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Jeffrey Dahmer: Psychopathy and Neglect

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JEFFREY DAHMER: PSYCHOPATHY AND NEGLECT

by

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JEFFREY DAHMER: PSYCHOPATHY AND NEGLECT

by
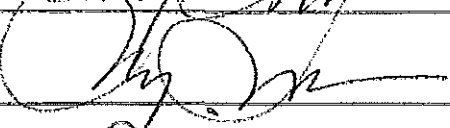
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Abstract

It is the intent of this paper to examine the relationship between Jeffrey Dahmer's Childhood neglect, his fascination with death, and its later influence on his adult psychopathic behavior. After defining the nature of serial killers and the impact of childhood abuse combined with a fascination with death, the focus of this case study will shift to the long term impact of the abuse and neglect suffered by American serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer. Using the social learning theory, the author will examine how this neglect and abuse tie into his later life as a sexual serial killer. Additionally, the theories proposed by the author will be analyzed by professionals in the field of childhood development.

Keywords: Jeffrey Dahmer, Serial Killer, Social Learning Theory, Neglect, Abuse, Anti-Social Behavior, Animal Mutilation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout history, people around the world have been captivated by the topic of serial murderers, primarily because they cannot understand why an individual would be willing to take not only one life but multiple. Numerous sociologists and criminologists have dedicated their entire lives to the research of individuals who prey upon other human beings. As a result, there is never a shortage of information about what makes a serial killer and even how that serial killer grew up. With an estimated 500 serial killers living and working in unsuspecting communities, understanding the origins and/or causes for their anti-social and psychopathic tendencies is of the utmost interest and importance to researchers and law enforcement officials (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). Statistically, these sadistic individuals are believed to be responsible for 3500 to 5000 murders every year (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Current research on individuals with anti-social and psychopathic tendencies has revealed copious amounts of information on the serial murderer's psyche, biological development, and environmental development; very little research has focused on the elements of a serial murderer's youth, which may have played a crucial part in violent behavior later in life. In this exploratory case study, the author will focus on the American serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, tracing the source of his psychopathic tendencies back to his childhood neglect and resulting emotional abuse, his fascination with death, and discussing how this may have influenced his opinion of the value of his own life in comparison to the value of the lives of his seventeen young victims.

Description of a Serial Killer

  Criteria to Define Serial Killers. There are three different types of individuals who kill multiple victims: mass murderers, spree killers, and serial killers. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (2005), these individuals differ based on the number of victims, motivation, and time between kills. A mass murderer is defined as an individual with four or more kills occurring at one time with no discernible cooling down period in between the murders (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). In order to be classified as a spree killer, an individual would need to kill two or more individuals with no cool down period between murders (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). Defining a serial killer, however, has proven to be more of a challenge. In the past, the number of murders needed to qualify as a serial killer has ranged from two to ten murders, occurring in multiple locations, and with a cooling down period between murders (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). Currently, law enforcement has made the decision to keep the number of murders on the low end, two or more victims, so that law enforcement is able to respond quicker to potential serial murder investigations (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). Additional criteria for serial killers include the serial killer being a stranger to the victim while also having no potential for financial gain as the crimes are generally psychologically motivated (LaBrode, 2007). While the victims are generally random, they may still have a symbolic meaning to the killer. For example, John Wayne Gacy Jr. killed "worthless little queers and punks" (LaBrode, 2007, p. 154) because his own father was highly homophobic and expressed that homophobia by being physically and verbally abusive toward him; due to John Wayne Gacy Jr.'s close attachment to his mother and sister, his father saw him as a homosexual and frequently called him a "mamma's boy" and a "little sissy" (Bell and Bardsley, N.D., p. 1).

Serial Killer Traits. Contrary to popular belief, not all serial killers are white males. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has made it a point to announce that serial killers come from all ages, races, genders, and socioeconomic statuses (Federal bureau of Investigation, 2005). However, an average serial killer profile states that serial killers are generally, but not always, a "white male, low-middle socioeconomic status, in his 20s or 30s, has a history of childhood abuse or neglect, is sociopathic [and/or] psychopathic, is a chameleon to his environment, and appears normal to others" (LaBrode, 2007, p. 154). While these two statements may appear contradictory, they are in fact quite accurate; serial killers come young and old, male and female, and classified from all different races. In 2007, an eight year old Indian boy, Amardeep Sada, became the youngest serial killer in the world after strangling three infants over the course of a year (Foster, 2007). One final characteristic that many serial killers tend to have in common is the sexual gratification they receive by taking the life of another human being. Also known as sexual sadists, these individuals incorporate their deviant sexual fantasies into their killings (LaBrode, 2007).

Typology of Serial Killers. There are many different forms in which a serial killer may manifest, and the two main groups are described as organized and disorganized (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Organized killers will be highly methodical, planning every nuance of a murder in advance and even stalking their victims until they have fully planned the entire crime, including the escape (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Organized killers will be very intelligent, methodical, and social, will likely be married with children, will come across as charming and successful, and will bring their own vehicle and weapon when they commit a murder (Victims of Violence, 2007). Organized killers will watch the media coverage of the crimes and will only be harder to capture the longer they continue to be free (Victims of Violence, 2011b).

Where organized killers are neat and clean, disorganized killers will be impulsive and will make things up as they go (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Unlike the organized killers, disorganized killers generally do not have a personal mode of transportation and will typically kill near where they live (Victims of Violence, 2011b). They may be socially awkward and either unemployed or employed with a low skilled job (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Often times, serial killers will take a 'trophy' from their victims. With an organized killer, this is going to be something long term and clean, like jewelry. A disorganized killer is prone to 'overkill' and will often take a body part as a trophy (Victims of Violence, 2011b).

In addition to organized and disorganized killers, law enforcement can further categorize a serial killer by classifying one as either a visionary killer, a mission oriented killer, a power-control killer, or a hedonistic killer (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Hedonistic killers are individuals who are usually schizophrenic and believe they are being 'told' to kill by an outside force. Mission oriented killers are individuals who believe it is their responsibility to rid the world of certain types of people, such as prostitutes, gays, or a certain race (Victims of Violence, 2011b). Power-control killers are often individuals who feel they lack or have lacked power or authority at one point in their lives. These individuals will kill in a manner that gives them the ultimate power: the power over life or death (Victims of Violence, 2011b).

The hedonistic killer is the most common form of serial killer and is further classified as a comfort, lust, or thrill killer (Victims of Violence, 2011b). A comfort killer will usually kill for some form of momentary gain or other benefit that will provide some form of comfort (Victims of Violence, 2011b). An example would be a homeless person who kills other homeless individuals in order to obtain the victims' belongings or a warmer location to live. A lust killer is a sexual predator whose sexual gratification is increased based on the amount of pain and/or

mutilation inflicted upon the victims. Jeffrey Dahmer was the perfect example of this type of serial killer since the mutilation of his victims would continue long after they died. The final category of hedonistic killer is known as a thrill killer. This hedonistic killer thrives on fear and death (Victims of Violence, 2011b). An example would be an individual who stalks his or her victims and sends threatening messages prior to killing his or her victims.

Description of Childhood Abuse

Throughout the years, there have been countless studies conducted on child neglect and/or abuse and its long term impact on social, emotional, and even physical development in adolescents. A common conclusion found in many of these studies reveals adolescents who have grown up witnessing violence in their homes and/or in their communities have a higher likelihood of suffering from long term emotional, physical, and mental trauma. These children will also suffer with difficulties associated with "attachment, regressive behavior, anxiety and depression, and aggression and conduct problems. [Additionally, victims of abuse] may be more prone to dating violence, delinquency, further victimization, and involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems" (Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, Hamby, and Kracke, 2009). Overall, children who witness violence at a young age become desensitized to the violence and many times will integrate this behavior into their own attitudes when relating to others.

Abuse comes in many shapes and forms affecting individuals from all races, ages, socioeconomic statuses, religious backgrounds, and sexual orientations (Alabama Coalition against Domestic Violence, 2010). Children who are abused will typically encounter the abuse from members of their own family or from individuals who are very close to the family. This form of abuse is generally defined as any form of assault, intimidation, battery, sexual assault, or any criminal offense committed by a relative or person(s) living in the same house as the victim

which has caused the victim harm (Bartol & Bartol, 2011). Abuse often becomes evident in the adolescent years of many serial murderers, and like many other victims of abuse, they will continue this cycle of violence. The term "cycle of violence" is used in cases of abuse as a way to explain the continuous cycle of violence that is commonly found in the family history of the abused and the abuser (Finkelhor et al., 2009). Although abuse and serial murder are two different acts, research has shown that serial killers will often look for certain characteristics in their victims. The characteristics can be race, sex, color and length of hair, job occupation, sexual orientation, height, weight, and/or age (National Museum of Crime and Punishment, 2008). Often times, the victim choice will in turn be based on the serial killer's experiences with abuse as a child, and the characteristics of the abuser or perceived wrongdoer in the serial killer's past will become the same characteristics that the serial killer seeks in the present when determining the next victim.

Types of Abuse. Child abuse is defined as "any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver (e.g., clergy, coach, teacher) that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012, p. 1). While a few of those children who experienced abuse as a child may grow up to be serial killers, for the most part, abused children do not develop this extreme response to childhood abuse. However, some do, and it is for this reason one must understand the types of childhood abuse and how each form of abuse may physically, emotionally, and psychologically traumatize a child for the rest of his or her life.

The first form of child abuse discussed in this analysis is physical abuse in which force is deliberately used "against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured" (Victims of Violence, 2011a, p. 1). In situations of physical abuse, the child may

be subjected to beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking, being held under water, or genital mutilation (Victims of Violence, 2011a). The long term effects of being physically abused as a child depend on the severity of the abuse, the ability of the child to cope with the abuse, the availability of a support system for the child to turn to for support or help, and several other factors. Children who are physically abused are more likely to encounter physical, psychological, behavioral, academic, sexual, interpersonal, self-perception, and/or spiritual consequences as a result of childhood abuse.

Sexual abuse is defined by the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act as the "employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion" of an underage child to engage in or assist in any sexually explicit or inappropriate act or simulation of an act, or the "rape, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children" (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008b, p. 1). Sexually abused children suffer many of the same long term consequences as physically abused individuals including low self-esteem, depression, and relationship difficulties (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008a).

Childhood neglect is defined as "the failure of a parent, guardian, or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs" which may consist of physical, medical education, and/or emotional needs (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008b, p. 1). Neglect of a child at a young age is especially traumatic to psychological development as a child needs human interaction in order to develop healthy social skills. A child who is neglected at a young age is also at an increased risk for anti-social traits, borderline personality disorders, and violent behavior as he or she gets older (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008a; Finkelhor et al., 2009).

