicks's remains in the car he received only a ticket, without the car's being inspected. He returned home to hide the body parts and "took the head, washed it off, put in on the bathroom floor, masturbated and all that, then put the head back down with the rest of the bags" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 119). When asked whether Dahmer were nervous talking to the police he noted that it was an "understatement" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 118) although he did not betray this secret. Dahmer then acted to relieve that tension by masturbating with Hicks's head. His

sense of superiority was thus maintained by his escaping detection of an enemy and then he concretized his sexual power through the continuation of the fantasy. Similarly, when he convinced his building manager that the equipment in his apartment was faulty, he still had the bodies of his victims to dismember and enjoy sexually – as he did with Sinthasomphone.

Dahmer described the events after he thought that Sinthasomphone was asleep:

> [I] went for a quick beer across the street before the bar closed; and I was walking back and saw him sitting on the sidewalk, and somebody had called the police. I had to think quickly, and told 'em that he was a friend that had gotten drunk, and they believed me. Halfway up a dark alley, at two in the morning, with police coming one way and fire trucks coming the other. Couldn't go anywhere. They ask me for ID, I show 'em ID; they try to talk with him, he answers in his native tongue. There's no blood showing, they checked him out and figured he was real drunk. They told me to take him back; he was not wanting to go back; and one officer grabbed him on one arm, the other officer grabbed him on the other arm, and they walked him up to the apartment. … They laid him on the sofa, looked around the apartment. They didn't go into my bedroom. If they had, they would've seen the body of [Hughes], still lying there. They saw the two pictures that I'd taken earlier, lying on the dining room table. One of 'em said to the other, 'See, he's telling the truth.' And they left. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, pp. 132 – 133)

In this case, Dahmer had a choice to do nothing. However, he approached Sinthasomphone on the street and convinced the police – though not the bystanders (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) – that Sinthasomphone was his friend. It could be argued that Dahmer was unaware of Sinthasomphone's lucidity and therefore needed a witness to be silenced. Dahmer noted that he did not think that the police would return, but stated, "He was already … damaged, so I decided to kill him and take my chances" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 136). Another possibility that could be inferred from Dahmer's striving was that he needed to complete the fantasy that he started a few hours prior. Dahmer "gave him the second injection, and that turned out to be fatal". He then completed his fantasy through necrophilia, taking the skull and dismembering the body in the space of two hours.

In most of the 'close-call' situations Dahmer was able to escape suspicion through communication. He was able convince others of his truth – and this was another form of mastery. Dahmer convinced the police that he merely needed to get out of a tumultuous

house when he had Hicks's body in the car (Masters, 1993). He convinced his father not to look in the box because its apparently pornographic contents would offend his grandmother (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He told his building manager that his appliances had failed (Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992) and convinced the police that Sinthasomphone was a friend (Baumann, 1991; Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Tithecott, 1997). Each of these examples was a manipulation of the truth; each was plausible and therefore highly successful. The success, however, is most importantly viewed for Dahmer's line of striving: he was superior to those he manipulated and could therefore continue to strive toward his goal.

The researcher found that the most striking aspect of this manipulation was its contrast to the general description of Dahmer as uncommunicative. Just as he did with his pranks in school, such as talking his way into a meeting with the Vice-President, he could manipulate his parents and the police with similar mastery. In line with Adlerian theory, it follows that Dahmer would use this compensatory skill in order to achieve his goal, but this skill seemed outside his narrowed activity. Dahmer seemed to use words to disguise his thoughts. Thus, if one were to consider Dahmer's ability to survive in reality as a similar adaptation, then it could, however, be argued that he used this mastery every day although it was hidden in a façade of isolation.

Dahmer's intelligence, persuasiveness and articulation were weapons that he used in his avoidance of the tasks of life. The literature indicated that people were easily influenced by this docile man even after his arrest. When Dahmer smiled in the courtroom the newspapers and authors noted how attractive he was and when he appeared unshaven even the families of his victims noted this change in his appearance (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Despite Dahmer's not exuding charm like other serial killers, such as Ted Bundy, he was still able to draw people's attention and interest. Perhaps, this too is an important consideration in individual psychology: it may have been society's social interest that blinded others to his undercurrent of evil and later, allowed the world to view him not only as a monster, but also a human being with a tortured soul.

A further aspect of Dahmer's interaction with others was his emotional reaction to these incidents as well as the murder. Dahmer claimed that with the first murder he was "very frightened" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 117), with the second he was "extremely

horrified" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 124) but afterwards he acted only for his own gratification (Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). When Dahmer spoke to the police about Sinthasomphone he was calm although "it was such an overwhelming situation that – I don't know where I got the sense of calm, I don't know" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 142). In this case – as with Hicks – the police had no sense whatsoever of Dahmer's inner state. Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) argued that there is a mind-body connection in the construction and expression of personality as the emotional state could be seen in the tension of the body. Dahmer's external calm could therefore be seen as a reflection of his practiced isolation and avoidance since childhood. However, this could also suggest that when Dahmer acted on his aggression it was a terrible sight.

10.4.4.6   Chicago

Dahmer's next two victims were from Chicago (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Jaeger & Balousek, 1991; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer's decision to lure victims from another state to his apartment may have been motivated by his nearly being caught in Milwaukee. Dahmer cleverly introduced himself to Matt Turner under an alias, which made it difficult for Turner's friends to name him (Masters, 1993). The sophistication of Dahmer's lure therefore developed despite, or perhaps as a result of, the tension of his nearly being caught. This showed the level of organization and control that Dahmer had as he could adjust his MO and could control himself enough to bring Turner to his apartment before killing him.

Dahmer's next victim was Jeremiah Weinberger. Dahmer was attracted to him and noted that he was "exceptionally affectionate. He was nice to be with" (Masters, 1993, p. 186). There appeared to be a mutual attraction and Weinberger was interested in spending time with Dahmer in Milwaukee. However, when Weinberger focused his attention on his friends it seemed to break the fragile 'trust' that Dahmer allotted him. Weinberger's connection with others seemed to affect Dahmer's view of him as it contrasted with Dahmer's notion of the ideal partner. Interestingly, Weinberger was the only victim who voluntary stayed with Dahmer and the only one who awoke the next morning (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). In terms of Dahmer's private logic, Weinberger's momentary rejection proved him to be an enemy who could not be trusted. However, Dahmer stated that he "wanted to find a way of keeping him with me without actually killing him" (Masters, 1993, p. 188).

Dahmer's definition of attractiveness was displayed in his apartment where he hung posters of well-built men (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer claimed that he was not interested in race, but in his victims' physical form (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992; Ullman, 1992). Dahmer noted of his ideal sexual partner: "I would have liked to have … a well-developed white guy, compliant to my wishes. I would have preferred to have him alive and permanently staying with me" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 157). This individual would not work, or indeed exist in the outside world, but he would be "just there for me" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 157).

Adler (1958) noted that children with a pampered response in the task of love look, not for an equal partner, but for a servant. Dahmer's fantasy showed an extreme as he wanted a sex slave. Interestingly, Dahmer claimed that he knew that he was "getting out of control … at the point where I started the drilling" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 148) but he wanted to achieve "that zombie technique" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149) as the concrete expression of his goal so much that he did not stop. Dahmer's need for a feeling of superiority thus overwhelmed his sense of reality. In his superiority complex, Dahmer claimed "I thought I could avoid detection" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149) "that's what happens when you think you don't have to be accountable to anyone. You think you can hide your activities and never have to account for them. It can lead to anything then, which it did" (Masters, 1993, pp. 111 – 112).

Dahmer's striving to obtain his perfect partner who would never reject him was an expression of his private logic. He had in mind a goal for each chosen individual, but it was such an unrealistic goal to achieve that it was inevitable that they would fail. When the victims failed, that is, when they rejected him because "they made it clear that they had to be back to work" they were doomed to become part of the fantasy because Dahmer "didn't want them to go" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 129). Ironically, Weinberger might have stayed with Dahmer voluntarily as he was attracted to him. However, to Dahmer's private logic, he had already failed in being a perfect partner. Of a potentially fulfilling relationship he noted, "I couldn't do that. Once I was at the apartment, I was already deep into a mode of doing things – and I never met anyone that I felt I could trust in that kind of relationship" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 129). "The person would have had to be totally compliant, willing to do whatever I wanted, and there just aren't people like that" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p.

130). That 'mode' or lifestyle indicated how Dahmer killed in order to preserve his sense of superiority in response to perceived rejections and to achieve his goal.

Dahmer did not use acid on Weinberger, but "I tried [to inject] boiling water. Later he woke up, felt groggy. I gave him more pills, went back to sleep. Did it the next night, left him there during the days" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 131). Dahmer momentarily succeeded in creating a zombie. Dahmer left him in the apartment, untied and he did not leave. This played perfectly into the fantasy and increased Dahmer's sense of superiority. After a second injection of boiling water, Dahmer found Weinberger dead on the floor. Weinberger's death shattered the fantasy that Dahmer finally achieved and in Weinberger's death there was also a sense of failure. Dahmer was alone once more, rejected even by his zombie. However, Dahmer still had the body with which to complete the original fantasy and could achieve his sense of power through ritual dismemberment, necrophilia and by taking the skin and skull as souvenirs.

Dahmer's momentary achievement of his fictional goal is important in the line of striving. Adler (1929, 1958, 1964) noted that individuals cannot achieve their final goal as it is an unconscious striving, which suggests that the individual is always in flux, always becoming. Dahmer's behaviour did not reflect the necessary social interest or common sense that Adler (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) argued to be crucial to mental health. Dahmer's ability to act as if he could achieve his fictional goal – which was expressed in the concrete striving for the perfection of his fantasy – was characterized by his ruling type and his lack of social interest. Dahmer could act to achieve his goal in his own creative way because of his self-centred training. In his private logic as a neglected child he held that he deserved everything he desired and his superiority complex helped him to believe that he would not be caught and that he was not accountable for his actions. This attitude of personal omnipotence was both critical to his success and downfall as he eventually became careless.

The near-achievement of the developing fantasy with Weinberger seemed to increase his efforts to re-create the experience. The development of the fantasy indicated that as Dahmer moved closer towards the achievement of his concrete goal, the fantasy developed. As stated previously, the fantasy always adapts such that its perfection cannot be achieved and this was paralleled in Adler's view (1929, 1958) that the individual's striving is always dynamic, but within a narrowed set of movement. Gradually, Dahmer's fantasy developed into a more spiritual construction through the desire to create the shrine. The fantasy therefore moved

increasingly towards a view of godlikeness through his use of his victims' bones for a connection with them (see section 10.4.4.8).

The achievement of the concrete goal or fantasy is important in Dahmer's lifestyle. For Dahmer, the fantasy itself had to be re-created, refined and practiced in order to achieve satisfaction and therefore it was evidenced in a variety of creative expressions. Dahmer was able to regulate his life in both fantasy and reality with great skill, but following Weinberger's murder this ability slowly faded. As the desire for the fantasy grew more powerful, in addition to the belief that he could not be caught, it follows that Dahmer's need to live in a fantasy world – as a god – grew stronger. This was facilitated by Dahmer's avoidance of the tasks of life. Dahmer needed only to enter the 'real' world in order to obtain victims to bring into his fantasy. The increased avoidance of the tasks of life and the escalation of the murders indicated that Dahmer's behaviour devolved to the point where his co-workers, family and parole officer noted that he was in trouble (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

10.4.4.7   Dominoes

Shortly after Dahmer killed Weinberger, he killed Oliver Lacy. Like Miller before him, Dahmer found Lacy extremely attractive and decided to keep the skull and skeleton (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). Dahmer was under review at work for abusing his sick days and after requesting a personal day to dispose of Lacy's body, he was suspended and subsequently dismissed (Masters, 1993). Dahmer claimed that,

> Nothing else gave me pleasure towards the end, nothing, not the normal things, especially near the end when things just started piling up, person after person, during the last six months. I could not get pleasure from going out to eat, I just felt very empty, frustrated, and driven to continue doing it. None of these are excuses for what I did, but those are the feelings I had in those last months, really intensive. For some reason, I kept doing it. I knew my job was in jeopardy in February. All I would have had to do was just stop for several months at a time and space it out, but it didn't happen that way. I was just driven to do it more frequently and more frequently until it was just too much – complete overload. I couldn't control it anymore. (Masters, 1993, p. 189)

The importance of occupation to Dahmer's life was clearly evidenced in the result of his dismissal. Dahmer had created a balance in his reaction to the tasks of life, despite his striving being on the useless side of life. It allowed him to enjoy living in both worlds. His employment provided a sense of stability and an income to continue his actions; he was isolated from social interactions, which provided him with a level of anonymity and elusiveness; and he satisfied his sexual cravings through murder. Adler (1958) noted that failure in one of the life tasks would reflect in the others. The loss of Dahmer's job finally disrupted Dahmer's delicate balance and it was then "that my dominoes started to fall" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 149).

Dahmer's self-regulation remained on the useless side of life, but became increasingly detached from reality. He continued to dispose of the bodies through dismemberment and acid, but became increasingly careless while he lived with the stench of rotten flesh, showered with a corpse and left evidence in the apartment.

> If I'd been thinking rationally I would have stopped. I wasn't thinking rationally because it just increased and increased. It was almost like I wanted it to get to a point where it was out of my control and there was no return. I mean, I was very careful for years and years, you know. Very careful, very careful about making sure nothing incriminating remained, but these last few months, they just went nuts. (Masters, 1993, p. 190)

No longer restricted by employment, Dahmer began to proposition men on the street – and he was often rejected. It is possible that this tension, in conjunction with his desire to achieve the superiority promised by his fantasy, continued to guide his line of movement. Finally, he was able to lure Joseph Bradehoft, his final victim. However, Dahmer also faced the stress of eviction and a predicament about his belongings.

> That was the last week I was going to be in that apartment building. I was going to have to move out and find somewhere to put all my possessions. Should I get a chest and put what I wanted to keep in that, and get rid of the rest? Or should I put an end to this, try to stop this and find a better direction for my life? That's what was going through my mind that last week. (Masters, 1993, pp. 190 – 191)

When Dahmer spoke about his 'possessions' it referred to the trophies: "I was debating whether I should keep the skulls or just abandon everything" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 130). His possessions were his victims and the power they represented. When asked whether

he felt a loss at losing the trophies he commented, "A great deal. That's why I was so torn over should I do it or not" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 130). The trophies were thus an essential part of the ritual as well as a way to maintain the fantasy as proof of his superiority.

