

RHODES UNIVERSITY
CL. No. TR 07-119
BRN

KAREN HORNEY: A psychobiographical study

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For a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Masters of Social Science in Counselling Psychology

Rhodes University

May 2006

ABSTRACT

This psychobiography on the life of Karen Horney is an exploratory-descriptive study that aims to explore and describe Horney's life structure development according to Daniel Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development. The method of research uses a qualitative single-case research design that studies her life over her entire lifespan and highlights the individual characteristics of Horney in a holistic manner within her socio-historical context. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select Karen Horney as the subject of the research and only published data was analyzed in the research.

Multiple sources of data are used to obtain the information in this research, including an autobiography and three biographies written by three different authors. This data is organized according to the temporal sequence of her lifespan and the developmental periods and time frame of Levinson's theory.

Horney's life is described and explored to highlight those areas of her life that conform to the developmental theory and those aspects of her life that are not included in the theoretical constructs of Levinson's theory. By exploring the significant relationships that Horney developed throughout her life with family, friends, work colleagues, community and religious affiliations, and the important issues in her development, this study verifies Levinson's theory by corroborating his conceptualisation of adult development as a process of sequential stages divided into four main eras of development, linked by three periods of transition. A shortcoming of Levinson's theory relates to his omission of self-esteem issues and religious concerns as relevant factors experienced during the era of pre-adulthood and spiritual concerns during the era of late adulthood.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Kelly and Megan. Only you two know what sacrifices you have made to allow me to complete my thesis. My wish is that you be inspired by this experience and be determined to reach your own goals as you grow older and live your dream!

To my parents and all my friends who have walked this journey with me. I will not forget your encouragement and support.

To Roelf van Niekerk, my supervisor. Your guidance and steady support has not only been encouraging but very valuable in assisting me to complete this work.

To Maureen Stewart, thank you for your input, your excellent editing skills and advice.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter preview

Two decades ago, several writers pointed to the increased interest in and acceptance of the biographical and autobiographical approach by social scientists and personality psychologists in research (Bertaux, 1981; Elms, 1988; McAdams & Ochberg, 1988; Runyan, 1982; Wrightsman, 1981). This study uses this approach to provide a psychobiography that will evaluate the ability of Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development to illustrate the life of Karen Horney, a German-born psychiatrist and prominent psychoanalyst who developed her own interpersonal theory of human behaviour and individual dynamics. This chapter introduces the psychobiographical approach to research in the field of psychology and provides a brief account of Horney's life. An overview of Levinson's (1996) theory is also provided to orientate the reader to the theoretical structure that guided the process of data collection and the study itself.

1.2 An overview of the psychobiographical approach

Psychobiography, a psychologically informed biography that describes an individual life in an in-depth manner, has developed as a method of research since a wider variety of hermeneutic approaches have become available to psychological research (McAdams, 2000; Runyan, 1988b). Psychobiography is a qualitative case study that is both longitudinal and cross-cultural in nature (Anderson, 1981a; 1981b; McLeod, 1994). It researches the entire lifespan of an individual as opposed to a specific period in a person's life and is an idiographic approach that serves to verify and/or illustrate the life of an individual according to a specific psychological theory. According to Edwards (1998), psychobiography contributes to theory building in that it refines or develops theoretical concepts so that existing theory is either refuted or confirmed. Roberts (2002) adds that psychobiographical research encourages the growth of new conceptual insights and illustrates existing theories. This study on

Karen Horney will contribute to the development of the psychobiographical research method in South Africa.

To date, psychobiographical research undertaken at the University of Port Elizabeth¹ and Rhodes University, has studied the following people: Jan Christiaan Smuts (Fouché, 1999), Helen Martins (Bareira, 2001), Bantu Stephen Biko (Kotton, 2002), Balthazar John Vorster (Vorster, 2003), Wessel Johannes Cronje (Warmenhoven, 2004), Mother Theresa (Stroud, 2004), Albert Schweitzer (Edwards, 2004), Bruce Fordyce (Morrison, 2004), Cornelius Jacobus Langenhoven (Jacobs, 2004), and Raymond Carlson (Smeeton, 2005).

1.3 A brief introduction to Karen Horney

Reviews of Karen Horney's life can be found in texts by Horney (1980), Paris (1994), Quinn (1987) and Rubins (1978). Karen Horney was born in Germany in 1885 and became one of the first female students to study medicine at a German university in 1906, after the education system recognised the ability of the female population to be educated on a comparable basis to men. She completed her medical studies specialising in psychiatry in 1915 and, after a year of undergoing her own psychoanalysis with Dr Karl Abrahams, developed an interest in psychoanalysis as a treatment method in psychiatry. Despite professional doubt in the scientific foundation of Freudian analysis, she studied and practised psychoanalysis according to Freudian theory but questioned and criticized his theory as her knowledge in this area increased. She was a founding member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute and a lecturer in psychoanalytic techniques at the Institute.

After emigrating to the United States of America in 1932, she continued to challenge Freud's views on female sexual development. Additionally, she criticised the focus of psychoanalytic therapy on the client's past history and childhood background in exploring conflicts, as opposed to focusing on the present interpersonal functioning of the client. She contributed to the field of psychology by exploring female psychology,

¹ The university of Port Elizabeth is now known as the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University since January 2005.

self-analysis, the nature of narcissism and the need for shorter-term therapies. Karen Horney died of cancer at the age of 67 in New York.

1.4 Overview of the theoretical framework for this study

Daniel Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development in women will guide this study. This theory offers an alternative to psychoanalytic theory that has been the dominant theory in psychobiographical research. According to Levinson, a life course that follows a basic sequence can be identified in the lives of most, if not all, men and women. He also acknowledges that every individual life has unique elements and characteristics that permit an individualised approach to the analysis of any life that might be studied by both professional and non-professional persons using this theory.

Levinson (1996) divided the life course into four eras, each lasting 25 years. Each era has a unique bio-psycho-social character that contributes to the development of the whole individual and contains developmental periods in which specific changes are identified and described. Within and between these eras, a transitional period defines the transition from one era to the next. This sequential life course will be used to systematically describe the life of Karen Horney as it unfolded, and the significant relationships that she developed throughout her life with family, friends and work colleagues will be explored as important issues in her development, by following the temporal sequence of her lifespan. It is this structure that will be used in this study to present the information obtained in the biographical and autobiographical material available in this research.

1.5 Data used in the collection of material

Multiple sources of data were used to obtain information on the life of Karen Horney. These include a primary source in the form of a journal, "The Adolescent Diaries of Karen Horney" (1980) and three secondary sources: Rubins' (1978) biography entitled "Gentle Rebel of Psychoanalysis", Quinn's (1987) biography, "A Mind of her Own" and Paris' (1994) biography, "A Psychoanalyst's Search for Self-Understanding".

1.6 Rationale for the selection of Karen Horney as the research subject

A purposive sampling procedure was used to select Karen Horney as the subject for this research as I wanted to study the life of an influential and educated woman who had an established career in her field of study. Additionally, I needed to select a woman who had been studied previously by biographers, so that a sufficient amount of information on her life was available for the research.

1.7 Outline of the structure of this thesis

In chapter two, a theoretical overview of psychobiography describes the relationship between psychology and biographical research and will discuss the value and benefit of psychobiographical studies. A biographical chapter on Karen Horney, which provides the reader with a background of her childhood and adult development, follows this overview in chapter three. Chapter four presents Levinson's theory of adult development and describes the important changes identified by Levinson in his concept of life structure and the theoretical constructs of the lifespan, life cycle and life course of an individual. The methodological procedure followed in this study and the ethical considerations of this research are discussed in chapter five. Chapter six provides the results of the data collection obtained from the autobiographical and biographical sources of information available to the researcher and is followed by the discussion of these results, which will refute or verify Levinson's theory of adult development. The final chapter draws the thesis to a close by discussing the conclusions of this research and its shortcomings as well as recommendations for further research.

1.8 Conclusion

This introduction orientates the reader to the structure of the thesis and provides an outline of the intention of the research to explore and describe the life of Karen Horney according to Levinson's (1996) theoretical structure of adult development. In the discussion of the results in chapter seven, aspects of his theory that are congruent with Horney's life story will be verified, while areas of adult development that may be unacknowledged or in opposition to his theory will be highlighted. In the

following chapter, psychobiographical research is discussed in more detail to elucidate the relationship between biographical studies and the field of psychology.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Chapter preview

This chapter outlines the relationship between psychology and biographical studies. It provides definitions and a brief overview of psychobiography as well as discussing various related concepts in an attempt to separate these different terms from each other. Case study research is then described and the value and benefits of a psychobiographical case study are provided. The chapter is concluded with a brief account of the development of the psychobiographical approach in psychology.

2.2 Psychology and biography

Humans have always been interested in the telling of stories. These stories have been conveyed through folk tales, myths, legends, history, stage productions and films (McAdams, 1994; Sarbin, 1986). This interest in the stories of the lives of individuals has been pursued by scholars of biography and scientific psychology who have endeavoured to answer the following pertinent questions concerning well-known figures in history who have influenced the lives of others:

- How do certain individuals achieve their potential and, in particular, develop into exceptionally creative, productive or competent people?
- How can we understand the life course of a single person?
- How can we study a single life, as it developed, to achieve valuable insight into that person's entire life? (McAdams, 1994)

Despite this interest in people's stories, however, psychology has traditionally been theory-centred and has relied on the scientific approach to study human development (Jacobs, 2004). According to McAdams (1994), psychologists assumed that the study of individual lives could not contribute to the formulation of psychological theory. However, as a result of the coming together of biography and scientific psychology, individual development can be illustrated by psychologists who attempt to answer

these questions by using biographical data as a source of information to study particular individuals. Alfred Adler, Erik Erikson and Henry Murray (McAdams, 1994) support the use of psychologically focused biographies as a means of studying an individual life in order to obtain insight into that person's life and to construct that life at a specific time in history.

Criticisms of the biographical approach assert that biographical methodology is generally too subjective and that too much information abounds to promote clear and rigorous scientific study (Anderson, 1981a; 1981b; Runyan, 1984). However, to dismiss this methodological approach would discourage the study of unique elements of individual personalities and individual lives (Howe, 1997) and would not permit the study of the entire life of an individual.

2.3 Psychobiography: definitions and a brief description

A psychobiography involves both psychology and biography. Assuming that a good biographical study is informative (McAdams, 1994), a psychobiography should combine both of these sources of knowledge. In particular, a psychobiography is "the systematic use of psychological (especially personality) theory to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story" (McAdams, 1988, p. 2). According to Bromley (1986, p. 9) psychobiographies can be defined as "biographical studies in which psychological concepts, methods and findings play a major role".

Essentially, psychobiography is the formulation and understanding of an individual's story according to the systematic use of a psychological theory (McAdams, 1988). McLeod (1994) elaborates by saying that it is the psychological description of people's accounts of their life experiences as they are recorded in diaries, journals, interviews, biographies, open-ended questionnaires and projective techniques.

Howe (1997) explains his understanding of a psychobiography as psychological research that uses biographical data to study and explore the development of creative and original thought processes and productivity in exceptional individuals. This definition therefore attempts to answer the question of how particular individuals develop into exceptionally creative, productive and competent people.

Furthermore, a psychobiography is an in-depth study of an individual life (Runyan, 1988b) using psychological theory to describe and understand an individual's personal material within his/her psycho-historical context (McLeod, 1994). A psychobiography should facilitate the formulation and exploration of the central story of that person's entire life according to the structure of the psychological theory being used (McAdams, 1994). It can be regarded as longitudinal and cross-cultural in nature as psychological concepts were primarily developed in the 20th century, but are applied to individuals living in earlier decades when used in the context of a psychobiography (Anderson, 1981a; 1981b).

2.4 Related terms and concepts in psychobiography

2.4.1 Autobiographies and biographies

An autobiography is the story of a person's life as recorded and described by the individual him/herself (Bromley, 1986). However, this is a selective, biased and subjective account. A biography on the other hand is a life history written by an author that may or may not involve the co-operation of the subject of the biography. It may be comprehensive and accurate or the opposite. A good biography should illuminate the life of an individual by focusing on the distinct and unique nature of the individual (Howe, 1997). A limitation of this approach, according to Schultz (2003), is that a psychological viewpoint of the individual is missing. A psychobiography therefore should provide additional information about the individual by providing this illuminating data.

2.4.2 Life histories and life stories

In life histories, the focus of the individual story is on similarities as opposed to the uniqueness of a single life (Rosenwald, 1988). They are based on subjective and objective data obtained in testimonies, observation, information from others and independent factual records (Bromley, 1986; Bujold, 1990). Life histories serve the purpose of testing hypotheses and examining relationships in many lives (McAdams, 1994) and are usually undertaken by sociologists and anthropologists who collect autobiographies and who attempt to search for commonalities within a group in order

to facilitate an understanding of that particular culture (Bertaux, 1981; Watson, 1976). Bromley (1986, p. 8) provides the following definition of a life history: "A scientific reconstruction and interpretation, based on the best evidence available, of the major formative, critical and culminative episodes in a person's life".

Life stories are oral or written accounts of events, relationships and circumstances in a person's life (Atkinson, 1998; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Runyan, 1984). They are essentially subjective, as they focus on personal thoughts and feelings of the narrator and depend on the depth and extent of the information provided by the narrator of the story, thus being potentially limited (Bujold, 1990). Bromley (1986) asserts that life stories tend to focus on meanings attributed to circumstances and events rather than factual information.

2.4.3 Psychohistories, historical psychology and historiographies

A psychohistory is a historical interpretation of a political, social or cultural event using a psychological theory (Berg, 1995; Runyan, 1988b), usually psychoanalytic in approach (Loewenberg, 1983). Historical psychology on the other hand is simply the history of psychological phenomena and of psychological development and the life course (Runyan, 1988b). Historiographies involve research using public records, government documents, confidential reports, newspaper editorials, photographs, films and artefacts to reconstruct information to provide a suitable historical explanation for a past event (Berg, 1995; Denzin, 1978; Parson, 1980). It is therefore past orientated research (Anderson, 1990) that seeks to answer a currently relevant question concerning the historical past.

2.4.4 Narratives

A narrative according to Bromley (1986, p.9) is an "orderly account of a series of events. It may take the form of a story or a log, with the emphasis on description rather than explanation." The relevance of narratives to psychobiography is that both approaches allow human development to be studied in a structured manner that facilitates the understanding of human behaviour (McAdams, 1988; Widdershoven, 1993). Additionally, narratives enable humans to make sense of the past, present and

future (Elms, 1994) and focus on the "whole person" as opposed to only certain aspects of that person's life (McAdams, 1988).

2.4.5 Personality assessment

Personality assessment can be distinguished from a psychobiography in that an assessment is the study of a life actually being lived as opposed to the study of a life that has been completed. It uses psychological tests and various psychological instruments to evaluate an individual's personal characteristics and behaviour (Aiken, 1997) to provide a psychological description of what that person is like now, at this particular point in time. Most importantly, it involves an element of prediction that is not required in a psychobiography. Carlson (1988) adds that psychobiography enables human development to be traced in "finished" lives with the added advantage of considering the socio-historical context of the person, while personality assessment focuses on the current analysis of the influential factors in a person's life.

2.4.6 Case studies

Psychobiographies, single-case experiments and psychological case studies are all forms of individual case research that are similar in character to wider case research (McLeod, 1994). In contrast to a psychobiography, a psychological case study focuses on a specific episode in the life of a person, as opposed to an extended period of time (Bromley, 1986). A single case experiment, on the other hand, is a study of one or more aspects of behaviour under closely controlled conditions (Bromley, 1986; Yin, 1994). It uses the classical principle of testing a hypothesis where $n=1$ (Yin, 1994). It is primarily used to test the effectiveness of psychological interventions, usually following a behavioural or cognitive-behavioural treatment programme, in order to record and assess specific changes following a specific intervention. Its advantage is that definite, accurate and valid conclusions can be drawn about causal relationships (Gerdes, 1989), but, in reality, controlled circumstances are not always possible as external factors in the environment could influence the subject outside of the treatment programme.

Case study research is typically non-experimental in that it lacks control and manipulation of the variables being studied. It is the study of psychological phenomena within a natural context that utilizes qualitative tools and techniques for data collection and analysis. It is therefore unstructured and in the past has been considered somewhat unscientific (Edwards, 1998). However, Edwards asserts that the value of case study research has begun to be recognised, now that knowledge that was previously unobtainable through traditional research designs, has become accessible to researchers and practitioners of psychological treatment interventions.

Case study research seeks to generalise the findings of the research to a specific, selected psychological theory rather than to a wider population of people, so that existing theory can be tested or new theory can be formulated (Cavaye, 1996; McLeod, 1994; Smith, 1988). Case research can focus on either one individual, as in a single case study, or on more than one person, as in a multiple case study (Smith, 1988).

Psychobiography has a single-case research design. It aims to provide a rich description and an in-depth study of an individual life to confirm or refute an existing psychological theory (Edwards, 1998; Markus, 1989). This is in contrast to a multiple case study that does not encourage a rich description but rather enables the analysis of data across cases, so that findings can be verified (Bromley, 1986; Cavaye, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1984). A multiple case design would be useful in a biographical study of career development (Bujold, 1990) or a study of leaders (Gronn, 1993). It is a qualitative research method that seeks to encourage an understanding of an individual and to promote meaning by exploration, description and understanding of both context and it's phenomenon. (Mouton, 1988). Psychobiography uses qualitative material such as personal documents, diaries, recorded dreams, letters and recorded oral productions (Alexander, 1988) to provide an extensive description of the life of an individual (Jacobs, 2004).