Emotional abuse is defined as a "pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth" and is one of the hardest forms of abuse to prove as it is almost always combined with another form of abuse (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008b, p. 1). Since emotional abuse is generally found along with other forms of abuse, the long term consequences for this form of abuse are the same as physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Emotionally abused victims tend to see themselves as having less value due to their abuse and are more prone to developing low self-esteem, depression, suicidal thoughts, anger, and many additional psychological consequences.

Psychological Impact of Abuse. Individuals who have experienced neglect and/or abuse tend to employ different methods for handling the abuse. While depression, suicidal thoughts, anti-social disorders, and many other forms of psychological consequences exist for the victims of neglect and/or abuse, research has discovered additional roles which may lead to further risks associated with the previously mentioned forms of abuse. Gender is one such risk. According to research funded by the Canadian Department of Justice and conducted by the Victims of Violence (2011a) organization, female victims "tend to internalize, and are more prone to low self esteem, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, or other psychological disorders. Boys, on the other hand, are more likely to externalize [their abuse] by becoming more aggressive and violent toward others" (Victims of Violence, 2011a, p. 1). This research was also confirmed in research studies by the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2008a) and by researchers Finkelhor et al. (2009) and Baldry (2003).

Jeffrey Dahmer's Childhood

One male child who showed aggressive and violent tendencies as he matured was Jeffrey Dahmer. Having grown up in a family who outwardly appeared to be loving and perfectly

normal, Jeffrey Dahmer's childhood differs from the childhood of many serial killers. Although interviews with Dahmer's family tell of a happy young boy who loved animals and nature, his family also speaks of an unexplainable darkness that crept into their little boy (Dahmer, 1994). His father, Lionel Dahmer (1994), would later write a book titled *A Father's Story*. His book explores the nightmare he endured while raising a little boy the best he could and simultaneously finding his every attempt to raise young Jeffrey Dahmer ending in failure. "It is a portrayal of parental dread... the terrible sense that your child has slipped beyond your grasp, that your little boy is spinning in the void, swirling in the maelstrom, lost, lost, lost (Dahmer, 1994, p. 14)." Lionel Dahmer does explain that there were several family issues that may have inevitably harmed Jeffrey Dahmer in a psychological manner. Jeffrey Dahmer faced many potentially traumatizing situations as a child. One of these was his surgery for a double hernia when he was approximately four years old. Jeffrey Dahmer was terrified his penis had been cut off (Dahmervideos, 2012f). Lionel Dahmer claims Freudian psychology would argue that this perceived castration may have been what led him to cut off the penises of his later victims (Dahmervideos, 2012f). Throughout Jeffrey Dahmer's childhood, he frequently witnessed his mother under the effects of her anti-anxiety drug, Equanil. Additionally, both of his parents were more involved in their own lives and generally left him to fend for himself, and he witnessed countless verbal altercations between his parents which would eventually lead to his parents' divorce when he was eighteen (Dahmer, 1994). Additional research into the divorce of Jeffrey Dahmer's parents also explores the possibility that Jeffrey Dahmer may have developed abandonment issues when he found that he could no longer contact his mother and little brother after his parents' divorce. Lack of contact with his mother and little brother coupled with the fact that his father spent large amounts of time working on his PhD at Iowa State University, rather

than at home in order to avoid family turmoil, may have compounded Dahmer's feelings of

isolation and abandonment.

Jeffrey Dahmer's experience with neglect may not have been the only negative factor in

his childhood; there were also unsubstantiated rumors that he may have suffered sexual abuse

from a peer in his neighborhood. The rumors of Jeffrey Dahmer being molested by a

neighborhood boy when he was eight were never confirmed and were even adamantly denied by

Jeffrey Dahmer's father (Dahmervideos, 2012). If the alleged sexual assault actually occurred, it

could explain why he would have chosen to target young boys and men to rape, torture, and kill.

On the other hand, Jeffrey Dahmer's choice of victims could also be nothing more than the

actions of a sexually confused young man who was terrified of being left alone or abandoned.

Jeffrey Dahmer would later confess that the cannibalism made him feel like his victims were a

permanent part of him. (Dahmervideos, 2012b).

In 1994, Stone Phillips interviewed Jeffrey Dahmer and his family in a very candid

interview. During this interview, Jeffrey Dahmer and his parents all agreed that he was a normal

little boy, just a little quiet. Jeffrey Dahmer's mother, Joyce Flint, smiles as she recalls her oldest

son, referring to Jeffrey Dahmer as a wonderful and fun little boy who would join her in doing

"all the things normal people do" (Joyce, 2012 e, 4:04). Joyce Flint further states that she never

saw any warning signs and claims she would have gotten him help if she had ever noticed

anything out of the ordinary (Dahmervideos, 2012e). Whether or not Joyce Flint and Lionel

Dahmer were truly oblivious to Jeffrey Dahmer's behavior may never be fully known, but what

cannot be denied is the abuse and neglect which Jeffrey Dahmer experienced as a child. Combine

this with witnessing multiple heated arguments and rumors of physical altercations between

Joyce Flint and Lionel Dahmer, and a very grim picture is painted of the home in which Jeffrey Dahmer was raised.

Exposure to Abuse and/or Violence. Jeffrey Dahmer never experienced physical abuse, and the sexual abuse he was rumored to have experienced was never substantiated, implying that the neglect and subsequent emotional abuse were the primary influencing factors for Jeffrey Dahmer's later murders. There have been countless studies showing how detrimental early childhood abuse can be on a child's development and how it may lead to anti-social behavior, increased violence, and numerous additional symptoms (Kotch et al., 2008; Victims of Violence, 2011a; Victims of Violence, 2011b; Trickett, Negriff, Ji, & Peckins, 2011). In Jeffrey Dahmer's life, these symptoms became evident as Jeffrey Dahmer withdrew from others and instead chose to internalize his feelings of frustration rather than seek help for the increasingly disturbing thoughts which manifested in his mind.

In the 1994 Stone Phillips interview, Jeffrey Dahmer confessed that he had never had a real deep conversation with his father, Lionel Dahmer; conversations he did have with his father were always superficial (Dahmervideos, 2012b). Lionel Dahmer, himself, admitted that he learned everything about his son's state of mind during the trial and in Jeffrey Dahmer's confessions (Dahmervideos, 2012b). Joyce Flint also appeared to be caught off guard by her son's actions, claiming she never saw the warning signs and was never even informed of the issues with her son until news of his arrest and crimes began playing in the media (Dahmervideos, 2012e).

Interpersonal violence was another matter that neither of Jeffrey Dahmer's parents found to be a serious issue when raising Jeffrey Dahmer or his younger brother. Joyce Flint claimed it was something she grew up with and therefore saw nothing wrong with it (Dahmervideos,

2012f). This reaction to interpersonal violent exposure is often how individuals in violent homes view violence; since they experienced it as a child, it must be normal or have little or no impact on children who reside within the home. This is a phenomenon which has been analyzed in multiple research studies, and in nearly every case, violent exposure has been shown to have a significant impact on the child's psychological and social development (Sousa et al., 2011; Mustanoja et al., 2011; Baldry, 2003).

Anti-social Behavior. As a child or adolescent, most individuals have skipped a class, harassed a classmate or sibling, or uttered a swear word at a peer. Generally, if this individual is caught, he or she will be reprimanded for the behavior and will think twice before committing the offense again. However, for some individuals this is not the case. Children who continually behave in a manner which is considered inappropriate or a blatant violation of another individual's rights are diagnosed with conduct disorder. Conduct disorder is often found to develop in children when they are in late childhood or early adolescence and will generally consist of bullying, damaging property, lying, and/or stealing without remorse (Johnston, 2009). Where childhood misconduct will typically stop once the child is caught and reprimanded, children with a conduct disorder are selfish, lack guilt, and generally do not get along well with others, making it very difficult to treat the misconduct since they will not see their behavior as wrong (Johnston, 2009). Due to this lack of guilt, these individuals are prone to violent and often unprovoked aggressive behavior against other individuals and/or animals (Johnston, 2009). If conduct disorder is not properly diagnosed and treated, with medication or by removing the child from the problem environment, the child is likely to begin displaying anti-social tendencies. Anti-social behavior is characteristically defined as behavior in which an individual knowingly violates an individual's rights and/or the laws and standards of society in a manner that is not

generally considered illegal (Bartol and Bartol, 2011). Anti-social behavior is officially defined as a "mental health condition in which a person has a long-term pattern of manipulating, exploiting, or violating the rights of others" (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2010, p. 1). Curt Bartol and Anne Bartol (2011) assert that the younger these actions develop, the more likely these individuals are to engage in more serious behavior as they get older (Bartol and Bartol, 2011). "Seriously anti-social children are likely to progress in a spiral of escalating and more severe anti-social and violent behavior over time" (Bartol and Bartol, 2011, p. 140).

For those unfortunate children who grow up with abuse and neglect, often times their cries for help are overlooked or ignored. "If a conduct disorder pattern is present prior to the age of fifteen, it is strongly associated with an increased risk of violent behavior into middle age (Bartol and Bartol, 2011, p. 49)." Children whose cries for help are ignored or overlooked will become involved in deviant behavior, and from there, they will gradually turn toward more illegal and even deadly activities. This behavior was particularly evident with Jeffrey Dahmer. At the age of four, Jeffrey Dahmer's Father had noticed Jeffrey Dahmer had a particularly odd fascination with a pile of bones that had been raked out from under his childhood home. While this odd behavior was noticed, Lionel Dahmer did nothing to deter his son's interest with death, and as a result, his son's interest grew. By the time Jeffrey Dahmer was in his teens, his interest in death had turned into an obsession. When he was in ninth grade, he was assigned a fetal pig and told to dissect the animal as a part of his grade; he later took the animal home and kept the skeleton (Dahmervideos, 2012a). This obsession eventually led to Jeffrey Dahmer frequently riding his bike along roads, collecting the bodies of animals which had been hit by cars, and later mutilating and displaying the bodies in a macabre manner (Dahmer, 1994). Following his arrest, Jeffrey Dahmer was asked why he continued to mutilate animals after he completed the first one;

his only response was that he did not know why. "It became a compulsion and it switched from animals to humans. I still don't understand it. I don't know why" (Dahmervideos, 2012a, 6:50).

In the 1994 interview with Jeffrey Dahmer and his parents, Jeffrey Dahmer appeared calm, relaxed, and even pleasant when talking about the crimes he committed. While he appeared to genuinely feel remorse for his actions, he did not feel that he could stop killing. Jeffrey Dahmer even claims to not have any recollection of his second murder, which he believed to be the murder which pushed him over the edge (Dahmervideos, 2012b). Jeffrey Dahmer's Father, Lionel Dahmer, strongly believed that it was his own unacted upon desires that were carried down into Jeffrey Dahmer; where Lionel Dahmer would fantasize about harming people (the neighborhood bullies) in his dreams, Jeffrey Dahmer would act on these desires in real life, beginning with animals and later with humans (Dahmervideos, 2012f). Lionel Dahmer further stated that it may have been Jeffrey Dahmer's strong sexual drive which led him to sexually assault, dismember, and cannibalize his victims (Dahmervideos, 2012f).

