Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

By Garth Baldwin

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Supervisor: Alida Sandison
Co-Supervisor: Lisa Currin
Reverend James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

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I would like to dedicate this study to my father, Cyril Baldwin, who passed away during the beginning stages of this research. I could not have asked for a more supportive father and I am sure he would have been proud of this accomplishment.

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Abstract

The purpose of a psychobiography is to describe an individual’s life while using a psychological theory. James Warren “Jim” Jones was selected through purposive sampling because of his instrumental role in organising the largest mass suicide in recorded USA history. Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) object relations theory was used to illuminate his life and personality dynamics, a theory focused on describing the *borderline personality organisation*. The study employed a qualitative single case study design, and data was analysed according to the principals set out by Yin (1994) as well as Miles and Huberman (1994). Results indicated that Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory was suitable in shedding light on the life of this infamous historical figure, which resulted in an increased understanding of the application of this psychological theory. Lastly, it contributed towards increasing the limited number of psychobiographical studies conducted in South Africa.

*Keywords:* James Warren “Jim” Jones, object relations, Otto Kernberg, personality development, psychobiography
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction and Problem Statement</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Chapter Preview</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Motivation for the Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2.1 The Researcher’s Personal Motivation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2.2 Professional Motivation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 The Life of Jones</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Kernberg’s Theory of Object Relations</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 The Psychobiographical Approach</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6 Research Methodology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6.1 Problem Statement</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6.2 Primary Aim of the Research</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7 Overview of Study</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8 Chapter Summary</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Life of Jim Jones</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Chapter Preview</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Jones’s Childhood</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2.1 Starting School</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Adolescence and Early Adulthood</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1 Peer Relationships</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.2 Marriage and Early Family ................................................................. 25
2.3.3 Father Divine .................................................................................... 27
2.3.4 Integrationist .................................................................................... 27
2.3.5 Jones’s Sabbatical from the USA ....................................................... 28
2.3.6 Return to the USA ............................................................................ 28

2.4 Ukiah 1965 - 1975 .............................................................................. 29
2.4.1 Relationship with His Family ............................................................ 30
2.4.2 Jones and Tim Stoen ........................................................................ 31
2.4.3 Expanding the Peoples Temple ......................................................... 31
2.4.4 Sex According to Jim Jones ............................................................... 34
2.4.5 The Spreading of Paranoia ................................................................. 35
2.4.6 Betrayal in the Peoples Temple ......................................................... 36
2.4.7 Condoned Violence ......................................................................... 37

2.5 San Francisco 1975 – 1977 ................................................................ 37
2.5.1 Identification with Figures of Power .................................................. 37
2.5.2 Contemplation of Suicide ................................................................. 38
2.5.3 Paranoia ............................................................................................ 39
2.5.4 Family .............................................................................................. 39
2.5.5 Scandal in the Press ......................................................................... 40

2.6 Jonestown 1977 - 1978 ...................................................................... 41
2.6.1 Health .............................................................................................. 41
2.6.2 White Nights ................................................................................... 42
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3 Congressional Visit</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Chapter Summery</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Overview of Object Relations Theory</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Chapter Preview</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Object Relations Overview</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Theoretical Framework: Otto Kernberg’s Object Relations Theory</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Normal Autism or Primary Undifferentiated Stage</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Normal Symbiosis or Stage of the Primary, Undifferentiated Self-Object Representations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 Differentiation of Self from Object Relations</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4 Integration of Self-Representations and Object-Representations and Development of Higher Level Intrapsychic Object Relations-Derived Structures</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.5 Consolidation of Superego and Ego Integration</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Degrees of Pathology</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1 Higher Level of Organisation of Character Pathology</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2 Intermediate Level of Organisation of Character Pathology</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3 Lower Level of Organisation of Character Pathology</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Personality</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Drives and Affectual States</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Classification of Pathology:</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3 Psychotic Personality Organisation</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.4 Neurotic Personality Organisation</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

3.5.5 Borderline Personality Organisation .......................................................... 59

3.6 Descriptive Elements of Borderline Personality Organisation .......................... 60

3.6.1 Anxiety ........................................................................................................ 61

3.6.2 Polysymptomatic Neurosis ......................................................................... 61

3.6.3 Polymorphous Perverse Sexual Trends ....................................................... 62

3.6.4 Pre-Psychotic Personality Structures ......................................................... 62

3.6.5 Impulse Neurosis and Addictions ................................................................. 62

3.6.6 Lower level Character Disorders .................................................................. 62

3.7 Structural Elements of Borderline Personality Organisation .......................... 63

3.7.1 Manifestations of Ego Weakness ................................................................. 63

3.7.2 Primary Process Thinking .......................................................................... 64

3.7.3 Defence mechanisms .................................................................................. 64

3.7.3.1 Splitting. .................................................................................................. 64

3.7.3.2 Primitive idealisation ............................................................................. 64

3.7.3.3 Early forms of projection and projective identification ......................... 65

3.7.3.4 Denial ..................................................................................................... 65

3.7.3.5 Omnipotence and devaluation ............................................................... 65

3.7.3.6 Pathology of internalised object relations ............................................ 66

3.8 Narcissistic Personality Disorder .................................................................... 66

3.8.1 Antisocial personality disorder .................................................................. 68

3.8.2 Malignant Narcissism ................................................................................ 68

3.9 Chapter Summery .......................................................................................... 69
Chapter 4: Psychobiography: A Theoretical Overview

4.1 Chapter Preview

4.2 Psychobiographical Research

4.3 Concepts related to Psychobiography

4.3.1 Personality

4.3.2 Psychohistory

4.3.4 Narrative

4.4 Qualitative Research

4.5 Single Case Study

4.6 Critical Evaluation of Psychobiography

4.7 Psychobiographical Research: Past, Present and Future

4.8 Value of Psychobiographical Research

4.8.1 Theory Development

4.8.2 Holistic Setting and Process and Pattern over Time

4.8.3 The Socio-historical Context

4.8.4 Subjective Reality

4.9 Chapter Summary

Chapter 5: Research Methodology Chapter

5.1 Chapter Preview

5.2 Primary Aim of Research
Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

5.3 Research Design .......................................................................................................................... 80

5.4 Sampling .................................................................................................................................... 81

5.5 Data collection .............................................................................................................................. 82

5.6 Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................... 83

5.6.1 Data Reduction ......................................................................................................................... 84

5.6.2 Data display ............................................................................................................................... 84

5.6.3 Conclusion Drawing and Verification ......................................................................................... 85

5.7 Reliability and Validity Considerations ....................................................................................... 86

5.7.1 Considerations .......................................................................................................................... 86

5.7.2 Construct Validity ..................................................................................................................... 86

5.7.3 Internal Validity ......................................................................................................................... 86

5.7.4 External Validity ....................................................................................................................... 87

5.7.5 Reliability .................................................................................................................................. 87

5.8 Ethical Considerations ................................................................................................................ 87

5.9 Preliminary Methodological Considerations ................................................................................. 88

5.9.1 Analysing an absent subject .................................................................................................... 88

5.9.2 Cross-cultural Differences ....................................................................................................... 88

5.9.3 Inflated Expectations ................................................................................................................. 89

5.9.4 Reductionism ............................................................................................................................. 89

5.9.5 Researcher Bias ......................................................................................................................... 89

5.10 Chapter Summery ...................................................................................................................... 90

Chapter 6............................................................................................................................................ 91
6.1 Chapter Preview ........................................................................................................................................... 91

6.2 Formation of Object Relations: 3 years – 7 years....................................................................................... 91

6.2.1 Normal Autism or Primary Undifferentiated Stage: ............................................................................. 91

6.2.2 Normal Symbiosis or Stage of the Primary, Undifferentiated Self-Object Representations ... 92

6.2.3 Differentiation of Self from Object Relations .......................................................................................... 93

6.2.4 Integration of Self-Representations and Object-Representations and Development of Higher
Level Intrapsychic Object Relations-Derived Structures.............................................................................. 94

6.2.5 Consolidation of Superego and Ego Integration....................................................................................... 96

6.2.6 Summary Template of Early Object Relations ....................................................................................... 97

6.3 Application of Object Relations to Jones’s Later Life................................................................. 98

6.4 Significant Life Events 7 Years – Late Adolescence............................................................................... 98

6.4.1 Peer Relationships................................................................................................................................. 98

6.5 Early Adulthood ....................................................................................................................................... 100

6.5.1 Family .................................................................................................................................................. 100

6.5.2 Crisis of Faith..................................................................................................................................... 102

6.5.3 Father Divine..................................................................................................................................... 102

6.5.4 Integrationist...................................................................................................................................... 103

6.5.5 Sabbatical .......................................................................................................................................... 104

6.5.6 Return to the USA............................................................................................................................... 105

6.6 Ukiah ...................................................................................................................................................... 105

6.6.1 Relationship with His Family............................................................................................................... 106
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.6.2</td>
<td>Jones and Tim Stoen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.3</td>
<td>Expanding Peoples Temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.4</td>
<td>Sex according to Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.5</td>
<td>The Spreading of Paranoia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.6</td>
<td>Betrayal in the Peoples Temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.7</td>
<td>Condoned Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>San Francisco 1975 – 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7.1</td>
<td>Identification with Figures of Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7.2</td>
<td>Contemplation of Suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7.3</td>
<td>Paranoia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7.4</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7.5</td>
<td>Scandal in the Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Jonestown 1977 – 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8.1</td>
<td>Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8.2</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8.3</td>
<td>“White Nights”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8.4</td>
<td>Congressional Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>Chapter Summery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Chapter Preview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Revisiting the Purpose of the Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3 Kernberg’s Object Relations Theory as Applied to Jones .......................................................... 119
  7.3.1 Drives .................................................................................................................................. 120
  7.3.2 Defence Mechanisms .......................................................................................................... 121
  7.3.3 Borderline Personality Organisation .................................................................................. 122
  7.3.4 Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 123

7.4 Possible Limitations of the Current Psychobiographical Case Study ........................................... 123
  7.4.1 Analysing and Absent Subject ............................................................................................. 123
  7.4.2 Researcher Bias .................................................................................................................... 124
  7.4.3 Reductionism ...................................................................................................................... 124
  7.4.4 Cross-Cultural Difference .................................................................................................. 124
  7.4.5 Inflated Expectations .......................................................................................................... 125

7.5 Specific Limitations of this Study .............................................................................................. 125

7.6 Value of the Study .................................................................................................................... 126

7.7 Recommendations for Future Research .................................................................................... 126

7.8 Chapter Summary ..................................................................................................................... 127

References ....................................................................................................................................... 128

Appendix 1 ...................................................................................................................................... 137

Appendix 2 ...................................................................................................................................... 138
Chapter 1
Introduction and Problem Statement

1.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will provide a brief introduction to the field of psychobiographic research. Then James Warren “Jim” Jones will be introduced and a brief overview of his life will be presented. An explanation of Kernberg’s theory of object relations will follow. The problem statement as well as the primary aim of this treatise will be given. Then the researcher will then share some personal insights regarding the aetiology of this study, followed by a summary of the chapters that are to follow.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

1.2.1 The Researcher’s Personal Motivation

The researcher first encountered Jones while watching a television documentary about the Peoples Temple. Immediately a fascination with Jones was formed within the researcher’s mind. How could a successful and influential religious person be responsible for such a horrific act of senseless death? That question served to motivate the researcher throughout the study.

The concept of religiously inspired suicide, or as Jones described it “revolutionary suicide”, is not unique to Jones and the Peoples Temple. Currently there are numerous suicide bombers and martyrs willing to die for their religious beliefs. The September 11th 2001 incident where the World Trade Centre was destroyed is a good example of religiously inspired suicide. Such current world events also influenced the researcher’s curiosity as to the type of individual who might inspire others to commit suicide.

Beyond the fascination with the research subject, the researcher also had an interest in object relations since being introduced to the theory during a lecture in his first year of his
Psychology Master's program. The theory is well suited for shedding light onto individuals who suffer from psychopathology. With this in mind the researcher aimed to become better acquainted with the theory. The researcher hoped that conducting this study would not only help explain Jones’s personality development, but would also help to improve his understanding of object relations theory.

1.2.2 Professional Motivation

Since Freud’s first publication of *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood* in 1910 (Elms, 1988), the popularity of undertaking this form of research has steadily increased in both the United States of America and in Europe (Runyan, 1988a). As the number of psychobiographic studies increased, so did the critical appraisal by peers of this type of research. This resulted in better methods and higher standards within this field of research (Runyan, 1988b). Despite the increase of psychobiographic research in South Africa over the last thirty years, Fouché and van Niekerk (2010) are of the opinion that more studies of this nature need to be conducted.

In this study the researcher undertook to explore the life of James Warren “Jim” Jones from his birth, in May 1931, until his death in November 1978. In order to conceptualise Jones’s personality development, Kernberg’s object relations theory was chosen, to illuminate Jones’s psychological progression. This choice was made as it was uniquely suited to explain the psychological development of Jones. Kernberg’s theory is centred on the explanation of *Borderline Personality Organisation*. It focuses on understanding how chronic anxiety; aggressiveness; narcissism and neurotic symptoms such as phobias, perverse sexual behaviours and diminished impulse control develop within an individual based on their earliest childhood experiences (Kernberg, 2004). Another motivating reason for choosing Kernberg’s theory is that that he acknowledges that he built his theory upon the works of
previous object relations theorists. This therefore locates his work as one of the most current evolutions of the theory of object relations (Christopher, Bickhard, & Lambeth, 2001). Lastly there are other theorists such as Kohut, whose theory of self psychology also focuses on narcissism, the researcher however applied his personal preference and elected to use Kernberg’s theory.

1.3 The Life of Jones

Jones was born on 13 May 1931, in a small settlement named Crete in Indiana (Ulman & Abse, 1983). From an early age Jones suffered neglect at the hands of his parents (Reiterman, 2008). Throughout his school years, he was fixated with religion which was later matched by an obsession with socialism.

Jones became a champion for the poor and set up numerous outreach programs sponsored by his church. He was an inspirational person which drew a lot of influential people to him. He used his authority with many powerful people, and these included the wife of the then president of the United States of America as well as the Prime Minister of Guyana (Reiterman, 2008).

Throughout Jones’s life he was plagued by paranoia (Reiterman, 2008). He feared nuclear war and constantly believed that the United States government was plotting against him and his church (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006). Eventually Jones’s fear of an enemy plotting against him came to fruition, with a series of newspaper reports highlighting various atrocities committed by Jones in his church (Reiterman, 2008). Rather than facing the allegations, Jones instead opted to flee the country to Jonestown Guyana with close to 1000 of his followers (Nelson, 2006).

Once in Guyana, Jones’s settlement was visited by an American Senator. Motivated by anger when a number of his congregation chose to leave with the senator, Jones ordered that
the senator be assassinated (Nelson, 2006; Reiterman, 2008). Following this he instructed everyone in the Jonestown settlement to commit suicide by drinking cyanide laced Kool-Aid. Jones, however, did not die from poisoning, but instead was found dead with a gunshot wound to his head.

At the end of that fateful evening on November 1978, over 900 people had died from ingesting poison. This marked the single greatest loss of American life due to mass suicide in recorded history (Nelson, 2006).

Jones was selected for this study purposively by the researcher because of the unique life that he lived. He was a charismatic leader who inspired his congregation to fight for a better life for all, unfortunately his dream never reached fruition but instead ended in the horrific loss of life.

1.4 Kernberg’s Theory of Object Relations

Kernberg’s theory sees early childhood events as being critical for future adult personality development (Kernberg, 1979; 1985; 2004) A developing child’s psychological functioning is centred around the relationship between itself and significant others. Furthermore, these interactions become internalised as concepts or templates of the self, other, and self in relation to other (Glickauf-Hughes & Wells, 1997).

Kernberg’s theory sees psychological development as a progression through five distinct phases (Kernberg, 1979). These phases occur from birth till the age of seven years old. Once one phase is completed children progresses onto the next stage. Each of these stages gradually leads individuals towards a state on autonomy whereby they are able to psychologically detach from their caregivers (Kernberg, 1979). Through the process of detachment they are able to relate to others around them as being whole rather than seeing them in a dichotomous, polarised manner.
Should individuals not complete all of these stages, they are then at risk for developing personality disorders. This is in part because they continue to relate to others from a child-like perspective (Kernberg, 2004). They project onto others the same feelings they experienced towards their caregivers when they were children. Furthermore, they frequently are not able to discern the difference between self and non self, which leads to the formation of a confusing world filled with part objects as well as self objects. This distorted sense of reality can lead to individuals employing various defence mechanisms so as to protect themselves from perceived threats. These defence mechanisms can in fact increase the intrapsychic discomfort and thus exacerbating the degree of their pathology.

Although Kernberg’s theory is widely accepted, there are various criticisms that have been voiced against it too. These criticisms include: questioning whether intrapsychic templates that influence how the child understandings themselves and others are really able to develop as early in life as Kernberg asserts (Christopher, Bickhard, & Lambeth, 2001), the lack of adequate description of how good and bad self and other representations emerge in relation to positive and negative events in the developing infant’s life (Christopher, Bickhard, & Lambeth, 2001), and the lack of explanation for why more complex behaviors (repression) are sometimes used when more primitive behaviors (splitting) already serve the need for protection against intrapsychic distress (Christopher, Bickhard, & Lambeth, 2001). Despite these critiques, Kernberg’s theory has been well supported for the understanding of personality pathology and is applied broadly for understanding this area of human functioning.
1.5 The Psychobiographical Approach

Fouché and van Niekerk (2010) describe a psychobiography as an in-depth descriptive study of a mysterious, unique or even controversial individual. It is a single case study design that is qualitative in nature. Runyan (1982) states that a psychobiography is morphogenic in nature. This means that the study focuses on the subject as a whole and not only on specific aspects that make the individual unique. Thus the life story of the individual is studied, along with the environment in which the person lived (McAdams, 1996), which further includes their socio-historical context.

According to Fouché and van Niekerk (2010), psychobiography has firmly established itself as a credible research methodology in South Africa over the last three decades. This is due to the fact than the psychology departments at various universities have undertaken to conduct research in this field. Despite this existing growth within this field of research, they encourage more universities to undertake psychobiographical studies due to the benefits to the field of psychology. These benefits include it being a tool to test current psychological theories, as well as its potential to enhance and develop theory (Fouché and van Niekerk, 2010). Carison (1988) states that psychobiography allows for the better exploration of personality than, in particular, through even the best longitudinal research.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Problem Statement

The research problem that motivated this study was the need to increase the number of psychobiographic studies conducted in South Africa. This study set out to explore and describe the life of a notorious historical figure using Kernberg’s theory of object relations as its theoretical framework.
1.6.2 Primary Aim of the Research

The aim of the proposed study was to examine the life of Jones in order to explore his psychological and personality development, and to generalise these finding to Kernberg’s object relations theory. This study aimed to illuminate the individual’s life by narrating a rich and interesting story, while simultaneously contributing towards the understanding and development of a psychological theory.

This study can be described as both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature of the study relates to the accurate description of the subjects personality development within the context of the socio-historical time in which he lived. The descriptive-dialogic nature relates to the generalisation of the phenomenon within the individual’s life to a specific theory (Edwards, 1990).

This study does not intend to generalise its finding to a broader population. Instead, it will generalise its finding to Kernberg’s theory of object relations.

1.7 Overview of Study

This treatise is comprised of seven chapters with this being the introduction. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the life of Jones from his birth until his death. Chapter 3 explains Kernberg’s object relations theory, focusing on both healthy psychological development as well as the development of psychopathology. Chapter 4 is dedicated to psychobiographic research. It discusses the history of this field of research as well as related terms associated conducting psychobiographies. Chapter 5 describes the methodology used in this study. The data collection and analysis will be explained, followed by a discussion of reliability and validity. Lastly ethical considerations that were considered before conducting the study will be discussed. Chapter 6 presents the findings of this research while Chapter 7 focuses on the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study.
1.8 Chapter Summery

This chapter presented a brief outline of this treatise. It provided a motivation for the study, and introduced the concept of psychobiographical research. Then a brief overview of the life history of Jones, the subject of the study, was presented. Focus was given to explaining the research problem as well as the primary aim of the study. Lastly a breakdown of the chapters in the study were summarised.
Chapter 2
The Life of Jim Jones

2.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will present an overview of the life history of Jones. It will cover significant events in his life from his birth in May 1931 until his death in November 1978. His life story will be broken down into themes that occurred over the duration of his life.

