

1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

On 10 October 1996, John (an alias to protect the subject's identity) wrote this about his beloved in his diary:

"I will never ever make love to her if she don't want to and last night was the first time we made love and it was wonderful and beatiful¹ something I treasure now and always will."

The next entry, on 17 November, 1996, reads:

"My friend a lot of things has happened since last time we spoke. I think first the bad news and then the good news. Firstly I am retrenched again lost my car got no money. Good news. I am totally in love with Mary [an alias, again] and I will do anything for her even will kill for her ... This love I have got for her is so total I haven't got space for anyone or anything else. Yes it hurt at times sometimes it feels like my heart is bursting for her. I am so proud of her she do so many things for me and I wish I can tell her I love her and at the same time convey that feeling. We got engaged officially on the 16th November."

He then wrote nothing for 22 days. On Thursday, 10th December, he wrote:

"My friend I am so empty, broken in pieces dead inside my soul and my whole being cry's out why, what have I done. I have destroyed something very special and someone I love, someone that is part of me as I was part of her we live for each other and I killed my Beloved and deares Mary my Teddybear what for and why I don't know."

He then starts writing to her as if she is still alive, and continues to write in his diary nearly every day for the next few years.

While working as a clinical psychologist in the South African Department of Correctional Services I often had to do psychotherapy with people who were imprisoned for murdering

¹ This is from the original writing without correction of John's spelling errors

their spouses or loved ones, much like the person whose diary is quoted above. Normally, when people hear about someone who murdered his or her spouse, the first thought that comes to mind is of a rough and tough, dominating, loud and outspoken individual. Some champions of the psychodynamic school such as Bjerre (1981) found some proof in their research and theoretical formulations for this spontaneous, popular view — believing that people who are at risk of committing such deeds are robust, extroverted, and overtly aggressive.

However, during psychotherapy and informal interactions I observed that, to the contrary, they seemed instead to be reserved, introverted and seemingly passive. This observation was made possible by a more open-ended, existential type of approach as formulated and promoted by theorists such as Valle and Halling (1989). It prompted me to wonder how we can account for such seeming paradoxes.

I realised that there were many possible ways to gain a better understanding, including through further psychometric testing, searching for collateral information from family members and friends, and by reading previous research studies on similar cases. Another way would be to study the language and literary expressions of people who committed violent crimes, but who generally seemed passive and introverted. This method captured my interest given my special interest in literature, and as I was aware that there was a developing trend in psychology to discover the scientific and practical value of language and literature. The ways that people try to express their thoughts and emotions with words, especially through writing, interests me because they tend to be more spontaneous when not under the immediate pressures of being observed, and not cut short by someone else's comment or reaction. Many people find satisfaction in writing down all their experiences in personal diaries. A study of such an intimate diary would be one of many ways to gain this better understanding, as well as a potentially useful and revealing tool for clarifying the phenomenon of crimes of passion in general.

Analysing of such a diary may contribute significantly to psychology because psychology is the study of human beings and how they behave. Someone writing spontaneously about their experiences before and after murdering someone else, someone they loved very dearly, is a human being trying to make sense of their own behaviour. At the same time, that person has committed a very harmful deed that remains very difficult to understand. While it may be called a crime of passion, such terminology certainly does not put the act beyond the realm of critique or analysis. The author of such a diary uses written language to try to make sense of what has happened, attempting to come to terms with it by articulation.

A contemporary trend in psychology is particularly interested in how language sets human beings apart from other species, and how language can be used to analyse people's experiences and their life-world. Language is a way of expression, and reflects a way of being or knowing that is strictly human. It represents a form of knowledge – knowing about or reflecting about our selves – that is unique to our species.

The main problem in handling so-called *crimes of passion* is that it very often focuses on the difficulty of explaining the phenomenon. The Canadian Oxford Dictionary (1998, p.333) defines *crime of passion* as "...a crime, esp. murder, committed in a fit of sexual jealousy". This, however, is a very narrow definition that immediately raises various questions, including: when someone kills their beloved or sexual partner, is sexual jealousy *always* the motive? If so, why does it often happen that people who kill their partners or lovers do so without proof of any third party's involvement? Is the act primarily of sexual lust or of violence — as several research projects indicate about rape?

Crimes such as that under study are often referred to as *crimes of passion*. This very phrase of entitlement already reveals some of the inherent contradictions in such an act. Passion and crime are strange bedfellows indeed; however, they sometimes seem to become entangled or intermingled in mind-boggling ways. Although passion usually has a positive connotation and crime a negative one, both provoke very strong emotions. Sometimes it may seem as if the strength of the emotions elicited may act as a sort of drug, in turn raising the possibility of making irrelevant, or even suppressing the question as to whether the emotion, and its possible consequences, is positive or negative. Under such circumstances, the coin representing the emotions may suddenly flip. Love may turn into hatred, and nurturing, appreciating and creating may become cursing, aversion and destruction. The resulting deed might often rightly be described with strong words such as *murder* or *horrible* or *monstrous* by anyone directly or indirectly affected by it. Even so, it is questionable whether it is always so accurate to describe the person who committed the deed, the *murderer*, as a *monster*.

A person committing such a violent deed often experiences himself or herself as swayed or manipulated by an inexplicable force for a fleeting moment. Such people may later prefer to completely distance themselves from the act, although they were beyond dispute the agents of the deed, as their bodies clearly committed it. For at least one moment, a loss of control caused a complete separation between intent and action. Traditionally, in trying to solve this paradox between overt intent and action or deed, theorists have tended to look for faults in the individual. Often some kind of psychopathology, illness or even a demon, is cited to explain why someone could suddenly turn from nurturing and affectionate acts to destructive and hateful ones. Something damaging, harmful or destructive that did not belong there

entered the body of the individual, and that unwanted or non-corresponding element made that person lose control. These elements are variously defined with medical-psychiatric terms (e.g., germ, virus, chemical imbalance) terminology specific to psychological trends — such as object-relations theory (e.g., split-off ego parts) — and spiritual-theological terms (e.g. demon-possessed). Mythological characters, such as werewolves, legends, and fairy tales such as *The Beauty and the Beast* or *The Princess and the Frog* were arguably created to try to explain two opposites within one person, or at least to deal with this curious fact. All these accounts have some limited explanatory advantages to pinpoint some curative strategies for the phenomenon. Yet they are also unsatisfactory in terms of finding answers to some of the very questions they raise, such as about why and how these strange elements entered the body of the individual, and just where they came from.

The difficulty of explaining the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of a crime of passion, then, is the core problem that this study attempts to address. I will attempt to demonstrate how spontaneous linguistic forms of expression in the diary of someone who murdered his beloved can be used to gain a better understanding of this dark part of reality. This is a part of reality where both the suffering individual and the therapeutic or research community seem to be either out of control or very vague about explaining this seemingly paradoxical phenomenon: why is the knowing (loving a person) in such cases not revealed in their way of being (killing that person)? As the researcher I propose the possibility that some adequate knowledge for unravelling this paradox might appear articulated between the lines of a diary of a specific human being while caught up in an inadequate, harmful way of existence. Without realising it himself, the author of that diary might have come very close to an answer by posing his questions spontaneously in writing. However, the knowledge locked up in a diary needs to be explicated by a proper study of its content and context.

I discovered such a diary after establishing a trusting relationship with one particular client, John. He revealed to me that he had kept a personal diary since the beginning of his relationship with the victim. He made numerous entries in the diary, articulating his emotional states and thoughts about the relationship, and subsequent actions. He often employed a poetic style and various rich metaphoric literary turns of phrase that reveal his innermost conflicts and motivations. A careful analysis of these spontaneously-expressed linguistic forms of expression is likely to lead to an accurate understanding of the mindset of someone at risk of harming his or her loved one(s).

The diary proves to be an insightful text, revealing the innermost experiences of a person who committed a deed seemingly contradictory to his passions or feelings. In a personal diary people tend to write without pretending, without being bound by any literary rules nor

expectation of being judged or evaluated for what they write. They reveal their experiences of their everyday life, very often just for the joy of expressing it. The very fact that it is so spontaneous and without pretension – without any concern about the fact that someone else might read it or find it difficult to understand – often fills it with meanings that are hidden for anyone but the author. These hidden meanings are not likely to be immediately clear or accessible to any reader who does not know the author and his or her life-world very well, or who fails to analyse the diary properly. Other meanings may even be hidden to the diary's author that are quite obvious to another reader. For example, the diary's author may be unaware of the fact that people reading their writing may consider the writer as unusually passionate about nature. Just reading the diary's text very carefully can reveal hidden meanings; even so, most are likelier to require more advanced techniques to reveal or explicate them.

This study would therefore do well to approach its aim of explaining the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of a *crime of passion* by an exploration of the complicated and hidden meanings (knowledge) within the diary through research techniques that might help to unravel these paradoxes. The study of knowledge or ways of knowing is generally referred to as epistemology. Heylighen (1993) says that epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge, and which attempts to distinguish true or adequate knowledge from false or inadequate knowledge. It is also one of the pillars of the new sciences of cognition, which developed from the information processing approach to psychology. As this study attempts to show that adequate knowledge can be obtained from a study of the diary of someone who murdered his beloved, it can be regarded as epistemological.

Epistemology is a specific branch of philosophy used in some specific psychological approaches, such as information processing, but, as Gruber (1993) points out, it should not be confused with ontology, which refers to the subject of existence. Although the concepts overlap, they are certainly not the same. To simplify the matter, it may be said that knowing (epistemology) is a part or subdivision of a human being's existence or being (ontology), but they are certainly not the only subjects of existence or even of knowledge. This study is interested in the unique ways in which a specific human being reveals his being within a specific context, time, or part of his life. Ontology can thus be regarded as a broader underlying philosophy that is related to, but not equal to, epistemology.

Practically, the issue of the underlying philosophies behind this study translates into issues of scientific method: how can we reveal the adequate knowledge written between the lines of a diary of a specific human being while he was being caught up in an inadequate way of existence? This issue may seem quite complicated, as the author of the diary experienced

his own knowledge as inadequate or insufficient to allow him to change his way of being from an inadequate to an adequate one before the disastrous crisis unfolded. However, through hardship and experience he started to find some adequate meaning in his existence again. The core purpose of this study is to attempt to translate this adequate meaning and knowledge in such a way that at least some of the hidden meanings that prevented the author of the diary from existing adequately, especially in his more intimate relationships, will be revealed.

As researcher, it is my opinion that an epistemological approach within a broader existential-phenomenological perspective will be useful for answering the basic research question. This perspective should facilitate processes that reveal at least some of the diary's hidden meanings. Although existentialism does not refer to a specific method, it specifies a way of scientific study that is the most suitable for studying and describing how human beings experience their existence. Freedom of choice, through which each human being creates his or her own nature, is a primary theme. Because individuals are free to choose their own path, existentialists have argued, they must accept the risk and responsibility for their actions. Freedom of choice therefore implies responsibility for one's choices. Although we are embodied human beings living in a certain environment, our biology and/or environment do not determine our existence. They cannot be separated from our conscious choices about our being as embodied persons living in a specific environment. We are our bodies and we live our worlds. The diary in this study tells the story of someone who chose a way of existence that led him to a point of direct confrontation with some consequences of his choosing which were very difficult to face. Taking responsibility for his actions led him to choose another way of existence – a way about which he wrote in his diary. In essence it is a true-life story, a story about what happened before, during and after a tragic event in someone's life. Because it is primarily about his way of being or existence and his experience of it, existential phenomenology should, in my opinion, be the primary paradigm for gaining a better understanding. However, choosing existential phenomenology as a primary paradigm does not exclude the possible secondary use of other related fields such as linguistic phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. The true-life story was written in language, and one of our objectives is to interpret it, or at least some parts of it. Existential phenomenology might thus be the point of departure and the guiding paradigm, but linguistic phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology can certainly be expected to be as road signs along the way of finding hidden meanings in the diary, and aids to revealing the not-so-obvious elements in the life story.

Phenomenology is a school of philosophy, closely related to existentialism whose principal purpose is to study the appearances of human experience while attempting to suspend all consideration of their objective reality or subjective association. The phenomena studied are those experienced in various acts of consciousness, mainly cognitive or perceptual acts, but also in such acts as valuation and aesthetic appreciation (Wren, n.d.). Phenomenology strongly believes that the world should be allowed to reveal itself, and that consciousness and pre-conceptions should be explicated through scientific descriptions (Valle & Halling, 1989). Finding the hidden meanings between the lines of a spontaneously-written diary is, it seems to me, one possible way of allowing the life-world of a specific person to reveal itself. Looking for those meanings will also help to explicate some pre-conceptions and unconscious beliefs or themes in the living world of the diary's author. Max van Manen (2000) states that phenomenology is a philosophic tradition as well as a method of human science – a reflective inquiry into human meaning involving several domains of inquiry. In this study, phenomenology will not merely be used as a method of inquiry into different sources of meaning but rather as a philosophical or methodological attitude leading to the discovery of new insights with practical consequences for human living. The use of linguistic phenomenology or phenomenology of practice, as subdivisions of broader phenomenological inquiry, will be used as orientations for dealing with this project of inquiry. The nature of the text studied (primarily a diary) and the leading research question (how can the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of a crime of passion be explained?) will hopefully lead to an incorporation of such orientations as methodological options within the broader framework of existential phenomenology.

Phenomenological techniques or methods of inquiry best suit the qualitative textual and thematic analytical research required to reveal these hidden meanings. Such techniques are usually the most appropriate for existential-phenomenological studies that deal with specific experiences, rather than with tendencies or statistics. As Moustakas (1994, p.105) says, one of the definite characteristics of a human science research question should be that "...it seeks to uncover the qualitative rather than the quantitative factors in behaviour and experience". Clearly, qualitative research is also more appropriate than quantitative research, simply because $n=1$. A comparison with other subjects or groups by counting the number of certain responses and comparing that with others is simply not possible. Textbooks about and introductions to single case research techniques, such as interviewing, make it very clear that qualitative research methods and approaches are usually or mostly indicated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, Kazdin, 1982, Kvale, 1996.). In this study the focus is on spontaneous descriptions of very specific experiences. Descriptive studies are often regarded as synonymous with qualitative studies. If they are not completely synonymous,

descriptive studies can certainly be regarded as a subcategory of qualitative studies. A diary is not only a description of experiences; it is also a linguistic text. Spontaneous written language is used to express or describe experiences. In this context the word “text” can be used to refer to the contents of the diary, no matter which style of writing or literature has been used to describe the experiences in the diary. Textual analysis can thus be regarded as a further appropriate way of studying the diary. It also fits under the broader heading of qualitative research. We are dealing with a search for meanings hidden in a certain, specific text. Van Manen (2000) states “Phenomenological inquiry draws on many types and sources of meaning”. These resources can often be found in human domains such as in the arts, in the humanities, in everyday life experiences, in language, and in phenomenological studies.

In texts or literature there often are certain themes. A more specific way of analysing texts is to have a very close look at the themes that might be running through the whole text like a golden thread. Thematic analysis is a recognised form of analysis of written literature that might be very applicable to the research done in this study. By analysing the qualitative text of his diary, we will attempt to show some of the themes occupying the mind of someone who killed his beloved. Such an in-depth report might contradict previous claims by psychodynamic theorists, although the primary purpose of this study is not to disprove previous theories. Rather, it is to undertake a self-explanatory in-depth case study by analysing a spontaneously-written diary of a person who killed his beloved. This in-depth case study analysis will focus on clarifying the paradoxical nature of crimes of passion.

The technicalities of the research design will be discussed in Chapter 3. Before this, however, a proper overview of literature relevant to the subject of this research will provide a broader foundation for the work to follow.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE SURVEY

The theoretical framework within which this study is undertaken can be classified as a phenomenological-existential approach. In Chapter 1 a brief explanation was provided of the reasoning behind this choice of theoretical approach. It is my opinion that the research material does not allow for any other theoretically-based approach. This chapter will also support of this choice by tracing some trends in the existing literature. Further support will also be provided by attending to the relevant epistemological-ontological debate that underlies this choice, by observing how phenomenological inquiry can helpfully inform the search for meaning, and, in closing, by describing some implications of this methodological approach that is needed by a study of this kind.

2.1 The epistemological-ontological debate

Several ways of knowing and ways of living/acting fall under the broad heading of phenomenology. “Existential” may be regarded as a theoretical orientation under this heading, together with other orientations — such as the hermeneutical or linguistic. A survey of ways of knowing within this orientation, as manifested in the existing literature, will help to determine the ways of knowing that are most appropriate to this research project. Written texts, for example, express knowing in language, providing us with access to such knowing. Van Manen (2000) stated that “Writing is the way that phenomenology is practised”. He reminds us that phenomenologists such as Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, De Beauvoir, Levinas, Bachelard were not only scholars but also and especially gifted authors. We shall also have to investigate some the basic themes in an existential-phenomenological approach to knowing.

Themes such as ‘lived experiences,’ ‘modes of being,’ ‘ontology,’ and ‘life world’ are often addressed in the existential-phenomenological literature. Phenomenologists such as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty turned towards the existential world as we live and experience it. Consequently some of their basic conceptualisations are the starting point for conceptualising the theoretical framework later to be used in the research section of this thesis. A single case study will be done using, amongst others, the spontaneously-written text of a personal diary as a major source of knowledge. Sources of knowledge such as language will thus be used in this study, and methods of reflection such as thematic reflection might be used during the process of inquiry.

A phenomenological-existential approach is one of the few, if not the only theoretical framework or approach that allows for both a single case study and analytical approaches or attitudes such as linguistic and thematic analysis to be applied within the same broader context of qualitative research. Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.vii) describes phenomenology as follows:

Phenomenology is the study of the essences; and according to it, all problems amount to finding definitions of essences: the essence of perception, or the essence of consciousness, for example. But phenomenology is also a philosophy, which puts essences back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their “facticity.”

This definition is loaded with concepts that might guide us along the way to finding a proper theoretical framework for this thesis. This includes concepts such as essences, perception, consciousness, facticity, and a philosophy that puts essences back into existence. *Essences* generally refers to the intrinsic nature or quality of something. It is that element which makes something different from something else – it defines its character. However, when Merleau-Ponty (1962) uses this concept, he refers to more than just this character-defining element. He uses it in a broader sense to refer to that way of being that makes human experience or being or living different from the way of living or being of any other species. He talks about the condition that makes human beings human, and takes it a bit further to include the way in which human beings interact with their world. Van Manen (2000) considers that, “...Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology is existential, oriented to lived experience, the embodied human being in the concrete world.”

Perception refers to the way in which human beings understand or interpret something – their impression of something. In Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) definition it is used in the context of human experience. Human beings perceive according to **how** they are, live or exist. The essence of perception will therefore always be linked with the essence of your way of living or existing. One distinguishing characteristic of the way in which human beings live, is the fact that they can be conscious of their way of living or being and of the very fact that they live or exist.

Consciousness is probably one of the concepts over which philosophers and existentialists have spilled the most ink and produced the largest tomes. When Merleau-Ponty (1962) writes about consciousness he refers to much more than just the awareness that human beings might have of something in their world, or even of the fact that they exist. It includes their whole living world: their time, space, interactional world, their cognitive world, and every possible additional aspect of the way in which they exist. Human beings *are* consciousness.

Facticity refers to the fact that human beings exist as unique beings within a unique context, implying involvement in a unique set of circumstances and interactions. For Merleau-Ponty, facticity is not so much about the essences as about establishing contact with the world through methods of reduction. He is interested in the *humanity* of human beings and how that distinguishes us from all other beings, more than in searching for essential materialistic components of the world. Searching for the essence of something implies reduction – reducing it to its core element. However, ironically, only things can be reduced in this sense, and not human beings. As soon as human beings interact with the material world, such a reduction is impossible. The core element or essence of the investigated or perceived phenomenon involved in the interaction therefore stands in relation to the human being interacting with it. Even if what is investigated is a material object, when a human being is involved through observing it or interacting with it, that material object becomes part of a bigger (not smaller or lesser) encompassing reality. It becomes more than it had been or different from what it had been before the human being's involvement.

According to Van Manen (2000), Merleau-Ponty also expresses his position on phenomenological inquiry by saying that it "...can never yield indubitable knowledge [because of]...the impossibility of a complete reduction". Instead, he regards phenomenological inquiry as "...a manner or style of thinking". This has to do with the fact that human beings are unique. They exist and relate to the world in a different way than any other living organism or species. As soon as they are involved with any phenomenon, that phenomenon is also rendered unique.

The paradoxical phenomenon studied in this thesis — namely, crimes of passion as explicated between the lines of the diary of someone who murdered someone he claims to have loved very dearly — certainly seems unique in all the mentioned senses of the word. It also appears very difficult to explain. Yet this does not imply that it has never happened before, or that it will never happen again, nor that it has no bearing on other human beings. Phenomenology makes it possible to study an event like this by allowing its facticity to reveal itself to us through reflective techniques for analysing events and descriptions, such as diaries and essays. The bearing upon others flows from the very nature of the studied subject, the fact that it is a human phenomenon. It does not need to be generalised or compared with other similar phenomena in order to be relevant. The relevance and usefulness have to do with the fact that it has to do with real human experience and existence.

Just by observing how central the concept of existence is in Merleau-Ponty's view of phenomenology, it can be postulated that phenomenology has a definite companion in

existentialism. In his comprehensive study of the latter subject, Rollo May (1958, p.11) defines existentialism as "...the endeavour to understand man by cutting below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedevilled Western thought and science since shortly after the Renaissance". Kruger (1988, p.12) points out that Descartes introduced two dualisms in psychology, namely, the dualism between body and spirit, and that between person and world. The influence of these dualisms is still clearly visible in most subdivisions of psychology.

How these Cartesian dualisms acted upon the human sciences such as psychology becomes even clearer the distinction by Van den Berg (1980) between convergent and divergent thinking. Simply put, convergent thinking attempts to solve problems by reductionalistically, or through logical reasoning; in principle, convergent thinking can be computerised or expressed through formulas and theory. However, this does not hold true for true human problems (or crises). Human problems are divergent, often with no solution in the usual sense of the word; often, such problems are better expressed through rhetorical questions or poetry than through questions with direct and simple answers.

Theorists and researchers very often attempt to express human crises in a convergent way, through models and theory. I contend that a divergent approach is better suited to describing phenomena such as crimes of passion, for the very reason that they involve human beings in many ways. They are deeds committed by one human being on another for a reason that is so paradoxical and difficult to explain that it can only be human. For Van den Berg (1980, p.30) "...phenomenology is the science of divergent thinking about man and his world". Human beings are complicated by nature. That is why simplification and most popular ways of reduction very often result in unsatisfactory answers when phenomena involving human actions are studied. Human beings cannot be separated from their subjective nature. They are involved in their actions in complicated ways, making every deed more than just an objective application of something to something else. The paradoxical nature of a crime of passion cannot be explained in a satisfactory way, without considering that it is a human phenomenon.

Although May (1958) studied the subject matter of existentialism when he observed the cleavage that he refers to, a thorough study of this phenomenon makes it clear that this cleavage has practical implications. The cleavage between subject and object, starting with Descartes in the sixteenth century, meant in practice that human beings since the sixteenth century considered that they should attempt to be objective towards themselves and their world. In academic methods and approaches, subjectivity obtained a negative connotation in the sense that it became associated with being un-scientific or un-substantiated. Objectivity

was believed to be the only stance or attitude enabling empirical knowledge and research, even when a human being or a human action is the subject of research. Scientists influenced by Descartes' cleavage between subject and object could only study human experiences and emotions from an outside stance. Inside, subjective reports were regarded as invalid research material, unless proved to be similar to the reports of a significant percentage of reports by others in similar circumstances, indicating a "proven tendency." Sometimes this attitude even implied that human experiences should be expressed or explained in terms of mechanistic processes expressed through statistics, reducing them to formulas.

Existentialism as a theoretical attitude, believes, to the contrary, that subjectivity is the most valid stance from which a person's experience of their self and their world can be described and studied. That person's experiences of their body, relationships and world of objects are inevitably intermingled with their subjective experiences and emotions. The subject of this study certainly has to do with human, subjective experience. Studying it from only an objective stance would be just as inappropriate as trying to start an engine without fuel, say, by talking to it: it would be applying an approach that does not match the nature of the subject (Edwards 1998; Giorgi 1985; Kruger 1988).

From an existential-phenomenological perspective, when asked about the essence of a person's experience of a crisis such as having to deal with the ramifications of a crime of passion, it could be said that that person is confronted with their own limitations, or the boundaries of their existence. People do not like to be reminded of the fact that they have to die some time, and that they do not know how and when this is going to happen. Along with this awareness that people's existence is limited comes an awareness that their knowledge and understanding is limited. Many things are beyond people's comprehension. They do not always know why things happen and how they operate, nor why they came into existence or exist at that moment. This existential anxiety often referred to in relation to a person's dealings with their own death and/or limitations is a central theme of existentialism and phenomenology.

Park (2001, p.89) states that "...anxiety is being 'afraid' when there is nothing to fear." He further explains that anxiety is the non-psychological twin of fear; it feels like ordinary fear, but it does not arise from a situation and it has no intelligible cause. Fear arises from living in the world: Because we live in a world of real dangers, we are sometimes understandably afraid. Anxiety arises from within ourselves: from the depths of our being we feel a sense of threat that has no cause. A human action such as committing a crime of passion can be linked with existential anxiety, because it certainly fills anybody with fear just to think of the possibility that it can take place. Just as with existential anxiety, there usually seems to be no

reason for such an act and its meaning is very difficult to explain. It involves the limit of human existence (death) as well as the limit of human comprehension.

Phenomenological literature pertaining to the person and their limitations or boundaries will therefore be explored to the extent that it may possibly help to understand crimes of passion by analysing John's diary.

2.1.1 The Person and his/her Limitations or Boundaries

Human beings tend to disregard and avoid the fact that they have limitations. To be limited refers to our living within the boundaries of our own birth and death – that we are mortal and destined to having to face up to our own death at some point in our lifespan. Our own mortality is especially difficult to confront. Kruger (1988) points out that modern man in particular wishes to avoid the fact of her or his own death: "Whereas in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of this century, the great taboo in Western world was sex, as of now, it is death" (Kruger, 1988, p.72).

Crises, however, remind us of our own boundaries and of our death as the final destination of life, but also force us to confront it. While usually a very intense experience, such a reminder of a person's own destiny also connects that person to certain irrefutable truths about their existence. Chessick (1986, p.86) points out that philosophers such as Jaspers and Heidegger deliberated the point that truth begins in certain fundamental experiences in the lived world, so-called boundary situations such as death, anguish, guilt, and suffering. In this context, a boundary situation can refer to a confrontation with either our own limitedness or our own death as our final destination.