In interviews with Jeffrey Dahmer, he appeared just as perplexed by his actions as everyone else, claiming the urge to kill was uncontrollable, unavoidable, and something he could not understand. Jeffrey Dahmer admitted he began having fantasies of death mingled with sex by the time he was 14 or 15 years of age, and it was at that age that he felt he was at a point of no return (Dahmervideos, 2012a). Jeffrey Dahmer claimed his fantasies consisted of picking up a hitchhiker, holding him hostage, and doing whatever he wanted with him (Dahmervideos, 2012b). Three years later, all of the pieces fell together. One night, while driving home to a once again empty home, Jeffrey Dahmer drove past a hitchhiker and was unable to stop himself. "All the parts were there that just made it possible to happen" (Jeffrey, 2012b, 1:35). Steven Hicks was only 19 years old when he was murdered.

Chapter Summary

Media sources, movies, books, and even television shows have managed to keep a deep fascination with the concept of a serial murderer thriving year after year. Those who have taken the time to research these disturbed individuals have classified the types of serial killers as either organized or disorganized killers, allowing society to further define serial killers based on the manner in which they kill. In addition to being either organized or disorganized, a serial killer can be a visionary killer, a mission oriented killer, a power-control killer, or a hedonistic killer (Victims of Violence, 2011b).

For those who wish to understand why a serial killer kills, research will generally lead them to stories of childhood abuse or neglect as a precursor to violent and/or anti-social tendencies. Many serial killers are exposed to some form of neglect, physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse as a child; however, Jeffrey Dahmer only experienced neglect and emotional abuse as a child making his case rather unique. Jeffrey Dahmer began to display anti-social behavior as a result of regular and long term neglect as a child. It is believed that this neglect is what led Jeffrey Dahmer to devalue life and develop anti-social traits which would later develop into full fledged psychopathic tendencies as he got older.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter presents the current and/or influential research studies and data gathered on childhood neglect/abuse and how that neglect/abuse later impacts on adult serial murder and/or violent tendencies. Over the years, various research studies have been conducted to study the phenomenon of neglect/abuse and its resulting effect on a child's social and psychological development. The studies delve further into how the child's development may influence his or her adult behavior. By showing how neglect/abuse can influence a child's behavior and personality, researchers have been able to more effectively solidify the connection between abuse/neglect and increased likelihood of anti-social behaviors, various personality disorders, and increased criminal and/or deviant behavior.

The following reviews will summarize the pertinent literature relating to this analysis's subject manner; particular focus will be given to those studies which analyze the long term impact of neglect and abuse on child development. Additional elements which will be reviewed are: child/parent attachment, witnessing domestic violence as a child, anti-social behavior and personality disorders, and studies relating to childhood abuse and animal torture and/or mutilation. Specifically, this literature review chapter is arranged into five subcategories: (a) social learning theory, (b) childhood abuse and neglect, (c) anti-social behavior, (d) violence against animals, (e) serial murder and/or violence.

Data was obtained for this literature review using the Regis University online database and various additional online databases for scholarly research. The primary databases used were:

Sage journals, Wiley Online Library, Google Scholar, and federally funded organizations for

both the United States and foreign governments. The most commonly used keywords or phrases

were: Jeffrey Dahmer, child abuse, child neglect, anti-social, psychopath, serial killer, social

learning theory, and many additional variations and/or combinations of each of those terms. In

the following literature review, articles were chosen based on the quality of research, relation to

proposal topic, and readability.

Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory is the belief that an individual learns certain behaviors from his

or her environment through observational learning (McLeod, 2011; Bandura, 1977). Heng Choon

(Oliver) Chan, Kathleen M. Heide, and Eric Beauregard (2011) used the social learning theory

and routine activities theory as the foundation for their research on sexual homicide. Through the

use of these two criminological theories, Chan et al. (2011) were able to research the motivation

process from which an individual becomes "motivated to sexually kill, decides to sexually kill,

and acts of that desire, intention, and opportunity" (Chan et al., 2011, p. 228). Their analysis of

sexual killings concluded by stating that a sexual killer not only requires the correct state of mind

for the act but must also have the correct environmental cues for the crime to occur. Also known

as the routine activities theory, these environmental cues will generally consist of a "motivated

and potential offender, an attractive and suitable target, and an ineffective or absent capable

guardian protecting against a violation" (Chan et al., 2011, p. 232). Chan et al. (2011) also

claimed that individuals who commit sexual killing are generally exposed to regular and long

term sexual violence and other criminal behavior starting from early childhood, usually from a

parent or caregiver. Jeffrey Dahmer was used to illustrate Chan et al.'s (2011) claims since he is

a well known American serial killer and because he witnessed multiple domestic disputes and

altercations between his parents. He was also chosen as an example due to his experiences with parental neglect as a child and adolescent; as a result of that neglect, he was denied the child-parents interaction he needed for proper social development. Additionally, Chan et al. (2011) suggested communities combat the issue of child neglect by encouraging individuals to take part in parenting classes, high schools to teach child development or parenting classes, and parental support groups.

When defining the causality of psychopathic tendencies, there are numerous theories which pertain to biological and environmental factors and their influence on the development of psychopathic behavior. Using the Social Learning and Individual Trait Theories, Rebecca LaBrode (2007) analyzed the lives of several different serial killers "to assess the similarities and differences between their histories, crimes, and personalities" (LaBrode, 2007, p. 151) and found a startling number of connections between the targeted serial killers. The targeted serial killers were Gary Ridgeway, Ed Gein, Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, BTK (Dennis Rader), John Wayne Gacy Jr., and Ed Kemper. All of these individuals displayed anti-social personality disorder traits as well as psychopathic tendencies and similarities in the crimes they committed, their personalities, and their histories. "Gary Ridgeway (The Green River Killer), Jeffrey Dahmer, Ed Kemper, and Henry Lee Lucas all engaged in necrophilia, which involves engaging in sexual activity with deceased individuals" (LaBrode, 2007, p. 154). While they grew up in different times, locations, and with different family upbringing, all of these individuals had a history of "abuse, trauma, insecure attachment, loss or abandonment of a parent or caretaker, anti-social behavior, head injury, and low arousal levels" (LaBrode, 2007, p. 154-155). Even the victimology of these individuals shares a common theme as each chose a primary characteristic that all their victims shared. For example Jeffrey Dahmer targeted young men, John Wayne Gacy

Jr. targeted adolescent boys, Ted Bundy targeted college aged women with long hair, and Gary

Ridgeway targeted prostitutes (LaBrode, 2007).

Following Labrode's (2007) analysis of common themes found amongst serial murderers,

Richard B. Felson and Kelsea Jo Lane (2009) conducted a research study which stated that

offenders will commit crimes based on what they have been exposed to. Using data gathered

from State and Federal Correctional Facilities, Felson and Lane (2009) came to the conclusion

that offenders who were exposed to sexual abuse as a child were more likely to commit sexual

crimes as an adult, particularly targeting young children as their victims, while physically abused

offenders were more likely to commit violent offenses (Felson & Lane, 2009). This data resulted

in Felson and Lane's (2009) encompassing question: "[W]hat exactly do children model when

they are mistreated" (Felson & Lane, 2009, p. 489)? Bandura's (1977) social learning theory

claimed "behavior modeled is often the same as the behavior observed" (Felson & Lane, 2009, p.

489) which would imply mistreated children are more likely to transfer the violent treatment they

received as children to those they encounter when they reach adulthood (Bartol & Bartol, 2011;

Felson & Lane, 2009).

Childhood Abuse and Neglect

There are numerous methods for disciplining a child when he or she misbehaves, but

none quite as controversial as physically harming a child. While many parents who spank their

misbehaving child do so in a manner which is more startling than harmful, even this can have

long term psychological impacts on a young child's development. Kathryn Maguire-Jack,

Andrea N. Gromoske, Lawrence M. Berger (2012) recently conducted a study which targeted

children under the age of five years in hopes of determining whether "spanking at ages 1 and 3 is

adversely associated with cognitive skills and behavior problems at ages 3 and 5" (Maguire-Jack

et al., 2012, p. 1). Known as the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, their study worked with 4,898 U.S. children born between 1998 and 2000. The majority of the children were from unmarried families with lower incomes (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). Data was obtained through telephone or in-person interviews at the child's birth and then again when the child was within the one, three, or five year age range (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). Spanking levels were recorded by researchers who obtained the information purely by asking the mother of the targeted child to rate how often she spanked her child, or how often her spouse/partner spanked the child, on a five point scale (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). The scale ranged from: "[(1)] never in the past month, [(2)] once or twice, [(3)] a few times this past month, [(4)] a few times a week, [(5)] or every day or nearly every day" (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012, p. 5).

While the amount of spanking was not recorded in a statistically reliable manner, the behavioral, cognitive, and emotionality problems were measured in a manner which was far more reliable. Behavioral problems were measured by using the Child Behavior Checklist, which compares how the child displays externalized and internalized behavior problems (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). The child cognitive development was measured using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III which is frequently used to measure children's language and cognitive abilities (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). The final test was only obtained from the children when they were in the 1 year age group. This test measured each child's tendency to become easily aroused, often intensely, which is frequently associated with later cognitive skills, behavior problems, and consequentially an increased risk of parental stress and maternal spanking (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). Using the Emotionality, Activity, and Sociability (EAS) Temperament Survey for Children, Maguire-Jack et al. (2012) were able to measure each child's emotional development. Conclusions gathered from this study showed "spanking at age one was

associated with a higher level of spanking and externalizing behavior at age [three], and

spanking at age [three] was associated with a higher level of internalizing and externalizing

behavior at age [five]" (Maguire-Jack et al., 2012, p. 1, 10-13). Additional conclusions showed

that a link "between spanking at age [one] and behavioral problems at age [five]" were often

signs the child was exposed to ongoing spankings from the age of one to the age of five

(Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). The authors were not able to conclude that spanking a one year old

child had any effect on cognitive skills at either three or five years of age (Maguire-Jack et al.,

2012).

Jonathan B. Kotch et al. (2008) all conducted an in-depth research study on early

childhood neglect (birth to two years of age) and the impact it had on later childhood aggression

(ages four, six, and eight). Using a study group made up of 1318 at risk children, Kotch et al.

(2008) gathered reports of aggressive behavior from the child's primary caregiver and reports of

child maltreatment from the Child Protective Service. Known as the LONGSCAN study, this

study made use of the Modified Maltreatment Classification Scheme (MMCS) in order to gather

a more accurate interpretation of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional

maltreatment (Kotch et al., 2008). According to MMCS, physical abuse is an intentional act of

harming a child by a caregiver or responsible adult which physically injures the child; this does

not include ear piercing, circumcision, or any other form of culturally accepted physical harm

directed at a child (Kotch et al., 2008). Sexual abuse is any intentional exposure, contact, or

interaction of a sexual nature between a child and a caregiver or responsible adult which results

in sexual gratification or monetary profit for the adult (Kotch et al., 2008). Sexual abuse would

also include any and all injuries which were a direct result of the sexual act (Kotch et al., 2008).