2.2 Jones’s Childhood

Jones was born on May 13, 1931 in a small settlement named Crete in Indiana, USA (Ulman & Abse, 1983). His father, James Thurman Jones, was a distant and uninvolved parent who had been injured in the First World War after he inhaled poisonous mustard gas. Reiterman (2008) believes that this injury made it difficult for Jones senior to integrate into the community, and was looked down upon by most of the town’s residents (Reiterman, 2008). Jones’s father was also violent towards him, and would beat him. He was an alcoholic who spent much of his later life frequenting the local card house or else sitting in his rocking chair on their porch (Reiterman, 2008). Jones would later, in an FBI recording Q134, describe his father as a: “very bitter, cynical person. He spent so much time being engrossed in his own pain, that he finally debilitated his health (McGehee, 1978).

Jones’s mother, Lynetta Jones, was a head strong, educated woman who for many years had harboured desires of becoming a successful business woman. Being that she was sixteen years younger than her invalid husband; she took over the role of providing for her family financially (Jones L., 1977). This was a considerable responsibility considering that Jones was born during the Great Depression when resources and employment were scarce. This resulted in there being few luxuries for him and it was not uncommon for Jones to rummage through rubbish to find small treasures with which he could amuse himself (Jones L., 1977).
The combination of a working mother and a distant father translated into Jones lacking attention and care from an early age. As a child who had just mastered the art of walking, he was often found wondering around naked covered in his own excrement. His neighbour, Mrs Kennedy, would occasionally take it upon herself to clean him and complained about how neglectful his mother was (Reiterman, 2008). Jones turned to animals to keep himself company, often adopting strays and bringing them home. As Jones gradually grew older it was Mrs Kennedy who introduced him to Sunday school and made sure that he never missed a church service (Reiterman, 2008). Soon Jones started exploring other churches by himself, searching in vain to find the love and acceptance that he felt was missing from his life (The Jonestown Institute, 1979). Jones’s ability as an orator was discovered by a charismatic Pentecostal minister who began grooming him to become a child evangelist. His mother took exception to his preaching after he began having nightmares, and forbade him from attending that church. Jones then undertook to start his own church in his family’s barn, preaching to the neighbourhood children. A childhood friend of Jones recalled him being obsessed with both death and religion (Nelson, 2006).

2.2.1 Starting School

When Jones was enrolled in school he performed well academically. However, he struggled to engage with his peers and mostly kept to himself during school hours. Jones was obsessed with maintaining an immaculate appearance from a young age. This resulted in him not willing to engage in rough and tumble play with the other children in case he dirtied his clothing (Reiterman, 2008). He formed a strong relationship with his 4th grade teacher, and even considered her to be a mother figure in his life. However, when she died unexpectedly Jones was shocked and recalled having to be lifted up so as to see into her casket. He
described his emotions as follows: “And I want to cry. The pain and the hostility of it … because her life was unfulfilled” (McGehee, 1978)

The remainder of his junior school years he described as being unpleasant. He was frequently ridiculed and berated by school teachers before the class (McGehee, 1978). His only close friend was a neighbour who lived across the street (Reiterman, 2008). After school, Jones would use his menagerie of animals as a draw-card to attract neighbourhood children to his home, often taking the opportunity to preach to them. Once he had their attention he did not want them to leave, and would go to extreme lengths to make them stay. On one occasion he locked two boys in his attic for most of the night (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones was very controlling as a child and would not allow any of the other children to contradict him or tell him what to do. Furthermore, he had very high standards and would expect the visiting children to clean the barn to his liking. If the barn was not cleaned to his liking, the children had to clean it again until he was satisfied (Reiterman, 2008).

When one of his animals died Jones conducted an elaborate funeral service for it, for the benefit of the other children. On one occasion he even allegedly stabbed and killed his own cat so that he could conduct a funeral service for it (Nelson, 2006). He was cruel towards animals, and this extended to doing experiments on them too, for instance he tried to graft a chicken’s leg onto a duck (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones summarised his early years as being filled with a sense of isolation, despair and rage:

I was ready to kill by the end of third grade. I mean, I was so fucking aggressive and hostile. I was ready to kill. Nobody gave me any love, any understanding. In those Indiana days a parent was supposed to go with a child to school functions…. There was
some kind of school performance, and everybody’s fucking parent was there but mine.

I’m standing there alone. Alone. I was always alone! (McGehee, 1978)

2.3 Adolescence and Early Adulthood

2.3.1 Peer Relationships

When Jones entered high school he became further isolated from his peers; his fixation with religion made it difficult for others to relate to him due to his high moral standards. His closest friendship ended after an argument in which his friend walked away from him and Jones reacted by trying to shoot him with his father’s pistol. In fact this was the third time that Jones had attempted to shoot his friend (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones found solace in reading books; he was particularly attracted to studying the works of Adolf Hitler, Karl Marx and Joseph Stalin. He also continued his preaching, except now he moved to the streets in his home town (Reiterman, 2008). Towards the end of his junior year in high school his parents separated which resulted in Jones and his mother relocating to the nearby town of Richmond.

2.3.2 Marriage and Early Family

During his senior year at school Jones began working part time as an orderly at Reid Memorial Hospital. He integrated himself well with the nursing staff and they regarded him fondly. However, he would enjoy tormenting the other orderly which eventually resulted in them quitting their work out of desperation to get away from Jones.

Jones met his future wife, Marceline Baldwin, at Reid Memorial Hospital where she was workings as a student nurse. Despite the fact that she was almost four years his senior, they immediately formed a strong relationship which led to a brief courtship and marriage after his graduation. The newlyweds relocated to Bloomington where he enrolled at Indiana University (Reiterman, 2008).
Soon after Jones was married he had a crisis of faith. His eagerness to preach the gospel was now replaced with an equal enthusiasm to discredit religion. He declared himself an atheist and openly mocked religion for being hypocritical. He also began to show an interest in communism, often times publically stating that it should be better received in the public arena (Reiterman, 2008).

Not long after being married, Jones and Marceline invited her ten year old cousin, Ronnie Baldwin, to live with them. The motivation for this decision was the fact that Ronnie’s father had recently passed away and his mother was incapacitated at the time. Jones’s generosity was contrasted by his cruelty. Jones had trained his pet monkey to attack on command and he would encourage it to attack Ronnie. On one occasion, while holidaying at India Lake Resort in Ohio, Jones tried to abandon Ronnie in the middle of the lake. He also bullied a terrified Ronnie to walk into the fast flowing waters above Niagara Falls and acted as his life line by holding his hand. When Ronnie eventually returned to live with his mother he would hide if he knew that Jones was visiting (Reiterman, 2008).

Ironically Jones’s interest in socialistic movements eventually led him back to the church, as he saw the church as being an instrument through which he could introduce socialism (Reiterman, 2008). He enrolled as a student pastor at the Methodist Church and in his first address decided to tackle the subject of racial discrimination. Later this topic would become one of the dominant themes in his own church. Jones became captivated with the “revivalist movement” after being exposed to healings performed on stage at a missionary seminar. He began to frequent various healing stage performances and displays by mediums in order to learn their techniques of showmanship. He started to introduce these charismatic practices in his own newly formed church called the “Peoples Temple” and often relied on deception and trickery to convince his congregation that he had supernatural powers (Reiterman, 2008).
2.3.3 Father Divine

Jones’s interest in charismatic leaders led him to meet Father Divine in the late 1950s. Father Divine was a charismatic African American church leader who, as his name implies, claimed to be “perfection incarnate in human form” (Jones J., 1959, p. 24). Jones was clearly impressed with Divine’s mission and mirrored many of his churches outreach programs on Divine’s projects. In a subsequent publication after their initial meeting, Jones painted Divine and his movement in a favourable light. Albeit that initially Jones took exception to Divine’s self-proclaimed God-like status, he too would later declare himself a deity.

The impression that Divine made on Jones must have been substantial, as one of the personal items found in Jonestown after the mass murder-suicide was an unreturned library book, checked out in the 1950s, called “Father Divine Holy Husband” (Hougan, 2012). In the publication a commentator states that when Father Divine dies a mass suicide of his followers should follow (Hougan, 2012). When Divine eventually died, Jones claimed that the spirit of Divine had reincarnated into Jones’s body.

2.3.4 Integrationist

Jones had shown an interest in political sociology from an early age and had always championed the cause of underprivileged communities. In 1960 Jones was appointed by Democratic Mayor Charles Boswell as the Human Rights Commissioner of Indianapolis (Reiterman, 2008). Using his newly appointed position as a platform, Jones vigorously attacked inequality. He set up sting operations in order to catch restaurants that would not sell food to African Americans, and was also instrumental in reducing racial discrimination in the police department, telephone companies and theme parks (Wessinger, 2000). When Jones was accidentally admitted to an African American only ward in hospital, he created a public
Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

outcry when he insisted on emptying the bed pans of the African Americans in the ward. His actions subsequently led to the desegregation of the hospital’s wards (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones’s outspoken stance about race relations made him the target of numerous hate crimes. However, some of the alleged attacks were orchestrated by Jones himself for publicity (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones’s commitment to a non-prejudiced and integrated multicultural society motivated him to adopt six children from different ethnic backgrounds, these included Korean, Native American and African American. In total he had seven children, as he and Marceline had one biological son together (Reiterman, 2008).

2.3.5 Jones’s Sabbatical from the USA

In 1961 Jones reported seeing a vision of a nuclear bomb being detonated in Chicago (Krause, 1978). This led him to seek out safe areas where he could relocate his church. His quest to find a safe haven from nuclear fallout led him on a two year journey of exploration that included Guyana, Hawaii and lastly Brazil. Strangely an article was published on Jones in the Guiana Graphic, one of the local newspapers, for speaking out against communism. In his absence from the USA, his congregation dwindled from close to 2000 people to only a few hundred (Reiterman, 2008). This resulted in him not being able to afford to stay in South America and forced his subsequent return to his parish.

2.3.6 Return to the USA.

Upon Jones’s return to Indianapolis, the attendance at his church once again began to increase. His charismatic personality proved to be an alluring draw card. His grandiosity started to become more transparent in his sermons. He started to brand himself as a prophet and superior being with god-like healing abilities:
If you don't like the God that speaks about dunghills and shit heaps and asses, then you don't like the God that healed all those women last night of breast cancer. You can't separate one from the other, because I'm the same today, yesterday, and forever (McGehee, 1973).

2.4 Ukiah 1965 - 1975

Despite his church’s success, he remained plagued by fears of a nuclear holocaust and began searching for a safe place where he could relocate himself and his congregation. Inspired by an article published in the January edition of Esquire Magazine in 1962, which stated that Ukiah was the safest place to live in the USA in the event of a holocaust, Jones decided to uproot his church and move to Ukiah (Nelson, 2006). When one of his senior advisors questioned his motive for relocating his entire church, Jones justified his need to have them relocate with him as follows: “I’ve thought about it. And I’ve talked about it with my psychiatrist. He said that I can’t release them too fast from their dependency or they’ll have psychological problems” (Reiterman, 2008, p. 96).

In July 1965 Jones and 140 of his congregation, many of whom had made great sacrifices to be there, relocated to Ukiah. No preparations had been made for such a large number of people to be absorbed into a community of 10 000 people. As Jones could not rely on his congregation for financial support initially, he began working as a school teacher, teaching USA History. His subject matter was controversial because he taught his socialist views as well as the need for birth control. In this regard he taught masturbation as a solution for over population and even explained to the 6th grade class his preferred techniques (Reiterman, 2008).

During the next two years Jones appeared to be more at peace, visiting his congregation at their homes and spending time with his family. However, his tranquillity did not last long and
he started to fear that the school administration had begun spying on him. He even posted members of his church at his classroom door to alleviate his fears. Jones’s fears were not completely unwarranted as his controversial views were not well received in the conservative community. He and his congregation members received many violent threats which culminated in Jones posting dozens of armed guards outside his church (Silva, 2007).

It was while living in Ukiah that Jones was able to cement the concept that all members of the church were part of an extended family unit. Everyone was expected to help each other and everyone was to report to him as the head of the family (Reiterman, 2008).

2.4.1 Relationship with His Family

Jones’s responsibility to his church became all-consuming and this negatively impacted his family life. Jones and his wife drifted apart. His sister-in-law visited in 1968, and was shocked to learn that Jones had begun preaching about, and endorsing, open sexual relationships within the church. Jones even decreed who in the church should have sexual relations with others (Reiterman, 2008). It was at this time that Jones began a sexual relationship with Carolyn Layton, a member of his congregation. On occasion he would take his nine year old son, Stephen, with to visit his mistress and would leave him in the lounge while he and his lover had sexual relations in the bedroom (Jones S., 2003). In an attempt to remove his wife, Jones tried to have his wife institutionalised by claiming she was suicidal. However, her family found the story suspicious, came to visit to see how she was, and intervened. Despite this failure Jones openly continued to have the affair. He slowly tried to replace his wife with Carolyn by having her take over all of Marceline’s duties, both domestic and church related. Again he used the excuse of suicide, except this time it was Carolyn who was going to take her life if Jones was not with her. At this time Jones also started to abuse drugs, taking numerous substances.
At this time Jones’s relationship with his children was strained. Stephen, his son, attempted to commit suicide, by over dosing on his father’s medication, when he learnt of his father’s affair. Rather than spending more time with his son Jones decided to hire a temple member as a playmate for Stephen instead (Reiterman, 2008).

2.4.2 Jones and Tim Stoen

While living in Ukiah, Jones met Tim Stoen, an up and coming law graduate from Berkeley University. Jones and Stoen immediately struck up a strong relationship which resulted in Stoen and his new bride relocating from San Francisco to Ukiah in 1970. Stoen was hard working and in his spare time acted as the church’s legal advisor. Jones saw the benefit of having Stoen remain in the church and in order to maintain a hold over him, convinced Stoen to sign an affidavit declaring that his son, John Stoen, was in fact the prodigy of Jones and not Stoen’s (Stoen, 1971). Stoen agreed and signed the affidavit despite the boy’s birth certificate declaring Stoen as his father (State of California Department of Public Heath, 1972).

2.4.3 Expanding the Peoples Temple

By the early 1970s the Peoples Temple had grown significantly both in wealth and members due to an aggressive marketing strategy. Jones procured busses and set out on trips across the USA in recruitment drives. As his church grew, so did his paranoia. Jones was afraid of being exposed as a socialist, as well as being afraid of losing his church (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones’s message to his people began to divert further from mainstream Christian doctrine. He started teaching that socialism was a replacement for God and even began baptising people in the name of socialism. He taught about reincarnation, and used that to explain how he inherited his divinity, as he was the incarnation of among other people: Jesus, Buddha,
Pharaohs, Karl Marx, and Vladimir Lenin (Blanton, 2011). With this message came a parallel message that death was not to be feared.

Jones’s desire for power was not limited to his church. He proactively sought to make contact with powerful figures in the political spectrum and frequently boasted about how many influential people he knew. These individuals included FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and the then-Governor Ronald Reagan, with whom he established written communication (Reiterman, 2008).

As Jones’s movement increased in size, he decided that it needed more internal structures. In this regard he created a hierarchy of ranks within the Peoples Temple. The lowest rank was the “Planning Commission”; secondly the “Guidance Counsellors” and lastly at the head of the hierarchy was the “Staff” (Nelson, 2006).

The Staff were a select group of less than ten individuals, who were all white females, and most had graduate degrees. The demographics of his closest inner circle were in stark contrast to the demographic of his church and not in harmony with the message he preached about equality. Jones demanded absolute loyalty from his staff members and as a result they were tasked with the most sensitive jobs within the movement, such as gathering information about others in the church for his clairvoyant performances, or else arranging the fake healings (Reiterman, 2008).

Being a member of the Planning Commission was a status symbol in the church. The function of the Planning Commission was to serve as the church’s governing body. However, it soon became a forum for Jones to scrutinise individuals within the church, their behaviours and even their sex lives (Chidester, 2003). Jones would humiliate people before the commission. Examples of this include ordering individuals to strip naked before the group (Nelson, 2006), and on one occasion, placing a snake around the shoulders of an elderly man,
causing him to defecate out of fear (Pick-Jones, 2007). During these sessions Jones began experiencing strange somatic symptoms. He would often claim to be having a heart attack if he felt that one of his congregation had disappointed him (Reiterman, 2008).

In 1972 Jones established a new branch of the Peoples Temple in Los Angeles. The motivation for the decision was based primarily on the realization that the church’s growth was limited in the small community of Ukiah. A strong marketing campaign was launched centred on Christianity and Jones’s faith healings. Jones’s paranoia surfaced again. He instructed that all prospective new members be screened and sorted into groups headed up by church counsellors who were tasked to subtly interrogate them to ascertain their true intentions. Some church members were even tasked with going through people’s garbage; as Jones had managed to convince his congregation that the FBI and CIA were trying to infiltrate the church in order to stamp out their socialistic message (Reiterman, 2008). At that point in time there was no record that the church was under investigation by any state department (Reiterman, 2008).

Bus trips across the USA became an annual event and were used for recruiting new members as well as generating income. Jones often boasted that he would never embark on a journey that he was not confident would net $100 000 to $200 000 in profit (Reiterman, 2008). Collections were held three to four times a day whereby members were expected to contribute financially. Members were also deprived of sleep, as Jones would keep up a constant monologue over the CB radio. Conditions were cramped and some passengers would sleep in the luggage compartments in order to get space. Jones, however, had a luxury compartment outfitted for himself in the rear of bus seven with his own personal bed and desk (Nelson, 2006).
2.4.4 Sex According to Jim Jones

Jones had a ravenous sexual appetite and engaged in multiple sexual relations. He preached about the equality and respect for others, yet exploited people sexually, and used sex as a tool to enhance loyalty and control those around him. Most partners willingly had sex with Jones, but many were forced into sexual relations against their will (Kohl, 2012). Jones personally engaged in sexual relations with both men and women, although he never considered himself bi-sexual. He preferred to be the dominant lover when engaging in sexual intercourse with men, frequently leaving heterosexual males feeling vulnerable and confused afterwards (Reiterman, 2008). Despite his original message of free love and open sexual relationships, by the early to mid-1970s Jones changed his message to that of abstinence (Kohl, 2012). In order to dissuade his congregation from sex he explained to them that he was the only true heterosexual person alive and that all other people were homosexual (Reiterman, 2008), and taught that sex interfered with the goals of socialism. The logic behind these assertions was that energy directed towards sex was not in line with furthering the goals of socialism. Ironically, although he preached about abstinence he bragged about his own sexual prowess (Kohl, 2012).

Jones justified his numerous sexual relations by stating that it was for the betterment of the other person and that he derived no pleasure from it. However, Jones insisted that all of his lovers publicly declare how good a lover he was. Despite claiming to be altruistic in his sexual relations, Jones was known to brag about his sexual exploits in graphic detail to his friends (Reiterman, 2008).

On 13 December 1973, Jones was arrested for exposing himself to an undercover police officer in a movie theatre frequented by male homosexuals. Jones was able to have the case dropped and even managed to have the arrest sealed on his record (Wise, 2012). However,
the arrest fanned his fears of being exposed as a sexual deviant to the community at large, exacerbating his paranoia. After the incident he reported to a senior staff member that he would no longer have sex with strangers (Wise, 2012).

2.4.5 The Spreading of Paranoia

From the beginning of the Peoples Temple, Jones would stage attacks on the church so as to justify his paranoia to his congregation. By the mid-1970s Jones began staging more elaborate attacks on the church. Many of his sermons spoke about an enemy that was poised to strike at any moment. In order to cement these fears and prove their existence, Jones orchestrated elaborate attacks on the church which included attempted bombings as well as shootings. In one incident Jones claimed to have been shot while in the presence of his congregation, but he was able to miraculously heal himself thereby explaining his lack of injury. Perhaps out of fear or admiration, no one ever questioned the veracity of his assertions. These incidents led to the installation of barbed wire fencing around the church as well as the presence of armed guards. It also justified Jones in having armed bodyguards accompany him at all times (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones had created the illusion of enemies plotting against the church for many years. His deepest fears did eventually come to pass in the form of an eager newspaper journalist who stumbled upon some of the claims that his church had made about Jones. Lester Kinsolving authored an eight article expose for the San Francisco Examiner, four of which were published between September 17 and September 20, 1972. In part one of the series Kinsolving listed the church’s numerous assets; the fact that Jones had claimed to have raised 40 people from the dead; the presence of armed guards on church grounds and lastly, how Jones would sell pictures of himself as trinkets that could be worn by members of his congregation as protection charms (Kinsolving, The Prophet who Raises the Dead, 1972). In
part two, Kinsolving highlighted how Jones had declared himself a deity and he questioned the validity of Jones’s miraculous healings (Kinsolving, 1972). In the third instalment Jones’s forcing of people to donate money was reported, along with covering the underage marriage of a young girl in the church. Lastly, more questions were raised about Jones’s healing abilities and his unwillingness to allow medically trained experts to verify his claims (Kinsolving, 1972). In the final published article Kinsolving called for the State Attorney General’s Office to investigate Jones and the Peoples Temple (Kinsolving, 1972).