In collecting data for a psychobiography, two major sources of evidence are available to the researcher (Berg, 1995). These two sources can be categorised as either primary sources or secondary sources. Primary sources consist of oral or written testimony or witness accounts of individual actions. Typically these sources consist of

original documents. Secondary sources comprise oral or written testimony of people not present at an actual event or experience. They are second hand accounts as recorded in biographies, textbooks, and newspaper articles.

2.5 The value and benefit of a psychobiographical case study

Various benefits arise from the utilisation of the case study method and these apply equally to psychobiographies. These will be presented and discussed as they apply to each identified value.

2.5.1 Identifying the uniqueness of the individual case within the whole

A psychobiography encourages us to explore the unique characteristics of an individual. This is referred to as an idiographic approach. It was originally encouraged by Gordon Allport to study personality development and is in contrast to the nomothetic approach valued by statisticians and positivists (Elms, 1994). Allport, however, later acknowledged the shortcomings of the idiographic approach and replaced it with the term morphogenic. This approach attempts to incorporate individual features embedded within the whole person so that the individual characteristics of a person within his/her context can be explored and illustrated (Elms, 1994; Wallace, 1989).

2.5.2 Socio-historical context

Psychobiography aims to explore the individual's social and historical context to facilitate an accurate understanding of the individual during that particular historical era (Watson, 1976). The benefit of this understanding also permits the consideration of the cultural and sub-cultural influences that impact on the personality development of the individual (Barnouw, 1973; Mouton, 1988; Runyan, 1984; 1988b) and places the individual within his or her particular experience of the socialisation process within the family and broader social environment (Runyan, 1984).

2.5.3 Process and pattern over time

As the focus of a psychobiography is on the completed life of an individual from birth until death (Carlson, 1988; Gronn, 1993), the personality development of the individual can be described and understood as it occurred during the subject's lifespan (Fiske, 1988). Possible reasons for these developmental changes can therefore be suggested or proposed (Morrison, 2004) and due to the longitudinal nature of this research, a comprehensive description of human development within the context of time is provided (Alexander, 1990; Sokolovsky, 1996).

2.5.4 Subjective reality

An understanding of the inner experiences, thoughts and feelings of the subject is encouraged in life history research (Mouton, 1988). Watson (1976) emphasised the importance of understanding the subject's life story from his or her subjective point of view. This requires a hermeneutical and phenomenological perspective. It is in the understanding of this subjective reality that empathy and sympathy for the subject is facilitated to provide a clear picture of the individual's life story (Runyan, 1984). Yin (1994) advocates that a good case report should be so compelling and interesting that the reader is encouraged to continue reading until the end of the report.

2.5.5 Theory testing and development

Carlson (1988) asserts that life history research is ideal for testing and developing theories of human development. In case research, the chosen theory plays the important role of contributing to the identification of the research objectives during the data collection phase. This theory would then serve as the template with which to compare and analyse the data and allows the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the data within theoretical constructs. In a psychobiography, the findings of the case study are compared to the theory. This is known as analytical generalisation, as opposed to statistical generalisation (Yin, 1994). The primary objective is to compare the case data to the theory, thereby testing it, extending it and ultimately developing it (Yin, 1994). It is therefore both deductive and inductive research (Bromley, 1986; Fouché, 1999). Life history research is also effective in the

informal testing and development of developmental theories of gerontology and aging (Sokolovsky, 1996), career development (Anderson, 1988; Bujold, 1990; Ochberg, 1988) and the emergence of genetic predispositions of leaders as reflected in their health (Kets de Vries, 1990).

2.6 The development of psychobiography

According to Runyan (1988a), the first psychobiography began with Freud's study of "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood" written in 1910. At that time, it was regarded as applied psychoanalysis and although psychoanalytic biographies were being produced, they were severely criticized. One of the reasons may have been because they tended to have a pathographic focus that attempted to expose the neurotic drives of well-known, influential figures. McAdams (1988) gives the example of the biographical study of Florence Nightingale, written by Lytton Strachey, who suggested that selfish compulsions were the motivating factors for her good deeds and care of others. Freud on the other hand, held the reductionistic view that intrapsychic dynamics motivated both creativity and neurosis.

Later, in the 1940's, Langer produced "The Mind of Adolf Hitler". This psychobiography however was only published in 1972 (Runyan, 1988a). In 1958, Erik Erikson produced "Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History" and in 1969 "Gandhi's Truth: On The Origins of Militant Nonviolence".

Research by Runyan (1988a) has shown an increase in psychobiographical studies after the 1970's as well as the development of professional organizations, conferences, specialist journals and dissertations focusing specifically on psychobiography. Initially it was rare to have academic training in psychobiography, but it has now developed as a formal academic training programme in certain universities in the United States of America (Alexander, 1988; 1990; Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1988; 1994; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1988a; Simonton, 1994). A general internet search on May 23, 2006 identified the following influential figures in the field of psychobiography:

- Alan C. Elms: Influential theorist of psychobiography (www.ulmus.net)

- Dan P. McAdams: Director of the Foley Center for the Study of Lives (<http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/peopleDir/Profile/?ProfileID=46>)
- William MacKinley Runyan: Professor in Psychology at the University of California, Berkeley. He is interested in psychobiography and the study of life history and case history as a research method (<http://socialwelfare.berkeley.edu/faculty/runyan.htm>)
- Todd Schultz: a Psychology professor at Pacific University and has a website offering additional internet resources about psychobiography as a field of research as well as various publications on well known figures in history (<http://www.psychobiography.com>).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief description of the different terms related to psychobiography in an attempt to elucidate the differences between the forms of individual life stories available in psychological research. The psychobiographical approach is defined and the benefits of this form of case research are discussed. In the following chapter the childhood background and adult life of Karen Horney is presented as a biographical outline of her life story and development.

CHAPTER 3

KAREN HORNEY: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

3.1 Chapter preview

This biographical chapter on Karen Horney provides an account of the family in which she grew up, giving a brief description of her mother and father and their conflictual relationship that ended in divorce when Karen was 19. Her educational history is provided and her marriage to Oskar Horney, which also ended in divorce, is described. Her career as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst is outlined and the events leading up to the eventual establishment of her own training institute are presented.

3.2 Family background

Karen Horney was born in the small city of Eilbek, close to Hamburg in Germany on September 15, 1885 and was named Karen Clementina Theodora Danielsen at birth. She was the second child born to her parents, her elder brother, Berndt, being three and a half years older than her. Karen's father had been married before and had four teenage children from his previous marriage. Unfortunately, these children never accepted his new wife or their step-siblings, Berndt and Karen. This led to frequent tension and conflict in the family that tended to worsen when Karen's father returned home after his frequent trips away from them.

Karen's father, Berndt Henrik Wackels Danielsen, was a sea captain who piloted ships across the South Atlantic to South America. He was often away on long trips that were very dangerous and risky and usually lasted six months. He is described in the various biographies as possessing good nautical skills and, as he was responsible for a crew of 40 men at a time, appears to have had good leadership abilities albeit in an authoritarian style. He was a strong character who expected his own family to listen and obey him without questioning him, probably as a result of his authoritarian role, which was his job as a sea captain. He was a man who followed strict Christian principles and regularly read the Bible and referred to Biblical teachings in his home. This may have contributed to Karen's questioning of spiritual matters during her

childhood and adolescence as she struggled to reconcile these teachings with the reality of her home life, where she did not feel loved and supported by her father.

Karen's mother, Sonni, whose full name was Clothilde Marie Danielsen (née van Ronzelen) was the daughter of a well-known architect and director of harbour construction, Jacob Joseph van Ronzelen. There is a street in Bremerhaven named after him and he is acknowledged in the local museum for his skill and contribution to the construction of the port of Bremerhaven. Sonni is regarded as having married late in her life at the age of 28. This was generally unusual for women in that time, as they were encouraged to get married rather than remain single and dependent on relatives, even if the marital relationship was not expected to be fulfilling.

The age difference of 16 years between Karen's parents was a problem that they struggled to overcome and with the frequent absence of the father in the home, the marital relationship was not a close one. In fact, Quinn (1987) believes that Karen and her younger brother Berndt were one of the few sources of satisfaction in Sonni's life. Karen was also frequently coerced into taking sides with her mother when her parents were arguing, and, as she grew older, became emotionally distant from her father. Her poor relationship with him is reflected in her adolescent diaries where he is not recorded as one of the most important people in her life and where he is referred to as the cause of major disruption in her life. This clearly indicates her lack of admiration or affection for her father. Quinn (1987) also commented that he was noticeably absent in family photographs, which due to his job, would be expected to a certain extent. Her parents did eventually separate when Karen was 19 and still at school, two years before she started her medical studies at university.

3.3 Social context

Karen was born during the industrial age in Germany when major societal changes and growth was taking place. Steam powered industry was developing and electric trams had begun to replace a horse-drawn railway (Quinn, 1987). It was also a time in which social improvements were being advocated, as the rights of women were being

recognised and girls were finally permitted to study at the Gymnasium² in the early 1900's. This was a major advancement in the cause for women's rights as girls were now afforded the opportunity of qualifying to enter university to obtain a tertiary education.

3.4 Karen's adolescent years

Karen kept a diary intermittently from the age of 13 as a way of remembering her years as a teenager and as a young adult (Horney, 1980). This diary was not a daily account of her life though, and there is a gap of almost four years, while she was at university, when she does not record any entry at all. She made her final diary entry at the age of 26. At this stage of her life, her diary entries became reflections on her analysis with Dr Karl Abrahams, a psychoanalyst who she saw regularly for about a year. Her diary entries during her adolescence reflect her experiences of school, friendships, spiritual struggles and love relationships.

From an early age, Karen wanted to study medicine and become a medical doctor. How she planned to do this at a time when women were not permitted a university entrance, testifies to her fierce ambition and reluctance to allow anything to block her attainment of her self-made goals. Perhaps this also reflects her strength of character and naïveté, as at that age she may not have realised how powerful social restrictions could be for a woman in that socio-historical era. Later on, she demonstrated the strength of her ambition when her father refused to finance her medical studies. In an effort to counter his refusal, she devised a plan to become a teacher, a socially sanctioned career for a woman at that time, so that she could pay for her own studies once she had saved enough money.

3.5 The beginnings of her medical career

Karen began studying medicine at the age of 21 at the University of Freiburg after successfully completing the Abitur, the university entrance exam. Out of 2350

² A Gymnasium education is similar to a High School education in that with a six-year Gymnasium training you could pass the Abitur, the required examination to enter university.

students at the university, only 58 were women and in the medical school, Karen was one of 34 women (Quinn, 1987). This may seem quite high for this profession, but it reflects the feminist ideology of that time which encouraged women to study medicine so that they could provide medical treatment to other women. Initially, Karen was very unhappy while adjusting to university life, as she was very lonely living on her own in a single room close to the university campus. However, she soon made friends and settled down. It was soon thereafter, that she met her future husband, Oskar Horney, at an academic social evening and immediately became friends with him. She was not attracted to him at first though, as she was keen on developing a romantic relationship with his good friend, Louis Grote, a fellow medical student who was one semester ahead of her. She was in awe of Louis' inner harmony, self-confidence and good looks, all qualities she considered lacking in herself.

Oskar Horney on the other hand, was an economics graduate at the University of Brunswick and was reading for a Ph.D. in Political Science. Perhaps their relationship developed primarily from a platonic basis as he moved soon after she met him to Braunschweig, so that he could continue to work on his dissertation there. They maintained their relationship by writing letters to each other that span a 15-month period between July 1906 and September 1907. These letters are now a part of her adolescent diaries. Oskar was not as good looking as Louis Grote, but was regarded as being very clever, well organized and fiercely competitive in sports, according to Quinn's (1987) biography. It was possibly his intelligence that kept their relationship intact and his ability to allow Karen to talk about her relationship difficulties with Louis Grote, as she would pour out her distress and conflict in these letters to him.

When Karen was 22 years old, Oskar returned to Freiburg to complete his Ph.D. thesis and began to spend a lot of time with her. It is suggested in the various biographies that it was for this very reason that Karen stopped recording her feelings and life events in her diary, simply because there was no time to do so, as she was very busy with her medical studies and this relationship. Another reason could have been that she was feeling fulfilled with Oskar and did not need to explore her feelings in her diary. Two years later she married Oskar and moved into a boarding house in Berlin with him, where she continued her studies.

Karen was very happy studying medicine and felt challenged and stimulated by her studies. She did however struggle throughout her adolescence and early adulthood with feelings of inferiority and shyness. She would feel worthless at times and would record her feelings of extreme tiredness and depression, which worsened after her father died after a short illness at the age of 74, a year after she was married. It was at this time that she sought psychoanalytic help with Dr Karl Abrahams. Karen's analysis lasted about a year and was an intense process that involved six sessions of analysis per week. It is reported that she continued to use the tools of psychoanalysis to help her to understand her depression and exhaustion even after this analysis ended, through recording her feelings and intra-psychic experiences in her diary.

3.6 Karen's own family

Karen became pregnant with her first child whilst preparing for her final exams. This was the beginning of a very stressful time for her as her mother had a stroke and died at the age of 61, only a month after Karen's first daughter Brigitte was born. Despite these stressors however, she managed to successfully pass her exams. It may well be that, as a result of all this family stress and adaptation, that she sought consolation in an extra-marital relationship that she began with one of Oskar's good friends, Walther Honroth. It seems unusual however that, despite each person's spouse being aware of this relationship and Karen's friendship with Walther's wife, they all continued to be friends and even moved next door to each other at a later stage. This relationship lasted for a short while, but no further information as to exactly how long was provided in Quinn's (1987) biography.

Karen's second daughter, Marianne, was born two years later. This was a very busy time for Karen as she was taking care of two small children, working, and writing up her doctoral thesis. Her thesis was a case study of a patient who became psychotic after a head injury. The title was "A Case Report on the Question of Traumatic Psychosis" (Quinn, 1987). Two years later, her third daughter, Renate, was born. The fact that she could manage all these domestic and professional demands demonstrates her ambition and drive, as Oskar was very involved and financially successful in his own career working for the Hugo Stinnes Corporation in the official

capacity of General Secretary and therefore could not have assisted her in her child rearing responsibilities during the day.

Indeed, it was probably this very stress and busy lifestyle that contributed to the breakdown of their marriage as they began to lead separate lives after a few years, socialising with different people and seldom being with each other. The family circumstances deteriorated even further after Karen's brother Berndt died of pneumonia when she was 41 and Oskar lost his job after the collapse of the Stinnes Corporation that same year (Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). Additionally, Oskar became ill with meningitis and was hospitalised while travelling on business later that year. Quinn (1987) even believes that he may have suffered brain damage as a result of his illness. Oskar was declared bankrupt two years later and the family were forced to leave their comfortable house and move to an apartment in the city. A year later, they separated and, although they didn't finalise their divorce until 10 years later, Oskar and Karen never reconciled (Quinn, 1987).

This separation brought its share of hardship as well. Karen and her daughters experienced financial difficulties that forced her to take in two boarders to help pay the rent on their apartment and money was so scarce that they could not afford to heat the whole apartment adequately (Quinn, 1987). Additionally, the children were required to help more at home as domestic help was not available. Karen's youngest daughter, Renate, is alleged to have displayed behaviour problems in response to these adjustments by throwing stones at passing cars and her school threatened to expel her (Quinn, 1987). Karen's response to these behavioural difficulties was to send Renate to a school in Switzerland. This move turned out to be the right one for Renate, as she thrived both socially and academically in this school (Quinn, 1987). No adjustment problems were mentioned in the biographies about her older two daughters, perhaps reflecting their maturity and understanding of the difficulties that their parents faced when living together.

3.7 Karen's career

After Karen qualified as a medical doctor, she specialised in psychiatry and studied psychoanalysis, undergoing her own analysis with Dr Karl Abrahams (Quinn, 1987).

She was a founding member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute that trained students in psychoanalysis using Freud's theory, and was a lecturer and supervisor of psychoanalysis at the Institute for 12 years. She developed her own theoretical ideas after gaining extensive experience in psychoanalysis with her patients and began to deviate from Freud's theory, opposing his concept of penis envy in female sexual development and the basis of neurosis (Quinn, 1987). She also began to focus her therapy on the present interpersonal functioning of the client rather than focusing on his/her childhood history and past experiences. She wrote 14 papers on the psychology of women and frequently gave talks at various meetings of mental health professionals as well as at non-professional meetings (Quinn, 1987). After moving to the United States of America at the age of 47, she worked at two American psychoanalytic institutes before founding a new institute with four other people (Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). In her final year, a clinic that would offer psychoanalytic therapy at a reduced fee was founded as an added service at the institute she had helped to start. This institute was later renamed the Karen Horney Psychoanalytic Institute (Quinn, 1987).