Physical neglect was defined in two different ways in the MMCS: first as failure to provide and

second as a lack of supervision. These two definitions are explained in a literal sense. A failure to provide means caregivers or responsible adults who fail to meet the physical needs of the child (Kotch et al., 2008). The physical needs of the child include the requirement of adequate food and shelter. Lack of supervision included parents and responsible adults who fail to adequately supervise a child both inside and outside the home (Kotch et al., 2008). Bringing a child into an unsafe environment, allowing a child to be supervised by an unsafe or unsuitable guardian, or inadequate supervision of the child are all examples of the child having lack of supervision (Kotch et al., 2008). After reviewing the data obtained from the LONGSCAN study, Kotch et al. (2008) were able to conclude that only early childhood neglect was a significant predictor of higher aggression scores. Additionally, Kotch et al. (2008) were able to conclude that "early abuse, later abuse, and later neglect were not significantly predictive" of future aggressive behavior in children (p. 725).

Cindy Sousa et al. (2011) explored the effects of child abuse in combination with a child witnessing his or her parents being domestically violent toward each other and compared this to the likelihood of the same child developing anti-social tendencies as an adolescent. Data gathered for this study was performed longitudinally over approximately 16 years on 457 children who were approximately four years of age during the first wave of the study, approximately eight years of age during the second wave of the study, and approximately eighteen years of age during the third wave of the study. Abuse was measured based on the amount and degree of disciplinary action taken against a child, which included biting, slapping, and hitting a child with a hard object (Sousa et al., 2011). Domestic violence was measured by recording the amount and degree of "physical violence (hit, punch, kick), threats to do physical harm, and breaking things" (Sousa et al., 2011, p. 119). Sousa et al. (2011) concluded from the

findings that a stronger parent-child attachment as well as reducing the likelihood of a child witnessing domestic violence could reduce the risk of anti-social behavior as the child reaches adolescence.

Children who witness domestic violence between their parents are not only at a higher risk of developing anti-social behavior, (Souta et al., 2011) but according to Susanna Mustanoja et al. (2011), these children are also increasingly vulnerable to bullying behavior, both as the victim and the bully. As part of the STUDY-70 project, the research study "consisted of 508 (208, 40.9% males; 300, 59.1% females) adolescent inpatients aged 12–17 years (mean 15.4 years; [standard deviation] 1.3) consecutively admitted to Unit 70 at Oulu University Hospital, Department of Psychiatry, between April 2001 and March 2006" (Mustanoja et al., 2011, p. 496). As a method for determining the amount of trauma these adolescents had experienced, a survey was taken from each individual asking if the adolescent had witnessed or been the victim of a violent crime, witnessed domestic violence ("involving threatened or actual harm to parent" (Mustanoja et al., 2011, p. 497)), or been subjected to physical and/or sexual abuse both isolated or reoccurring. This information was compared to data gathered on the participant's experience with bullying, which the researchers defined as threatening or intimidating behavior directed toward another individual on three or more occasions (Mustanoja et al., 2011). Mestanoja et al. (2011) concluded the study by revealing the increased likelihood of aggressive behavior, in the form of bullying, for both boys and girls. Boys showed a statistically significant association between bullying behavior and witnessed interpersonal violence between their parents; Girls showed that their bullying behavior was significantly associated with "witnessing a violent crime, to being a victim of violent crime, to witnessing [interpersonal violence between her parents], and to physical abuse by [her] parents" (Mustanoja et al., 2011, p. 498; Sousa et al.,

2011; Kotch et al., 2008; Maguire-Jack et al., 2012; Bartol & Bartol, 2011; Felson & Lane, 2009; LaBrode, 2007).

In 2011, researchers Penelope K. Trickett, Sonya Negriff, Juye Ji, and Melissa Peckins conducted a survey on child abuse and neglect and the substantial effect this has on society. Over the last several decades, there has been a great deal of research on child neglect and abuse and each of these studies "indicate such maltreatment is associated with a number of mental health problems, including internalizing and externalizing problems, as well as other maladaptive developmental problems in childhood and beyond" (Trickett et al., 2011, p. 3). After reviewing these research studies, Trickette, et al. (2011) were able to conclude that a significant number of additional research studies need to be conducted on the societal impact of child abuse and neglect. This would be beneficial to communities since it would provide additional information needed by child welfare and other similarly focused organizations in order to create intervention programs which may be able to reduce the number of abused and/or neglected children in society. Additionally, data resulting from the research by Trickette, et al. (2011) found intervention programs to be generally successful when treating abused or neglected children.

Anti-Social Behavior

Anti-social behavior is the intentionally destructive behavior which results in physical or mental harm to an individual, property loss, and/or results in a significant impact on the physical or mental well-being of another person (Sentse, Dijkstra, Lindenburg, Ormel, & Veenstra, 2010). In the 2010 Dutch study, known as TRIALS, researchers were hoping to determine how much of an impact parental protection and supervision has on the development and prevention of anti-social behavior in adolescents. The study group consisted of 1023 participants, with an average age of 13.51 years, and primarily included young girls (55.5%) (Sentse et al., 2010). TRIALS

researchers focused on two main questions in this study. The first pertained to the level at which

parents set rules, protected their children, and supervised their actions (Sentse et al., 2010). By

asking this question, the researchers were able to compare overprotective and domineering

parents to the under supervised and laid back parents in order to determine which of these two

styles leads to a higher likelihood of anti-social behavior. The results of this question revealed

that both parenting styles could lead to children which anti-social tendencies (Sentse et al.,

2010).

Adolescents with higher levels of maturity who were overprotected were not given the

chance to explore adult privileges, such as autonomy, and this restriction resulted in adolescents

engaging in more anti-social behavior as a way to assert their independence. Adolescents whose

parents allowed them to be independent and self sufficient were also at a higher risk for anti-

social behavior because they were allowed to roam the streets without supervision, and often

times, free-living adolescents tend to engage in anti-social behavior (pranks, theft, bullying...) or

develop friendships with other anti-social individuals in order to feel a sense of belonging

(Sentse et al., 2010). The second research question in the TRIALS study asked whether anti-

social behavior in adolescence is to some degree a result of miscommunication between over

protective parents and adolescents who make every effort to be independent and self sufficient

(Sentse et al., 2010). This question revealed adolescents who matured early or were male were

still at an increased risk. However, if the parents were willing to monitor their children without

blatantly monitoring their activities, they were able to reduce the children's likelihood for

developing anti-social behavior (Sentse et al., 2010). Sentse et al. (2010) measured anti-social

behavior through the use of an Anti-social Behavior Questionnaire to determine the level of anti-

social behavior in the adolescent participant. The questionnaire also provided questions for

obtaining the number of friends which displayed mild to severe anti-social behavior, through the participant's self admission. The parents' parenting style was obtained by administering the 'My Memories of Upbringing for Children' questionnaire. TRIALS also obtained information on the amount of unsupervised wandering, parental knowledge, and biological maturation of the adolescent (Sentse et al., 2010).

Childhood and adolescent neglect has long been known to be linked to the development of aggressive and/or anti-social behavior. In John F. Knutson, David DeGarmo, Gina Koeppl, and John B. Reid's (2005) study, they chose to explore how much of an impact one's parenting style will have on this particular topic. Taking into account that many studies have failed to directly connect childhood neglect to future aggressive or anti-social behavior, the authors' took care to acknowledge that neglect is often associated with other forms of child maltreatment and/or socioeconomic disadvantages (Knutson et al., 2005). As a result, Knutson, et al. (2005) concluded that their research study needs to make a special effort to control or regulate the elements of child maltreatment and socioeconomic disadvantages, in addition to providing "well-specified operational definitions of neglect" (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 93). In order to accurately record the impact of "neglectful parenting, poor supervision, and punitive parenting in the development of children's aggression", 218 children ranging from 4 to 8 years of age were selected from disadvantaged families across two different states: southeastern Iowa and north central Wisconsin (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 92). In an effort to ensure a diverse collection of study participants, individuals were recruited with particular focus on the degree of their urbanization and ethnicity (Knutson et al., 2005). Following an initial structured interview and an in-home assessment, a study that was used to obtain background information on the participants, results were obtained purely from three laboratory sessions which were approximately 90

minutes apiece (Knutson et al., 2005). The first of the three laboratory sessions was conducted approximately 26 days after the initial interview and in-home assessments. This first part of the session requested that the mothers of the children take a literacy test, known as the Reading and Spelling subtests of the Wide Range Achievement Test, followed by a recorded parent-child interaction experiment (Knutson et al., 2005).

The experiment section consisted of the child learning a new board game and later teaching the rules to the parents. This experiment measured how well the child and parents interact and communicate. While the child was initially learning the rules of the board game, the parents were asked to discuss the "most important of the child issues identified in the [initial] questionnaire" (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 97). The second part of the session consisted of a role-play scenario which tested the child's social problem solving skills (Knutson et al., 2005). An example of this task was having the parents and child preparing for a play-date with an individual the child generally dislikes (Knutson et al., 2005). The third part allowed the parents and child time to freely interact with each other for ten minutes; the fourth part of the study requested that the parents instruct the child to put all the toys away. All of these interactions were recorded and analyzed by a "professional team of four behavior coders at Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) using the Interpersonal Process Code" (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 96). Results of the study fell short in that the researchers were not able to establish an exact connection between "neglectful parenting, poor supervision, and punitive parenting in the development of children's aggression" (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 92). "In short, [the] replicated data suggest the addition of supervisory and care are important independent effects within developmental models; however, much more work on neglectful parenting, harsh discipline, and social disadvantage in the development of aggression is required" (Knutson et al., 2005, p. 92).

Conduct disorder is a serious behavioral problem occasionally found in late childhood and early adolescence; it is usually self serving and can even be violent behavior which the individual does not see as wrong. The most common forms of conduct disorder are vandalism, drug or alcohol use, manipulation, bullying, arson, and truancy (A.D.A.M. Medical Encyclopedia, 2011). Lindon J. Eaves, Elizabeth C. Prom, and Judy L. Silberg (2010) researched this phenomenon and its connection to the development of anti-social behavior when linked with inter-parental violence, inconsistent parenting, and/or parental neglect. For this study, researchers gathered data on "childhood adversity, parental antisocial behavior, and longitudinal adult and juvenile anti-social behavior" (Eaves et al., 2010, p. 425) by assembling a study group which consisted of 1,412 families with particular focus on families which contained adolescent twins. By studying the anti-social behavior of both the parents and the children, Eaves et al. (2010) were able to conclude "the longitudinal study of twins and their parents makes it possible to demonstrate there is a direct causal effect of childhood adversity on child conduct disorder over and above any indirect genetic correlation" (p. 425).