As the fantasy developed further, Dahmer envisioned a shrine constructed from the bones and skeletons of his victims. He refused to use skeletons and skulls from a store as it "wouldn't be a remembrance – it would have been a stranger" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 150). Dahmer wanted to "develop some sort of incantation or ritual, to tap into power, spiritual power. At that time, I thought that sort of thing might be possible, but I didn't know" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, pp. 150 – 151). In terms of the life task of spirituality, Dahmer showed little social interest and no respect for any moral or legal code that preserved life. Dahmer was aware that his actions were wrong as he went to great lengths to cover the crimes which resulted in (a) an increased sense of superiority over the police and (b) resulted in his losing his job, which eventually resulted in his spiralling out of control.

Although Dahmer did not complete the shrine, it might be seen as a final, unified expression of his possession of his victims. In terms of the final goal of godlikeness, the shrine represented Dahmer's creation of his own world, "a place where I could feel at home" (Masters, 1993, p. 286). He would be surrounded by those to whom he was attracted and kept with him – with him at the centre: a god. Dahmer explained that the shrine would have been "a place for meditation, where I could feel I was drawing power from an outside source … I was trying to get in contact with the spirits" (Masters, 1993, pp. 282 – 283). Dahmer kept the skulls as he believed that it was his victims' essence and thus wanted to draw power from his connection to those few individuals who had seen his darker side. It appeared as if he wanted to commune with his possessions. Stated differently, he desired the godlike attribute of omniscience through his victims and maintained by his victims. As a shrine is erected to honour gods, this shrine was an expression of Dahmer's of self-centred training as he noted that the shrine would be dedicated to "Myself" (Masters, 1993, p. 286).

10.4.5 Arrest, Trial and Death

10.4.5.1 Arrest

The day of his arrest, Dahmer use an elaborate con to lure Tracy Edwards away from Edwards's friends to the apartment. Dahmer's mood vacillated between boredom and

excitement (Masters, 1993). Dahmer claimed that he handcuffed Edwards so that, "I'll be in control" (Masters, 1993, p. 193). Edwards described in court that Dahmer was "just like a normal everyday person, friendly … and all of a sudden he's pulling knives on me. … He's not the same person. … He kept changing mood, was a different person from one moment to the next" (Masters, 1993, p. 231). Dahmer claimed that he could not recall most of what happened on that day (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992) but remembered speaking about gay bars in Chicago and about his fish. He listened to Edwards's chest (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Prud'homme & Cronin, 1991; Schwartz, 1992); watched television whilst rocking and chanting (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992); and finally, Edwards claimed that "he reverted to the person I first met. He felt sorry for himself, had lost his job, and thought nobody cared about him" (Masters, 1993, p. 231). Edwards noted that, "It was like I wasn't even there any more" (Masters, 1993, p. 231).

In this final attempt at murder, Dahmer was no longer in control, despite – by his standards – not being drunk (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). He lost the little sense of control, power and stability in the 'real' world that his employment offered him. Similarly, in his fantasy world, he could not control himself sufficiently to control his victim and Edwards escaped. As Dahmer's view took on an increasingly religious or spiritual tone, he claimed:

> Something stronger than my conscious will made it happen. I think some higher power got good and fed-up with my activity and decided to put an end to it. I really don't think there are any coincidences. The way it ended and whether the close calls were warnings to me or what, I don't know. If they were, I sure didn't heed them. If I hadn't been caught or lost my job, I'd still be doing it, I'm quite sure of that. I went on doing it and doing it and doing it in spite of the anxiety and the lack of lasting satisfaction. (Masters, 1993, p. 195)

In this statement, Dahmer blames a higher power for his arrest, just as he blamed evil forces for his actions as evidenced in his desired construction of the shrine, his admissions to psychiatrists and his final statement in court (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). As the pampered child, he showed his inability to take responsibility for his actions, but rather found others to blame.

When Edwards returned with the police, Dahmer again shifted to the seemingly confident, attractive man who conned the police just a month earlier (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). On this occasion, the police searched the apartment and found the

photographs. Dahmer fought back briefly before he was cuffed and then muttered, "For what I did, I should be dead" (Masters, 1993, p. 4). Dahmer admitted later that "it just seemed like it went into a frenzy this last month. Everything really came crashing down. The whole thing started falling down around my head" (Masters, 1993, p. 190).

A significant difficulty that arises in individual psychology is the consideration that every action is purposive. Despite his knowledge that he would have to vacate the apartment, he still decided to lure Edwards and to kill him, which indicated that his striving to achieve the fantasy was more powerful than his cognizance of reality. However, it further suggested that Dahmer's being ill-prepared and Edwards's escape were acts towards the fictional goal just as the close calls of the past were able to sustain his sense of superiority and power. It does not seem logical to infer the Dahmer wanted to be caught although Dahmer stated later that "I think in some way I wanted it to end … even if it meant my own destruction" (Masters, 1993, p. 5). Upon the discovery of his crimes it might be argued that his choice to confess, his helpfulness and the nature of his plea could be viewed as acts towards superiority.

Dahmer chain-smoked while he recounted his confession in bland monotone (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He considered the confession as "cleaning out … refreshing" (Masters, 1993, p. 5). Adler (1958) noted that the individual's lifestyle would not change, but would merely show a different form of compensation to achieve the fictional goal unless the mistakes in the lifestyle and the striving towards the goal were addressed. As there was no significant psychological intervention, it follows that Dahmer did not change his lifestyle, but adapted to the situation. As such, Dahmer's recounting of the murders (a) could be viewed as a way to re-live the experience and (b) held a significant 'shock value' that would increase his superiority in the presence of the police as the detectives who took his statement were unaware of the findings at Apartment 213. Inexplicably, Dahmer retained his ability to connect with others; the detectives who interviewed him as well as the psychiatrists in the trial often referred to him as 'Jeff' despite the offensiveness of his actions and his lack of emotional expression in the re-telling (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

Dahmer helped in the identification of his victims, noting, "It's a relief not to have any secrets anymore" (Masters, 1993, p. 216). He stated that it was to "relieve the minds of the parents. I mean, it's a small, very small thing, but I don't know what else I could do. At least I can do that" (Masters, 1993, p. 10). He identified victims either from 'missing persons' reports or from photographs taken during dismemberment. Despite his claim that he did this

"because I created this horror and it only makes sense that I do everything to put an end to it, a complete end to it" (Masters, 1993, p. 11) this still can be seen as part of his striving for power and control. Dahmer was not trained in co-operation and therefore it follows that his arrest did not change his lifestyle. Instead, it was in his power to provide the victims with faces and, as he was allowed to view the pictures once more, he could re-live the experience and retain a semblance of the power and control he had before.

As Dahmer was brought to his cell his infamy was confirmed. When he was taken for fingerprinting, silence erupted at his presence (Schwartz, 1992). He spoke with his father, stating simply at the shame and desperation in his father's face, "I really screwed up this time" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 182). Before he was secluded in his cell, Dahmer asked about his grandmother, apparently the one person for whom his social interest had not entirely abated (Dahmer, 1994; Masters, 1993).

10.4.5.2   Trial

Dahmer was arraigned the day after his arrest and began to go into alcohol withdrawal. As he no longer had access to alcohol to drown his thoughts, Dahmer began to have nightmares. Adler (1958) noted that dreams reveal the unconscious striving of the individual. Masters (1993) mentioned three separate dreams: (a) homosexual fantasies that ended without violence; (b) a nightmare about a police attempt to incriminate him in a murder and (c) a nightmare about a old man in a cape who appeared out of the water – at the house in Bath – claiming that Dahmer had stolen the wood he was sawing. While the first dream reflected Dahmer's desire for association and belongingness, the latter two indicated avoidance of his responsibility of his actions. Thus, it can be tentatively argued that Dahmer's dreams reflected his striving.

Dahmer pleaded guilty, but insane. Dahmer's plea was an interesting choice as it shifted the focus from his guilt to his mental state. Of his experiences Dahmer stated that it was "just a nightmare, let's put it that way. It's been a nightmare for a long time, even before I was caught … for years now, obviously my mind has been filled with gruesome, horrible thoughts and ideas … a nightmare" (Masters, 1993, p. 21). Dahmer was interviewed by psychiatrists, but they were unable to provide a unified impression of him. Most of those psychiatrists, however, believed in his statement that he did not enjoy torture, but "wanted to make it as painless as possible" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 137) and testified that he was not

sadistic. It appeared again, as if Dahmer manipulated the psychiatrists, as he had before, through skilled communication and held a sense of superiority over them.

Dahmer asked, "Am I just an extremely evil person or is it some sort of satanic influence, or what?" (Masters, 1993, p. 112). Whilst the psychiatrists could not provide an answer, his was:

> I have no idea. I have no idea at all. Do you? Is it possible to be influenced by spirit beings? I know that sounds like an easy way to cop out and say that I couldn't help myself, but from all that the Bible says, there are forces that have a direct or indirect influence on people's behaviour. (Masters, 1993, p. 112)

It could be argued that Dahmer's extreme discouragement was characterized by his displaying aspects of all three socially useless lifestyle types that Adler (1929, 1930, 1958) proposed. His avoiding lifestyle was seen in his alcoholism and response to work; a leaning lifestyle of a pampered response was seen in his inability to be independent or take responsibility for his actions; and his ruling lifestyle was evidence in his high degree of antisocial activity, pampered response and his justification of his actions.

At trial, Dahmer fell into the background of the proceedings. While the murders were relayed, Dahmer sat impassively. It might be argued that even with the trial, Dahmer was able to re-experience some of the power he held before even though his emotions did not reveal this. The literature indicated that it was difficult to reconcile the horrific acts with of the handsome man seated in the court room. "His very normalcy was insulting. ... People were not prepared to imagine that insanity may be invisible" (Masters, 1993, p. 20). In terms of self-regulation, Dahmer interacted well with his lawyers and the guards who escorted him to court – and he also retained his dark sense of humour. When a woman recognized him while he was wheeled into the court room and screamed, Dahmer responded simply, "I guess I should have shaved" (Masters, 1993, p. 242).

Dahmer did not participate in his defence. He stated that,

> I'm not going to get up on the bench and say anything, that's for sure, no way. As far as I'm concerned there is no defence. I see no hope. It's just completely hopeless from my standpoint. I'm not going to sit up in front of all those people and try to answer questions. (Masters, 1993, pp. 215 – 216).

This statement is striking in that Dahmer was able to fuse his justification for avoidance of taking responsibility for his action publicly with a reasonable amount of contrition. It further

indicated his fear of people's hearing his justifications and the open rejection it involved. While he was aware that he was despised by the public (Johnson, 1992; Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Ullman, 1992) he did not experience it in his secluded cell. Thus, he was able to maintain a sense of superiority through his avoidance of this reaction.

Whilst Dahmer appeared fascinating in his pronounced anonymity, when he delivered his address in court he was mesmerizing. Dahmer's speech (see Appendix B) suggested to the audience that he was apologetic and convinced – based on the psychiatrists' varied conclusions – that he was insane when he committed the murders (Masters, 1993; Schwartz, 1992). He essentially absolved himself of the murders, but continued to apologize to the victims' families and everyone whom he affected – such was the power of Dahmer's words. Though all his statements of remorse may have been true, it appeared from his line of striving for personal superiority that they served as a form of creative and practiced manipulation towards a sense of godlikeness within the confines of the situation.

Dahmer ended his speech with a quote from the Bible. Dahmer's increased spirituality appeared first in his striving towards achieving his fantasy but now indicated a return to his practiced behaviour when he lived with his grandmother and achieved a sense of acceptance. Dahmer claimed, "I still have the guilt, I'll probably never get rid of that, but yes, I'm free of the compulsion and the driving need to do it" (Masters, 1993, p. 220). In terms of his striving, however, this appeared to be a creative response to his environment. In jail and prison, he could no longer achieve superiority through sexual power as his fantasies could not be acted out and he could no longer drink. Instead, he found other ways to achieve his superiority: through religion and celebrity (Davis, 1995; King, 2004; Phillips, 1994).

10.4.5.3 Prison and Death

Dahmer was sentenced to prison without the possibility of parole. He was kept in isolation after repeated statements like, "If I was killed in prison, that would be blessing right now" (Masters, 1993, p. 217). He noted that, "It gets to you – the boredom" (Masters, 1993, p. 219) and that he faced "the sense of total, final hopelessness. That's quite a sensation. I imagine it's a bit what hell is like" (Masters, 1993, p. 217). Dahmer was able to acquire a razor blade, which he took "in case it got too bad in the future" (Dahmer, 1994, p. 237). The 'it' that Dahmer referred to seemed to reflect a sense of his awareness of his lack of social

interest: "When you've done the types of things I've done its easier not to reflect on yourself. … [I]t doesn't do me any good. It just gets me very upset" (Masters, 1993, p. 217).

Dahmer's imprisonment resulted in a new line of striving as he could no longer use alcohol as a means to move towards superiority. Dahmer's suicidal ideations indicated his desire to avoid taking responsibility for his actions. Alcohol and suicide are characteristic of the avoiding types as they are a means to rule over others through self-harm (Adler, 1929, 1958). Adler (1958) argued that suicide is an expression of a retreat before all the difficulties of life and always a reproach or revenge. It is further an expression of the conviction that he can do nothing to better his situation and Dahmer reflected this when he stated, "I don't think I'm capable of creating anything. I think the only thing I'm capable of is destroying … I'm sick and tired of being destructive. What worth is life if you can't be helpful to someone" (Masters, 1993, p. 220). This statement, however, holds an antithesis. The importance of contribution (Adler, 1929, 1930, 1958) seemed to be recognized by Dahmer, just as he recognized his own destructive power. However, his notion of suicide would have been a destructive reproach that allowed him a final escape from the tasks of life.

Dahmer was eventually released into the general population – though in a mental ward – where he had more access to books and visitors (Davis, 1995). He used this opportunity to focus on his renewed religious beliefs and was often visited by his father and contacted by his mother. Prison, rather ironically, provided Dahmer the chance to exercise his social connections with the family who he felt had previously neglected him. They had supported him throughout the trial and thus regained a small semblance of trust. Dahmer also received weekly visits from a minister. He was fearful of Ratcliff's reaction to him and was surprised at the acceptance (Ratcliff, 2006). Ratcliff baptized him and Dahmer became increasingly vocal in prison about his beliefs and later, attested to his reformation on television (Phillips, 1994). In addition to this spirituality, Dahmer also re-created himself as a model prisoner (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993). The combined efforts of his actions for association and control thus possibly provided him with a sense of superiority.