3.8 Emigration to USA

In 1932, at the age of 47, Karen was offered a job in the United States of America as assistant director of the Chicago Psychoanalytical Institute (Paris, 1994; Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). This position required her to teach and assist in the preparation of a teaching curriculum for the Institute. Franz Alexander, who had previously been a student of hers in Berlin, personally telephoned her from Chicago to offer her the job (Quinn, 1987). He had just started the Institute and must have been very impressed and sure of her ability to lead the Institute in the direction he envisioned, to recommend her as the person suitable for this position. At the same time, he must have had some sense of her tenacity and adventurous spirit to offer her this job, knowing that it would be a big decision for her to leave the comfort of a familiar environment and the county of her birth.

For Karen, her motivation was possibly to make a new start for herself after her separation from her husband five years previously. She accepted the job on a two-year contract basis (Rubins, 1978), allowing her the chance to return to Germany if

she wanted to. The political circumstances at that time may also have been a motivating factor as Hitler was beginning to exert political power at that time (Quinn, 1987). According to Rubins (1978), Renate, her youngest daughter, recalls the conflict that her mother felt between leaving her home and her friends, and the loss that would be experienced with such a move, as opposed to the challenge and opportunity that was offered to her in the United States of America.

During this time, however, she must have had a sense of security knowing that her two older children were advancing steadily in the career paths they had chosen. Brigitte was a young actress who was gaining recognition after winning the Reinhardt prize for acting in 1932 (Quinn, 1987). Marianne had just started studying medicine at the University of Freiburg, following in her mother's footsteps. It was therefore a move that would be made by herself and Renate, who was 15 at the time (Quinn, 1987).

Karen and Renate initially struggled with adjusting to a new culture in the USA. The USA had different social values and they found the people to be more materialistic than in Germany (Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). The examples given of this experience in the biographies were the open discussion of people's salaries and the informal manner of addressing professional people on a first name basis. Karen also had the extra pressure of having to write the required state exams in English in order to practise as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, for which she did not feel confident after having studied for her medical degree in her home language. However, she passed them well, although no direct information is given in any of the biographies as to how well she passed these exams. The following year, she applied for USA citizenship, thereby revealing her commitment and desire to stay in her new country.

According to Rubins (1978), the different socio-cultural conditions of the USA influenced her writings and theoretical viewpoints from this time onwards, as she became more and more interested in considering the sociological and cultural influences on individual behaviour and the cause of neurosis. Two years after settling in Chicago, Karen moved to New York, having resigned from the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute after tensions between her and the Director, Franz Alexander, could not be resolved. This was a good move for both her and Renate as they found a better apartment and employed a German housekeeper who added

some familiarity to their daily lives. Karen also had more time to socialise and soon got her driver's licence and bought a second hand car, thereby giving her more independence and freedom to go where she wanted to go (Quinn, 1987).

After moving to New York, Karen was warmly accepted into the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. She had a good professional reputation, although there were rumours that she had had a sexual relationship with one of her supervisees at the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute (Quinn, 1987). These were never confirmed though, and she had begun a romantic relationship with Erich Fromm in Chicago, who also moved to New York during the same year (Quinn, 1987). They were supposed to have been inseparable companions and together they socialised with Paul Tillich, a theologian, and his wife, Hannah, who both remained friends with Karen until her death (Quinn, 1987). Within six months of this move to New York, her private practice was fully booked. A year later, Renate left school and returned to Berlin to marry her boyfriend from school (Quinn, 1987).

Karen became a grandmother in the following year to Kaya, Renate's daughter. She was enthusiastic about her new role and her new granddaughter as she went to see the baby within a month of her birth, taking food parcels and presents with her to Germany (Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). During this trip, she also applied for a divorce from Oskar (Rubins, 1978). No exact reasons were given as to why she had delayed so long in filing for a divorce. Her busy schedule and focus on establishing her career in a new country may have delayed her application and besides, this had not prevented her in any way from establishing other relationships with men in the meantime, so she might not have regarded it as a priority in her life. Her relationship with Erich Fromm lasted approximately seven years and no other specific man was mentioned as having a romantic relationship with her, except an unidentified training analyst who maintained a relationship with her until her death (Quinn, 1987).

In 1937, at the age of 52, Karen published her first book, "The Neurotic Personality of Our Time". Her second book, "New Ways in Psychoanalysis", followed two years later. Just before her third book, "Self-Analysis" was published though, her teaching and supervisory role at the Institute was taken away from her due to the committee's decision that she was deviating too far from Freud's psychoanalytic theory in her

training and supervising of the Institute's students. Karen resigned and within three weeks of her resignation, founded the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis with other professionals (Quinn, 1987).

This association, however, split into two groups after two years over theoretical debates and, later, at the age of 67, The Karen Horney Foundation was formed to enable a clinic to be affiliated to the Institute (Quinn, 1987). The Institute was also later renamed in honour of Karen Horney. Karen considered the start of the clinic a dream come true, and was very honoured by the gesture of naming it after her. Her response according to Rubins' biography (1978, p. 329) was: "*You have not only my whole hearted consent but I consider this to be the most meaningful honor I ever received or might receive in my life*".

3.9 Karen's final year

Just before Karen died, she travelled to Japan in search of spiritual answers and her desire to relate Zen Buddhism to her theory of interpersonal relationships. Her eldest daughter, Brigitte, and her good friend, Daisetz Suzuki, who was a Zen master, were among the few people who accompanied her. She visited various Zen monasteries and really enjoyed the trip, considering it one of the greatest experiences of her life (Rubins, 1978; Quinn, 1987).

Soon after this trip, she became very ill and was diagnosed with gall bladder cancer. She had to be hospitalised soon after, as she was having difficulty breathing and was in a lot of pain. After three days, she knew that she was dying, despite her family trying to keep this from her by excluding certain visitors from seeing her (Quinn, 1987; Rubins, 1978). She died on December 4, 1952 at the age of 67. Her good friend, Paul Tillich, who delivered the eulogy at her funeral, acknowledged Karen's compassion for other people's psychological distress and suffering, and affirmed the contribution she had made in the work she had wholeheartedly been involved in.

Karen Horney died acknowledging the progress and achievements of her three children who she felt expressed different aspects of her own personality. Brigitte was the actress she had once wanted to be in her youth, Marianne was the psychiatrist,

the professional identity she had achieved, and Renate was the mother she aspired to be.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief overview of Karen Horney's life. Her family of origin is described and a picture of her own family with her husband and three daughters is painted, both before her divorce and after. An outline of her career is given and the changes that she encountered after immigrating to America are described. Her final trip to Japan a few months before she became ill and died is mentioned as one of the highlights of her life and a memorable time for her. The following chapter presents Levinson's (1996) theory of life structure development, which is the theoretical focus of this thesis, through which Karen Horney's life will be described in the discussion of the results.

CHAPTER 4

LEVINSON'S THEORY OF LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Chapter preview

Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development identifies and describes the important changes that occur throughout the lifespan of an individual. This theory will be used to explore the development and changes that occurred throughout the life of Karen Horney in chapter six of the research. The key concept of life structure development and the constructs of the lifespan, life cycle and life course of Levinson's theory will be defined and discussed in this chapter. Additionally, the eras in the life cycle of adult development will be presented and described, together with the periods of transition that link these developmental eras.

4.2 An introduction to theories of development

Developmental psychology enables us to explore the wide variety of developmental changes that occur between birth and death. Some developmental theories have focused on childhood development, giving the impression that once a child entered adulthood, development was complete (Gerdes, Ochse, Stander & Van Ede, 1981). This may have been substantiated by the rapid physical and psychological changes of childhood and adolescence in comparison to the less obvious development during adulthood. Since then, developmental theorists have recognised that development involving both constancy and change occurs throughout the entire lifespan of each individual (Kaplan, 1998).

4.3 Levinson's theory of development

Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development acknowledges a basic sequence in the life course of both men and women whilst recognising the unique elements in each individual life. He believes that adult development is a process of stability and change, continuity and discontinuity, orderly progression and stasis, regression and flux

(Levinson, 1996). He emphasizes the importance of regarding adult development as more than just an extension of child development or the prelude to old age in which growth as well as a possible decline in certain areas of functioning occurs. An example of such a decline would be deterioration in cognitive or physical functioning as a person moves towards old age.

Levinson's (1996) theory regards interpersonal relationships with friends, family, work, religious affiliations and the community as significant influences throughout adult development that contribute to the uniqueness of each individual life. According to his research adult development for both genders follows a similar life course.

4.4 The lifespan, life cycle and life course

According to Levinson (1996) the *lifespan* refers to the period of time from birth until death. The *life cycle* however is not an exact concept. Levinson suggests that the process of life is a journey that begins at birth and ends with death. This journey can be divided into a series of periods within the life cycle that are introduced as eras. These eras are distinctly different in quality and unique in character. Change occurs within each era and a transition characterises a movement from the one era to the other.

The *life course* refers to the sequence of an individual life as it passes through time. According to Levinson (1996), it is not a simple, continuous process, as the different eras within the life course require adjustment by the individual. The period of time between eras is referred to as a time of transition. It is important to acknowledge that no particular era has more importance than another, as each era merely contributes to the life course as a whole.

4.5 The life structure

Levinson (1996, p. 22) defines the life structure as "the underlying pattern or design of a person's life at a given time" and is a key concept in his theory of adult development. Levinson strives to understand the nature of an individual's life and the general direction or course of that life over time. He is interested in studying individual

personality style, social roles and biological characteristics that influence the life events and life course of an individual. In analysing the development of the life structure of an individual, the most important aspects of that person's life should be highlighted as well as the nature and significance of relationships with others. These relationships may be within the immediate or extended family, with colleagues at work, or with others in the social environment.

Levinson (1996) believes that the relationships of each individual contribute to the unique experience of each person and are the means through which a life is lived and expressed. His theory proposes that the life structure is comprised of three components, with only one or two of them occupying a central place in the life structure. These components are the following:

- Central components
- Peripheral components
- Unfulfilled components.

Central components have the greatest significance for the self and to the life of an individual. It is in these areas of a person's life that the most energy and time is invested. These central components strongly influence the nature of the other components.

Peripheral components are those components that are easier to change or eliminate as the individual invests less time and energy in these directions so that if they are changed, minimal change in the overall life of the person occurs.

Unfulfilled components are those important things that the person wants to have but for some reason has not managed to attain, such as meaningful employment or a career, marriage, or a family. The absence of any of these components influences a major part of the life structure.

Usually marriage, family and career are the central components of an individual's life with other components varying in importance. The family is part of a complex world involving different people, events, activities and social contexts. This family may be a

nuclear family or family resulting from a prior marriage, an extended family or the individual's family of origin. The individual's ethnic group, race, occupation and culture would influence the relationship that the person has to the family.

The importance of a career to an individual is more than the specific work activities and rewards related to this career or the belonging to an occupational group of people. Levinson (1996, p.23) posits that work "engages a person in an elaborate occupational world". To understand the meaning of work and occupation in a woman's life, the relationships within her work environment should be examined and explored to ascertain how they are interrelated with the other components of the life structure. Other components may include love relationships, friendships, politics, ethnicity, culture, religion, leisure, social life and fun, use of time alone, bodily health and illness, other social relationships, and the relationship to the self.

According to Levinson (1996), the life structure develops as a result of the interaction between the self and the external world and connects the individual to his or her social environment. There is an internal and external aspect to the life structure, of which both aspects should be considered. External aspects are the social context, roles, and events in the life of the person. Internal aspects are the individual characteristics, personal conflicts, subjective meanings and motivations of the individual. He regards the life structure as a concept that emerges during the life course according to a certain sequence. This sequence involves a period in which a structure is built and maintained and is followed by a transitional period in which transformation of the life structure occurs and a new structure is formed in a new *structure-building period*.

The primary task of a *structure-building period* is to create and maintain a life structure that will enhance the life of an individual so that important choices can be made and goals can be achieved according to the personal aspirations and values of each individual. The process of making major life choices and building a life structure is often stressful and generally involves different changes. For this reason conflict may be experienced and life may not run smoothly during this time. Structure building periods are usually five to seven years in duration, at which time the life structure is questioned, evaluated and possibly altered or modified.

A structure-changing or transitional period ends the existing life structure and necessitates the reformulation of this structure. It is a turning point and a time of change, as new possibilities and potential exist. The primary task of every transitional period is to evaluate the existing structure, explore and assess the various options for change in the self and world, and to negotiate new choices and decisions that are part of the new life structure. Transitional periods usually endure for five years. According to Levinson (1996) there is therefore no permanency in life structure at any time, as change is integral to the nature of life.

4.6 Eras in the life cycle

Levinson (1996) proposes that the life cycle evolves through a basic sequence of eras, with each era lasting approximately 25 years. Each era has its own distinct bio-psycho-social character that influences the development of the person as a whole and requires major changes and adaptations by the individual. Between these eras, a period known as a cross-era transition marks the ending of one era and the beginning of another era. At times, these eras partially overlap as one era may begin before the previous era has completely ended. A cross-era generally lasts for approximately five years. These eras and transitional periods form the structure of the life cycle that acknowledges the basic order in the sequence of human lives whilst allowing for individual variations in this sequence. According to Levinson, each developmental period begins and ends at an average identified age but allows for a variation of two years above and below this average. Additionally, research on both genders consistently agrees with these age linkages and developmental periods.

Levinson (1996) identified the following four eras in adult development:

- Era of Pre-Adulthood (age 0 - 22)
- Era of Early Adulthood (age 17 - 45)
- Era of Middle Adulthood (age 40 - 65)
- Era of Late Adulthood (age 60 onwards).

In between these eras, the cross-era transitions are the following:

- Early Adult Transition (age 17 - 22)
- Mid-Life Transition (age 40 - 45)
- Late Adult Transition (age 60 - 65).

These eras and transitional periods will be discussed as they occur chronologically throughout the life cycle of the individual according to Levinson's (1996) theory of development.

4.6.1 Era of Pre-Adulthood (age 0 - 22)

This era includes early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence and early adult transition. It is the era of most rapid physical, psychological and emotional growth (Levinson, 1996). The individual typically lives within a family or equivalent social unit that provides protection, socialisation and support of this development as the individual is still relatively dependent and vulnerable (Jacobs, 2004). In the first two to three years the infant begins the process of individuation in which he or she develops a concept of "me" and "not me" (Levinson, 1996). As the child develops, his or her social world expands beyond that of the immediate family as friendships in school and the surrounding neighbourhood are established. As the child progresses through school, the ability to work improves as self-discipline increases. Puberty begins at the age of 12 or 13 years and is characterised by bodily changes as sexual maturity unfolds.

4.6.2. Early Adult Transition (age 17 - 22)

At this period in development, childhood gradually ends and early adulthood begins. The individual has no clear idea of what is in the future or what to expect during this cross-era. The individual at this time is also not fully in either the era of pre-adulthood or the early adulthood era. Generally, it is a time during which the individual aims to obtain more and more differentiation from his or her parents and an individual identity is formed whilst a unique place in the adult world is established (Levinson, 1996). This transitional period necessitates a change in life structure.

4.6.3 Era of Early Adulthood (age 17 - 45)

This era begins with early adult transition and is often the most dramatic of all eras. Between the ages of 20-30 years, bodily and psychological changes reach a peak. According to Levinson (1996), the period of time between the ages of 20 and 40 can be a time of immense contradiction and stress whilst also being a time in which high levels of energy are experienced. Goals and ambitions are formed and pursued while the individual makes important decisions concerning a career, long-term relationships, sexual orientation, choice of spouse and other family related decisions. During this time the individual works hard at earning a place in society and towards the end of the era, strives to become a competent and mature person in an adult world.

Levinson (1996) identifies various potential stressors that could influence the course of development of the individual during this period of time. These may include establishing a career, choosing a spouse and deciding on a lifestyle and family that is compatible to this choice, parenthood and managing financial obligations and commitments. These stressors can either be experienced and managed effectively or they can be the cause of maladjustment if the demands of the individual's family, community or societal pressures and expectations overwhelm or are in intense conflict with the individual's personal needs and desires.

Levinson (1996) divides this era of early adulthood into three developmental periods as he conceptualises this era and the following era of middle adulthood as structure building periods, probably because his research focuses on 45 women between the ages of 35 to 45.

4.6.3.1 Entry life structure for early adulthood (age 22 - 28)

As the individual enters the era of early adulthood, a provisional life structure is created in which major life choices and decisions concerning the choice of a person to love, a marriage partner, family, occupation, and lifestyle are made. According to Kaplan (1998), a *dream* is created as a vision of the type of life that is desired and it is this *dream* that ultimately provides direction and motivation for these major life

choices. Further separation from the family of origin occurs and the individual attempts to establish a place in the adult world.

4.6.3.2 Age 30 transition (age 28 - 33)

This is a mid-era transition and should not be confused with the transitional periods between the developmental eras of the life cycle. It is a period in which the individual has the opportunity to re-evaluate the entry life structure for early adulthood and explores new possibilities and options that are available to him or her. Levinson (1996) asserts that it is a time of moderate to severe developmental difficulty for the majority of men and women.

4.6.3.3 Culminating life structure for early adulthood (age 33 - 40)

At this time, the individual creates a position and structure within which he or she can develop a sense of stability and security in him or herself and within society. The individual moves from a junior to a senior position and life goals and childhood dreams are driving forces and motivational tools that provide direction during this time. Kaplan (1998) adds that the individual usually develops more confidence and will exhibit greater authority in their occupational roles during this period.