Boundary situations remind us how important it is to live our life to the full. We never know when the last opportunity is going to be to show a loved one that we care, to deal with 'unfinished businesses' in relationships, to pay our debts, or to enjoy our health and freedom. Being reminded of our limitations brings about a 'carpe diem' attitude towards our being-in-the-world. We are brought to realise how much there remains to be done to contribute positively to 'seize the day,' or to do our share to make the world a better place to live in. We realise that we do not live in a void, and that our lives have an impact upon others' lives, whether we like it or not. We live in our world with others, and we do it in a certain way, with a certain attitude. A crisis or boundary situation brings people to the realisation that they can no longer be ignorant about the way in which they live their lives with others in the world.

According to Heidegger (1962), human beings' being-in-the-world with others (Mitwelt) is usually characterised by one of two concepts, namely "Sorge" and "Fursorge." "Sorge" may be translated as inauthentic or insincere, and refers to a concern about others as things or objects. "Fursorge", in contrast, translates as authentic or sincere, and refers to an engagement with or concern for others through dedication to common goals of interests. For Heidegger, twentieth century people have started to lose the "Fursorge" type of concern for each other. Yet confronting a life-threatening situation, such as a serious disease or the violent death of a close friend or relative, forces people to rediscover the value of real concern for their fellow human beings through a natural yearning to be cared for by others.

The etymology of the word "crisis" reveals that it may either refer to a danger or an opportunity. During a crisis, the experience a life-threatening danger may be transformed into an opportunity for psychological or spiritual growth. This process of often-painful growth, a confronting-your-limits situation or crisis, could therefore result in rediscovering a sincere concern for the person as person. Kruger (1988) also shows that the person who can, again, experience his own death as a given, and as part of life, breaks with the artificial, insincere way of relating with himself and others that characterises the twentieth century. "By understanding death in this genuine fashion and by accepting it as one's own, Dasein breaks with inauthentic existence and throws itself on its own authentic possibilities" (Kruger, 1988, p.75).

It thus appears that such experiences of crisis could represent the point in time where the person manages to overcome the Cartesian dualism of his world, the split between subject and object that caused the person to become estranged from their subjective experiences. From a certain perspective, the mind/body dualism may have arisen from this avoidance of the experience of facing one's own fallibility or death. The anxiety provoked by a confrontation with a boundary situation inevitably brings on intense subjective experiences associated with it. When a person manages to turn the danger inherent in confronting his or her own boundaries into an opportunity for growth that experience could reunite the body and spirit, the person and world, the positive and the negative. In her study of Heidegger's concept of the person, Leonard (1989, p.48), agrees that "...it is in the state of 'breakdown' that we develop insight into the taken-for-granted understanding of health: the unity of self and healthy body".

Against this background, breakdown in the broader sense may have to do with the fact that mind and body are still separated, causing a lack of control over the dark side of oneself and the world, because it is experienced as inaccessible. Simply put,

this 'inaccessible dark side' refers to things in our lived experiences that make us feel or say: 'I do not understand' or 'I do not know.' Psychology has often struggled to clarify this dark side from different theoretical angles. Psychoanalysis probably represents the most common and well-known way of dealing with it. Psychoanalysis refers to this area as the unconscious, and has devoted many books to the discovery of what this unconscious is, and how it influences human behaviour.

Thinkers such as Carl G. Jung and Melanie Klein take the notion of an unconscious as a point of departure, refining it into concepts that came to be extended as the foundations of new schools of thought. Jung casts new light on the subject through studies about 'archetypes,' while Klein contributed very perceptive analyses about 'object relations.' Their intra-psychic theories and explanations gave rise to schools of inquiry that have in common an attempt to get a grip on this dark or unknown part of us. Both regard it as a matter of the action of various processes (biological, cognitive, affective or wilful, etc.) within the individual, while the existential-phenomenological approach looks for ways to shed light on this dark side of ourselves by exploring phenomena in the world around us. Being obscure for us, or our not knowing it, does not mean that it is absent, nor does it indicate some inherent malfunction. The methods of existential phenomenology hold that it is in our living world, and to be discovered: we just do not know it, or we think we do not know it. It is an area of not knowing, to become known. In a way, these dark areas of not knowing motivate us to live and discover. A crisis, in short, can often direct us towards discovering a specific dark area in our world that calls for discovery. It can create a desire or even a passion to unravel the difficulties of our lives that remain hidden in the dark. That dark side may be enlightened by following this desire, or by exploring this passion in the world around us. This brings us to a new yet closely related topic that existential phenomenology also has explored: namely, passion.

2.1.2 Passion and crisis experience

Existential phenomenology encourages us to explore our world through our human senses. We live and learn to know our worlds through seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting it to the full. It prompts us to become passionate about living in the world. Passion is an experience that human beings deal with in our everyday lives. Although the human experience of passion certainly does not fall into the category of breakdown or human limitation, a study of the processes involved in their progression shows some overlap between their elements.

Because passion involves very subjective human experiences, a closer look at its nature and development may contribute to a better understanding of what happens during a time of crisis related to a crime of passion. In his study of the transformation of passion, Bernd Jager (1989, pp.220-221) makes a valuable contribution to the phenomenological understanding of the person in crisis. He identifies six manifestations of passion — namely, anger, sexuality, pain, sleep, birth and death — and argues that they do not fit into a person's everyday activities, but interrupt life's rhythm. It is, however, exactly this interruption of the rhythm of everyday life that liberates us:

All passion transports us from the midst of life to the limits of existence, which are also its sources. Within all passion, there is a dawning of the recognition and acceptance of death at the heart of life (Jager, 1989, p.221).

Jager points out that a crisis functions as crush-pen or channel through which a person reaches the light or liberation. Every passion moves toward its own point of culmination: sexuality has its orgasm, the process of dying has death, sleep its point of no return, pain its collapse, and anger its transfiguration or point of transformation. This movement through the channel of crisis is often accompanied by anxiety. When a person is in the turbulent waters of crisis, he or she cannot ponder or determine their path at will. Such a person is beside him or herself and, left to the elements, has to surrender to them. This experience of being left to the elements during passion, and its accompanying anxiety, lead to a radical transformation that may help a person to find meaning in the antipodes of that passion, which "...both provokes and overcomes a crisis; it first introduces and then prevails against a radical discontinuity within human life." (Jager, 1989, p.225) This theme of separation and discontinuity describes the essential structure of human passion.

From this contemplation of the person in crisis we can surmise that crises that connect us to the boundaries of our existence may wound, but many help to open us to the fertile richness of a more completely human existence. A surrender to the elements is seldom a very joyful experience in itself, but it may help us to go through a channel leading towards a more rewarding experience of life in general. This raises a question: how does one experience oneself in all the dimensions of one's existence during a crisis? How does one experience one's life-world, one's body, one's relationship with others, and one's relationship with time? The following section will comment briefly about these aspects of the life-world of the person in crisis.

2.1.3 The person in crisis and their world

The concept 'world' is a sweeping, encircling one in phenomenology that includes a person's entire being-in-the-world. May (1958, p.59) defines it as "...the structure of meaningful relationships in which a person exists and in the design of which he participates." Existentialists differentiate between three aspects that further define the term 'world,' and these characterise every person's being-in-the-world. Firstly, there is the Umwelt, which literally means the 'world around,' referring to the physical world commonly known as the environment. Secondly, Mitwelt or with-world, refers to the world of beings of one's own kind, or fellow beings. Lastly, Eigenwelt literally means 'own world,' and refers to the relationship with the self.

For the purposes of this study it is necessary to be aware that, when comments are made about the world of the person in crisis, all the aspects of the world are included. However, an experience of crisis results from an uncommon awakening to the world.

World is so all-pervasive as to be overlooked by persons, and it only appears to us in a conscious way when disruption or breakdown occurs. Heidegger gives us the example of the hammer. In using a hammer we do not think of it and its purpose in an abstract, theoretical way but rather in an assumed, taken-for-granted way – until such a time as the hammer breaks or fails to serve the purpose we intend for it. From the recognition of what it isn't doing we derive a sense of what a hammer in the assumed, ready-to-hand mode is like. A notion of "hammer" in the present-at-hand, abstract, theoretical mode will give us a notion of a hammer that excludes hammering in the taken-for-granted, lived experience of hammering (Leonard, 1989, p.45).

Phenomenology reminds us that nothing can be taken for granted. Once things are taken for granted, a crisis may develop. During crises people lose their awe and their passion in their relationship to the world. Then, their attitude can become focussed on their own breakdown, and their passion might become misdirected or numbed. However, the crisis may act as a road-sign redirecting their lives towards more sensible pursuits, or to revitalise their passion. It may bring the motivational qualities of passion and desire to the service of others and the world again. Crises will often highlight the necessity of bringing one's own world into harmony with the rest of the world again – breaking through the loneliness, isolation and different-ness of one's impassionate existence.

In his discussion of the different-ness of a psychiatric patient's existence, Van den Berg (1972, p.45) argues that, like a physically sick person or someone experiencing (mental or physical) pain, sadness or suffering, psychiatric patients in crisis will find themselves in another world. To be ill or in crisis, whether with some illness that is

trivial or mortal, means, above all, to experience things in a different way, to be in a different yonder, to live in another world, whether it is barely different or completely different. In this sense a crisis represents a realisation of a disharmony, a sickness or an impassionate existence. It is not a physical or technical fault in a person's body, a distortion of perception, or a faking of symptoms for a secondary gain through projection or exaggeration.

Van den Berg (1972) shows that the change in the world of the person in crisis implies that their world and the things within it are truly sick, so it makes no sense to claim that the person is merely projecting their own feelings onto other things. In short, it may be said that the sick person, or person in crisis, has reached the limits of their existence, and is trying to find new sense or meaning there – a new way to revitalise or re-apply their passion. The world that has become 'different' for the person in crisis often includes the experience of the body. In what follows we make a few comments on this.

2.1.4 The person in crisis and his/her body

Phenomenologically speaking, it cannot be said that the person has a body, as that would imply a dualistic distinction between body and spirit. To separate body and spirit practically means to take the human out of human sciences. When this is done the human body becomes a mere mechanistic study object without real human experiences. The "psyche" is taken out of psychology. Kunz (1998) explains the consequence of this erroneous tendency in human sciences by indicating, very strikingly, that psychology has become an "egology" in the recent past. As Kunz (1998, p.10-11) puts it: the real psyche (psukhe), spirit or soul, which has been replaced by the ego in Western society, should be brought back into psychology to make it a 'psukhology'. Through this play on words of Kunz prompts us to realise that the purpose of psychology or psychological research should never be self-centred or for personal gain. It should be to serve others.

Many things in social sciences recently became self-centred in the sense that the primary question asked is 'how can it help me?' How can it help me to reach my full potential? How can it help me to be more productive or successful? How can it help me to be a better academic, psychologist, engineer, sportsman, etc.? When it comes to the body the question would be what is the best way of obtaining the most beautiful look or body shape, or to become as fit and healthy as possible? The spirit or soul

seems completely forgotten once the body comes into play. Phenomenology reminds us of the oneness of body and soul.

Viewed phenomenologically, it is more correct to say that people are their bodies, or that they are embodied. Because a person is their body, the above comments about the experience of their world obtain for their experience of their body as well. In a crisis, a person becomes far more aware of their self as embodied being; as Leonard (1989, p.48) explains:

Our everyday lived experience, in which the embodied self is taken for granted, breaks down in illness, and our ready-to-hand understanding of ourselves as embodied, doesn't work for us anymore.

When someone describes a negative experience that they have had, they talk about themselves as a whole, describing themselves pre-reflectively. They do not read, study, formulate, or even think about theories about how others reacted during similar negative experiences, or the way that the chemical composition of their bodily fluids changed. The person will not consciously try to predict or manipulate their own emotional reactions or behaviour before experiencing them, or to react during a negative experience. Any person in a crisis speaking about organs or parts of the body is not referring to the same things that a physician has in mind when referring to those organs or parts, which stand independent of the person himself. Van den Berg uses the example of the patient whose world falls apart, and comments by asking affirmatively, "...is he not saying the same thing when he states that his legs are failing him and he feels as if he is losing his sense of equilibrium!" (Van den Berg, 1972, p.56). He then firmly states that "world and body are interrelated", and that it is thus not unusual for the person in crisis to experience his body as different or sick, together with experiencing a 'different' world.

2.1.5 The person in crisis and their fellow beings

When we say that in phenomenology our embodied being is not intended to be self-directed or ego-centred, this practically implies that our use of or our living through our bodies is intended to be directed towards others, not ourselves. Kunz (1998) uses the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas when he explains the importance of this stance for psychology. He maintains that we should strive towards a pure existence for the sake of the other, and not for ourselves. This pure one-for-the-other can be called radical altruism. As Kunz (1998, p.20) says:

The radical alternative to egoistic theories of ethics points out that the neediness and worthiness of others, calling us to responsibility *prior* to our reason, *beyond* our individual desire for happiness, *before* forming any

contract with others, generates the ethical command. This alternative is a radical *alterocentrism*. It calls for a radical *alterology*, a radical *psukhology*. It can be described as *radical altruism*.

The focus of our living should be to serve our fellow-beings. When this focus is lost or becomes misdirected, things will inevitably go wrong. Kunz (1998) uses deep philosophical concepts, which might be difficult for many people to digest, yet he succeeds in bringing to our attention a very dangerous tendency in many aspects of psychological practice, such as research, theoretical writings and psychotherapy. Even when choosing a theoretical framework for a study such as this one, a wrong choice may result in a self-directed focus aimed at impressing rather than contributing to a better understanding of and service to others, thus assuming some responsibility for a considerate methodology.

Burggraeve (1985, p.82) also refers to this assumed responsibility as “Goodness full of Desire.” He points out that this goodness is, for Levinas:

“...a flame which, through its own glow, sets and fans itself into a roaring fire ... It is the love that enflames without requiring that the beloved one be perfect” (p.83). The “Desire appears to be burning by another fire than that of need, a fire that is smothered by satisfaction” (p.87) and it “demonstrates in its wondrous exuberance, an inner relationship with the lyrical beauty of a poem put to music” (p.92).

Earlier in this study (2.1.1, par. 4, p.2-14) Heidegger’s distinction between authentic and inauthentic was raised. The point was that an experience of crisis could lead a person to become more authentic in his relationship with the things in his world (and thus also with his fellow beings). It is, however, necessary to point out that the person could also experience feelings of isolation and loneliness during the crisis, while in the process of becoming more authentic. This is especially true for the psychiatric patient or person in crisis. Van den Berg (1972, p.110) brings to our attention that relationships with others are of such vital significance in this context that psychopathology could be called the science of loneliness and isolation — the first word indicating that the patient may really suffer from their own condition, whereas the second denotes that that person does not always suffer.

Van den Berg (1972) provides a striking explanation of how a person experiences their relations with others also through objects (things) in their world. He gives an example of expecting a friend who does not arrive, yet still experiencing the friend’s presence through a bottle of Médoc, speaks volumes. It shows how objects in our everyday live, and how we use them, become symbols of our relationships with others. They become live parts of our relationships with human beings. Later in the

book, his telling examples illustrate how words, gestures and looks can enlarge or shrink the distance between person and body; he concludes by summarising that "...the relationship between man and fellow men is such that it realises itself in the form, and in the nearness of distance, of world and body" (Van den Berg, 1972, p.71). From this, one may surmise that a person in crisis will experience distances between themselves and fellow beings as growing nearer or farther apart. Objects in their world can become barriers between the person and others, or become removable barriers through the stages of the crisis.

Van den Berg (1972) further explains another interesting aspect of the relationship between the person in crisis and his fellow beings. For that person in crisis, according to Van den Berg, the seat or location of consciousness often shifts away from the person to their fellow beings. That which cannot be seen or known anymore by the person may be seen and known by others. Although the person does not know why others observe her or him as they do, to them it may be very obvious. Even when that person does not know why she feels or acts as she does, some others may know the reason very well. The unconscious of that person in crisis is not truly an interpersonal absence, but rather an intrapersonal presence that has moved to another place. Often, while the person in crisis will not know why he experiences what he does, it may be self-evident to others in his world. Actually, he still does know as well – it is merely necessary to discuss it with someone who understands, so that, through the dialogue, the other person can once more point it out or return him to consciousness as it was before.

Kunz (1998) highlights the same aspects of interpersonal relationships from a different angle when he adds a new dimension of common concepts such as responsibility, respect and altruism by applying to them the background of Levinas's philosophy. Kunz emphasises the importance of a sincere appreciation of others as they are, without any preconceptions or prejudice, indicating very clearly that our striving for power over others, for it's the sake of power alone, very often corrupt our ability to interact with others in responsible or authentic ways. These concepts might become very useful later in this study, when we look for some clarification of the paradoxes that crimes of passion express. However, before we apply these concepts, another important aspect of existential-phenomenological theory that might be applicable requires our attention. A theoretical framework for an existential-phenomenological study will not be complete without touching on the concept of time and how it is experienced by someone in crisis.

2.1.6 The person in crisis and time

Phenomenologists often explore time extensively, being an important aspect of the living world, even though it falls more to existentialism to explore it as a manifestation or mode of existence. May (1958) points out that, for existentialists, time is a very important aspect of the field of any person's experience, especially when in crisis, because "...they [existentialists] are struck by the fact that the most profound human experiences, such as anxiety, depression, and joy, occur more in the dimension of time than in space" (May, 1958, p.65).

Time should thus be examined in terms of its existential meaning to a person, rather than, as traditionally explored, as an analogue of space. The ability to transcend immediate time constraints, and to view a particular experience in the light of the past and future, is a uniquely human characteristic. For a person, the future rather than the present or past, is the dominant dimension of time. What a person wants to become determines what they remember with regard to what they used to be in the past. Van Vuuren (1997) also shows that the person's past is not in his memory, but rather in the flow of the world. He makes the following important statement in this connection:

Wanneer ons die fokus verskuif na die vraag van die "herstel" van herinneringe dan moet ons goed begryp dat dit nie die herinnering is wat moet "herstel" nie maar die verlede wat in die hede getransformeer moet word (Van Vuuren, 1997, p.21).

When we shift the focus toward the question of the "recovery" of memories, we should understand well that it is not the memory that has to be "recovered" but the past that needs to be transformed into the present. [The translation is mine.]

Memories are in fact transformations of the past into the present, which in turn brings to the fore the importance of the future. Without hope in the future, such transformations cannot take place. The expectation of the future precipitates or triggers the transformation. It may be said that the person's perspective of the future does, in some way, determine *how* the past is transformed in the present. A crisis moment may, however, be the point in time when past and future meet in the present in such a way that previously unseen aspects of that past, from this fresh perspective on the future, may be transformed within the present. This often results in an "Aha-experience". May (1958, p.71) describes just such an experience:

It is the moment when a person suddenly grasps the meaning of some important event in the past or future in the present. Its pregnancy consists of the fact that it is never an intellectual act alone; the grasping of the new meaning always presents the possibility and necessity of some personal

decision, some shift in gestalt, some new orientation of the person toward the world and future.

Time, as experienced by the person in crisis, may thus be described as a period of pregnancy that may lead to the birth of a new, different view and experience of both the past and the future, in the present. Leonard (1989) points out that Heidegger does not view time in the traditional fashion, *viz.*, as a never-ending continuous series of 'now's,' but rather as a figuring forth, *modus*, presentation or way of *sein*, living or being human when she states that "In the Heideggerian phenomenologic view, however, temporality is constitutive of being; for example, Heidegger describes the past as having-been-ness" (Leonard 1989, p.49). It is this whole figuring forth or experience of being human that is in a process of change during a crisis.

To be aware of your own being-in-time, with fellow human beings and interacting with the world in such a way that it may lead to an authentic existence, is phenomenology's epistemological task or quest. This knowledge brings meaning. However, this meaning is not a given: it has to be searched for through rigorous inquiry. How this inquiry informs the search for meaning will now be examined more closely.

2.2 Ways in which phenomenological inquiry informs the search for meaning

There are many ways in which phenomenological inquiry informs our search for meaning.

Van Manen (2000) states:

Phenomenological inquiry draws on many types and sources of meaning. These sources lie not only within the disciplinary boundaries of the social sciences but also in other human domains such as the arts, the humanities, everyday life experiences, language and, of course, in phenomenological studies.

In this study, the major sources of meaning will be the written text of a diary and spontaneous essays, as well as some notes and insights obtained from psychotherapy sessions. All these sources are essentially linguistic in some way or other, and amenable to use as sources of meaning. According to Van Manen (2000) "...language is a source of meaning; it makes our experience 'recognizable.'" He elaborates on this claim by postulating that words often mean more than they say. Sometimes the surplus or transcendent meaning is symbolic, as in myth, or rhetorical, as in political texts, or motivational, as in graduation speeches, or inspirational, as in prayers. And sometimes the surplus meaning is phenomenological. It is phenomenological when the meaning evokes lived experience, re-awakening some possible human experience in a manner that is immediate, yet prompting reflection.

Re-awakening human experience through language is one of the ways in which more knowledge about crimes of passion and the paradoxes surrounding it will be explored. In phenomenology, the reflection prompted by such an immediate encounter with the drama written between the lines of language will inevitably lead to more knowledge about the studied subject.

Apart from linguistic phenomenology, there are also other methods of reduction or orientations within phenomenology, such as hermeneutic phenomenology that might further be of help to this study. Although the study material consists mainly of a written text, it should be interpreted in such a way that some of hidden meanings come to the fore. In phenomenology, however, interpretation has an ironic meaning. Ironic because the 'in' in interpretation implies a reduction or simplification, which is exactly what phenomenology opposes. In phenomenology, interpretation or hermeneutics means to allow the (human) text to remain complex while it endeavours to facilitate an encounter that allows it to speak for itself in such a way that some of its hidden meanings will suffice. Romanyshyn (1991, p.27) postulated that complex, psychological knowing (or hermeneutics) is

...an erotic singing between reader and text, an incarnated gnosis, a mimetic collusion, a rhythmical dialogue which reveals the poetic, soulful character of mind.

In this study, the intention is to respect this 'soulful character of mind,' and to deal with it in such a way that the relevance of the available sources of meaning will reveal itself. The knowledge that may be revealed by a rigorous encounter with the available sources of meaning may be relevant in areas such as psychotherapy or phenomenology of practice. However, before dealing with these possible applications of the knowledge, a closer look at the pathways towards the applicable knowledge will be appropriate.

Both the subject and the object of this study entail the self-expression of someone whose time experience was in transformation during a crisis period. He attempted to express his experiences in language. Language in this context can simply refer to the written expressions in his diary and verbal and non-verbal expressions during psychotherapy. But language can also have a much deeper and broader meaning, which is best articulated by a brief overview by Jacques Lacan, one of the most influential French psychoanalysts. Lacan saw himself primarily as a psychoanalyst wanting to revive and redefine some of Freud's concepts, but he also used many ideas and categories proper to existential phenomenology. Later in this chapter (2.2.1) we will elaborate how Lacan took some of the concepts of phenomenologists such as Heidegger as a vantage point to elaborate his own formulations. Richardson (1989) wrote an insightful article about phenomenology and psychoanalysis in which, after showing many similarities in their roots and theoretical concepts, he observes that both Lacan (as a

representative of psychoanalysis) and Heidegger (representing phenomenology) are looking for the liberating truth that emerges through analytic dialogue. This is sometimes called the 'talking cure'. Richardson (1989, p.19) summarises his conclusion as follows:

Does all this make Lacan a Heideggerian? Unfortunately it is not as simple as that. But in all that we have seen it is hard to deny that both men are aiming at the same latency...

Lacan's close encounter with existential phenomenology is particularly reflected in his theoretical formulations about the unconscious. Juranville (1998) shows that Lacan maintained a similar perspective on the fundamentals of existence, and shared ethical concerns about the Other with Levinas. However, Lacan expanded upon the concept of the Other: "The unconscious is the Other of language, knowledge that is outside the subject, law that determines the subject to be and to desire according to an impassable violence" (Juranville, 1998, p.122). For Lacan, Other is another word for object. Hill (1997, p.160) states "an object is any item that creates or supports subjectivity". When Lacan writes 'Object' with a capital he refers to the "other" of language. Language is the *object* of desire and it includes the 'little object' or the 'other' (without a capital), which is the *cause* of desire. In the language of existential phenomenology, it is one of the primary *sources of meaning* that can be used to inform us during inquiry into some of the darker areas of knowledge, including the logic behind paradoxical phenomena such as crimes of passion. Although Lacan considers language from a psychoanalytic point of vantage, a closer look at his view might be helpful in an existential phenomenological study. Wertz (1993, p.127) confirms this by concluding an informative article about 'the phenomenology of Sigmund Freud' by stating that "...phenomenologists may assist psychoanalysis in becoming a part of the ever more inclusive and unified human science movement".

2.2.1 Lacan's view of language

Whereas Heidegger's phenomenology regards temporality (or time in the broader sense) as *constitutive* of being, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory instead explains why and how language can be regarded as the condition of our being. In this context, language means much more than a series or arrangement of spoken or written words. It goes even further than communication, which also involves body language, sign language, and supernatural forms of communication such as telepathy. It refers to the culture into which we are born. This culture or world of pre-orchestrated meanings contains basic signifiers or indicators of the truth about us. It represents a realm or order of predetermined meanings regarding our lives that are often difficult to access through means such as words and symbols. Language includes and

embraces the whole history of our lives, even from before we were born and after our death. It also differentiates us, as human beings from any other species.

Cambefort (1998, p.4) states,

Lacan's use of linguistic data transforms the classic conceptions of language. The meanings given to the outside world and to life by the subject make the basic signifiers more obscure than obvious. As a result, the analysis experience reveals the eclipses and delusions contained in rational development and moral justifications. That is why language is not a "means of communication," as the hackneyed and often meaningless phrase goes, but the condition of man's existence in the world.

The aim of psychoanalytic treatment, for Lacan, is to articulate truth, and not to cure. The truth of one's desire, he argues, should be articulated through speech rather than any other medium – speech in the broader sense of the word is the only way to this truth. Evans (1996, p.98) stresses the importance of a sound understanding of language for Lacanian analysis by stating that "...speech is the only tool which the analyst has; therefore, any analyst who does not understand the way speech and language work, does not understand psychoanalysis itself". Desires only have expression as symptoms, signifiers or words. It belongs to the realm of the symbolic or linguistic. While it has some similarities with passion, as discussed under 2.1.4, it is not exactly the same. The main distinction between them is that desires can often be unconscious, while passion is conscious most of the time. Desire is a property of language and the essence of the subject or person, at the very heart of his or her existence. This distinction raises the question about whether crimes of passion might not be referred to instead as 'crimes of desire.' Is it not true that most offenders will say: "I do not know why I did it?" This issue, however, must wait until later in this study, as the immediate subject of discussion is the relationship between Lacan's view of language and his concept of desire.