Dahmer was a celebrity, though despised, who was frequently interviewed about his actions and new spiritual views. In the various interviews Dahmer explained:

> It's just like a big chunk of me has been ripped out and I'm not quite whole. I don't think I'm over-dramatizing it, and I'm certainly deserving of it, but the way I feel now, it's like you're talking to someone who is terminally ill and facing death. Death

would be preferable to what I'm facing. I just feel like imploding upon myself you

know? I just want to go somewhere and disappear. (Masters, 1993, pp. 216 – 217)

He also mused, "I should have got a college degree and gone into real estate and got myself an aquarium, that's what I should have done" (Masters, 1993, p. 220). In contrast to an earlier statement, Dahmer admitted in his final interview that "I wish that I could say that it just left completely, but there are times when I still do, still do have the old compulsions" (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast). He ended with a warning to others, either from a vestige of social interest or confirmation of his superiority:

For somebody out there watching this and hasn't done, that hasn't killed people and wants to and rages inside … [You] need to talk to somebody about it, trust somebody about it; to sit down and talk about something that isn't a crime. Talking about it isn't a crime; doing it isn't just a crime it's a terrible thing and doesn't know when to quit and can't be stopped easily once it starts. (Phillips, 1994, Television Broadcast)

As the model prisoner, Dahmer was increasingly trusted by the prison officials. At first he was held in solitary for fear that he would be attacked because of the perceived racial motivation of the murders. "That's the thing. Everybody thinks it's racial, but they were all different. … If I could've struck up a conversation with a white, very good-looking guy type of guy, I would've taken them back [to the apartment]" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, pp. 140 - 141). At trial, Dahmer's attorney argued that Dahmer desired "body form, not colour" (Masters, 1993, p. 227) despite one psychiatrist's view that Dahmer was motivated by a mission to kill homosexuals and men of colour (Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). However, Dahmer's line of striving seemed to be motivated towards self gain rather than to rid the world of others.

In his daily prison life, Dahmer interacted well with the guards, chain smoked, gained weight and maintained his dark humour. Dahmer responded to taunts from other inmates by telling them, "I bite" (Davis, 1995, p. 301). Dahmer therefore used his infamy and the actions he apparently considered as evil to safeguard his self-esteem and gain a sense of superiority. Dahmer also regularly attended church and was once attacked by another inmate. Although the guards wanted to put him in isolation again, he insisted on staying in the general population. Prison officials agreed with Dahmer's assessment that he was at "no undue risk" (Davis, 1995, p. 302). Dahmer's ability to manipulate situations through his behaviour and communication thus retained his power and sense of control and mastery.

Dahmer's decision to stay in general population indicated that he did not want to give up the power and superiority that he attained through his spirituality and daily interaction with others. However, the choice also reflected his earlier desire for death: "This is the grand finale to a life poorly spent and the end result is just overwhelmingly depressing … it's just a sick, pathetic, wretched, miserable life story, that's all it is. How it can help anyone, I've no idea" (Masters, 1993, p. 23). If viewed as a suicidal ideation, his desire violated the religious stance that he advocated. As such, his murder – or suicide-by-inmate – would achieve a goal of being with those he killed. The goal of godlikeness is further evidenced in the sense of control and manipulation such that he helped to design his own death. Soon after Dahmer began to work in the prison gymnasium, he was killed and "entered the realm of legend" (Davis, 1995, p. 302) as he secured his place as one of the most notorious sexual sadists in history (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). However, Adler (1958, p. 237) noted that "only the work of those men who have contributed survived. Their spirit continues and their spirit is eternal". Thus, Dahmer's lack of co-operation and social interest and limited contribution can be seen, finally, from Adler's point of view as "futile" (Adler, 1958, p. 237).

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided the presentation and discussion of Dahmer's individual personality development throughout his lifespan. This longitudinal view took into account the dynamic interplay of Dahmer's perceptions within the social environment that influenced lifestyle development as well as his unique solutions the tasks of life. The following chapter is an integration of the findings and discussions provided in Chapters 9 and 10. Chapter 11 provides conclusive summaries of the two discussion chapters and a comparative summary that integrates the two conceptual models utilized in this study.

CHAPTER 11

INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

11.1   Chapter Preview

In light of the purpose of the research, this chapter provides an integration and discussion of Jeffrey Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development. First, brief conclusive summaries of Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories in relation to Dahmer's life are provided. This is followed by a brief discussion on the similarities and differences of Erikson and Adler's theories. Finally, a comparative summary of the biographical findings of Dahmer's life history is discussed within the conceptual frameworks provided by the theories of Erikson and Adler.

11.2   Conceptual Outline for the Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The presentation and discussion of Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development in this chapter are aimed at the integration of the two theoretical perspectives derived from the descriptive-dialogic approach used in the two preceding chapters. As such, conclusive summaries of Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development are presented first. Then, the researcher will discuss the similarities and differences between the two theories as an introduction to their integrative application to Dahmer's personality development. Finally, a comparative summary of the findings as well as similarities and differences is presented to evaluate how the two theories complement each other – or not – within the view of Dahmer's personality development.

11.3   Conclusive Summaries

11.3.1   Dahmer's Psychosocial Personality Development

Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory holds that personality development occurs through eight stages across the lifespan. At each stage the individual must resolve the prevailing crisis to gain an accruing ego strength. The successful resolution of the four earliest stages ideally results in the formation of a solid identity. With fidelity in this identity, the individual can face the remaining tasks of life to love, work and be generative.

The findings and discussion suggested that Dahmer mostly failed to achieve an adequately positive balance in the resolution of the six crisis stages that he faced across his lifespan. Dahmer's mistrust and malignancy of withdrawal were a pervasive aspect of his personality. Dahmer failed to acquire the ego strength of hope, for himself in society and thus to trust others in society. From this earliest failure, Dahmer's personality development indicated an accrual of setbacks rather than ego strengths. Dahmer seemingly appeared to develop a degree of willpower, but failed to show much independence throughout life. Dahmer displayed a marked lack of guilt, but seemed to have an uncanny competence in the ability to manipulate others through his words and bland emotional affect or apathy. Further, he showed very little initiative, industry or pride except in his experiments with animal remains in adolescence and with his victims later in life.

The findings and discussion indicated that Dahmer did not develop a solid identity. Instead, he experimented with his identity as if in a continual psychosocial moratorium. At school, college and in the army his simultaneous acceptance and rejection was based on his strange interests, dark humour, pranks and alcoholism. The first murder was committed at the close of adolescence, but the power of the fantasy and control over a victim was diminished for a time. When he lived with his grandmother he showed a certain fanaticism in religion, until this was shattered by his experiments with (a) his sexuality and (b) control over his sexual partners to satisfy his fantasies.

The findings and discussion suggested that Dahmer's experiments and the eventual, gradually escalating murders showed an increase in the malignancies that Dahmer previously held. It appeared as if the little willpower that Dahmer held was broken at the second murder and indicated a compulsive need to control his victims. The purpose and compulsivity he showed was related to the fantasies he wanted to perfect and ultimately appeared to result in a breakdown of his fragile identity into a careless impulsivity that resulted in his arrest.

Further, the escalation of the murders seemed to reflect Dahmer's increased ruthlessness. Dahmer drugged victims, but also killed them. He also engaged in necrophilia and cannibalism that served both his sexual gratification and the continued need for control over his victims. Then he experimented with lobotomizing victims in order to break down their free will to keep them as sex slaves. Dahmer seemed to consider his victims as objects to be used or discarded, not only as bodies, but also the souvenirs he took from them. As such,

Dahmer's identity was most solid as a serial killer and his industry showed a level of purpose and competence in the execution and concealment of the murders.

However, at the same time, Dahmer faced the challenges of work and love as an adult member of society. Dahmer interacted with society and projected an image of his being (a) generally passive and dependent, (b) uninterested in occupational success and (c) often contrite or embarrassed by his failed independent acts that resulted in arrests. He was competent in his ability to feign a social mask of the 'guy next door'. Thus, it appeared as if Dahmer's continued role confusion manifested as a functional fragmented identity to survive in and manipulate society and continue to act as a serial killer. It is possible that Dahmer masked his 'serial killer' identity in order to shield himself from the rejection of others. Acceptance, which is crucial to the development of a solid identity, appeared to be a desire sought in his daily life and his fantasies. The 'serial killer' identity was carried out in secret and could never form into a socially beneficial identity, thus in terms of the theory Dahmer failed throughout his adult life to create a positive identity. In his role confusion, Dahmer faced the tasks of intimacy in a malignant way: through isolation, exclusivity – and violence.

The findings and discussion suggested that because of his failure to develop a solid identity Dahmer was unable to successfully resolve the sixth crisis of intimacy and remained isolated. This isolation, interestingly, was evidenced in both promiscuity and exclusivity. Dahmer's withdrawal and isolation indicated his general exclusivity in that it could be argued that only his victims experienced the 'serial killer' aspect of his identity. However, Dahmer was also promiscuous in his interactions with others as they were (a) socially superficial and (b) marked by the number of partners he experimented on and the victims that he killed. Dahmer's relationships, particularly with his victims, displayed no mutuality but were an individualized experience of taking.

The findings and discussion suggested that Dahmer's arrest provided him with the opportunity to return to, and attempt to resolve, previous crises. Dahmer initially reverted to displaying the passive social mask, marked by (a) an inability to express much emotion, (b) reserve and (c) apparent contrition. Dahmer remained competent in his ability to manipulate others through this projected identity as it kept him, though infamous, isolated and shrouded in mystery as an impossible monster. Imprisonment prevented his continued drinking and ability to act on his fantasies and he therefore returned to a previously held ideology, religion. Although prison would not be considered an optimal situation for positive personality

development, Dahmer was afforded the chance to reconnect with his parents and to build a small sense of trust in another. Through his proclaimed religious reformation and the view of his being a model prisoner, Dahmer may have continued to manipulate the new, unchangeable environment for his survival. While this view could indicate a possibly more positive shift in Dahmer's identity, it might also be considered that Dahmer used this 'model prisoner' identity to continue his fame and connection with the outside world and possibly, to engineer his escape: death.

The presentation and discussion of the findings of Dahmer's identity development indicated that Dahmer failed to acquire a solid identity. Dahmer's role confusion appeared to be his identity, but was not socially beneficial. Owing to the idiographic extremes of his failures to resolve the various crises, the researcher posited that Dahmer developed a fragmented identity that suggested an inherent functionality towards his survival within society – and outside it, in fantasy. Thus, although Dahmer progressed through the stages in Eriksonian theory, his individual response to the staged crises may possibly indicate that Dahmer's development belied a solid psychosocial identity.

11.3.2 Dahmer's Individual Personality Development

Adler's (1929) dynamic theory of individual personality development holds that the individual is a creative participant in the development of a unique, unified lifestyle. Each individual strives towards superiority to compensate for feelings of inferiority. The lifestyle is relatively set by the age of five through a private logic and a guiding fictional goal. The individual's creative power guides the form of striving to achieve this self-ideal. The individual's behaviour is thus purposive towards the goal that he acts as if it is attainable in the face of the tasks of life.

The biographical findings and discussion suggested that Jeffrey Dahmer's lifestyle showed aspects of the ruling, avoiding and leaning lifestyles. As such, his striving was on the useless side of life, against co-operation and contribution. It appeared as if Dahmer's perception of neglect, his pampered response and possible organ inferiority narrowed his development into a striving for personal power. He held a private logic that he was (a) worthless and unloved, (b) that the world was full of hostile enemies to be overcome and (c) that others could not be trusted. He constructed a private meaning of success and meaningfulness in life, which was unified in a fictional ideal of godlikeness. Through his

subjective perception of reality, Dahmer compensated to overcome an inferiority complex in relationships by seeking the easiest means to overcome the tasks of life, rather than to solve them in co-operation.

The presentation and discussion of findings in the previous chapter also indicated that Dahmer's striving towards his fictional goal displayed many different creative compensations. As his training was self-centred, his actions maintained a feeling of personal power and superiority rather than social interest. Dahmer's avoidance of the tasks of life was characterized by the use of the most effective and practiced means to intoxicate himself into a feeling of superiority. His responses ranged from alcoholism, isolation and dependence to sexual murder, dismemberment, necrophilia and cannibalism.

The presentation of the findings and discussion indicated that Dahmer's response to the tasks of life indicated the unity of his purposive movement towards his goal. In the face of the task of work, Dahmer engaged only in menial labour far below his intellectual level. He used his employment as a way to maintain a ruling lifestyle in later life and to continue his alcoholism. His behaviour indicated a pampered response and lack of independence to work in terms of education, his military service and social contribution. He was unable to solve this difficulty as he failed in the tasks of fellowship. Dahmer had few friends in school and almost none in later life. He avoided his family, but seemed to hold a level of affection for his grandmother. He interacted only minimally with his supervisor and colleagues at work, his apartment manager and his parole officer. Dahmer's social awkwardness served to confirm his private logic and his body language and monotone speech patterns reflected his inability to communicate his emotions with others. His most characteristic response was thus isolation, which promoted his superiority through keeping his alcoholism, fantasies, sexual orientation and the murders secret from the few connections in his life as he did not believe that they were trustworthy.

The presentation and discussion of findings further indicated that Dahmer focused his sense of satisfaction on the sexual task of life. He did not pursue a loving, possibly marital, relationship but instead chose to dominate his male sexual partners. Dahmer sought, in his pampered response, a sex slave with no free will who would always be at his bidding. He graduated from dismembering dead animals to manipulating his sexual partners, tying together aspects of sexual gratification and death for his own sense of satisfaction. He experimented in adolescence and adulthood with ways to subjugate his partners to his will

and used his narrowed expertise not only to gain control and sexual gratification, but also to avoid capture and feed a growing superiority complex. His early experiments on his partners indicated a minimal sense of social interest in that he did not want his victims to die, but to enjoy their bodies.

A further significant force that shaped Dahmer's lifestyle appeared to be the power of his deviant sexual fantasies. The earliest murder indicated Dahmer's fear of rejection and need for self-gratification. When he was abandoned at home, he found an attractive man who could have served to gratify his fantasies. Dahmer's drinking helped to break down the remnants of his limited social interest at each of the murders. Dahmer lured, killed and dismembered his victims and slowly attempted increasingly violent compensations to achieve satisfaction. In this superiority complex, he indulged in (a) manipulating the bodies and taking souvenirs; (b) necrophilia, often with the victims' internal organs; and (c) cannibalism in attempts to prolong a sense of power, control and belongingness with the victims. He also tried to create zombies in order to achieve the concrete goal, a perfect fantasy, whereby he could master a sex slave who would never leave him – that is, never reject him.

In response to the life task of self-regulation, the presentation of findings and discussion similarly suggested that Dahmer's lack of a sense of self-worth and control in his daily life was overshadowed by his creative compensations through murder to gain a sense of superiority. While Dahmer's behaviour generally hurt others – his family, his victims and their families – he was also a chain-smoker and alcoholic who hurt himself to hurt others. Despite Dahmer's attempts to stay his drinking and fantasies, the resulting tension and offer of sexual gratification shattered this temporary façade. Except for prison, Dahmer did, however, care for his physique. He was interested in body-building and remained physically fit after his military service. His interest in the male form was an important factor in choosing victims to whom he was attracted and a possible aspect of his organ inferiority. From the victims whom Dahmer found particularly attractive he took various souvenirs as reminders or confirmations of his personal superiority and tried to integrate them into a self-controlled world.