4.6.4 Mid-Life Transition (age 40 - 45)

This transition is the developmental link between early and middle adulthood and is therefore part of both eras of development. The individual has to adjust and accept that they are getting older while maintaining some sense of satisfaction and enjoyment in life. The individual continues the process of individuation (Levinson, 1996) and seeks to maintain and modify a sense of self, as he or she engages in life.

4.6.5 Era of Middle Adulthood (age 40 - 65)

After the mid-life transition between 40-45, early adulthood comes to an end and middle adulthood begins. General energy levels typically decrease whilst the quality of the individual's life may be enriched as less conflict about certain needs, drives and

tensions are experienced (Levinson, 1996). Additionally, individuals now become responsible for encouraging the development of the generation younger than themselves.

Levinson (1996) claims that individuals may become more responsible concerning themselves and others, more creative, more open minded, more purposeful and more capable of sexual intimacy than before. However, this time is also potentially a period in which a sense of emptiness, stagnation and a loss of vitality could be experienced.

As in the previous era of early adulthood, Levinson (1996) divides the era of middle adulthood into three developmental periods. These various periods are also regarded as structure building periods.

4.6.5.1 Entry life structure for middle adulthood (age 45 - 50)

The primary task of this developmental period is to create a structure from which middle adulthood can evolve. In general, this structure is very different from that of early adulthood as important differences in the relationships that form the central components of the life structure occur, even if these relationships have been maintained for a long time.

4.6.5.2 Age 50 transition (age 50 - 55)

This is the opportunity to evaluate the entry life structure and to explore the concept of self and the world. It is a mid-era transition similar to the age 30 transition. Developmental crises are common at this time, particularly for those who have made few significant life changes or who have made unsuitable life changes in the previous 10-15 years (Levinson, 1996).

4.6.5.3 Culminating life structure for middle adulthood (age 55 - 60)

This structure allows for the attaining of major goals and dreams and is a time in which an individual seeks to obtain more security in his or her personal and social position within the environment.

4.6.6 Late Adult Transition (age 60 - 65)

This transition ends middle adulthood and is the start of late adulthood. It is a time of important and extensive evaluation of the past, and creates the foundation for entering the latter part of life as the individual moves into late adulthood.

4.6.7 Era of Late Adulthood (age 60 onwards)

Late adulthood typically begins at the age of 60. Due to the physiological, psychological and social changes experienced at this time, an individual's life style could be changed in many ways during this era. Retirement and health issues are predominant challenges of this time and would therefore have influenced the transitional process as the person enters this era. An important developmental task of this era is for the individual to experience a sense of being involved in his or her community so that a feeling of belonging and of being able to make a significant contribution to society is engendered. At the same time, the individual is faced with the task of establishing a new sense of self (Levinson, 1980). Despite the challenges of this era, individuals may create great intellectual and artistic works at this time in their lives, thereby contributing to society as a whole and realising their potential.

4.7 Satisfactoriness in life structure development

The "satisfactoriness" (Levinson, 1996, p.28) of life structure development refers to the effectiveness of its providing the individual with successes, rewards and advantages as opposed to failures, deficits or disadvantages. It does not refer to the level of satisfaction that an individual has with life. Additionally, the suitability of this structure to the personal attributes and maintenance of the individual's sense of self is also important to consider in this evaluation. Levinson noted that the development of the life structure and the development of the self are two different concepts.

4.8 Crises in life structure development

A developmental crisis occurs when a person has difficulty in coping with any or all of the tasks required in a certain developmental period. Transitional periods often

involve a time of moderate to severe crisis. The individual may feel incapacitated, immobile, and unsure and may feel threatened by a possible loss of a future. Crises may occur during structure building periods as well, if serious problems in creating an adequate structure or difficulty in sustaining it are experienced.

A crisis in life structure development is qualitatively different from an adaptive crisis. An adaptive crisis is a specific stressful event such as a time of ill health or abuse by a partner, whereas a developmental crisis needs to be considered within the context of the tasks required of that specific developmental period in which the individual experiences a difficulty. A developmental crisis may lead to positive repercussions if the individual is able to create a life structure that is more suitable to the self and more viable in that person's immediate environment. Negative results may lead to pain, anguish and the developing of a less satisfactory life structure.

4.9 Gender similarities and differences

Levinson (1996) proposes that men and women go through the same periods of adult life structure development, with only a slight difference in life circumstances, life course, and ways of negotiating each developmental period being experienced. According to Levinson (1996), women have different resources and different internal and external constraints to men. He recognises that society places restrictions on people according to their gender and refers to this as *gender splitting* in which traditional roles are created for men and women. Women are typically the homemakers in a marriage and men the providers. The difficulty then arises for women who do not have a career as their self-development may be discouraged and/or hindered, and for the working woman a conflict between achieving occupational goals and meeting the needs of a family may be experienced (Kaplan, 1998). Levinson therefore pointed out the importance of considering the gender of an individual within his/her historical context in the study of any particular person.

4.10 Conclusion

Levinson's (1996) theory of life structure development identifies and describes four eras in which the life cycle of an individual evolves. Each era lasts approximately 25

years and is linked by periods of transition lasting roughly five years. Although a basic sequence common to both men and women is acknowledged in this theory, Levinson recognises that each individual life is unique and that differences within adult development may occur. This theory forms the basis on which the life of Karen Horney will be studied. In the following chapter the methodology followed in this research is presented.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Chapter preview

In this chapter preliminary methodological considerations important to psychobiographical research are discussed and recommendations to overcome the difficulties inherent in this type of research are suggested. These considerations are then applied to this study of Karen Horney. Following this, the aims of the research, the research design, the psychobiographical subject, data collection procedures and the data analysis methods are presented. The chapter ends with a discussion of the ethical considerations pertaining to this field of research. It is important to note that many of the references in this chapter are not recent works that are cited, due to an established method of psychobiography that has existed since its inception more than 20 years ago.

5.2 Preliminary methodological considerations

A criticism of psychobiographical research is that important scientific standards of psychological research are transgressed if certain methodological considerations are not addressed in the research process (Elms, 1984; Runyan, 1988b). These factors are identified and the strategies available to avoid and minimise these difficulties are presented (Anderson, 1981a).

5.2.1 Researcher bias

Due to the relatively in-depth nature of psychobiographical research, psychobiographers need to be aware that they might develop intensely personal reactions to the research subject. According to Anderson (1981a) these could be countertransference-like reactions that are usually unconscious and unintentional but ultimately lead to the idealising or unfair criticism of the biographical subject in the research (Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1988). To avoid this, the following steps can be taken:

- The psychobiographer could ensure that the relationship he or she builds with the research subject is discussed in an open manner with other biographical specialists who would be able to make appropriate recommendations and comments on this relationship (Anderson, 1981b; Schurink, 1988).
- During the data collection process, feelings towards the research subject could be examined by recording them in a journal that is included in the appendix of the written work, so that any possible biases are evident and expressed (Anderson, 1981a).
- Empathy with the research subject should be encouraged so that the researcher can avoid being disparaging of him or her (Anderson, 1981a).
- In the event of the subject still being alive, he or she should be allowed the opportunity to critique the manuscript and could be offered the opportunity to make an evaluation of his or her relationship that developed with the researcher (Schurink, 1988).

5.2.2 Reductionism

Psychobiographies are criticised for focusing on pathological processes rather than on the normality and health of the research subject (Anderson, 1981a; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1988b). Secondly, insufficient attention and consideration is often paid to the complex social, historical and cultural factors that influence the subject of the study thereby reducing the analysis of the subject to an intrapsychic explanation of behaviour (Runyan, 1988b). A third critique is that too much attention can be focused on childhood events and experiences without considering later developmental influences in sufficient detail (Runyan, 1988b; Wallace, 1989). To avoid these limitations, certain strategies can be implemented:

- Research should be thorough and based on multiple sources of information.

- The excessive use of esoteric psychological terms should be avoided and adequate explanations should be provided for the terminology used in the study (Anderson, 1981a; Runyan, 1988b).
- A eugraphic approach in which the focus on the health and normality of the subject should be encouraged rather than a pathographic approach (Elms, 1994).
- The psychobiographical subject should be seen in a holistic manner and the researcher should be cognisant of the socio-historical context of the individual (Anderson, 1981a; Howe, 1997).

5.2.3 Cross-cultural differences

As the subject of the research has often lived in a different historical time to the researcher and in a different culture, psychobiography can be considered to be a form of cross-cultural research. The researcher needs to be aware though, that current psychological concepts might not be cross-culturally sensitive or applicable to the subject who lived in an earlier time period. (Anderson, 1981a; Anderson, 1981b). To overcome this challenge, historical research should be done to obtain an understanding of the cultural context in which the research subject lived at that time (Anderson, 1981a; 1981b).

5.2.4 Analysing an absent subject

Although the psychobiographer may not have direct communication or contact with the research subject, which limits the information obtained in the research process, various sources of information such as autobiographical or biographical material on the research subject can be used to obtain valuable information (Anderson, 1981a; 1981b). An advantage inherent in this type of research is that the various consequences of certain life events including the decisions and choices that the individual made in his or her lifetime are available for analysis and evaluation.

5.2.5 Validity and reliability criticisms

Due to the lack of a control in case study research and the difficulty of generalization, psychobiographical research is often criticised for not adhering sufficiently to scientific standards (Runyan, 1988b). Yin (1994) identifies four concerns pertinent to this research design that are important factors in all social science methods, namely: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability.

- Construct validity: This refers to the selection and clear conceptualisation of the constructs and variables of the study. This is addressed by carefully selecting and conceptualising the constructs and variables of the research according to the objectives of the study (Yin, 1994).
- Internal validity refers to the credibility of the research findings. This is addressed by the use of multiple data sources and thorough research to corroborate information (Rudestam & Newton, 1992).
- External validity refers to the generalisation of the research findings. This is addressed by having the aim of the research as generalising the research findings to a psychological theory rather than to the larger population or other case studies. This is known as analytical generalisation (Yin, 1994).
- Reliability brings up the issue of replicating the research under similar circumstances. De Vos and Van Zyl (1998) suggest that a consistent coding scheme be used to ensure this, if one is used. Alternatively, the researcher needs to be explicit in how the data was recorded so that a similar strategy can be used in any subsequent research.

5.2.6 Elitism and the easy genre

Psychobiographies have been criticised for focusing on prominent and privileged people rather than less well-known or important figures in history. It may also be regarded as an easy form of research whereas it involves a fairly intensive and broad

research process that considers the subject's socio-historical context and uses a wide range of sources of information to corroborate the data obtained (Runyan, 1988b).

5.2.7 Infinite amount of biographical data

An infinite volume of material is often available to the psychobiographer (Anderson, 1981b; McAdams, 1994). One strategy available to the researcher to manage this information is to use the selected theory as the guideline to determine what material is relevant to the particular research at the time. This study used the theoretical constructs of Levinson's (1996) developmental theory and the data reduction method of analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) to achieve this. This analytical method will be discussed in further detail in section 5.8 of this chapter.

5.2.8 Inflated expectations

Psychological explanations may be perceived by the reader as the only means of explaining certain behaviours, decisions and actions in the research subject's life. Anderson (1981a) advises that psychobiographers appreciate the shortcomings of psychobiographical research so that psychological explanations are not seen as the only means of understanding and explaining human behaviour but rather as another means of adding to descriptions and explanations in a speculative manner.

5.3 Methodological considerations in the psychobiographical study of Karen Horney

The above-mentioned methodological issues were considered in this study of Karen Horney.

5.3.1 Researcher bias

In an effort to avoid idealising or overly criticising Karen Horney, the researcher explored her feelings, thoughts and attitudes toward the subject throughout the research process and documented them as often as possible to discuss them with the supervisors of this research. This may be found in Appendix A. However, it is always

possible to be unaware of certain biases and to provide a subjective view of the research subject based on personal values, norms and expectations of human behaviour.

5.3.2 Reductionism

Multiple sources of information were used in this research and a eugraphic approach was favoured rather than focusing on pathographic issues. Karen Horney was studied in a holistic manner while considering the socio-historical context in which she lived. An attempt has been made to provide an adequate explanation of the psychological terminology used in the theory according to which this study was conducted.

5.3.3 Cross-cultural differences

Karen Horney lived in a different historical time and different culture to the researcher. To overcome this obstacle, the researcher has considered these contextual issues in the analysis and discussion of Horney's life and has familiarised herself with the socio-historical events and context of that time. However, current psychological concepts are considered to be sensitive to the historical and social era in which Karen Horney lived.

5.3.4 Analysing an absent subject

Although the researcher did not have direct contact with the subject of the research, information from multiple sources was available. The benefit of studying a person who had completed her life was that a complete overview of Karen Horney's life was available so that the consequences of her decisions, choices and actions could be noted and commented on in the research. The possibility of interviewing Horney's surviving daughters (via electronic means) was considered but owing to the large amount of data available, as well as the lack of trusting personal or professional relationships with her daughters, it was decided that this was not feasible.

5.3.5 Validity and reliability criticisms

- To ensure construct validity, the researcher has used the theoretical constructs of Levinson's (1996) developmental theory to clearly conceptualise the adult development of Karen Horney. The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe her life course. This has been achieved by categorising the life course of Karen Horney according to the developmental time frame of Levinson's theory.
- Multiple sources of data were used in this research to encourage the credibility of the research findings and to cross-reference the information obtained. This increases the internal validity of this study.
- External validity was not of major concern for this study as the findings of the research are to be compared to Levinson's (1996) developmental theory rather than generalising the findings to the larger population.
- To ensure the reliability of this research the researcher used published material to obtain the information for this study and recorded the information that was pertinent to each of the four eras of development according to Levinson's (1996) theory. This information was recorded chronologically so that her life course could be followed and studied in the sequence in which it unfolded. In this way, the research should be able to be replicated by following a similar manner and format of recording the data.

5.3.6 Elitism and the easy genre

Karen Horney was selected as the subject of this research based on her significant contribution to psychology in her interpersonal theory as well as personal characteristics that the researcher values. For this reason it could be argued that she is a person from a privileged background as she was one of the first female students in Germany to study medicine. However, the value of studying a woman who displayed strength of character in not complying with the norms and expectations of a patriarchal society outweighs this possible shortcoming.

The criticism of this being an easy study is countered by the attempt of this study to be a thorough analysis of her life within the limits of a Master's thesis.

5.3.7 Infinite amount of biographical data

The primary and secondary sources of information for this research were published material. This ensured that information was accessible and available to cross-reference and check certain details. Only the information that applied to her life structure development was recorded, as this was the focus of this study.

5.3.8 Inflated expectations

The researcher recognises the limits of this study as it has focused on the study of Karen Horney from a psychological perspective using an adult developmental theory. This study is therefore merely one means of explaining her life experiences and should be seen within this context and restriction.

5.4 Aims of the research

The primary aim of this study is to explore and describe the life of Karen Horney according to Levinson's (1996) theory of life structure development. Secondly, Levinson's theory is able to be tested and either confirmed or refuted by applying it to the life of Karen Horney and evaluating its accuracy in explaining the choices, life events and experiences that formed part of her life story (Edwards, 1998).

5.5 Research design

A psychobiography can be described as life history research (Runyan, 1988b). This type of study uses a qualitative single-case research design (Yin, 2003), which explores the life of Karen Horney over her entire lifespan. It is a morphogenic research method (Elms, 1994), in that it highlights the individual characteristics of Karen Horney in a holistic manner, within her socio-historical context (Runyan, 1983). This design enables the study of Karen Horney to be structured using Levinson's theory of adult development as the means through which her life is systematically

reconstructed into a logical and descriptive story (McAdams, 1994), and provides a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the individual within the social context of that historical period (Edwards, 1998).

5.6 The psychobiographical subject

Karen Horney was selected as the subject for this psychobiography based on the purposive sampling method of identifying and choosing an individual whose life exemplifies greatness, interest and significance (Elms, 1994; Howe, 1997; Runyan, 1984; Simonton, 1994). According to Howe (1997) the study of "greatness" is applicable to psychology as it attempts to investigate the development of individuals who become exceptionally competent or creative men or women in society. Purposive sampling can also be based on the judgement of the researcher, who selects a subject according to desired characteristics and personal interest generated by the subject (Strydom & De Vos, 1998).

Karen Horney was a psychoanalyst who was unafraid of expressing her professional opinion even in the face of much opposition. This quality, her female role in society and her separation from her husband many years before she obtained a divorce, activated my interest in the study of her life course and influenced my decision to select her as my subject for this psychobiographical research. Although three biographies and her autobiography have been published, no psychobiographical study exists on Karen Horney.

5.7 Data collection procedures

A primary source (a document produced by the subject) and three secondary sources (documents produced by other authors) were used in the collection of data. The primary source was Karen Horney's autobiography written in a journal format. The secondary sources comprised three biographies written by three different authors, as stated in section 1.5 in the introductory chapter of this thesis.

To ascertain the available data that had been published on Karen Horney, an internet search using the Google search engine and the American National Biography Online

Web Site accessed through the Rhodes University Library was used. The four sources of published material were then purchased so that the information was available for use once the data collection process began.