Jones was clearly shaken by the story and reacted swiftly by attempting to cover up the incident. He sent out members of the church to buy up as many of the newspapers they could. Next he threatened the newspaper with a law suit if it continued publishing the series. Finally, he used intimidation tactics against the editor which resulted in the story being dropped. Later in a strategic meeting it was decided that Kinsolving would have a dossier opened and his movements and writing would be documented by the church. The idea of kidnapping, beating or illuminating Kinsolving was also discussed (Reiterman, 2008).

2.4.6 Betrayal in the Peoples Temple

Jones was never able to tolerate any form of defiance in the Peoples Temple. Anybody who questioned Jones was immediately called before the Planning Commission where he would personally humiliate and degrade them. The most significant act of defiance that Jones encountered while living in Ukiah was when a group of eight youths defected from the church. Jones was enraged when he learned that they had left and went as far as hiring an airplane to try to locate them while they fled the county. In a sermon after the defection Jones made veiled threats about harm coming to those who defied him, referring to their conduct as an act of treason (McGehee, 1975). In a display of his own inner turmoil he first offered them an olive branch, only to recant it later and excommunicate them from the church. The
testament of many defectors from the Peoples Temple stated that they feared for their lives (Reiterman, 2008).

2.4.7 Condoned Violence

Jones was very outspoken about not supporting violence while he lived in Ukiah. Even when discussing his revolution he spoke about passive resistance being directed towards the state and its corrupt capitalistic ideology. However, in his own church he sanctioned violence. Initially physical punishment was directed towards children who had misbehaved. He advocated that they be spanked with a paddle, which he fondly termed the “Board of Education”, in front of the Planning Commission (Reiterman, 2008). Later even adults would be spanked. His desire for violent punishment gradually increased. Jones sanctioned that children, one aged only five, engage in fist fights before the counsel. He then extended these pugilistic bouts to include adults who had transgressed his rules as well. Should the individual needing punishment win their bout, Jones would simply order another person to step up and fight them until they had received an adequate beating (Reiterman, 2008).

2.5 San Francisco 1975 – 1977

2.5.1 Identification with Figures of Power

In 1975 Jones relocated his church’s headquarters once again, this time to San Francisco. Jones seemed to take pride in being able to rub shoulders with other powerful and influential people and actively sought out these relationships. To further Jones’s connections he became more involved in both local and national politics, being instrumental in the election of Mayor George Moscone. He later used that as leverage to be placed in a position of local governance resulting in him being appointed as the Chairperson of the San Francisco Housing Authority in 1976. Another example of Jones’s international political influence was that he was able to arrange a personal meeting between Guyana Prime Minister Forbes Burnhan and California
Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

Lieutenant Governor Mervyn Dymally in order to discuss relations between the two countries (Reiterman, 2008). Jones also had personal telephonic communication with Rosalynn Carter (McGehee, 1976) and saw her while she was campaigning in San Francisco (Kilduff & Tracy, 2012). Jones was even granted an audience with Walter Mondale aboard his private jet when he was campaigning for the Vice Presidency (Kilduff & Tracy, 2012).

2.5.2 Contemplation of Suicide

Jones had had suicidal thoughts for most of his adult life and frequently projected them onto those around him. In 1975 he began contemplating the idea of a mass suicide and conducted his first loyalty test whereby he gave 100 members of the Planning Commission wine which he claimed had been poisoned. He informed them that anyone who tried to leave would be shot. After a great deal of commotion he eventually revealed that the wine was not poisoned. He conducted the whole affair as if it were an experiment; he even administered a questionnaire to them in order to assess their subjective experiences of the fake poisoning (Reiterman, 2008).

In 1977 one of Jones’s closest allies and legal advisor, Stoen, attempted to defect. Jones, motivated by his paranoia about Stoen releasing sensitive information about the Peoples Temple and Jones himself, immediately sent out a party of loyal Temple members to find him. Stoen was eventually located in the United Kingdom and Jones was able to convince him to return. Upon Stoen’s return Jones began collapsing every night with what he described as heart attacks. His mood became sombre and he admitted for the first time that he was having suicidal thoughts while giving a publicised address at the Golden Gate Bridge in honour of suicide victims. In the address he made what he referred to as a Freudian, implying that he and his followers were having suicidal thoughts: “Suicide is a symptom of an uncaring society. The suicide is the victim of conditions which we cannot tolerate and and …
I guess that was a Freudian because I meant to say, which he cannot tolerate” (Reiterman, 2008, p. 321).

2.5.3 Paranoia

With Jones assuming a more prominent position in the public arena his paranoia began to increase. He came into regular contact with the press during his daily activities at the Housing Authority. This led him to fear yet another incident similar to the Kinsolving exposé. He reported to his aids frequently that he believed that reporters were trying to write scandalous articles about him and also that the FBI were investigating him. He even feared that the revenue service was gathering information relating to tax evasion by his church (Reiterman, 2008).

To add to his fears more and more prominent members of his church were defecting. He became convinced that they would go to the press. In order to try to silence them, he would use threats of harm against them or use their family members who remained in the church as leverage against them in order for them to remain silent. These bullying tactics served to increase his paranoia as he feared his threatening telephonic conversations were being recorded and those would in turn be used against him (Reiterman, 2008).

His church sermons continued to reflect his paranoia, where he spoke about biological weapons that the USA had created and were planning to use against its Blacks, Indians and Mexicans (McGehee, 1973). In another sermon he questioned the intention of the press implying that there was a conspiracy against him: “the evil intentions of those monopoly forces that own the press” (McGehee, 1976).

2.5.4 Family

Jones’s ever increasing busy life was taking its toll on his family. He had less time to invest with them as his church and budding political career took precedence. His relationship
with his biological son degraded significantly which resulted in Stephen’s second suicide attempt in order to gain attention from his father (Jones S., 2003). As before, he overdosed on his father’s prescription medication. Jones reacted by sending him to see a psychiatrist but insisted that he use a pseudonym so as not to taint Jones’s image. Later he sent him to Guyana despite his son and mother protesting the decision.

Jones’s relationship with John Stoen, the child who he claimed paternity over, was more of a mentorship. Jones groomed John in his own image, possibly with the idea of one day having him take over Jones’s role in the church (Hall, 2009). Many within the group began to see young John as a God-Child (Isaacson, 2008). When John’s mother, Grace, defected from the church, Jones immediately had John transferred to Jonestown. With him out of the country he would be beyond the reach of the USA courts if a custody battle ensued (Reiterman, 2008).

2.5.5 Scandal in the Press

In 1977 reporter Marshall Kilduff wanted to write an article on Jones and the Peoples Temple, primarily focusing on Jones as an influential church leader who was active in local governance. Kilduff was immediately met with resistance when he tried to arrange an interview with Jones. Jones’s reaction was to stone wall all of Kilduff’s efforts as he feared yet another scathing article similar to that of Kinsolving’s (Reiterman, 2008). Jones’s actions actually served to exacerbate the situation and spurred more investigation into what he could be hiding. In a short time Jones’s worst fears came to pass; multiple newspapers carried damning stories of the abuse, fear, and violence in the Peoples Temple. Rather than staying to face the charges, Jones decided to flee the country to his last outpost of safety, Jonestown Guyana (Nelson, 2006).
Throughout Jones’s life he had never been able to accept people leaving or abandoning him (O'Shea, 2011). Perhaps motivated by this fear, when Jones relocated to Guyana, he arranged for 1000 of his congregation to join him there. The settlement, however, was not prepared to absorb such a large influx of people. Food resources became scarce and accommodation was overcrowded (Reiterman, 2008). The remaining churches back in the USA all had noticeable reductions in their attendance resulting in a reduction of income. This prompted Jones to order the sale of church assets in order to support the expensive Agricultural Project.

The mass migration of his church created a sense of fear and urgency in family members left behind who had lost their loved ones, literally overnight. Eventually this pool of people coalesced to form a lobby group who sought legal remedies to have their loved ones returned to them in the USA. Few people were able to escape from the compound, but those few who did brought stories of fear, beating, sexual abuse and most concerning, threats of mass suicide back to the USA. Eventually this group applied enough pressure to motivate a visit by Congressman Ryan to visit the compound (Reiterman, 2008).

2.6.1 Health

While in Jonestown, Jones’s health deteriorated significantly, most likely due to excessive drug use. His speech became slurred and indistinct, a far cry from the eloquent orator he once was. His body was swollen with edema and he had trouble walking unaided. In three audio tapes dated August, September and October 1978, Jones spoke of suffering from a high fever (Alternative Considerations of Jonestown and Peoples Temple, 2012). His autopsy would later show that he had high concentrations of pentobarbital, a barbiturate, in his system.
indicative of substance abuse. The motivation behind the drug use, whether in part medicinal, or purely recreational, is unknown.

Jones’s mental health had declined significantly too, most notably an increase in his paranoia. He also began having frequent thoughts of suicide. He experienced many dissociative episodes where he would claim to be in reincarnation of Lenin. When in these altered states he would run into the jungle, shooting his revolver wildly while attempting to speak Russian. His son, however, believes that these antics were purely theatrical (Reiterman, 2008). Despite living in exile, with multiple legal battles looming, for example, a custody battle for John Stoen, and the petition of investigation of his church by loved ones in the USA, Jones maintained a grandiose persona. In the midst of all the turmoil surrounding him, Jones tried to make contact with a movie producer with the expectation that a movie would be made based on his life.

2.6.2 White Nights

Jones’s increased drug use and fears of defection by his people increased his paranoia to almost intolerable levels. He regularly summoned all the residents together for urgent meetings that would last throughout the night; he called these “white nights”. In these meetings he would speak about conspiracies targeting the movement. He claimed that USA forces wanted to invade and kill all the residents. In one protracted six day ordeal he had the entire compound in lockdown convincing the people that there were besieged by a group of commandos hiding in the jungle. As always his followers believed what he told them and willingly gave up their sleep for nights on end, seeking out an invisible enemy (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones spoke frequently about John Stoen, and how his parents were attempting to kidnap him away from Jonestown. In a radio conversation with his wife, who was still in the USA,
Jones declared that if any government agency came to arrest anyone from the settlement they would all commit suicide in a show of solidarity. Jones began using the phrase “revolutionary suicide” more frequently and continued to do practice runs with the residence of Jonestown (Reiterman, 2008). Jones would instruct the residents to drink poison, and afterwards laugh at their surprise when they realised that they had not consumed poison after all. He would then reward them for their loyalty (O'Shea, 2011). Ironically, Jones berated any of his people who attempted, or spoke about, committing suicide without his permission, but yet ridiculed anyone who refused to drink the poison given by him.

Jones could not tolerate anyone leaving or threatening to leave. He made all his people sign incriminating documents that he threatened to use against them should they leave. If he suspected that someone was going to defect he ordered them to be drugged with thorazine (O'Shea, 2011). He encouraged people to turn in family members who they thought might be leaving, thus creating paranoia amongst the residents and also preventing anyone from conspiring against him (Nelson, 2006).

2.6.3 Congressional Visit

Due to mounting pressure from the USA, Congressman Ryan and a delegation of journalists descended upon Jonestown in 1978. Before their arrival Jones discussed the potential of murdering the entire party during a “white night” (Nelson, 2006). He had even coached the residents of Jonestown on how to answer questions that might be posed to them by members of the visiting delegation. Soon after the arrival of the party, church members made contact with the reporters expressing their desire to leave Jonestown. According to Rietman (2008), Jones seemed at a loss for words, contradicting himself first by saying they were free to go, but then almost pleading with them to stay.
After someone tried to stab Ryan, the delegation decided to retreat as rapidly as they could with the defecting members. When they reached the airstrip they were ambushed by a group of armed men. Five members of the retreating party were killed on the airstrip before they were able to evacuate.

In Jonestown, Jones immediately called a white night. For whatever reason, he chose to record his speech and the hundreds of people dying hysterically (Nelson, 2006). His last known words were riddled with paranoia. He told the people that an invasion was imminent and that their children were about to be murdered.

While surrounded by armed guards he ordered that first children were given cyanide laced juice. Then parents were instructed to drink the poisonous cocktail too. Those who hesitated were forced to drink it according to some eye witness accounts (Carter, 2006).

At 9 p.m., one of the survivors that had managed to escape into the jungle heard a cheer of celebration go up from the compound, presumably Jones and his inner circle celebrating their successful revolutionary suicide. After half an hour he heard five gunshots, followed two hours later with a final gunshot (Reiterman, 2008). By the end of the night, 918 people had either committed suicide or had been murdered. Jones died from a gunshot wound to his head, his body laid out in the pavilion with his head resting on a pillow. The pathologist report indicates that Jones’s injuries were consistent with suicide (Reiterman, 2008). However, the weapon was suspiciously found 22 feet away from him indicating that perhaps Jones was murdered and did not commit suicide along with the rest. Also, the entry wound of the bullet was through his left temple and Jones was right handed. It is unknown whether Jones really committed suicide or if he was murdered.
2.7 Chapter Summery

Jones was born during a time of great uncertainty in USA history. The great depression had just ended and the Second World War was about to begin. From an early age Jones showed a fascination with religion which bordered on an obsession. After a brief crisis of faith soon after marriage, he re-embraced the Christian faith and started his own church which he named the Peoples Temple. Jones was able to draw large crowds with his charismatic oratory skills. Unfortunately being in the public spotlight increased his paranoia. Towards the end of Jones’s life he became embroiled in a scandal that was fanned by the media. Perhaps in an attempt to escape with his reputation in tact he fled to a small settlement call Jonestown situated in Guyana. It was there that he ordered the assassination of a visiting USA congressman, and soon after convinced over 900 of his followers to drink cyanide laced juice, culminating in the largest mass suicide in recorded United States of America’s history.
Chapter 3
An Overview of Object Relations Theory

3.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will present an overview of the development of the object relations theory with some attention being given to the contributions made by various leading theorists. It will explain how the earliest relationships of children are affected by their primary caregivers, which subsequently influence how children see and respond to others throughout their lives.

In order to better explain this developmental process, Kernberg’s developmental stages will be discussed, initially focusing on optimal psychological functioning, but then followed by a description and classification of how psychopathology develops. Pathological functioning will be described according to a hierarchy of severity, leading into a discussion on pathological personality organisations. Special focus will be given to the borderline personality organisation.

3.2 Object Relations Overview

Within the psychoanalytic movement, four categories have emerged for understanding human behaviour, each emphasising a specific area of human experience (Stadter, 2009; Frankland, 2010). Drive theories pay particular attention to innate biological drives, namely sex and aggression and their influence on human behaviour while ego psychology focuses on the way in which the person balances their internal drives with their external reality. The focus of self-psychology is on the person’s subjective experience of the self (Stadter, 2009). The basis of object relations theory is the human relationship.

Object relations theory is based on two core assumptions: Firstly, the root of psychological functioning is centred around the relationship between the self and significant others; secondly, interactions between the developing infant and their immediate care-givers
become internalised as concepts or templates of the self, other, and self in relation to other (Glickauf-Hughes & Wells, 1997). These internalised models of interrelating guide perceptions and shape the attitude of the developing individual, ultimately affecting interpersonal relationships in adulthood (Bowlby, 1988).

Melanie Klein is often regarded as the founder of object relations theory (Gabbard, Beck, & Holmes, 2005). She theorised that rather than being driven by psycho-sexual drives as Freud had theorised, children are driven to control their feelings towards significant figures in their lives (Cashdan, 1988). However, the term object was first used by Freud. This was to convey the fact that people do perceive others as they want them to be rather than they really are (Frankland, 2010), They form a relationship with a fantasy representation of the other individuals in their lives and are not able to see them as unique multidimensional beings (Stadter, 2009). These fantasy representations represent people as all good or all bad.

There are two psychological positions outlined within object relations theory which are underpinned by the two core assumptions outlined above. The paranoid-schizoid position refers to the infant experiencing both loving and destructive feelings towards the parent figure, but at any given point is only able to see or experience them as objects being either all good or all bad. Once the child is able to internalise that their parent, the object of their love, is also the object of their hate, they then transition into the depressive position (Kaslow, 2002).

The consequence of entering the depressive position is that the child experiences anxiety. This is due to the fact that they can now see that the object of their destructive feelings is the same object of their loving feelings. This leads to them experience anxiety, as they fear that they may destroy their good [parent] object when destroying the bad. Often they attempt to
resolve their anxious feelings by making gestures of reparation, in an attempt to undo their bad behaviour (Cashdan, 1988).

The child who is still in the paranoid-schizoid position cannot internalise both the good and bad aspects of a parent object. They experience the holding of these different sides as threatening to their developing self. Consequently the child separates these aspects in order to make them less threatening and thus acceptable (Cashdan, 1988). Fairbairn (2003) described the mechanism by which the infant separates the good and bad aspects of their caregivers as splitting. Thus the child splits off a good or bad aspect of the parent object. However, by doing so, the child also splits their own ego.

An example of this process would be that a child [in the paranoid schizoid position] who perceives an aggressive parent to be part of them. Due to this connection, the child is forced to assimilate their parent’s aggression into their own psyche, and perceive themselves as the aggressive party also. They experience this as very threatening, and in order to reject the bad aggression they disown it, and they split it off, thus concurrently splitting their own ego.

Bowlby, who was inspired by the Klein, also viewed the relationship between parent and child as being critical in the development of healthy psychological functioning. Bowlby’s (1969) theory of attachment states that positive human attachments are a core human necessity. The psychological mechanisms of this attachment are not as clearly delineated as by mainstream psychoanalytic theorists. However, the degree and nature of early attachments with the primary care giver greatly influences the quality of future relationships. Inadequate or threatened loss of an adequate attachment to a primary care giver will result in psychological distress. Building upon Bowlby’s work, Ainsworth developed three categories into which attachment could be grouped namely: secure; anxious-ambivalent; or anxious-avoidant. Main and Solomon (1986) later added a fourth category namely, disorganized /
disoriented, which was characterised by odd, awkward behaviour and unusual fluctuations between anxiety and avoidance (Obegi & Berant, 2009).

Margaret Mahler (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975) highlighted the importance of the child being able to separate from its mother, and saw psychological birth as being separate from physical birth. Whereas the one is an event, the other is a process that unravels over three stages during the first three years of life (Steele & Steele, 1998). When these steps are successfully navigated, children are able to function as autonomous beings who are able to see themselves as separate from their caregivers. Failure to separate from the primary caregiver leads to the development of pathology in later adulthood (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975).

3.3 Theoretical Framework: Otto Kernberg’s Object Relations Theory

Kernberg’s theory of Object Relations attempts to explain the development of the borderline personality organisation, the theory which the present study will apply the life of Jones in order to generalise his development to this theory.

According to Kernberg (2004) there are four primary requirements for the development of normal personality which are constructed upon a foundation of inherited temperament. Firstly, for the healthy development of personality the individual needs to be able to develop an integrated concept of self as well as an integrated concept of other. He refers to these structures jointly, as ego identity, which are cemented in the differentiation of self from object relations developmental stage (Kernberg, 2004). The second structural characteristic of the normal personality is ego strength. This evolves from ego identity and is responsible for affect dispositions, impulse control and sublimation in an individual’s drives. This also evolves during the differentiation of self from object relations developmental stage. The third aspect of the normal personality is an integrated and mature superego, which is formed in the
integration of self-representations and object-representations and development of higher level intrapsychic object relations-derived structures stage (Kernberg, 2004). This leads to the individual being able to act responsibly and ethically with standards, values and ideals. Lastly, the individual needs to learn how to manage their libidinal and aggressive drives appropriately. This means being able to have healthy intimate sexual relations. It is also important to be able to manage destructive drives in healthy ways like self-assertion without overreacting to perceived external attacks, or by turning their destructive drives inwards (Kernberg, 2004). The development of these intrapsychic structures and their importance in relation to Kernberg’s developmental stages will be described below.

3.3.1 Normal Autism or Primary Undifferentiated Stage

Kernberg’s (1979) first stage is called the normal autism stage and is from birth to the first month. During this stage there are no tasks that need to be accomplished; however fixation within this developmental stage results in the infant being unable to establish a normal symbiotic relationship with its primary care giver (Kernberg, 1979).