Violence against Animals

While Jeffrey Dahmer adamantly denied ever harming a living animal, it is well known that he collected the bodies of dead animals and mutilated them in some rather extreme ways. Heather Piper (2003) made an attempt to understand adolescent animal abuse by relating it to interpersonal violence within the home. Theoretically, a child who was abused or neglected is going to find an outlet for the frustration felt as a result of that abuse or neglect. That outlet can take many forms, and according to Piper (2003), one possible outlet comes in the form of animal abuse. Simply put "adults who are abusing animals are also likely to abuse their children and [sic] children who abuse animals are also more likely to be victims of abuse" (Piper, 2003, p.

162). Piper (2003) even goes so far as to suggest that animal abuse may be an indicator of child

abuse or domestic violence within a family. However, Piper (2003) strongly encourages

individuals to not let their preconceived notions interfere with the true causes of animal abuse.

While media sources like to portray animal abuse as the gateway to serial murder, one must

understand that not every animal abuser is in a violent or abusive home nor is every animal

abuser fated to become a serial killer. Piper (2003) goes on to argue that most studies on animal

abuse and later violence against humans suffer from "fundamental fallacies of logic" (Piper,

2003, p. 165) since there is no real proof that animal abuse will lead to homicidal tendencies later

in life. Many research studies which focus on this phenomenon target very specific populations,

such as criminals or serial killers, and do not account for the large numbers of children who

abuse animals and grow up normal. Piper (2003) suggests that a better definition of animal abuse

may help clarify the nature of the abuser. For example: In China, dogs and cats are regularly

killed and eaten and it is not seen as abnormal. The social stigmas associated with various forms

of animal abuse are going to change based on the individual, the location, and even the animal

being abused.

A child who grows up witnessing interpersonal violence between his or her parents will

often replicate the violence as a show of frustration or because it is something seen by the child

as normal. In a long term Italian study conducted by researcher Anna C. Baldry (2003), the

association between the witnessing of parental domestic violence and occurrence of animal abuse

perpetrated by the child witness was analyzed. According to the American Psychological

Association, children who are exposed to domestic violence will often act out in ways similar to

children who have experienced some form of abuse (Baldry, 2003). Animal abuse is frequently

regarded as a form of anti-social behavior and as a severe form of conduct disorder, both of

which are commonly associated with child abuse (Baldry, 2003). In order to test her theories

regarding this phenomenon, Baldry (2003) obtained parental permission to evaluate 1,392 Italian

youths in regards to domestic violence and animal abuse. These participants ranged in age from 9

to 17 years of age and were "45.9% girls and 54.1% boys" (Baldry, 2003, p. 259, 263). The

participants were recruited from 13 different schools, four elementary (28.5%), six middle

(47.3%), and three high schools (24.1%) in and around the province of Rome (Baldry, 2003). In

an effort to obtain relevant information on the participants, each individual was asked to reveal

the number and species of pets within the household. Socioeconomic status was another aspect

of interest in this study and was obtained by asking the participants about their parents' jobs,

their house size, the number of residents living within the home, and the district in which the

residence resided (Baldry, 2003). Animal abuse was measured using the P.E.T. (Physical and

Emotional Tormenting against Animals) Scale for preadolescents and adolescents (Baldry,

2003). This test analyzed both the child's experiences with animal abuse and the occasions when

the child witnessed animal abuse by a family member or peer. Animal abuse was determined to

be most prevalent among boys (66.5%) who witnessed animal abuse, while girls (33.5%) were

more likely to internalize the trauma in the form of depression or victimization as school (Baldry,

2003). Domestic violence was measured through a modified version of the Conflict Tactic Scale

which was adapted for youth participants (Baldry, 2003). The scale examined physical, verbal,

and emotional abuse with particular focus on father against mother and mother against father

domestic violence (Baldry, 2003). Baldry (2003) concluded the study by stating the results were

strongly supportive of the connection between domestically violent homes and participants who

where abusive toward animals. As with many similarly focused studies (Piper, 2003; Dadds,

Whiting, & Hawes, 2006), Baldry (2003) encouraged individuals to not assume interpersonal

violence and animal abuse is automatically going to turn a child into a violent criminal as an

adult.

There are very few childhood behavioral problems that carry with them the ominous

nature and stereotyping commonly found among children who have abused animals (Dadds et

al., 2006). Often times, children who abuse animals will be looked upon as violent future

criminals. Dadds et al. (2006) stepped forward to stonewall this misconception by looking deeper

into the phenomenon of childhood violence against animals. In order to effectively examine the

relationships between animal abuse and adult violent behavior, Dadds et al. (2006) chose to look

at this issue according to two primary factors. The first of these factors was the possibility of

animal abuse being the warning sign for a child who is a risk for developing psychopathic

tendencies (Dadds et al., 2006). The second factor focuses on family problems as the source of

the conflict (Dadds et al., 2006). Dadds et al. (2006) performed a research study by obtaining 131

participants from five schools in Queensland, Australia; the students ranged in age from 6 to 13

years of age and consisted of 67 males and 64 females. Data was obtained through self-

administered questionnaires which the participants were asked to return using the provided return

envelope. Using the Children and Animals Inventory, researchers were able to classify the

degree of animal cruelty based on nine dimensions of cruelty. The nine dimensions of cruelty

consisted of: severity or degree of pain inflicted upon the animal, frequency of the animal abuse,

duration or average time spent abusing the animal in one session, when the last act of abuse was

committed (recency), diversity of animals abused (example: dogs, cats, birds…), level of

concern for the abused animal (sentience), whether the child attempts to hide the act

(covertness), whether the act was committed alone or with others (isolation), and whether the

child regrets the acts of abuse(empathy) (Dadds et al., 2006). Additionally, the child's

externalization was tested using the Child Behavior Checklist-Revised-Parent Form, the child's

potential for psychopathic behavior was tested using the Antisocial Process Screening Device,

and family conflict was measured by the conflict subscale of the Family Environment Scale

(Dadds et al., 2006). As a result of these tests, Dadds et al. (2006) not only concluded that male

children were more likely to engage in animal cruelty than females but that there is also a high

correlation between psychopathic behavior and animal cruelty. Dadds et al. (2006) also strongly

supported future studies which may be able to further understand the connections between these

variables and provide information which could be used as an early warning system for troubled

children.

After numerous studies had shown a significant correlation between animal abuse and

domestic violence, many individuals felt it was time this data was implemented as a preventative

method. Using a study sample of 860 college students, Sarah DeGue and David DiLillo (2009)

attempted to show why many U.S. jurisdictions have chosen to adopt legislation which would

allow "child and animal welfare investigators to refer families with substantiated child

maltreatment or animal cruelty for investigation by parallel agencies" (DeGue & Delillo, 2009,

p. 1036). Over the years, there have been numerous studies conducted on victims of domestic

violence, child maltreatment, and child neglect (Dadds et al., 2006; Baldry, 2003; Piper, 2003;

Trickette et al.,2011; Mustanoja et al., 2011; Sousa et al., 2011; Kotch et al., 2008; Maguire-Jack

et al., 2012; Felson & Lane, 2009; LaBrode, 2007), and the vast majority of these studies have

shown a correlation between these cases and reports of animal abuse.

In many homes, animals are considered another member of the family, and as a result,

they are vulnerable to domestic violence, maltreatment, and/or neglect (DeGue & Delillo, 2009).

The student participants from DeGue and Delillo's (2009) study were obtained from three

universities across the Midwest and west, California, Nebraska, and Ohio, were 75.6% female, 70% white, and had an average age of 20.1 years. Demographic and retrospective reports of child maltreatment and domestic violence within the participant's family of origin were obtained using the Computer-Assisted Maltreatment Inventory (DeGue & Delillo, 2009). This test allows researchers to obtain a more accurate report of each participant's childhood "sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, neglect, and exposure to domestic violence" (DeGue & Delillo, 2009, p. 1043). The respondent's experience(s) with violence against animals was tested using a modified version of Boat's (1999) Inventory on Animal-Related Experiences, known as the Animal Violence Inventory (AVI) (DeGue & Delillo, 2009). Excluding hunting and routine farm activities, DeGue and Delillo (2009) defined animal abuse/neglect as denial of the basic necessities (food, water, medical treatment, excessive confinement, and cleanliness) or the intentional infliction of pain or injury (beating, fighting, and engaging in sexual acts with the animal) on any domesticated or wild animal. Conclusions derived from this data showed that approximately 57.9% of participants who witnessed or participated in animal cruelty as a child were also exposed to child maltreatment and/or domestic violence as a child (DeGue & Delillo, 2009).

Serial Murder and/or Violence

Throughout history, there have been serial killers. Often times, these individuals are morphed into monsters or creatures to better explain their actions, vampires for example, and other times they are merely psychopathic individuals who have infiltrated one's society, unidentified and fulfilling a need that even they may not fully understand. According to numerous research studies, these monsters and/or psychopathic individuals have been victims of abuse, witnesses to inter-parental violence, and perpetrators of animal abuse and/or mutilation. A

serial killer is by definition someone who has committed three or more murders of people previously unknown to the individual with a "cooling off" period in between the murders (Haggerty, 2009). This definition leaves much to the imagination and occasionally fails to include dictators who order the murders of large numbers of individuals, operate death camps, and/or oversee death marches (Haggerty, 2009). According to Haggerty (2009), this is a significant flaw which has made researching serial murderers a challenging subject.

Haggerty (2009) explained the role bureaucracy plays in modern serial murder by underlying several modern phenomena connected to modern serial murders. The first of these phenomena is mass media and the resulting celebrity culture. For example, Casey Anthony, OJ Simpson, and numerous others have paved the way for countless individuals to reach celebrity status through alleged criminal acts within today's modern society (Haggerty, 2009). Since serial murder is still a relatively rare occurrence within our society, mass media has only recently begun to play a significant role in exploiting the enigma that is serial murder. Today, mesmerized individuals can satisfy their need for tales of serial murder through countless true crime and detective novels, movies and police dramas, and even in comic books and serial killer collector cards (Haggerty, 2009). Jeffrey Dahmer, himself, is memorialized in modern society with his own action figure, collector cards, movies, a comic strip, and other memorabilia (Jarvis, 2007).

The second phenomenon which aids in modern serial murder is the realization that we are a society of strangers. In generations past, neighbors were very close and often times knew in depth information about each other, each other's family, and personal predilections which offered a significant amount of protection against serial killings, also known as stranger killings (Haggerty, 2009). Often associated with a period of enlightenment which strongly focuses on

scientific thought and reason, modern culture has led to a society which can rationalize dark thoughts of murder and even genocide (Haggerty, 2009). For example, Hitler's Germany was able to rationalize the mass genocide of millions because they felt it was for the best, a means to an end, and better yet, a way to remove the weak from society (Haggerty, 2009).