When Lacan refers to 'articulating the truth of one's desire' it is important to bear in mind that 'desire' also has a very distinct meaning in his work. *Desire* does not refer to a biological need or drive, but rather indicates the real meaning of one's life or self-realisation. However, for Lacan, desire can never be fully satisfied. Once your desire is met, it ceases to exist. In practical terms, this means that the person as the carrier or medium of that desire also ceases to exist. Consequently, one of man's strongest desires is death. These Lacanian concepts have very obvious similarities with the existential-phenomenological view of anxiety as a very human phenomenon, and death as a passion that is related to existential anxiety. However, Lacan's view of

death is a subject for later discussion. His understanding of language first needs further clarification.

Understanding Lacan's views on language requires grasping his affirmation about the *primacy and precedence of the signifier over the signified*, as well as his view about the *domination of the imaginary by the symbolic*. Language, for Lacan, is a system of signifiers: these are the basic units of language, which are primary and produce the signified. A signifier without a signified is called a pure signifier. Pure signifiers are meaningless and indestructible and they determine the subject. The effects of the signifier on the subject constitute the unconscious, hence also constituting the whole field of psychoanalysis. During psychoanalysis the connection between signifiers and the signified is re-arranged.

The signifier is the constitutive unit of the symbolic order because it is integrally related with the concept of structure. The field of the signifier is the field of the Other, which Lacan calls 'the battery of signifiers'. The signifier and full speech (which overlaps with authentic existence) is thus the symbolic dimension of language. The signified, signification, and empty speech (which overlaps with inauthentic existence) form the imaginary dimension of language. Lacan holds that the symbolic is characterised by the absence of fixed relations between signifier and signified. Only by working within the symbolic order can the analyst produce changes in the subjective position of the analysand; these changes will also produce imaginary effects, since the imaginary is structured by the symbolic. These concepts might possibly provide some clues as to why people who commit crimes of passion often utter so many 'empty' words when asked why they committed them. The relationship between their words and the substance that they signify or are trying to signify often remains an unresolved riddle. For phenomenologists it remains 'out there,' in the dark area of the person's 'not knowing,' and for psychoanalysts it is in the unconscious. Regarding this area it seems that Lacan comes far closer to existential phenomenology than do other traditional Freudian psychoanalysts. It is not so clear that the unconscious lies within the individual for Lacan; rather, it lies in the pre-existing meaning of the language or culture within which the individual was born. It has always been 'out there.'

The unconscious is the discourse of the Other, and thus belongs wholly to the symbolic order. Another famous statement Lacan made in many of his seminars is: **'the unconscious is structured like a language'**. Symptoms, errors of everyday life, jokes and dreams can thus be regarded as signifiers that provide access to the

unconscious, because Lacan defined a signifier as “that which represents a subject for another signifier” — as opposed to a sign, which represents some thing for someone. According to his theory of the unconscious, the processes of **metaphor and metonymy**, consisting in combination and displacement or shifting of meaning, are constituent of the unconscious. The unconscious is related to transference. Laplanche (1976, p.138) states that transference also refers to metaphor: “‘Transference’, ‘metaphor’: the word is the same, and it originally means ‘carrying over’”. Against the background of this statement, Smith (1991, p.65) wraps up all these relationships in a striking way:

The power of language is by virtue of transference, and the power of transference is by virtue of language. It is language and transference together that metonymically carry one along and metaphorically carry one over, as one is, toward the new and toward change.

Access to the unconscious has always been a major theme in psychoanalytically inspired psychology, although different psychological schools have taken different approaches to the subject of the unconscious. Existential phenomenology very seldom refers directly to the unconscious; its major focus of interest is consciousness. However, the very fact that consciousness is explored in such a rigorous way, implies that unconsciousness exists. As explained earlier (2.2), it can even be postulated that psychoanalysts and existential phenomenologists had it in common that they were looking for the truth of our existence. Existential phenomenologists are also interested in language as a source of meaning or truth, and will thus agree about the significance of linguistic phenomena such as metaphors. Terms and concepts such as transference and the unconscious, however, are not acceptable as they imply something beyond or different from ‘the things themselves’ in the living world, controlling the individual. Most of more recent psychology also moves away from searching for access to the unconscious, searching instead for meanings that are socially constructed.

Whatever the approach, as we read documents such as personal diaries after studying Lacan’s views on the relationship between language and the unconscious, it is not very difficult to see that at least some of his very theoretical statements have very practical applications. People often try to utilise all the possible forms of language known to them while striving to obtain a glimpse of the dark world of the unconscious signifiers that cause them to become who and what they are, and to do the things they do. Without any substantial knowledge about psychological or linguistic theory, many will resort to language as a possible refuge against the ravaging storms in their unconscious that cloud the previously unstirred waters of

their conscious lives, especially when experiencing a crisis. They then try to analyse themselves and their world. A personal diary can become a person's first analyst, although without inscriptions this analyst is very much dead: dead in the sense of being non-judgmental, non-interpretative, and even non-responsive; in some cases — such as when people write letters to people who have passed away — even in the quite literal sense of not living. Lacan often referred to the place (position) of the analyst as the place of the dead. During analysis, in his view, the analyst wants the analysand to articulate the truth of their desire. He argues that desire is a property of language that belongs to the symbolic order. Evans (1996, p.202) writes about Lacan's views in this connection as follows:

The symbolic order is also the realm of DEATH,² of ABSENCE and of LACK. The symbolic is both the PLEASURE PRINCIPLE which regulates the distance from the Thing, and the DEATH DRIVE which goes 'beyond the pleasure principle' by means of repetition (S2, 210); in fact, 'the death drive is only the mask of the symbolic order' (S2, 326).

2.2.2 Lacan's view of death

As the paragraph above suggests, death is a major theme for phenomenologists, existentialists and psychoanalysts. Lacan developed some elements of the meaning of death articulated by several existential phenomenologists, including Heidegger, which are reflected in psychoanalytic sessions with his students and patients. Accordingly, Lacan (1954 – 1955, S2, p.233) states:

Life is concerned solely with dying – To die, to sleep, perchance to dream, as a certain gentleman put it, just when what was at issue was exactly that – to be or not to be.

According to Schneidermann (1983, pp.132-133) Lacan later declared that:

...the desire of death was not sleep or the dream, but the awakening. You awaken to desire and that desire is death – who would not want to remain asleep, if only for a few minutes?

Death represents the end or satisfaction of all our drives, needs and desires, and there are no complicated intrigues or tiring expectations in death. While its exact nature remains a mystery to us, like the unconscious we are motivated by death to strive towards resolving of that mystery during our lives. Life is directed towards death and the conscious is controlled by the unconscious.

Van Haute (1989, pp.78-86) explains how Lacan picked up on Heideggerian concepts, such as "Sein zum Tode" (being towards death), "Geworfenheit" (thrownness) and "Vorlaufen zum Tode" (prelude to death) related to his views on

² In Lacan's manuscripts this way of writing is used for emphasis.

death. The subject coming to terms with their own death will accept responsibility for the futility of their own thrown (“geworfen”) origin. Man is always thrown into the realm of the symbolic, but the point where the relation between the subject and the symbolic develops (through language) always eludes us. The subject’s existence is limited by and founded in an irreversible loss (or lack).

Death, according to Lacan, is the limit of the historical function of the subject. This limit is present at any given moment of our existence. It breaks open any possible fixation of meaning. Even the analyst is an empty mirror in which the truth of the analysand’s speech is reflected. As Schneidermann (1983, p.78) says:

...the analyst’s place is the place of the dead, in the singular, unnamed. It is for the analysand to name this place, thereby confirming the role of the signifier in its creation.

During our lives we are continuously involved in interpreting and re-interpreting our own histories. As long as we are living, the meanings we attribute to events and relationships in our lives can still change. As the analyst makes no final judgement or interpretation, the analysand cannot permanently identify with any meaning. The analysand is confronted with their own futility, and their future thus remains ‘open.’ The analyst’s absence brings about this experience that no word is the last word. The connection between words and meanings is always fluid. Words or expressions and symbols for the pre-determined meanings of our histories (indicated by pure signifiers) can always change. As indicated already, a diary can in some sense play the same function as an analyst. It acts as a reflecting space for words and meanings that spontaneously flowing from a person’s mind; also, it does not utter any last word in response to what is written in it.

Psychoanalysis not only strives towards an acceptance of the ‘being-towards-death’ (sein-zum-Tode), according to Lacan, but it is aimed at a ‘full reconstruction of the history of the subject.’ It wants the subject to articulate all the symbols of his or her history – his or her ‘fate’ should be reconstructed. This ‘full’ speech discovers a new connection with the symbols that articulate the history of the subject. However, the discovery of (meaning)’ful’ speech often does not come without many utterances of empty (meaningless) speech.

Lacan engaged in the dubious practice of stopping his psychoanalytic sessions at any time he judged that a meaningful insight had been made, regardless of how long the session had gone by the clock. Schneidermann (1983, p.133) associates the short sessions that Lacan used in psychoanalysis to the desire of death:

There was something of the horror of death in the short sessions, in these psychoanalytic sessions whose time could not be known in advance, whose time was not counted by the clock ... So the analysand found himself thrown into reality, ejected into the world without so much as a fare-thee-well. I have introduced this subject with the desire of death because, looking back, this is the only way it makes sense to me.

Cutting short the sessions certainly reminded analysands about their own futility, forcing them to deal with an unexpected stoppage, end or change in the trend of realisation of their normal expectancies. This condition enhanced the tendency to free-associate and to escape from being controlled by the ego.

For Lacan his psychoanalytic sessions had to represent reality as much as possible. He tried to create a sample of reality representing themes and issues of normal life in order to allow his analysands to discover the truth about themselves and their desires not only in dealing with a "sample" of life, but also in their living-in-the-world. When we consider the fact that the subject of this thesis, John, committed a single seemingly insensible deed that brought his whole life to a standstill and changed his future life radically, it is not very difficult to see at least some possible applications of Lacan's view of death as it was expressed in his psychoanalytic practice to our analysis of what happened to John. Apart from the fact that he literally had to face death, he was also forced to face the destructive ramifications and hopefully the end (death) of his insincere existence.

There appear to be an important common thread between Lacan's view of language and death and, on the other hand, the existential-phenomenological view of the person in crisis. It is that that person becomes aware that there has always been another, seemingly flip or opposite side of the coin representing his or her experiences. Although this new side of reality which entered the realm of his/her conscious experiences appears to be recursive or opposite to what is familiar to him or her, it actually is the recursive or opposite side of the same experiential field. For example: without life there cannot be death, loneliness can only exist against a background of interpersonal experiences, and passion can mean revitalising love or destructive hatred. These experiences may sometimes get entangled beyond conscious control, causing the coin to flip unexpectedly. However, if we have access to the recursive side of our experiences and accept them as an integral part of reality, it may become a constructive, healing experience, widening the field of accessible consciousness. Hermeneutic phenomenology introduces a process of reflection that may help to clarify or explicate some of the hidden, dark or seemingly opposite meanings behind words or actions. An example of such a reflective process can be

found in a phenomenological reflection on the origin dualities such as the Cartesian split (mentioned in 2.1, p 2-12).

2.2.3 Where do existential dualities come from?

Several indications in literature suggest that distortion of harmony, imbalances, bipolarities, and conflicting dualities can be traced back to the origin of man. In his insightful discussion of the transformation of passion, Bernd Jager (1989) refers to where, in Plato's *Symposium*, Aristophanes tells a creation story of an early mankind in which individuals were made up of the equivalent of two persons. This race of giants angered the gods, so Zeus cut them into halves. The Bible's *Genesis* story also has the harmony between God and man, and between man and nature, disrupted when Eve offered Adam the forbidden fruit, which he accepted. Jager (1989, p.222) concludes:

At the beginning of history stands the knife that separates a primordial slumbering unity that cuts the umbilical cord, and separates mankind from paradise. Thus is created the wound at the heart of mankind from which flows language and culture.

In the light of this, the assumption can be made that the phenomenon of existential dualities can be traced back to origins and nature of man. Even some expressions we use thoughtlessly in our everyday speech suggests the double-sidedness of our nature. We often hear phrases such as the classic "I love him (her) so much I can eat him (her) up." This phrase may also help explain the harmful effect of a forced cut or split between two recursive sides of the same subject or object. As soon as the "love" is separated from the "eating up" the latter shows itself as a destructive, horrible and murderous act. The positive intention or nature of love is transformed into a negative and disastrous act or effect.

To show a possible relation between the double-sidedness of human reality and nature, the topic of this study does not require a far-fetched logical leap. This study is about crimes of passion and the knowledge about it that might be uncovered from between the lines of a diary of someone who committed such a crime. The very phrase 'crimes of passion' contains two concepts, i.e., 'crimes' and 'passion,' that seldom belong in the same etymological field. Hermeneutic phenomenology might provide some useful methods for reflection that may help to explore paradoxical dualities such as those expressed in crimes of passion. The exercise can also illustrate how phenomenological inquiry can inform our search for meaning.

2.2.4 Hermeneutic phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology involves processes of interpretation, suggesting methods of inquiry that require more than mere description. This raises the question about whether hermeneutics can ever be associated with phenomenology. Are there forms of interpretation that do justice to the subject, or the text of inquiry, without changing their essential meaning? Van Manen (2000) listed several methods that might help to explain or uncover meaning in phenomenology without changing them. He calls these reflective methods, maintaining that "...the purpose of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the meaning of something" (Van Manen 2000). He lists thematic reflection, linguistic reflection, guided existential reflection, collaborative reflection, hermeneutic interview reflection and exegetical reflection among the hermeneutic methods that may be applied to explain meaning without changing the subject or the text of inquiry. While this study might employ various of these reflective methods in the analyses to follow, the methods most appropriate to our inquiry are thematic reflection, linguistic reflection, and exegetical reflection.

Thematic reflection can help find significant topics or lines of thought to guide us to some of the hidden meanings in the studied text. However, we should keep in mind the warning by Van Manen (2000) against a too-mechanical approach that undertakes a sort of frequency count that fails to reflect on the meaning of the words or phrases involved. Thematic examination should instead involve a proper human look at the methods and philosophical character of the text.

We discussed linguistic reflection while reviewing Lacan's theory of language. Although Lacan dealt with the complicated philosophical side of linguistics, a look at the more obvious aspects of language already guide us towards interpretative clues. As Van Manen (2000) formulates it: "...sayings, idiomatic phrases, proverbs, and poetic quotes are generally derived phenomenologically: they are born out of lived experience." The stylistic and structural elements of the studied text can thus also be regarded as a source of knowledge guiding us towards a better understanding of crimes of passion. Mensch (n.d.) confirms this view in an insightful article on *the phenomenology of language*. He considers that:

It takes the presence of the world – in particular, the presence of meanings embodied in objects – as responsible for the meanings words have. This is why a word can refer, through its meaning, to an object.

Exegetical reflection refers to studying other related literature and subjects, and comparing this to the research subject and material. This process should also strive

not to be a mechanical gathering of seemingly relevant material. There should be a constant openness to unexpected sources of insight: this involves a process of “...reading and studying related and unrelated literature for background information, helpful insights, other ways of looking at a question, or new understandings” (Van Manen 2000). This literature study is one example of exegetical reflection, as it should create a background and foundation for the case study that will follow. Romanyshyn (1991, p.28) summarises the core of all methods of phenomenological hermeneutics by stating “...we need, then, to remain twisted, soulful, in a linear world if we are to allow the circuitous path of psychological gnosis to find its way”. If this ‘soulfulness’ can be maintained during this study, then the chance is good that the hidden meanings may reveal themselves in unexpected ways.

Up to this point in this chapter we have dealt mainly with theoretical orientations. However, exegetical reflection will remain incomplete without a look at some literature and research that is related to crimes of passion specifically. A preliminary reflection about the reviewed literature revealed a paradoxical picture of the ‘murderer’ as robust versus timid, expressive versus introverted, aggressive versus overtly passive. Most available literature tends, in a direct or indirect way, to picture the murderer as robust, expressive and aggressive, although various studies confirm my preliminary observation, while working with people who committed such crimes, that they tend instead to be timid looking, introverted and/or overly passive in everyday life. The existential-phenomenological literature reviewed suggests that these apparent paradoxes in appearance or the personality traits of the ‘passionate murderer’ may not lie in the person itself, but rather in the way the person is observed or approached. This prompts having a further look at some of these approaches.

2.3 The paradoxical picture of the ‘murderer’

The additional literature survey for this study will attend to the various approaches to the crimes of passion phenomenon, and possible explanations for this kind of behaviour. The psychodynamic approach (Wright, 1984) focuses more on the unconscious processes involved, and the possibility of intra-psychic dynamics having a causal effect on a temporary or long-lasting loss of control. The cognitive-behavioural approach, on the other hand, may emphasise issues such as irrational beliefs (Ellis, 1969), or cognitive constructs leading to a state of learned helplessness (Beck, 1972). Other approaches might include social discourses that propose the ways in which partners in an intimate relationship construe their realities (Hollway, 1989). This literature survey will most likely indicate possible themes to deal with an explain during the stage of textual and thematic analysis.

In searching for more specific literature and research on topics of relevance, I found many more real-life and dramatised stories than actual scientific research. After quoting phrases from the male and female subjects, the dust cover of Rizzo (1994) reads as follows:

“She said no is a love story that turned into rage. Neither Heather nor Josh believed in love at first sight, but when they met, their pre-conceived notions vanished. Almost from the beginning, the physical nature of their relationship threatened to push the couple over passion’s edge to compromise and ruin. Each viewed their relationship differently, and when their ideas collided, two lives were severely damaged in the emotional wreckage of a criminal act.”

There are several hypotheses within the interpretative phrase “...the physical nature of their relationship threatened to push the couple over passion’s edge to compromise and ruin”, and these may have a bearing upon our study. Several questions that may point to areas of particular interest arise with studies of crimes of passion. Some examples of such questions are: Does a sudden change to a physical relationship indicate a risk of criminal behaviour? Does passion push to the “edge to compromise and ruin”? And, if so, where is this edge? Can physical chemistry be separated from love, responsibility and respect? And if so, how?

Although date rape is the subject of the book above, and in this case it did not end with physical death to one member of the couple, the dynamics of the relationship prior to the criminal act are relevant. The experiences of the parties to the criminal act provide us with some interpretive cues. Themes such as the deep passion felt by the male partner, and his strong possessiveness towards the female partner, are evident in the Josh and Heather story. The conflict between a positive physical attraction and chemistry while together, and a strong sense of moral principles and pre-conceived ideas about how the relationship should develop, seem to run like a golden thread through the development of the relationship.

Another interesting and relevant book series is called *The Hot Blood Series*. The editors of this popular soft-cover series play up natural human drives to create a sort of romantically-coloured picture of sex-related horror and violence. In the introduction to the book *Crimes of Passion*, Gelb and Garret (1997) say that *Hot Blood* is a continuing, multiple-author collection of short stories combining elements of sex and horror. The two ingredients are 'married' within each story; in other words, if either is omitted, the stories would collapse. Nothing is said to be gratuitous in the *Hot Blood* stories. Sex is a primary motivator for the protagonists' behaviour. Gelb and Garret (1997, p.xi) end the rationale they provide for the series by saying that "...sex is one of the most basic human drives, and the ultimate bond between human beings. We all think about it, practise it, talk about it, dream about it. And in *Hot Blood* we read about it too." I disagree with this rationalisation for 'marrying' sex and horror intentionally, although this line of argument may provide a further clue in exploring the paradoxical nature of crimes of passion. Assumptions such as that sex, and not violence or jealousy, is the prime motivator of the behaviour of people who commit crimes of passion, are very questionable. If shown to be incorrect, perhaps they can be replaced with something that is more verifiable as a prime motivator. Interpretations like this provide us with insights into how people regard crimes of passion prior to reflection, being misinformed about its real nature.

It may be significant that one of the few ways that people create to deal with incidents where there is a meeting between the negative and positive opposite ends of passion — namely, sex and death; or, for that matter, love and hate — is to create a preserve for adults in art and literature, as seen above. It is as if the real effects of such incidents, such as ruined lives and endless feelings of guilt and worthlessness, are being kept hidden from society, since they make it too difficult to face our negative or dark side directly. Such stories and incidents are sometimes romanticised with depictions as 'forbidden fruit,' and characterizations as art and literature; or they can literally result in an isolated life in self-imposed isolation from other people or even in imprisonment when the crimes are discovered.

This tendency to deal with the dark side of our archetypes, drives and sometimes our real deeds or real people, by pushing them out of sight, out of the "normal" world or even out of our lives or reality, is classically represented in a recent book by Dibbell (1998). In *My Tiny Life – Crime and Passion in a Virtual World*, Dibbell classifies his own book as "...a true account of the case of the infamous Mr. Bungle and of the Author's journey, in consequence thereof, to the heart of a half-real world called LambdaMOO." (Cover page).

Lawrence Lessig, from the Harvard Law School, reviewed this book as follows:

Travelling through the social networks of LambdaMOO – an electronic world where players create their own environments, where gender and identity are infinitely malleable, and where actions seductively appear to have no consequences in ‘real life’ – Julian Dibbell discovers a cybercommunity ripped apart by real world issues such as crime, punishment, class struggle, and sexual obsession. In *My Tiny Life* Dibbell ventures deeply into this half-real world – exploring even the MOO’s erotic demimonde – and finds that the lines between ‘real life’ and ‘virtual reality’ blur, leaving set notions of community, history, identity, and love transformed and the definition of “real” experience irrevocably altered. (Dust cover)

It seems to me that this book illustrates a tendency by modern man to deal through denial with the split between mind and body, or, more specifically, with the pressures human beings experience, by “mechanising” and objectifying their experiences in the face of a lack of ability to accept and live with their humanity in a materially-obsessed world. It shows a tendency to deny or cover up our world’s dark side, and ours, by pushing these out of our active consciousness or focus, toward an imaginative twilight zone at the periphery of our acceptable world. It may be quite significant to see this twilight zone or pre-conscious world being mechanised in more recent literature. In a sense, the virtual reality referred to in Dibbell’s work can be regarded as a prison for our anti-social mind constructs. Although Dibbell is more of a journalist than an academic, he contributes importantly to current theories on modern or contemporary attempts to deal with our mechanised world, where even the identities of the “passionate criminals” are blurred in a nether realm somewhere between human and machine.

Typical of attempts to mechanise human beings, so as to find fault within them when something goes wrong, are some studies that search for common personality traits among men identified as batterers (abusers). Vaselle-Augenstein and Ehrlich (in Viano, 1992) conducted such a study. They concluded that clinical and empirical evidence both suggest that, as a group, batterers have an identifiable set of personality characteristics: dependence, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, paranoia, dissociation from their own feelings, poor impulse control including antisocial tendencies and hostility toward women. However, despite these common personality traits, they concede that there is no reason to assume that all batterers are alike.

Looking for the fault within the individual suggests rehabilitation focussed on fixing individuals’ faults. Stacey, Hazlewood and Shupe (1994) wrote one of the few academically-oriented books about “violent couples.” They express hope in rehabilitation, while a need also for a more extensive knowledge base and the development of rehabilitation programs for potential cases. They conclude that the indirect effects of men counselling women, and the limited amount of counselling offered to a relatively small proportion of these women,

initiated some significant positive differences in the lives of their subjects, encouraging researchers to “imagine what a better co-ordinated, more fully informed program in a given community could achieve” (Stacey *et al.*, 1994, p.143).

Stacey, *et al.* (1994) regarded their research as a sort of a limited pilot study to determine whether it is worthwhile to put more time, money and effort into attempts to plunge into the unclear waters of crimes of passion. They clearly regard continuous efforts to clarify the matter as not only worthwhile, but also very necessary. How this clarification should take place, however, is left open for further investigation. What they mean by a fully informed program in a given community is still to be determined. Maybe this study will bring us closer to such a ‘program.’

The most widespread way to deal with “rehabilitating” people commit crimes, including crimes of passion, involves incarceration and severe punishment. This has recently been subjected to strong criticism. Woodward (in Schwartz & Travis, 1997, p.142) states,

...the solitary mission of the criminal justice system has always been, and remains, the segregation of the convict from society, and in that single-mindedness lies the system’s fatal flaw. Therefore, security overrides and overshadows all else.

After working in such a system for nearly seven years I would agree with this criticism. Segregating the convict from society, along with the associated security concerns, usually relegates education, job training, psychological counselling and other rehabilitative programs to a perfunctory position along the chain of priorities. Essentially, our prison system can be compared to a vast network of human warehouses whose figurative wares emerge more badly damaged than when they arrived, and are often rendered functionally useless. The prison system is probably the most concrete practical instance of our tendency to try to get rid of our own “bad parts” or dark side. Those who manifest their own bad parts are locked away, out of society’s view, in the hope that if or when they return to “the other, acceptable side,” some kind of mystic transformation will have taken place. Highlighting these flaws, and the similarities between their manifestation in society and within psychodynamics and the interactive tendencies of some human beings, is certainly no attempt to justify or soften the criminality of deeds such as crimes of passion. Rather, it is a plea to attempt a search for some new alternative ways to understand it that may lead to better ways of dealing with its manifestations, ways that give rise to less injury for the parties it involves.

Although many attempts have been made to identify the roots of violent behaviour in intimate couples, most have only led to a clearer awareness of the complicity of such behaviour and the fact that every case is unique. Barnett and LaViolette (1993) indicate that women in abusive relationships do not differ significantly from other women, although society is inclined

to blame them. They also emphasise that their “captivity” is part of the cause of intimate violence, more than of its cure. Although conformity is an everyday occurrence, they suggest that the effects of conformity, as evidenced in Milgram’s research, are no less significant than the behaviours resulting from captivity. Experiments in conformity reflect these dramatic effects on people in general, and on battered women in particular. Given the nature of victim blaming, the process of becoming trapped in a battering relationship “could happen to anyone” (Barnett & LaViolette 1993, p.90). The strong natural human tendency to conform may be another clue to unravelling the intricacies behind crimes of passion.

Creatney and Davis (1995, p.23) try to perform an analysis leading to identifying some predictors of violent behaviour in intimate couples. They conclude that certain aspects of repeated victimisation are implicit in their analysis, and it is worth treating each one with some care since they each contribute to the aetiology of assault. They are: firstly, the consumption of alcohol, whether by victim or offender; secondly, location; thirdly, the victim’s own criminality; and, finally, the victim’s role in precipitating the assault. About the female victim’s possible role in provocation, Creatney and Davis (1995, p.38) remark that “...the roots of the violence lie in the man’s assumption of superiority and in his need to assert this in his relationships with women”.