3.3.2 Normal Symbiosis or Stage of the Primary, Undifferentiated Self-Object Representations

The second stage is called normal symbiosis and is from the 2nd month until the 8th month. This stage is associated with the development of ego identity. During this stage the infant has no concept of self and sees the mother as an extension of itself. Inborn attachment patterns, for example: crying and latching to the mother’s breast, are naturally activated and lead to the formation of self-object representation. The inability of the infant to internalise that it is separate from its carer leads to the self-object representations that develop to form two clusters of object relations, namely “good” self-object representations and “bad” self-object representations (Kernberg, 1979). These intrapsychic structures are held apart from each
other as they are formed during separate affective circumstances and are stored as two separate constellations under “affective memory” (Kernberg, 1979). They influence the formation of primitive affective memory (Kernberg, 1979). Pleasurable affects, lead to the creation of good self-objects, will eventually evolve into more specific pleasure seeking behaviours such as oral satiation, gratification at exploration, and pleasurable interpersonal contact, which form the foundation of the libido. Painful affects, leading to the creation of bad self-objects, will evolve into painful emotions such as anxiety, fear and rage and form the foundation of aggression (Kernberg, 1979).

### 3.3.3 Differentiation of Self from Object Relations

The third stage, *differentiation of self from object relations*, occurs between 6–8 months to 18–36 months of age. The child does not yet have an integrated self, nor an integrated concept of another human being. This means that all interactions that the child has are with part objects (Kernberg, 1979). During this stage splitting is a normal occurrence (i.e. good/bad aspects are split off the loved object). Splitting serves to protect the child’s relationship with the mother. Recognition of the mother sets a chain of events into motion beginning with the delineation of the *self* from *non self* and eventually the *self* from external objects. This leads the individual to begin to develop different kinds of self-representations and corresponding object-representations. Under predominantly pleasurable circumstances, good self-object representations leads to an increased libidinally invested affective formations. Early frustrations lead to the development of bad self-object representations and an increase in aggressive drive derivatives (Kernberg, 1979). The infant perceives these aggressive drives as being justified in response to a hostile “bad” external mother. As the self and object representations become more differentiated in both libidinal and aggressive
invested interactions, so the ego’s boundaries become more cemented (Kernberg, 1979) [i.e. the child’s sense of self is cemented].

Consequently, the splitting process should gradually decrease as the child is better able to experience the beloved object as both good and bad. This affords them the ability to see people as whole integrated beings who have the ability to act autonomously. By not being linked to them they avoid the responsibility of owning others behaviours and affectual states as their own.

Under pathological circumstances the individual does not develop an integrated ego identity, and therefore is unable to develop functional ego strength. Consequently splitting may increase so as to keep self-representations associated with the libidinal and aggressive/destructive drives apart. The consequence of this is the later inability of the child to integrate libidinal and aggressively invested self-representations into a self-concept, and concurrently an inability to integrate libidinal and aggressively charged object representations. This results in the inability to understand the self or other people holistically (Kernberg, 1979). Fixation in this developmental stage, or regression to this developmental stage, is associated with borderline personality organisation, which is characterised by the utilisation of splitting as one of the primary defence mechanisms (Kernberg, 1979).

3.3.4 Integration of Self-Representations and Object-Representations and Development of Higher Level Intrapsychic Object Relations-Derived Structures

The fourth stage occurs between the age of 3 years old and 7 years old. During this stage the “good” and the “bad” self-representations are consolidated to form a definitive self-system (Kernberg, 1979). The loss of the good or ideal self-image means that the individual no longer sees themselves as desirable by their good object. This realisation leads to the loss of both good self object and good object representation, which activates a psychobiological
disposition for depression triggered by the realisation of never reuniting with the good object (Kernberg, 1979).

The integration of affectively opposite self-representations correlates with the *depressive position* as outlined originally by Melanie Klein (Kernberg, 1979). When the child realises that its own “badness” is directed towards its mother that it loves, feelings of guilt are triggered. Thus the integration of these opposite representations (both good and bad aspects) leads to the broadening of potential affectual states, especially guilt, leading to the development of the super ego, and the greater regulation of affect. Rather than using splitting, more sophisticated defence mechanisms related to the use of *repression* are used, namely *isolation, undoing* and *reaction formation* (Kernberg, 1979).

Some aggressive and destructive drive fragments remain repressed as they are too unacceptable for the person to entertain. Using repression as a defence mechanism solidifies the id as an intrapsychic structure. Furthermore, previously bad self object representations are projected and reintrojected into the psyche leading to the solidification of the superego as an intrapsychic structure. (Kernberg, 1979). This stage concludes with the individual having a formed an id and a superego.

### 3.3.5 Consolidation of Superego and Ego Integration

The ego, in short, is the seat of consciousness, of perception, of motor control, of conscious memory, of access to the preconscious. But also, and very fundamentally, it’s the seat of the world of internalised object relations and an integrated sense of self (Kernberg, as cited in Bridle, 2010).

According to Kernberg (1979) the ego evolves and grows in response to interactions the individual has within their environment and interaction with others. These interactions continuously reshape the individual’s self-concept, which is also influenced by the
individual’s internal object relations (Kernberg, 1979). The more accurate these perceptions of self are, the more the individual will be able to perceive people as whole objects and will not distort their perceptions. This results in a harmonious world of internal object relations, which includes significant others, social peers, cultural identity, provides the individual with love and guidance, which in turn helps maintain a balanced ego system (Kernberg, 1979).

3.4 Degrees of Pathology

Individuals who do not successfully progress through each of the developmental stages will be inclined to develop psychological pathology. The nature and severity of the pathology can be placed in three tiers namely: higher level of organisation of character pathology; intermediate level of organisation of character pathology and lower level of organisation of character pathology (Kernberg, 1979).

3.4.1 Higher Level of Organisation of Character Pathology

Individuals within this tier are relatively well integrated and functional within society. They have a very strict and punitive superego which centres their defence mechanisms on repression, thus keeping undesirable or threatening thoughts, feelings or objects at bay. They are capable of forming deep and meaningful relationships and engaging in appropriate sexual relationships albeit that they tend to be slightly inhibited. They are also able to express their anger appropriately (Kernberg, 1979).

3.4.2 Intermediate Level of Organisation of Character Pathology

Individuals within this tier have more aggressive drives, which are furthermore sadistic in nature, and have a strong punitive superego. The superego is less able to accept the individual’s aggressive behaviours, which results in individuals experiencing high levels of guilt. Projection is the primary defence mechanism employed by these individuals to alleviate the feelings of guilt. Individuals are partially able to express their instinctual impulses [both
aggressive and sexual], but use reaction formation to keep their most threatening impulses in check (Kernberg, 1979). Splitting is also used occasionally, when the ego struggles to integrate the punitive pressure from the superego and the aggressive drives.

Individuals are able to form and maintain lasting relationships which are mutually satisfying. Character pathology tends to be mild, taking the form of passive aggressive, sadomasochistic and narcissistic traits. Sexual deviation may be present, yet if so, individuals are still able to function within the bounds of a functional relationship (Kernberg, 1979).

### 3.4.3 Lower Level of Organisation of Character Pathology

The aggressive and sexual drives of these individuals focus on their own need gratification at the expense of others. Individuals struggle to feel concern for others and are unable to identify with their own feelings of guilt. They frequently experience paranoia and engage in the use of defence mechanisms to eliminate their own distress. The ego centres defence mechanisms on primitive defences, namely splitting and dissociation, along with denial, projective identification, primitive idealisation, devaluation and omnipotence (Kernberg, 1979). Individuals only have the capacity to relate to part object relations and have an inner world filled with dichotomous fragments of either good or bad representations of people. Due to a weak ego, they are incapable of tolerating anxiety and have poor impulse control (Kernberg, 1979).

These individuals find themselves instinctually drawn to positions of power and influence, often overtly seeking recognition and wealth. Despite their attraction to powerful individual, they struggle to maintain healthy relationships with other. Personality disorders associated with this organisation are narcissistic personality disorder, anti-social personality disorder as well as borderline personality disorder. Pre-psychotic personality disorders like schizoid and
paranoid personality disorder are also grouped within this organisation, and this organisation is considered a precursor to having psychotic episodes (Kernberg, 1979).

3.5 Personality

Personality is determined by a proportional combination of temperament and character. Temperament can be defined as largely a genetically predetermined manner of relating to the environment with particular predictable affect dispositions (Kernberg, 2004). Character refers to behaviour patterns that are motivated by the individual’s ego identity, namely their integration of self-concept and concept of significant others. Other influencing factors such as cognitive capacity, cultural influences and super ego values also influence the expression of the individual’s personality (Kernberg, 2004).

3.5.1 Drives and Affectual States

Kernberg’s theory has embraced a drive model; it explains the motivation of people with regard to seeking out other individuals with whom they can fulfil their primary drives. These drives can be classified according to two categories, namely libidinal or aggressive.

Libidinal drives are a manifestation of pleasurable and rewarding affectual states, whereas aggressive drives are a manifestation of painful and aversive affectual states. Affects are genetically determined responses initially triggered by early interactions with the caregiver or fantasised interpersonal interactions (Kernberg, 2004). When the infant is able to recognise the facial expressions of its care giver in response to its own subjective experience, it begins to develop functional object relations, in relation to its affectual state. However, should the parent repeatedly trigger negative affectual states in the infant, it may lead to the disorganisation of future drives, potentially laying the foundation for confusion between aggressive and libidinal dives, and the formation of subsequent bad object relations (Kernberg, 2004).
The function of aggression is to remove a source of irritation or pain or else overcome an obstacle between the individual and experiencing gratification (Kernberg, 2004). This should manifest as assertiveness in a functional person. However, when untempered, aggressive drives can manifest as rage. Hatred is also emerges in response to a frustrating object.

However, unlike rage that is relatively short lived, hatred is a chronic condition that persists over time with the intention of destroying the bad object, dominating it or making it suffer. It frequently co-occurs with paranoia. The individual projects their malevolent thoughts [self representations] onto others, and then fears that this badness in others will attack them.

Hatred comes about when irritation and gratification stem from the same source during early childhood. In peak affectual states of aggression, the individual may lose ordinary cognitive functioning resulting in bizarre illogical behaviours (Kernberg, 2004).

Similarly, sexual excitement is the core affect of libido and over time it evolves into the primary affect of elation. If these drives are well integrated into the psyche, the individual will be able to enter into healthy sexual relationships.

3.5.2 Classification of Pathology:

The pathological personality can be understood by seeing it as a continuum ranging from neurotic personality organisation to psychotic personality organisation with borderline personality organisation positioned in-between (Kernberg, 2004).

Kernberg’s classification of personality disorders is similar to the current DSM IV TR criteria, but is not totally interchangeable.
This organisation is characterised by the individual’s inability to integrate a concept of self and a concept of significant others resulting in ego identity diffusion). These individuals deal with the anxiety caused by this inability by utilising primitive defence mechanisms centred on splitting namely: projective identification; denial; primitive idealisation; omnipotence; omnipotent control and devaluation (Kernberg, 2004). These mechanisms attempt to keep their idealised (good) and persecutory (bad) object relations apart from each other. By so doing they attempt to nullify their aggressive drives and protect their capacity to depend on good objects.

(Kernberg, 2004, p. 15)

3.5.3 Psychotic Personality Organisation

This organisation is characterised by the individual’s inability to integrate a concept of self and a concept of significant others resulting in ego identity diffusion). These individuals deal with the anxiety caused by this inability by utilising primitive defence mechanisms centred on splitting namely: projective identification; denial; primitive idealisation; omnipotence; omnipotent control and devaluation (Kernberg, 2004). These mechanisms attempt to keep their idealised (good) and persecutory (bad) object relations apart from each other. By so doing they attempt to nullify their aggressive drives and protect their capacity to depend on good objects.
Individuals also have a lack of reality testing, and the defence mechanisms help to compensate for this lack (Kernberg, 2004). Kernberg has developed a definition of what reality testing is, which is unique to his theory. Reality testing is the inability to differentiate self from non-self, and maintain empathy towards others, within a functional social environment; functional reality testing also requires the absence of delusions and hallucinations. Psychotic personality organisation is associated with the inability to differentiate self-representations from object representations and indicates a fixation at the symbiotic stages of development (Kernberg, 2004).

3.5.4 Neurotic Personality Organisation

This organisation is characterised by normal ego identity and allows the individual to experience healthy object relations. Their ego strength allows them to tolerate anxiety without giving in to their impulses. They can have functional intimate relationships albeit that they often experience excessive guilt relating to sexual intercourse due to their strict and punitive super ego. Clinical disorders associated with this organisation are: Depressive-Masochistic; Hysterical; Obsessive and Avoidant personality disorder (Kernberg, 2004).

3.5.5 Borderline Personality Organisation.

As with psychotic personality organisation, borderline personality organisation is also characterised by an inability to differentiate self from non self and use defence mechanisms to deal with the consequent anxiety. Primitive defence mechanism centred on splitting are used. For individuals within this personality organisation, fixation is evident within the *differentiation of self from object relations* phase of development (Kernberg, 2004). Individuals respond relatively well to reality testing, but may develop brief transitory psychotic episodes [triggered by acute stressors or substance use] (Kernberg, 1985).
People within the borderline spectrum struggle to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships in both their professional and personal lives. Their identity diffusion often leads to their make decisions that are inconsistent and illogical, and they struggle to successfully direct their own lives. Furthermore, individuals struggle to integrate their aggressive and libidinal drives and tend to have numerous perverse sexual tendencies. Due to their ego weakness they cannot tolerate anxiety, have poor impulse control and have poor sublimatory functioning (Kernberg, 2004).

Clinical personality disorders that fall within this organisation are: Borderline; Schizoid; Schizotypal; Paranoid; Hypomanic; Hypochondriacal; Narcissistic (including Malignant Narcissism) and Antisocial personality disorders (Kernberg, 2004).

Some individuals with borderline personality organisation can maintain functional relationships in spite of their identity diffusion. They have better developed ego functioning with an integrated superego that allows them to better integrate themselves within society. These individuals can be classified as having an intermediate level of personality disorder which includes: Cyclothymic, Sadomasochistic as well as higher functioning Narcissistic personality disorder (Kernberg, 2004).

### 3.6 Descriptive Elements of Borderline Personality Organisation

There are some characteristic behaviours and symptom presentations that are indicative of the borderline personality organisation. By viewing this cluster of behaviours as a syndrome it is easier to be able to differentiate it from other personality organisations. Two or three of the following symptoms need to be present in order to receive a diagnosis of borderline personality organisation (Kernberg, 1985).
3.6.1 Anxiety

Individuals experience chronic, diffuse, free floating anxiety. On its own, this symptom cannot be evidence of a personality disorder, but once seen in context with other elements, can aid in determining borderline personality organisation (Kernberg, 1985).

3.6.2 Polysymptomatic Neurosis

Individuals need to have two or more of the follow symptoms in order to meet this requirement for borderline personality organisation.

1. Multiple types of phobias which place restrictions on the individual’s life. These phobias can be phobias relating to their own body, such as blushing, speaking in public or fear of being looked at. Externalised phobias such as fear of animals, storms or heights etc. Lastly phobias of contamination such as dirt are all indicative of borderline personality organisation (Kernberg, 1985).

2. Ego syntonic obsessive compulsive behaviours such as repetitive hand washing, and cleansing rituals. These behaviours occur in conjunction with intrusive thoughts, such as fear of dirt, that if intense enough, can take on a paranoid appearance (Kernberg, 1985).

3. Multiple, elaborate or bizarre conversion symptoms can be present over extended periods of time, often many years in duration. These symptoms can be so severe that they may appear to be a somatic hallucination (Kernberg, 1985).

4. Dissociative episodes such as fugue states, episodes of amnesia or twilight states can accompany other disturbances of consciousness (Kernberg, 1985).

5. Hypochondriasis and the fear of illness can occur with a preoccupation of remaining healthy (Kernberg, 1985).
6. Many people display some degree of paranoia during the course of their lives. However, individuals with borderline personality disorder can display pervasive and severe paranoid personality traits throughout their lives (Kernberg, 1985).

3.6.3 Polymorphous Perverse Sexual Trends

Individuals often display heterosexual and homosexual promiscuity accompanied with sadistic elements. Bizarre sexual fantasies permeate their intimate lives, indicating unstable object relations (Kernberg, 1985).

3.6.4 Pre-Psychotic Personality Structures

Any of the following personality types can be indicative of borderline personality organisation: paranoid personality, schizoid personality and hypomanic personality (Kernberg, 1985).

3.6.5 Impulse Neurosis and Addictions

There is often a pattern of chronic impulsive behaviour that is ego dystonic when viewed from their normal behavioural functioning. However, during the actual impulsive act they derive great pleasure. These impulsive acts can take the form of drug and alcohol abuse or other impulsive behaviours such as kleptomania. These impulses can merge with the individual’s sexual dysfunctions resulting in eruptive episodes of perverse behaviour only later to be followed by remorse and rejection of the perverse act (Kernberg, 1985).

3.6.6 Lower level Character Disorders

Borderline personality organisation can be manifest in three of the following personality disorders namely: Hysterical or infantile personality disorder, narcissistic personality disorder and depressive-masochistic character structure (Kernberg, 1985).
3.7 Structural Elements of Borderline Personality Organisation

These structural elements hypothesise the intrapsychic functioning with an individual who has a borderline personality organisation.

3.7.1 Manifestations of Ego Weakness

Ego weakness can manifest in one of three ways: lack of anxiety tolerance, lack of impulse control and lack of developed sublimatory channels (Kernberg, 1985). Lack of anxiety tolerance does not only imply that the individual struggles to function well while in an anxious state, rather it refers to how the individual reacts when faced with added stress. Such individuals tend to react to anxiety by regressing to more primitive ego functioning resulting in increased symptom presentation (Kernberg, 1985).

A lack of impulse control is due to the ego syntonic nature of the behaviours being conducted. At the moment of conducting the various impulsive acts the individual does not necessarily perceive them as being inappropriate. However, after the completion of the compulsive act the individual denies, or splits off their behaviour, thus denying it from the conscious awareness. The motivation for these impulsive behaviours stems from the individuals inner drives (Kernberg, 1985).

The main function of sublimatory functioning is to find ways to experience enjoyment and to have an outlet to express creativity; as it is regulated by the ego (Kernberg, 1985). The lack of sublimatory channels needs to be seen in relation to the individual’s culture and social environment. They often appear to live bland, joyless and uneventful lives. However, should the individual find themselves in a highly social environment they may attempt to adapt, but yet still struggle to find enjoyment.
3.7.2 Primary Process Thinking

Individuals with borderline personality organisation tend to regress to early ways of thinking, becoming almost childlike when under stress. This is evidenced by them adopting infantile, selfish behaviours. It is suggested that pathological early object relations that are linked to primitive drives are reactivated (Kernberg, 1985). This reactivation interferes with the cognitive processing of the individual.

3.7.3 Defence mechanisms

There are multiple defence mechanisms that can be employed by the ego so as to protect the individual from experiencing unpleasant intrapsychic anxiety. Its function is to attempt to protect the early introjections and identifications from later experiences that may be challenging to internalise.

3.7.3.1 Splitting.

Splitting is the primary defence mechanism employed by individuals with borderline personality organisation and underlies all the other defence mechanisms used by them. Splitting works to keep opposing drives apart, allowing the individual to disown experiences that are not in harmony with their introjections and identifications (Kernberg, 1985). This in turn helps to reduce expressed aggression. It is also utilised during moments of poor impulse control, for once an impulsive act has been accomplished it is soon split off and disowned. Extreme oscillations of behaviour directed towards people also indicate the use of splitting.

3.7.3.2 Primitive idealisation.

This refers to the tendency to see some externalised objects as all good. If this is done because of an underlying aggression that is directed to the object, it is reaction formation rather than primitive idealisation. In the case of narcissistic personality disorder, the narcissist often identifies with other powerful and influential people and thereby exalts themselves
through association with them. This is due to the fact that they see the other person as a self object and simply an extension of themselves (Kernberg, 1985).

**3.7.3.3 Early forms of projection and projective identification.**

Individuals with borderline personality organisation tend to frequently use projection. The objective is to externalise their bad, aggressive self-representations. By doing so they create imagined retaliatory and dangerous objects against which they need to defend themselves. As they are still unable to separate themselves from these objects (due to never mastering the separation individuation developmental stage) they attempt to control the object and attack it before it attacks and destroys them (Kernberg, 1985).

**3.7.3.4 Denial.**

This defence mechanism is related to splitting as it is a process of disowning actions and emotions. By using denial, the individual is unable to draw from their past memories and experiences. Emotions that have previously been experienced, in relation to similar current interactions with others, are split off leaving the individual to act in inconsistent ways (Kernberg, 1985). This translates into the individual appearing to others as being incongruent and unstable.