Following the rationale of Hitler's mass genocide against those who did not meet his particular standard of humanity, society has fueled a generation of serial killers who are able to rationalize their murders by dehumanizing their victims. For example: John Wayne Gacy Jr. did not refer to his victims as humans but instead as "worthless little punks and queers" (Hirtler, 2011). Modern society has also assisted in the stereotyping of vulnerable victims. Current statistics show that women in particular are affected by this phenomenon as women currently account for sixty percent of serial killer victims (Haggerty, 2009). While serial murder is far from being a novel concept, the advancements of modern society have only aided in making serial murders more mainstream and profitable.

In today's society, individuals do not need to look far in order to find some sort of serial killer memorabilia, glorification, or even glamorization. Murder, violence, and blood are hot commodities which draw the attention of countless individuals around the world. Jarvis (2007) explored this phenomenon and researched the impact it has on the serial consumer. Beginning with the manner in which violent crime is marketed, Jarvis (2007) refers to serial murder as a spectacle to be consumed by a society which craves violence. Ultimately, this article attempted to uncover the "less transparent links between the normal desires which circulate within consumer society and monstrous violence" (Jarvis, 2007, p. 326). While Hollywood has their share of serial killing villains (vampires, zombies, Freddy Krueger, ect), the real world of serial killers has made actions figures, comic books, t-shirts, and even trading cards for some of the

most famous real life serial killers in history, including "superstars" Ted Bundy, John Wayne

Gacy Jr., and Jeffrey Dahmer (Jarvis, 2007). Jarvis (2007) claimed individuals flock to serial

murder because of the way serial killers can blend into a crowd, becoming unknown and deadly.

After analyzing numerous Hollywood serial killer movies, Jarvis (2007) was able to reveal that

most movies which revolve around a serial killer tend to be focused on either mass consumerism

(Campbell's soup in the Movie *Seven* or personal fitness in *American Psycho*) or the style of

murder (Jeffrey Dahmer and his cannibalism, Ted Bundy and his manipulation of good

Samaritans, John Wayne Gacy Jr. and his fascination with clowns and young boys and men)

(Jarvis, 2007).

Whether made into celebrities or not, serial killers are detrimental to society. Conduct

disorder accounts for numerous adolescent behaviors found to be socially offensive or

destructive to modern society and have often been connected to later, more serious offenses. In

the Stephen D. Singer and Christopher Hensley (2004) analysis of one well known form of

conduct disorder and its connection with later serial murders, children with a predilection for fire

starting were observed under the scope of the social learning theory. According to the social

learning theory, serial murder is a trait learned through personal experiences and the individual's

response to said experiences (Singer & Hensley, 2004). Often times, these experiences are

humiliating to the individual or provoke a high amount of frustration in the individual. In Jeffrey

Dahmer's case, he experienced vast amounts of neglect from his parents as a child, and it is

theorized that he internalized the behavior by acting out (conduct disorder) which later evolved

into an anti-social and psychopathic behavior as he got older. Singer and Hensley (2004)

explained that the resulting frustration may even result in the individual's later victim choice.

Ted Bundy displayed a tendency to focus on specific traits in his victims by only killing women

who resembled a young woman who ended a relationship with him in college (Biography, 2012).

Data for the Singer and Hensley (2004) case study was obtained by studying the lives of three

notorious serial killers who also had a history of fire starting; the serial killers were Carl

Panzram, Ottis Toole, and David Berkowitz (also known as Son of Sam). Through detailed

examinations of the individuals' lives, Singer and Hensley (2004) were able to reveal a strong

correlation between the abuse, humiliation, and neglect experienced by these individuals as

children and how those experiences may have resulted in their later fascination with arson and

serial murders.

Despite an international fascination with serial murders, there are still relatively few

studies or organizations with an agreed upon definition of who or what constitutes as serial

murder. In the study by William B. Arndt, Tammy Hietpas, and Juhu Kim (2004), particular

effort was made to define the characteristics of male serial murderers, their crimes, their victims,

and any additional information found to be relevant to the study. These efforts resulted in a

collection of definitions pertaining to male serial murder ranging from very basic to very specific

in nature (Arndt et al., 2004). For Arndt et al.'s (2004) study, 285 individual cases were

reviewed. In order to be considered for Arndt et al.'s (2004) study group, the cases had to meet

the requirements of three or more murder victims committed by a male, had to be within the

United States during the 1900s, and the murders needed to be committed separately over a time

period of hours to years. Once these 285 individual cases were accepted into the study, they were

further classified according to the motivation of their suspects' victims: whether the killings were

sexually motivated or non-sexually motivated, whether the suspects were geographically stable

or transient during the murders, and finally whether the suspect(s) was killing within a team or

individually (Arndt et al., 2004). Results of the examination by Arndt et al. (2004) revealed

nearly half of serial murders are sexually motivated killings (48%), and 60% of the research

cases pertained to geographically stable individuals which were found to have a killing career

half the length of a transient killer. Only 16% of the suspects worked as a team, and while most

of the study suspects targeted female victims, those who targeted men generally had a higher

victim count (Arndt et al., 2004). Additional conclusions put the average starting age to be

around 26 years of age with the majority of the suspects being White, followed by African

American (16%) (Arndt et al., 2004). Hispanic and Asian suspects were found to be poorly

represented within the study; Arndt et al. (2004) suggested that additional research studies should

be implemented to study these two groups.

In 2005, researchers Willem H. J. Martens and George B. Palermo concluded a study on

loneliness; researching the impact it may have on the development of violent and/or anti-social

behaviors or attitudes. Focusing on serial killers, Dennis Nilsen and Jeffrey Dahmer in particular,

Martin and Palermo (2005) chose their target population based on the amount of loneliness the

individuals experienced while growing up. In the case of Jeffrey Dahmer, he was neglected by

his parents for most of his life, and as a result he was always looking for ways to keep himself

from being alone (Martin & Palermo, 2005). Jeffrey Dahmer's father neglected his son to finish

a PhD in chemistry, and Jeffrey Dahmer's mother was a drug addict who had little time for him

(Martin & Palermo, 2005). When his younger brother was born, the minimal attention Jeffrey

Dahmer received from his parents became even harder to obtain. Following his parents' divorce

when he was 18 years of age, his mother promptly took his brother and abandoned him to live

alone in his parents' old home (Dahmer, 1994). After his mother's abandonment, Jeffrey Dahmer

sought to satisfy his need for company by seeking out young attractive boys and men, drugging

them, having sex with them, and ultimately murdering, dismembering, and sodomizing their bodies.

Martin and Palermo's (2005) second serial killer analysis focused on Dennis Nilsen. Dennis Nilsen was the child of a Norwegian soldier who was rarely around and a Scottish mother who showed little to no interest in her son; as a child, he was unable to develop a close bond with either parent. The only individual he was able to form an emotional bond with was his grandfather who died suddenly when Dennis Nilsen was only 6 years old (Martin & Palermo, 2005). Following his parents' divorce and his mother's remarriage when he was 8 years old, Dennis Nilsen found himself pushed into the background by his mother who was now more interested in her new family (Martin & Palermo, 2005).

From similarities between Jeffrey Dahmer and Dennis Nilsen, Martin and Palermo (2005) were able to conclude that loneliness can have a significant impact on anti-social and homicidal behaviors. According to Martin and Palermo (2005), this extreme loneliness may lead to "internal rigidity, social-emotional and moral numbing, indifference, hostility, and anger" (p. 305). However, the authors also argue that an individual can be helped if those around the individual know what warning signs to look for. "Substance abuse; depression; social-emotional incapacities; lack of social support and guidance; a violent, criminal, or indifferent environment; and a lack of self-esteem are all warning signs of loneliness that individuals who works with or around juveniles should be watching for" (Martin & Palermo, 2005, p. 306).

Chapter Summary

Childhood is one of the most influential stages of an individual's development, and by exposing a child to violence and/or neglect, one may be inevitably impacting the development of

a child's self image or the image of those with which the child interacts. In this chapter, the author has reviewed numerous articles on the social learning theory, childhood abuse and neglect, anti-social behavior, violence against animals, and finally serial murder and/or violence. Through these reviews, significant evidence has been presented which shows the impact abuse and/or neglect can have on one's psychological development. Individuals who were abused, neglected, and/or exposed to violence as a child were found to be at an increased risk for personality disorders and/or criminal behaviors, including animal abuse and even serial homicide (DeGue & Delillo, 2009; Dadds et al., 2006; Baldry, 2003; Piper, 2003; Trickette et al.,2011; Mustanoja et al., 2011; Sousa et al., 2011; Kotch et al., 2008; Maguire-Jack et al., 2012; Felson & Lane, 2009; LaBrode, 2007). Bandura's (1977) social learning theory was also reviewed in order to add validity to the claim that a child's social and family environment may have a considerable impact on the child's psychological development.

Chapter 3

Method

Introduction

The case study will focus on the neglect and abuse suffered by Jeffrey Dahmer throughout his childhood but will also provide theories which may account for his adult serial murders. Using available qualitative data on the social learning theory, serial homicide, animal and childhood abuse and neglect, interviews with Jeffrey Dahmer prior to his death, and interviews with professionals in the field of child development, the author intends to shed light on the potential consequences of childhood neglect and abuse. This case study was reviewed and approved by the Regis University Institutional Review Board (IRB) as an exempt study on October 10, 2012. The IRB approved this case study under the exempt category 45CFR46.101.b(4) and as IRB #12-299. This chapter is organized into four subsections: (1) subject selection, (2) instrumentation, (3) data collection, (4) data analysis.

Subject Selection

Jeffrey Dahmer was chosen as the target population of this case study because he came from a family without physical or sexual abuse, yet he still became one of America's most notorious serial killers. Born May 21, 1960, Jeffrey Dahmer was the first child born to Lionel and Joyce Dahmer and would remain the only child until his younger brother, David, was born December 1966 (Dahmer, 1994). For most of Jeffrey Dahmer's young life, his Father was a graduate student working full time in order to finish his PhD in chemistry and had little time to spare with his son. Joyce Dahmer was frequently plagued with mental health problems combined with an addiction to anti-anxiety drugs. Consequentially, neither parent had much time to

dedicate to the development of young Jeffrey Dahmer and to steer him away from an obsession with death. Neglect was a way of life for Jeffrey Dahmer. If he had a problem, he internalized it because he knew his family could never spare the time to uncover the dark secrets which festered within his mind.

What makes Jeffrey Dahmer different from other serial killers is that he grew up without physical, verbal, or sexual abuse, and he did not have any severe health issues (other than a double hernia surgery when he was approximately four years of age). However, he was subjected to neglect and emotional abuse, both of which are commonly found among children in today's society. With single and dual working parents becoming a normal occurrence in modern families, many children are being exposed to much of the same abuse experienced by Jeffrey Dahmer, yet very few of these children grow up to become violent or homicidal as adults.