In spite of mentioning of some specific predictors, Browne (1987) confirms the vagueness of the results of attempts to identify common elements in the development of intimate violence. He states that social learning concepts, such as modelling, portray how violent behaviour is learned. They also shows how violent behaviour may be transferred from childhood experiences to adult interactions. Even so, he adds that:

...they still do not explain why some men who witness violence as children do not grow up to batter their intimates, while others who did not come from abusive backgrounds later become violent (Browne 1987, p.35).

Ptacek (1990) is of the opinion that issues of gender and power, more than the notion of temporal insanity, underlie the build-up towards violence by men of their spouses. She indicates that the clinical literature on men who batter has grown with the increased visibility of batterers to social service workers. Several disturbing trends, however, have also been noted. The significance of gender and power to an analysis of wife beating is ignored in some of the most recent literature. The confusion and ambiguity concerning issues of victimisation and responsibility represents a related trend. Finally, the psychopathological underpinnings of much of the recent literature are evident in the shift from a notion of sickness to one of temporary insanity as an explanation of wife beating. This notion of the batterer as temporarily out of control should, however, like many of the batterer’s other rationalizations, “...not be accepted at face value” (Ptacek, 1990, p. 159).

Wilson and Daly (1992) argue along the same lines in pointing out that being out of control due to jealousy cannot excuse criminal behaviour in any context. It is almost as if they are trying to picture male offenders of crimes of passion as spiders attacking their female victims once in their webs of self-centred desires, highlighting through careful research that despite the contemporary scourges of serial killers, rape-murders, and homicides in the course of robbery, most murdered women are killed by their mates. Small portions of the men who kill their wives are found “unfit to stand trial” or “not guilty by reason of insanity” (Wilson & Daly, 1992, p.83-84). Such men are often deemed to be suffering from a psychiatric condition called “morbid jealousy” (Mowat 1966), diagnosed on the basis of an obsessive concern about suspected infidelity and a tendency to invoke bizarre “evidence” in support of the suspicion. But most men who kill in jealous rages are not considered insane. Not only is jealousy “normal,” but so, it seems, is violent jealousy, at least if perpetrated by a man in the heat of passion, according to Wilson & Daly (1992, p.84).

Most of the more specific literature summarised above does not look at crimes of passion from an existential-phenomenological stance. In spite of this, these sources contribute valuably to understanding crimes of passion. They tend to picture the ‘passionate murderer’ as a bearer of some kind of pathology, causing them to be aggressive or robust and intentionally aggressive by nature or personality. However, when stories about these people are read carefully it becomes clear that, for most of their lives, the characters pictured in this way display nearly the very opposite traits. The ‘hot blooded’ ones, such as Josh, the jealous people, those with feelings of inferiority or the inhabitants of LambdaMOO were normal and had softer or even timid characteristics. I consequently do not necessarily agree with many of the ways in which these attributes have been allocated and tendencies have been identified, yet the findings of these studies may be added to this study’s presuppositions. They will either be confirmed or rejected by rigorous phenomenological reflection and inquiry into another similar case. Hopefully this will also lead to clarifying the paradoxes involved.

The method of this inquiry we will follow will now be summarised briefly, to provide a clearly laid-out theoretical framework to proceed with the coming Chapter’s methods and procedures, prior to actually making interpretations by analysis of the diary and other relevant texts.

2.4 The methodological attitude in phenomenology

The methodological attitude in phenomenology involves radical reflection on meanings and lived experiences. Phenomenological method deals with, explains, and studies intimate violence portrayed in this brief literature review, revealing the author’s postulated

presuppositions for this study. Even the way in which the literature is presented, organised and commented on indicates the researcher's subjective position. However, the real text to be studied still remains the spontaneous linguistic expressions and self-description used in the mentioned diary and other texts. This is the part of the study that will confirm, reject or re-write these presuppositions completely. It is important to allow this study's 'subjects' — the person studied, the diary and other written texts, as well as the particular crime of passion — to 'speak for themselves.' It is also important to comment on the verbal self-representation in such a way that it brings to the fore some meanings hidden in the text itself in order to yield a clear understanding of what happened in this particular crime of passion.

The study will thus start with a de-terpretation of the text and then attempt to in-terpret it in such a way that the meanings stemming from that de-terpretation are made clearer without changing them at all. Rapmund (2000, p.126) found that Paul Ricoeur promoted such an approach by trying to research texts from both a subjective and an objective perspective; he indicate that Ricoeur "...suggests that understanding of a situation needs to be developed both from the perspective of being in the context (empathy), and from the perspective of distancing, using interpretation" (cited in Kelly, 1999, pp.400-401). In other words, there is a need to provide both a description of the way that the world is understood by the experiencing subject *as well as* an interpretation of that subjective understanding through the use of existential-phenomenological reflective methods. Ricoeur proposed, therefore, that a *both/and* approach should be pursued, rather than an *either/or* approach.

This study's next challenge is thereby to find a research design and method that will allow "eyes" from both internal and external interpretative viewpoints to project their images on the same screen. The researcher's glasses will hopefully only render the three-dimensionality of the projected images without in any way distorting them.

3 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This Chapter will start with an overview of this study's research problem and objectives as they relate to the research design and methods of research to be discussed. The most appropriate research method will then be scrutinized and described in order to form a sound basis for the actual research to follow. The case study method used in this study will be described next. This is an important part of the research design since it presents the rationale for choosing a single case study for analysis. The procedures used during this study's data collection and data reduction closely relate to the research design and research methods that this study use. For this reason, a special section in Chapter 3 is devoted to describing the how this study's data were collected and reduced into researchable form. How this study deals with the issue of plausibility is another important aspect of the research design, which will also be treated in this Chapter. In closing, this Chapter presents a step-by-step description of the procedures designed for this study's data analysis.

3.1 Research problem and objectives

The main research problem in dealing with crimes of passion is often the difficulty of understanding and explaining the phenomenon. At first impression, it appears to be a phenomenon that simply does not make sense. It is hard to understand how crime can be combined with passion, as they seem two completely different, nearly opposite phenomena. The one (passion) has to do with love and the good, while the other (crime) is about hate and the bad. Even so, it is well-known that there are many true stories about people who abused, injured or killed their lovers. The literature study has shown that popular books have been written on the topic, and research has focused on subjects associated with crimes of passion. However, the phenomenon's dynamics still seem to be something of a mystery. Although we have seen identified some possible reasons for the phenomenon — such as 'jealousy' and 'the male's feelings of inferiority' leading to a need for false postures of superiority — its nature and dynamics are still clouded in mystery. Why can passion lead to crime? What triggers such a conversion? When does it happen, and under what circumstances? Why is there such an interest in crimes of passion that tend to make stories and movies about it popular? Who might be at risk?

This research will hopefully contribute something to unravelling the mystery and paradoxes behind crimes of passion provoking such questions. In order to ensure that this goal can be achieved, we need to examine the rationale for choosing a particular research method.

3.2 Research Method

When human phenomena such as crimes of passion are studied, it is important to choose the right strategies, suitable to reaching the primary objectives of the research. The previous Chapter dealt mainly with the existing literature on the subject, and with examining a possible theoretical framework. In this Chapter my aim will be to go one step further by translating the theoretical framework into a workable research design. Designing an appropriate research strategy within the phenomenological framework requires starting with a holistic perspective of research methods and ways of inquiry that fit within this framework. That holistic perspective or overview could serve as a point of departure to find the most appropriate research design for this study within the broader scheme of research strategies fitting in this conceptual framework.

Van Manen's (2000) spider-web diagram of phenomenological inquiry as pictured on his World Wide Web site (<http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/inquiry/1.html>) is very useful as an overview of phenomenological methods. It starts by presenting six principal aspects of phenomenological inquiry (Figure 1), each of which branch out (diverge) into many finer aspects of reality involved in phenomenological inquiry (Figure 2, p.3.45).

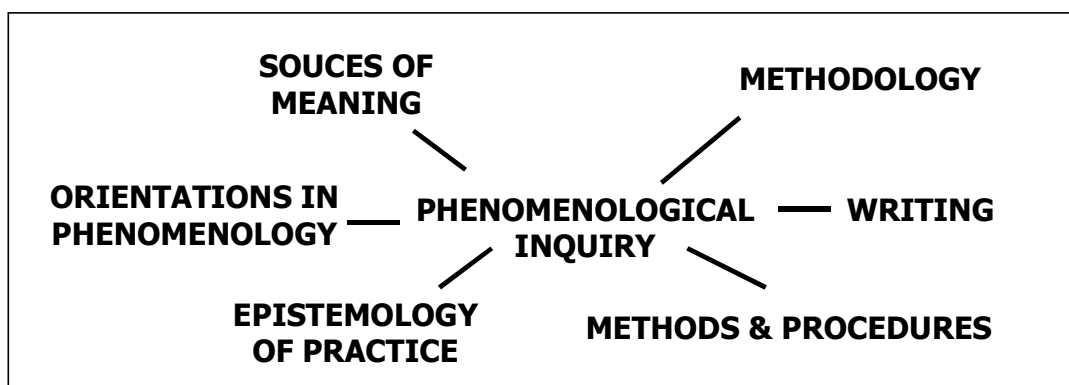


Figure 1: Van Manen's (2000) principal aspects of phenomenological inquiry

This visual representation provides a holistic view of how the different thematic and practical fields within the vast broader domain of phenomenological inquiry fit together and how they are related. It also shows the major subdivisions of phenomenological inquiry — such as method, orientations in phenomenology, sources of meaning, writing, methods and procedures and epistemology — and how they branch out into related fields and applications. Studying this diagram and following its paths led me to deciding that linguistic reflection, thematic reflection, and exegetical reflection are probably the most appropriate non-empirical reflective research methods for use in this study. Furthermore, it prompted the

realisation that these methods fit into the category of conceptual analysis, since they can be seen as ways in which concepts are studied, grasped and formed. When these concepts are compared to concepts from the existing literature, it suggests its appropriateness for the explication of the 'between the lines' knowledge.

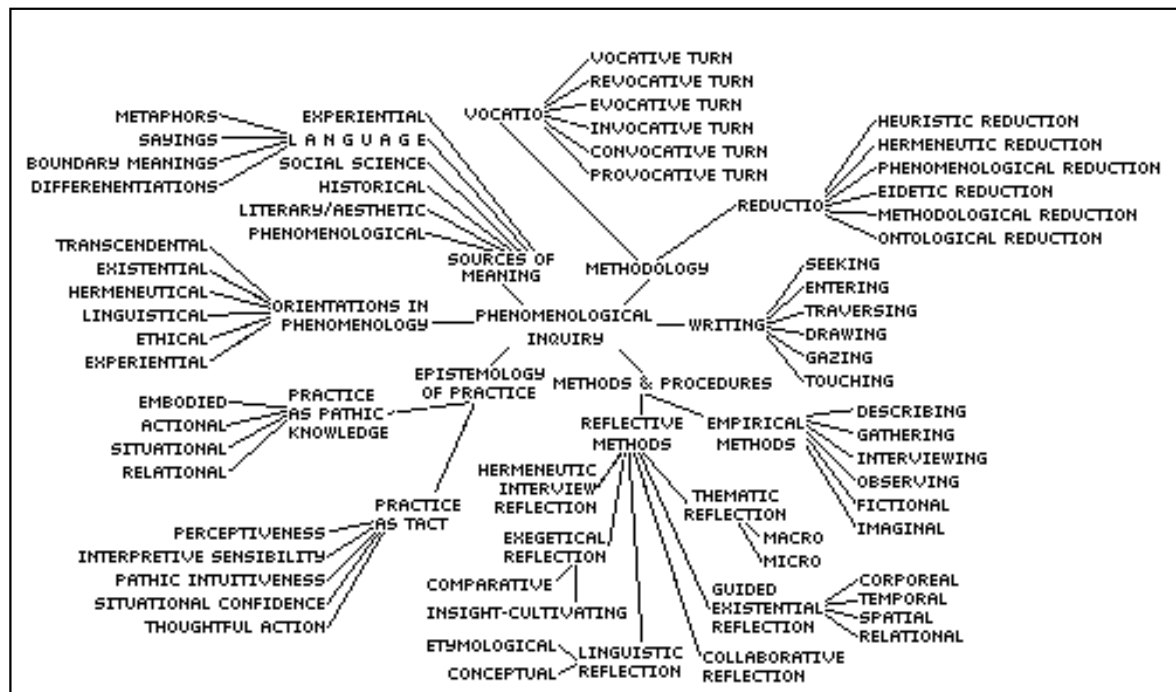


Figure 2: Van Manen's (2000) spider-web diagram of phenomenological inquiry

An existential-phenomenological approach seems to be most appropriate to explore the complexity of meanings that a crime of passion could have for a person. The next issue is to resolve which research design will do justice to the chosen theoretical orientation. The issue can be resolved by considering some of the broader subdivisions in research methods, including qualitative and quantitative research, and more specific subdivisions, such as empirical and reflective methods, along with their respective subdivisions.

3.2.1 Qualitative and quantitative research

Despite the wide breadth of its compass, Figure 2 only represents one broad division or about half of the spectrum of scientific research designs. Research designs can be divided roughly into qualitative and quantitative designs. Figure 2 represents only qualitative research. Choosing one qualitative research design or the other does not entail that a quantitative research design is a wrong or inappropriate research design in general, but rather only that it may not be appropriate within the framework of this particular study. The two broader orientations towards research designs should thus

be regarded as complementary, rather than competitive. Jones (1995, p. 42) indicates that:

Qualitative research takes an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them.

Qualitative research thus begins by accepting that there exists a range of ways of making sense of the world. It is concerned with discovering the meanings seen by those who are being researched, and with understanding their worldview rather than that of the researchers, and it regards it as valid data. Quantitative research, for its part, is more interested in showing tendencies and predictable patterns by using more statistically-oriented research designs.

Several recent works on research methods in the social sciences and psychology emphasise qualitative methods (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Schaw, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Edwards, 1998; Giorgi, 1985; Kazdin, 1982; Kruger, 1988; Kvale, 1992, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1989). While qualitative and quantitative research may well investigate similar topics, each addresses a different type of question. When crimes of passion, for instance, are studied, quantitative studies would be suitable to answer questions about the frequency, the age, gender and culture of the offenders and/or the victims, the time of the year, and the places where it is more likely to occur. Qualitative research is more suitable to address questions about the nature and origin of such crimes, and to investigate why people do such things. This is why a qualitative approach and research design have been chosen for this study.

Within qualitative research there still are numerous possibilities for different kinds of research designs. There being so many, it would be inappropriate to list all the possible kinds of qualitative design here. It is, however, necessary to further classify, describe and refine the most appropriate design for this study. A relevant subdivision of qualitative research is the one between empirical and reflective research methods.

3.2.2 Empirical and reflective research methods

Following the lines in Figure 2 shows clearly that research methods and procedures as an aspect of phenomenological inquiry divide mainly into empirical and reflective methods. It is important to determine whether this study's research will be empirical or non-empirical. Research is empirical when it is based on observation or experimentation, not on theory. 'Empirical' also has a general connotation of deriving knowledge only from experience (Barber, 1998). By contrast, non-empirical research

methods are based on conceptual analysis, theory- or model-building studies, philosophical analyses or literature reviews (Mouton, 2001). Reflective methods will fit in the category of non-empirical research methods.

This study will employ both the empirical and reflective research methods because it studies a particular case (empirical method) and is also interested in analysing written texts through non-empirical method (reflective). The fact that it is a case study may more specifically place it in the category of ethnographic, empirical research. Stake (2000, p.438) confirms that, amongst several other types of studies, ethnographic studies can be classified into the broader category of case studies:

The work of ethnographers, critical theorists, institutional demographers, and many others follows conceptual and stylistic patterns that not only amplify the taxonomy but also extend the foundation for case study research in the social sciences and social services.

This study also has some interest in the empirical elements of content analysis, textual analysis, hermeneutics and life history method. Breakwell and Wood (1995) indicate that the procedures for content analysis are similar to the procedures for the analysis of diary data. However, the focus of analysis in this study is to answer philosophical questions by analysing concepts, studying themes, and putting them in the context of existing literature. This confirms that strong elements of both empirical and non-empirical methods must be present in the research design. It is thus necessary to look for some research design that can accommodate both of these methods within this study's theoretical orientation. The basic orientation is existential phenomenology. Themes such as "lived experience," "modes of being," "ontology" and "life world" were shown in Chapter 2 to be central in existential-phenomenology. However, Van Manen (2000) postulates that "phenomenology may also be considered a human science method: a profoundly reflective inquiry into human meaning". Since this study uses the principles of phenomenology for both the theoretical orientation and the research method, it might be helpful to take a closer look at phenomenology as the basis for our research method.

3.2.3 Phenomenology as a research method

Regarding phenomenology as method implies reflecting or thinking about the subject of research rigorously and writing about it according to clear, disciplined strictures (Edwards, 1998; Giorgi, 1985; Kazdin, 1982; Kruger, 1988; Kvale, 1992, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1989, Van Manen, 2000). Reflection involves the practical implementation of the research attitude, which implies suspension (bracketing) of our natural attitude (Heidegger, 1962). Writing is the element that finds practical

application in language, attempting to portray pre-reflective (pure) experiences. According to phenomenological principles, the concept of "language," as discussed in Chapter 2, has a key role to play, and this could be explored in various ways. According to Van Manen (2000), language could be a whole way of *orientating* oneself towards inquiry, it can be a primary *source of meaning*, it can be a *vocative expression vehicle*, or it can be a *reflective method*. The fact that this study strives to have a phenomenological orientation implies that written language (the texts written by the subject) and the art of writing (the research report written by me) are inevitably a major focus for doing phenomenological research. However, the texts written by the subject are also identified as units for analysis according to the research design.

Language will consequently be used as a major *source of meaning*. The linguistic forms of expression such as themes, poetry, sayings, metaphors, differentiations, and boundary/peripheral meanings in the texts will need to be studied carefully.

Even so, the study's major orientation will not be linguistic. As explained previously, the *primary orientation will be existential*. A *hermeneutical* method may be adopted as another orientation, because themes such as interpretation, textual meaning, dialogue, pre-understanding, and tradition are also of some interest for this study. Besides being descriptive, this study is also interpretive. According to phenomenological principles, interpretation of material is not desirable, because it might contaminate the original intent and meaning of the author. In reality, even research done from a phenomenological point of view cannot escape the reality that the method of describing also implies interpretation in some way or the other, as indicated by Silverman (2000, p.827), who studied the work of contemporary ethnographer Sacks (1992). Silverman (2000) concluded that Sacks (1992) brought to light the fact that rendering of qualitative descriptions involves active interpretation. This is true when a researcher inductively chooses headings and categories in a research report. A phenomenological method strives to be deductive rather than inductive, but the very fact that it tries to explicate meaning involves inductive interpretation. This is where the danger lies; a researcher might change the meaning intended by another person. However, knowledge of this vulnerability serves the purpose to caution a researcher to follow more rigorous guidelines. This is why adopting a hermeneutical orientation could be the method of choice for this study to explicate the hidden meaning of the analysed text, rather than to change it.

As explained earlier (3.2.2, p. 3-46), phenomenological research methods can be either empirical or non-empirical. Within the wider range of available *reflective*

phenomenological methods, linguistic reflection will be used as our primary *reflective method*. Thematic reflection and exegetical reflection are further reflective methods to be used. They are suitable for analysing written texts such as this study's primary study units. The *empirical* methods most suitable for use to complement the mentioned reflective methods used in this study are describing and gathering. Materials such as the diary, spontaneously written essays and letters, and some formal assessment reports and essays written upon request and psychotherapy notes, were *gathered* for studying. During the interpretation process, a *description* of the researcher's personal experiences might help in some instances to facilitate an explication of meanings.

3.2.4 Other possible research methods

Before moving on to a step-by-step description of the method to be used for analysing this study's data, a few remarks will be made about some other apparently relevant research methods that were also considered. Viewed from the perspective of Van Manen's (2000) diagram (Figure 2 p.3-45), the broader division between empirical and non-empirical (reflective) research methods may even branch out (diverge) further. Finer classifications may be made when considered in light of the fact that a certain study object or objects, or a certain subject or subjects, will be used as units of analysis. Along these lines, Mouton (2001) proposes several empirical methods as possible ways to do qualitative research:

- ethnographic research
- case studies
- content analysis
- textual analysis, hermeneutics, textual criticism
- discourse and conversational analysis
- life history methodology

These methods were all considered during this study's stage of research design. All contain elements that appear at first sight relevant to this study. The subject of this study committed a crime of passion within a certain ethnographic context; I am interested in studying his "case"; I am interested in the content of his writings; these are texts to be analysed and interpreted; it may be helpful to obtain some insight about the discourse of the writings, in order to become studies; and the subject's life history may provide very useful knowledge when studied. However, after subjecting Mouton's (2001) description of these methods to scrutiny, none lent itself entirely as

the primary or only method for this study. As indicated, all contain elements of interest to this study, yet the broader classification of describing and gathering provided by Van Manen (2000) is preferable. It allows for a greater openness for adopting any of the finer aspects specified by Mouton (2001) while doing research and when that research steers me in that direction.

Among the broader range of available non-empirical study methods Mouton (2001) presents, conceptual analysis and literary reviews were considered as added ways to classify the described broader research methods of this study. Concepts are interpreted (hermeneutical orientation) and after a literature review it is compared to the research results (gathering, thematic and exegetical reflection). Yet, as with his empirical methods, neither of Mouton's (2001) non-empirical methods lends itself to adoption as this study's sole method.

The non-empirical, reflective methods identified in paragraph 3.2.2 (p. 3-45) are strongly reminiscent of what Mouton (2001, p.167) describes as the empirical method of "...textual analysis, hermeneutics, textual criticism". At first sight, the similarity of terms and methods in two separate categories of research method — empirical and non-empirical or reflective methods — may confuse. Yet when one considers, along the lines of Van Manen's (2000) diagram, that describing and gathering are the chosen empirical research methods, and that part of the broader research orientation is existential and hermeneutical, it becomes clearer how these methods may be integrated. It then leads to the realization that, within the existential and hermeneutical orientation, empirical ways of gathering data can be useful to this study. Specifically: texts will be gathered or parts of larger written texts will be selected, and the experiences of both the researcher and the subject will be described. These data forms will then be explicated through the non-empirical reflective methods of linguistic, hermeneutical and exegetical reflection. A summary of the chosen research methods discussed in the following paragraph will now serve to wrap up the conclusions of the foregoing discussion.

3.2.5 Summary of the chosen methods

- The *research paradigm* most suitable for this study is the qualitative research approach.
- Phenomenology is also applied as a *research method* within the framework of qualitative research.
- The primary *research orientation* is existential.

- A hermeneutical method may be adopted as another *orientational attitude*, because themes such as interpretation, textual meaning, dialogue, pre-understanding, and tradition are of some interest to this study.
- Language will be used as a major *source of meaning*. The linguistic forms of expression such as themes, poetry, sayings, metaphors, differentiations, and boundary/peripheral meanings in the texts, will have to be studied carefully.
- Empirical and reflective *research techniques* will be used during the data analysis.
- Within the wider available range of phenomenological *reflective* methods, *linguistic reflection* will be used as a primary *reflective method*. *Thematic reflection* and *exegetical reflection* are further reflective methods to be used. They are all suitable to analyse written texts such as the primary study units in this study.
- The *empirical* methods most suitable for use in this study are *describing* and *gathering*. *Gathered* for studying were materials such as: the diary, spontaneously written essays and letters, some formal assessment reports and essays written on request, and psychotherapy notes. During the interpretation process, *description* of the researcher's personal experiences might help, in some instances, to facilitate the explication of meanings.

3.2.6 Integration of chosen methods

At this stage of discussing the methods chosen for use during this study's research, it may help to visually represent how to integrate the different methods. Within the broader framework of methods discussed earlier in this Chapter, in principle, two possible major methodological paradigms are involved. They are the inductive and the deductive research paradigms. Interpretation and/or categorisation imply an inductive process, since concepts are reduced to fit into titled semantic fields. By contrast, description or expansions of concepts or phrases imply a deductive process. Usually, phenomenological research methods tend to favour deductive research processes because they reduce the risk of bringing pre-conceived meanings into the process of explication of meanings or knowledge. However, phenomenological research methods do not necessarily exclude the use of inductive research techniques, when applied in ways that clarify meaning rather than change it.

During the process of selecting appropriate research methods in preparation for the data-analysis in this study, a visual representation of how inductive and deductive methods can be integrated was found in the form of a diagram designed by Mayring

(2000). The diagrams in Figures 3 (p. 3-53) and 4 (p. 3-56) help to conceptualise how all the mentioned subdivisions of qualitative research — such as linguistic reflection, thematic reflection and exegetical reflection — can be seen as parts of the same process of application of non-empirical methods. The diagrams also show how the empirical processes of gathering and description fit together into the same research process. This indicates how all the empirical and non-empirical methods represent different angles of approach within the same broader context of qualitative research flow.

Mayring (2000) designed his flow diagram specifically for qualitative content analysis, not so as to show how to integrate research methods; even so, it can usefully indicate how different research methods fit together. The flow diagrams are very helpful in integrating different categories of research methods such as linguistic, hermeneutical and exegetical reflection into a holistic picture. All of these methods have both interpretive (inductive) and descriptive (deductive) elements.

This study, like Mayring's (2000) study, involves textual analysis. The flow of the research process may thus consist of many steps similar to those of Mayring's (2000) study, guiding the practical implementation of the research process. This process starts inductively, organising and defining processes, and then applies the reduced, interpreted meanings during a deductive process that describe and explicate the meaning locked up in the text and categories. A holistic picture of the flow of the research process helps to understand how seemingly contradictory or clashing approaches such as inductive and deductive data analysis processes can be integrated into complementary research steps within a qualitative research project. Quantitative steps can even be used within this broader qualitative research process without compromising the qualitative nature of the research method.