**3.7.3.5 Omnipotence and devaluation.**

The use of omnipotence as a defence mechanism, results in the individual seeking out people who they idealise. They often form strongly enmeshed relationships with these idealised individuals and by doing so they attempt to hold onto the good object. They are ruthless in their desire to hold onto these good objects, frequently seeing them as extensions of themselves. They take pride in their ability to manipulate these good objects and can project their fear of them being destroyed onto others, thus leading to them to aggressively defend them against perceived threats.
Not only do they identify with these idealised individuals but they also demand to be idealised by other people too. It is common to feel a sense of superiority over those around them, demanding that others exalt them and pay homage to their greatness (Kernberg, 1985).

In order to prevent the good objects from turning on them, individuals attempt to attack or destroy the objects by using devaluation. These revengeful and destructive tendencies are most frequently targeted against objects that the individual perceives as frustrating or standing in the way of them having their libidinal drives met (Kernberg, 1985).

3.7.3.6 Pathology of internalised object relations.

By using splitting the individual is able to keep contradictory ego states apart. These ego segments each contain a primitive object image which is connected to a self-image and an affectual state that were formed during the individual’s childhood (Kernberg, 1985). Due to the fact that the individual is unable to reach the depressive position, because they are not able to hold the opposing images of themselves being both good and bad, they are incapable of feeling both anger and love collectively towards themselves or others. This inability to relate to whole objects prevents them from experiencing guilt, as they feel justified in feeling anger or aggression towards their bad objects, with no remorse (Kernberg, 1985).

The polarization of good and bad objects forces the superego to become excessively punitive and sadistic so as to keep the bad objects at bay and forces the individual to project them externally. The good object becomes internalised, leading to the desire for power, perfection and greatness. This inability it integrate the superego leads to the use of devaluation and omnipotence and defence mechanisms (Kernberg, 1985).

3.8 Narcissistic Personality Disorder

This disorder centres on pathological self-love, pathological object-love and a pathological superego. Pathological self-love manifests in grandiosity, exhibitionism and recklessness.
Individual’s strive to associate themselves with power and wealth and are often extravagant in their choice of clothing. They seek constant admiration from others, but yet are dismissive once it has been received. Their feelings of superiority are balanced by feelings of worthlessness thus creating a polarised dichotomy. They fear being average and constantly strive to be superior to others around them (Kernberg, 2004).

Pathological object love is manifested though feelings of envy. In order to guard against these feelings they use devaluation. They show disinterest or even contempt towards other’s achievements, but yet are quick to take credit for their work due to their strong feelings of entitlement and due to exploitation (Kernberg, 2004).

A pathological superego is evident by depressive affects, triggered by the failure to succeed in their grandiose efforts, as well as failing to secure admiration from others. Their self-esteem is regulated through shame rather than guilt resulting in their inability to take criticism from others. The individual is not concerned by ethical, aesthetic, or intellectual values, rather their values are childlike, aimed at protecting self-esteem and pride (Kernberg, 2004).

According to Kernberg, narcissistic personality disorder develops between the age of three and five. The developing individual is unable to integrate the dichotomous nature of both their self-representations and object representations. By splitting off the bad self and object representations they are left with a pathologically unrealistic grandiose self-image (Kernberg, 2004). They dissociate from themselves and project all negative aspects of themselves onto those around them, resulting in devaluating behaviour towards others and a lack of empathy towards their fellow man. This personality style is brought about through a cold and rejecting yet admiring parenting style (Kernberg, 2004).
Ideal self-representations fail to be incorporated into the superego which results in the superego being contaminated with aggressive drives. In order to tolerate this excessively cruel superego the individual projects these drives onto others, resulting in an abundance of perceived persecutory objects. Due to the superego’s inability to regulate the individual’s self-esteem they require constant affirmation and approval (Kernberg, 2004).

3.8.1 Antisocial personality disorder

Antisocial personality disorder shares many similar characteristics with narcissistic personality disorder. Both have pathological superego functioning, however, antisocial personality disorder has an almost complete breakdown of the superego leading to an inability to experience empathy or remorse. This leads to behaviours of lying, stealing, forgery and swindling, so called passive parasitic type which is in contrast to assault, murder, and armed robbery which are characteristic of the aggressive type (Kernberg, 2004). Both these types struggle to form lasting meaningful relationships with others, instead having fleeting encounters that are exploitative in nature. They are unable to perceive consequences and only relate to the here and now with regard to planning (Kernberg, 2004).

3.8.2 Malignant Narcissism

This syndrome finds itself positioned between antisocial personality disorder and narcissistic personality disorder. Individuals with this syndrome presentation have strong antisocial traits such as egosyntonic sadism, aggression and a paranoid orientation, but yet still have the capacity for loyalty and concern for others (Kernberg, 2004). They have the ability to integrate experiences from their past and have the capacity to plan for the future. However, this ability to prepare for the future is contrasted by a strong ego-syntonic suicidal drive which is a manifestation of their desire to exert control over others. Their paranoid
orientation is due to the projection of their own sadistic superego onto those around them which leads them to perceive others as enemies (Kernberg, 2004).

3.9 Chapter Summery

This chapter presented an overview of the object relations theory and explained how important the first few years of life are with regard to the shaping of the future personality. It presented a brief overview of how various theorists contributed towards the development of this theory. Kernberg’s theory of object relations was then introduced and used to describe healthy psychological development. This discussion included the progression of children through the various developmental stages as well as the healthy development of their drives and intra psychic structures. This in turn was contrasted by a discussion relating to the development and classification according to tiers of borderline personality organisation. As part of the discussion of pathology, various defence mechanisms were discussed. Lastly, the focus was directed to three sub categories of borderline personality organisation namely narcissism, malignant narcissism and anti-social personality disorder.
Chapter 4
Psychobiography: A Theoretical Overview

4.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will provide an overview of the psychobiographic approach. Various related terms are discussed so as to provide a clearer understanding of the domain of psychobiography. This discussion is then followed by an overview of qualitative research as well as an explanation of what a case study design entails. It then critically appraises the strengths and weaknesses of psychobiographical research. This is followed by a brief outline of the historical developments of this type of research. Lastly the advantages of conducting a psychobiography are discussed.

4.2 Psychobiographical Research

The word psychobiography is derived from two words namely psychology and biography. This implies that there is a fusion of both telling the story of an individual’s life while simultaneously being informed and guided by psychological theory. McAdams describes the fusion as a way “to discern, discover or formulate the central story of the entire life; a story structured according to psychological theory” (McAdams, The Person: an Introduction to Personality Psychology, 1994, p. 12). In order to understand the individual’s story, the lens of enquiry must include more than just the subject; it must also include the environment in which the person lived (McAdams, 1996).

Schultz (2005) states that life histories are at the core underlying the development of all theories of psychology including psychoanalysis, behaviourism, cognitive psychology and even neuroscience. According to Carison (1988) psychobiography is uniquely positioned as a research method to both test these theories and even help develop them further.
4.3 Concepts related to Psychobiography

4.3.1 Personality

Defining personality is inherently difficult due to the fact that various theories of psychology use different constructs in understanding human behaviour. Despite these challenges, Meyer, Moore, and Viljoen (2002) state that personality is responsible for the following: understanding the motivation for human behaviour, explaining ideal human development as well as understanding the formation of psychopathology.

Despite the lack of agreement regarding what personality can be definitively defined as, Runyan (1997) states that psychobiography is an effective tool for interpreting personality development according to psychological theory. Furthermore, by re-examining the same individual’s life over time using the same theoretical model, the development of the specific theory can be examined. This is because the theory evolves but the individual’s lived life cannot change. By doing this it is possible to track how the understanding of personality develops over time.

4.3.2 Psychohistory

The Oxford Dictionary defines history as “the study of past events, particularly in human affairs” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013). Humans have always been drawn to trying to understand our past. This interest led to the disciplined study of history, and more recently, the application of psychology to history. Mazlish (1971) describes a psychohistory as the application of psychology to the study of history so as to help illuminate potential causal factors that contributed to the development of historical events. Illick (1983) sees the application of psychohistory as not only a way of being able to understand the motivation for people’s actions, but also links it to the process of evolution. He is of the opinion that the human consciousness has been constantly evolving and states that the study of psychohistory
is a possible mechanism to quantify how that evolutionary process has taken place over time.

4.3.3 Life Histories and Life Stories

In order to understand historical subjects there are different methods that can be used to makes sense of how people lived their lives. One of these methods is the study of life histories. Life histories are less concerned with the study of an individual’s life; rather they focus on interactions across many lives (McAdams, 2006). Life Stories by contrast, are an account of events or occurrences that have occurred in an individual’s life as related by the subject themselves (Craik, 1996).

4.3.4 Narrative

McAdams states that “to know a person really well is to know a person’s story, that self-defining narrative of the reconstructed past, perceived present and anticipated future” (McAdams, 1994, p. 147). It is through telling these life narratives that people are able to form a sense of identity which in turn reflects their underlying personality (McAdams, 1994). These stories can be condensed to form biographies, “an account of someone’s life written by someone else” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013); or autobiographies, “an account of a person’s life written by that person” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013).

4.4 Qualitative Research

Rather than seeking a definitive answer as to what is real and measurable, qualitative research attempts to explore the differences (Camic, Rhodes, & Yardley, 2003). Denzin and Lincoln explain qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials –
Despite the lack of generalisable findings, qualitative research can be a powerful tool in uncovering and understanding human behaviour. Reason and Rowan captured the motivation for conducting qualitative research eloquently as follows:

There is too much measurement going on. Some things, which are numerically precise, are not true; and some things, which are not numerical, are true. Orthodox research produces results which are statistically significant, but humanly insignificant; in human enquiry it is much better to be deeply interesting then accurately boring (Reason & Rowan, 1981, p. XIV).

Psychobiography has moved away from the experimental model and has begun to explore the individual from a holistic point of view (Schultz, 2005). Runyan (1982) describes a psychobiography as being morphogenic in nature as the study focuses on the subject as a whole and not only on specific aspects that make the individual unique. Thus the researcher focuses on an individual under an idiographic lens rather than from a positivistic nomothetic orientation (Fouché & van Niekerk, 2010).

4.5 Single Case Study

VanWynsberghe (2007) states that there are many varying definitions of the term “case study”. Yin defines: “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Creswell gives a broader more comprehensive definition as “A case study is a problem to be studied, which will reveal an in-depth understanding of a ‘case’ or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell, 2002, p. 61).
Yin (1981) states that case study research can use either qualitative or quantitative evidence. The collection of evidence can come from fieldwork, archival records, verbal reports or observations. He defines the purpose of case study research as follow: “it attempts to examine: (a) a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1981, p. 59). According to Baxter and Jack (2008) a case study design should be considered when: (a) the study attempts to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) the behaviour of those in the study cannot be manipulated; (c) the context in which the subject lived is relevant to understanding the phenomena being researched; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

Case study research is generally regarded as being grounded in a philosophical underpinning of Constructivism (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This means that individuals give meaning to the world around them and that there is no absolute truth to be found. However, by interpreting the stories of individuals, an attempt can be made to understand their unique world as well as the motivations for their actions and behaviours.

4.6 Critical Evaluation of Psychobiography

There are many commentators who hold negative views towards psychobiography. Firstly, some authors are of the opinion that psychobiography focuses almost exclusively on prominent individuals in history to the exclusion of the environment in which they lived. They assert that great changes are attributed to very few individuals and argue that religion, culture, economy and social structures are overlooked. Runyan (1988a), however, is of the opinion that individuals can be studied even if they were not significantly influential in historical events and were simply passive observers. In so doing the researcher needs to take
cognisance of how the subject fitted in to the society in which they lived so as to see the individual from a holistic point of view.

Another antibiographical argument is that individuals that are studied tend to be elitist, as too much attention is focused on politicians, royal gentry and great military leaders while ignoring the oppressed. Runyan (1988a) states that it is tempting to study influential and prominent people; however, individuals from middle class or lower class backgrounds can be the focus of research too. Even unsavoury individual such as criminals, gangsters and serial killers can become the focus of biographical research. This study will focus on the infamous character of Jim Jones, which is a distinct shift from an elitist subject. There is validity to the argument that individuals being studied are not representative of a broader population. However, it is their very uniqueness that makes them interesting subjects to research.

It has also been argued that researchers can become too enmeshed with the subject they are studying and lose their objectivity (Kohut, 1986). Runyan (1988a) states that due to the fact that the researcher is so intimately connected to the life and world of the individual being studied, they can begin to experience sympathy and empathy for them. This connection can help convey a sense of being with the subject which in turn can enrich the research.

Runyan (1982) asserts that one of the greatest challenges facing the researcher of a psychobiography is the lack of adequate information and facts concerning the subject. This in turn is exacerbated by the researcher not having contact with the subject in question. There is also invariably a lack of information especially relating to the subjects childhood. The lack of reliable information relating to the subject can influence the study and it is advised to examine all available information on a subject before undertaking the research so as to ensure that there are adequate resources available.
4.7 Psychobiographical Research: Past, Present and Future

Sigmund Freud is generally regarded as having written the first psychobiography when he wrote *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood* in 1910 (Elms, Freud as Leonardo: Why the First Psychobiography Went Wrong, 1988). Following in Freud’s foot-steps, psychoanalysis soon became the dominant theoretical framework used in producing psychobiographies (Elms, 1994). Gradually, however, different theoretical frameworks began to increase in prevalence (Elms, 1994).

Since Freud’s first publication the popularity of undertaking this form of research has steadily increased in both the United States of America and in Europe (Runyan, 1988a). As the frequency of undertaking psychobiographies increased, so did the critical appraisal by peers which has resulted in better methods and higher standards within this field of research (Runyan, 1988b).

According to Fouché and van Niekerk (2010), psychobiography has firmly established itself as a credible research methodology in South Africa over the last three decades. This is due to the fact than the psychology departments at various universities have all undertaken to conduct research in this field. These Universities include Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; Rhodes University; the University of Johannesburg and the University of the Free State. Van Niekerk (2007 cited in Fouché & van Niekerk, 2010) highlighted that internationally there are many prestigious universities that are also active in this field of research namely Duke University; Harvard University; North-Western University; Pacific University; Rutgers University and the University of California.

What does the future hold for psychobiography? Schultz (2005) states that he hopes that it gains more recognition as a legitimate type of research and that more credible psychobiographical studies are conducted. In the South African context, Fouché and van
Niekerk (2010) are of the opinion that psychobiography should be included as a curriculum requirement within psychology programs. They also suggest a greater cooperation between South African universities and other international universities in order to maintain a high standard of academic excellence. They make the following recommendations:

1. More psychobiographic studies should be conducted not only on great South Africans, but also legendary African figures.
2. Other universities should be encouraged to become active in this field of research.
3. More celebrity psychobiographies should be undertaken so as to stimulate interest in this field by a younger generation.
4. Completed psychobiographies should be published in the public arena so as to highlight the value in undertake this type of research.

4.8 Value of Psychobiographical Research

4.8.1 Theory Development

One of the greatest contribution that psychobiography has brought to the study of psychology is that it actively tests current theories. According to Carison (1988) many of the psychoanalytic theories have had limitations revealed after they have been tested by psychobiography research. He qualifies that statement further by saying that the study of personality in particular can be examined better though psychobiography, than through even the best longitudinal research. Fouché and van Niekerk (2010) are of the opinion that the psychobiography is not merely a tool to test current psychological theories, but should be applied to the active enhancement and development of theory. These theories include developmental psychology; positive psychology; health psychology; career psychology and personology.
4.8.2 Holistic Setting and Process and Pattern over Time

According to Elms (1994) psychobiography focuses on the study of patterns in an individual’s life which helps to inform the researcher about aspects of their personality. This holistic process is described by Elms as being morphogenic (Elms, 1994). By studying these patterns over the subject’s entire life, the researcher is able to examine the formation and expression of behaviours that make the subject unique. The focus is therefore to examine the person’s entire life holistically and not to adopt a reductionistic stance whereby only small aspects of the subject’s life are studied.

4.8.3 The Socio-historical Context

Psychobiography examines the individual within the context in which they lived (McAdams, 1996). Jones was born in the time of the great depression into a family that struggled financially. He was only a young child when the Second World War broke out which propelled the USA into one of the worst conflicts in modern history. The USA eventually ended the war with Japan after it dropped two nuclear bombs on its enemy. After the conclusion of the Second World War, global tensions were not eased as the USA and Russia engaged in the Cold War. This resulted in a nuclear standoff between the two reigning super-powers. All of these events featured prominently in Jones’s life and impacted not only how he saw the world but also affected many of his decisions.

Not only were there threats from foreign countries, but there was civil unrest within the USA too. Racial prejudice was rife which resulted in the uprising of many civil rights movements. This may have motivated Jones to become more adamant in spreading his solution for both war and racial segregation, namely socialism.
4.8.4 Subjective Reality

The psychobiographer should attempt to understand the subject from their own phenomenological point of view. This requires the researcher to immerse themselves in the world of the research subject. By doing so, the research aims to be able to tell the subjects story more accurately with sympathy and empathy (Elms, 1994).

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of psychobiographical research. It clarified terms and topics related to this type of research as well as provided an overview of the nature of qualitative research and single case study design. The strengths and weaknesses of psychobiographical research were discussed so as to provide the reader with a broader understanding of the limitations of this type of research. A historical overview was also provided, as well as potential future areas of development for psychobiographic research discussed, with specific emphasis being placed on the South African context. Lastly the advantages of undertaking this form of research were presented with the aim of increasing the credibility of psychobiographic research.
Chapter 5

Research Methodology Chapter

5.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will give an overview of the methodology used to guide the present research study. The primary aim of the research will be clarified as will the research design. The motivation for choosing the subject will also be discussed. The manner in which data was collected and analysed will be explained, followed by a discussion of reliability and validity. Finally, ethical considerations for conducting this study will be explored.

5.2 Primary Aim of Research

The aim of this study is to explore and describe the personality dynamics of Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones’s in terms of Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) object relations theory. The focus is on generalising findings to Otto Kernberg’s object relations theory. Yin describes this type of generalisation as analytic generalisation whereby “a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study” (Yin, 1994, p. 31).

5.3 Research Design

The current study follows the progress of the completed life of James Warren “Jim” Jones, and can be categorised as life history research (Runyan, 1988b). As it tracks the entire life of Jones, it allows the researcher to speculate about possible causal explanations relating to events in his life. This in turn allows for hypotheses to be generated relating to the development of personality dynamics.

The methodology of the research is a qualitative single case study design. Qualitative research is usually concerned with the study of expressed words rather than numbers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study aims to illuminate the individual’s life by narrating a rich
and interesting story, while simultaneously contributing towards the understanding and development of a psychological theory. This psychobiographical research examines a lived life, in this case the life of Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones, by applying a qualitative single-case research design (Yin, 1994).

According to Elms (1994) this study would be best described as morphogenic, because it aims to study the subject as a whole rather than breaking the subject down into simplified elements. It can also be described as both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature of the study relates to the accurate description of the subjects personality development within the context of the socio-historical time in which they lived. The descriptive-dialogic nature relates to the generalisation of the phenomenon within the individual’s life to a specific theory (Edwards, 1990).

5.4 Sampling

James Warren “Jim” Jones is the subject of this research; this qualitative case study will attempt to examine his entire life history. The sampling method used may be described as purposive, as Jones was intentionally selected by the researcher. According to Devers and Frankel purposive sampling strategies are “designed to enhance understandings of selected individuals or groups’ experience(s) or for developing theories and concepts. Researchers seek to accomplish this goal by selecting ‘information rich’ cases.” (Devers & Frankel, 2000, p. 264).

The selection of Jones as the subject of this study was taken for a number of reasons. Jones was an outspoken champion for racially discriminated minority populations within the USA. He used his position as a church leader to address racial inequality. His actions led to numerous policy changes, thereby helping to reduce segregation in hospitals, the police force and amusement parks (Reiterman, 2008). In contrast to these pro-social acts, Jones also
engaged in anti-social acts where he appeared to take pleasure in other peoples’ discomfort, for example, degrading and humiliating members of his congregation during church meetings (Nelson, 2006).

Jones was also an exceptionally charismatic orator. He had an alluring quality about himself and was able to draw and infuse his congregation with enthusiasm to change the world. His vibrant personality even drew numerous powerful political figures to him. Over time, Jones’s church evolved into a cult movement. Despite all the positive change that Jones brought about, he is perhaps best known for inciting over 900 people to commit suicide in the small community of Jonestown Guyana. This horrific loss of life warrants an attempt to understand the person responsible for initiating all those senseless deaths.