Instrumentation

This analysis will not be integrating a large research group but will instead be interviewing several professionals in the field of child development and/or psychology. In order to reduce the amount of preconceived notions when it comes to the nature of serial killers, the interviewed individuals will not be informed of the true focus of this analysis until after they have completed four of the five questions. This precaution is to ensure the interviewee will not let a preconceived stance toward the origin of serial killers influence the answers to the questionnaire. The questions are asked in an open-ended style, and the interviewees are encouraged to answer to the best of their knowledge.

The first question in the questionnaire asks: "In your opinion, is psychopathic or antisocial behavior learned through life experiences (bullying, neglect, abuse…) or is an

individual born with these tendencies" (Appendix A)? This question will help determine whether the participant believes violent crimes to be a result of an individual's biological or genetic make-up (nature) or as a result of the environment in which they were raised (nurture). The second question asks participants: "How much of an impact do you believe adolescent abuse/neglect would have on the development of psychopathic or antisocial tendencies" (Appendix A)? Third, the participant is asked: "What type(s) of child or adolescent abuse/neglect do you believe would have the most significant impact on adult violence (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, or Neglect)" (Appendix A)? Questions two and three are to determine the interviewee's stance on abuse and neglect and how it may influence later, violent behavior. The fourth question asks: How likely do you think an abused child would be to project this violence on to another person or animal? Explain" (Appendix A)? This question reveals the interviewee's stance on the relationship between child abuse/neglect and animal cruelty. Once the first four questions have been asked, the interviewee is then informed that this study pertains to serial murder and Jeffrey Dahmer in particular. The fifth question is the only question which directly asks questions about Jeffrey Dahmer, and it is as follows: "Jeffrey Dahmer experienced neglect and emotional abuse as a child. How much of an impact do you believe this abuse had on his behavior and eventual murders of 17 young men" (Appendix A)?

Data Collection

According to Babbie (2010), when examining a social phenomenon which is documented by media sources (newspaper, magazines...), an unobtrusive research method is the most effective method for data collection. In this case study, data will be obtained through the review or content analysis "of human communication" (Babbie, 2010, p. 320). The abuse and neglect experienced by Jeffrey Dahmer as a child is a primary focus in this case study and will,

therefore, be critically analyzed and compared to numerous studies conducted on abuse, neglect, animal cruelty, and serial killers in general. Data gathered over the course of this case study will consist primarily of qualitative research that has been conducted on Jeffrey Dahmer's life (interviews, biographies…) and on abuse/neglect (websites, organizations, government sources…). For information pertaining directly to Jeffrey Dahmer, the majority of the information will be coming from the biography, *A Father's Story*, written by Jeffrey Dahmer's father, Lionel Dahmer, and from publicly available interviews with Jeffrey Dahmer. The interviews will provide information on his life, his state of mind, and reactions from those who knew him. Secondary sources on the social learning theory, child abuse and neglect, serial killers, and animal cruelty were obtained from journal articles, government articles, online databases, and organizations which specialize in abused and/or neglected children. Primary sources were obtained from firsthand interviews with the target population, which in this case study will consist of the interviews with Jeffrey Dahmer. Additional primary sources will consist of interviews with individuals who specialize in child development, intervention, and addictive behavior.

Chapter Summary

While this case study aimed to expose the long term impacts of child abuse and neglect in the American serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer, this chapter focused on the methodology which was used within this case study. One of the first things the author did was explain why Jeffrey Dahmer and his experiences with domestic violence, abuse, and neglect were chosen as the focus of this case study. The author also used this chapter to explain which sources were most beneficial to this study and why. Additionally, the author used an open ended survey to obtain additional information and points of view from professionals within the field of child

development, intervention, and rehabilitation. The survey and the logic behind each of the survey

questions was discussed within this chapter; however, the results of the surveys and collected

data will be analyzed in chapter four.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Introduction

Data or content Analysis is the "study of recorded human communication" (Babbie, 2010, p. 320). As previously mentioned in this case study, data found valid and pertinent to this study was obtained through journal articles, newspaper clippings, biographies, interviews, and numerous federal and private organizations. After each source had been read and critically analyzed, the obtained information was written in a brief outline form which made the information easier to find should it be needed for additional analysis at a later point. Once the study outline was constructed, the author constructed supplementary questions which the author considered valid to this case study's primary focus. These supplementary questions can be found in appendix A.

Government and Private Organizations, such as Child Welfare (2008a, 2008b, & 2009), The Center for Disease Control (2012), and Victims of Violence (2011a & 2011b) were of great assistance when attempting to understand the inner workings of abused and/or neglected children. These sources were able to add valuable statistical and firsthand knowledge of children who, like Jeffrey Dahmer, developed anti-social and psychopathic tendencies as a result of childhood abuse and neglect. The sources were also of particular value when reviewing the impact of a child witnessing domestic violence and/or heated arguments between parents or responsible caregivers. Similar to children who experience abuse and neglect, children who witness inter-parental violence or arguments are at a higher risk of developing psychological,

developmental, and behavioral difficulties (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009;

Mustanoja et al., 2011; Sousa et al., 2011; Kotch et al., 2008).

Interviews

Interviews and biographies about the life of Jeffrey Dahmer were invaluable in this study

since there was no way to directly interview Jeffrey Dahmer following his murder by a fellow

inmate in 1994. The interviews questioned Jeffrey Dahmer's motivations for murder,

cannibalism, and necrophilia and revealed both startling and heartbreaking revelations from

Jeffrey Dahmer and both his parents. By watching and analyzing the interview by Stone Phillips

of Jeffrey Dahmer, the author was able to get Jeffrey Dahmer's view on the biography written by

his Father as well as the opinion of Jeffrey Dahmer's Mother, an insight into Jeffrey Dahmer's

life that is not very easy to find.

The interviews conducted by the author for this case study were also helpful in

understanding the impacts of child abuse/neglect, animal cruelty, and how those incidents

influence child development leading into adulthood. The first of the participating respondents

was Gopá Ka Ross (2012), an expert in child intervention and art education. Ross (2012)

received her Bachelor's degree in Art education, her Master's degree in Art Education with an

emphasis in art therapy, and she is a certified Early Childhood Specialist/Interventionist.

Additionally, Ross (2012) specializes in children age 0 (pregnancy) to 6 years of age.

With over 35 years of experience in this field, Ross's (2012) immediate response to the

question regarding the development of psychopathic or anti-social behavior was to state that

children can be born with these issues as well as develop them through life experiences.

Additionally, Ross (2012) explained that anti-social and psychopathic behavior can be

genetically inherited from the individual's parents. These tendencies are often times undiagnosed and may not even be diagnosable due to our current knowledge of and the mysteries surrounding the human brain. However, Ross (2012) stated that these inherited tendencies can be treated with "proactive pro-social intervention by caring parents, teachers, or therapists" (Appendix B). These children may still need medication to make up for issues untreatable by intervention methods, but given time, they should be able to develop positive functional interactions with others (Ross, 2012).

In regard to adolescent abuse/neglect and its impact on the development of anti-social or psychopathic tendencies, Ross (2012) stated that while abuse/neglect could have a negative impact on adolescent aged children, abuse/neglect would have a more significant impact on children during their early years. Through Ross's (2012) 35+ years of experiences, sexual abuse is the one form of abuse that she has never seen fail to manifest itself in one form or another. However, Ross (2012) also claims that both physical and sexual abuse can be connected with higher levels of adult aggression or violence. Emotional abuse is what Ross (2012) referred to as the "ghost in the nursery" (Appendix B). The 'ghost' is often associated with neglect, a loss of self-esteem, emotionally violent outbursts, and manifestations of unadulterated rage as a teen (Ross, 2012). Jeffrey Dahmer internalized these traits until his teen years when he displayed the 'ghost' by dissecting animals around 15 years old; these violent outbursts would transfer to humans when he was 18 years old.

Building on the "ghost in the nursery" reference, Ross (2012) responded to the question of childhood abuse and its potential projection on to another person or animal by stating "children with a history of abuse/neglect do repeat the abusive acts they experienced" (Appendix B). Sometimes, however, this violence against other people or animals is seen as a way to

retaliate or express their anger/frustration for the abuse and mistreatment that they have

experienced (Ross, 2012). Confusion is another element of this transference of rage and

frustration, as the children become old enough to realize that someone should have been there to

protect them and/or take care of them (Ross, 2012). Abused/neglected children are, therefore,

likely to hurt, bully, and/or abuse others as a way to vent the frustration they feel for their

suffering (Ross, 2012). When asked how this abuse and neglect may have influenced Jeffrey

Dahmer, Ross (2012) admitted to knowing very little about Jeffrey Dahmer and his crimes. In

order to avoid adding a bias point of view, the author has chosen to remove any and all

discussion between the author and Ross (2012) which pertained to Jeffrey Dahmer.

The second participant was Robert Gregg (2012) who specializes in the drug and alcohol

counseling of adult offenders. Gregg (2012) has worked in the counseling field for 34 years;

previously he worked in family counseling but is currently working as a drug and other addiction

counselor. Since we were unable to meet in person, this questionnaire was completed through

email. Any confusion regarding the questions in the questionnaire was sent directly to an email

attached to the author's cellular phone, where emails were promptly received and responded to.

When asked whether or not anti-social and psychopathic behavior is something an

individual is born with or learns through life experiences, Gregg (2012) stated that he believes

these behaviors to be learned. He defended this stance by explaining individuals who have

experienced abuse in the past are frequently found to abuse others (Gregg, 2012). This assertion

has been confirmed by multiple research studies throughout the years (Child Welfare

Information Gateway, 2008a; Finkelhor et al., 2009; Kotch et al., 2008; Trickettet al., 2011;

Victims of Violence, 2011a; Victims of Violence, 2011b). When questioned about the impact of

adolescent abuse/neglect, Gregg (2012) responded by stating "adolescence is a critical time of

development... any abuse or neglect could develop into psychopathic or antisocial tendencies" (Appendix C). The third question on the questionnaire allowed Gregg (2012) to further define childhood/adolescent abuse by asserting his belief that physical abuse or neglect results in a higher degree of acting out in a violent manner.

When asked if a child's experience with abuse could result in the projection of violence on to other living creatures, Gregg (2012) stated that it would be very likely and referred to a phenomenon known as the poisonous pedagogy. According to Alice Miller (N.D.) and Robert Slagle (N.D.) this phenomenon is found in dysfunctional families whose parents belittle or shame their children into repressing their emotions or behaviors which the parents find to be offensive. Slagle's (N.D.) article claims "this wounding of the inner child [may later become] the basis for compulsive/addictive behavior in adults" (Slagle, N.D., p. 1). This could explain Jeffrey Dahmer's behaviors as an adult since his parents had little or no time set aside to spend with him or help him develop a healthy self-esteem or self-worth. The emotional abuse and neglect at the hands of his parents effectively stunted Jeffrey Dahmer emotional development, in that he became unable to share his problems with his parents out of fear of being a burden. Gregg (2012) ultimately felt Jeffrey Dahmer's childhood emotional abuse and neglect were contributing factors to his adult sadistic behavior; however, Gregg (2012) also felt that Jeffrey Dahmer was a "volitional free-agent" who in the end chose to commit murder (Appendix C).