According to Yin (1994) the use of published data has the following advantages: (a) stable sources of data can be viewed as needed, (b) the spelling of names can be checked and dates can be verified, (c) information from other sources can be corroborated, (d) information is relatively accessible and (e) this information is convenient for the researcher to access as needed according to his or her own time frame. Additionally, the use of data from several authors reduces the potential risk of author bias in which the author could describe and portray the subject in a certain manner, which could be incorrect, and a result of poor or inadequate research. Data triangulation or cross referencing is also possible with this method so author bias is minimised (Yin, 1994) and internal validity of data is therefore enhanced. One of the difficult tasks and challenges in conducting psychobiographical research is in examining, extracting and analysing the vast amount of available material on the subject (Alexander, 1988; McAdams, 1994). The method of analysis for this study will be discussed in the next section.

5.8 Data Analysis

Yin (1994) describes the analysis of case study data as a process of examining, extracting, categorising and compiling information regarding the subject so that the aims of the study and the theoretical constructs and focus of the theory guide the analysis of the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) propose that analysing data involves three sub processes that are inter-linked and occur throughout the research process, as qualitative data analysis is an iterative and continuous process:

- Data Reduction
- Data Display
- Conclusion Drawing and Verification.

5.8.1 Data reduction

Data is reduced through the initial choice of a conceptual framework that guides the researcher in the choice of information that is selected and recorded (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is intended to focus, sort and discard irrelevant material so that final conclusions can be drawn.

5.8.2 Data display

The display of the data collected in the study assists the researcher in organising information concisely so that appropriate conclusions can be drawn in the analysis of the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the researcher record the data in an organized way so that the meaning of it can be formulated. They propose the use of matrices or charts as one of the many types of possible data displays. Such a display enables information to be concise and easily accessible. In selecting which data to display, the researcher is already in the process of reducing and analysing the data. In this study, the information relevant to the development of Karen Horney's life structure was placed in the developmental eras and specific periods according to the age in which various events and experiences occurred.

5.8.3 Conclusion drawing and verification

Conclusions can be drawn from the moment data collection begins. However, the researcher should attempt to keep an open attitude throughout the research, as far as possible, so that conclusions can be verified. These sub processes take place before the data is collected, during the research design and planning of the study, as the data is collected and, finally, after the data has been collected while preliminary analyses are being made.

5.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations should always play a significant role in any psychological research. The first ethical issue facing the psychobiographer relates to the selection of a research subject. The question arises as to whether it is permissible to conduct

research on a living person or only on a deceased subject (Elms, 1994). Another issue relates to the use of material available to the researcher and whether it is permissible to use only archival material, only what family members deem suitable, or any kind of available material. The researcher should always consider the possible reaction of the family, in case the information printed is unacceptable to them.

Although the American Psychological Association has not provided specific guidelines for psychological biographies, the American Psychiatric Association issued guidelines in 1976 pertaining to the issues of psychobiography (Elms, 1994). According to Elms, these guidelines are the following:

- Psychobiographies should ideally be done on deceased persons, preferably those who have been dead after a long period of time so that no close surviving family members are embarrassed by any controversial or unsatisfactory revelations.
- Psychobiographies done on living persons should obtain the consent of the research subject to interview, explore and publish the research findings.

Elms (1994) also suggests that all personal information obtained by the psychobiographer be treated with respect so that ethical and responsible research can be executed. He added that the purpose of a psychobiographical study is to encourage our understanding of human behaviour to the benefit of both others and ourselves. The consent given by Karen Horney's two surviving daughters, Dr Marianne Horney Eckhardt and Ms Renate Horney Patterson, for this research can be found in Appendix B.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter presents the preliminary considerations important in psychobiographical research, in particular to this study of Karen Horney. Additionally, the strategies available to the researcher to avoid the shortcomings and criticisms of this research are outlined. The methodology followed in this research process is presented so that

the research could be replicated. The following chapter presents the data collected from the sources of information used in this study.



CHAPTER 6

RESULTS OF DATA COLLECTION

6.1 Chapter preview

According to Levinson's theory (1996), a life course that follows a basic sequence can be identified in the lives of most, if not all, women. The sequential stages of Karen Horney's life will be presented according to the four eras of development as identified by Levinson, by highlighting the relevant information pertaining to her development during each era according to the age at which the life experiences and important life events occurred. Within these eras, the three components of the life structure will be identified as a means to describe the unique elements of her life and to determine the significant relationships and issues of that era.

6.2 The developmental periods in the life of Karen Horney

6.2.1 Era of Pre-Adulthood (age 0 - 22)

Karen Horney was born in Eilbek, Germany on September 15, 1885. She began writing a diary on June 7, 1899, at the age of 13 years (Horney, 1980). Although she did not record daily events or feelings on a day-by-day basis in her diary, her entries provide an insight and understanding of the personal world that she lived in at that time and are an indication of those experiences that were most important to her while she was keeping a diary. Her entries focused on her relationship with school teachers, love relationships with boyfriends, her personal feelings of confusion and low self-esteem, and her personal goals and ambitions. Her autobiography "The Adolescent Diaries of Karen Horney" published in 1980 is divided into five diaries, as they were written in five separate books. The last diary entry was recorded on July 9, 1911, at the age of 26. Included in this autobiography, are her letters to her future husband, Oskar Horney, written between July 1906 and September 1907 (Horney, 1980).

6.2.1.1 Central components

There are two central components identified in Horney's life during this era. They are her family of origin and her educational goals. Each of these components will be discussed separately.

Karen was raised in a family where her father was considered to be the head of the household. She grew up in a time when equal education for girls and boys was not recognised until the early 1900's when she turned 15. At this age, she wanted to study at the Gymnasium for girls, as this would provide her with a good education and enable her to pass the university entrance exam, the Abitur, as she wanted to study for a degree in medicine. Her father was not in favour of this though, as he wanted her to stay at home so that she could help her mother with the domestic chores. This created a lot of conflict in the family, as her mother wanted her to receive an education at the Gymnasium so that she could achieve the goals that she had set for herself. Karen wrote *"My 'precious father' forbade me any such plans once and for all. Of course he can forbid me the Gymnasium, but the wish to study he cannot. My plan for the future is this:..."* (Horney, 1980, p. 19) and she lists five goals that would enable her to achieve her ultimate ambition of qualifying as a medical doctor. Her plan was to study to be a teacher, which was a socially acceptable profession for a woman and would enable her to obtain the financial means to study medicine independently (Quinn, 1987).

Karen gradually lost respect for her father as he did not support and encourage her to realise her ambitions. In her entry on December 28, 1900, aged 15, she regarded him as being selfish, blunt and hypocritical and the cause of much unhappiness at home. Her mother and brother on the other hand, were very supportive of her ambitions and formed an alliance to try and persuade Karen's father to give her the education she wanted. This took them almost a month, as eventually her father relented and agreed to pay for her to study at the Gymnasium. Karen was extremely happy, relieved and excited that he had changed his mind (Horney, 1980).

Karen wanted to be a medical doctor from a young age as is apparent in her diary entry at the age of 14. She felt that her goal to study medicine was confirmed after

she had spoken to a medical doctor who treated her for influenza while she was on holiday with her family, and wrote that she wanted to be able to serve people through treating them and curing them of their ailments.

6.2.1.2 Peripheral components

The peripheral components identified in Horney's life are her relationships with her peers and those with her schoolteachers. She also experienced spiritual concerns surrounding the Christian religion she was exposed to as a young girl.

As Karen was a schoolgirl in this era, her diary is filled with entries of her important friends and the teachers she admired. Her best friends were listed as Gertrud Holmberg, who she called Tuti and with whom she maintained a life long friendship and Käthe (surname not given and no further information was given about her). Her two favourite teachers were Herr Schultze, who was her German and religious instruction teacher, and Fräulein Banning, her French teacher. She greatly admired Herr Schultze who recognised her academic potential and encouraged her to read extensively (Quinn, 1987). Fräulein Banning, who was mentioned in two later entries in her diaries, was described by Karen as an inspiration and mentor (Quinn, 1987) and was no doubt a good role model for Karen.

Karen really struggled with spiritual matters during her adolescence, especially as her father was a very strict Christian man who constantly reminded his family of Christian principles, yet, did not demonstrate his love and concern for his family. She wrote "*In spiritual matters I still feel very unworthy, for although I am steadily growing up, I do not yet feel the true need for religion. A sermon can overwhelm me and at times I can act accordingly, but prayer...*" (Horney, 1980, p. 4). She also began to question the reality of God at the age of 15, asking herself "*...What is God? Is there resurrection? Is God personal?...*" (Horney, 1980, p. 18). What puzzled her and kept her questioning religion was that she had attended confirmation classes and been confirmed at the age of 15, but had never managed to find the answers to her fundamental questions, leaving her feeling very forlorn and discouraged about religion. She also felt conflicted in the Christian teaching of the Fourth Commandment

that ordered her to love and respect her father as she did not respect him and did not feel that she loved him as much as this commandment required.

6.2.1.3 Unfulfilled components

The unfulfilled components of Horney's life during this era of pre-adulthood concern her self-esteem and the need for love and acceptance from others. At the age of 16, Karen recorded thoughts and feelings of self-loathing "*I don't understand myself, am dissatisfied with myself and everybody else. In the condition I am in now, I am absolutely good for nothing. I can only work hard 1 to 2 days a week...*" (Horney, 1980, p. 43). These feelings of uselessness were also recorded six months later, as she set very high standards for herself and felt stupid, despite having achieved the best marks in her class at school. She would also frequently doubt whether she was loved, and dreamt of being loved by a man who would make her feel special and accepted. She writes "*Why? Why is everything beautiful on earth given to me, only not the highest thing, not love!*" and goes on to ask "*... But who loves me??*" (Horney, 1980, p. 30).

6.2.2 Early Adult Transition (age 17 - 22)

At the age of 17, Karen wrote a poem entitled "*Times of Transition*" (Horney, 1980, p. 55). It begins as follows:

Everything in me is storming and surging and pressing for light that will resolve this confusion. I seem to myself like a skipper who leaps from his safe ship into the sea, who clings to a timber and lets himself be driven by the sea's tumult, now here, now there. He doesn't know where he is going...

Her poem continues for two more pages and includes the following line "*Only an anxious question often hems me in: toward what goal am I striving?*" (Horney, 1980, p. 57).

6.2.2.1 Central components

The central components identified during this era of transition are issues of sexuality and morality, her family of origin, and her education when she started her medical training at the University of Freiburg. These components will be discussed as the important issues and experiences that were a central part of her life between the ages of 17-22.

At the age of 17, Karen describes her mood as “*chaos*” (Horney, 1980, p. 57) and expresses feelings of inner disorder and turmoil, particularly regarding issues of morality. She had just had a discussion about lesbian relationships and sexually appropriate behaviour outside of a marital relationship with a school friend Alice. In this discussion she found out that someone she knew had been sexually molested by her father, and was very disturbed by this. She writes, “*I felt very exhausted. The whole dreadful knowledge all at once. It was too much. And then I couldn't even be left quietly to myself and let the storm within subside.*” (Horney, 1980, p. 60).

She also continues to question acceptable sexual behaviour in relationships (Horney, 1980, p. 61):

and I finally got so far as to doubt my statement about the only sin a woman can commit. One question occupied my mind for weeks, even months: is it wrong to give oneself to a man outside of marriage or not? I answered now in the affirmative, now in the negative.

She concludes that providing one truly loves a man, having sexual intercourse is not immoral and substantiates this by quoting Shakespeare: “*For there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.*” (Horney, 1980, p. 61).

When Karen was 19, her parents separated. It is surprising that she does not record this event in her diaries as it involved a major change in her family life and she had to move with her mother and brother to a different home. Additionally, they had to take in two boarders to help pay the rental expenses as Karen's mother was not financially secure after the separation. No further information is recorded in any of the

biographies about Karen's relationship with her father after this event, so how much contact she had with him after her parents' separation is unknown. Karen lived at home until she left for university at the age of 21.

In March 1906, at the age of 21, Karen completed her schooling and was admitted to the University of Freiburg. She left home on Easter Sunday and records that she "*...went ahead into an unfamiliar life with a thousand anxious expectations*" (Horney, 1980, p. 147). Initially, she felt miserable and lonely as she rented a room in an apartment a couple of blocks away from the university. She was very satisfied and fulfilled in her medical studies though, and soon made some friends who made her feel more settled at university. This satisfaction in her studies is corroborated in a letter to Oskar the following year in which she states that she loves her work and that it provides her with a sense of purpose, stability and security (Horney, 1980).

6.2.2.2 Peripheral components

The peripheral components identified during this transitional period are her romantic relationships and her relationships with her peers and friends. The first man Karen kissed and fell in love with at the age of 18 was Ernst Schorschi. He was on a brief visit and stayed at her house for two days. Although they only spent a short while together, she was completely enamoured by him and felt that her life had taken a new, exciting turn for the better. From that point in her diary, he becomes her entire focus although he does not reciprocate her love, leaving her feeling hurt and deeply disappointed. It took Karen one and half years to resolve her feelings of confusion and rejection over the loss of this relationship (Quinn, 1987).

By the time Karen turned 19, however, she felt that she could move on with her life and had learned from her experience with Ernst Schorschi. On New Year's eve of 1904 she wrote that she wanted "*...to learn how to listen to the delicate vibrations of my soul, to be incorruptibly true to myself and fair to others, to find in this way the right measure of my own worth.*" (Horney, 1980, p. 102). She soon fell in love again though, and eight months later records her confused feelings of warmth and affection for the new man in her life, Rolf (surname unknown), with whom she was friends and had just started to become sexually attracted to. She asks, "*Am I already in love*

again? Can I still love? Can one give one's whole heart away twice? Is there a difference between loving and "being in love"?..." (Horney, 1980, p. 89). Her relationship with Rolf lasted for one and a half years, until he moved away from Berlin to pursue voice studies in Austria. Karen was very sad when they broke up as they had shared mutual feelings of depression together, discussed philosophical issues, and supported each other through some difficult times.

Karen became friends with a few men at university. The biographies list Hans Bender, a fellow medical student, Louis Grote who was a semester ahead of her in medical school, and Oskar Horney, a PhD student, as her friends. No further details of the friendship with Hans were given but Louis Grote who was a self-confident, good-looking man (Quinn, 1987) soon attracted Karen to him and they became lovers. Oskar, who was three years older than Karen, moved to Braunschweig a few weeks after he met Karen to work on his doctorate in Political Science. Karen regarded him as being much wiser than her and admired his intelligence and sense of humour. They maintained a platonic relationship through regular correspondence in which Karen would discuss her relationship with Louis and reveal her endless soul searching "*The searching for our selves is the most agonizing, isn't it? - and yet the most stimulating - and one simply cannot escape it.*" (Horney, 1980, p. 174).

Karen only became a close companion of Oskar after she had ended her relationship with Louis and after Oskar returned to Freiburg to complete his PhD thesis. As no diary exists for this period of time, Quinn (1987) suggests that they developed a romantic relationship that led to Karen feeling fulfilled and happy, thereby taking away her need to describe any feelings of distress and confusion in her diary.

6.2.3 Era of Early Adulthood (age 17 - 45)

This era is divided into three developmental periods in which a life structure is created and maintained. The information obtained during this era is therefore divided according to the ages at which these periods typically occur. As in the previous era, the components of the life structure have been identified to present the information obtained in the research.

6.2.3.1 Entry life structure for early adulthood (age 22 - 28)

6.2.3.1.1 Central components

The central components identified in this entry life structure are Horney's education and career and her marriage to Oskar Horney. In March 1908, at the age of 23, Karen passed her first two years of medical exams. She changed university after this and moved to the University of Göttingen to complete her final two years of her degree, as it was standard practice at that time to get a varied experience during medical training (Quinn, 1987). After completing her degree, she chose to specialise in psychiatry and worked in various psychiatric clinics, including the Berlin Charité under Karl Bonhoeffer. During her psychiatric residency, she began to train as both a student and patient in Freudian psychoanalysis although she kept very quiet about this, as psychoanalysis was not an accepted and recognised medical practice at the time (Quinn, 1987).

On 30 October 1909 Karen and Oskar were married. Karen was 24 at that time and any happiness in being married was short lived, as her father died the following year at the age of 74 after a brief illness. Karen experienced symptoms of depression including sexual difficulties with Oskar after her father's death. It was at this time that she sought psychoanalytic help from Dr Karl Abraham. The following year she records in her diary that she had made progress in overcoming her depression. She writes, "*...a definitely increased self-assurance in comparison to before, together with less shyness and less defensiveness toward others – those are undoubtedly new achievements. The really severe attacks of fatigue, too, belong to the past.*" (Horney, 1980, p. 247).

This wasn't the end of her personal difficulties however, as her mother died unexpectedly of a stroke the following year, a month before her first daughter Brigitte was born. Her mother was 61 when she died. Karen was under a lot of pressure during this time as she had final state medical exams to write and a newborn baby to care for.

6.2.3.1.2 Peripheral components

In addition to her orthodox psychiatric training, Karen regularly attended meetings of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society and began to make friends with those people who had a similar interest in psychoanalysis (Rubins, 1978). In the same year of her mother's death and her daughter's birth, Karen began an extra-marital relationship with Oskar's friend, Walther Honroth. It is intriguing that Karen was a friend of his wife, Lisa Honroth. According to Quinn (1987), it seems that all four people were aware of this relationship and remained friends even when the relationship ended. Quinn (1987) claims that Karen had a second affair with someone by the name of "Carl" but as the surname was unknown and she was acquainted with several people of that name, this could not be confirmed and no indication of her age at this time was apparent.