The researcher found the contrasting aspects of Jones’s life to be fascinating and was intrigued to try and understand how they may have arisen. In order to better understand how the various aspects of Jones’s personality may have evolved the researcher chose Kernberg’s theory of object relations as the theoretical framework to aid in the understanding of his personality development.

5.5 Data collection

Data was collected from numerous sources; these included biographical material, archival material, documentaries as well as testimonies from contemporaries. According to Yin (1994) there are three important rules that should be followed when collecting data, they are: consult multiple sources of evidence, create a case study database and keep and maintain a reliable chain of evidence. The researcher has consulted numerous sources so as to triangulate data collection and has meticulously referenced all the materials used. The primary sources used to conduct this psychobiography are listed below. These sources include, but are not limited to:
1. A biography written by Tim Reiterman (2008). He was one of the journalists who was present in Guyana as part of Senator Ryan’s delegation hours before the mass suicide/murder took place. Reiterman states that he used triangulation as a technique to enhance the credibility of the biography and lists all the sources that he consulted.

2. *The Alternative Considerations of Jonestown and Peoples Temple*, sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies at San Diego State University. This academic website is a large repository of archival material. It also contains primary source information by Jones, his family as well as his followers. Furthermore, it hosts hundreds of audio recordings captured by the FBI during the investigation into Jones and the Peoples Temple.

3. A documentary *Jonestown the Life and Death of Peoples Temple* (Nelson, 2006). This documentary contains first-hand accounts by followers of the Peoples Temple as well as video footage captured of Jones while he was still alive.

The researcher utilised a data extraction grid (see Appendix 1), which was used to capture and aid in the organisation of the relevant data pertaining to the formation of Jones’s early object relations. Furthermore, Alexander’s (1990) guidelines for the extraction of salient data were used to extract themes that emerged throughout the life of Jones that were relevant to his identified object relations (see Appendix 2).

### 5.6 Data Analysis

Yin (1994) states that there are two general strategies for data analysis that can be used in case study research. The first method relies on the theoretical propositions used to illuminate the life of the subject of the research namely Kernberg’s object relations theory. By using these propositions as a template for the collection and organisation of data, focus was drawn to the salient information allowing less relevant information to be discarded. The second
general analytic strategy is to develop a descriptive framework in which to cradle the research. To accomplish this goal the researcher placed the subject into an historical context. This included that he was born in the end of the Great Depression, that the Second World War broke out when he was a young child and that he lived through the Cold War. All of these environmental circumstances would have had an effect on how Jones saw the world in which he lived. His significant life events were also described, starting from his earliest recorded childhood experiences until his death in Jonestown Guyana. By doing this the researcher aimed to provide a greater understanding of the context within which the research and extracted data was understood.

Miles and Huberman (1994) separate data analysis into three categories namely, data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification.

5.6.1 Data Reduction

Data reduction is a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming data into a useable format, thereby removing irrelevant information (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This is important as conducting a psychobiography requires sifting through vast amounts of information on the research subject. Furthermore, data reduction is informed by the underlying theoretical framework being employed within the study, namely, Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations. By extracting the relevant portions of data for analysis the researcher was able to formulate hypotheses about their meaning.

5.6.2 Data display

Once the relevant data has been extracted it needs to be assembled and displayed in such a manner that enables conclusions to be drawn (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This presentation of data is called the data display. In qualitative research the most frequently used method of data display is extended text. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that this style of data display
can be overwhelming as large quantities of data are presented in sequential manner. In order to overcome this obstacle, it is suggested that charts, graphs or matrices be used in order to arrange data in a more coherent manner. The researcher used a data extraction grid so as to help organise relevant data used in this study (see Appendix 1).

In order for the researcher to not become overwhelmed by the quantity of information being processed Alexander’s (1990) nine principal identifiers of salience were applied. These include: primacy; frequency; uniqueness; negation; emphasis; omission; error; isolation and incompletion (Alexander, 1990) (See Appendix 2).

5.6.3 Conclusion Drawing and Verification

From the very beginning of the study, the researcher begins to piece together information so as to be able to draw conclusions from the collected data. Miles and Huberman (1994), however, warn against reaching conclusions prematurely in the course of conducting research. They suggest that actual verification of results should only be reached after a thorough analysis of the relevant data.

Rather than seeing these three steps as being independent phases of research, Miles and Huberman (1994) see them as a single cyclical process whereby information is constantly being revised by revisiting all the steps in an on-going manner.

The results of this study will be presented in chapter 6 in an extended text format. Furthermore, conclusions will be scrutinised in chapter 7 along with a discussion on the limitations of the study that may have influenced the findings.
5.7 Reliability and Validity Considerations

5.7.1 Considerations

Guba’s model of trustworthiness is commonly applied to qualitative research. Guba’s strategies are of great value and (Krefting, 1991) were considered for the study. However the classically quantitative forms of reliability and validity as set out in Yin’s (1994) methodology for case study research were weighed more strongly by the researcher in their applicability and use to the current study and were thus applied here.

5.7.2 Construct Validity

Researchers conducting case studies have often been criticised for not having adequately operationalised measures and use of “subjective” judgments to collect data (Yin, 1994). The following three steps are recommended by Yin (1994) in order to increase construct validity.

1. Use multiple sources of evidence.
2. Establish a chain of evidence.
3. Have the study reviewed by other investigators.

Furthermore, in order to increase construct validity the researcher will select appropriate constructs that are in alignment with the research aim. Within this study these include the developmental stages underlying Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations as well as recognised object relations defence mechanisms.

5.7.3 Internal Validity

Internal validity is concerned with causation and if one event led to, or caused, another event to occur (Yin, 1994). It can be compromised when other, unforeseen or unaccounted-for factors could have influenced the chain of causative events.

Yin (1994) states that many inferences have to be made by the researcher in the course of psychobiography research. This is due to the fact that the researcher has to rely on a
collection of past interviews or documentaries and does not have direct contact with the subject. In order to reduce threats to internal validity Yin (1994) recommends asking specific questions of the research, namely:

1. Have all rival explanations or possibilities been explored?
2. Is the evidence convergent?
3. Does the evidence appear to be airtight?

In order to increase internal validity multiple sources were consulted so as to triangulate the collected data. After examining these sources the researcher attempted to explore if all rival possibilities had been considered and if the available evidence was convergent.

5.7.4 External Validity

External validity refers to the ability for the results of the study to be generalised to a broader population. In this regard the researcher applied analytic generalisation by which the results were applied to a broader psychological theory namely Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations (Yin, 1994).

5.7.5 Reliability

Reliability, also known as confirmability in qualitative research, is primarily concerned about the objectivity of the researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The less biased the researcher is during the course of the study the more likely it will be that the study will be able to be replicated by another researcher (Yin, 1994). In order to increase reliability the researcher documented the steps taken while conducting the study, thus allowing future researchers to be able to replicate the research.

5.8 Ethical Considerations

The present study is in accordance with the ethical guidelines for conducting a psychobiography as set out in 1976 by the American Psychiatric Association. These
guidelines state that the subject should be dead, preferably long dead. If the subject is still alive their consent is to be acquired (Elms, 1994). In this regard, attention must be brought to the fact that Jones died in 1978. Despite the time elapsed between his death and the current study there is abundant information available within the public domain in order for the researcher to conduct this study. As the information consulted is in the public domain there was no reason to obtain informed consent from his family. Furthermore, all the sources consulted were duly acknowledged and appropriately referenced.

5.9 Preliminary Methodological Considerations

There are a number of pitfalls associated with conducting a psychobiography that the researcher will have to consider while conducting this study. These are listed below along with suggested solutions.

5.9.1 Analysing an absent subject

It has been suggested that psychobiographers are at a disadvantage due to the fact that their subjects are not present as they are in a therapy setting (Anderson, 1981). However, rather than only drawing information from a single source, the psychobiographer is able to consult numerous sources and collate the data to produce a richer and deeper understanding than by having simply consulted the subject alone. They are also able to view the subject’s life in its totality rather than focusing on only a single cross-section of time. In this regard the researcher has undertaken a literature search of material relating to Jones.

5.9.2 Cross-cultural Differences

It has been argued that psychological concepts that have been formulated in the twentieth century are not applicable to the lives of people who have lived in the past (Anderson, 1981). In order to account for this the researcher will acquaint themselves with the historical and cultural context of that of the subject. Furthermore the researcher will actively seek to
identify any areas of difference between themselves and the subject in order to help understand any cultural differences.

5.9.3 Inflated Expectations

Anderson (1981) states that making inflated claims is not common with psychobiographers. However, it is possible for the researcher to place too much emphasis on psychological processes and development to the exclusion of other possible explanations that could have accounted for the behaviours of the subject throughout their life (Anderson, 1981). It is recommended that the researcher see psychology as adjunct to other disciplines that could explain the subject’s life. The researcher will also endeavour to report all findings as speculative and not claim any definitive causality based purely on psychology theory.

5.9.4 Reductionism

Anderson (1981) asserts that a one-dimensional psychological analysis cannot explain all of the complex dimensions of a subject's life history. Furthermore he states that it is an error to assume that psychological factors by themselves are determinative of the subject's personality and that it is important to consider among other things historical and cultural phenomena.

5.9.5 Researcher Bias

It has been suggested that in the course of psychobiographic studies, researchers tend to pathologise the subjects of their research and can often paint them in an unfavourable light (Anderson, 1981). In order to prevent this, the researcher will take the precaution of constantly being cognisant of their own emotional responses elicited while undertaking this study. These emotional responses can be compared to countertransference like reactions. It has been suggested that rather than hindering the research process they may help add a deeper depth and understanding of the individual being studied (Anderson, 1981).
5.10 Chapter Summery

This chapter contained an overview of the methodological considerations that the researcher took cognisance of while conducting this research. The primary aim of the research was clarified as were the methods of data collection and analysis. Reliability and validity were discussed in relation to this psychobiography research. Lastly ethical considerations were discussed within the context that the research is being undertaken.
Chapter 6

Results

6.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will highlight events that may have influenced the development of Jones’s earliest object relations by isolating incidents in the earliest stages of his life. Although there may have been other significant events in the personality development of Jones, an attempt has been made to extract the most likely events within the knowledge that is available, that could potentially have influenced the development of his object relations within Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory.

Once Jones’s developmental stages have been recorded, noting potential areas of fixation, the researcher will use this information and apply it to the rest of Jones’s life in order to ascertain how his earliest object relations may have influenced his life.

6.2 Formation of Object Relations: 3 years – 7 years

Object relations theory is based on two core assumptions: firstly, the root of psychological functioning is centred around the relationship between the self and significant others; secondly, interactions between the developing infant and their immediate caregivers become internalised as concepts or templates of the self, other, and self in relation to other (Glickauf-Hughes & Wells, 1997). With this in mind, Jones’s earliest life has been examined for evidence of the development of his earliest object relations.

6.2.1 Normal Autism or Primary Undifferentiated Stage:

Jones was born towards the end of the Great Depression. Resources were scarce and many families in America were suffering from financial difficulties. Jones’s family was no exception. His father, who had been injured in the First World War, began abusing alcohol and was unable to find employment. His mother assumed responsibility for the financial
security of the family which forced her to seek employment. This resulted in her leaving Jones alone from an early age. Despite her absence due to work, there is no evidence that Jones struggled to establish a healthy attachment to her within the Normal Autism or Primary Undifferentiated Stage. Furthermore, it would appear that he managed to progress to later developmental stages indicating that he successfully navigated this stage of his development.

6.2.2 Normal Symbiosis or Stage of the Primary, Undifferentiated Self-Object Representations

The second stage is called normal symbiosis and is from the 2nd month until the 8th month. This stage of development is focused on the child attaching and forming a dyad with its mother. Children see themselves as joined to, and part of, their mother, and are unable to separate. This inability of infants to internalise being separate from their caregiver leads to the development of self object representations that are in two clusters of object relations, namely “good” self object representations and “bad” self object representations (Kernberg, 1979).

During this stage Jones’s ego identity would have been fused with his primary caregiver. It is reasonable to deduce that he would have experienced everything that happened to him as if he was causing it himself. Any neglect he experienced would have been his own doing, just as any pleasure he received was also his own making. It is possible to infer that Jones may have suffered neglect from a very early age due to an absent mother, a detached father and a poor economic climate.

These early experiences would have laid the foundation for Jones’s aggressive and libidinal drives. The neglect and frustration he experienced would have manifested as anger and rage. These destructive drives would have been internalised and directed towards himself and are likely to have led to him perceiving himself as inferior. The lack of pleasurable experiences, due to neglect, would have led him to crave libidinal invested energy. This is
likely to have become a strong motivator in his early life, leading him to seek out praise and admiration from others.

6.2.3 Differentiation of Self from Object Relations

The third stage, differentiation of self from object relations, occurs between 6–8 months and 18–36 months of age. During this stage the child gains the insight that it is separate from its mother. Developing children learn to be able to differentiate a good self from a good object, and later a bad self from a bad object. They use the defence mechanism of splitting to hold these competing aspects apart in order to reduce their anxiety.

The quality and degree of care that Jones received from his parents was questionable. He was left alone to fend for himself from an early age. His neighbour reported that on occasion she found him running around covered in his own faeces. He would also rummage through garbage to find things to amuse himself with. Furthermore, Jones admitted that his father beat him as a child. This neglect most likely resulted in Jones’s inability to successfully complete this developmental stage as he would have developed without the needed human contact required to help lead him to an independent sense of self. This isolation may have resulted in Jones experiencing ego diffusion, thereby not being able to experience himself as separate from others, seeing them as an extension of himself. This would mean that the people with whom he interacted would become contaminated with his own self representations. Rather than seeing them as whole beings, he would have interacted with them as part objects, which is interacting with limited aspects of them.

This inability to separate self from others would have left Jones in a turbulent and confusing world. Subjectively he would have seen himself as the cause of the neglect and discomfort that he was experiencing. As these experiences were out of his control, he would have struggled to make sense of how he was causing the discomfort he was experiencing. If
Jones perceived himself as the cause of his own neglect he may have perceived himself as cruel and uncaring which by default meant that he saw the world as cruel and uncaring too. In order to alleviate the internal discomfort of being both victim and persecutor it is likely that Jones would have utilised the defence mechanism splitting, which is the defence mechanism that is characteristic of this developmental stage. Splitting is utilised on an unconscious level to protect the developing child from fearing destruction by the bad object. Should the individual not successfully complete this developmental milestone, their use of splitting as a defence mechanism is likely to increase.

Jones’s interactions would have been influenced by his drives, namely both libidinal and aggressive drives. During this developmental stage the child internalises the pleasurable moments it experiences which solidify to become their libidinal drives, and internalises negative or frustrating experiences, which solidify to become aggressive drives. It is possible to conclude that the pleasurable experiences Jones had would have occurred predominantly in isolation. This would have led to a self-centred idea of intimate pleasure, and difficulty expressing his libidinal drives in relation to other people, thus not seeing pleasure as being mutually rewarding with others.

It is also possible that the lack of differentiation from others would have led Jones to introject his destructive drives that should have been directed outward, thereby making himself a target.

6.2.4 Integration of Self-Representations and Object-Representations and Development of Higher Level Intrapsychic Object Relations-Derived Structures

The fourth stage occurs between the age of 3 years old and 7 years old. During this stage the “good” and the “bad” self-representations are consolidated to form a definitive self-system (Kernberg, 1979). This stage correlates with Melanie Klein’s depressive position, and
is centred upon the individual forming a stable self-identity. It is the researcher’s hypothesis that Jones never reached this developmental stage as he appears to have struggled to integrate both his good and bad self representations, as well as his good and bad object relations. He described being “ridiculed and berated” by all his school teachers except one. This teacher took a liking to him and he adored her in return, even stating that he saw her as a mother figure. This view of his teachers may be seen as an example of how Jones saw the world as a polarised place filled by extremes, delineating people as either good or bad, rather than good and bad. His logic did not seem to allow him to see the grey area of circumstances that he encountered. This polarised view could account for why Jones was attracted to the church at such a young age; it represented the perfect manifestation of that which was all good, accepting and nurturing, the perfect good object.

Due to his inability to master ego identity, Jones would not have developed ego strength. Ego strength develops from ego identity, and gives rise to affect dispositions, impulse control and the sublimation of drives. The lack of ego strength accounts for limited affectual dispositions experienced by Jones (Kernberg, 2004). The depressive position is characterised by underlying guilt experienced when individuals realise that they are in fact both good and bad, a position never reached by Jones. Jones appeared to have lacked the ability to experience guilt, seen for example in his locking some of the neighbourhood children in his father’s barn. This can also be seen as an example of variable impulse control. Difficulty with the sublimation of his drives may be seen with Jones struggling to find an outlet for his aggressive drives. Many of his peers can recall that he was obsessed with death (Nelson, 2006; Reiterman, 2008). It is also alleged that Jones killed his cat in order to perform a funeral ceremony for the benefit of the neighbourhood children. He conducted cruel
experiments on animals too, for instance he tried to graft the leg of a chicken onto a duck (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones’s defence mechanisms would have been primarily focused on splitting, and he would not have developed the ability to use the more sophisticated defence mechanisms related to repression (Kernberg, 1979), which are also associated with the more advanced developmental stage.

There is a strong likelihood of a fixation in the previous developmental stage, Differentiation of Self from Object relations.

**6.2.5 Consolidation of Superego and Ego Integration**

Kernberg (Bridle, 2010) asserts that the internalised object relations and integrated sense of self integrates within the conscious experience or ego. He further asserts that the ego then grows through experiences and interactions with the world (Kernberg, 1979). Jones’s early world would have comprised extensive neglect, and possible physical abuse laying the foundation upon which his ego developed. This would have resulted in the formation of a template from which he would have viewed and interacted with others and how he viewed himself in relation to others.

A lack of integration of aspects of himself would have resulted in ego diffusion, resulting in a view of others as self objects. Furthermore Jones, may have found that he took on the persona of people that he came into contact with, assimilating their nuisances, for example Father Divine and God. This meant that his self concept would not have been stable and would undergo frequent fluctuations resulting in him not being able to perceive himself accurately not perceiving others accurately either.
6.2.6 Summary Template of Early Object Relations

The researcher asserts that Jones was most likely fixated in the differentiation of self from object relations stage of development. This would have resulted in a lack of ego identity, brought about by his inability to separate from his primary caregiver, leading to him experiencing ego diffusion. As ego strength evolves out of ego identity the researcher can conclude that Jones may have never developed functional ego strength. Thus would have resulted in him displaying impulsive behaviour, limited affect dispositions [most notably the inability to experience guilt] and the lack of the sublimation of his drives.

The lack of ego strength would have resulted in Jones struggling to contain the pressure from his id. Elements of Jones’s aggressive drives should have been repressed and solidified into his id. However, as Jones’s defences were centred on splitting rather than repressing, he would have been unable to supress them. The result of this would be that Jones’s aggressive drives would have gone relatively unchecked and would have resulted in him being impulsive as well as sadistic at times. His destructive drives would have been free floating and easily triggered by memories or object representations that he encountered during the course of his life.

Fragments of Jones’s bad self representations would have gradually solidified and formed a punitive superego. These bad self representations would have been projected outward, leading him to see others as being critical or persecuting of him. Later these projections would have remained disowned and led to the formation of paranoid traits, while others would have been introjected into his superego resulting in his perfectionistic traits.

The defence mechanisms, associated with fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations stage, are centred on splitting and not repression. By using projection; omnipotence;
devaluation; primitive idealisation; denial and projective identification, Jones would have disowned or denied the existence of his bad self representations.

Jones’s object relations would have led him to see the world as either good or bad rather than good and bad. This would result in him struggling to see the middle ground in life situations as he would hold a polarised view of the world in which he lived.

The organisation of Jones’s intrapsychic structures as outlined above, will be demonstrated and discussed through the narrative of Jones’s later life below.

6.3 Application of Object Relations to Jones’s Later Life

The previous sections attempted to identify Jones’s earliest development according to Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations. The following sections will attempt to apply those finding to the rest of Jones’s life so as to offer possible explanations for the expression of his personality and his psychological functioning.

6.4 Significant Life Events 7 Years – Late Adolescence

6.4.1 Peer Relationships

Jones went to a lot of trouble to engage the neighbourhood children, putting on elaborate shows for them, and dazzling them with carnival tricks or showing off some or other treasure for their amusement. He seemed to radiate a sense of confidence that the other children were drawn to (Reiterman, 2008). When applying Jones’s object relations configuration, it is plausible to assume that Jones’s libidinal drives were being satisfied by being the centre of attention, perhaps leaving Jones with a feeling of acceptance that he longed for; a way of receiving the positive attention that his parents had not given him.