Organizations and Research Studies

SimplyPsychology.org is a private organization which was found to be particularly useful when researching Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, in which, "behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning" (McLeod, 2011, p. 1). Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, is a form of operant conditioning, in which an

individual's behavior can be changed based on positive, negative, or neutral reinforcement (McLeod, 2007). Bandura's (1977) theory was used in this case study as a way to explain Jeffrey Dahmer's attitude toward his victims. Since Jeffrey Dahmer was neglected as a child, this may be why he lacked empathy for his victims. Since his own parents did not value his well-being as a child, it may have led to his inability to value the well-being of his victims. By comparing the social learning theory to the information within the gathered articles and studies, it is believed the resulting data will show a strong correlation between neglect/abuse and the possible (but not guaranteed) development of psychopathic tendencies as an adult.

Following an extensive review of current literature on abuse, neglect, antisocial behavior, serial killers, and the social learning theory, the key issues were compared to the author's theory that some, but not all, children who have experienced abuse/neglect as a child are at an increased risk of displaying antisocial or violent behavior as they grow into adulthood. After comparing and contrasting the literature with the focal point of this case study, the author was able to confirm that most research studies do confirm that child neglect, abuse, and even the witnessing of domestic violence will have an impact on child development and later criminal behavior. There is, however, very little information to explain why some children appear to be impervious to violence, abuse, and neglect as a child and appear to grow into socially acceptable adults. Ross (2012) suggests that the reason some abused/neglected children still grow into contributors to society is due to other caregivers providing the support and boundaries such children need as they develop. This shows that as a society, researchers need to conduct further long term research studies on this phenomenon. By increasing the general understanding of the development of antisocial and psychopathic behavior in children and adults, we may be one step closer to predicting and preventing future violent behavior by abused and neglected children.

Chapter Summary

After gathering all of the relevant data in previous chapters, this chapter's purpose was to compile and analyze the results. Beginning with the published literature on Jeffrey Dahmer, child abuse/neglect, antisocial behavior, animal abuse, and the social learning theory, the author was able to gather conclusions and theories which bolstered the author's hypothesis that abuse and neglect can have detrimental impacts on children and adolescents. The 1994 interview with Jeffrey Dahmer was able to provide insight into why Jeffrey Dahmer murdered 17 young boys and men. Additionally, the interview gave Lionel Dahmer and Joyce Flint's point of view about Jeffrey Dahmer as a child and adolescent, their marital disputes and how that may have impacted Jeffrey Dahmer, and what they believe may have led their son to murder. The interview results, with Ross (2012) and Gregg (2012), were analyzed. By answering the survey questions, Ross (2012) and Gregg (2012) provided the viewpoint of two professionals, and their expert opinions of the long term impacts of child abuse and neglect were presented and compared with literature studies. The results of the data collection revealed several discrepancies and questions the author feels warrant further study which will be discussed later in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Results

This case study focused on Jeffrey Dahmer and the abuse and neglect he experienced as a child. Using information obtained from various government and private organizations, websites, interviews, and journal articles, the author was able to conclude that the abuse and neglect experienced by Jeffrey Dahmer may very well have had a significant impact on his later actions as a sexual serial killer. Through the criminological theory, known as the social learning theory, the author was able to argue that Jeffrey Dahmer's experiences with abuse and neglect may have led him to becoming one of America's most notorious serial killers. The social learning theory suggests that Jeffrey Dahmer became homicidal because he was denied the child-parent interactions which could have helped him obtain a healthy sense of social development. While Jeffrey Dahmer's childhood abuse and neglect appears to be a common trend among serial killers, it is not commonly found among children or adolescents who have experienced abuse and/or neglect at a young age. However, the research obtained during this case study was not entirely supportive of the author's hypothesis; existing research showed discrepancies and provided valid arguments which the author feels are deserving of further research.

Suggestions for Future Study

As result of this exploratory case study, the author was confronted with several inconsistencies in regards to the case study's hypothesis. The most significant of these discrepancies was revealed during the interview with Ross (2012) when she stated that she believed anti-social behavior could be inherited from an individual's parents. This was a possibility which the author initially overlooked when creating the thesis statement before being

enlightened by not only Ross's (2012) statements but also the Stone Phillips interview with

Jeffrey Dahmer (Dahmervideo, 1994). Piper (2003) clarified one common misconception in

regards to animal and child abuse when she stated that society has long been diluted into

believing children who abuse animals are doomed to become violent and disturbed individuals.

This belief is false as many children who abused animals at one point have still grown up to lead

normal and productive lives. Another discrepancy which became apparent during this case study

is the belief that adolescent abuse/neglect at a young age is going to have an equally significant

impact on the potential development of violent and/or aggressive behavior as the child ages

(Kotch et al., 2008; Maguire-Jack et al., 2012). This belief is also false. While there are some

children who become violent as a result of being abused or neglected, it is not a certain outcome.

Many children or adolescents who are abused do not become violent or aggressive. While none

of these inconsistencies are novel concepts, the author had not taken these ideas into account

when designing this case study.

As a result of this case study, the author strongly believes that there are several questions

which need to be answered if society ever wants to fully understand the phenomenon of child

abuse/neglect and its impact on the development of violent behavior as an adult. The first of

these questions is why some abused or neglected children turn violent while others are perfectly

fine. Researchers need to study what environments, support systems, and other influential factors

help an abused or neglected child cope. Second, there needs to be research on child abuse/neglect

outside of the criminal population. Many of the studies found during research within this case

study focused primarily on individuals who have been arrested for violent behavior. Researchers

need to study abused individuals who have not been arrested and are from all socioeconomic

statuses, races, demographics, etc.. By narrowing the research focus to criminals, the researchers are limiting the study's potential, which may result in an important element being overlooked.

Chapter Summary

This chapter summarized the results of this exploratory case study and allowed the author to conclude that child abuse and neglect can have an impact on later violent behavior. However, this is not the case for all abused/neglect child and adolescents since many abuse/neglected children and adolescents are able to live normal lives as they grow into adults. The author discussed the need for further research in this field using the two main discrepancies found within the case study.

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Appendix A

Abused Child. Violent Adult?

1. In your opinion, is psychopathic or antisocial behavior learned through life experiences (bullying, neglect, abuse…) or is an individual born with these tendencies?

2. How much of an impact do you believe adolescent abuse/neglect would have on the development of psychopathic or antisocial tendencies?

3. What type(s) of child or adolescent abuse/neglect do you believe would have the most significant impact on adult violence? (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, or Neglect)

4. How likely do you think an abused child would be to project this violence on to another person or animal? Explain?

Once the previous four questions have been answered I will then reveal that this paper is focusing on Jeffrey Dahmer. It is believed that this will prevent the interviewee from being influenced by what they know of Jeffrey Dahmer or other well known serial killers.

5. Jeffrey Dahmer experienced neglect and emotional abuse as a child. How much of an impact do you believe this abuse had on his behavior and eventual murders of 17 young men?

Appendix B

Abused Child. Violent Adult?

<u>Survey questions: **Gopá Ka Ross**</u>

1. In your opinion, is psychopathic or antisocial behavior learned through life experiences (bullying, neglect, abuse...) or is an individual born with these tendencies?

   Both – Many children are born with antisocial and/or psychopathic tendencies inherited (bipolar disease and schizophrenia) <u>yet</u>, with proactive pro-social intervention by caring parents, teachers, or therapists – children can learn positive functional interaction with others, yet often may need medication also.

2. How much of an impact do you believe adolescent abuse/neglect would have on the development of psychopathic or antisocial tendencies?

   Development of antisocial/psychopathic in teen years can be from abuse/neglect, yet most often, the pattern of both abuse/neglect and dysfunctional psychopathic behavior emerged in early years.

3. What type(s) of child or adolescent abuse/neglect do you believe would have the most significant impact on adult violence? (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, or Neglect)

   Violent adult behavior can be from any of the above abuses or neglect, yet physical/sexual abuse seemed to reflect physically mirroring violence – emotional abuse is the "ghost in the nursery" manifesting in rage in teen years often coupled with neglect, loss of self esteem and emotional violent outbursts.

4. How likely do you think an abused child would be to project this violence unto another person or animal? Explain?

   Children with a history of abuse/neglect do repeat the abusive acts they experienced or are violent with others and animals expressing anger/frustration or even a misguided

fascination of the suffering they can cause – perhaps retaliation for their own struggles with pain and confusion – anger and questioning why was a responsible adult not there to protect them and in turn act it out and hurt/bully/abuse others in outbursts.

Once the previous four questions have been answered I will then reveal that this paper is focusing on Jeffrey Dahmer. It is believed that this will prevent the interviewee from being influenced by what they know of Jeffrey Dahmer or other well known serial killers.

5. Jeffrey Dahmer experienced neglect and emotional abuse as a child. How much of an impact do you believe this abuse had on his behavior and eventual murders of 17 young men?

The respondent did not know a lot about Jeffrey Dahmer. Author explained his life, his alcohol addiction, and mother's mental illness as well as anti-anxiety drug use during pregnancy caused a passionate response in the respondent.

"His mother was mentally ill, he was mentally ill."

Start: 6:45 PM

End: 8:30 PM

11/19/2012

Appendix C

Abused Child. Violent Adult?

<u>Survey questions:</u> **Robert A. Gregg**

MA in guidance and counseling. Been a counselor for 34 yrs. Presently works with drug and other addictions and has worked in family counseling.

1. In your opinion, is psychopathic or antisocial behavior learned through life experiences (bullying, neglect, abuse…) or is an individual born with these tendencies?

    I believe that this behavior is learned. Abused victims have a tendency to become abusers themselves.

2. How much of an impact do you believe adolescent abuse/neglect would have on the development of psychopathic or antisocial tendencies?

    I believe that adolescence is a critical time of development. Any abuse or neglect could develop into psychopathic or antisocial tendencies.

3. What type(s) of child or adolescent abuse/neglect do you believe would have the most significant impact on adult violence? (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, or Neglect)

    Pertaining to violence, it would seem that physical abuse/neglect would lead to acting out of violence.

4. How likely do you think an abused child would be to project this violence unto another person or animal? Explain?

    It is very likely. John Bradshaw referred to this as the poison pedagogy.

Once the previous four questions have been answered I will then reveal that this paper is focusing on Jeffrey Dahmer. It is believed that this will prevent the interviewee from being influenced by what they know of Jeffrey Dahmer or other well known serial killers.

5. Jeffrey Dahmer experienced neglect and emotional abuse as a child. How much of an impact do you believe this abuse had on his behavior and eventual murders of 17 young men?

I believe that Jeffrey Dahmer's childhood neglect and emotional abuse contributed to his sadistic behavior. He is also a volitional free-agent who chose to carry out his mass murder behavior.

Start: 11/18/2012; 4:11 pm

End: 11/19/2012; 5:06 pm