The findings and discussion further indicated that Dahmer's envisioned spirituality was most clear in his attempts to create a shrine to himself – as a god – through the use of his victims' skulls and skeletons. He was unable to dispose of these remembrances when he lost his employment and faced eviction. Just as he did with the animals, he kept the bodies close

to where he lived but unlike with the animals, he held no sacred reverence for life. After his arrest and confession, Dahmer later claimed to be reformed and used his celebrity status to regulate his environment, but may have continued his superiority striving in each interview that provided the opportunity to relate his tale. Just as he ruled with pranks in adolescence and calm over the police in adulthood, Dahmer ruled over the court proceedings and prison officials through his reserve and uncanny ability to communicate an impression of his humanity. In possibly his final manipulation of the social interest of others, Dahmer may have engineered his own death as a final act in his movement towards godlikeness, which was possibly concretized by his enduring fame.

The presentation of findings and discussion indicated that Dahmer's behaviour throughout life indicated a purposive avoidance of the tasks of life and his movement towards personal superiority through the subjugation of others. His fictional goal and creative power guided his variety of creative compensations within his narrowed field of interest. Further, this psychological movement reflected his private logic and inferiority complex through a fear of rejection – and the superiority complex for personal power rather than a social contribution to society. Thus, it appeared that Dahmer's body, mind and emotional expression reflected the unity of his personality within his purposive, compensatory striving for personal superiority in the striving for godlikeness.

11.4 Integration of the Findings

11.4.1 Similarities and Differences in the Theoretical Models

Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development and Adler's (1929) theory of individual psychology hold similarities and differences that made each vital to the view of Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development.

11.4.1.1 Psychosexual Origins

Erikson and Adler both studied under Freud and began as psychoanalysts (see Chapters 3 and 4, respectively). Both theorists broke away from Freud, but retained aspects of psychosexual theory. Erikson's (1950) theory maintained Freud's notion of the staged nature of development, but Erikson increased the number of stages and the view of personality development throughout the lifespan. Adler's (1929) theory was a departure in terms of the

dynamic nature of a range of influences across the lifespan. However, Adler's theory may be described as soft-deterministic (Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003a). Adler (1929) held that personality, though its expression was varied throughout life, was more difficult to change and was purposive towards goals and informed by fictions established in childhood.

11.4.1.2 Lifespan Development

Both Erikson (1950) and Adler (1929) held that personality development occurs across the lifespan. Erikson provided eight staged crises through which personality develops. Adler held that the individual's lifestyle is a continuing expression of his private logic and purposive behaviour towards a fictional goal.

Erikson (1950) held that identity formation is most important during adolescence when the individual faces the question of 'who am I?' in relation to his sexual and occupational identity. Once a solid identity is formed in which the individual has fidelity, he is able to face the next crises of adult life. Adler (1929), in contrast, held that the formation of the fictional goal and the private logic occurs in the first four or five years of life. He argued that children do not change in adolescence, but are more capable of finding new, creative ways to express their lifestyle in accordance with the increasing freedoms provided by adolescence. Thus, although the expression of the lifestyle may change, the guiding fiction and perceptions remain consistent.

11.4.1.3 Multi-Faceted Nature of the Theories

The psychosocial and individual personality development theories similarly highlighted the importance of cultural and historical factors in addition to biological, psychological and social aspects of personality development. Whilst Adlerian theory (1929, 1930, 1958, 1964) was more expressive about the range of influences on the individual's development, such as global events, family, media and religion that could either (a) forge common sense for a useful lifestyle or (b) form the basis of mistaken beliefs that guide lifestyle development, Erikson (1950, 1958, 1969) also noted the influence of such factors – particularly in his earliest psychobiographies.

11.4.1.4   Positive Nature of the Theories

Erikson (1950) and Adler (1929) argued that an individual's personality could be changed. Adler held that this change was not easily achieved as the lifestyle is relatively set by the age of four or five. However, Adler held that individuals could affect change in their lifestyles by being helped to identify the inferiority complex that blocked social interest and working to change the faulty perceptions previously held. Erikson (1950) noted that the different stages delimited were based on age-related crises. However, he further noted that all of the eight crises were present in every stage whilst one was ascendant. Owing to the nature of the theory, the individual has the chance to return to any of the previous crises in an attempt to find a successful resolution for an ego strength. This condition, however, required that the individual experience an optimal situation whereby a previous crisis could be dealt with again.

11.4.1.5   Optimal Development

Erikson (1950) and Adler (1929) held similar views on the optimal development of personality. Erikson held that the individual's identity was based on the accrual of ego strengths and the fidelity in the identity. This fidelity would allow the individual the opportunity to face the adult tasks of intimacy – that is, in terms of work and love – and generativity into old age. Adler argued that optimal personality development was the individual's social interest. He held that if the individual faced the tasks of life in a socially beneficial manner – that is, without any blocks in co-operation because of mistaken beliefs – the lifestyle is useful. Thus, despite the differing conceptualizations of optimal development, both theorists fundamentally argued that an optimal personality reflected the individual's beneficence to society. Further, both noted the importance of tasks of work and love in this benefit, but Adlerian theory further highlighted the sexual task of life, spirituality and self-regulation.

11.4.1.6   Structure of the Theories

Erikson (1950) held that personality development occurs through eight successive stages in the lifespan. As such, the theory is more structurally based as it follows age-related stages. Adler (1929), on the other hand, argued that identity development is more dynamic and is based on a confluence of building experiences that are expressed in a creative lifestyle. Adler

held that the most important intervening variable in the individual's lifestyle is an inherent creative power and thus valued a multitude of lifestyle constructions. Therefore, the individual's personality development is idiographic, but nevertheless a consistent movement towards a guiding fiction. Erikson's conceptualization of personality holds more vernacular descriptions of the successful or unsuccessful resolution of the crises. However, as Erikson predominantly outlined optimal development (Erikson, 1950, 1975; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003b), the idiographic potentialities of an individual's failure to successfully achieve ego strengths were less elucidated.

11.4.2   Theoretical Similarities and Differences in Dahmer's Personality Development

This section is based on the presentation of findings and discussion related to Dahmer's personality development according to Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory and Adler's (1929) theory of individual psychology in Chapters 9 and 10, respectively. Each historical period in Dahmer's lifespan is discussed. First, a table of the findings related to the two theoretical perspectives is provided. This is followed by a discussion of the similarities and differences noted in the respective periods.

11.4.2.1   Childhood of Fantasy

11.4.2.1.1   Psychosocial and Individual Personality Findings

The first historical period in Dahmer's lifespan ranges from birth until the age of 12 (see Conceptual Matrix, Chapter 8). Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory holds that Dahmer faced four stages in this first period. Adler's (1929) theory of individual personality posited that Dahmer formed the basis of his lifestyle in the first four or five years, after which his lifestyle was purposively and creatively expressed in the face of the tasks of life.

Table 11.1

Psychosocial and Individual Personality Development Findings in the First Historical Period

Psychosocial Theory	Individual Personality Development
Stage 1: Trust versus Mistrust • Dahmer's earliest interaction in the	**Formation of the Lifestyle** • Dahmer experienced a natural inferiority

family did not appear to result in the formation of an adequate sense of trust • The resulting mistrust appeared to show a malignant pattern of withdrawal • He did not achieve a positive balance of hope in himself or society.	that initiated a striving to superiority • He may have experienced an organ inferiority that could have influenced his emphasis on the body or physique • His early experiences in the family appeared to guide mistaken beliefs
Stage 2: Autonomy versus Shame/ Doubt • Dahmer showed little independence • He tried to avoid shame and doubt as he knew the difference between right and wrong • The balance did not appear positive enough for the development of an ego strength of willpower.	• He held characteristics of a first born and only child • He seemed to perceive interactions as situations of neglect, that is, he desired a pampering situation • The perception of neglect may have been linked with his fear of rejection • This appeared to be a major block in his social interest and co-operation, which formed the basis of his inferiority complex
Stage 3: Initiative versus Guilt • Dahmer showed little initiative, but engaged in isolated play • He showed little guilt for his actions, but did not show malignant ruthlessness • He did not appear to develop a positive balance towards the ego strength of purpose to succeed at a range of capacities.	• He built a private logic based on his perceptions and creative power • His private logic held that: o He was unworthy and neglected o The world was full of hostile enemies to be overcome o People could not be trusted or co-operated with and thus deserved no contribution • His perception of experiences continually confirmed this private logic • He developed a goal of godlikeness that guided his striving for power but towards personal superiority and control.

Stage 4: Industry versus Inferiority	**Expression of the Lifestyle**
• Dahmer showed little industry before his interest and experiments in bones	• Dahmer showed little courage and a halting lifestyle of leaning and avoiding
• He appeared to feel inferior in relationships and withdrew	• He avoided the life task of work as he was not interested in school and showed an almost singular interest in animals
• He was not malignantly inert from interaction, but remained distanced by his odd behaviour	• He avoided the social life task as he kept himself isolated from others in his own fantasy world
• He did not appear to abandon the previous fantasy stage but increasingly acted on solitary adventures and experiments of control in his limited interests	• Although the sexual life task was of lesser relevance, he avoided this task by deciding at an early age not to be married based on his perceptions in the family
• He did not develop competence as his actions were neither socially beneficial nor guided to a future purpose or sense of productivity.	• He showed little self-regulation and retreated into an isolated fantasy world
	• He often leaned on his family to push him into activities and interactions
	• He showed little spirituality and was increasingly interested in animals' remains for experiments of control.

11.4.2.1.2   Similarities and Differences in the First Historical Period

Both Erikson's (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories emphasized the importance of Dahmer's earliest interactions in his family and the resultant hope and courage, respectively. The findings indicated that Dahmer failed to develop an adequate sense of trust in the family environment. The resulting influence on his personality development appeared to be a withdrawal from society and possibly, the restriction of his range of interests. A second similarity in the findings was that both theories indicated that Dahmer's developing personality was not socially beneficial.

The third similarity was that both theories highlighted the important aspects of (a) withdrawal, (b) rejection and (c) fantasy. Dahmer withdrew in the face of social interactions and a purposive movement towards a future occupation. He also showed a fear of rejection at home and at school and withdrew, with each experienced rejection as an ultimate betrayal and confirmation of his rejection and his view of himself in relation to others. This fear of rejection was also shown by both Eriksonian and Adlerian theory to be a source of inferiority in relationships as well as a lack of hope and courage to face any life tasks. Fantasy also played a crucial role in Dahmer's development as it remained constant throughout the period as a retreat from rejection and a self-created source of control.

The major differences highlighted in his historical period were related to theoretical differences. Adlerian theory holds that Dahmer developed a lifestyle in the first four or five years through the dynamic interaction of Dahmer's earliest experiences. Eriksonian theory indicated that Dahmer progressed through the period by facing four successive stages. The teleological nature of Adler's (1929) theory suggested that Dahmer's choices and perceptions were indicative of his creative power, whilst the findings based on Eriksonian theory suggested that Dahmer faced the age-related stages according to the epigenetic principle.

Adler's (1929) theory emphasized Dahmer's creative power in his perception of experiences such that he developed an inferiority complex in relationships, a private logic and fictional goal of godlikeness that guided his purposive movement on the useless side of life in a leaning and avoiding lifestyle. Erikson's (1950) theory, in contrast, highlighted Dahmer's failure to acquire hope, adequate willpower, purpose and competence – which would accrue into his ability or, more likely, inability to develop a solid identity in the next historical period.

11.4.2.2 The Quiet Loner

11.4.2.2.1 Psychosocial and Individual Personality Findings

The second historical period in Dahmer's life ranges from the age of 12 to 18 (see Conceptual Matrix, Chapter 8). In this period, Dahmer faced Erikson's (1950) fifth stage of ego identity versus role confusion and according to Adler's (1929) theory, faced the tasks of life through a purposive and creative lifestyle.

Table 11.2

Psychosocial and Individual Personality Development Findings in the Second Historical Period

Psychosocial Theory	Individual Personality Development
Stage 5: Identity versus Role Confusion	**Lifestyle:**
• Dahmer entered the fifth stage without a positive resolution of all previous crises	• Adolescence provided new situations to creatively express Dahmer's lifestyle
• At home he remained isolated through secret alcohol use and staying in the woods to avoid the family environment	• Dahmer avoided the work task of life as he was disinterested in school or a future occupation despite his intelligence
• At school he was isolated by his strange pranks, alcoholism and known interest and growing competence in the dissection of animal remains	• Dahmer avoided the social task of life by isolating himself to escape a volatile family environment
• He avoided his homosexual desires in a community that considered it taboo	• Dahmer had few friends as his peers were wary of his known alcoholism, pranks and interest and competence in dissecting animal remains
• His unfulfilled homosexual fantasies held elements of death despite his initiative to capture a victim	• Dahmer showed a lesser degree of activity in a ruling lifestyle through his alcoholism, which served to isolate and escape from his family, confirm his perceived neglect and feed a growing superiority complex in that his parents were oblivious to his drinking
• When he was abandoned and drinking, he acted on his compulsive fantasies and impulsively killed	
• His confusion about the murder – despite the power of control and acting on a fantasy – and failed resolution of this stage seemed to indicate a start of a psychosocial moratorium	• Dahmer used the pranks, which included verbal manipulation despite his lack of communication, to rule over his peers and serve his need for control and belongingness
• He failed to acquire a solid identity from	
o a lack of acceptance in society	
o disinterest in social or occupational	• Dahmer avoided the sexual task of life as

productivity o confusion about his sexual identity • He did not show repudiation, except possibly in his general withdrawal from society and work – and in the murder • He could not develop fidelity in an identity • His role confusion held core aspects throughout the period such as his dark humour, alcohol dependence and increasingly violent homosexual fantasies, which were against a socially beneficial identity to be shared with others.	he was uninterested in women and avoided his homosexuality in a community that considered it taboo • He was interested in human physique and engaged in bodybuilding, but showed little consideration for others • He had increasingly violent sexual fantasies and planned – but failed – to capture a victim by force • The tension of his abandonment and need for superiority climaxed in the self-created success of previously fantasized and adeptly concealed murder which indicated a ruling lifestyle of control and emergent superiority complex to a goal of godlikeness.