6.2.3.2 Age 30 transition (age 28 - 33)

6.2.3.2.1 Central components

When Karen was 28, her second daughter Marianne was born, followed by Renate two years later. Karen was kept very busy raising a family during this time and it seems that as they were having children, Karen must have been satisfied to some extent in her marriage to Oskar to be maintaining a sexual relationship with him. When Karen was 32, Brigitte started school and Marianne started kindergarten (Rubins, 1978). This would have given more structure to their daily activities and general family life.

At the age of 29, Karen completed her thesis, which was a case study entitled "A Case Report on the Question of Traumatic Psychosis" (Quinn, 1987). This dissertation enabled her to graduate as a psychiatrist. The following year (1915), she accepted the position of secretary of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society of which she was a founding member and two years later (1917), aged 32, was invited to address a mixed audience of psychologists, non-analytic physicians and interested lay people on psychoanalytic techniques organised by the Medical Society for Sexuality (Rubins,

1978). She also published a paper this year and at the age of 33, was practising psychoanalysis on a full time basis.

6.2.3.2.2 Peripheral components

According to Rubins (1978), Karen led an active social life in which she would spend evenings with different friends and play tennis over weekends. Her friends included Karl Muller-Braunschweig (a psychoanalyst) and his wife Josine Ebsen (a psychiatrist and a member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute), Walther and Lisa Honroth (Walther was an architectural engineer and Lisa a journalist), and Karl and Elizabeth Marx (Karl was a chemist and Elizabeth was an artist). As these friends shared similar intellectual interests, discussions on politics, art, religion, philosophy and psychotherapy would be held during the time they were together (Rubins, 1978).

6.2.3.3 Culminating life structure for early adulthood (age 33 - 40)

6.2.3.3.1 Central components

In 1918, at the age of 33, Karen and her husband moved from the city of Berlin to the suburb of Zehlendorf. This move gave them more space for the children to play and they were able to employ several maids, a cook, a ladies maid, a chauffeur and a gardener. An English governess was employed to teach the three children. They were financially secure by this stage as Karen had a steady income and Oskar was successful in his job. Karen had begun to practice psychoanalysis on a full time basis, during the morning working in the city, and during the afternoons consulting patients in the front room of her home (Quinn, 1987).

Later that year, Brigitte (6 years old) contracted Tuberculosis and at the advice of Brigitte's doctor was sent to a TB treatment centre in Zuoz in the Swiss Alps where she could continue to attend school (Quinn, 1987). A few months later, Karen sent Marianne (5 years old) to Zuoz as well, although she did not have tuberculosis. No clear explanation was provided for this decision. Quinn suggests that it could have been due to food shortages experienced during the First World War or because she was missing her older sister quite a lot. Interestingly enough, the trauma of early

separation from the mother was not recognised in 1918 (Quinn, 1987) and it is possible that Karen overlooked the possibility of separation anxiety resulting from the trauma of not being with her mother, in favour of meeting her apparent need to be with her sister. However, it should be recognised that the uncertainty of the First World War may also have motivated her to move her two older children to a safer environment.

In 1922, according to Quinn (1987), Karen (age 37) and Oskar grew apart from each other. They did not share the same friends, spent little time socialising with each other and held different political affiliations. In the following year, Oskar lost his job at the Stinnes Corporation and became ill with meningitis that required hospitalisation. According to Quinn (1987), he barely survived this illness and may have suffered brain damage as a result of this, as he repeatedly failed in all the business ventures that he undertook subsequent to his loss of employment, including an investment in which he had encouraged his parents to become involved. To add even more stress to her life, Karen's brother Berndt died that same year at the age of 41 after contracting pneumonia.

During this culminating life structure for early adulthood, according to Rubins (1978), Karen presented seven papers at various professional meetings, one of which was a paper on "Marriage Problems and Psychoanalysis" which he believes was a result of her own problems experienced in her marriage. Quinn's (1987) biography cites one paper that was submitted to a professional journal of psychoanalysis in this period. It seems therefore that she was fairly active in contributing to the development of psychoanalytic theory at this time of her life. She also attended the sixth International Psychoanalytic Congress at the age of 35 (Rubins, 1978).

6.2.3.3.2 Peripheral components

At this time in her life, no information was apparent concerning her social relationships. Quinn (1987) only mentions that Karen lived her life as a single woman and did not socialise much with Oskar at this time. It therefore appears that her career and her children consumed the majority of her time.

6.2.4 Mid-Life Transition (age 40 - 45)

6.2.4.1 Central components

The central components of Karen's life during this transitional period were her family and her career. In 1925, Oskar was declared bankrupt which forced Karen and Oskar to sell their house in Zehlendorf and move to an apartment in the city. Karen was 40 at the time. Their furniture was repossessed and a year later, they separated. Quinn (1987) claims that they remained on friendly terms and did not divorce until many years later. She proposes that financial difficulties and marital infidelities may have precipitated their separation, as Oskar had developed a social relationship with his secretary, Hanna, whom he eventually married. Karen moved into a small apartment with her three daughters, close to the Berlin Institute (Rubins, 1978).

As far as her career was concerned, Karen, at the age of 40, was considered a senior member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute and was involved in the teaching and development of the curriculum at the Institute. After her separation from Oskar, however, Rubins (1978) claims that she decreased her teaching responsibility at the Institute for approximately two years, possibly due to the high demands of her family commitments and marital difficulties experienced at the time.

Karen published 13 papers during this time and at the age of 43, played a role in establishing the General Medical Society for Psychotherapy whose aim was to promote the use of psychotherapy in medical practice (Quinn, 1987). She continued in her teaching role at the Institute and seemed to focus on teaching the techniques of psychoanalysis and teaching sexual biology and gynaecology. According to Rubins (1978), despite her marital problems and important life changes, she appeared to change and grow in self-confidence and was an active participant in all discussions at various meetings.

6.2.4.2 Peripheral components

Karen socialised with her psychoanalytic colleagues: Josine Ebsen, who married and later divorced Karl Muller-Braunschweig; Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, who lived in Berlin

and who was one of the first psychoanalysts to do therapy with children; Hans Liebermann and Max Eitingon, both practitioners of psychoanalysis and influential members in psychoanalytic circles. It therefore appears that her social life revolved around people with whom she came into contact on a professional basis.

6.2.5 Era of Middle Adulthood (age 40 - 65)

Levinson (1996) divides this era into life structure building and maintaining periods so the information obtained about this time of her life is also recorded according to the ages at which the various work accomplishments and life choices were made in each of these developmental periods.

6.2.5.1 Entry life structure for middle adulthood (age 45 - 50)

6.2.5.1.1 Central components

At the age of 47, Karen decided to emigrate with her youngest daughter Renate to the United States of America, as she was offered a good position at a new psychoanalytic training institution that a younger colleague and former student of hers, Franz Alexander, was establishing. According to Rubins (1978), Renate recalls that her mother had conflicting feelings about leaving Germany, as she was sad to leave her friends behind but felt challenged by the new opportunity as it offered her more autonomy. It is possible that an ulterior motive of increasing the emotional distance between herself and Oskar added to her reasoning in moving to a new country.

At the time of considering this important move, Karen's eldest daughter Brigitte was making a name for herself as a theatrical actress, as she had just won the Reinhardt prize for acting, and Marianne had started to study medicine. Her youngest daughter, Renate was fifteen and therefore had to move with her to the USA. Karen and Renate arrived in Chicago in 1932 but apparently, struggled to adjust to the cultural changes involved in moving to the USA. Once she had successfully passed her state board exam however, she began to settle in her new country.

Quinn (1987) believes that Karen was most productive from the age of 41 to 47 as she was teaching, writing, travelling and active in the committee meetings of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute as well as running her own private practice. According to Quinn (1987), from the age of 40, Karen published fourteen professional papers mostly focusing on the topic of male and female psychological development and relationships. Five papers were written on marital difficulties. However, Quinn (1987) cites 16 published papers between ages 45 to 50 in her list of Karen Horney's works at the back of her biography. It is somewhat confusing though as to what criteria were used in her calculation of professional papers written by Karen. Despite this confusion, it is clear that she was busy in her writing, which was either because she was happier now that she was out of an unhappy and/or unfulfilling relationship, or, because she was a very ambitious and driven woman pursuing a purposeful goal.

In 1932, when Karen was 47, Franz Alexander offered her the position of associate director at the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute. This position involved teaching at the institute and was a two-year appointment, which began later that year. Karen accepted the position and worked at the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute for two years before she resigned and moved to New York, after unresolved tensions between herself and Alexander became intolerable. It appears that these tensions arose over a lack of respect for differing theoretical viewpoints on Alexander's behalf, as he did not agree with Karen's questioning of Freud's principles and felt that her views on considering the cultural and societal demands that influence personality development and individual behaviour were unfounded.

At the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, Karen lectured, supervised and analysed students while doing some part-time lecturing at the Washington-Baltimore Institute and the New School for Social Research. She was also involved in supervising social workers at a social work organisation in New York while running her own private practice. It is interesting that around this time, she attended two interdisciplinary seminars with Kurt Riezler, a philosopher, Max Wertheimer, a Gestalt psychologist and Hans Speier, a sociologist, to discuss the relationship of sociology to psychology. She was also noted to have begun to move away from orthodox psychoanalysis from this time in her life, thereby affording more consideration and focus on the client's

present experience as opposed to focusing on the past, and giving more consideration to cultural influences on human behaviour.

6.2.5.1.2 Peripheral components

Before Karen left Germany, her social circle consisted of people who were involved with the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute. However, although her social and professional life revolved around her colleagues, she did find time to go to the theatre. In the USA, Karen apparently socialised with Karl Menninger (a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst), Leo Bartemeier (a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst), Harold Lasswell (a sociologist), Margaret Mead (an anthropologist), and Erich Fromm, formerly a philosopher who studied psychoanalysis and with whom she later developed a romantic relationship (Quinn, 1987). Once in New York, she broadened her social circle to include non-analytical friends such as Paul Tillich, a theologian and his wife, Hannah. Karen was interested in Paul's philosophy and religious viewpoints and they remained life long friends.

In Chicago Karen allegedly had an affair with one of her students Dr Leon Saul, who was 16 years younger than her. However, he died before Quinn (1987) could confirm this. It is known however that Karen began an intimate relationship with Erich Fromm who moved to New York at the same time as her. They were apparently constant companions over the weekends and reportedly discussed and influenced each other's theory as they shared each other's reading material.

6.2.5.2 Age 50 transition (age 50 - 55)

6.2.5.2.1 Central components

In December 1935, at the age of 50, Karen went to Berlin to visit Renate as she had just moved back to Germany to get married. Brigitte was regarded as a film star as she had acted in twenty-seven films thus far, and Marianne was pursuing a career in psychiatry and psychoanalysis. At the age of 51, Karen became a grandmother to Renate's first child, but no other mention is made of the other children that were born, although it is apparent that they had other children. Karen visited Renate regularly in

Germany before Renate and her family eventually immigrated to Mexico a few years later. During a visit to Germany in 1936, Karen aged 51, applied for a divorce but was only granted this divorce two years later, as the German courts were very disorganized at the time. She had therefore waited almost ten years to finalise her divorce.

Karen wrote two books during this developmental period. Her first book, "The Neurotic Personality of our Time", was published in 1937 when she was 52 and her second book, "New Ways in Psychoanalysis", was published in 1939 when she was 54. According to Quinn (1987), she also published five papers from 1935 to 1940 and was therefore very productive in her writing of professional material. It is thought that after her move to the USA, she gave more consideration to the social factors in an individual's environment due to her experience of adjusting to a different culture, but it may also be due to the direct influence of her colleagues and friends on her thinking, as they approached issues and theoretical debates from a sociological and anthropological perspective.

6.2.5.2.2 Peripheral components

Karen became close companions with Gertrude Lederer-Eckardt, the mother of Marianne's boyfriend and future husband. Gertrude was ten years younger than Karen and assumed the role of personal assistant to her, as Karen showed no skill or inclination in managing her own financial affairs and domestic responsibilities. Gertrude also helped Karen manage the pain in her back by massaging her and helping her get sufficient exercise. When Karen's secretary resigned, Gertrude assumed this role as well. Gertrude would accompany Karen on regular weekend retreats and they became very close companions who cared for each other.

6.2.5.3 Culminating life structure for middle adulthood (age 55 - 60)

6.2.5.3.1 Central components

It is not clear at this time whether Karen lived on her own or whether she shared her home with Gertrude. It is clear though that they spent every weekend together, with

Gertrude supporting Karen in such a way that she was able to complete her work. Although it was a reciprocal relationship, it appeared to favour Karen's routine and desires, although mention is made of a time when Gertrude was ill and Karen nursed her back to health over a two-week period. In 1941, Marianne married Gertrude's son, but this marriage did not appear to interfere or alter the relationship between Karen and Gertrude in any way.

According to Quinn (1987), Karen became more interested in writing from the age of 55. She continued to see patients in her private practice though and was kept busy teaching psychoanalysis, supervising psychoanalytic students and attending New York Psychoanalytic Society meetings. At the age of 56 she began to develop the thought of starting a new institute with Clara Thompson, a colleague who shared similar ideas as far as her criticism of Freud's theory was concerned, probably because she realised that the differences in theoretical persuasions were causing a lot of tension and conflict and she was not getting the recognition for her views that she deserved.

Later that year, Karen was demoted from the position of instructor in psychoanalysis and from the supervision of analysts at the institute. This followed a decision made at a meeting of the education committee where they announced that Karen Horney's theoretical viewpoints opposed the fundamental principles of psychoanalytic training. Karen walked out of this meeting and was followed by Clara Thompson and three younger analysts, Harmon Ephron, Bernhard Robbins and Sarah Kelman. These five individuals tendered their resignation two days later from the New York Psychoanalytic Society and within three weeks of their leaving, founded a new organisation and named it the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (AAP). The first journal to be published by the organisation, the *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, soon followed this development. At the same time as the institute was being founded, Karen began to work on her third book, "Self-Analysis", which was published in 1942. Problems were still experienced in this organisation, however, and, three years later, it had divided into three different groups.

Her hard work did not stop here as she published her fourth book in 1945 at the age of 60, "Our Inner Conflicts", and wrote and produced a book with five members of the

AAP from a series of lectures: "Are You Considering Psychoanalysis?" This book, published in 1946, contained nine essays on psychoanalysis (Quinn, 1987). It appears that she was a very well known and well-respected psychoanalyst at this time and Harmon Ephron was quoted as saying "*Everyone wanted her as an analyst. I had so many referrals from her I kept five other analysts busy*" (Quinn, 1987, p. 356).

6.2.5.3.2 Peripheral components

Karen's friends at this age were mostly professional colleagues but also included Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict (a socio-ethnologist), Erich Fromm and John Dollard (a socio-ethnologist). As other professionals such as Paul Lussheimer, a psychiatrist, arrived in the USA, Karen expanded her social circle to include them in social activities where they would visit at each other's homes.

Some time in the early 1940's, Karen's seven-year relationship with Erich Fromm ended. Karen was 55. Erich Fromm had attended the Berlin Institute for Psychoanalytic Training in 1923 after having received his doctorate in Heidelberg in 1922 and had therefore known Karen for almost twenty years. Despite this loss of her relationship with Erich Fromm, Paris (1994) claims that she became more self confident, creative in her work, and assertive. She appeared to have more energy and opportunity to enjoy her life fully and expressed this in her behaviour. Quinn (1987) however, describes Karen's response to this loss as one of deep hurt when the relationship ended.

6.2.6 Late Adult Transition (age 60 - 65)

6.2.6.1 Central components

In 1946, at the age of 61, Karen continued to be busy and according to Rubins (1978) could not sit for long without doing some form of activity, whether it was walking, shopping or gardening. She took regular holidays with her youngest daughter Renate and seemed to favour remote, scenic places where she could relax and write in peace. She also visited Brigitte and her husband in Switzerland, which became a regular event every summer holiday for the next six years.

Karen published 10 papers between the ages of 60 to 65 and wrote her last book, "Neurosis and Human Growth". She also continued her private practice but did not seem to be as active in teaching at the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.

6.2.6.2 Peripheral components

When Karen was 64, she began to be concerned with issues of morality, good and evil, guilt and sin, self-interest and selfishness, and explored these human concepts and characteristics from philosophical and religious viewpoints. She became enthralled in reading Aldous Huxley's book "The Perennial Philosophy" that apparently contains short readings and commentaries on Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. Her relationship with her Japanese friend Daisetz Suzuki deepened, and she started to attend her close friend Paul Tillich's sermons at the cathedral at which he preached.

According to Quinn (1987), Karen began a relationship with a man who was younger than her when she was in her sixties. He was reportedly a candidate at the Institute whom she analysed and the relationship lasted until she died. No further information was available on this relationship.

6.2.7 Era of Late Adulthood (age 60 onwards)

6.2.7.1 Central components

Karen published three papers between 1951 and 1952 (Quinn, 1987) but focused on her writing and the developing of psychoanalysis to fit in with the ideas of Zen Buddhism that ultimately aimed at developing wholeness of individual experience. Karen believed that this related to the search for the true, authentic self as opposed to the false self that was influenced by the culture of the individual. According to Rubins (1978), Karen was discouraged by the antagonism between various members of the institute and it is perhaps for this reason that she withdrew more and more from the Institute as she grew older.