However, Jones seemed to be afraid that others were going to abandon or reject him. Two examples of this can be seen when Jones locked two of the neighbourhood children in his
parent's barn, thus preventing them from leaving, as well as him shooting at his friend when he threatened to walk away from him (Reiterman, 2008).

Thus the kind, friendly and welcoming side of Jones’s personality was matched by a harsh, cruel and sadistic side. This contradictory inner dichotomy could be explained by Jones using splitting as a defence mechanism (Kernberg, 2004). His libidinal and aggressive drives were competing for expression, and he used splitting to keep these competing aspects of his personality apart from each other (Kernberg, 1979).

Jones was very perfectionistic. This might be explained by fragments of his negative self representations being split off and absorbed into his superego. This could account for why Jones was obsessed about maintaining an immaculate appearance from a young age. Also why he would not in engage in rough and tumble play with the other children in case he dirtied his clothing.

Jones also seemed to enjoy being in control. When the neighbourhood children helped him clean his animal enclosures, they had to obey him and perform tasks to Jones’s very high standards. Furthermore, when Jones conducted meetings in his barn, none of the other children were allowed a say in the proceedings (Reiterman, 2008). Due to ego diffusion, it is possible that Jones would have seen the neighbourhood children as self objects, and perceived them as an extension of himself. This would have granted him a sense of entitlement to order them about as he wanted. This may also be seen as possible evidence of a developmental fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations stage (Kernberg, 1979).

When Jones entered high school he found himself isolated from his peers. Evidence seems to lead to the understanding that this was due to his obsession with religion and the inability of the other learners to relate to him (Reiterman, 2008). Jones may well have been employing
projective identification as a defence mechanism whereby he kept the ‘bad objects’ at bay (Kernberg, 1985). By pre-empting the rejection of others he made himself unavailable to form relationships with them, creating a self-fulfilling prophesy and confirming that the world at large was rejecting him.

During Jones’s senior year at school, he obtained part time work as an orderly at the local hospital. Jones was well liked by the majority of the nursing staff; however, while working there he played many cruel pranks on a fellow orderly. The degree and severity of his pranks eventually led to the other orderly quitting his job out of desperation (Reiterman, 2008). This cruel behaviour could be seen as an example of devaluation which is a subtype of the splitting defence mechanism. Jones would have projected his own bad self representations outwards onto the other person and then subsequently attacked the badness that had been projected outwards. It is possible that this was a response to fear of an imagined attack from this other person (Kernberg, 1985).

6.5 Early Adulthood

6.5.1 Family

Jones married at a young age after a brief courtship with a woman four years his senior (Nelson, 2006). Perhaps this was motivated by an attempt to re-merge with a mother-like good object, again indicating a possible fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations stage. Being fixated in this stage would have resulted in a high probability that Jones would only have been able to relate to others as part objects, unconsciously using them to fulfil his own needs based on his object relations.

Soon after being married, Jones invited his wife’s ten year old cousin, Ronnie, to live with them (Reiterman, 2008). There are a possible myriad of explanations that could have accounted for the inclusion of Ronnie into his household. A likely possibility is that this
decision could have been motivated by Jones seeking to join with other good objects. Perhaps in an attempt of overcome feelings of isolation he experienced as a child.

Jones did a number of cruel things to Ronnie. For example, he trained his pet monkey to attack Ronnie; trying to abandon him in the middle of a lake while on holiday and insisting that he walk into the water above Niagara Falls with only Jones holding his hand to prevent him being swept away (Reiterman, 2008). He interacted with Ronnie in a very controlling manner. It is common for people fixated in the differentiation of self from object relations stage to be very controlling as they fear the loss of their good objects (Kernberg, 1985). They take pride in their ability to manipulate the people around them as they view themselves as superior. This results in an expectation that others must idealise them. If, however, they are not idealised, they can interpret that as a sign that the other person is trying to destroy them leading them to attack the other person. This is a form of projection, where their bad self is projected outward onto those around them (Kernberg, 1985). This could account for the cruelty shown towards Ronnie.

Another contributing explanation of Jones’s behaviour here is the defence mechanism omnipotence (Kernberg, 1985), whereby Jones unconsciously placed himself in a superior, controlling and powerful position of authority over Ronnie. This type of controlling behaviour would have resulted in Ronnie withdrawing from Jones, thereby triggering his object relations that people will reject him. His response to Ronnie’s withdrawing was to employ devaluation where he would attack and degrade Ronnie in an attempt to “destroy” him, perceiving him as the bad rejecting object.

In order for Jones to hold these two opposing aspects of his behaviour apart, both loving and sadistic, he would have used splitting as a defence mechanism thereby disowning his own badness.
6.5.2 Crisis of Faith

It was during this stage of Jones’s life that he had a crisis of faith. He denounced Christianity in favour of a belief in socialism. This illustrates his polarised view of the world, by only being able to see things as either good or bad, as either Christian or socialist, but not both. This polarisation is evidence of a fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations stage of development (Kernberg, 1985, 1979).

It was only when Jones saw value in being able to use Christianity as a spring board to launch his socialistic message that he re-embraced Christianity (Reiterman, 2008). Despite the appearance of a move towards the depressive position, namely an integration of good and bad object relations, Jones stated numerous times that he used Christianity only as a recruiting mechanism for his socialist cause (Reiterman, 2008). Thus internally he was still using a splitting mechanism to hold the two competing ideologies apart.

6.5.3 Father Divine

Narcissism is centred on self-love, pathological object-love and a pathological superego (Kernberg, 2004). The developing individual is unable to integrate the dichotomous nature of both their self representations and object representations. By splitting off the bad self and object representations they are left with a pathologically unrealistic grandiose self-image (Kernberg, 2004).

When Jones met Father Divine, he would probably have identified with Divine’s own grandiose self representation. Divine had proclaimed himself a deity which would have been an alluring person for Jones to associate with (Jones J. , 1959).

Jones appears to have felt a strong connection with Divine which is evidenced by the fact that he emulated many of the outreach programs of Divine’s in his own church. Furthermore, he even went so far as to mirror Divine’s claim to be a deity. Thus demonstrating
pathological self love. This could be explained by Jones’s lack of ego identity whereby he assimilated aspects of Divine into himself.

It is thus possible that the connection Jones felt towards Divine was due to Jones perceiving him as a self object. This may explain why Jones claimed that when Divine died he merged and “reincarnated” into Jones (Reiterman, 2008). Jones’s inability to separate self from non self resulted in him perceiving others as part of himself. By having Divine’s spirit as part of his being he would never be apart from the good object.

There is an element of Jones’s being that was exceptionally grandiose, also seen in the claim to be the reincarnation of a deity. It is possible that due to Jones’s strict, perfectionistic superego, he split off his bad self representations thereby forming an unrealistic grandiose self image. This could have resulted in Jones seeing himself as superior and flawless, qualities associated with a benevolent god. This grandiose sense of perfection would require the love and adoration of another perfect person. This would have resulted in Jones displaying pathological object love as he could only love objects that he perceived as perfect and worthy of his admiration. It is possible that Jones was trying to replace his childhood good object with a perfect person who could never reject or abandon him.

6.5.4 Integrationist

Jones identified with the poor underprivileged class, possibly as a result of his own humble upbringing and subsequent feelings of neglect and frustration. These feelings probably originated from his youth when his family suffered economic hardships during the Great Depression (Reiterman, 2008). By identifying with and helping the poorer class he was perhaps trying to resolve the feelings of frustration that he experienced as a child. His proactive attempt to fight segregation was possibly an example of projection, these frustrations were targeted at a new oppressor, namely the US Government.
Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study

In his church sermons, Jones frequently spoke negatively of the US Government, stating how they were plotting to expunge the lower class (Nelson, 2006). This platform seemed to provide expression for his destructive drives. By projecting his feelings of inferiority onto them, he was left with his grandiose self. By stating how the American government wanted to destroy the lower class he was also possibly projecting his own unconscious desire to destroy them and vicariously destroy the inferior aspect of himself.

Over time, Jones’s sermons began to convey a sense of paranoia bordering on delusion. He frequently spoke about conspiracies, and how people opposed to his church were out to get him. He even claimed that the American government was plotting against him (Reiterman, 2008). These fears were possibly also fuelled by the Cold War raging between the USA and Russia. Kernberg (1979) states that the defence mechanism of splitting is frequently used by people fixated in the differentiation of self from object relations stage of development, in order to alleviate paranoia. Jones appeared to have used splitting here as a defence mechanism, where he projected his bad persecutory object representations onto the USA state and other unseen enemies. By projecting the badness away from himself he created a threatening enemy which resulted in his paranoia. Conversely, his good nurturing object representations were projected onto the Socialistic ideology which he believed was the cure for all of society’s problems.

6.5.5 Sabbatical

Jones’s paranoia was the motivation for him leaving the USA and heading to South America in search of refuge (Krause, 1978). He reported seeing a vision of the USA being destroyed by a nuclear bomb (Reiterman, 2008). Again, this could be seen as Jones’s bad self representations and destructive drives being split off and projected onto the US state. His contempt towards the USA was well known as he frequently spoke poorly and derogatorily
towards the USA in his church sermons (Nelson, 2006). Perhaps Jones’s early contempt for his father served as a template that later evolved into the contempt he felt towards the USA. By fleeting the USA he perhaps sought to be welcomed by a good object, namely Guyana which could have symbolically represented his mother-like good object.

It is plausible to conclude that Guyana did make Jones feel welcome as years later it would again be his chosen place of refuge from the persecuting US press.

6.5.6 Return to the USA

Upon returning to the USA Jones’s sermons in the church began to take on a more derogatory stance towards Christianity. He declared himself almost god-like and yet at the same time preached about how humble he was, and demanded absolute respect from his congregation (McGehee, 1973).

It appears as if Jones was using omnipotence as a defence mechanism here (Kernberg, 1985). Perhaps, motivated by the fear or uncertainty of returning to America, which he perceived as a bad object, he split off his bad self representations in an attempt to make himself more acceptable and pleasing to the imagined bad object. This would have left him with a grandiose self representation. Furthermore, by attacking and devaluing the Christian church, Jones was able to project his bad object representations onto an outside subject. By doing this he was able to accomplish two goals, firstly he was able to exalt himself among his congregation, and secondly, he was able to direct his destructive dives onto a known target.

6.6 Ukiah

Jones’s paranoia regarding the destruction of the USA by nuclear holocaust did not relent. He read an article in the Esquire Magazine which reported Ukiah as the safest destination in the USA in the event of a nuclear war (Nelson, 2006). Motivated by this article, Jones and a large portion of his church migrated across America to find a safe haven (Reiterman, 2008).
The most significant occurrence relating to this move was, in itself, the relocation of the church along with Jones. He appeared unable to separate himself from his church. This inability to separate may be seen as indicative of a fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations stage, and thus his perception of the church as a self object. He even stated that they would suffer from psychological harm if he were to leave them:

“I’ve thought about it. And I’ve talked about it with my psychiatrist. He said that I can’t release them too fast from their dependency or they’ll have psychological problems” (Reiterman, 2008, p. 96).

It is likely that this was Jones projecting his own fear of separation onto his congregation. It was during this move that Jones began teaching that everyone in the church was one large extended family (Reiterman, 2008). This may have been an attempt to unite his church thereby reducing the likelihood of them leaving him.

6.6.1 Relationship with His Family

After Jones had settled in Ukiah, he began experiencing problems with his family. He drifted apart from his wife and subsequently began an extra-marital affair with Carolyn Layton (Jones S., 2003). He also began preaching about the benefits of having multiple sexual partners and even went so far as instructing different members of his congregation who they should sleep with (Reiterman, 2008).

This behaviour could potentially be explained by Jones’s libidinal drives and his seeking of sexual gratification. As Jones was frequently isolated as a child and experienced neglect (Reiterman, 2008), his libidinal drives may have taken on a selfish orientation as they would not have formed in relation with others but instead formed in isolation by himself (Kernberg, 1979). This would have resulted in him struggling to form healthy sexual relationships.
Furthermore, sanctioning of open sexual relationships within his church could be explained by Jones projecting his own justification for sexual behaviour onto his church.

Jones’s relationship with his wife had deteriorated greatly, and he tried to substitute her with Layton (Reiterman, 2008). It is possible that Jones used splitting as a defence mechanism to justify his behaviour, disowning his cruel and inappropriate actions. Rather than confronting the fact that his relationship with his wife was failing, he denied that there were any problems and instead saw her as responsible; he saw her as mentally ill and tried to have her institutionalised.

6.6.2 Jones and Tim Stoen

Jones formed a strong relationship with Stoen very quickly (Reiterman, 2008). This may have been because Stoen was an influential attorney and Jones was able to identify with him as being superior to other people, or it may have been that Jones simple saw value in having a lawyer work for the church. Whatever the reason for their relationship, Jones tried to cement it by having Stoen sign over paternity of his son to Jones (Stoen, 1971). This could be seen as motivated by Jones’s early bad object relations and his fear that people would abandon him.

6.5.3 Expanding Peoples Temple

Jones often set out in cross county recruiting drives. According to Jones the motivation for this was profit (Reiterman, 2008). Again it is interesting to note that he would always take a large contingent from his church along with him, thus supporting the idea that Jones could not detach himself from them.

Despite the conditions being quite cramped and uncomfortable on the bus, it appears that Jones was not overly concerned about the discomfort of the church members. Jones could have been using devaluation as a defence mechanism; whereby he treated them with disdain
and lacked empathy for them as he perceived them as a threat, possibly fearing that they would leave him. Another explanation for this behaviour could simply be the manifestation of Jones’s grandiosity. Kernberg (2004) describes this type of behaviour as being typical of a narcissist in as much as they seek constant admiration and exaltation from others, but yet are dismissive and show little concern for their followers once it has been received.

When back in Ukiah, Jones began preaching that his divinity stemmed from the fact that he was the reincarnation of Jesus, Buddha, pharaohs, Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin (Blanton, 2011). These grandiose delusions could again be explained by the use of the defence mechanism omnipotence (Kernberg, 1985). By splitting off all his bad self representations he may have been left with an exaggeratedly superior sense of self. This good self representation may have been so elevated that the only people he could identify with would have been the powerful and god-like people from the past. This type of over exaggerated sense of importance is also consistent with the narcissistic personality (Kernberg, 2004). This could also be an example of Jones’s lack of ego identity, whereby he tried to incorporate significant historical personalities into his own self, thereby making himself appear more important and authoritative.

With the success of the marketing of the church Jones’s congregation began to grow. Unfortunately for Jones, so did his paranoia. He began to believe that the CIA and FBI were investigating him and ordered new prospective members to be screened (Reiterman, 2008). His paranoia could be seen as a consequence of his grandiose self representation. His bad self representations once split off would have been projected outward. This ever present looming badness would have been the seed of the paranoia that Jones experienced.
6.6.4 Sex according to Jones

Although Jones preached about the value of having open sexual relationships when he first moved to Ukiah, that message soon changed to one of abstinence (Reiterman, 2008). This shift could perhaps have been Jones’s attempt at reining in his own libidinal drives. He may have recognised that his sexual conquests were potentially harmful to him and his reputation, and projected that need to quit onto his congregation.

Despite his message of abstinence, Jones was not able to curtail his libidinal drives. He engaged in multiple sexual relationships, with both men and women, and justified these encounters by saying it was for the good of the other person, (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006). Furthermore, he also stated that he was the only heterosexual person alive and that everyone else was homosexual (Nelson, 2006). Jones appeared to be using the defence mechanism of denial, by not recognising that he had a problem with curtailing his sexual encounters and also by denying his bisexuality. Perhaps he found it too threatening to entertain the idea that he was bisexual and subsequently split off and denied that aspect of himself. He also used projection, by stating that others should stop having sexual intercourse instead of him stopping.

6.6.5 The Spreading of Paranoia

By the mid 1970’s Jones’s paranoia had continued to increase. He began staging fake attacks on the church which resulted in the deployment of armed guards on church property (Reiterman, 2008). It appears that Jones attempted to create an enemy that was tangible for his congregation to see. It is likely that he felt that it was the best way to convince the church that the threat was real and thereby justify the use of armed guards.

Most likely the discomfort caused from the paranoia that Jones experienced became overwhelming. Therefore, in an attempt to reduce the danger from the imagined threat, he
staged these cathartic displays. By so doing he create imagined retaliatory and dangerous objects (Kernberg, 1985) against which he could defend himself.

6.6.6 Betrayal in the Peoples Temple

Jones’ fears of rejection were activate through the defection of eight youths from his church (McGehee, 1975). He reacted strongly to this event, chartering a small airplane to search for them from the air as they were fleeing the county (Reiterman, 2008). His reaction may be accounted for by the neglect that he experienced as a child and his fear of re-experiencing those same painful affectual states. Due to the lack of differentiation of self from objects he may have experienced this act of betrayal as painfully losing a part of himself.

6.6.7 Condoned Violence

Jones sanctioned violence as a form of punishment within his church, often enjoying watching bloody pugilistic bouts between both adults and children (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006). These bouts may have been an outlet for Jones’s aggressive drives. The neglect that Jones experienced as a young child would have driven him to want to attack the thing causing his discomfort (Kernberg, 2004). These feelings of discomfort and frustration would have laid the foundation for Jones’s aggressive impulses thought the rest of his life. Kernberg (2004) states that aggression can be triggered in the developing child through abuse or neglect, and is one of the core affects of severe personality disorders (Kernberg, 2004). By internalising these affectual states Jones may have laid a foundation for needing to attack bad objects in his life. However, due to his splitting he would have projected his bad self representations out onto others, thus directing his aggressive drives onto innocent people in his life.
6.7 San Francisco 1975 – 1977

6.7.1 Identification with Figures of Power

As mentioned previously, Jones had identified with powerful and god-like individuals from history, so it would make sense that he would also identify with influential individuals of his time. In this regard, Jones was influential enough to arrange a personal meeting between Guyana Prime Minister, Forbes Burnhan and California Lieutenant Governor, Mervyn Dymally, in order to discuss relations between the two countries (Reiterman, 2008). He even maintained a personal communication with Rosalynn Carter (McGehee, 1976). It could be argued that Jones identified with these individuals because he could relate to them as powerful and influential people. He would have projected his own good self representations onto these individuals, thereby using primitive idealisation as a defence mechanism. During Jones’s early childhood he would have split off his bad inferior self from his good and perfect self. By doing this he would have sought to have pleased his good object by being perfect, thus making himself more desirable. This unrealistic good self would have resonated with other people who Jones would have perceived as being perfect, good, powerful or even god like.

These same feelings of superiority may have motivated Jones to seek a position as Chairperson of the San Francisco Housing Authority (Reiterman, 2008). Most probably he was motivated by his desire to be seen as someone of importance and significance which would result in him having feelings of acceptance and desirability by others.

The researcher is of the opinion that Jones’s desire to be active in the public eye may have created inner distress due to his paranoia. Part of Jones craved attention while another part of Jones feared an invisible enemy set to destroy him. Jones’s history shows that he tended to flee from his imagined danger [escape to South America and Ukiah]. However, that was not
possible with his assumption of office. It is likely that Jones used splitting in order to keep
these two contradictory aspects of himself apart from each other. Though, it is possible that
his intrapsychic anxiety was not able to be reduced, thus resulting in his depression and
suicidal ideation.

6.7.2 Contemplation of Suicide

In 1975 Jones began contemplating a mass suicide and conducted his first loyalty test
where he gave 100 members of the planning commission wine which he claimed had been
poisoned (Nelson, 2006). Jones’s suicidal ideation may have stemmed from him internalising
his own aggressive drives. The function of aggression is to remove a source of irritation or pain
(Kernberg, 2004). In Jones’s life this pain/irritation may have stemmed from the anxiety he was
experiencing due to his paranoia. He most likely found the thought of his own suicide too
uncomfortable to tolerate resulting in him projecting his own suicidal desire onto others. It is
also possible Jones included his congregation into his suicidal plans because of his view of
them as a self object.

At this time Jones began having unusual somatic symptoms which he described as heart
attacks (Reiterman, 2008). These may have been his way of internalising his own desire to
die, perhaps trying to contemplate or rehearse his own death.

6.7.3 Paranoia

Jones’s paranoia steadily increased as more people left the church. He feared that they
would go to the press and reveal the atrocities happening within the church. Jones reacted by
trying to threaten them so that they would remain silent (Reiterman, 2008). This is a good
example of Jones’s aggressive drives being directed towards irritating objects in his life. He
began to increase the number of teachings in his sermons about the dangers and the evil intent
of the American government. This was most likely his way of externalising the imagined
enemy. By so doing he had a tangible enemy that he could attack. This is a stark contradiction when one considers that he was working for the state as Housing Commissioner. Again it is most likely that Jones used splitting as a defence mechanism so as to hold these opposing views apart.