Mayring (2000) presented a process of inductive qualitative content (textual) analysis (Figure 3), followed by deductive content (textual) analysis (Figure 4, p.3-56) of the same data as follows:

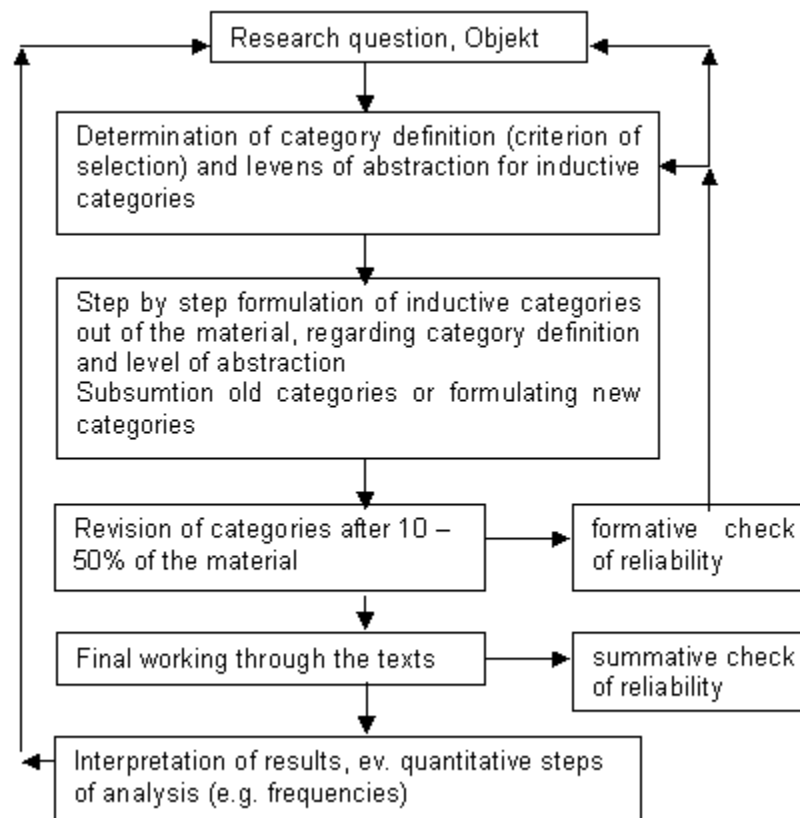


Figure 3: Step-model of inductive category development (Mayring 2000, p.11)

Mayring's (2000) step-model of inductive category development uses the following research steps:

- Although originally designed to indicate some steps in the process of data (content) analysis, Mayring's (2000) step-model of inductive category development also indicates that the formulation of a research question implies induction or reduction since it denominates a (reduced) area of operation or research. It lessens or delineates reality by indicating a specific area of focus, and starts by indicating that the research question already implies induction or reduction because it defines a research object. Phenomenological research methods with an existential research orientation also start with the formulation of a research question as a consistent point of focus during the research process. Thematic, linguistic and exegetical reflection may already form an integral part of the process of formulating the research question.
- After the research question has been formulated, the reduction is taken a step further by forming an operative definition of the forthcoming categories of analysis that will serve as criteria to determine the value of data within the research paradigm. This process results in inductive category-formation based on a pre-determined level of abstraction or generalisation. Categories are named through a

step-by-step study of the meanings the textual material present. Categories that are included (subsumed) in other categories are eliminated and new categories are added if meanings are discovered that have not yet been included. Thematic reflection on the language (source of meaning) in the gathered texts figures very prominently during this part of the research process.

- The next step involves a process of ‘name giving and organising’ which starts during the process of data collection and, continues right through the process of data analysis. The units are named or defined either by arranging the suitable material from the text to fit under a more inclusive term/definition from the text or by choosing a new collective term or defining phrase which will not add to or take away from the meaning. Categories that overlap are combined, and categories that merely repeat an existing meaning unit are deleted. During this phase, exegetical and linguistic reflection have to be implemented with a hermeneutical method as an orienting attitude.
- The categories are then revised once 10 to 50% of the material has been processed and finally worked through, while their reliability is checked formatively (are they really coming from the text?) as well as summatively (are they really summarising the meaning projected in the text?). Linguistic reflection is a primary method here, but it is done with an eye on its overall phenomenological method and existential orientation. True to phenomenology’s very nature, the primary question to be addressed is: “Is justice being done to the original meaning (language) of the text?”
- The results are then interpreted so that the new knowledge gained can be formulated or presented in understandable ways. This process of interpretation involves qualitative steps, such as category counts, to determine which meanings are most emphasised and used in the text. Description as an empirical research method is implemented during this step of the research process. A hermeneutical method is again applied as a research orientation within the context of a broader phenomenological research method guiding the description.

Within the phenomenological paradigm, the whole inductive process described above can be seen as part of the explication of the researcher’s pre-conceptions. The use of inductive processes for categorising, organising and defining permits recognising that that researcher cannot escape the human tendency of “totalising” (Levinas, 1979, p.17) or generalising. These processes are actually against the nature of phenomenology, interpreting instead of describing, and defining instead of allowing

the world to reveal itself in its own way. Even so, it is recognised that it is very difficult to transcend the human tendency to reduce meaning and to present things in simplified ways. Ironically, starting off by taking these steps in a conscious and organised way opens the way for a more deductive process, permitting justice to be done to the originally texts' intended meanings.

The phenomenological research methods discussed earlier in this chapter apply to the broader framework of the research sequence presented by Mayring (2000) in his flow diagrams. They endeavour to allow the world circumscribed by the research question to reveal itself deductively without contamination by any preconceived ideas or inductive formulas. Yet they acknowledge that the starting point to approach this ideal is recognising that we do not live in an academic or intellectual utopia: we are subject to inductive ways of thinking and formulating concepts when we strive to report phenomena. With this acknowledgement at the start, a text's real meanings may be revealed more freely through deductive processes.

As the second part of the process Mayring (2000) proposes applying the following steps in deductive category application (Figure 4, p. 3-56):

- The research question is considered within the context of deductive category application.
- A theory-based formulation of definitions of the analysis' aspects, main categories and sub categories that had crystallised during the inductive category-development process.
- A theory-based formulation of definitions, examples and coding rules is applied as part of the process of classifying the texts' different elements into more "digestible" units while they are collected in a 'coding agenda.'
- The categories and 'coding agenda' are revised during a second formative reliability check.
- The text is worked through again, in a second summative reliability check.
- Final interpretation of the results. Again, quantitative processes, such as determining frequencies, may be useful in this deductive part of the process of qualitative research.

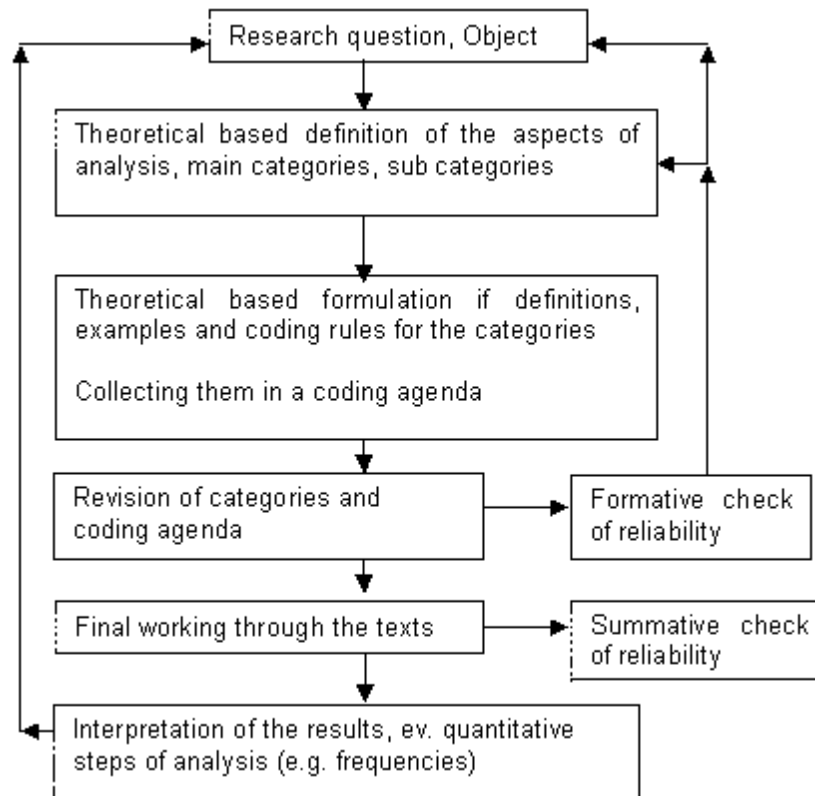


Figure 4: Step model of deductive category application (Mayring 2000, p.14)

A comparison of this deductive process with the previous inductive one raises the striking fact that the steps executed during both phases of the research process are nearly the same. The research methods that come into play during these similar steps will consequently also be similar. The key difference between the inductive and the deductive parts of the research process is that the inductive process is mainly concerned with category-formation, while the deductive process is mainly concerned with theory-formulation — as indicated in Figures 3 and 4. Theory-formulation implies description. More description as an empirical research method will thus be used during the deductive process, especially in the last step. Inductive category-formation and definition through a study of the texts' themes (linguistic, exegetical and thematic reflection) eventually lead to deductive theory-formulation through a rigorous description of the knowledge enclosed in the text. As indicated, all the phenomenological methods discussed in 3.2.3 can be implemented at some point in this process, starting with inductive category-formation and resulting in the description of theory or new knowledge (according to a hermeneutical method), and they are integrated in this way into a holistic research flow process within an existential-phenomenological paradigm.

Although the research in this study will not mechanically reproduce the steps in Mayring's (2000) flow diagram, it is a helpful tool beyond just providing a global picture of the research process. The picture of the multi-phased process also shows how many aspects that are often regarded as mutually exclusive can be integrated and used as complementary. The picture shows how inductive and deductive processes may be used to complement each other, while showing how the entire process centres on the research question. Although carefully chosen, the method for this study still has its strengths and its weaknesses. These major strengths and weaknesses will now be considered.

3.2.7 Strengths and weaknesses of the chosen method

One of the major strengths of the chosen method lies in its ability to answer the central research question: it will help to shed light on the paradoxes and hidden meanings within the phenomenon of crimes of passion. If well structured, the conceptual analysis will clarify the categories and thus also clarify the meaning of crimes of passion. It will also explicate theoretical linkages and reveal the conceptual implications of different viewpoints. The literature review undertaken for this study helps with this through a sound understanding of the issues and debates inherent in the issue of crimes of passion. It brings to the fore current theoretical debates and thinking, some previous studies and their results, and the gaps or shortcomings in both those previous studies and current theories.

Unfortunately, as with all methods, the phenomenological method chosen for this study also has weaknesses. The most important is in that the texts' quality and authenticity are major determining factors of the quality of the interpretation. The same statement or linguistic form may often be interpreted in more than one way. If different interpretations conflict or are just too different, this may obscure rather than clarify. Furthermore, the fact that the selected case and texts are bound to a specific context may also constrain our understanding of it. The generalisability of the knowledge gained from the study may be questionable. If the conceptual analysis is poorly done, conceptual confusion, theoretical ambiguities and fallacious reasoning may result. No new knowledge can be gained from the literature review because it only summarises and organises existing knowledge. This study relies heavily on gaining and validating new information and insights in a relatively small empirical part of the study. However, it is designed to answer a specific type of question, not just any question.

3.3 The type of questions to be answered

If this study is conducted according to the identified methodological framework (3.2.5), the existential-hermeneutical orientation and the literature review will facilitate answering exploratory questions, descriptive questions, conceptual (semantic-meaning determining) questions, and theoretical questions (Mouton, 2001). As this study also covers a conceptual dimension, it will further enable clarifying conceptual linkages through classification and categorisation. If these aspects of suitability are applied to the major research objective of this study, it can be said that it will enable exploring the nature of crimes of passion and the paradoxes behind it. It will also enable the researcher to formulate and investigate descriptive questions about the nature of crimes of passion, and formulate concepts and theories on the subject. Conceptual linkages will be identified between different parts of the studied texts, and between the studied texts and the existing literature. These concepts will hopefully help clarify the phenomenon of crimes of passion when organised in categories, and classified under descriptive, integrating terms, or terminological phrases. Yet many types of questions cannot be answered by this method: questions about tendencies, incidence, locations and frequencies of crimes of passion are among those that fall outside of this method's scope.

The underlying assumptions behind our method are closely related to the underlying assumptions of existential-phenomenology in general, as described in Chapter 2. It assumes that there is a lived experience to be studied, and ways in which preconceptions about it can be explicated and bracketed (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). It also presupposes the existence of a 'human text,' or a humanly produced text that can be revealed through 'the things in the world.' Furthermore, it implies divergent instead of convergent thinking (Van den Berg, 1980), and that only more complex forms of knowing (Romanyshyn, 1991) and data presentation can do justice to the researched subject.

Carefully considering these assumptions shows their relevance for studying the complicated nature of crimes of passion by analysing the spontaneous inscriptions in the diary of someone who murdered his beloved. The preconceptions can be explicated through a literature study and by pinning down the contents of pre-reflective conceptions about it. It is a human phenomenon, it is complex, it involves a human being who reveals himself through 'things in the world' — such as relationships with others, inscriptions in diaries and talking — and it raises many unanswered or even rhetorical questions.

The following research questions will be investigated:

- What are the main paradoxes involved in the phenomenon of a crime of passion?

- What kind of clues can we find in the words, expressions and/or behaviour of a person who murdered his fiancée that may help explicated the phenomenon of crimes of passion so authentic knowledge can be gained from it?
- How can a spontaneously written diary and related texts help us to understand the complex phenomenon referred to as a crime of passion?

Although this study is designed to deal with a human phenomenon, it still uses certain units of analysis to clarify the phenomenon within a specific context. These 'units of analysis' will now be described briefly.

3.4 Units of analysis

The research method will work with a few closely related units of analysis. The first and most obvious unit of analysis (definitely not an 'object' of analysis) is the person who committed the crime of passion and wrote the diary. Yet it is very important to recall that the objective of this study is not to study him or his character traits or personality. He will only be 'analysed' insofar as it is needed to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of his crime of passion. The second important unit of analysis is the available written texts about this specific crime of passion. The written texts consist of three parts. The first and most comprehensive and insightful unit is the spontaneously written diary. The second is the letters and essays not included in the diary, which were mostly written after he began undergoing psychotherapy with the researcher. The third unit of analysis is the researcher's written notes and memories from interacting with the other 'units of analysis,' during psychotherapy and research.

The main objective when analysing the texts will be to demonstrate how spontaneous linguistic forms of expression in a personal diary can be used to gain a better understanding of the apparent paradoxes involved in the phenomenon of crimes of passion. In order to achieve this objective the mindset of someone who killed his loved one will be studied as it is portrayed in the spontaneous entries he made in his diary, essays and some therapeutic interviews. During the analysis of the data (diary, essays and interviews) linguistic forms and meanings that could usefully refine therapeutic strategies and inform preventive actions will be explored. An in-depth description and exploration of the linguistic forms as spontaneously revealed in the diary of a convicted person who committed a crime of passion, will thus form the data basis to explicate the meaning of a crime of passion.

The insights and information gathered during research will explain the extent to which information such as that revealed in a diary, and other forms of writing, can be used

practically to shape prevention when treating similar cases. That is, the knowledge gained from this investigation should enhance the possibility of rehabilitating offenders already convicted of a crime of this nature, thereby protecting the community against repetitions of such tragedies. A better understanding of the phenomenon of crimes of passion by glancing into the living world of the diary's author should thus help professionals and laymen in the helping professions, especially in the view of professional ethics to provide advance warning of potential harm.

3.5 Case study method – Single case study for analysis

From a theoretical point of view, it can be said that single case studies are more than just a valid research method within the framework of an existential-phenomenological study. It may even be the preferred research method when the specific research design of this study is considered. Whereas more than one subject is required by quantitative techniques that determine tendencies and patterns, and generalise findings over a larger population, an in-depth description of meaning through a hermeneutical study that uses language as its major source of meaning in a self-revealing study such as that proposed here requires only a single case. The phenomenon and the goal of the study are also more important than how many similar cases can be found. Polkinghorne (1989, p.43) postulates that phenomenological psychology:

...differs from mainstream psychology by holding that human behaviour is an expression of meaningful experience rather than a mechanically learned response to stimuli.

A personal description of a crime of passion and its ramifications without question expresses a meaningful experience. It does not have to be compared with similar cases to make it a compelling or convincing description, or a real human experience. Edwards (1998, p.37) formulates a further advantage of single-case-based research in psychology by stating:

In clinical psychology, it has long been recognised that the group-based research process failed to contribute the kind of knowledge base that is of direct application to much of clinical practice.

Edwards (1998, p.40) also lists six assumptions that are shared by case-based approaches (shortened):

1. The ultimate task of science is not to map human behaviour and experience on a vast matrix of variables from which predictions can be derived.
2. Quantification is not an end in itself.
3. The quality of our science depends on the quality of our data.

4. Participants are encountered respectfully as persons and treated as individuals whose accounts of themselves call for exploration and understanding.
5. Data are contextualised. This means that a sufficient range of qualitative data is collected to enable meaningful relationships to be examined within a single case.
6. Research needs to be case-based and case-centred.

These six assumptions, viewed against the backdrop of this study's research design and objectives, show that there is sufficient motivation for using only one case in an investigation of this nature. Therefore, only one subject and his literary efforts in his diary and some other written documents will be studied in a specifically designed single-case study method. Because the author of the diary spontaneously produced real-life experiences and rich descriptions of his feelings and emotions, the diary lends itself to a valid and valuable existential-phenomenological study.

It can be said, from a very pragmatic point of view, that the reason only one case will be selected for this study is that it will be very difficult to find similar cases. The subject (studied person) of my study is very unique for several reasons. Firstly, it will not be easy to find another person who diarised all of his or her experiences before, during and after committing a crime of passion. Secondly, if such a person were found, it is doubtful that such a person would be willing to share their experiences and make their diary available for analysis. Thirdly, even if such a person could be found, the quality of the data and the applicability as a source of knowledge may still be questionable.

3.6 Data collection and data reduction

The data for this study consists of the spontaneously written diary of one person as well as some short essays and reports he presented during psychotherapy. Once rapport was established at the start of long term psychotherapy, and as this therapy evolved, it transpired that the client has been keeping a diary containing rich data for understanding his experiences. When approached on the subject, he spontaneously offered me the diary for psychotherapeutic and research purposes, seeming to appreciate that his story may be heard in this way. Consent was confirmed with a signed letter in his own words (Appendix A).

To protect his confidentiality, his name and signature have been changed to 'John' throughout this study. While I realise that the chosen aliases (John and Mary) have symbolic meanings in some contexts, this was unintentional. They were chosen because they are common English names, and spontaneously sprung to mind when aliases were needed. During therapy, John was also asked from time to time to write short essays on various

topics; some were selected as data with very relevant information for this study. Those most relevant to this study's objectives and research question were selected.

One of the major problems during the data-collection process had to do with the scope that would be regarded as sufficient for analysing a single case. It will be sometimes be necessary to reduce the available data to make it more manageable. The diary John presented for research purposes consisted of several volumes of hand-written A-4 pages. John used hardcover books with over fifty pages, and he presented approximately ten of those books for use during therapy and research. An exact page count is not really relevant, but my estimate is that more than 1,000 pages of hand-written copy were available. Although his handwriting and the linguistic style vary considerably (John often wrote poems with shorter lines), on average John wrote approximately 200 words on one page. He also wrote on both sides of every page. This results in extensive textual data that is impossible to analyse fully, and it had to be significantly reduced to make for manageable units of analysis.

During my search for a method of data analysis I came across Kvale's (1996) strongly worded comments on what he refers to as "the 1,000 page question". Among other critical comments Kvale (1996, p.176) writes, "...the question is not only posed too late, it is leading". He explains that such a question is evidence of very poor research practices as it shows that the study has not been planned properly. At first Kvale's (1996) statement discouraged me with regard to the usability of the available data for research purposes. However, when I read Kvale's (1996) further explanatory comments, as well as some other work of his (Kvale, 1992), I realised that those comments were specifically meant for data collection *via interviews*. During research interviews, the sifting of data already starts before the first interview: in the process of planning the interview. With diary or textual analysis, however, such sifting can only begin after the text has been written, and after speed-reading through it in its entirety to obtain a holistic grasp. According to Kruger (1988, p.153) the first step in phenomenological data analysis is "an intuitive and holistic grasp of the data". In this research project we should also add Kruger's (1988) statement '*...and forming a holistic impression of the research project*'. Only after completing this process can we decide which of the available written texts is most appropriate and valuable for the study.

Preliminary preparations before analysing the vast text led to identifying problems with regard to data reduction. After identifying some initial themes or categories, based on an overall chronological division of the diary's events and experiences, I also subdivided the relevant information according to a thematic subdivision. The categories that emerged can be summarised as follows:

1. Getting to know the girl, becoming engaged, up to the time of her death. This includes themes related to so-called “experiences of the first time.”
2. The period between his arrest and conviction.
3. The period while in prison and in therapy — when there emerged these themes, which could be regarded as meaning units of specific relevance to his expressions:
 - Establishing rapport
 - Prison issues
 - Family issues
 - Emotional expressions
 - Fiancée’s parents
 - Repentance and compensation
 - Relationships
 - Adjustments to society that may be required after release and in possible work contexts
 - Parole
 - Search for safe context
4. Selection from his short essays specifically relevant to the topic of this study.

These preliminary categories of experiences reflect the most important parts of John’s life story as it relates to his crime of passion. It was as if John spontaneously addressed those issues every time he had the opportunity to ‘speak his mind’ freely, either in writing or talking. Yet most of John’s diary entries about these categories of experience were made before he entered psychotherapy with the researcher. Only the essays, and a relatively small part taken from the diary, were written after the psychotherapeutic involvement with the researcher started. This largely rules out the possibility that John altered the contents of his writings ‘to suit the research project,’ or to impress outside parties such as future readers of the research results, prison authorities, or the researcher as psychotherapist. John continued to write in his diary during the whole process of psychotherapy and after it was over, once the researcher resigned from the South African Correctional Services. He probably still keeps a diary.

Even so, a clear selection has to be made for the purposes of this study. Firstly, only text produced during the time period of December 1996 to February 2000 is used for analysis. What he wrote after the identified period is regarded as less relevant to this study and more likely to be influenced by John’s knowledge that his writings will be used for research. The pre-identified categories above are applied to select the most relevant parts, but this still leaves me with an extensive database requiring further reduction. The following further selection strategies were implemented to achieve a manageable data set for analysis:

- Only approximately five entries within each category were selected. If there are more or less than five relevant entries, the amount of selected entries will be adjusted accordingly, but five per category is the norm.
- The selected entries are pre-read for relevance. If only a part of one day's entry is relevant, only that part will be used.
- Significant dates and occurrences are included: court appearances, Christmas and New Year, and days when major circumstantial changes occurred in John's life, e.g., the last entry before the crime, the first one after it took place, and the turn of the century.
- Special linguistic forms such as poems and letters within the diary and rich metaphors are included to comprise no more than 50% of the selected parts. Where John used headings and titles himself, they are also be used to determine relevance to the subject of investigation.

Finally, when the selected research material is evaluated in light of the nature of this study, it should prove to be ideal for an existential-phenomenological study of this nature. It should contain a spontaneous description of lived experience, represent several linguistic forms as vehicles for expression, and focus on a complex human phenomenon, i.e., a crime of passion. Language is a valid source of information, and within this context a hermeneutical research orientation will help to explicate (show) the knowledge latent in the selected data. Overall, the data should be suitable for analysis through linguistic, thematic and exegetical methods of data analysis.

Figure 5 below illustrates the sequence of steps followed in the process of data reduction and analysis. Although the technique may not be followed strictly, the mapping of the data reduction and analysis process will be based on the IDEF method ("Integrated Definition Language"), which was developed by the USA Department of Defence for describing Value Adding Activities (see Muller *et al.*, 1997). Currently, IDEF is widely used in Industry to describe business processes. This method enables the user to illustrate which rules or principles govern the activities in the process, and how various outputs in the process are used synergistically to produce the end result. Each block in the process contains an action (described by a verb) that is being performed. The three attributes of the IDEF method that will be used in the figures below are:

- **Inputs (entering from the left-hand side):** Describing what is needed to perform an activity, e.g., eggs and flour to bake a cake.
- **Outputs (leaving on the right-hand side):** What is produced by the activity, e.g., a cake or information gathered from data.

- **Controls (entering from the top):** What governs the activity, e.g., the recipe for the cake, rules and principles

Figure 5 illustrates the process of data reduction as it is applied and how it is tested for plausibility (described in the following section):

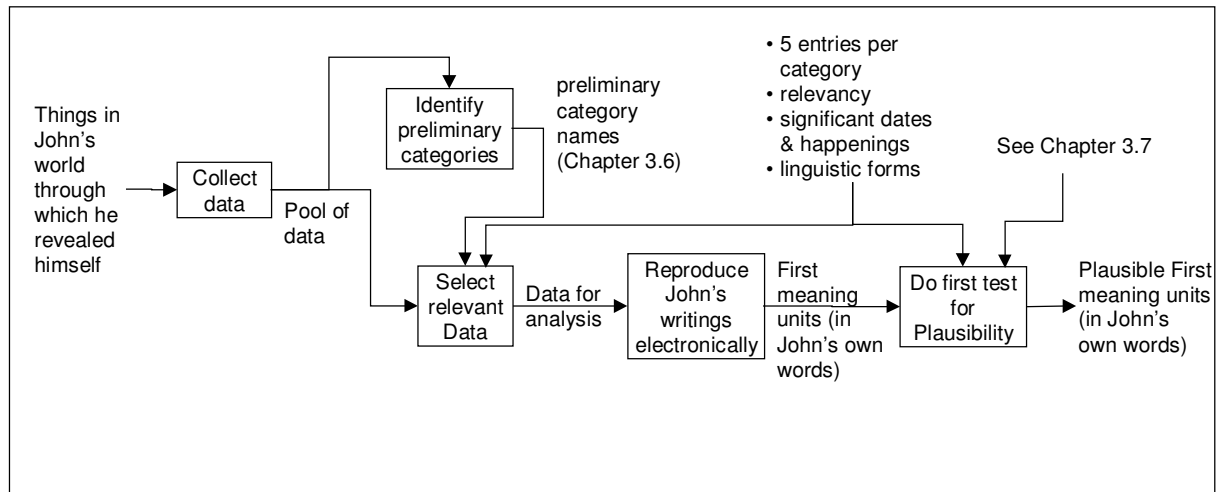


Figure 5: Process of Data Reduction

3.7 Plausibility

Qualitative research does not require indications of validity and reliability in the same sense as quantitative research does. When quantitative research has to answer questions about validity, it often relies on measuring instruments, using statistics. The question is: 'does the instrument measure what it is supposed to measure?' Qualitative, phenomenological research is concerned with the fact that research findings should be trustworthy and compelling enough to be used as the basis for actions and policies. However, the way that validity and reliability are ensured for research results differs vastly for quantitative research. This is why the term 'plausibility' and rigour are preferred for these kinds of issues.

Qualitative phenomenological research does not use statistical instruments or measurement. It is interested in human experience, and the quality and accuracy of descriptions of human experiences. The method used to ensure this accuracy centres on rigour. Phrases such as *rigorous reflection* and *rigour of explication* are common in validation processes of phenomenological research. According to Polkinghorne (1989, p.57)

...the validity of phenomenological research concerns the question, 'Does the general structural description provide an accurate portrait of the common features and structural connections that are manifest in the examples collected?'