11.4.2.2.2 Similarities and Differences in the Second Historical Period

Both Erikson's (1950) theory and Adler's (1929) theory highlighted fundamental similarities in Dahmer's personality development. The theoretical findings recognized (a) the socio-cultural environment that stunted Dahmer's sexuality development, (b) the importance of Dahmer's abandonment as an opportunity for the first murder and (c) Dahmer's adaptation to situations that indicated his personality development was not socially beneficial.

Further, both theories indicated (a) the importance of the family, (b) Dahmer's reaction to the task of work, (c) his interactions with peers and (d) his use of alcohol, pranks, dissection of animals and fantasies in his development. However, each of the theories posited different ways to explore and describe Dahmer's development through these core aspects.

Erikson's (1950) theory held that Dahmer showed the first malignancy in his withdrawal from the family and peers. His apathy in reaction to work, that is, school or occupational interest, showed little initiative or industry other than his interest in dissecting animals. Adlerian theory, in contrast, suggested that Dahmer's behaviour was teleological in that his

avoidance of the work and social tasks of life indicated a continued avoiding lifestyle. In the creative expression of the lifestyle, Dahmer used alcohol as means of (a) avoiding the family environment, (b) ruling over his peers and (c) a way to confirm his private logic. Further, Adler's (1929) theory suggested that his disinterest was an avoidance of work, except in a single interest of animal dissection which showed a purposive striving for personal superiority and control and further distanced him from his peers.

Erikson's (1950) theory suggested that Dahmer's use of pranks served as an adaptation in adolescence to withdraw from peers as well as to provide some sense of appreciation. Adler's (1929) theory viewed the pranks as purposive – as noted with alcoholism – to avoid the social task of life, to confirm Dahmer's private logic and to rule over and manipulate others through his words and deeds.

As the socio-cultural environment was important to Dahmer's developing sexuality, he did not experiment with his sexual identity in terms of Eriksonian theory and avoided the sexual task of life according to Adlerian theory. Further, in terms of Adler's (1929) theory, Dahmer's inferiority complex was based on a fear of rejection in a community that rejected homosexuality and thus suggested that elements of death – possibly forged from the implicit control derived from dissecting dead animals – may have been a creative compensation in fantasy towards a feeling of personal superiority and power.

Although both theories suggested that Dahmer's abandonment was an opportunity, Erikson's (1950) theory indicated how Dahmer's possible repudiation of society through withdrawal was further climaxed in the murder. Adlerian theory, in contrast, held that Dahmer's striving for superiority in a tense situation highlighted his inferiority complex and purposively moved him to choose to act as if he could achieve his fantasy for a degree of control. Further, alcoholism was noted as a disinhibiting factor that broke down the remnants of social interest to act towards his fictional goal. Thus, while Eriksonian theory indicated that Dahmer remained in role confusion throughout the period, Adlerian theory held that Dahmer creatively faced the tasks of life through avoidance and an increasingly ruling lifestyle on the useless side of life.

11.4.2.3   Hiatus – or Build-up

11.4.2.3.1   Psychosocial and Individual Personality Findings

The third historical period in Dahmer's lifespan ranges between the ages of 18 and 27 (see Conceptual Matrix, Chapter 8). According to Erikson's (1950) theory, Dahmer faced the sixth stage of intimacy versus isolation. According to Adler's (1929) theory, Dahmer expressed his lifestyle creatively and purposively in this period toward his fictional goal.

Table 11.3

Psychosocial and Individual Personality Development Findings in the Third Historical Period

Psychosocial Theory	**Individual Personality Development**
Stage 6: Intimacy versus Isolation	**Lifestyle:**
• Dahmer entered the sixth stage without a solid identity and thus was in a psychosocial moratorium	• Dahmer continued to express his lifestyle toward his fictional goal
• He lacked purpose and acquiesced to parental desires for going to college	• He avoided the life task of work by using alcohol in college, the army and at home
• He lacked initiative in academia, but showed industry in acquiring funds for alcohol	• He was sent to college – in which he was not interested – and the army and this indicated a leaning lifestyle
• He apparently felt guilt for Hicks's murder and possible loss at his dog's death	• In college, he creatively acquired money to maintain his alcoholism
• He was forced into the army where colleagues were wary of his temper when drinking, but appreciated his humour	• He showed an interest in being a military policeman, but was trained as a medic which was in line with his interest
	• He was uninterested in his work as phlebotomist and continued drinking
• The move to Florida may have been either an attempt at independence or the avoidance of shame and doubt	• He maintained menial labour, which was suggestive of a criminal lifestyle
	• He made others wary with his alcoholism

- He lacked industry in Florida and drank until destitute

- He was rejected from home because of drinking and sent to his grandmother

- As a phlebotomist he was uninterested in a field in which he was trained

- He co-existed with his grandmother and took on a possible religious fanaticism

- He also worked as a menial labourer despite his intelligence and maintained the position for remuneration

- After he was propositioned, the different cultural environment facilitated his acting on fantasies and homosexual desires avoided earlier in adolescence

- He preferred partners to be completely still and ruthlessly experimented for the desired effect

- He developed patterned behaviour regarding work, drinking and experimenting with sexual fantasies – and showed compulsivity and occasional impulsivity to achieve his fantasy

- He was not interested in relationships in Florida, in his church group or in his brief, random encounters with men

- He remained isolated as both promiscuous regarding the number of superficial relationships and exclusive in terms of his not sharing his identity with partners, family members or co-workers

- and humour, which he used to avoid reflecting on Hicks's murder

- He avoided social interactions and his perceived rejections – often the result of his actions – confirmed his private logic

- He had superficial relationships with co-workers, a non-sexual relationship in Florida and a symbiotic relationship with his grandmother

- He continued to avoid the sexual life task by avoiding meaningful relationships

- When he was propositioned he returned to his fantasies and masturbation

- He experimented with his sexual identity in a different socio-cultural environment and with methods to control his partners, which indicated a superiority complex and an increasingly ruling lifestyle

- The brief nature of sexual encounters with partners also ensured his avoidance of facing the sexual task of life

- He exercised a degree of control in his experiments in his choice not to kill

- Facing the task of self-regulation, he stayed in shape, but drank and smoked

- When he lived with his grandmother he decided to try to control his fantasies through a religious ideology until he experimented with his fantasies

- This religious lifestyle at the time still indicated an avoidance of the life tasks as

• He remained in role confusion, but appeared able to manipulate others and adapt to and survive in different social situations.	he did not work, had no friends or sexual relationships • His lifestyle remained on the useless side of life as he avoided the life tasks and increasingly showed a ruling lifestyle.

11.4.2.3.2   Similarities and Differences in the Third Historical Period

Both Erikson's (1950) theory and Adler's (1929) theory indicated similarities in the third historical period related to (a) the socio-cultural environment in which Dahmer could exercise his sexual development, (b) the experimentation to achieve the fantasy and (c) the direction of his personality development away from social benefit. The theories recognized that the different cultural climate allowed Dahmer to experiment with his sexual development and that he continued to avoid meaningful relationships because of his lack of identity to share with another according to Erikson's theory and his avoiding and ruling lifestyle towards a goal of godlikeness as posited by Adler's theory.

Central to the view of Dahmer's personality development in this stage was his lack of interest in a social occupation and his emphasis on experimenting with partners to achieve his fantasies. From an Eriksonian perspective, these experiments were part of his compulsivity and growing ruthlessness in his need for control which seemed to give purpose and a sense of industry. From an Adlerian perspective this indicated Dahmer's increasingly ruling lifestyle in his striving for personal superiority, power and control. The sexual fantasies directed this creative striving through experiments to achieve the specific control required to satisfy his sexual desires.

Erikson's (1950) theory indicated that Dahmer faced earlier crises in this stage and reacted to situations in ways previously indicated. He avoided tasks of work and love through withdrawal and alcohol use. He also faced the second stage in his need for autonomy and the impulsivity and compulsivity shown in the experimentation toward the fantasies. He further showed aspects of the third and fourth stages through, first, his apathy and disinterest and later, his industry and purposiveness in the achievement of his fantasies. Adler's (1929) theory, in contrast, highlighted that Dahmer's creative compensations to the situations indicated a unity of movement towards his goal. His (a) leaning lifestyle was indicated by a lack of independence, (b) his avoiding lifestyle was indicated by his use of alcohol and

indifference to work and productivity and (c) his increasingly ruthless lifestyle to experiment and achieve his fantasies by controlling others were on the useless side of life to avoid the tasks of work, love and sex – in order to achieve personal power and superiority.

Further, Adler's (1929) theory indicated a level of control and choice that Dahmer exercised in his choice of partners as well as his decision not to kill, which indicated a possible level of social interest. Erikson's (1950) theory suggested that Dahmer's actions were indicative of his inability to share an identity with others and thus a failure to resolve the prevailing crisis of the period. Similarly, Erikson's theory indicated that Dahmer's possible fanaticism and sexual experimentation – indicative of the fifth stage – was an attempted withdrawal from society, while Adlerian theory suggested that it was purposive to his avoidance of the tasks of life and congruent with his movement towards godlikeness.

Both theories indicated that Dahmer's behaviour was situational. Eriksonian theory suggested that Dahmer's religious ideology was a fanaticism that did not forge a solid identity to be shared with others in the face of work and love. From an Adlerian perspective, it could be argued that Dahmer's spirituality served his superiority striving in that he was in a situation where he did not feel rejected and he responded in a way to continue that state while still avoiding the tasks of work, love and sex.

Erikson's (1950) theory and Adler's (1929) theory suggested that Dahmer's personality development was not socially beneficial, but this was evidenced differently. According to Eriksonian theory, Dahmer remained in role confusion and faced previous crises in his response to the tasks of work and love which he failed to resolve in this historical period. According to an Adlerian perspective, Dahmer continued to strive towards his fictional goal, with each situation showing a creative compensation and adaptation to avoid the tasks of life.

11.4.2.4   Seeking a Compliant Partner

11.4.2.4.1   Psychosocial and Individual Personality Findings

The fourth historical period in Dahmer's lifespan extended from the age of 27 to 31 (see Conceptual Matrix, Chapter 8). In terms of Erikson's (1950) theory, Dahmer continued to face the sixth crisis stage. According to Adler's (1929) theory, Dahmer faced the tasks of life

by expressing his creative lifestyle in a purposive and unified movement towards his fictional goal.

Table 11.4

Psychosocial and Individual Personality Development Findings in the Fourth Historical Period

Psychosocial Theory	Individual Personality Development
Stage 6: Intimacy versus Isolation	**Lifestyle:**
• Dahmer remained in the sixth stage but had no solid identity to share with others	• Dahmer continued to face the task of work but did not act toward a more desired financial success
• Tuomi's murder indicated Dahmer's rage, disinhibition through alcohol use and breakdown of his willpower into a compulsivity to achieve his fantasy	• As his actions towards his fantasies escalated, he was increasingly absent from work and finally dismissed
• His independent actions resulted in an embarrassing arrest and discussion of his homosexuality with his father, but did not result in an optimal situation to resolve this aspect of identity confusion	• His minimal interaction with his co-workers, parents and parole officer and lack of friends indicated an avoidance of the social task of life
• He continued to work, but did not kill during his incarceration and later saw a parole officer with whom he discussed his homosexuality and life difficulties	• Relations with male sexual partners to whom he was attracted were either brief sexual encounters or resulted in murder
• The murders showed a high level of ritualization towards achieving the fantasy through the use of lures, drugging, murder and dismemberment	• Tuomi's murder indicated his acting on his superiority striving along with the use of alcohol to break down any previous social interest
• He was highly adept at concealing murder with practiced dismemberment, but also kept souvenirs	• The sexual task of life was more prevalent as he found attractive partners to satisfy his fantasies
• He also ate the flesh of one victim which	• He experimented with the victims for control, which indicated a ruling lifestyle and need for personal superiority

could be seen as either:

- incorporation of the identity of the homosexual men to whom he was attracted OR

- destruction of what he feared and saw as a reason for his rejection

- He engaged in necrophilia to satisfy his specific sexual desire to have control, which seemed to highlight his seeing the victims as objects

- He showed exclusivity in the murders as they were instances of taking from others rather than mutual sharing of identity

- Exclusivity was also seen through the experiments to create zombies that would serve as sex slaves unable to reject him as true fusion between partners was impossible

- The increased ruthlessness indicated the power of a 'serial killer' identity as fantasy blended into reality

- However, he still functioned in society and interacted with others when necessary without raising suspicion about his actions

- He consistently and competently manipulated others in high stress situations to avoid shame

- As his compulsivity and ruthlessness in the 'serial killer' identity escalated he became impulsive and lost his job

- He showed variety in the nature of the murders which showed his creativity to act as if he could achieve his goal

- He engaged in cannibalism as a way to keep his victims with him forever, as a form of ultimate possession and it also excited him sexually which indicated his superiority striving as predominantly centred on sexual power and control

- He dismembered the bodies in line with earlier practice and therefore effectively evaded capture, which served to increase his superiority complex over the police

- Necrophilia served to satisfy a fantasy of non-rejecting, still and controlled victims

- He experimented with creating zombies from his victims to constantly serve him without any possibility of rejection, which remained central – and inevitable – to his choice to kill

- He could control whether he killed an attractive victim or not and this indicated a choice to exercise his ruling lifestyle, but he described his actions as a compulsion which highlighted the constant need to strive for superiority

- In terms of self-regulation he continued to use alcohol to break down his minimal sense of social interest

- He was also highly organized or ritualized in the murders and adapted his MO to avoid capture and maintain his

• Despite the lack of structure, he continued to function in society and killed a final victim • Before his arrest, his role confusion seemed to manifest as a functional, fragmented identity to function in both society and a self-created fantasy world.	personal superiority • His calm demeanour – reflective of his avoiding lifestyle – in high stress situations allowed him to manipulate others and fuel his superiority complex over the police and society • He faced the task of spirituality through a unified movement to godlikeness in that he kept souvenirs to use as reminders of his personal superiority and for his sexual gratification – and intended to create a shrine to himself.

11.4.2.4.2 Similarities and Differences in the Fourth Historical Period

The findings of both theories indicated that the nature of Dahmer's behaviour was increasingly distanced from social benefit through his (a) lack of interest or productivity in work, (b) his superficial relations with others and (c) the murders. Erikson's (1950) theory highlighted the ruthlessness that Dahmer displayed in the breakdown of his willpower and his repudiation of society. Adler's (1929) theory, in contrast, indicated that his ruling lifestyle was a creative expression of his avoidance of the tasks of life.

Both theories highlighted the importance of Tuomi's murder in Dahmer's breakdown of personal control. From an Adlerian perspective, Dahmer chose to continue – and held a semblance of control over – the murders and escalated his behaviour to satisfy his power striving. From Erikson's perspective, this murder indicated Dahmer's lack of willpower and powerful compulsivity towards a fantasy in his repudiation of society.