In January 1952, however, Karen was honoured when a new clinic was formed that was to be called The Karen Horney Clinic, attached to the Institute that she had formed many years earlier (Rubins, 1978). On learning this information, Karen was very happy as it had been a long aspiration of hers to offer psychotherapy at a lower cost, to those people who would otherwise have been unable to afford this treatment.

6.2.7.2 Peripheral components

In January 1951, Karen's Japanese friend Daisetz Suzuki returned to the USA to teach at the University of Columbia. Karen, who had been writing to him up to this point, developed a good friendship with him and tried to relate Zen ideas and principles to her interpersonal theory when they met with each other. Karen's interest in Zen Buddhism led to her trip to Japan in July 1952 at the age of 67. Brigitte, who was divorced and was living with Karen in the USA at that time, accompanied her with two other friends. On this trip they visited the most important Zen monasteries and it turned out to be one of the happiest adventures of Karen's life. On this trip, Karen gave a lecture on new developments in psychoanalysis to the Jikai-Kai Medical School (Rubins, 1978).

Karen's health deteriorated from the age of 60 as she experienced abdominal pain that continued for two years. Her doctor suggested exploratory surgery because he suspected a problem in her gall bladder, but Karen refused. She was later diagnosed with gall bladder cancer and a few months after this was hospitalised, but died within three days. Her family were supportive in the last few days of her life and her daughters, Marianne and Brigitte alternated in sitting at her bedside. They both apparently tried to hide the fact that she was terminally ill from her, but according to a medical intern who nursed Karen in the hospital, she was aware that she was dying. On December 4, 1952 Karen died in her sleep. Unfortunately, her daughter Renate who was travelling from Mexico on board an aeroplane at the time, was too late to see her mother before she died.

Paul Tillich, who led the funeral, said in his eulogy "... *She wrote books, but she loved human beings. She helped them to throw light into the dark places of their souls*" (Quinn, 1987, p. 418-419). It seems clear that Karen had a great impact on the

lives of her patients and her colleagues, both those who agreed with her theoretical concepts of psychoanalysis as well as those who strongly opposed her deviation from its basic tenets and practice. There is no doubt that her contribution to psychology as a whole has been valuable and her determination to seek the truth of human experience, in the face of strong opposition, is admirable.

6.3 Conclusion

The life course of Karen Horney has been divided according to Levinson's four eras of adult development. These eras allowed the researcher to identify important events, issues and experiences that were relevant to her life as it unfolded. The following chapter will discuss these results in order to highlight the areas of Karen Horney's life that support Levinson's (1996) theory and any aspects that are lacking in his theory of adult development.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

7.1 Chapter preview

In this chapter Karen Horney's life is described according to the chronological divisions of the four eras of development proposed by Levinson (1996). Each era of adult development will be discussed in detail to facilitate an understanding of Karen's life during that period of time, and to ascertain the effectiveness of Levinson's theory in highlighting the important events and experiences of her life.

7.2 The developmental periods in the life of Karen Horney.

7.2.1 Era of Pre-Adulthood (age 0 - 22)

Levinson (1996) regards the era of pre-adulthood as including early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence and a transitional period referred to as the early adult transition. As this era includes the early adult transition that occurs between the ages of 17 to 22, the basic sequence of the life course of Karen Horney progressed according to the average age at which Levinson's era of pre-adulthood allegedly occurs. It is interesting that Karen herself identifies and describes her life at the age of 17 as being a time of transition as she was striving towards a goal, even though she was not always sure what that goal was. It is not surprising that Karen experienced this time as confusing though, as she was not sure of her future but knew that she wanted to venture into a challenging world that would stimulate her intellectually.

Despite the many changes and the rapid physical, psychological and emotional growth that occurs in this era, Levinson provides little information about this period, other than identifying the process of individuation that occurs early in the era as an infant separates from the primary caregiver and begins to develop an identity. According to Levinson (1996), the process of individuation begins at the age of two or three and continues throughout adult development.

As very little information was available on Karen's pre-adolescent years, the researcher cannot comment on the process of individuation during her childhood. However, she clearly continued the process of individuation as she progressed through her adolescence, as evident in her career goals and ambition to become a medical doctor. She had a strong desire from the age of 14, to further her education and study at university to become a medical doctor. This demonstrates the process of her developing an identity and sense of independence as she expressed her ambition to be educated, despite the lack of initial support and encouragement from her father.

She was fortunate though to have a mother who encouraged her to pursue her own dreams and ambitions, even if it was unconventional according to the social norms at that particular time in history. This facilitated the process of individuation as her mother's capacity and willingness to allow her to leave home and go to university, allowed her to develop her independence and exercise autonomy.

Levinson asserts that each era is unique in character. This is substantiated in this study, as the life course of Karen Horney during this era is very different to her life course in subsequent eras. Her diary entries for this era focus on the life structure components of her family of origin, her educational goals, her relationships with friends at school and school teachers, spiritual concerns and difficulties, low self-esteem, romantic relationships and issues of sexuality and morality. These life structure components in turn identify and describe how her life is unique, as the following discussion will show.

Karen's mother was supportive of her dreams and ambitions and a good caring relationship existed between mother and daughter. This support was very important to Karen as she was encouraged to achieve academically at school and her mother was a much needed ally in convincing her father to allow her to receive the education she required to gain entry into university. Her family were therefore very central in her life while she was living at home. Once she was old enough to leave home, however, they played a lesser role in her life and other relationships became more important.

Karen's goal to study medicine is clearly the central component of her life, as much of her energy was focused in this direction. She had a fierce, unshakable ambition to

attend the Gymnasium so that she could gain entry into medical school, despite the initial restriction on girls attending the Gymnasium and German universities before the early 1900's. Her goal to become a medical doctor gave her clear direction, and her strength of character is evident in her ability to focus on this goal, despite societal restrictions of that time and her father's initial disregard for Karen's ambition.

Karen's ambition therefore corroborates Levinson's assertion that the central components of life structure development influence the direction and life experience of the individual. Her goal to become a medical doctor was the beginning of her career that ultimately lead her into the field of psychiatry, and that determined the course of her life from this point onwards.

Karen's relationships with her teachers were important in guiding and nurturing her ambitions and capabilities. Her two favourite teachers, Herr Schultze and Fräulein Banning, became significant role models for Karen, but, although these teachers were important to Karen during her school years, once she had changed schools, she managed to maintain her academic standards and reach her goals without their input or encouragement. This seems to indicate that they had fulfilled a role in Karen's life during an important time, but once they were not a part of her daily life, she nonetheless managed without them. For this reason, Levinson's concept of peripheral components is helpful in conceptualising the influence of these two teachers on Karen's life as they helped her to achieve academically at school.

Karen lists her two best friends in her diary who were clearly significant to her in her adolescence. However, the significance of these two best friends is not clear in Horney's autobiography other than companionship and the sharing of similar interests. Karen's peer relationships were important in fostering the development of her self-identity, in providing her with social acceptance and also contributed to her enjoyment of her school days. This facilitated the development of a life structure that allowed space and energy to be devoted to relationships with friends and facilitated a healthy, functional and satisfying lifestyle.

The many questions that bothered Karen throughout her adolescence concerning the reality of God and the need for prayer and religion were important existential issues

for her. These concerns were highlighted for Karen as her father adhered to Christian principles and tried to influence his family by quoting from Biblical scriptures. This forced her to make her own judgement on the validity of the religious principles that her father taught, particularly as he did not appear to behave in a way that exemplified what he said. At the same time, the inconsistencies she saw in her father added to her confusion on spiritual matters and resulted in her experiencing conflict and anxiety because she was aware that her thoughts of disrespect for him were not in accordance with Biblical teachings. These spiritual concerns are expected during adolescence, as questions regarding spiritual matters would typically arise during a time of intellectual and cognitive development.

Levinson does not mention religious concerns as an important aspect of this era yet it was a peripheral component in Karen's life while she was living at home. Once she finished school and went to university, these concerns are not evident in her diary entries, perhaps because she was not exposed to her father's teachings and didn't have to think about them, and also because she had little time, if any, to devote to spiritual concerns.

Additionally, Karen's struggle with self-esteem and acceptance are normal issues for adolescents, yet Levinson does not mention these issues as important in life structure development. Although I would not regard low self-esteem as inhibiting the development of the life course as such, the success of a person living his/her life according to his/her personal goals and desires would be hampered if feelings of uselessness and incompetence were experienced most of the time. I therefore think that Levinson's oversight in regarding healthy self-esteem as an important aspect of life structure development, limits his understanding and description of the era of pre-adulthood.

7.2.2 Early Adult Transition (age 17 - 22)

Levinson asserts that an individual may begin the transition from pre-adulthood into early adulthood from the age of 17. Karen Horney only left home when she was 21 as she qualified to enter university at this age. Her transition to early adulthood started a little later then, only once her identity changed from a school girl acquiring an

education at the Gymnasium to a first year medical student when she started at the University of Freiburg. Her initial unhappiness at university where she felt lonely only changed once she had made some friends, and had begun to establish a place for herself in this new adult environment. These social relationships therefore took a central role in her life once her family were not so readily available.

While Karen was still at home at the age of 17, she was exposed to issues and questions of sexuality, including appropriate sexual behaviour and incest. This was raised in a conversation with a school friend and would be a typical issue faced by adolescents. Levinson however does not include sexuality concerns or sexual choices as part of this era as he includes them as life decisions to be made in the next era of early adulthood. In a western culture when most adolescents complete their schooling between the ages of 17 to 19, and are exposed to sexual relationships even before then, these issues should be included in the theoretical content of the era of pre-adulthood.

Certainly for Karen, while she was still studying at school, I doubt she would have been considered or regarded as a young adult. I think therefore that Levinson's statement that an individual between the ages of 17 to 22 is not in either the era of pre-adulthood or the era of early adulthood, does not apply to Karen's life. I regard Karen as being in the era of pre-adulthood until the age of 21 when she left her mother's home and began her academic career.

However, this era of transition is useful in conceptualising the change that occurs when an individual leaves the family of origin and begins life in the adult world of work, even if this work is the preparation for a professional career and involves studying at a tertiary institution. This cross-era transition is certainly a time of change, as an individual develops into a young adult and develops and builds a life structure that will enable him or her to achieve the goals and ambitions he/she has set during the era of pre-adulthood.

7.2.3 Era of Early Adulthood (age 17 - 45)

According to Levinson (1996) this is often the most dramatic era as bodily and psychological changes reach a peak at this time. This certainly happened in Karen Horney's life as she qualified as a psychiatrist during this era and decided to train as a psychoanalyst despite much opposition in psychiatry to the effectiveness of psychoanalysis as a treatment intervention. These career choices were important decisions that determined her future professional life and which provided a structure to her life, as her whole life revolved around her career from this point on.

It is possible that, if psychoanalysis had not been recognised as a successful technique in psychiatry, she may have had to alter her career path at a later stage of her life. However, she was successful as a psychoanalyst and her career became a central component in the structure of her life as it demanded a great deal of her time and energy and provided her with an identity in her professional field.

Levinson divided this era into three parts as specific periods in which a life structure is built, maintained and assessed for its effectiveness in allowing the individual to attain his/her short and long-term goals. The discussion is therefore divided according to the chronological ages that Levinson identifies as occurring during the life structure development of this era.

7.2.3.1 Entry life structure for early adulthood (age 22-28)

At the age of 21, Karen entered university. This was the beginning of a new phase in her life and she created a new life structure as she began the era of early adulthood. This life structure necessitated further individuation and separation from her family of origin, which occurred and ultimately led to her marriage to Oskar Horney at the age of 24. Up until that time, her life revolved around the development of a future career in medicine and the development of a romantic relationship, first with her friend, Louis Grote, and subsequently with Oskar Horney.

Her decision to marry Oskar did not appear to be a difficult decision, although she had not finished her medical studies by that time. She appears to have made a provisional

life structure in which her career and choice of marriage partner were compatible, as her marriage did not prevent her from continuing her studies. Her dream of qualifying as a medical doctor was in sight and achievable, and provided her with the direction and motivation to devote her energies to both of the central components of her life that were important to her, namely her career and her marriage.

According to Levinson (1996), stressors of choosing a spouse and establishing a career could have caused a period of maladjustment if Karen had experienced these choices and demands as overwhelming. She did not appear to experience any doubt or conflict in making the decision to marry Oskar however, and her medical studies continued without any difficulty or disruption to her life.

However, once her parents died, she was exposed to life stressors that were unplanned and as she had no control over them, she did experience stress and a period of depression. She also had to adjust to her new role as a mother but managed to do this while still continuing her studies, perhaps due to her young age at which enough energy was available to achieve what she wanted. Additionally, she was a highly motivated young woman, which boosted her energy level and inspired her to achieve her objectives. Karen seems to have been quite extraordinary in her ability to manage all these demands and pressures of her life at that time, and the structure that she created for her life certainly created a secure foundation on which the rest of her life was based.

Karen's relationships with other psychoanalytic friends seemed to have inspired her to fulfil her dreams and ambitions and fuelled her motivation to succeed as a psychoanalyst despite the setbacks that she suffered. Additionally, her extra-marital relationship may also have served as a release of stress and may have given her the extra support she needed to survive the stressful times in her life, especially if Oskar was not able to meet her emotional needs at that time, although this is not clear.

Karen Horney therefore created a provisional life structure that centred around her dream of becoming a successful psychiatrist specialising in psychoanalysis. The major life choices concerning a career and the choice of a marital partner were made

with no difficulties or setbacks for this period of her life. Karen therefore began to establish her identity and place in the adult world.

7.2.3.2 Age 30 transition (age 28 - 33)

Levinson proposes that this period of five years in the era of early adulthood can be experienced as a time of developmental difficulty, depending on the possibilities, options and choices that an individual makes at this time. However, Karen had no difficulty in maintaining her momentum in establishing her career and building her own family. All of Karen's three daughters were born during this five-year period, despite her heavy workload. She managed to complete her thesis and took on the role of secretary of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society while also finding time to prepare an academic paper for publishing, and to give a talk at a professional meeting of the Medical Society for Sexuality. Karen was therefore keen and willing to take any opportunity for furthering and developing a professional reputation. Her professional and personal success is apparent at that time and no evidence of her evaluating her life structure at that time is evident, as she was managing very well and living her dream.

7.2.3.3 Culminating life structure for early adulthood (age 33 - 40)

Levinson proposes that an individual becomes stable and secure within his/her societal role as the era of early adulthood is culminated, which is definitely clear in Karen's life at the age of 33. Karen and Oskar were able to afford to move into a bigger house and hire sufficient domestic help to ensure that their own professional careers could be maintained and furthered. Karen had a successful private practice and continued to work outside of her home.

When her elder daughter Brigitte became ill with tuberculosis, Karen did not take time off from her career, as she sent Brigitte to a treatment centre where she could receive the necessary treatment to ensure that she got better. Similarly, as Oskar lost his job and became ill as well, Karen continued to stay focused on her career and managed to present seven papers during the eight years of this developmental period, despite these financial and emotional stressors. It is this period then, if any, that would have

been difficult for Karen to develop successfully in her career, rather than in the age 30 transition as proposed by Levinson. It therefore seems that the developmental difficulty experienced by an individual in any of the age periods would depend on the demands made on that person according to the life circumstances and events that occur at that time.

Similarly, it was Karen's career that maintained her focus and direction in her life at this time. The stability, professional and financial security that she had acquired by this time, also gave her continued motivation to overcome the life stressors that she was exposed to during this developmental period. Karen therefore created a life structure in early adulthood that allowed her to achieve her professional goals and her personal ambition of starting and nurturing a family that included rearing three children. Her life therefore seems to fit according to the average age at which these life events typically occur according to Levinson's (1996) theory.

7.2.4 Mid-Life Transition (age 40 - 45)

Levinson regards this cross-era as the developmental link between early and middle adulthood and as a period of time that belongs to both eras. However, for Karen it was a time of great personal change as she separated from her husband at the age of 40. Despite these personal changes, Karen became productive as far as her academic writing was concerned and published 13 papers in this short period of five years. Over and above this, she was involved in teaching at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute and maintained her own private practice. She was therefore still very focused on her career. Perhaps it was due to the central component in her life structure that she was able to maintain her focus and did not experience a developmental crisis at this time in her life.

According to Levinson, the process of individuation continues as a sense of self evolves, as the individual gets older. It was probably this sense of being a competent, professional person that provided Karen with an identity, so that despite losing her role and status of being a married woman, she continued to be active in her professional capacity. It seems therefore that Karen continued the process of

individuation during this cross-era transition, as she found a new place in society as a woman separated from her husband.

7.2.5 Era of Middle Adulthood (age 40 - 65)

Levinson proposes that the life structure of the individual in this era is very different to the life structure built in the era of early adulthood as the relationships that form the central components of a person's life are most likely to have changed in some way. Levinson does not indicate in what way these relationships may have changed however, so it is very difficult to obtain a full understanding of what he means by this.

In Karen Horney's life, the only change in the relationships of the central components occurred when Karen separated from her husband at the age of 40. This event was included in the previous discussion of the mid-life transition, which Levinson regards as being part of the era of middle adulthood. If this event is seen within the era of middle adulthood, then it could be argued that an important change in Karen's relationship with her husband, from whom she separated, did occur in the beginning of this era. Despite this big change in her life, Karen still remained focused on her career and was as productive, if not more productive, in this era than in the mid-life transition and in the era of early adulthood.