Polkinghorne (1989, p.57) continues to list five important doubts concerning validity that need to be addressed when doing phenomenological research. Adapted for this research project's context, they are listed and applied to this study by trying to answer every question separately:

1. Did the researcher influence the contents of the subject's descriptions in such a way that those descriptions do not truly reflect the subject's actual experience?

Most of the diary of the subject was written before the researcher met him. The texts written after psychotherapy began were specifically checked for such influence by comparing them to the previous text. Their contents and structure did not seem to differ vastly.

2. Is the transcription accurate, and does it convey the meaning of the original presentation?

The subject himself wrote the original text. Rigorous phenomenological methods are used in the transcription for explication purposes, and the end product of transcription were given to the subject to comment on whether it still accurately reflected his experiences.

3. In the analysis of the text, are there conclusions other than those offered by the researcher that could have been derived? Has the researcher identified these alternatives and demonstrated why they are less probable than the one chosen?
4. Is it possible to go from the general structural description to the transcriptions and to account for the specific contents and connections in the original examples of the experience?
5. Is the structural description situation-specific, or does it hold in general for experience in other situations?

Questions 3, 4 and 5 are addressed during the process of analysis.

The main aim in qualitative, phenomenological research is thus to present the data in such an authentic way that the reader will be convinced of the credibility of the research and the plausibility of the interpretations that will ensue from the analysis. Against this background I continuously checked and re-checked the accuracy of the condensed descriptions and interpretations.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is no easy task. Kruger (1988) and Giorgi (1985) extensively explain methods for qualitative data analysis in phenomenological research. Combined with the ones proposed by Polkinghorne (1989, p.52) in his summary of steps used by different qualitative research experts such as Colaizzi (1978), Giorgi (1975), and Van Kaam (1969), these methods provide the steps in the process of analysing the textual data represented in the diary:

1. The classification of data into categories (Natural Meaning Units).
2. The reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms. This inevitably means that a coherent form of psychological language will have to be chosen in which to 'translate' the natural meaning of units. The paradigm clarified and motivated in the literature study is used. It suggests that a language true to the living world of the person who created the studied and analysed text should be used. Descriptive language should be used rather than language that tries to define things in terms of pathology, or by generalising, or using diagnostic terms from medical textbooks.
3. The elimination of those reduced statements developed in step 2 that are probably not explicating the meaning of crimes of passion.
4. Application.

These steps will be applied within the broader categories of chronological order in the diary to be analysed (see 3.6 p.3-61). However, the same openness in approach and to *ad hoc* methods of analysis as mentioned during the description of the theoretical orientation in Chapter 2 and 3.2 (p. 3-44) will be maintained throughout the data analysis. The following preliminary identification of themes and chronological units was undertaken to launch the process of data analysis by reflecting on the therapeutic process notes, reading the diary's text, and associated writings.

3.8.1 The classification of data into categories (Natural Meaning Units)

Natural meaning units are selections or sections of the text with the same subject or object of description as their source of inspiration. They are either the names or titles given to chronological units in the diary, or spontaneous names or phrases that appear in it, which are repeated in the same or in altered formats.

Sollors (1993, p.5) explains the meaning of theme in this context:

By *theme (Thema)* we mean that whose representation contains the sufficient reason of other representations supplied in the discourse, but which does not have its own sufficient reason in them. If there are many themes, there can be no connection.

This definition indicates that a Natural Meaning Unit (nmu) can be used as a synonym for both “category” (e.g., when chronology applies) and “theme.” For the purposes of organisation of the material in this analysis it will mostly be used as synonymous with *theme* (e.g., when Heideggerian time is applicable). The context should clearly indicate which meaning applies.

Brinker (1993, p.35) further explains what a theme is by referring to Wittgenstein’s work on how drawings can be described in different ways:

There are two subgroups in the class of phenomena included in Wittgenstein’s descriptions: (1) those in which there is no way of seeing, identifying, or describing the drawing without interpreting it in some way (the duck-rabbit drawing is an example of this subgroup). (2) Those in which you can step, as it were, away, not committing yourself to one of the representational readings, and offer a neutral account of the drawing.

The two different ways of observing drawings indicate that a theme can either spontaneously or subjectively flow from the text, or it can be allocated (added) as a name or interpretation by the reader. In the first instance, it is just seen as it is — or, in Wittgenstein’s work, as the drawer presents it. In the second instance, the theme is seen as something to be interpreted against the background of something else, usually your own thoughts. Although the ideal way of dealing with a theme should be to see it without comparing it to anything else, it has to be acknowledged that this is practically impossible. When people comment or talk or write it is always about something. The word ‘about’ implies that comparison with our own thoughts is already taking place: it is taking place relative to or in relation to my own reservoir of prior experiences. I am commenting about something. When the classification is completed about the nmu’s from data within the texts to be analysed in this study, it will be important to keep this principle in mind. Its application will confirm the phenomenological principle that presuppositions should be explicated, rather than denied or ignored. Interpretation or, in this case, more specifically identification of natural meaning units, is a subjective act performed by a human being, and always in a certain context (Kruger 1988).

Referring to Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*, Brinker (1993, p.36) continues to say:

All of these “abouts” are relative “abouts.” They are relative to certain teleological, philosophical, or sociological texts and beliefs. In Wittgenstein’s terms they are due to the dawning of a certain image or thought on the reader.

The merits of ‘seeing as’ are that it shows in an absolutely lucid way the intertextual character of thematic interpretation and the kind of ‘game’ (or kind of rationality) we may expect in critical disputes of this kind...

This raises the simple point that throughout the process of identification of the themes I will have to acknowledge my own subjectivity. My acknowledgement of this subjectivity in advance enhances my ability to see as the author saw, and experience his actions, instead of seeing it only as I see it. This will help me to *thematize* about the *theme* of the author, and not to create my own themes that I associate with it.

Coetzee (in Sollors, 1993, p.289) concludes:

In my account it is not the theme that counts but thematizing. That themes emerge in the process are heuristic, provisional, and in that sense insignificant. The reasoning imagination thinks in themes because those are the only means it has; but the means are not the end.

The themes or nmu’s that I identify are will thus be my own – formulated by me as interpreter or researcher. Yet the closer they are to those of the diary’s author, and the more they clarify his real meaning, the more valid it makes this research or analysis. The identified themes should also help the reader to get behind the thematizing of the author of the diary and other texts. If the identified nmu’s or themes fail to highlight the author’s real argumentation or intended meaning in the texts analysed, then the interpretation must be seen as invalid.

In a study aimed at understanding the subjective meanings that medical couples have about their lives, Love (1994) gives a workable model for identifying themes during a hermeneutic study of transcripts. A central question throughout her analyses is: ‘What is a theme?’ In answering this question, Love follows Gadamer (1976), who encourages researchers in this frame of reference to “...celebrate the inner dialogue of the researcher and encourage the author to include such pondering in the text” (Love, 1994, p.123). She does not include these steps as a direct suggestion that the very same categories should be applied during the identification of natural meaning units in this study. However, they may certainly act as a good example of steps that may also apply in this study.

Utilising several significant features, Love identifies themes according to a simple method of classification (Love, 1992, pp.123-124):

1. Repetition within and across interviews: Ideas, beliefs, concerns, and issues that one or the other or both spouses discuss repeatedly throughout the interview, and/or which arise at least once during an interview and are noted again in other interviews, are considered significant. In my study the idea of repetition applies to ideas, issues, concerns and beliefs that get repeated throughout the analysed diary and other units of analysis.
2. Levels and nature of affect: This includes emotion that is evident through nonverbal cues such as a sudden rise in vocal volume, changes in facial expression, and other bodily movements all noted concomitantly with particular content, add significance to that content or theme. In my study the levels and nature of affect may be more visible in writing styles, such as metaphors and poetry, and changes in handwriting and used words and phrases.
3. Historical explanations, descriptions, and interpretations: Stories of the past that explain and justify present behaviours and meanings are considered significant. John, the subject of my study, used historical explanations and descriptions throughout his diary that may fit in with this definition.
4. Explicit and implicit interpretations: These require connections between thoughts and activities and meanings ascribed to them, whether they are obvious and direct or implied and metaphoric. These interpretations are significant. John often interpreted his own actions and thoughts by writing about them. These interpretations may be used as significant during the process of data analysis.
5. Serendipity: Participants' behaviours and expressions that differ from the expected, based upon my reading and experience. Unexpected surprises are significant as they allow the researcher to recognise ideas that have not been published. Many behaviours and expressions in the units of analysis for this study may differ from what is expected. The best example is probably the very fact that John committed a crime of passion and spontaneously wrote about it in his diary. The content of what he wrote may therefore be full of serendipity.

Although the themes from Love's (1994) study cannot be adopted in this study without some rethinking and alteration, as indicated they do provide a very good framework of what is meant by the classification of the data into nmu's or themes.

The next step in my proposed process of data-analysis for this study is the reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms.

3.8.2 The reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms

As mentioned (3.8, p. 3-67), the reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms inevitably means that a coherent form of psychological language will have to be decided upon to 'translate' the nmu's. As indicated as well, for this purpose we will use the paradigm clarified and motivated in the literary study. Nmu's or themes directly related to our research objectives will be identified and 'translated' according to an existential-phenomenological paradigm. This suggests that the texts have to be described from a different perspective. The question to be answered will be what this tells us about crimes of passion, rather than only looking at John's questions while writing the text. Meaning units that do not directly relate to the research objectives, as well as meaning units or statements in the original text that repeat those already mentioned, should thus be eliminated. Kruger (1988, p.153) emphasises that the preliminary description resulting from this process should still be seen as related to all the other meanings in the protocol:

It is essential to note that each meaning unit exists in the context of the other inter-related meanings of the protocol so that, regardless of how clearly meanings are conceptually differentiated from each other, there is nevertheless an inseparable relatedness of all these meaning units in their lived sense.

The use, throughout the data analysis, of a language that is true to the living world of the person who authored the text can help to ensure this continuance caused by the relatedness of the preliminary description. This implies that, true to the nature of existential-phenomenology, descriptive language should be used instead of language that tries to define things in terms of pathology or generalisation or diagnostic terms from medical textbooks. Simply put, it means that the language of the author of the text should be explicated, and not changed by the language of the interpreter. The language I will therefore use to tell John's story should be as close as possible to the language I will use to describe the nmu's in the text. My language should, wherever possible, still reflect John's language in telling his own story and trying to make sense of it. The whole transcription or transformation of language during this step boils down to a re-arrangement or re-viewing from a different perspective, and not a re-writing of the original data.

Aronson (1994) identifies five steps in this process of re-arranging or re-viewing data during textual analysis. His steps represent the entire process of data analysis, but are not included here to suggest how to conduct this study's data analysis. They

serve merely to indicate what comes into play during the reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms. In a sense, this step in the data analysis can be regarded as a mini-data analysis within the broader process of data analysis. An overview of this process at this point could help to demonstrate what is involved in finding appropriate "psychologically descriptive terms" for the identified nmu's. Aronson's (1994, p.1) steps, paraphrased and shortened to fit the context, are:

- Collect the data. This first step can come from direct quotes or paraphrasing common ideas. The initial themes identified and mentioned under 3.6 can result from this data collection step.
- The next step to a thematic analysis is to identify all data that relate to the already classified patterns. The identified patterns are then expounded on. All of the writing that fits under the specific pattern is identified and placed with the corresponding pattern.
- The next step to a thematic analysis is to combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes. Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs. The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985, p.60).
- When gathering sub-themes to obtain a comprehensive view of the information, it is easy to see a pattern emerging. When patterns emerge, it is best to obtain feedback about them from their author. Asking the author to give feedback about the accuracy of the transcribed text can achieve this.
- The next step is to build a valid argument for choosing the themes. Reading the related literature does this. By referring back to the literature, the researcher gains information that allows drawing inferences from the text. Once the themes have been collected and the literature has been studied, the researcher is ready to formulate theme statements to develop a storyline. When the literature is interwoven with the findings, the story that the researcher constructs is one that stands with merit. A developed storyline helps the reader to comprehend the process, understanding, and motivation of the researcher.

Following these steps by Aronson (1994) will lead to a summary of the original data's essential elements. These are sub-steps underlying the second step of data-analysis, and they highlight the psychological meaning without changing or reducing it. The

next major step in my proposed data-analysis process is to eliminate those reduced statements developed in step 2 (3.8.2) that are probably not explicating the meaning of crimes of passion.

3.8.3 The elimination of those reduced statements developed in step 2 that are probably not explicating the meaning of crimes of passion

For practical, methodological purposes this step is regarded as repeating step 2 in my proposed process of data-analysis (3.8.2). Elements that reflect a blending of several parts of the previous description or meaning units are to be removed from the condensed text. This implies removing insignificant trivia that may create confusion or misinterpretation of the themes identified as central and nmu's produced by the author or subject. This step involves repeating some procedures, but it is important to explicate further the meaning of the phenomenon under investigation. This step highlights more about the knowledge to be revealed in the learning process, more about how crimes of passion work and what they are.

Eliminating reduced statements developed in step 2 brings the data analysis process to a point where the most important remaining question will be to confirm that the study did not go off its rails at some point. Was I true to the data in the process of analysis? Did the final set of data bring me at least closer to an answer to the research question? Would the subject still agree with the interpretation of what he tried to say? This step is called the application, and it is the next major step in this study's process of data-analysis.

3.8.4 Application

The application has to do with validity testing in a qualitative sense. The description resulting from the previous steps should be randomly applied to selected protocols (paragraphs from the diary, or other selected texts) to determine whether it contains more than the necessary and sufficient constituents of the topic of inquiry (the difficulty in explaining the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of a crime of passion) (See also 3.7, p. 3-65). The protocols are paragraphs from the original text that might contain elements inherent to the experience and that have been left out of the hypothetical identification. This last should be reduced or expanded to ensure the presence of *all* the necessary elements, but also *only* those that are necessary. If the author of the text is available, the hypothetical identification will be presented to him to confirm that the necessary experiential elements are still there. This application could also be done throughout the analysis by presenting direct quotes from John's

diary to substantiate the selection of specific themes as nmu's for revealing the applicable knowledge.

The last major step in my proposed data-analysis process for this study is to integrate the knowledge gained through the previous steps.

3.8.5 Integration

The results of the four initial steps of data analysis still appear as bits and pieces of information without a clear story line. This is the result of the fact that it is presented and analysed under the headings of the preliminary nmu's identified during the process of data selection. Although these headings are needed to organise the first phase of the data analysis, it might make it difficult to follow the logical line of the story unfolding from the process of data analysis. During the fifth step of data analysis, the analysed data will be integrated to form a descriptive story without the preliminary headings.

3.8.6 Summary of proposed process of data analysis

Figure 6 on the next page follows the IDEF method and illustrates the Inductive Data Analysis phase as summarised in Steps 1 through 5 below:

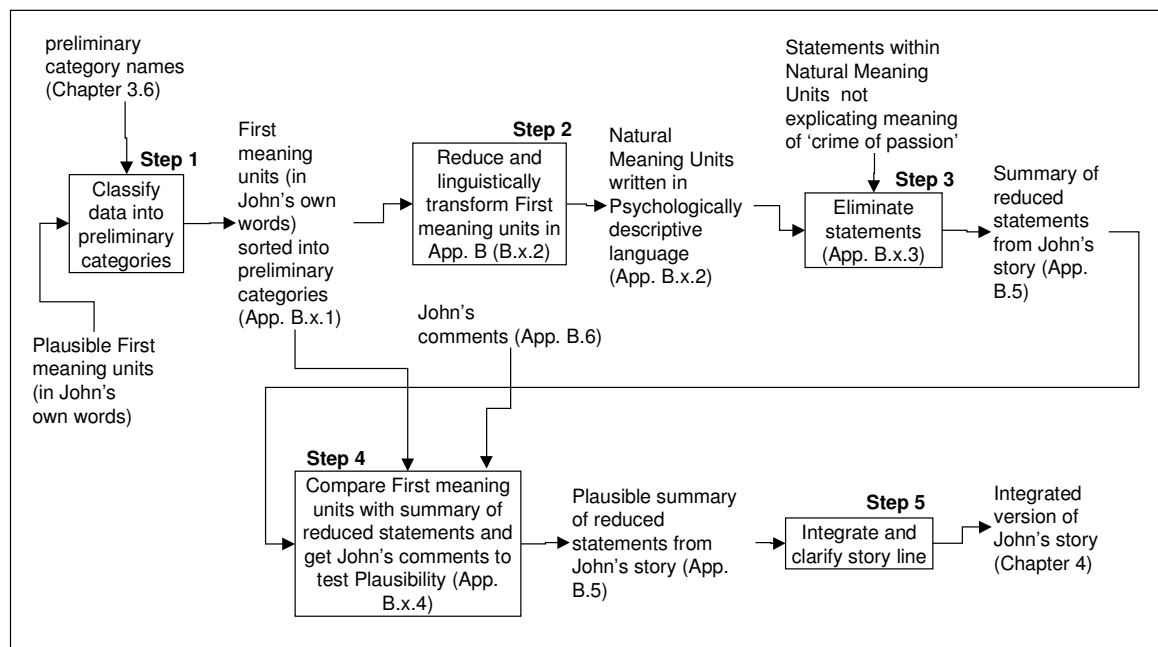


Figure 6: Process of Inductive Data Analysis (App. B and Chapter 4)

In this study, the following steps of data analysis will be followed:

- Step 1: The classification of data into categories (Natural Meaning Units)

Natural meaning units will be identified. They will be regarded as selections or sections of the text with the same subject or object of description as their source of inspiration. The themes or nmu's that I identify will be my own – formulated by me as interpreter or researcher. However, the closer they are to those of the author of the diary, the more they clarify his real meaning, the greater the validity of this research or analysis. The themes identified should help the reader to get behind the thematizing of the author of the diary and other texts. If the nmu's or themes fail to highlight the real thrust or intended meaning of that author, the interpretation can be regarded as invalid. Their purpose will be to help me *thematize* about the author's *theme*, not to create themes that I associate with it.

- Step 2: The reduction and linguistic transformation of the selections into more psychologically descriptive terms

A coherent form of psychological language will be used to 'translate' the nmu's. The paradigm clarified in the literature study will be used for this purpose. Nmu's or themes directly related to the research objectives will be identified and 'translated' through an existential-phenomenological paradigm, implying that the texts will be described from a different perspective. The question will be what the translation tells us about crimes of passion, instead of looking only at John's own questions while writing the text. Nmu's that do not directly relate to the research objectives, and nmu's in the original text that repeat those already mentioned will be eliminated.

During this step, the language of the author of the text will be explicated, not changed by the language of the interpretation. The language I will use to tell John's story should be as close as possible to the language I will use to describe the nmu's in the text. My language should, wherever possible, still reflect John's language in telling his own story and trying to make sense of it. The whole transcription or transformation of language during this step boils down to a re-arrangement and re-viewing (from a different perspective) rather than a re-writing of the original data. In a sense, this step in the process of data analysis could be regarded as a mini-data analysis within the broader process of data analysis.

- Step 3: The elimination of those reduced statements developed in step 2 that are probably not explicating the meaning of crimes of passion

This step could be regarded as a repetition of step 2. Elements that represent a blending of several parts of the previous description or meaning units are removed

from the condensed text. This implies removing insignificant trivia that might create confusion or misinterpretation of the themes identified as central and natural meaning units produced by the author or subject. This step highlights the inherent knowledge to be revealed in the process of learning more about how crimes of passion work and what they are.

- Step 4: Application

The application has to do with the plausibility of the study. The description that results from the previous steps will be randomly applied to paragraphs from the diary or other selected texts to determine whether it contains more than the necessary and sufficient constituents of the topic under investigation. The description resulting from the previous steps will thereby be reduced or expanded to ensure the presence of *all* the necessary elements, but also *only* the necessary ones. This description may also be presented to the author of the diary (written text) to confirm that it still represents his real experience. This application could also be done throughout the analysis by presenting direct quotes from John's diary to substantiate the selection of specific themes as nmu's for revealing the applicable knowledge.

- Step 5: Integration

The results of the first four steps of data analysis may still appear as bits and pieces of information under certain headings without a clear story line. These headings are necessary to organise the first phase of the data analysis, but could make it difficult to follow the logical line of the story unfolding from the data analysis. During the fifth step, the analysed data is integrated to form a descriptive story without preliminary headings.

- Step 6: Deductive category development

The five mentioned steps represent the process of inductive category development, as outlined by Mayring (2000). After applied to the selected units of analysis, they will be repeated in the descriptive story that resulted from the five steps of data analysis applied during phase one. However, during the second phase, steps 2 and 3 will be combined to avoid unnecessary repetition and lengthy descriptions in the body of this study. Steps 4 and 5 will also be switched in order to enable me to do a final test of plausibility of the meaning of John's crime of passion. This second phase of data analysis reflects the process of deductive category development (see Figure 7):

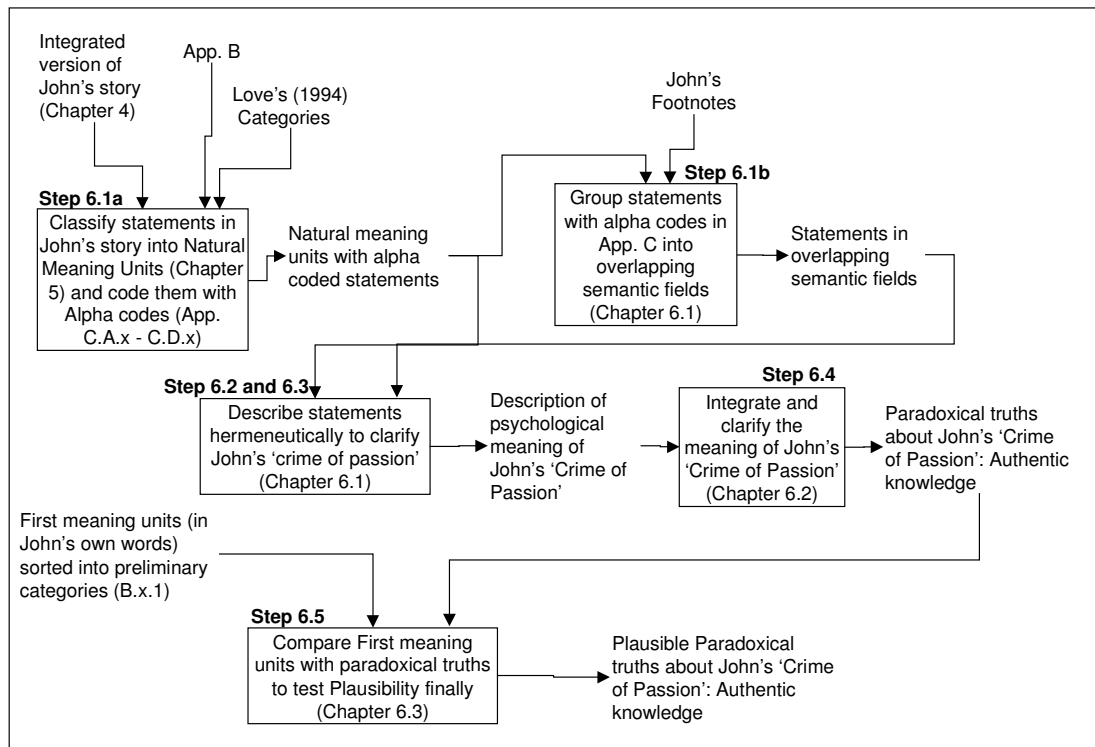


Figure 7: Process of Deductive Data Analysis (Chapter 5 and 6)

Appendix B shows how the application of the relevant steps and phases described above was followed to explicate the knowledge between the lines of the identified units of analysis, the writings of John, the subject for this research project. Chapter 4 represents the outcome of the first phase of inductive data analysis, telling the story of his crime of passion as it unfolded during the analysis. In Chapters 5 and 6, further descriptions will be given to explicate the meaning units and the psychological descriptions, while Chapter 7 concludes the process with an integration and interpretation of the data analysed for this study.

4 PRESENTATION OF JOHN'S STORY

The following two chapters are probably the most important chapters of this thesis. The selected 'raw data' in the diary are presented as processed according to the data analysis methods described in Chapter 3. The result discloses information in the selected data that could add to our knowledge about the studied phenomenon. Since the diary involves more than a thousand hand-written pages, presenting the whole diary here in typed format was impractical, although a copy was submitted as an adjunct to this study and for safekeeping. The selected data units were presented as paragraphs, phrases or expressions as a starting point for the actual analysis process. But to avoid a lengthy, repetitive presentation of data in the body of Chapter 4, the first four steps of data analysis described in 3.8, as well as John's story arranged according to preliminary categories of meaning, are attached as Appendix B. The previously identified categories or themes are used as headings to organise and guide the first phase of the process of data analysis. These are:

1. Getting to know the girl, becoming engaged, and up to the time he killed her. This includes themes related to so-called "experiences of first time."
2. The period between his arrest and conviction.
3. The period in prison and in therapy, involving these themes that emerged in therapy, which could be regarded as meaning units of specific relevance to his expressions:
 - Establishing rapport
 - Prison issues
 - Family issues
 - Emotional expressions
 - Fiancée's parents
 - Repentance and compensation
 - Relationships
 - Adjustments to society that may be required after release and in possible work contexts
 - Parole
 - Search for safe context
4. Selection from his short essays specifically relevant to the topic of this study.

As mentioned in 3.6 (p. 3-64), about five significant entries, phrases or paragraphs at a specific point in time were quoted as basic units for analysis for each category. Only the integration, the final part of step 5 (see 3.8.5, p. 3-74), is presented here, as it outlines what happened in John's life before, during and after his crime of passion. This description will be

presented in chronological order and is entitled *John's story*. The true life (hi)story evolved from the integrated version of the results of phase one of the data analysis, providing a preliminary description of the meaning of crimes of passion unfolding from John's story as he presented it in writing and speech.

In order to facilitate the final categorisation and analysis, John's story will be presented here without headings or meaning units that were used to guide this process, according to the chronological timeline of his life. I am the storyteller and John is mentioned in the third person. While I tell the story on the basis of his life history, diary and other writings, I have tried to stick to his interpretation and perceptions in order to "make him speak" during this presentation. Some preliminary comments of mine, and John's court reports (typed in textboxes), might serve as meta-communication that contextualises his crime for readers, prior to embarking on the process of analysing the meaning units, psychological meaning, and eventually an interpretation that addresses the research question in later chapters.

Prior to presenting John's story as it issues from his diary and other communications, a description of the context of his psychotherapy will provide us with a framework to understanding better the peripheral factors that had an impact on unpacking his story.