A significant difference highlighted in the findings was that Adlerian theory holds that Dahmer's behaviour was always based on personal choice, towards an unconscious but purposive fictional goal. This view of Dahmer's striving was more unified in the conceptualization of personality development than the posited fragmented identity from an Eriksonian perspective within role confusion. Dahmer's posited fragmented identity indicated the range of masks he used to interact with others and survive in various situations.

Furthermore, Adlerian theory considered the impact of spirituality and self-regulation as factors in Dahmer's choices and movement toward superiority. For example, Dahmer's spirituality related to the creation of a shrine indicated a concrete goal in his striving to achieve his fictional goal of godlikeness. Eriksonian theory, however, suggested that his behaviour was an aspect of Dahmer's increased impulsivity rooted in the compulsivity of achieving the fantasy that resulted in his dismissal from work.

Adler (1929) indicated that a failure to face one life task resulted in the failure in all. Similarly, Erikson's (1950) theory indicated that Dahmer showed failure in the previous stages and was unable to resolve the prevailing crisis or the construction of a solid identity. The failure to resolve the prevailing crisis of intimacy versus isolation to achieve the ego strength of love was compounded by the setbacks of previous periods.

Another difference in the theories was the view of cannibalism. Eriksonian theory provided two possible views of cannibalism – either as an incorporation of another's identity or the destruction Dahmer's own identity – which are both indicative of the second stage which holds roots in concepts of willpower and control. Adlerian theory, in contrast, maintained that the cannibalism was a method for Dahmer to experiment with his own satisfaction for sexual power and control to achieve his fantasies as a concrete expression of his fictional goal. From this contrast, however, a similarity is noted in the conceptualization of Dahmer's use of souvenirs, necrophilia and desire to create zombies. Both theories indicated that these behaviours were actions guided towards the achievement of his fantasy. These were expressed differently through the creative lifestyle towards godlikeness through personal control and power in his superiority complex according to Adlerian theory. In Eriksonian theory, this may have been expressed through his isolated 'serial killer' identity where he shared with his victims the basest aspects of his identity – and may have represented a form of intimacy.

The findings further indicated that Dahmer's increased impulsivity and ruthlessness in his identity and ruling lifestyle marked a lack of grounding in reality. From an Eriksonian perspective, he seemed to lose a measure of control in the functional mask he had nurtured. From an Adlerian perspective, wherein all accidents are considered unconscious and part of striving, Dahmer's behaviour appeared possibly incongruent with his concealing of the murders but resulted in situations that promoted his feelings of superiority.

11.4.2.5   Arrest, Trial and Death

11.4.2.5.1   Psychosocial and Individual Personality Findings

The fifth and final historical period in Dahmer's lifespan ranges between the ages of 31 and 34 (see Conceptual Matrix, Chapter 8). According to Erikson's (1950) theory, Dahmer continued in the sixth stage and in terms of Adler's (1929) theory, expressed his lifestyle towards his fictional goal in the face of the tasks of life.

Table 11.5

Psychosocial and Individual Personality Development Findings in the Fifth Historical Period

Psychosocial Theory	**Individual Personality Development**
Stage 6: Intimacy versus Isolation	**Lifestyle:**
• Dahmer continued to face the sixth crisis	• Dahmer was arrested while unemployed and only worked again later in prison, which was when he was killed
• He was arrested after he impulsively lured, but carelessly allowed a potential victim to escape	
• He could still feign a social mask to the police, until he was arrested	• He was interviewed and spoke about the killing with an implied expertise that may have served his striving to power as confirmation that he was the necessary source and thereby re-lived the powerful memories
• He confessed to police and psychiatrists and appeared both contrite, but ruthlessly callous about his actions	
• His fame as a serial killer and apparent normalcy were contradictions indicated by his fragmented identity	• He avoided the social life task before his arrest as he interacted with only a few, including the last intended victim
• His arrest afforded the chance to share an aspect of his identity with others, but not a socially useful identity in which to have fidelity	• His bland monotone and deportment in his confession to police and psychiatrists indicated his avoiding lifestyle
• At trial he withdrew as a spectator	• Despite the apparent contrition and possible show of social interest, the confession could have served as a confirmation of his striving to power and
• His imprisonment was not an optimal	

situation for a return to the previous crises and develop a social identity to share with another, but resulted in a stay of his alcoholism and murder

- He also returned to a possible previous fanaticism about religion in a similarly confined environment that prevented or helped to stay his acting on his fantasies before

- He interacted with his parents and a minister and could have developed a small amount of trust

- He survived in prison by showing a initiative in a 'model prisoner' identity

- He was industrious in the use of his celebrity to give interviews and interact with others as he was necessarily exclusive because of the prison environment

- Similarly, his compulsivity – but not always his thoughts – was checked by the surroundings

- He was allowed to work in prison, but it was not socially beneficial

- Prison did not allow him to face the sixth stage of intimacy versus isolation and he did not appear to hold a solid identity to share with others.

to highlight his power over the police

- He withdrew at trial and appeared a mysterious bystander

- In prison, he had more meaningful contact with his parents possibly because of their knowledge of his actions

- He was 'trusted' by prison officials because of his 'model prisoner' behaviour that may have been a striving to superiority through manipulation

- The sexual task of life was not especially relevant as he was mostly kept isolated

- His return to religion possibly suggested an attempt to avoid his homosexuality

- The fantasies still existed, but he could not act on them and thus possibly adapted to the situation by speaking about his actions as compensation

- In terms of self-regulation prison halted his alcoholism, but he continued to smoke and gained weight

- He possibly continued his striving for superiority through the celebrity status afforded him by the notoriety of the murders and interviews

- He manipulated prison officials by allowing him to continue to serve his sentence in general population

- He faced the task of spirituality more proactively as he regularly saw a minister and professed his reformation

	• The prison environment was not an optimal setting to face the life tasks and he still showed an avoiding and ruling lifestyle towards his goal, which may ultimately have resulted in a final manipulation towards godlikeness and control over life and death – his own.

11.4.2.5.2 Similarities and Differences in the Fifth Historical Period

The similarities highlighted by both theories in this historical period indicated that (a) Dahmer's isolation was a cornerstone to his interaction with others, (b) his need for interaction and acceptance remained integral to his personality development and (c) he continued to survive and adapt to situations mostly through the same identity and lifestyle, respectively, as noted in previous historical periods. These will be discussed in conjunction with the differences noted in the findings.

Dahmer's arrest appeared to be the product of his compulsivity becoming an impulsivity in terms of Eriksonian theory, whereas Adlerian theory suggests that his behaviour was purposive. His confessions seemed to indicate a sense of guilt and a measure of social interest in Eriksonian and Adlerian theory, respectively. However, while both posited the potential for a change in personality, Adler's (1929) theory further highlighted that his confessions may have been a way to confirm his superiority complex through the years of his achieving an individual sense of success and meaningfulness.

Both theories highlighted that Dahmer's reaction to the arrest was his withdrawal – not only in terms of incarceration, but also in terms of the mystery that surrounded him despite his candid confessions. These confessions and later interviews provided Dahmer with the chance to interact with others outside the prison population for a sense of belongingness according to Adlerian theory and the acceptance in Eriksonian theory that usually helps to crystallize an identity. However, Adler's (1929) theory further suggested that the interviews provided Dahmer with the opportunity to re-live the murders with each telling and to confirm his superiority complex. Similarly, the interviews themselves provided a striving towards superiority through the possibility of interaction and the chance to proclaim his religious reformation. This spirituality was previously suppressed but exercised in prison to present a

view of Dahmer as a model prisoner. Erikson's (1950) theory also indicated that this potential return to a possible fanaticism was another experiment with his identity and indicated a continued role confusion.

Both theories further indicated that Dahmer continued to manipulate others. Erikson's (1950) theory suggested that this manipulation was based on his survival in prison by projecting a 'model prisoner' mask. This identity allowed him to have contact with his parents and a minister and he may possibly have developed a small sense of trust. Adler's (1929) theory suggested that while his increased spirituality and possible development of trust and social interest was positive, his striving was still towards personal superiority. He possibly manipulated the prison officials through his celebrity and good behaviour to orchestrate the conditions for his death as the final act in his control over life and death.

Finally, both theories highlighted the limitation on personality development posed by imprisonment. Adler's (1929) theory noted that prison limited the ways in which Dahmer faced the tasks of life, particularly the work, social and sexual tasks. However, Dahmer's experiences and perceptions in this confined setting suggested that he continued to avoid all five life tasks in a socially useless lifestyle and towards a striving for superiority. Erikson's (1950) theory, in contrast, did not provide for personality development in prison. As such, aspects of the prevailing crisis of intimacy and isolation could not be sufficiently met, nor were the requirements of adult life such as work and love prevalent. Instead, Dahmer's personality development was viewed as role confusion in which he continued to experiment with different identities.

11.4.3 Summary of the Findings

Both Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories considered the biopsychosocial as well as cultural and historical influences of situations and experiences in Dahmer's continuing personality development through the lifespan. Adlerian theory indicated that Dahmer held a socially useless lifestyle whose movement was guided purposively towards a fictional goal of godlikeness through creative, concrete expressions of personal superiority. Eriksonian theory held that Dahmer remained in role confusion, which was viewed as a functional, fragmented identity to survive in society and achieve a fantasy. Thus, both theories indicated, despite their different conceptualizations, that Dahmer's personality development was ultimately not socially beneficial.

11.5 Conclusion

Chapter 11 provided an integrative psychological presentation and discussion of Dahmer's personality development according to Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of personality development and Adler's (1929) theory of individual psychology. In some instances the theoretical frameworks fit perfectly into Dahmer's life, with each of the pieces falling in place together. At other times, however, the theories were not able to provide a perfect fit. This is the value of psychobiographical research. The ambiguity and the lack of fit are possible indications of where the theories need to be extended and further tested and refuted.

The psychobiographical case study research method is not simply about the individual personality, but also the theories used. The analytical generalization derived from the study through the testing of the theories was facilitated by the use of the single case study. The results of the study indicated that Dahmer's life generally conformed to aspects of the stages of development identified by Erikson, but also that his personality development evidenced a functional, but fragmented identity that indicated a continuing role confusion. Further, Dahmer's personality development conformed to the more dynamic developmental process posited by Adler towards the creative striving for superiority. Therefore, it is the researcher's opinion that the study can be recognized as a positive demonstration of the value of both Erikson (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories in understanding the processes of psychological and personality development in an individual's life.

In the following and final chapter, the study is concluded with a discussion of the value and limitations of, and criticisms against, the study. Further, recommendations for future research in this field of study are made.

CHAPTER 12

LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 Chapter Preview

In this final chapter, the purpose of the study is revisited and the conclusions drawn from the research are explored. The limitations and value of the study are discussed and recommendations for future research are made. Finally, the researcher's general thoughts and remarks are provided.

12.2 The Purpose of the Study Revisited

The primary aim of this psychobiographical study was to explore and describe Jeffrey Dahmer's personality development throughout his lifespan. The psychobiographical approach involved the detailed biographical account of Dahmer's life history in order to conceptualize and interpret his personality development within Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial personality development and Adler's (1929) individual psychology.

Owing to this theoretical orientation, the study was both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. Thus, the findings regarding Dahmer's personality development were evaluated and interpreted within the framework of the contents and constructs of psychosocial and individual personality development. In this way a dialogue was established between the exploratory-descriptive findings of the study and the conceptualization of the two theoretical perspectives.

This vital dialogue accomplished a secondary aim of the study, which was to informally test the relevance and applicability of the two personality theories in relation to Dahmer's longitudinal personality development. The descriptive-dialogic nature of the psychobiography enabled the researcher to evaluate whether the theoretical conceptualizations of psychosocial personality development and individual psychology adequately explored and described the personality development of an enigmatic and controversial figure such as Jeffrey Dahmer.

In the following section the researcher provides a critical discussion of the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for future research in this field. The limitations and

recommendations are discussed with reference to (a) the two conceptual models, (b) the psychobiographical case study method and (c) the psychobiographical subject.

12.3   The Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

12.3.1   The Two Conceptual Models

12.3.1.1   Psychosocial Personality Development

A first criticism related to the use of psychosocial theory in this research is its lack of a sufficient explanatory framework. As previously indicated in Chapter 11, the theory does not clearly explain how identity development is shaped in the face of pervasive failures to achieve ego strengths. Dahmer's role confusion indicated its functionality in surviving in society and facilitating his actions towards his fantasy. As such, in the course of this study the researcher was often confronted by the question, "Can role confusion be an identity in and of itself?". Unlike individual personality theory that holds a teleological and creative explanation of how lifestyle is shaped through life experiences, psychosocial theory lacks a sufficient explanation for personality development that is not based on optimal identity development. Psychosocial theory's valuable emphasis on staged life crises alone does not provide a satisfactory and coherent explanation. Future research should thus aim to re-evaluate the theory's casual and explanatory framework related to the view of a functional identity as well as the limitation to identity development in situations that are not optimal.

A second, related, criticism or limitation to the use of psychosocial theory is the insufficient provision or conceptualization of the necessary balance required at each stage to acquire an ego strength. Closely linked with this criticism is that the influence of maladaptations and malignancies on personality development were not sufficiently differentiated. Dahmer's personality development indicated that in the breakdown of his ego strength of willpower, he shifted from compulsivity to achieve his fantasy without shame and doubt into an eventual impulsivity whereby his independent actions resulted in his arrest. Further, Dahmer's isolation was possibly evidenced as both exclusivity and promiscuity – which is an extreme of intimacy. Future research should aim at identifying the complementary influence as well as the relationship between maladapations and malignancies in identity development.

The third criticism or limitation of the psychosocial theory used in this study relates to the theory's insufficient explanation of personality development for prison inmates. Unlike individual psychology which indicates the individual's purposive striving and perceptions of experiences in the face of life tasks, psychosocial theory is based on relatively healthy development and does not indicate the influence of prison on identity development or, stated differently, the potentialities in identity change either positively or negatively. As previously noted in Chapter 11, Dahmer's identity development in prison indicated aspects of potentially positive development regarding trust but the continuation of role confusion as if prison itself provided a psychosocial moratorium. Future research in this field should aim at identifying the influence of imprisonment as a psychosocial moratorium and on identity development in general. Further, Dahmer's personality development indicated that aspects of his identity – such as his dark humour and withdrawal – remained consistent throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. As such, future research could investigate identity development by evaluating the more pervasive and enduring aspects of identity that may not be seen as purely situational, to a view of core personality traits that transcend the psychosocial identity.