6.7.4 Family

Jones’s relationships with his family had continued to deteriorate. His son tried to commit suicide for the second time and Jones reacted by sending him to see a psychiatrist, but insisted that his son use a pseudonym (Jones S., 2003). Jones then ordered that his son be sent to Guyana. This is a good example of Jones using denial as a defence mechanism. Rather than accepting the possibility that his son had a problem, which would have reflected badly on Jones’s reputation, Jones chose to deny that there was anything wrong. Perhaps Jones needed to hold onto the image of being perfect in order to be desirable. This feeling would have likely stemmed from his critical superego applying pressure on him to be perfect.

Jones groomed John, the child who he claimed paternity over, to be seen as a god-child in the church (Isaacson, 2008). The reason for this may have been that Jones could not differentiate self from non self as saw John as an extension of himself, thereby seeing him as a self object. Furthermore, he may have attempted to resolve his own unhappy childhood events by giving John everything that he would have wanted thereby projecting his own childhood desires onto John.

6.7.5 Scandal in the Press

In 1977 newspaper reporter Marshall Kilduff wrote an exposé about Jones and the atrocities committed in the Peoples Temple (Nelson, 2006). The article attacked the character of Jones in the public arena, thereby forcing Jones acknowledge the allegations and
preventing him from employing splitting and disowning them. As Jones had previously done when feeling threatened, he fled, this time to Guyana.

The grandiose self representations that Jones had formed of himself would not have been compatible with the allegations being made against him. In his mind he perceived himself as perfect and god-like, however, this self representation would have served to protect himself from underlying feelings of inferiority, making him hypersensitive to criticism and judgment. The newspaper would have challenged these beliefs forcing Jones to consider his actions and challenging his grandiose imagined self. It would also have presented a face for the unseen enemy that Jones was convinced was plotting against him. Jones fleeing and not confronting the allegations was most likely Jones using denial as a defence mechanism. He claimed that he was being set up and that the allegations were all unfounded.

6.8 Jonestown 1977 – 1978

6.8.1 Migration

As Jones had done previously, when he relocated to Ukiah, he brought a large contingent of his followers with him to Jonestown, Guyana (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006). Jones’s grandiose self representations would have required constant affirmation from his followers. Also Jones probably saw his congregation as an extension of himself thereby needing them to accompany him.

6.8.2 Health

While in Jonestown, Jones’s health deteriorated significantly, most likely due to excessive drug use. His autopsy would later show that he had high concentrations of pentobarbital, a barbiturate, in his body (Nelson, 2006). It is possible that Jones began using drugs to help regulate his moods, possibly to distract himself from his the anxiety associated with paranoia.
Jones’s mental health had declined significantly too. Most notably his paranoia had increased as had his suicidal ideation. He also experienced many dissociative episodes where he would claim to be in reincarnation of Lenin. When he was in these altered states he would run into the jungle, shooting his revolver wildly while attempting to speak Russian (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones appeared to experience transitory psychotic episodes, possibly brought about through a combination of drug abuse and the excessive use of splitting as a defence mechanism. Jones had used splitting to such an extent that he was unable to differentiate reality from his inner world of self and object relation. His ego identity had begun to deteriorate to such an extent that it appears that he could not be able to hold onto his identity.

His bad self representations reached such a proportion that he literally tried to attack his ‘imagined’ bad object in the jungle. Jones’s weak ego was probably unable to find a more suitable way to discharge his anxiety thereby resulting in this impulsive behaviour.

### 6.8.3 “White Nights”

Jones regularly summoned all the residents together for urgent meetings that would last throughout the night; he called these “white nights” (Nelson, 2006). In these meetings he would speak about impending attacks on the settlement and the need for unity. In one protracted six day ordeal he managed to convince the residents that they were being besieged by a group of commandos hiding in the jungle and ordered armed men to patrol the settlement day and night (Reiterman, 2008).

This illustrates the severity of Jones’s paranoia. He probably split off and projected his bad self representations onto an imagined enemy. This projection was probably done so as to reduce the anxiety cause by his persecutory delusions. This also illustrates how Jones
perceived his followers as part objects, having them serve his needs by fending off his imagined enemy, but yet not acknowledging their own discomfort, pain and suffering.

Another possible explanation for Jones ordering his people to defend themselves from an imagined enemy was that it would have served to unite them. If they stood together in unison against a common enemy they would have been less likely to divide and leave Jones.

During these “white nights” Jones also spoke frequently about mass suicides and conducted a trial run with his followers (Reiterman, 2008). These instances were probably Jones suicidal desires being projected onto his followers. As mentioned previously, Jones probably saw all of his followers as an extension of himself, therefore convincing them to commit suicide was the first step for Jones to commit suicide himself. If he were to die, they would also need to die, as they were an extension of himself.

6.8.4 Congressional Visit

Family members of people living in Jonestown petitioned the American government due to their concerns of the wellbeing of family members which resulted in a congressman Ryan visiting the settlement (Nelson, 2006). Once at the settlement, people began approaching him and his delegation asking for help so that they could leave (Reiterman, 2008). Triggered by the number of people defecting, Jones ordered that Senator Ryan and his delegation be assassinated. Thereafter he called a “white night”, and instructed his followers to drink poison laced juice (Reiterman, 2008).

Jones probably felt attacked by Ryan and also felt betrayed by his followers who were defecting. Jones, acting in an ego syntonic way, and motivated by his aggressive drives, probably targeted Ryan as he perceived him as the cause of his discomfort. Furthermore, in Jones’s mind Ryan probably represented his greatest enemy and persecutor, namely that of the American government. On a deeper and unconscious level, Jones most likely associated
Ryan with his father, seeing him as an authoritative and uncaring person who was punishing Jones. The neglect and punishment that Jones had suffered at the hands of his father may have motivated Jones to finally attack his bad object.

Jones reacted impulsively, probably due to his ego’s weakness and his inability to find a reasonable course of action to resolve the predicament in which he found himself. He placed himself in a position where he stood to lose that which he valued most in life, namely his followers and his reputation. His superego would have demanded perfection from Jones, yet Jones’s decision to assassinate the senator was so decisive that Jones could not split it off or deny that it had occurred. He had placed himself in a situation that forced him to confront the reality of what he had done.

Throughout Jones’s life he had always fled when faced with a threatening situation (Reiterman, 2008). However, he now found himself in a position where he had nowhere else to escape to. This might have been a contributing cause for him ordering the suicide. He may have considered the afterlife the last safe place of refuge.

The ordering of the mass suicide can be understood by Jones’s own suicidal desire, motivated by his aggressive drives, being projected onto his followers. Being that he was unable to separate from people throughout his life, it stands to reason that when he decided to die, he would have had to take his followers with him.

6.9 Chapter Summery

Jones earliest years were filled with hardship. Both his parents were uninvolved, which resulted in him suffering from neglect. This neglect may have led Jones to fear rejection as he desperately wanted to connect with a loving parent figure. This neglect may have resulted in Jones never progressing past the development stage of differentiation of self from object relations.
Throughout Jones’s life he used splitting as a defence mechanism, thereby disowning incongruent aspects of himself and his behaviour. It appears that Jones split off his bad self representations and projected them onto people around him; doing this may explain his paranoia as Jones would have constantly found himself surrounded by bad objects. Splitting would have allowed him to disown his “bad” self which resulted in Jones having an unrealistic and grandiose “good” self. This would account for Jones’s omnipotent self image as he saw himself as superior to those around him.

Jones appeared to struggle to discern the difference between self and non-self, which resulted in his being surrounded by self objects. This would have given Jones a sense of entitlement over those around him, more importantly, however, it meant that Jones needed others around him so as to feel whole.

Jones also seemed to struggle to express both his aggressive and libidinal drives throughout his life. He could be very cruel to those around him, and seemed to enjoy watching others’ discomfort. His sexual libido seemed insatiable resulting in him engaging in frequent extramarital affairs (Nelson, 2006).

After Jones had relocated to Guyana, so as to avoid a scandal, he was confronted by a visiting senator who initiated a large defection of Jones’s followers. Perhaps being driven by his aggressive drives, Jones ordered the assassination of the senator. The realisation that Jones had nowhere else to flee to may have motivated him to commit suicide; as he perceived his church as being part of himself, they had to die with him.
Chapter 7
Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

7.1 Chapter Preview
This chapter will begin by revisiting the problem statement. A summary of Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) object relations theory, as applied to the life of Jones, will follow. Next the limitations of the study will be discussed as well as applicable solutions that were used to address limitations. Lastly the value of this study will be discussed along with possible future recommendations.

7.2 Revisiting the Purpose of the Study
The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe the personality development of James Warren “Jim” Jones over the course of his lifetime. A psychobiographical approach was used to capture his life history while using Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) object relations theory to help illuminate his psychological development.

This study was both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature of the study relates to the accurate description of the subjects personality development within the context of the socio-historical time in which they lived. The descriptive-dialogic nature relates to the generalisation of the phenomenon within the individual’s life to a specific theory (Edwards, 1990), namely, Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) object relations theory.

7.3 Kernberg’s Object Relations Theory as Applied to Jones
The researcher is of the opinion that the life of Jones is well conceptualised within Kernberg’s theory, which aids in the interpretation and explanation of how he evolved into the person he was and provides an explanation for many of his actions.
The neglect that Jones suffered as a child most likely laid the foundation for all of his future relationships. This neglect resulted in Jones never progressing past the differentiation of self from object relations developmental stage (Kernberg, 1979). The fear of rejection appeared as a prominent theme throughout his life; it may be speculated that he feared re-experiencing the emotions and painful affectual states that he had as a young child when his parents neglected him. It is plausible that due to his ego diffusion he would have struggled to differentiate self from non self. This would have resulted in him perceiving others as an extension of himself.

7.3.1 Drives

Kernberg (2004) states that individuals need to be able to manage their libidinal and aggressive drives appropriately. Jones seemed to struggle to express his libidinal drives throughout his life due to the fact that he had poor ego strength. Despite being married, he did not seem to be satisfied sexually within that relationship. Throughout his life he engaged frequently in extramarital affairs indicating his inability to find a healthy method to express his libidinal drives.

Jones’s aggressive drives also were unable to find an outlet for healthy expression due to his lack of ego strength. He had a sadistic aspect to his personality that appeared to enjoy watching other’s discomfort. Jones also seemed to direct his destructive drives inwards. This could explain the frequent suicidal ideation throughout his life as well as the motivation for the mass suicide in Jonestown.
7.3.2 Defence Mechanisms

Kernberg (1985) describes how primitive defence mechanisms centred on splitting are used by individuals who have never successfully navigated the differentiation of self from object relations developmental stage.

When Jones was a school boy, he kept to himself. It is plausible that this was an attempt to avoid anticipated rejection by his school peers. This would have one of the earliest examples of the use a defence mechanism, namely projective identification. However, Jones soon realised that he had the ability to be a leader as well as a being a good orator, and he used these talents to entertain the neighbourhood children. This eventually led Jones to using two other defence mechanisms, that would he would use frequently throughout his life, namely omnipotence and devaluation. During the course of Jones’s life he would elevate himself to almost god-like proportions while simultaneously devaluing those around him (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006).

Another defence mechanism that Jones used frequently throughout his life was projection. The clearest and most pervasive example of this was his tendency to project his bad self representations onto the world around him (Reiterman, 2008; Nelson, 2006). This would explain his paranoia and why he constantly felt that there were third parties plotting against him. In essence he feared his own “badness” that was too overwhelming for him to internalise, therefore in order to reduce his discomfort he projected that badness onto an external enemy. The result of this projection was that he was left with an unrealistic grandiose self representation thereby explaining his narcissistic traits.

Jones would not only project his bad self representations onto others, but would also project his good self representations. This would have happened when he interacted with
people in positions of power and authority. By doing this Jones was using primitive idealisation as a defence mechanism.

Jones also frequently used denial; this is clearly seen when examining Jones’s experience of his sexuality. He frequently engaged in sexual relationships with both men and women. However, he fervently denied being bisexual. Furthermore, he would explain his sexual pursuits as being for the betterment of the other party (Nelson, 2006), thereby denying the fact that he derived pleasure from the numerous encounters.

Lastly, Jones frequently utilised both omnipotence and devaluation throughout his life. These defences would account for his grandiose sense of self, as well as his cruelty that he occasionally directed towards members of his church and family.

7.3.3 Borderline Personality Organisation

It was not the intention of this study to diagnose Jones according DSM IV TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) classification. However, it is of value to note that Jones meets the criteria set out by Kernberg (1985) for Borderline Personality Organisation. This personality organisation corresponds to a fixation in the differentiation of self from object relations developmental stage. Jones met the following criteria as described by Kernberg (1985):

Polysymptomatic Neurosis:

- Jones experienced dissociative episodes and twilight states which can accompany other disturbances of consciousness.
- Jones display pervasive and severe paranoid personality traits throughout his life.

Polymorphous Perverse Sexual Trends

- Jones was not able to find a healthy expression for his sexual drive and which resulted in him having multiple sexual partners and was even arrested for indecent exposure.
Impulse Neurosis and Addictions

- Jones displayed impulsive behaviour throughout his life. He also abused substances towards the end of his life. This was confirmed by his autopsy which showed high levels of barbiturates in his body.

Lower level character disorders

- Jones showed an inability to feel remorse for his cruel actions.
- He frequently used splitting as a defence mechanism
- He also had a grandiose self image possibly indicating narcissism

7.3.4 Conclusion

The researcher is of the opinion that Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations seems to be confirmed once examined in relation to the development of Jones’s personality.

7.4 Possible Limitations of the Current Psychobiographical Case Study

Various challenges that can affect the success of a psychobiography have been listed previously. These preliminary methodological considerations, which were listed in chapter 5, are: analysing an absent subject; researcher bias; reductionism; cross-cultural difference and inflated expectations (Anderson, 1981). The research will now reflect on how these issues were addressed within this study.

7.4.1 Analysing and Absent Subject

The researcher felt confounded on occasion due to the inability to consult directly with Jones. However, by listening to various audio recording captured by the FBI in Jonestown the researcher was placed in a position where he was able to almost be transported back in time to listen to Jones speak. This created a sense of proximity between the subject and the researcher.
7.4.2 Researcher Bias

Despite the infamy of Jones, the researcher constantly tried to remain neutral and non-judgemental towards the research subject. In this regard, the researcher found that viewing Jones through the lens of object relations served two purposes. Firstly, it helped to provide structure to the interpretation of Jones’s life, thus aiding in the researcher in viewing the subject from an analytical viewpoint. Secondly, it served to allow the researcher to understand Jones on a deeper level thereby drawing the researcher closer to understanding why Jones developed the personality he did rather than judging him for his actions.

7.4.3 Reductionism

The researcher is aware that there are many contributing factors that would have served to influence the personality development of Jones and that it would be reckless to assume that all of his actions could be explained by Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations. In this regard the researcher undertook to consult as many different sources of information available on Jones so as to include as many alternative considerations as possible.

7.4.4 Cross-Cultural Difference

The researcher was aware that Jones lived in a different time and country to that of the researcher. In order to help understand the subject, the researcher read extensively about the various world events that Jones would have been experiencing first hand. These included the Second World War, the Great Depression, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement in the USA and lastly about the revivalist church movement. This served to help the researcher to immerse himself into the world of Jones.
7.4.5 Inflated Expectations

The researcher is aware that the nature of this study is limited to interpreting the life of Jones through only one theoretical lens. It is likely that other theoretical perspectives would be able to increase the understanding of Jones’s personality development. Therefore, the researcher does not purport that these findings are a definitive explanation of the development of Jones’s personality, but instead offers only one possible explanation.

7.5 Specific Limitations of this Study

The researcher found that there was a lot of material available regarding the negative things that Jones had done in his life, but yet struggled to find recourses stating the positive things about Jones. This may have influenced the findings towards seeing Jones in a more pathological manner rather than a balanced view.

Although there was information available regarding Jones from the time he could just begin to walk, there is little information regarding Jones as a new born infant. This would have been useful in understanding how Jones attached to his mother from his absolute earliest moments alive. As there is no mention the researcher assumed that there were no significant problems in these stages of his development.

The researcher chose Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations specifically as it was well suited to conceptualise the personality development of Jones. However, the nature of the theory tends to be quite critical of the subject and can create a more pathologised image of the subject than other theories would.

Another limitation in applying Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations is that it sees personality development as occurring only within the first seven years of life, thereby failing to take into consideration the effect that later life events may have had on the subject’s personality development.
Lastly the researcher must state that the sheer complexity of Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations, which is contained in three volumes, might have resulted in some nuances of his theory being overlooked.

7.6 Value of the Study

The researcher has presented the first psychobiography of the life of Jones using Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations. This is of significance as it was able to provide a unique explanation for the personality development of Jones. Furthermore, the research also was able to contribute to the understanding of Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory thereby contributing to the development and understanding of psychological theory.

This study was also a platform to demonstrate the value of psychobiographical research by presenting the patterns of unique behaviour throughout the life of a notorious individual. The nature of the subject might also be intriguing enough to spark other researchers to engage in this method of research.

It has also added to the body of psychobiographic research conducted within South Africa. This is in according with the need for more studies of this type as described by Fouché and van Niekerk (2010).

Lastly the researcher chose to use object relations as the theoretical framework for this study, which to his knowledge, is one of the first psychobiographies stemming from this learning institution to do so.

7.7 Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher is of the opinion that a similar study could be undertaken on a larger scale. The life of Jones is so vast that a doctoral thesis would perhaps be better suited to capture all its nuances.
Examining the subject’s life by using another contemporary object relations theorist such as Kohut may yield an interesting and perhaps contrasting understanding of Jones’s personality development. Furthermore, such a study would highlight areas of contention within the broader theory of object relations.

A comparative psychobiography of Jones and other cult leaders may also be of value. This may reveal areas of similarity or differences within the personality development of this population of individuals.

Lastly it may be of value to re-examine the life of Jones using a developmental theoretical framework. This would provide an entirely different perspective with which to interpret his life and personality development.

7.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter began by revisiting the purpose of this study. That was followed by an explanation of Kernberg’s (1979; 1985; 2004) theory of object relations being applied to the life of Jones. The possible limitations of the study were then discussed which included remedies that researcher took to help prevent them from occurring. Then a discussion of the limitations of the study was given. That was followed by a description of the value of the study as well as making recommendations for possible future studies.
References


Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study


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http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/AboutJonestown/PrimarySources/LynettaJonesEarly.html


http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/AboutJonestown/PersonalReflections/sjones1.htm


http://jonestown.sdsu.edu/AboutJonestown/PrimarySources/newWestart_text.htm


Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study


Rev James Warren “Jim” Jones: A Psychobiographical Study


# Appendix 1

Data Extraction Sheet: Stage development according to Kernberg (1984)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage Description</th>
<th>0-1 months</th>
<th>2-8 months</th>
<th>8-36 months</th>
<th>16-24 months</th>
<th>Ego integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal Autism</td>
<td>No information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal 'Symbiosis',</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-8 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation of Self from Object Relations,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8-36 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration of Self Representations and Object</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consolidation of Superego and Ego Integration</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Possible neglect
- Ability to connect with other
- Neglectful parenting/corporal punishment from father
- Isolation
- Polarised thinking and lack of holistic view of others
- Impulsivity
- Perception of others as self objects
**Appendix 2:**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guideline</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primacy</td>
<td>This is a moment of a ‘first’ in someone’s life, a first incidence on which they build all other behaviour and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>This refers to that which occurs frequently. The frequency with which something is reported is often an indication of increasing certainty surround it and its importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
<td>This refers to that which is singular or odd to that particular person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negation</td>
<td>This is that which is the opposite. There may be a particular belief or understanding of an individual which is in fact the opposite in reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis</td>
<td>This refers to that which is either over- or underemphasised. Overemphasis is usually seen when something that is held to be commonplace receives a great deal of attention, while underemphasis arises when something that seems important receives little attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>This refers to that which is missing from the picture, that element of a person’s life which seems to have been omitted when considering their lifespan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error or distortion</td>
<td>This refers to the presence of mistakes – be they related to facts in general, or to the person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>This refers to that which stands alone or does not fit with the information as a whole, leaving one asking the question, “Does this make sense?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompletion</td>
<td>This refers to that which has not been finished, and this can often be seen when closure has not been achieved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>