4.1 The context of psychotherapy with John

The process of establishing psychotherapeutic rapport with John happened within a huge Correctional Services facility on the outskirts of one of South Africa's largest cities. During the relevant time, most government-managed correctional facilities were beset with complex overpopulation issues. In addition, the courts could not cope with the caseload resulting from very high crime rates. The facility at issue was designed as an intake-and-distribution centre, and lacked appropriate training and recreational facilities, such as are usually included in longer-term correctional facilities. It was adjusted to accommodate nearly all possible inmate categories, from those awaiting trial to maximum security.

There were four buildings accommodating inmates on the premises and several buildings for personnel facilities. One building was mainly used for medium-security male inmates awaiting trial (Medium A prison), one for sentenced medium-security males (Medium B prison), one for sentenced maximum-security male inmates (Maximum prison), and one for all categories of female inmates (Female prison). All facilities, except the maximum-security prison had very few single cells. Most beds were triple-storied and approximately two metres apart to save space.

At the time of my first contact with John, I was the only psychologist on the staff for a total sentenced inmate population of nearly 5,000. Since permanent Correctional Services staff members were not responsible for un-sentenced inmates, I had not met him during his

awaiting-trial period. He has recently been transferred from Medium A prison (inmate population approximately 10,000) to a Medium B prison with an inmate population of approximately 3,000. My office was in the administrative building, 500 metres away due to a shortage of office space in the Medium B building. I usually made arrangements to borrow an office when doing prison consultations. Most inmates were not allowed to leave the premises of the building where they were accommodated.

Ever-present in the facility where John served his sentence, despite efforts to control them, it was beset by overpopulation, gangsterism and intimidation, corruption and bribery among inmates and some staff members, frequent staff changes due to resignations and transfers, staff shortages, frequent transfers of inmates as a method of behaviour control, losses of valuable information from the files of inmates and staff members, security concerns, illegal drug-smuggling and abuse. These issues were restrictive factors that almost always had to be dealt with during psychotherapy. John sometimes referred to them directly or indirectly, although he was afraid to write down such information. He often wrote staff members to try to raise some concerns or asking for adjustments to his privileges, indicating that he had to deal with these issues as part of his everyday life. The general approach and atmosphere in prison was that it was necessary to survive under circumstances that were sometimes referred to as “healthy paranoia.”

When I first met John, I realised that practical issues had to be addressed as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. Amongst other things, I recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in a newly-established rehabilitation centre within the Maximum-security prison. One thing John was particularly afraid of after being transferred, was the ever-present possibility of needing to return to Medium B prison after completing his time in the rehabilitation centre. He always feared that he could not stand up to the stronger intimidation in less protected environments, where he had to sleep in crowded cells with other inmates and the focus is on safe custody, not on rehabilitation.

The relevant episode of John’s life story, which was reported to me in this context, began when he met Mary.

4.2 John's story – context and background

John was the oldest of three children who lived in a suburb with his parents in one of the biggest cities in South Africa. His parents were married in 1958, and he was born in 1961. Both his parents were still alive during this research, but both were battling with restrictive physical illnesses. His mother was a nursery school teacher, and his father was a factory manager who had retired in December, 1999, due to medical reasons at the age of sixty-two. John's experience of his childhood relationship with his father was very bad and stormy, and of his relationship with his mother as good and supportive. His one sister, two years younger than him, was married and had two children. Her family lived in a suburb in the same town where they had grown up, about fifteen kilometres from their parents. His relationship with his sister was very good. He also had an adopted brother, thirteen years younger than him who, during the time of the research, worked as a mechanic, was still single and lived with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father-figure to his adopted younger brother: he often felt responsible for sharing some of his life lessons with him. He often felt bad that his brother was getting involved with bad friends and habits, and wanted to protect him from these influences.

John's story, as revealed in his own transcripts, is divided in two. The first part is the story reflected in his diary, which is this study's largest source of information. It mainly contains the story at issue as John experienced it and reported it as soon as it happened. The second part is John's story as reflected in the court report as well as the letters and essays he wrote during incarceration and psychotherapy. This contains some preliminary interpretations, since it consists of John's own retrospective meditations about his life, as well as some third-party interpretations of his story included in the court report.

4.3 John's story as reflected in his diary

Monday 5 May 1996, the day that John first kissed Mary,³ was unforgettable. To him she was very beautiful in appearance, but especially in terms of personality. He fell completely in love with her and, although he sometimes doubted his own ability to do so, he yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. One month and ten days after that first kiss, they went to a forest-like place called Green Valley for the weekend; here they met some new friends and saw several wild animals and birds. They slept on the train during the first night of the weekend since they had drunk too much alcohol to drive. That night, to John, was lovely and unforgettable: they made love for the first time, and then fell asleep in each other's arms.

³ Alias is for the sake of confidentiality. Although the name Mary might have some symbolic meaning and specific connotations in some contexts, these meanings were not considered as a reason for choosing this name. However, it should be acknowledged that for John Mary impersonated 'immaculateness'

Two weeks after their trip to Green Valley (2 July 1996), John and Mary moved into their own

1996	
May	5th: John kissed Mary
Jun	14 to 17th: visit Green Valley
Jul	2nd: moved in together 12th: John's company closed down
Aug	
Sep	started to work at another company
Oct	
Nov	John retrenched 16th: John and Mary engaged
Dec	10th: Mary murdered 11th: John hands himself over

apartment. John was very excited about it and prayed that it would work out for them. That night again felt like their first night together in each other's arms.

Ten days later, John's workplace closed down due to fraud by one of the managers, who had committed suicide when it was discovered. John felt very bad. At first, he was uncertain about whether to tell Mary about it, but he decided to because her love for him would help her to understand. She did not react as negatively as he had feared.

On Wednesday 24 July 1996 John felt a need to apologise to Mary for the fact that he did not attend her Netball league matches the day before by writing two poems for her and buying

her a gift and a card. He was afraid of losing her and felt that he had to earn her love. They had a talk the previous night and he felt that it helped him to understand her better. She told him that she did not have enough space in her heart to love him completely since two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupied some space in her heart. John felt upset about this, but did not interpret his emotion as jealousy. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was an "ace." He also spoke to her about a sexual problem he experienced and afterwards he felt more at ease and they slept well that night. He expressed some anxiety about himself not being able to live without her, because she was fulfilling many of his desires. He also felt insecure because he was in the process of looking for a new job.

For nearly two months after this talk with Mary, John stopped writing in his diary. On Thursday, 10 October 1996, he began writing about his regret about an injury to Mary's finger. He reported that they attended a wedding on 5 October, and had had an argument after an ex-boyfriend of hers said good-bye to her. They were both upset, and on their way home he made some sexual gestures/overtures towards her. At home, after he undressed her, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he later regretted. She replied by pointing out to him that he generally gets angry when she is not ready for sex, demanding it from her, and that her ex-boyfriend is nothing

more than a friend and that John handles her too roughly. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback and could not have sex with her then, because he realised that it was not right if she did not agree to it. The first time they had sex again was 4 days later. He experienced that as a very significant change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship, because she was close to menstruation and very sensitive. He learned to treasure her more and handle her more tenderly.

After more than a month, John made his next entry in his diary, which turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He has been retrenched again and had serious financial problems. However, he was now more convinced than ever about being totally in love with Mary. He expressed very strong feelings of an overwhelming and possessive love for her that could sometimes push him towards violent deeds, as well as a feeling of inability to convey his feelings to her. In closing, he mentions that they were engaged the previous day.

After not writing in his diary for approximately one month, John committed his crime of passion.
--

On 10 December 1996, John's whole being cried out for an explanation of the fact that he had killed Mary, whom he felt was so special for him that they were parts of one other. He despised of the fact that he broke his promise to himself that he would never hurt her physically or emotionally. It was difficult for him to believe that he had killed Mary. Previously, they had been able to solve differences of opinion by talking and reaching a compromise. He tried to tell her that he wanted to undo what he did. Their love was without equal for him.

After he fleeing from the murder scene, he sensed her telling him to return and give himself up. He listened to her, thanked her, and felt that he had to pay for it – even with his life, if necessary. He did not perceive himself as a violent person, and was convinced that Mary could confirm that. He thought they could communicate without words and he sensed her forgiveness. However, he still felt very guilty and wanted to compensate for it. On the day after the murder, he made a statement of confession to the police, appeared in court and asked for an attorney. His memory of what had happened the previous night was very vague. Deep regret overwhelmed him.

On the day of Mary's funeral, 14 December 1996, John still felt heartbroken. He wished he could attend the funeral, but was not allowed to. It gave him some comfort to know that his mother and sister represented him there. He thought that Mary's father is the only person who would understand the special relationship they had, and found more comfort in the fact that he approved of their relationship. John made a promise to God and Mary that, when he

was released from jail, he would put twelve pink roses wherever her ashes were, or if that was not possible, he would go to their favourite place and give them to the innkeeper.

Two days later, while in prison, John started to feel very withdrawn. He had a vision of Mary standing in the corner of his cell without saying or doing anything. She was wearing the same nightgown as on the night of the murder, and he could not see her hands and feet. Her face was faint and obscure. He was sure that she was trying to say something to him. After another two days, he gave some blood for tests and he felt as if in a trance. He experienced self-hatred, anger and depression, and had suicidal thoughts, yet his love for Mary kept him from committing suicide. Later that evening, he showed some compassion for a black man whom he did not know and who was being bullied by others, and gave him fruit and cigarettes. This was a strange experience for him, and he felt Mary made him do it. He felt scared and nervous, and looked forward to seeing the doctor the next day for the first time after his arrest. He then wrote a poem entitled "*Mary*," where he compares his dreams to a river carrying all their experiences, and with battling to stay between the shores. He dedicated the poem to the remembrance of their love.

Three days later, John had the same dream again. This time he saw Mary clearly and she was smiling and telling him that she loved him very much. He heard her voice as if she was speaking inside him. She was also holding a baby-like bundle in her one arm with her other arm stretched out towards him, as she had held it in the past when she wanted him to hug her. She disappeared when he wanted to touch her. The emptiness, self-anger, sadness and desire to undo his crime then returned to him. Later that night he still felt that way and cried with regret. These feelings were constant from the day of the murder, and he could not accept what he had done because he loved Mary so much. He remembered his sister telling him that he had hit Mary with a pipe and then fainted. The only pipe-like objects that he could remember were the umbrella and the keep-net that he unpacked after returning from their weekend away. He felt some remorse because he told some lies and remembered that they were sometimes snapping at each other in the days prior to the murder. He had constant headaches, felt tense and short-tempered, and was tempted to commit suicide. However, he was determined to push through for the sake of his beloved, and to tell the truth.

On Christmas Eve, 1996, John awoke tired because a new inmate had made a lot of noise in the night, and he had only slept for one hour. He felt angry, had a headache and no appetite, and still longed for his beloved. He was looking forward to being let out of his cell to have a shower. He also thought about being at home with his mother, settling down and getting a lawyer who could communicate better than the first one he had had, but did not know whom he could speak to about this. He recalled some intimate moments with his beloved, and how

beautiful she was. He blamed himself again for destroying their lives and future plans. He felt very close to breaking point, and had many unanswered why's in his mind. John felt a need to speak to Mary's father as he thought that her father would understand and had been like a father to him. He wanted to apologise to him for killing his daughter. He tried to hide his emotions, but still felt very torn apart. He then expressed many of his emotions and concluded that it was "not him" who had committed the murder. He recalled many memories about sentiments they shared, such as about nature, songs, and Disney movies. He wrote that he "...would like to give her a small teddy bear⁴ with a pouch inside, and inside that pouch a diamond and sapphire pendant that she could wear with her chain and glitter ball that he bought her before". He wanted her to imagine all his love inside the teddy bear, and whenever she held it the love would flow out into her heart. He ended this entry in his diary with many big why's and then wrote a poem with the title "Babe."⁵

The theme of the poem seems to be his yearning for every part of her being. He then repeats some of his already expressed emotions, centering on his inner battle between how he perceived himself and their relationship, and its irreconcilability with what he had done.

John mentioned being exhausted after this emotional display in his diary. After sleeping for two hours, he continued his entries about being nostalgic regarding memorable moments and "firsts" with his beloved. Amongst other things, he wrote about how and where they had met and played pool and other games together. He then briefly returns to his immediate surroundings and thanks her for her inspiration to give his roommates some cookies, describing how happy they are and how they are dancing. After that, he fantasises about the family he planned to have with Mary, and how he joyfully experienced her with all his senses.

At midnight, at the start of Christmas, John wished Mary a merry Christmas and drew some pictures to commemorate their love. He promised her, and the son and daughter that they had planned to have, that he would pay for what he did.

Eighteen days after the murder (28 December) John wrote a poem, "In a moment of anger," where he tries to make sense of his emotions. He emphasises how radically a short moment of "insanity" can change lives. He also tries to express something about his complete inability to explain why it happened — apart from knowing that it had to do something with anger. He then wrote some songs of love and praise for his beloved. He mentioned that the negative contents of his verses since being in custody scared him, but that the words just "came faster than he could write." He longed for his beloved, and realised that they had only been one night apart since they had begun dating. He wanted to put her name up at Johnny's Place in Green Valley when released from prison. He never used any swearwords or degrading names towards her before, and they never went to bed before sorting out arguments they

⁴ He often called her Teddy Bear

⁵ John's other nickname for his beloved

had. He found it very difficult to accept that he could harm her physically. He tried to remember what had happened, but could only remember some actions from before and after the murder, not the murder itself. He then wrote down the names of his recent poems, and mentioned how strange they were to him, describing his recurring visions of her looking as if she were trying to tell him something. He then confirmed his everlasting love for her.

On 29 December 1996, John remembered some patches of what happened the night of the murder. He remembered phoning Mary's mother after the murder. He also remembered that Mary had told him that she did not love him any more, and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside, and he could not believe that she had said them. He recalled previous times when she said tender, loving and gentle words to him and wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went straight to his soul and heart, and that he would store it there forever. He also recalled the night when she first used the name "Babylove"⁶ for him.

It was during a very intimate moment after he admired her body and she told him that she was convinced of the gentleness and purity of his love for her. She then gave him permission to freely explore her body.

After describing this moment in detail, he wrote about the sacredness and intensity to him of their relationship. He expressed his belief that her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. Now he could only share the memories with him. He then expressed his regret again, especially towards her father because he made them both lose her.

The refrain of him wanting to "undo" what he did was repeated again.

John wrote many poems; only a few of them were regarded as of sufficient relevance to be transcribed as showing the natural meaning units that appear in Appendix B of this thesis.

On 10 January 1997, John wrote a poem⁷ entitled "*Dad.*" He tried to express the emotional development between him and his father since the time his father gave life to him to when he started to experience him as absent, hating him and completely drifting away from him. Then, ironically, they reconciled after his fiancée's death. He experienced this reconciliation as very fragile and hoped it would last. He wished his beloved could witness it, because she always wanted it.

⁶ He later chose this as his poetry alias

⁷ John wrote many poems from which only a few that were regarded as the most relevant were transcribed among the natural meaning units in Appendix B of this thesis

On 11 January 1997, he wrote a poem called "*Lies*," where he tries to express which insights arose from a retrospective look at the consequences of his lies. They destroyed, took away, caused hate, drove in a wedge, and caused sorrow, pain and regret. He ended with an ironic and rhetorical, "*why did I lie to you?*"

Next to several of his poems like this, he wrote the word "regret" in the margin. He also wrote a poem entitled "Regret."

During 1997 and the first half of 1998, John continued writing extensively in his diary. He did not really introduce major new themes or insights, apart from revealing some more feelings about his father. The dream about Mary appearing to him and wanting to tell him something kept haunting him. He made it out for himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child at the time of the murder, and that she wanted to tell him about that. This interpretation triggered new visions of a happy family life with her, and renewed regret and self-blame because he destroyed that possibility. He also began dreaming of publishing a collection of poetry dedicated to his beloved when released from prison. For this reason, the style of his writing often took the form of verses with metaphors and other literary forms common in poems. As he was awaiting trial and sentence during this time, he also wrote often about what he anticipated in this regard, but seldom in the form of poetry. He adhered to normal "report" and "essay" styles when he wrote about this.

On 15 January 1997 he wrote "*My sick life*." He describes his heart as unmoved and himself as someone who cannot be loved. His life is in autumn and grief and sorrow replace all his fruits. He talks about his fire changing into dead ash, and his loss of jealous care and love. He feels sad and wants to shake his soul to free himself of his ugly part. He expresses his feelings of worthlessness and inability to see things as clearly as before. He concludes with a death wish in which he could choose the ground to be buried in.

On Monday, 3 March 1997, the day before his appearance in court, John mentions that he still slept badly. He had just finished another letter to his mother, and wants to write to his father too, but does not know what to write. While doing his morning chores, he accidentally cut his moustache and then shaved it off. It made him feel naked and cold. He prepared his best suit and outfit, and felt very nervous. He did not know what to expect. He considers writing to his sister instead of to his father, as it would facilitate expressing his own feelings. He wonders whether his psychologist is going to have the opportunity to talk in court, or if he is only going to be asked to plead. He anticipates a postponement of the hearing date and that his lawyer may say nothing other than plead "not guilty." He still experiences some doubt in his mind about what had happened during the murder; he even doubts if it he had been the one who did it.

His birthday, 4 April 1997, is another day of grief and anger for him. He feels careless and aware of the fact that his life expectancy is considerably shortened because he could not face what was lying ahead of him. He feels angry and aggressive towards his fellow inmates. These emotions are continuous.

Three months later, on Tuesday, 8 July 1997, John is on the verge of despair and isolated from the world outside. He counts the days and mentions that he already spent 280 days in the cells awaiting trial. He anticipates something bad, but does not know what. Yet he reports looking forward to a scheduled interview with a social worker and a visit from his sister. He feels guilty that his sister had to visit him in such bad circumstances, and was ashamed and afraid of his suicidal thoughts.

John started using the lower case when referring to himself, writing “i” for the personal pronoun. He mentions that thinking about Mary is upsetting and hurting him so much that he refrains from communicating with her in writing or speech. However, he still wants to treasure the good memories of her, as they provided his inspiration to live.

After his sister’s visit, John is glad to hear that she and her children are well, but longs to be with them. He is angry that the prison privilege of having magazines has been terminated; it reminds him of how isolated he is. He expresses a death wish again, and writes, “*The feel in Me.*” This short verse expresses his strong feelings about being isolated in a bad situation, and also his self-blame and self-hatred.

On Christmas Day, 1997, John writes that it feels just like another day, and that the place prompts him to “*cruise on in automatic mode*” and that he hates it. He continues to write a verse, “*When i fell in Love,*” which expresses his sensation of being in another dimension when he first saw Mary. He immediately knew that he wanted to make her his wife, and felt very happy. He ends off by writing about his belief that, in spite of his current loneliness, he would remember that first impression of her forever, and that he will love her as long as he lives. When he returns to a normal writing style, he expresses confusion and later writes about his headache, depression, and his enjoyment of the special food on Christmas day.

By the time of his final hearing, on Monday 8 June 1998, John reports his day count as 545; he adds daily notes about migraines and his medication next to the date of every new entry in his diary. He now hardly ever uses a capital ‘I’ when referring to himself.

John notes that he spent the whole day in court, that he was very edgy and that the final sentencing will take place in two days. He holds some hope about the possibility of a five-year sentence of Correctional Supervision, with psychotherapy sessions at his own cost supported by the probation officer and his private psychologist. He thinks about his father’s

lung cancer and their reconciliation, and his mother's possible shock if he has to go to prison. He anticipates the possibility of an eight-to-fifteen-year sentence because the judge would feel he had to punish him. Also, Mary's mother is reported as "*anti-me*." He expresses some understanding for her negative feelings towards him, but states his dismay about it because her revenge would not bring Mary back, and could cause more misery. His entry on the next day expresses his intense emotional and physical pain, and his intolerance for the marijuana smoke in prison. He also expresses an intense fear that a sentence of incarceration would ruin the lives of all the people in his immediate family circle. He thinks that suicide would be better if that happens, but would not do it because of his promise to his beloved.

On the sentencing day, 10 June 1998, he makes a short entry saying he was sentenced for eight years, and that it was a long time. He also expressed a sense of relief because he could start organising and building his life again, making a few calculations about the possible period of imprisonment if he gets a reduction for good behaviour.

Four months after John starts to serve his sentence, one of the correctional facility's social workers sent me a formal referral note, dated 8 October 1998. He attached a letter from John, addressed to the head of the prison, and dated 2 September 1998. The letter motivated John's requests to obtain a pair of prescribed spectacles and to see a psychologist. John highlighted that the Judge had ordered psychotherapy as part of his corrective regime, that he had bad migraines, and that he feared a second stroke (apparently he was told a few months ago that he may have had a minor stroke).

On 13 October 1998, I met John for the first time in the referring social worker's office. He was grateful and very co-operative. I followed the normal psychological protocol of doing a full present state examination. What stood out for me during the assessment, were: a) his long history of substance abuse (mainly cannabis); b) his relationship problems and experiences of conflict with his father; c) his inability to cope with the current prison environment (see prison issues); d) his physiological problems, such as migraines and hypertension; e) that writing was one of his natural therapeutic self-help devices, and f) his intense regret and bereavement.

I realised that practical issues had to be addressed as a preparatory ritual to facilitate psychotherapeutic development. I followed the necessary procedures to obtain his previous psychological assessment report written for the court proceedings, recommended regular psychotherapy and transfer to a single cell in the Maximum security prison, phoned his mother to investigate her possible supportive role, and recommended a medical examination, a.s.a.p.

During the following period, the social worker in Maximum managed to get approval to use a section of the prison, containing 11 single cells as an accommodation facility, for a substance abuse rehabilitation program stretching over a period of about three months. A new full-time psychologist was also appointed to share my responsibilities. She was a young lady who was still busy with the final stages of her practical training; ironically, Maximum prison was the

safest place to accommodate her during that time. After a few follow-up psychological consultations with John and many communications with other staff members, we managed to get John admitted as a member of the first group in the in-house substance abuse rehabilitation program. The new psychologist took over his psychotherapy, but I was involved in a supervisory capacity. John was eager to do the program from the start, and participated fully in all the activities.

On 1 December 1998, the day after John had had his first individual consultation with his new psychologist, he wrote about his tiredness and tension in his diary. He noted that it hurt to talk about his beloved, but that he needed to do that to get it out of his system and carry on with his life. He also wanted to address practical needs, such as getting something to read and permission to practice a hobby. He realised that Christmas was close by, and that it has been nearly two years since the murder. The time that had elapsed was long, but it also felt like yesterday for him. He wanted to start writing poems again.

On Christmas Day, 1998, John writes in his diary that it did not feel like Christmas and that he missed his family. His memories went far back, but felt irritated by a "lazy cleaner" whose work he had to do. He mentions that people tried to escape, and that it was a total waste of time and even a life. Someone died in prison from a "heart attack," and the worst of it was to see him and to clean the blood off the floor; this blood precipitated re-experiencing the murder scene in which he was involved.⁸

The entries in John's diary are much shorter now, although he very seldom skips a day. No relevant new themes are introduced in 1999. Some studying and writing assignments he writes about during this time in the rehabilitation program will be raised in a later section of this thesis.

After approximately one year in psychotherapy after the murder, he continued.

After approximately three months, in early 1999, I took over John's psychotherapy after the program was completed, and the new psychologist had transferred to another location. In accordance with the AA/NA treatment model, the people who went through the program were allowed to volunteer for training as lay counsellors, and act in a supervisory capacity for the next group of selected rehabilitation program occupants. A similar section of the Maximum prison close to the "rehabilitation centre" was obtained as a halfway house for inmates who had just finished the program and were being trained as lay counsellors. Although another psychologist (also a young lady in the final stage of training) was appointed in January 1999, she opted not to take the responsibility for John's individual psychotherapy. However, she did all group work and training sessions with the rehabilitation candidates. Later in the year, the male social worker that had begun the rehabilitation centre was also transferred to another location. His responsibilities were taken over by another young female social worker who was

⁸ What actually happened was that there was an attempted escape on Christmas day and one of the inmates was shot in the resulting clash between staff and some inmates

transferred from Medium B prison. John's involvement in the lay counsellor's training and activities enabled him to stay on in the appropriate section, containing single cells in Maximum. All the practical arrangements amongst difficult circumstances helped to establish good psychotherapeutic rapport and trust, laying a sound foundation for the psychotherapy to follow.

Christmas day 1999 was just like any other day: John longed to be with his family and he thought especially about the excitement of his sister's children. He felt powerless to change his situation and blamed himself for it. He had some new physical problems and wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation. He hoped that it would be his last Christmas in prison because he wanted to help his parents. He started to feel very annoyed by the noise that some of his fellow inmates made and blamed their cultural origin for it. He started to "hate them with a passion." He was looking forward to phone his family and knew that they would gather at his sister's house. He mentioned that his book⁹ was making progress and that he tried to put his emotions into words in it. He found it quite difficult.

After he phoned his mother John expressed some mixed feelings. His family members were all well, but their car had been stolen. This incident enhanced his ethnic hatred, and he wrote that he wished that he could get his hands on the thieves, that he would kill them and that he was even thinking of escape. He felt on the edge and anticipated an unstoppable emotional explosion. He was also angry because his external psychologist's report had been lost during the time that the psychologist's office in Maximum prison was unoccupied. His mother did not have a copy at home either, and he wanted to apologise to her that he was so angry when she told him that she could not find the copy. He realised that he could not afford to have an emotional outburst now, and wanted to speak to his individual psychologist about it. He also wanted to write a request to the parole board to have the remainder of his sentence converted into correctional supervision, and wanted to speak to the relevant social worker about it. He was determined to do things for himself now "if nobody wanted to help him." His main motivation was to help his ageing parents at home.

On 26 December 1999, he wrote that he has learned a lot about life, that he had become stronger and had grown aware of his shortcomings. He wanted to work on these last, but realised that it was not going to be fast or easy. He had avoided addressing it in the past, and realised how complicated the process of required change within himself had become due to his procrastination. He wanted to become a more balanced person and to consider his relatives more because he was thankful for their support during difficult times; he wanted to contribute something to their lives now. He thought about his father's difficulties after his car

⁹ Probably his book of poetry

had been stolen, and he wanted to prepare for the visit of his mother and sisters the next day. He missed his sister's children, and hoped they would come along.

During his time in incarceration, John often expressed feelings indicating different reasons for wanting to be with his family, or at least some members of his family. After the murder, he started to experience some reconciliation between himself and his father. The reports of the court's findings make it clear that his mother played an important part in convincing him to confess and hand himself over to the police while he was still very confused and afraid. She was also the one who sometimes tried to advocate for him by phoning some staff members in prison. He often expressed fears of not coming out of prison while his parents were still alive. He felt a strong responsibility to do something to make their time in old age easier for them. He felt that the opposite was happening, in actual fact, while incarcerated.