12.3.1.2   Individual Personality Development

In comparison with the psychosocial theory of personality development, Adler's (1929) theory of individual personality development appeared to provide a better developmental and explanatory framework to holistically conceptualize Dahmer's personality development. The dynamic interaction of the various life forces in detailing lifestyle development resulted in a more coherent and consistent view of personality development and thus the researcher has fewer criticisms against this theory.

However, the study of Dahmer's personality development in terms of individual psychology revealed two significant aspects of development of individual lifestyle that should be further investigated. The first – and most significant aspect – is the consideration of a fictional goal in development through the unified striving and expression of the lifestyle. The researcher was aware of the difficulty in formulating a tentative fictional goal as Adler (1929) noted it can only be traced, but if "purposely sought it is rarely obtained" (p. 8). Thus, a different interpretation of Dahmer's fictional goal could have resulted in a different view of his personality development. This potential limitation, however, does not reduce the complexity of the study. The researcher contends that if future research were to re-formulate Dahmer's fictional goal, further insights could be gained into his personality development.

As such, this limitation is also a value that is congruent with psychobiographical research as it allows the potential re-contextualization of Dahmer's lived life.

Further, as the expression of the lifestyle is towards a fictional goal, future research into Dahmer's personality could consider more in-depth exploration of possible concrete expressions towards the goal, such as those highlighted by (a) Dahmer's actions to achieve his fantasy, (b) his efficient use of manipulation and (c) his creation of a shrine to confirm his godlikeness. In addition, the life tasks posited by Adlerian theory that individuals face in the creative striving to their goal appeared more appropriate to adult development without a clear application during childhood. The researcher considered the following criteria during the analysis and interpretation of Dahmer's lifestyle development: (a) Dahmer's spirituality, work and sexual life tasks during childhood; (b) spirituality and work in young adulthood; and (c) social, sexual and work life tasks particularly during his imprisonment.

The second aspect that should be considered is – in light of the teleological nature of the theory – important *accidents* in individual development. As the theory holds that accidents are unconscious acts towards the fictional goal, future research could be aimed a exploring and describing, with more detail, their development in the creation and expression of a lifestyle and how they are, in turn, influenced by personal choice and social interest.

Finally, a limitation or criticism of both the psychosocial theory of personality development and individual psychology is related to their multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary nature. Although is also regarded as an advantage and value of the research (see section 12.4.1), it did create difficulty for the research focus and for specific in-depth description. In the case of this study, the multi-dimensionality of the two theories resulted in a comprehensive and lengthy description of Dahmer's identity development that was not ideally reader-friendly. The multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary nature of these theories also did not allow for a more in-depth and psychologically disciplined presentation and discussion of Dahmer's identity and lifestyle development. It is recommended that future psychological research in this field should aim at conducting more in-depth and psychologically focussed research on identity and lifestyle development. This could be achieved through smaller, more focussed, research projects that focus on specific crises in identity development and/ or the variety of life forces that influence lifestyle development for more detailed investigation into Dahmer's personality development.

12.3.2 Psychobiographical Case Study Research

As previously discussed in Chapter 7, the psychobiographical research methodology receives the most criticism. As a result, this study's methodology is also the most susceptible to criticism. The major constraints inherent to a psychobiographical study, such as: researcher bias; reductionism; cross-cultural differences; elitism and easy genre; inflated expectations; and reliability and validity criticisms were discussed in Chapter 7 (see section 7.2). Recommendations to future researchers who plan to employ the psychobiographical case study method were also discussed as methodological considerations in section 7.2. Furthermore, the methodological considerations that were applied to this psychobiographical study of Dahmer were discussed in section 7.3. Thus, to prevent the duplication of the discussion of the criticism levelled against this study's methodology, the reader is referred to sections 7.2 and 7.3. However, in order to fully explore their influence, there are certain limitations to this study that need to be highlighted and discussed.

First, the study has a relatively low external validity. As a result, the findings regarding Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development are not statistically generalized to a larger population. Instead, the aim of the psychobiographical study was analytical generalization, whereby the findings were compared with the content and conceptualization of the theories of psychosocial personality development (Erikson, 1950) and individual psychology (Adler, 1929). This refers to the descriptive-dialogic nature of the study which allows that the findings can be generalized to the two theories or models to informally test the relevance of the theories for Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development. Furthermore, the findings can also be generalized to the theories to identify inadequate theoretical conceptualizations and to make suggestions to elaborate on them (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b; Martin, 1996; McLeod, 1994).

Second, the study also has a low internal validity with regards causal explanations. The reason is that the primary aim of the study was not to explain cause-and-effect relationships related to Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development. Rather, the primary aim of the study was to explore and describe his personality development across his lifespan. However, in order to achieve internal validity in this exploratory-descriptive study, the strategy of structural corroboration (Yin, 1994) was utilized to enhance the credibility or truth value of the inferences made by the researcher (Fouchè, 1999; Krefting, 1991). This corroboration was accomplished through (a) data immersion; (b) in-depth psychological

research to check for distortions in the collected materials; (c) the use of multiple sources of biographical data on Dahmer's life; (d) the use of two theoretical models to approach the data, which is theoretical triangulation; and (e) the use of investigator triangulation. Investigator triangulation was achieved through the researcher's supervisors' professional comments and feedback on the data collection, extraction and analysis procedures.

In order to produce a methodologically sound psychobiography, the researcher gained new skills in this field of research and experienced the criticism of psychobiography as an easy genre as relatively biased, because of the in-depth nature of analyzing an absent subject. Many of the explanations regarding the findings are speculative and contextualized within the conceptual frameworks of psychosocial and individual personality development. The researcher recognized that many other possible descriptions and explanations may exist to provide insight into Dahmer's personality development. Therefore, the descriptions and explanations that were provided with regards Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development should not lead to the generation of inflated claims, but add to other and alternative types of descriptions and explanations regarding his personality development.

This psychobiographical study can be criticized for its comprehensive, lengthy and time-consuming nature. Owing to the strong qualitative nature of psychobiographical research – and its implicit storied and narrative dimensions – the analysis, presentation and discussion of the findings required much more time, repetition and elaborate documentation of research. This is further complicated by the 'infinite amount of biographical data' that pertains to the subject that must be collected, analyzed and presented in biographical format. Therefore, the researcher recommends that psychobiographies that form part of master's treatises should concentrate on a limited number of dimensions of a chosen subject's life in order to initially focus the biography into a more disciplined framework.

Although this study has explored the longitudinal progression of personality development, the researcher recommends that a future research undertaking of a related study take place at doctoral level where the specialized focus may be better suited to illuminate the intricacies of the complexity of personality development. Owing to the nature of a psychobiographical study, the researcher recognized that the findings presented in this study should be considered only a point of departure that provides a springboard from which to investigate Dahmer's psychological and personality development in a more in-depth and analytical manner. This

research is not the final product in terms of understanding Dahmer's psychological movement through life, but the foundation for more extensive research.

12.3.3   The Psychobiographical Subject

The possible criticism that could be levelled in response to the choice of Jeffrey Dahmer as the subject of this study has been discussed in Chapter 7 (see section 7.3.5). The criticisms centred on Dahmer as a single case as well as his infamy or greatness, which may make the study an elitist endeavour. The counter-arguments for the selection of Jeffrey Dahmer as the psychobiographical subject were presented in section 7.3.5.

According to McLeod (1994), the selection and inclusion of a subject for a single case study, as in this psychobiography, should be based on personal interest and the theoretical interest or significance of the subject. Stated differently, the findings related to the subject's life must be of relevance to confirm and/ or refute certain aspects of the psychological theories employed in the study. In the case of Jeffrey Dahmer, the findings related to his life history were of theoretical significance and interest to this research. The value of the study will be further discussed in section 12.4.

The researcher found that the two theoretical frameworks provided greater perspective to analyze the data and facilitated an understanding of the subject. However, it should be mentioned that while a high level of credibility was maintained through the use of numerous references, there was a lack of psychologically significant information related to Dahmer's social life and daily activities as much of the data about his later life focused on his criminal activities.

As Dahmer was an American male homosexual who lived in a different cultural and socio-historical period, the relevance of the findings of this study for the psychosocial and individual personality theories could be criticized for its gender, cultural and historical bias. Therefore, psychobiographers interested in personality development and greatness should consider conducting biographical research on enigmatic individuals who lived in various historical periods and from various cultures, both genders and different sexual orientations.

Even though Dahmer served as an enigmatic figure for this psychological biography, the researcher did not want to leave the reader with the impression that Dahmer was idealized in

the study. In contrast to many previous psychobiographies, the researcher entered the research process with full knowledge of Dahmer's numerous flaws and heinous acts that included murder, dismemberment, cannibalism and necrophilia (Dahmer, 1994; Davis, 1995; Masters, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). Indeed, for Dahmer, the contrast between his actions and the normalcy he portrayed created instead the view of him as a 'tortured soul'. The relevance of these contradictions was considered during the data analysis as well as the presentation and discussion of findings. Therefore, the holistic and more eugraphic nature of psychobiographical research allowed the researcher to consider the variety of influences on Dahmer's personality development rather to ignore the value of researching such a rich and diverse subject.

As such, it is necessary to consider Dahmer's greatness. Dahmer was not a great individual as presented in psychobiographies of pioneer statesmen and politicians like Smuts (Fouchè, 1999) and Stephen Biko (Kotton, 2002) or altruistic figures such as Mother Teresa (Stroud, 2004) or Albert Schweitzer (M. J. Edwards, 2004). However, Dahmer shares with these individuals a commonality of renown. As with most areas of human activity, there exists a hierarchy of fame – and serial killers such as Dahmer, Bundy and Gacy have assumed such legendary status that they have become the embodiments of 'real-life monsters' (Keppel & Birnes, 1997; Masters, 1993; Pistorius, 2002; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992, 1997; Schechter, 2003; Tithecott, 1997).

A charge against this psychobiography may therefore be that it is an elitist endeavour despite the depravity of Dahmer's actions. The researcher contends that the view of Dahmer as an exceptional – that is, an exception to societal norms – and enigmatic figure provided an advantageous perspective wherefrom to research psychological theory. Thus, this highlighted the importance of reconstructing historical facts and actors within the context of psychobiographical research. Therefore, rather than an elitist endeavour, the aim of this psychological biography was to illuminate the life of Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer. In the following section the value of the study is discussed and, where appropriate, further recommendations for future research are made.

12.4   The Value of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

In this section, the value of this research study will be outlined and discussed by referring to (a) the two conceptual models of psychosocial and individual personality development, (b) the psychobiographical case study research method and (c) the psychobiographical subject, Jeffrey Dahmer.

12.4.1   The Two Conceptual Models

The value of approaching this psychological biography from two conceptual models, namely, psychosocial personality development and individual psychology, is mainly related to their (a) multi-dimensional and systemic nature, (b) relatively positive definition of personality development and (c) developmental orientation.

With regards to the two conceptual models' multi-dimensional and systemic nature, the following values of the study could be highlighted:

1. Both models provided useful multi-dimensional frameworks to explore and describe a variety of factors that influenced Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development.   Examples of these included the social, occupational, sexual, self-regulatory and spiritual tasks that he faced throughout his life.   This multiplicity of dimensions in the view of Dahmer's life provided the study with a grounded holistic focus, which is central to the re-contextualization of the lived lives of enigmatic figures (Carlson, 1998; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1982b; Schultz, 2005a).
2. Both theories provided useful systematic frameworks to explore and describe the influence that various systemic forces, such as family and the socio-cultural and historical environment had on Dahmer's personality development.   Thus, both models provided contextual paradigms within which to explore and describe Dahmer's identity and lifestyle development.

With regards to these two conceptual models' relatively positive definition of personality development, the following values could be highlighted:

1. Both models were useful in the extraction, analysis and interpretation of the biopsychosocial as well as cultural and historical factors in Dahmer's personality

development. In this way, both models facilitated the psychobiographical view of Dahmer from a more holistic and eugraphic perspective.

2. Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory provided a valuable staged view of life crises to the evaluation of Dahmer's personality development and highlighted certain contrasts to optimal identity development. Adler's (1929) individual personality theory highlighted Dahmer's consistent unity of striving and how the perception of a range of dynamic influences can be creatively expressed in the lifestyle.

3. The findings of this study regarding psychosocial and individual personality development generally indicated that both conceptual models are theoretically relevant and practically applicable to the research and understanding of identity and lifestyle development. Those concepts of the theories that were not adequately differentiated and that require more elaborate future research were discussed in sections 11.4.2 and 12.3.1.

With regards to the developmental orientation of the two theoretical models, the following values of the study could be highlighted:

1. Both models provided a useful framework to explore and describe the development of Dahmer's personality throughout his lifespan. This study provided a description of the important development of creativity that played a crucial role in the promotion and maintenance of Dahmer's personality within society and the interacting fantasy world.

2. However, future research in this field should focus on establishing a more adequate and clearly differentiated understanding of how such antisocial and fantasy-based personality development occurs longitudinally and how it is influenced throughout the developmental stages in an individual's life.

3. Psychosocial theory and individual psychology could possibly further enrich the view of forensic and investigative psychology as frameworks to conceptualize and research individuals of a specific sub-population in their interaction with broader social systems.

4. The use of the two theories in this study also had methodological value in their contribution to the study's construct validity and reliability. The construct validity of this psychobiography was enhanced by psychosocial theory and individual psychology's provision of clear conceptualizations of the factors that influence personality development. This enabled the researcher to operationalize, with a higher degree of reliability and clarity, the salient biographical data related to Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development. Further, the theories contributed to the reliability of

the study through the construction of a conceptual framework that was use to extract, analyze and contextualize salient biographical data on Dahmer's personality development. This resulted in a consistent pattern of data extraction and categorization that enhanced the consistency, auditability and reliability of the psychological biography.

12.4.2   Psychobiographical Case Study Research

The value of this psychobiographical case study is similar to the value of life history research that was discussed in Chapter 2 (see section 2.3.6). The value of following a psychobiographical research approach is outlined below.

First, the study highlighted a 'new and different dimension' (Fouchè, 1999) to Dahmer's life that has not been presented before in biographical form. This refers to the psychological focus on Dahmer's personality development, with specific emphasis on his identity and lifestyle development across his lifespan.

This study illustrated the value of biography for psychology and, conversely, the value that psychology holds for biographical research. Biographical materials provide invaluable sources of information to study human development and personality from a developmental psychological perspective. In turn, psychology provides functional and scientific conceptual models within which to conduct biographies. Thus, psychobiography represents the effective synthesis of psychology and biography (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b).

Further, this psychobiographical study reflected the value and importance of studying individual lives within their socio-cultural and historical contexts. Life history materials provided the psychobiographer with insight into the influence that contextual forces have on human development. This psychobiographical study on Dahmer illustrated the value of uncovering his psychosocial and individual personality development against the background of the larger societal contexts that influenced his life. Further, the researcher found that the utilization of a developmental perspective facilitated the analysis and understanding of the subject as the researcher had to re-contextualize the data in terms of the historical period.