7.2.5.1 Entry life structure for middle adulthood (age 45 - 50)

Levinson stated that an important task of this period is for the individual to build a life structure upon which middle adulthood can evolve. Karen Horney's life changed considerably in this developmental period as she immigrated to the USA at the age of 47, and had to adapt and adjust to a completely new environment and culture. This in itself necessitated a new life structure as she had to form new relationships, both socially and with people at work, and she had to build a new career. As Karen stayed in the USA for the rest of her life, the new life structure she created for herself laid the foundation for the development of her career in this new country.

Levinson also proposes that energy levels decrease from this time. This was not the case with Karen Horney however, as she seemed to achieve just as much as she had

in early adulthood and certainly the change to a new career, new relationships and a new country would have demanded a great deal of her energy. Additionally, this was the beginning of Karen's productive phase as she was most productive in producing professional papers that were published at this time of her life. Quinn (1987) cites 16 papers of Karen that were published between the ages of 45 and 50, so it certainly was a busy and productive time for Karen.

In addition to her writing, Karen was very busy lecturing, supervising and teaching at the Institute where she worked and successfully ran her own private practice. Karen certainly had no time to stagnate in her career or to feel empty. It is clear that her career was continuing to develop and Karen lived a busy and fulfilled life at this time.

Karen's life fits in with Levinson's statement that individuals at this stage of life development are considered as senior members of their professions who are regarded as responsible for mentoring and encouraging the junior members of their profession, as that was her job and role in the Institute to train and mentor the students of psychoanalysis. Similarly, her self-confidence and professional competence may have enabled her to challenge Freud's theories in a more open-minded and creative manner, as suggested by Levinson, due to her maturity and stage of adult development.

7.2.5.2 Age 50 transition (age 50 - 55)

Levinson regards this developmental period as a time of evaluation of the life structure. Perhaps it was this evaluation of her life that, at the age of 51, precipitated Karen's legal application for a divorce after ten years of living apart from her husband. Karen also became a grandmother at the age of 50, which would have signified a new role for her and would have highlighted the fact that she was getting older. This new role would add another dimension to her self-concept and would require that she adjust to this added responsibility and change in identity.

Karen continued to be productive as she wrote two books in this developmental period and published five papers. She therefore continued to develop her career and was highly successful at this stage of her life. Levinson might have regarded this as a

period of creativity and purposeful behaviour, as Karen's active career substantiates this.

Karen's relationship with Gertrude Lederer-Eckardt was a special and unique element in Karen's life and it appears to have been an important relationship for Karen as she received professional, social and emotional support from Gertrude. If Karen had not had such a competent person supporting her at this time in her life, she may not have been able to achieve as much as she did professionally, as she would not have had the time to write as much as she did.

7.2.5.3 Culminating life structure for middle adulthood (age 55 - 60)

Although this was a very busy period for Karen as she wrote two books and continued to teach, supervise and run her own private practice, it was a period of much stress and tension in which her professional reputation and strength of character was severely tested. After unresolved disagreements over theoretical issues forced Karen to resign from the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, she formed a new Institute with other professional colleagues. This could be regarded as the realisation of a dream for Karen, but it was also a form of rejection for her open mindedness and willingness to act and think independently. At a time when security and consistency in her career might have been welcomed, Karen was making significant, permanent career decisions and changes. However, no evidence exists that Karen was deterred by these changes and professional rejection. In a time when middle adulthood was coming to a close for Karen, professional opportunities were available and she used these changes to further her career goals and establish an organisation in which she would have more autonomy. It could therefore be viewed as a time in which changes were made to create a new structure for the next period in her life of late adulthood, which is preceded by a time of transition. Levinson calls this cross-era, the late adult transition.

Karen certainly seems to have maintained relationships with psychoanalytic colleagues as well as colleagues in similar fields of interest such as Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Erich Fromm and John Dollard. These people probably encouraged her to remain open-minded and creative in her understanding of psychoanalysis and

most likely influenced her attempt to include the social and cultural elements in people's lives that might influence the psychoanalytic process. Additionally, her relationship with Erich Fromm that lasted seven years may well have provided her with emotional, social and professional support that allowed her to feel satisfied with her life structure, as she was able to achieve her goals and ambitions.

7.2.6 Late Adult Transition (age 60 - 65)

This last cross-era transition marks the beginning of late adulthood. It is a time of evaluation of the life that the person has lived, and of the goals that still remain to be achieved. It is also a time of entering the last era of adult development and creates the foundation on which the era of late adulthood is begun. Levinson provides little information about the content of this transitional period, so other than the time frame that this transition covers, little other information can be verified about this time in her life.

It is interesting that Levinson does not mention spiritual issues as part of the tasks that an individual needs to consider at this stage, as I would regard it as important at a time when an individual gets older and health concerns become apparent. Additionally, a person would become more aware of his/her mortality at this stage. For Karen, these spiritual concerns became apparent from the age of 64 and it is interesting that these spiritual concerns were also apparent in the era of pre-adulthood as she was developing a life structure that would help her to live the life that she wanted. It is almost as if her whole life had come full circle and she was back at the beginning, assessing and evaluating basic issues of spirituality.

If this transitional period is regarded as the beginning of the era of late adulthood, it was a time in which Karen continued to be busy both professionally and personally. She wrote 10 papers between the ages of 60 to 65 and wrote her last book. Additionally, she attempted to incorporate the principles of Zen Buddhism into her theory of interpersonal relationships and functioning. She was therefore still active and fully functional in her professional career, although she only lived for another two years after this transitional period.

7.2.7 Era of Late Adulthood (age 60 onwards)

Karen's life did not change in any way in this era. She continued to live an active and fulfilled life until just before she became ill and died at the age of 67. In amongst all her writing and travelling, she still managed to keep her private practice going, although no clear indication was given as to how busy this was.

Karen was honoured when a new clinic was established in acknowledgement of her contribution to psychoanalysis and this gave her a sense of belonging and a sense of satisfaction that she had made a significant contribution in the community in which she lived and worked.

During this last era of late adulthood, Karen's friends appeared to have been very important. Daisetz Suzuki accompanied her on her trip to Japan and assisted her in her attempt to learn about Zen Buddhism. He therefore made both a personal and professional contribution in Karen's life. If Karen had not become ill with cancer, she may have been able to develop her ideas further and achieve a deeper understanding of human nature. This trip to Japan provided Karen with a unique experience and indicates a unique element of her life in which she was able to question and discover her spirituality.

Levinson believes that physiological, psychological and social changes are common in this era of development as health issues develop for the individual. This certainly occurred in Karen's life. She chose to underplay and ignore her health, however, as she did not seek medical treatment when she first experienced deterioration in her health. It seems therefore, that she was determined to live her life as fully as possible, despite any health concerns.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter discusses Karen Horney's life structure development according to Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development in which the life course is divided into four eras. These four eras provide the guideline in describing her life and in identifying those aspects of her life that made her life unique. The results of this study indicate

that Karen Horney's life was congruent with the eras of adult development as proposed by Levinson. The following chapter will bring the thesis to a conclusion and further recommendations for research will be provided.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Chapter Preview

This final chapter provides a summary of the research and addresses the limitations of this psychobiographical research on Karen Horney. Thereafter, the value of this research is discussed and the recommendations for further research are provided. This study is then drawn to an end with the final conclusions for this study.

8.2 Summary of the research findings

Levinson's (1996) conceptualisation of adult development as a progression of four eras and three transitional periods throughout the life span of an individual is corroborated by this study. The life structure development of Karen Horney was clearly followed throughout her life according to the time frame provided by this theory, in each era of development. Karen Horney developed from a young girl raised in a patriarchal home and society, into an exceptionally career-driven woman who worked productively until she died at the age of 67.

Levinson's assertion that life structure development is influenced by the central components of a person's life has been highlighted in this study, as Horney's life clearly revolved around her career. Her family, although being an important component in her life, did not appear to be the central focus of her life. The concept of central, peripheral and unfulfilled components is clearly demonstrated by this study to highlight the unique elements of an individual's life and to indicate the direction and life course of an individual. Similarly, the interpersonal relationships that Horney had with her family, peers, friends, work colleagues and within her community, served to illustrate their significance to her life structure development.

This study also demonstrates the importance of building a life structure that facilitates the attaining of personal goals thereby contributing to the "satisfactoriness" in the life structure development. Karen Horney clearly developed a life structure that

encouraged and allowed her to realise her professional goals and aspirations so that she could achieve the professional success she desired.

Areas of Levinson's (1996) theory that are insufficient in describing various issues that might be important in the development of an individual's life were also highlighted in this study, particularly in the era of pre-adulthood. These issues include self-esteem issues, religious concerns and concerns about sexuality and moral issues. However, this study also demonstrates that spiritual issues may resurface later in an individual's life, as was the experience of Karen Horney in the late adult transitional period.

This study therefore illuminates the life of Karen Horney by describing her life experiences according to the time frame of Levinson's (1996) theory of adult development and adding to the biographical information available on the life of Karen Horney.

8.3 The limitations of this research

The preliminary methodological considerations pertinent to psychobiographical research were presented and discussed in chapter five of this study. Furthermore, the specific considerations taken into account during the research process were highlighted and presented in section 5.3 of the methodology chapter, to minimise the difficulties inherent in this case based research.

This study on Karen Horney however, has to be recognised within the limitation of the sources of information available to the researcher and within the constraints of a Master's thesis. As there was limited scope to study Karen Horney, very little attention could be given to the academic work that she produced, with the result that valuable information has not been included in this study. This information would have been able to provide additional insight and possibly would have given further corroboration of the life experiences she was living through at the time of her writing of each theoretical paper, article or book. Additionally, as no interview was conducted with her surviving relatives, information could not be confirmed or disputed, and was therefore limited to that provided in the autobiography and various biographies used in this study.

As the theory chosen for this research is a developmental theory, the focus of the information obtained in this study pertained to Karen Horney's life structure development. This study has therefore only focused on one aspect of her life, and in no way can account for her whole life experience or the total contribution that she made to psychological theory.

8.4 The value of this research

This research has evaluated the theoretical content of Levinson's (1996) theory of the adult development of woman. It has studied the entire lifespan of Karen Horney's life and has served to illustrate Levinson's proposal that the life structure of a woman can be divided into various eras and transitional periods according to a specific sequence and average time span.

Additionally, it has highlighted the need to view every life as unique, as the aspects of Karen Horney's life that were not mentioned in the theoretical content of Levinson's theory, namely the importance of spiritual conflict and religious concerns during adolescence and late adulthood, and issues of self-esteem and acceptance during adolescence, were shown to be important aspects of her life experience and development. Similarly, this study has shown that stressors identified in Levinson's theory do not necessarily influence or affect the life of every individual.

This study has also provided one answer to the question asked of well-known individuals in society: How do certain people develop and become exceptionally productive, competent and creative? The answer appears to be related to the central component of that person's life, which in the case of Karen Horney was her career and ambition to serve other people experiencing psychological problems and difficulties through providing them with psychoanalytic treatment.

8.5 Recommendations for further research

Future research could provide further information on the life of Karen Horney if other psychological theories were used to study her life, particularly Horney's own

interpersonal theory in which she identified three ways that people relate to others: moving towards others, moving away from others and moving against others. This theoretical approach could add to the understanding of Karen Horney's own personal relationships and to her own psychological functioning. Alternatively, a similar research study could be undertaken to increase the reliability of this particular research.

A more in-depth study such as a doctoral thesis, could also study the academic work produced by Horney, particularly her five books, to obtain further clarity and information concerning her life development, as mentioned earlier in section 8.3 of this chapter. This would add to the validity of the research findings in this study.

8.6 Conclusion

Although the limitations of this study have been highlighted, the aims of this research have been achieved as the life of Karen Horney has been illuminated through the focus on the development of her life structure. Additionally, Levinson's (1996) theory on the adult development of women has been verified, thus contributing to the development of the theoretical constructs of this psychological theory. This psychobiography has therefore illustrated this theory and has added to the development of the psychobiographical method of research in South Africa.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FEELINGS REGARDING KAREN HORNEY

11 December 2005

I don't know who Karen Horney really is. I don't understand her and find it difficult to connect to her. I feel a sense of disconnection, almost that she doesn't really feel. I am really struggling to obtain a real sense of how she feels in her diaries.

12 December 2005

I am beginning to get to know Karen Horney better. I am beginning to feel that as I read her diary, I can relate to her feelings of confusion and desire to understand feelings of attraction to other men, and the question of how do you know or understand that you love someone when it feels like you do? I also understand her search for the answers to the many questions in life such as the philosophy of life etc.

24 December 2005

I can recognise so much of myself in Karen's relationships with men. Also her analysis of "Clare" who Paris (1994) asserts is autobiographical. She undermines her own self by not recognising her capabilities and accomplishments and thereby lowers her self-esteem. As this is a particular phase I am going through in my own life due to the change in my life circumstances, I am identifying with her self-minimization and a "diffuse discontentment with life" (Paris, 1994, p. 127) I must be aware of this identification, as this will be the "lens" through which I will perceive and understand her personality and life development. I am also identifying with her feeling of being lost when a love relationship ends and her feeling that at that particular time, nothing else matters.

24 December 2005

I am shocked that she had so little insight into what constitutes ethical and professional behaviour. Why did she allow or encourage the man (Erich Fromm) with whom she had an affair, to supervise her daughter, or is this an indication of her trust and love in him? It does not seem very insightful to me. I feel angry and disappointed in Karen Horney's conduct, as I regard this as a lack of professional boundaries.

2 January 2006

I am beginning to feel that I am getting to know Karen Horney. I am feeling a sense of admiration for her attempt to find the answers in life and I admire that quality in her. I also feel that I might over identify with her need to be loved though, and her attempt to find the man who will provide the love and affection she needs and desires. This identifying with her need may lead me to pity her though, or to have too much sympathy for her. Is it possible to have too much sympathy? I also admire her strength in having the courage to move to another country with a new life style when she had only Renate, her daughter, for support. It must have been a difficult choice and a difficult adjustment for her.

8 January 2006

I feel quite sad about the end of her life. She really seemed to struggle with finding existential answers, something I am also looking for. Although there are qualities in her that I admire, I am also asking myself what right I have to judge those qualities and actions that I don't admire? I am in awe of her real devotion to her work, which helped the development of psychological theory, and her devotion to searching for the truth in psychological theory, as it applies to woman, is admirable.

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FOR RESEARCH

From: MARIAN [meck@fea.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2005 11:25 PM
To: g83g3733@campus.ru.ac.za
Subject: Karen Horney

Dear Ms Dixon, I was forwarded your request in regard to research you wish to conduct on Karen Horney. I am one of her three daughters, a psychoanalyst, in part retirement in California, though I still have an office in New York. The best biography of Karen Horney is 'A Mind of Her Own 'by Susan Quinn. 1988, Addison Wesley Publisher. Another earlier biography by Jack Rubins is not good, his research was not adequate. Many facts are in error. Karen Horney's archives are at the Yale University Library but not accessible by internet. Of interest are her "The Adolescent Diaries of Karen Horney' published by Basic Books, now out of print, but still available at Amazon.com's Out of Print book' section. My oldest sister dies 15 years ago, my younger sister lives here in the same community. .My e-mail is meck@fea.net. I will be glad to answer questions, but much is published, Sincerely Marianne Horney Eckardt M.D.

0

From: MARIAN [meck@fea.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2005 8:40 PM
To: Sarah Dixon
Subject: Re: Karen Horney

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

Dear Ms Dixon, I do not understand why you need consent to do your research, as all the material is published. What do you need consent for? Cordially Marianne Eckardt

----- Original Message -----

From: Sarah Dixon
To: 'MARIAN'
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2005 5:18 AM
Subject: RE: Karen Horney

Dear Dr Eckardt,
 Thank you so much for your reply. I am in my second year of Psychology Masters which means that I am doing an internship at present and have a research thesis to submit this year. I would like

to do a psychobiography on Karen Horney applying the developmental theory of Daniel Levinson to her life. To do this I was planning on using the three biographies that you mentioned. I acknowledge your caution in using Jack Rubins and would therefore consider the merits of not including this information in my research seeing as the research was inadequate. I would however not pursue my research without your consent and would therefore like to request your consent to do research on Dr Karen Horney. I would also be willing to answer any concerns or queries that you might have in what this research will entail. At this stage I am right at the beginning, and while I am trying to obtain consent to do the research, I am familiarizing myself with the content of the "The Adolescent Diaries of Karen Horney" and the book "A Mind of Her Own". My motivation for using your mother as the person who I would like to research was because I wanted to do research on a strong-minded woman who was admirable in standing up for what she believed to be true and valid and because I am interested in what qualities enable or encourage a woman to do so. I would like to assure you that I have no intention of harming or disreputing Dr Horney's professional reputation and would endeavour to acknowledge her contributions to Psychology. I would welcome your consideration to grant me permission to do the research and await your reply. Sincerely, Sarah Dixon.

From: MARIAN [meck@fea.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2005 7:09 AM
To: Sarah Dixon
Subject: Re: Karen Horney

I, Marianne Horney Eckardt and Renate Horney Patterson give our consent to any research Sarah Dixon may wish to do relating to Karen Horney. Sincerely Marianne Horney Eckardt and Renate Horney Patterson.
Regards Marianne Eckardt