The study of finished lives (Carlson, 1988) through psychobiographical enquiry enabled the researcher to trace human development over time. The longitudinal life history approach served to illustrate the value of biography as a means to study the behavioural processes and

patterns unique to psychosocial and individual personality development over the lifespan. A further advantage of the biographical approach to the study of Dahmer was that the researcher was able to triangulate the salient biographical findings with the various biographical sources that were available. This useful corroboration enhanced the relevant internal validity of the findings related to Dahmer's psychosocial and individual personality development.

This psychobiography contributes to the limited, but growing, number of biographies that have been completed within academic psychology in South Africa. The growing interest and popularity of qualitative life history research – such as the use of the psychobiographical research design and methodology – has enriched the understanding of developmental areas of, for example, health, personality, leadership and career development (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b; Jacobs, 2004; Kotton, 2002). As this psychobiography specifically focused on the life of a serial killer, the researcher hopes that future psychobiographies can further complement understanding in the fields of forensic or investigative psychology.

12.4.3 The Psychobiographical Subject

The inclusion of Jeffrey Dahmer in this psychobiography had various advantages for the study. First, Dahmer served as an enigmatic personality who modelled a life characterized by its deviation from the social norms, values and mores. The seemingly irreconcilable aspects of Dahmer's personality – that is, his heinous acts and the mundane normalcy of his daily life – made him a suitable individual whose rich and intriguing life history served as a template against which to compare the psychosocial and individual personality development theories.

A second advantage for using Dahmer is that a fair amount of rich and comprehensive resources were available to tap and cross-corroborate salient information. Owing to the researcher's interest in Dahmer a great number of texts were more easily accessible. However, despite their corroborating information, the literature focused predominantly on the murders or the trial. It is recommended that psychobiographers include the consideration of the availability of sufficient biographical sources as well as the breadth of such resources as important criteria in their choice of psychobiographical subject.

A third advantage of Dahmer as a subject is related to his 'greatness' as a murderer. Life history researchers, such as Simonton (1994) and Howe (1997), have advocated the

importance of studying great figures in an attempt to unravel not only the reason for their greatness but also what 'lessons' they can teach humanity. Jeffrey Dahmer was an enigmatic figure whose behaviour has relevance in light of South Africa's high serial murder rate (Hodgkiss, 2004; Pistorius, 1996, 2000, 2006; Ressler & Shachtman, 1997). Dahmer was thus an appropriately exceptional and enigmatic subject to identity aspects of greatness and an opportunity to learn from the tragedy of that greatness. However, the purpose of the study was not that of a psychological inquiry into Dahmer's greatness. Even though the life and personality of this enigmatic figure is viewed and revealed from two differing psychological perspectives, further psychological research on Dahmer's life should be considered.

As evidenced in this psychobiographical study of Jeffrey Dahmer, there is much value in studying the lives of great and controversial individuals. The psychosocial and individual personality paradigms together provided a more comprehensive understanding of the biopsychosocial, cultural and historical forces that contributed to his greatness.

A further advantage of having researched the life of a serial murderer within the theory of psychology was that it made the researcher increasingly aware of the importance to reframe and reconstruct the lives of significant criminal perpetrators within a psychological paradigm. South African society needs to reconstruct not only historical and criminal facts, but also its crucial actors who have been labelled as both insane and evil. In South Africa, there is a wide variety of 'rich' personalities whose lives need to be illuminated psychologically in order to understand and present them in an alternate light. The study of either deceased or incarcerated South African serial murderers could contribute greatly to the broadening of contextual understanding. Psychobiography therefore could provide an alternative way to unravel the human and emotional sides of the lives of individuals such as the South African serial murderers: Stewart Wilken, Norman Azfal Simons and Moses Sithole.

12.5   General Thoughts and Remarks

Reflexivity is an essential aspect of qualitative psychobiographical research as it recognizes the importance of the researcher in the construction of meaning for the research (Taylor, 1999; Willig, 2001). As such, the researcher would like to briefly add to the discussion by noting the following general thoughts and comments regarding the psychobiographical research on Jeffrey Dahmer.

This research study on the life of Jeffrey Dahmer was loosely informed by the researcher's interest in the study of serial murder. The crimes of individuals such as Dahmer seem so inconceivable that one desperately seeks answers, yet there are many random, unknowable factors that influence the development of an individual life. Freud, as an early psychohistorian, spoke of creative geniuses, but serial killers such as Dahmer are prodigies in their own right. As such, the use of the psychobiographical research process facilitated the reconstruction of Dahmer's life into an illuminating narrative through the description of his personality development across the lifespan according to two theoretical perspectives.

In the process of exploring and describing Dahmer's personality development throughout the lifespan, the findings illustrated creative – albeit negative – ways to deal with concomitant aspects of trust, rejection, perception, isolation and fantasy. The importance of fantasy in Dahmer's personality development suggested that he defined reality by what he accepted as real and true – even if it were but a vague, personal mirage. Future research could thus place greater emphasis on the influence of fantasy on personality development as well the consideration of the continuum of normalcy and creativity in how individuals create who they are through their actions, thoughts and behaviours.

Dahmer's uniqueness was as an enigmatic and controversial individual whose high level of social disregard indicated the necessity to view his development within the dynamics of his specific sub-cultural perspective. Thus, further research in this field could view the development of other serial killers to provide a greater frame of reference to this qualitative research. The researcher proposes that future researchers work on an inter-disciplinary basis by enlisting the assistance of experts in the field of investigative psychology and a historian who could provide greater socio-cultural insight into the subject's maturational climate for greater consistency and reliability.

The study noted the importance of Dahmer's social being on his personality development and the survival and adaptation required to maintain his functioning in society. In order to facilitate a greater understanding of the individual within society future researchers could employ greater chronological consistency in the exploration and description of personality development. In addition, the researcher proposes that future research also include more in-depth exploration of pathology as Erikson's (1950) and Adler's (1929) theories may not have fully illuminated a view of the functional pathology of an individual who was deemed guilty of evil, but sane in his actions.

With regards to gaining a more illuminated understanding of Dahmer, the researcher's concluding opinion is that Jeffrey Dahmer was an intriguing individual who can be considered a 'tortured soul'. Despite the atrocity of his actions he was nonetheless a human being who desired to belong. The illumination of Dahmer's personality development indicated that the process of exploring Dahmer's identity (Erikson, 1950) and lifestyle (Adler, 1929) development has illustrated interesting ways to perceive and react to life circumstances and situations. As such, this study has facilitated a view of interpreting lived lives differently and highlighted the value of psychobiography in terms of potential and possibility, which can be seen as a movement towards subjunctive psychology and history.

A valuable contribution to the field of psychobiography would be made through an in-depth study of the various domains of Dahmer's personality development highlighted in this study. In terms of Erikson's (1950) theory, for example, each of the crises could, in themselves, serve as interesting and informative future research projects for a more intensive and detailed illumination of his personality development. Similarly, in terms of Adler's (1929) theory, the influence of the dynamic factors in his perception of experiences could assist in the further re-contextualization of Dahmer's development regarding unanswered questions regarding his psychological functioning in areas where information was limited. As such, a study of Dahmer's personality could be focussed in the context of a single theory of choice to supplement the research conducted in this study.

Taken further, the use of different conceptual frameworks could provide additional insight into Dahmer's development. Jung's (1960) analytic theory could, for example, be useful to explore both the *shadow* of Dahmer's psyche and the crucial construction of the various personas that he exhibited. Fromm's (1973) theory would provide a similar opportunity to explore the necrophilious nature of personality development, which may be add to the discussion of Dahmer's necrophilia, cannibalism and generalized apathy.

In any research undertaking it is important to consider the parameters within which the research is conducted. Although the parameters often contribute to the limitations of the study, it is the researcher's opinion that these limitations are not negative, but the necessary facilitator to new avenues of research. Taking into account the limitations noted earlier in the chapter, the researcher believes that the study has nonetheless proven to be a valuable research undertaking as it is a good example of how the psychological life of an individual can be illuminated and re-contextualized. The general aim of this study was to facilitate a

better understanding of Dahmer's personality development through a holistic, developmental view that provided a dialectic advantage to the psychobiography's flexibility. Additionally, the study served to illustrate how such psychological understanding can facilitate the re-interpretation of individual lives. To these ends, the researcher is of the opinion that the aim of the study was accomplished.

12.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the limitations and value of the study were discussed and a brief reflexive analysis was provided. Further, recommendations for future research related to the life of Dahmer were made and the need for further research in the fields of psychosocial theory, individual psychology and psychobiographical life history research were indicated. The final word on the lived life of the enigmatic figure that is Jeffrey Lionel Dahmer has not been written. The researcher concludes with the following description of Dahmer: "Imagine, if you will, a voice that is resonant and low, apparently laconic, relaxed and articulate, but with palpable overlays of enormous tension and attempts to control what it is that he is saying" (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997, p. 111).

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APPENDIX A

Table of Dahmer's Murders

		Death	Souvenirs	Uniqueness
1978	Hicks	Strangulation	None	First Kill
1987	Tuomi	Assault	Skull**	Only murder that is not remembered
1988	Doxtator	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull**	Apparently unplanned, approached by victim
1988	Guerrero	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull	Skull not found in molestation case search
1989	Sears	Drugs, Strangulation	Scalp, Skull & Genitals	Kept the souvenirs in his locker at work
1990	Smith	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull**, Skeleton** & Photos**	Lamented the loss of all trace of the victim
1990	Smith	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull, Skeleton** & Photos	Unable to confirm the date of this murder
1990	Miller	Drugs, Exsanguination	Skull, Skeleton, Organs, Photos	Only case of cannibalism
1990	Thomas	Drugs, Strangulation	None, only Photos	Killed because Dahmer feared rejection
1991	Straughter	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull, Genitals, Hands & Photos	Lured despite mistrust of white people
1991	Lindsey	Drugs, Strangulation	Skull & Photos	Followed Dahmer's contact with his mother
1991	Hughes	(Drugs), Acid	Skull & Photos	Victim disabled; Apparently the first use of acid; Use of drugs unclear
1991	Sinthasomphone	Drugs, Acid	Skull & Photos	Escaped, but returned to Dahmer's custody
1991	Turner	Drugs, Strangulation*	Head & Photos	First Chicago victim
1991	Weinberger	Drugs, Hot Water	Head, Skin & Photos	Brief success with the Zombie Technique
1991	Lacy	Drugs, possibly Acid*	Head, Skeleton, Organs &Photos	Lost his job following this murder
1991	Bradehoft	Drugs, possibly Acid*	Head & Photos	Final victim

* Lacy and Bradehoft's cause of death were not clearly noted in the literature. Turner's strangulation, though inconsistent, was indicated.

** indicates that a souvenir was discarded or destroyed. It is possible that either Guerrero's or Sears' skull may have discarded or destroyed.

APPENDIX B

Dahmer's Statement in Court

Your Honour:

It is now over. This has never been a case of trying to get free. I didn't ever want freedom. Frankly, I wanted death for myself. This was a case to tell the world that I did what I did, but not for the reasons of hate. I hated no one. I knew I was sick or evil or both. Now I believe I was sick. The doctors have told me about my sickness and now I have some peace.

I know how much harm I have caused. I tried to do the best I could after the arrest to make amends, but no matter what I did I could not undo the terrible harm I have caused. My attempt to help to identify the remains was the best I could do, and that was hardly anything.

I feel so bad for what I did to those poor families, and I understand their rightful hate.

I now know I will be in prison for the rest of my life. I know that I will have to turn to God to help me get through each day. I should have stayed with God. I tried and failed and created a holocaust. Thank God there will be no more harm that I can do. I believe that only the Lord Jesus Christ can save me from my sins.

I have instructed Mr Boyle to end this matter. I do not want to contest the civil cases. I have told Mr Boyle to try to finalize them [sic] if he can. If there is ever money I want it to go to the families. I have talked to Mr Boyle about other things that might help ease my conscience in some way of coming up with ideas on how to make some amends to these families and I will work with him on that.

I want to return to Ohio and quickly end the matter [his first murder, that of Steven Hicks] so that I can put all of this behind me and then come right back here to do my sentence.

I decided to go through this trial for a number of reasons. One of the reasons was to let the world know that these were not hate crimes. I wanted the world and Milwaukee, which I deeply hurt, to know the truth of what I did. I didn't want unanswered questions. All the questions have now been answered. I wanted to find out just what it was that caused me to be

so bad and evil. But most of all, Mr Boyle and I decided that maybe there was a way for us to tell the world that if there are people out there with these disorders, maybe they can get help before they ended up being hurt or hurting someone. I think the trial did that.

I take all the blame for what I did. I hurt many people. The judge in my earlier case tried to help me and I refused his help and he got hurt by what I did. I hurt those policemen in the Konerak matter, and I shall ever regret causing them to lose their jobs and I only hope and pray they can get their jobs back because I know they did their best and I just plain fooled them. For that I am so sorry. I know I hurt my probation officer, who was really trying to help me. I am so sorry for that and sorry for everyone else I have hurt.

I have hurt my mother and father and stepmother. I love them all so very much. I hope that they will find the same peace I am looking for.

Mr Boyle's associates, Wendy and Ellen, have been wonderful to me, helping me through this worst of all times. I want to publicly thank Mr Boyle. He didn't need to take the case. But when I asked him to help me find the answers and to help others if I could, he stayed with me and went way overboard in trying to help me. Mr Boyle and I agree that it was never a matter of trying to get off. It was only a matter of which place I would be housed the rest of my life, not for my comfort, but for trying to study me in the hopes of helping me and learning to help others who might have problems.

I now know I will be in prison. I pledge to talk to doctors who might be able to find some answers.

In closing, I just want to say I hope God has forgiven me. I think He has. I know society will never be able to forgive me. I know the families of the victims will never be able to forgive me for what I have done. But if there is a God in heaven, I promise I will pray each day to ask them for their forgiveness when the hurt goes away, if ever.

I have seen their tears and if I could give up my life right now to bring their loved ones back, I would do it. I am so very sorry.

Your Honour, I know that you are about to sentence me. I ask for no consideration. I want you to know that I have been treated perfectly by the deputies who have been in your

court and the deputies who work in the jail. The deputies have treated me very professionally and I want everyone to know that. They have not given me special treatment.

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever" – 1 Timothy 1: 15 – 17.

I know my time in prison will be terrible, but I deserve whatever I get because of what I have done.

Thank you, Your Honour, and I am prepared for your sentence, which I know will be the maximum. I ask for no consideration.

(Schwartz, 1992, pp. 216 – 219)