On the last day of 1999, John remarked that it was an end of an era and of a part of his life that he rather wanted to "...file away in the deepest folds of his mind". He feels that he has learned from the last four years, while also failing himself and his family. The lesson is extremely painful and unforgettable for him. Now the time has come for him to build on what he has learned and carry on as his beloved would have liked him to. Although he still has many questions about what really happened the night of the murder, and is afraid of the possible answers, he feels ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping-stone helping him to learn. It has changed his life in a way that he never expected. He was not aware of his true mental condition because, if he had been, he would have done something about it for the sake of his beloved and himself. He still sees her in his mind, and will always love her. He realises that there will never be another Mary in his life, and he does not want another lady. He feels it would be so unfair to another her if all the memories of his beloved remain, inevitably causing him to make comparisons. He has done a lot of introspection during the past three years, and realises that there were things that he needed to do, but not for financial gain. He has been given a chance in life and wants to use it fully to help others better the quality of their lives. He wants to share what he has learned from his own experience, and it was so drastic for him that he felt that no words could describe it. He is writing a book about it, and also continues to write poems as a way of unloading events in his mind. He still hopes for a breakthrough in terms of understanding himself. Grateful for the love and support of his family, which carried him through this difficult time, he feels closer to them than ever before. He does not know what lies ahead in the New Year, but he has faith that things can only get better. He wants to get out and be with his family soon, and intends to work hard on improving himself, with his decision-making, and to find some answers to his questions. As the actual hour of the turn of the century approaches, he adds that he wanted space: a private, peaceful hole where he can curl up and have dreams and stretch his imagination while planning and setting goals. He expresses some hope that the minister of

correctional services would grant some deserving prisoners a reduced sentence. He also intends to complete his book and poems, and has a gut feeling that he had underestimated himself. Convinced that he had the answers to his own problems, he feels angry and frustrated because he cannot apply the answers to solve his problems yet.

On New Year's Day, John writes in his diary that he would have liked to be with his parents and his sister's family. They are the core of his very being, and although he realises that his problems (incarceration) were his fault, he prays to be with them at that moment. He expresses his determination to succeed in reaching his goals; two of them were to be released by June 2000, and to have his own business. He has very strong emotions that he describes as a passive anger caused by a combination of circumstances and feelings. He feels a need for help from his individual psychotherapist. He also wants to see the social worker who had been transferred to another location as he thought that he could help him to go out sooner from correctional supervision. He also wants to become involved in supporting the community's elderly and needy young children, to compensate for some debt he has towards them. His hobbies of making plaster ornaments and cards on the computer could become a possible source of income. He then writes three poems and mentions that they were acting as an outlet valve for his painful, sometimes devastating memories. He feels they are a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.

One of the reasons for keeping a diary that John often brought up during psychotherapy was that writing was the only way he felt that he could express his real emotions. He regarded himself as an "unpopular loner" during schooldays, and did not talk very easily. Yet he always had very intense emotions with which to deal. He often starts his diary entries with "my friend," almost as if the diary was a surrogate for an imaginary friend he created during early childhood, when he had no real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal "life partner and wife" with this "pen friend," and thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared while talking to his most intimate friend, partly imaginary and later often represented by his beloved. He used metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his "friend" to express his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence. When having to face some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder he continued to write to "his friend," although it is as if a "fusion" developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

Four days later, on 5 January 2000, he continues to express some experiences about relationships in his life in his letter to Mary. He writes that his world has become very small and that he had no "friends" - only people who knew him. He thanks God for his immediate relatives and again expresses his indebtedness to them. He thanks Mary for teaching him that life has a purpose, but regrets that it cost her her life. He tells her about his intention to

serve the elderly and needy children in institutions, and that he does not want to do it to escape his punishment. He starts to write poems again, and a book as well. There is a twist in his poems and they had a hidden, deeper meaning now.

After a coffee break he tells Mary that he has decided that it is time to get on with his life now, and that there were going to be major changes. He has decided to avoid getting involved in heterosexual relationships again as he does not like to hurt people and he is scared of himself. He wants to again do some of the recreational activities they used to do together, such as play pool and indoor cricket. He has had enough emotional pain now, and wants to start a new chapter in his life, although it is going to be very hard for him. He also discovers, through the things that came out in the cards and plaster ornaments that he made, that he had a “*weird creature streak*” in him. It gave him satisfaction to see that it gave his mother and sister some pleasure. He wants to go and live with his parents, and mentions that his father bought a new car and has been on pension since 10 December 1999.

Much has already been said about John’s relationships with other people and the specific difficulties he had with this. In fact, about every entry in his diary is about his experience of relationships in his life. But it is as if the more reserved focus before psychotherapy began, with therapeutic progress, to become a more other-centred, expressive approach. Before the murder, on 7 May 1996, he wrote in his diary that he had had an argument with his father, and that he got so angry that he could kill him, but that he just keep quiet for his mother’s sake. He also wrote about the fact that he started to fall in love with Mary, but had thought it would be better to “back off” because she was still in love with Bill, and that he did not want to hurt her.

Two days later, he writes in his diary that he was “...*utterly disgusted, frustrated and angry with myself*”. He mentions that he had applied to stay in the complex’s rehabilitation section, and that he had written a letter to Mary. Writing the letter caused him a lot of emotional pain again. He feels he could not cope so well any more, and feels trapped as he cannot realise his intentions to serve his family and the elderly while in prison. It is detrimental to keep up his morale, he should be enabled to do this, and he intends to write a proposal to the parole board the next day.

In a letter John wrote to Mary on 5 January 2000, he expresses concern about his father’s back and lung problems, and his mother’s skin cancer and eye cataracts. His sister had some difficulty finding a permanent job, and his brother-in-law was surprisingly supportive towards him. He wanted to help them all, and mentions that one of the motives in writing a book is to help others by sharing with them the many things he had learned. His poems are more personal for him, but he also thinks that someone else might find some clarifications for their own problems by reading them. He mentions that this may be his last letter to Mary, but “only time will tell”. He will always remember her and treasure the good memories.

Even prior to reaching the mid-point of his sentence, John often tries to envisage his first period “back in the normal community”. Although he yearns for freedom and the opportunity to deal with all his perceived debts to relatives and society, he also fears that he would not be able to cope with all his responsibilities again. One thing that he holds onto as an anchor amongst all these uncertainties is that one of his previous employers had promised him a job when he got released. His biggest fear seems to be entering again into new close relationships. He often pictures himself as quite isolated and busy with some compensatory duties, without allowing himself the privilege of very close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who are not related to him. The point that needs to be highlighted is his newfound awareness of vulnerability, and an accompanying fear of committing a similar crime again. Ironically, this new awareness turned out to be one of his best alibis to prove that he is not at very high risk of committing a similar crime again.

4.4 Preliminary interpretations of John’s story

Some preliminary interpretations of John’s story are reflected in the court report, his letters and his essays.

On 20 January 2000, John wrote a letter addressed to the rehabilitation centre psychologist and social worker. He mentions that he wants to clarify a few potentially problematic points that concerned him and others. His first concern is about a possible clash between the counsellor’s course he was taking and his individual psychotherapy sessions. He was afraid that the times would clash such that he would have to terminate the individual therapy. He indicates how important it is to be able to continue with both. The letter carries on mentioning another ten environmental and structural issues such as food, health, wanting to use a computer, other inmates’ bad behaviour and drug abuse, and equipment for hobbies. He then concludes by thanking the social worker for her time and requesting to see her together with one of his fellow course attendants to discuss the rehabilitation centre.

In a letter written to me on 26 February 2000, John wrote that he was afraid to return to Medium B prison when the counselling course finishes in September. He therefore requested to work and stay in the prison hospital (a small sick bay close to where he was for the course), working as a tea boy, at the vehicle maintenance unit, or at the dog unit. Whatever his position, he specified a desire to be in a single cell because he was afraid that he would not be able to cope with many people around him or with noise. He wanted to stop trying to use the prison computers, because they caused too much friction. Furthermore, he confirmed his request for a change in the scheduled time for his psychotherapy sessions. He felt a need to have peace and quiet around him to help him heal.

He mentioned being very concerned about his sister, who had not visited him since December 1999, suspecting the intervention of some conflict between his father and brother-in-law. He requested a consultation visit with his sister to clarify this matter. He expressed his fear of what it might do to him if he lost his family, explaining how his emotions fluctuated very frequently. He felt that he was treated unfairly by some of the wardens recently, and that they did not regard anything he did or said as worth listening to. He withdrew from them and did not volunteer for anything any more. He was angry with one specific staff member. He was convinced that his goals were realistic and with good motives. He did not want to pretend any more. A review of step 2 in his course¹⁰ made him realise how difficult it was to be honest with him, but it also helped him to see his own possibilities.

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations played a major part in his development and conceptualisations around the prelude and aftermath of the murder of his fiancée. It became an even more pressing issue once he was arrested since he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

On 3 January 1997 John wrote a letter to Mary, outlining his memories of their relationship from the beginning. He describes how they met at an evening of Blackball. She still had another boyfriend and he (John) "...gave her the choice" between the two of them. He recalls being glad that she chose him, and her crying when they went to fetch her belongings from his apartment. He then runs through his sentiments and memories about their favourite places and events, such as when they moved into their apartment and when he asked her father if he could marry her. He mentions that the first time they made love was in her mother's flat, and recalls other "firsts" — such as the first time they bathed together and their first dinner date, and their first weekend away at Green Valley. He also describes his positive memories of significant friends and family members, such as her grandmother and her brother, who told him that he was the best boyfriend she had ever had. He recalls their night in the train again and how intimate and intense that was.

Then he calls into memory the "*mistake of his life*", lying to her about his background. He mentions his regret and his wish to "*undo*" what he had done. He mentions what the engagement at her grandmother's place had meant to him, and how they had planned to have a boy and a girl, even choosing their names. Their wedding date was set for October 1997.

He ends the letter by expressing his disgust and disbelief that he destroyed all those memories, and having caused so much harm and hurt. He expresses his adoration of her,

¹⁰ To believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

thanks her for what she had done for him, asks for forgiveness and vows that he will love her forever, hoping to see her when it is his time. Once he ends the letter, he notes that he is worried about his future, but that he would pay for what he has done, even, if necessary, with his life.

Two of the words John used most often in his diary after the murder are “undo” and “regret.” Many of his poems – which even had titles such as “Regret” – and letters can be described as a sort of lamentation about what he did, how much regret they caused in him, and how he wished they had never happened or that he could reverse them. One thing that came out quite clearly in the court report, but his diary refers to only indirectly, was that he told his beloved a few lies about his qualifications and the nature of his employment. He wanted to impress her and felt that she might look down upon his real education and employment status. The murder happened shortly after he decided to confess to her that he had told these lies.

During the last phases of psychotherapy with me, he often spoke about how he doubted whether he would ever be able to be involved in an intimate relationship with another girl. He preferred to picture himself as doing some community service in a home for the elderly. He thought that he owed the community some compensatory service. The fact that his own parents were ageing probably contributed a lot to informing what he envisaged about this future voluntary service to other people.

These extracts from the court records reflect some of what he experienced in this regard:

“Probably because the accused wanted to impress the deceased, he told her and her mother several blatant lies. Some examples are –

- that he was an engineer who was busy with further studies;
- that he won prizes at university;
- that his motor vehicle was stolen.

He went so far as to commit fraud with the help of his brother-in-law’s credit card. This was a very stressful period, which caused further inferiority and dependence. It also had the consequence that the accused continuously lived in fear that the deceased would find out about his untruthfulness and that that he could lose her.”

The report further describes that John decided to tell the truth to his beloved. At first, she did not react very fiercely but, soon afterwards, she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she later also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after these incidents. He apparently hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance, and tried to bandage his beloved’s wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He claimed not being able to remember either how the crime took place or how he had got to the coastal town. From there, he phoned his mother, who convinced him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office. He did so.

In his letter to Mary of 5 January 2000, John mentions that things were getting better for him: he had a job waiting for him, a place to stay, and even a car awaiting him. He says that his family needed him very badly, and that his sister’s children’s acceptance of him was a

breakthrough for him. Then his thoughts returned to his cell, and he mentioned how his pot plant was the "main living thing" that gave him great pleasure.

On 26 February 2000, John writes¹¹ that he learned to be himself, and to stop pretending to be what he is not. He longs for a steady and secure job again, even if it is not very well remunerated. He realises that he got involved with Mary because he wanted to pretend that he was someone he was not. Eventually, he just could not cope with the pretence any longer, and he exploded. He did not want to let that happen again. He realises that he could not handle the teasing right through his school and his national service, up to his adult life and even now, in prison. He experienced it as pressure that made him aggressive.

From the start of his incarceration, John has expressed thoughts and feelings regarding his expectations about the phase between his release from incarceration and complete freedom. It starts by wanting to apply for converting his sentence from incarceration into correctional supervision. Although most concrete evidence points to the unlikelihood of this occurring, his emotions in this regard seem to get the better of him. He never really gave up on trying, even if anyone with some knowledge tries to explain the low probability of success for his plan. He seemed to want to hold onto this possibility as a reminder that his incarceration would not last forever. Sometimes it was also a matter of trying to transcend his immediate suffering, in many senses of this word. His intention to try to have his sentence converted also strengthened around the turn of the century. The new millennium probably also indicated a new millennium in his life for him. He wrote about these experiences through letters to staff members, as well as in entries to his diary.

In his letter to me of 26 February 2000, John explains why it was so important for him to finish the counsellor's course. He reports that it had already helped him to gain some insights about his own weaknesses, but that he still has to learn to cope with them. He says that he has had reset his goal to be out of prison by December 2000. He asks for advice on how to go about achieving this, and that he had heard about an electronic monitor for people on parole that he would be interested in using. He also intends to help "*the department sorting out problems so that in future more people can be helped...*" He confirms that he has sufficient support systems at home,¹² and that he would like to serve the elderly and children.

A last issue that runs like a consistent thread throughout his incarceration is John's search for a safe context. This can be interpreted literally as well as figuratively. He very often wants to be protected against possible physical assault and intimidation in prison. He also wants to find people who understand some of his inner struggles, and looks for support in finding answers to all his questions. He wants some reassurance that he will one day be able to have a normal life again. However, he is sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing

¹¹ in a letter addressed to me, the researcher and therapist

¹² this was one of the conditions before a parole date could be allocated

many *“purifying and compensatory rituals”*.

John’s letter to me of 26 February 2000 centres on his search for safe context. He mentions that tension and friction might sometimes make him act in ways he does not feel comfortable about, that he has felt extremely sensitive since the murder and has decided to avoid situations that may be hazardous to him. He feels that some prison wardens have recently been treating him like a child, and that he has kept quiet and done what was required from him, in hopes that it would *“backfire”* on them. He disagreed when he was told that he had too many privileges, and expresses his determination to fight back mentally and even physically, *“if needed”*. Due to a mistake someone else had recently made, prisoners were banned from using the computers, and he feels that that is unfair. They were eating out of dishes *“like dogs”*, and he was losing weight. He will not allow them to break him, and is determined to stay clean from drugs and alcohol, even once out of prison. He feels tied down because he cannot realize his decision to do work in the community, but is determined not to give up. He expresses a need to go on with psychotherapy, even once out of prison, and he wants to formulate his future plans.

A safe context to John was one where he could act upon his intentions to serve a community that was not threatening to his mental condition.

Another issue related to serving a sentence is that inmates often refer to being incarcerated as *“doing time”*, and, when they use drugs such as marijuana, they call it *“pushing time”*. In existential-phenomenological psychology, time refers to a way of being, not the passing of minutes or hours on clocks. I had such notions in mind as I asked John to write me an essay on Time in July 1999. I did not influence him by referring to them, as I was interested in getting his spontaneous associations, feelings and thoughts. He confirmed the significance of the subject *“Time”* for him by bracketing his title with several exclamation- and question marks.

John starts his essay on *“Time”* by mentioning how long it had been since his arrest, adding that he could have used the time more constructively. Time was something he had never really noticed before, but since meeting Mary (in 1996) it began to lie heavily on his mind and whole being.

For John it all began in 1976, when he started to smoke cigarettes. Although this was no big deal in itself, it led to some wrong friends and to drinking. He thought he could control it, but discovered that a bad temper and alcohol do not mix well. He got involved in many bar fights, injuring several victims. It felt bad for him to lose his temper when he was sober, and when he was drunk he tended to withdraw and entirely stopped talking; this became his pattern of behaviour. He could drink a lot of alcohol before anyone would notice that it affected him. As time went on, he began taking marijuana as well. He thought it would calm him down, but it

just made him quieter and emotionally bottled-up. Years later, he realised that it was a very dangerous situation. He also tried LSD, but that did not agree with him at all, and he ended up in hospital. When he tried cocaine, he felt it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison, and often mixed it with marijuana, Mandrax¹³ and alcohol in the form of wine, whiskey, rum and tequila.

In December 1996, he had a good fishing weekend. On Monday night he took marijuana, cocaine and *“a lot of alcohol”*. He did not take anything over the weekend as he was with his fiancée, whom he adored and respected. When they had the argument that night, he felt angry, but could control himself until he heard the words *“I don’t love you – take your things and go”*. It really *“rocked his unstable mind”*. John says that he *“...switched off for a few seconds and did something that I never did before and that he did not even dream about in his worst nightmares”*: he killed his fiancée in a terrible violent rage. Her head was smashed and he became a murderer. In retrospect, he thinks he acted like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. Despite generally having a sound memory, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Sometimes he hears a noise like dry branches breaking, which he associates with breaking bones: it upsets him and fills him with fear, revulsion and self-hatred. He will never forget the coppery smell of blood. Sometimes it feels to him as if it had happened very recently; he feels that this scene will haunt him forever.

Since then, John lived behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. Yet in life it is disturbed at times. Pain is there for him part of time, and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, there is no choice for him: the eight-years sentence in prison is a very long time for him. During the first three, he abused a lot of drugs and started seeing himself as very much of an uncaring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being again. He often exploded in Medium B prison, triggered by small incidents. On several occasions someone nearly got killed by him, and he sometimes scared himself too. After two mini-strokes and numerous migraine attacks, and after he hurt some people physically, he decided to seek some help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner to beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realised that it was the only chance that he would ever have. His life went unstoppably in the wrong direction for 35 years, and it cost a life, a murder, to make him stop in his tracks and realise that it was time to change.

¹³ Methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa

In November 1998, things reached a point where John realised that in only three years his life was beginning to shatter into pieces. Then he also realised that time was on his side, and that he had to allow it to heal him. This realisation led to a *"breakthrough decision"*, and by November 1999 he was living drug-free. He had committed himself to change, and now felt that he needed a secure surrounding to help him become a *"normal human being"*.

John reported about that *"Past time"*, over the previous nine months, had helped him to see a new John emerging; still, he felt shaky and uncertain about what to do with his future. He had so many dreams and goals that he sometimes felt frustrated because he wanted to do too much, too soon. Recently, his world had nearly crumbled because of insecurity, and he thus needed a secure environment from where he could lay the foundations for a well-balanced life. Time had shown him many of his weaknesses, and he developed an approach of constructive self-criticism and active involvement to address them. His confidence grew and time warned him that this was his one and only time to do what he had to do.

Looking back was like looking at a growing baby becoming stronger through pains, tears and falls. He no longer took for granted things such as being outside, walking on green grass, feeling the rain on his face, or enjoying a good home-cooked meal. Although he had a high price to pay, he felt it was not too high for a life that has been taken. Time could not take away the fact of what happened or the pain of missing a loved one now dead and forever in the past. Time sometimes brought hurting reminders, and he wished he could clean out bad memories. Even memories of good times with Mary upset John because he knew they could be no more. One thing he realised with sadness was that he did not want a relationship with some other woman. He was afraid of her reactions to dealing with the fact that he had killed his fiancée, and of his possible counter-reaction. He thought it would be best to avoid a situation where he would feel insecure. He realised that it might be seen as a bitter reaction, but his improved self-knowledge and writing to his sister helped him to see a side of himself that he never looked at before. He would always have an inner loneliness which time would not be able to take away. He found another part of him that was very happy about the fact that his sister had two children whom he loved dearly. Only time would tell whether he could ever have children of his own. At the moment, he was content with being able to see, love, and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, also for the future — although he had nearly lost them too. He concluded that time was a thing one could not define in only one certain way. It was everything and nothing at the same time. Only weakness, and the will to overcome it, would help him at that moment. In time he might look back and say, *"I told you so"*.

I thought it would be helpful, in explicating hidden meanings, to ask John to write down his

thoughts about a crime of passion. He did this shortly after his essay about time (in July 1999).

John began his reflections by saying that he is finally “*looking hard*”¹⁴ at what he calls a “*thing*”, and others call “*a crime of passion*.” He looked up the dictionary’s definition, which says it is “a crime especially of murder due to sexual jealousy”¹⁵. He commented that this definition does not include the build-up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, his pretending to be what he was not, impressing people, trying to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, sensitivity, and many more things that he did not have a label for. It also did not include the mental hell he was still going through, the longing, the heartbreak and regrets.

John's hardships had already lasted more than three years, and although an outsider may think a clear picture of his ongoing despondency is possible, his experience of it was confusing. However, it made him grow mentally. His picture of himself was painful and he did not believe or care about other people’s perceptions of it – that was their problem, not his. John had thought his life began when he fell in love with Mary, three years and eight months before. Soon afterwards, he realised how wrong he was. Love made him go blind and he had not noticed things that were quite obvious. He had made decisions and done things that he regretted and wanted to undo. It is not so easy, however, and life has a tendency to go on no matter what happens. He just had to pick up the pieces and carry on. His mind was his worst enemy because a person’s heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives but never forgets. It caused a scar only visible to him that he saw every day.

Since he had turned 18, John yearned for a secure peaceful life and in many ways he had that. However, he had some problems and a tendency to push them aside and avoid dealing with them. He saw himself as a peaceful, non-violent person before, but now he started to see himself in a different light - especially after the “*thing*.” The murder has turned his life inside out, and things would never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life’s tracks and was forced to look at himself, where he stood and where he wanted to go. He was forced to start dealing with problems that he had put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind, and did not hide anything. He was honest with himself for the first time and it felt good.

John also looked back to the time before the murder. In April 1996, he had been promoted from production supervisor to production manager; he thought that this was the first thing went wrong. He enjoyed his work very much, but hated the paperwork; he has never liked paperwork. He liked writing poems, but admitted that that was as far his love for paperwork

¹⁴ A phrase from Lion King, one of his favourite movies, which helped him to make sense of his life history

went. All the daily paperwork meant he was less on the workbench, where he felt most comfortable. In July 1996, he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and, from there on, his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself.

It was during this time that John began to realise how serious he felt about his relationship with Mary. He not only fell in love with her, he "*worshipped*" her. Never before had he felt like this about a woman, and he felt ill equipped to handle it. He only focused on the fact that he wanted her, and that he did not want to lose her or her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very possessive and protective about her. They had a lot in common, but there were also many differences. John was glad about the fact that she loved fishing nearly as much as he did. For him, it meant he could have peaceful weekends fishing at his favourite spot as well as the love of his life with him. They played action cricket together very often, they played league pool, and both won many trophies and prizes. Their shared interests made them feel very close to each other.

The first difference between them that John discovered was that she liked to party and to be socially involved, while he could not handle noise and loud music – even the music he loves. It hurt his ears and gave him migraines. They had very similar musical tastes, yet he liked it soft while she liked it loud; they were constantly at odds in this regard. He usually gave in and let her have her way. A second difference was that Mary was very neat and tidy, while John was not. In time, he became very conscious about where and how he packed things or put things away. He always helped her cleaning up and did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother had trained him in household things, e.g., with cleaning, cooking and planning. Mary did not like cooking much, while he loved cooking and eating. He was very happy in kitchens. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his job; suddenly he had no income, and that put severe strain on him. He could not handle that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry at himself. He tried to obtain a job for 6 months and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift work and she did not like it and would not allow him to take it. This frustrated him, but because he did not want to lose her he did not protest strongly. Not having a job put a lot of pressure on him, especially since they had got engaged and were planning to marry. He sold his car for R8,000-00 to pay for rent and food, as he was not happy that she was paying for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen.

During the time of John's unemployment, drugs became a bigger part of their lives than previously. They both took dagga (marijuana) and Mandrax, and he used cocaine as well. All of this cost money. They often travelled to and spent a lot of money in a coastal town in

¹⁵ John did not mention in his diary which dictionary he used

KwaZulu Natal. She had had previous relationships, as had he, but he was very cautious about her previous boyfriends, who still contacted her. Although he did not like this, he did nothing because he loved her. He also had problems with his father, with whom he clashed most of the time. These arguments influenced his life greatly and in many ways. To remember it brought on a lot of bitterness that he did not like to dwell on.

Finally, during "that fatal night" John wanted to tell Mary about his lies and his life of pretending, and he did so. She was shocked, but at first accepted his story and agreed to help him. Later on, she told him very loudly and in no uncertain terms that she did not love him, and that she did not want him. He pleaded with her to reconsider, and she calmed down. Then, amongst other features of his, she compared his sexual traits with those of her previous boyfriend. For John that was a tender, sensitive issue, because he had problems in that area. He kept quiet although it hurt him very much. Later she exclaimed: "that is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!"

John did not think that it was what she said as much as how she said it that made him lose control. He did not remember very much about what happened immediately after that. He remembered that he went for her, that he was hitting her, and also the blood afterwards. Later he found out that he had killed her using a steel pipe. To him that was the end of his life as well. He tried to kill himself and couldn't do it, as he had promised her that he would pay for what he had done. Her death had killed him inside, and even three years later it still haunted him. He had never been a violent person, except when he lost his temper. Then, he would lose control completely. He had thus always been careful not to lose his temper, but at times it happened so quickly that, before he knew, it was too late.

Even in prison John tried not to lose his temper. The first six months were sheer hell for him. He battled to come to terms with what he had done, and on top of that he used drugs and joined a gang. He had many fights and became very violent at times. **Noise**¹⁶ was a major trigger in "losing it." After 6 months in jail¹⁷ he realised that if he didn't do something immediately, he might as well kill himself. That was where his life had changed for the better, and he was working very hard to bring about this change. He wrote many poems in his first 18 months, using this as a way to vent his emotions. At first, he did not even notice this venting, but as his therapy progressed, he noticed that it helped get healed; later on, he would do it on purpose. However, he did not force it, but only did it when he had the words.

¹⁶ John underlined this several times in his diary

¹⁷ He calls it 'hell'.

Every time John thought about the murder, he felt the same emotions going through him; it felt like hell. He still did not cope with it well, and had many sleepless nights due to the haunting recollections. He was not sure why he did it, but the way he saw it, he had been pushed beyond his limit. He was ill equipped to handle a serious relationship; he was very immature and saw life different from how it really is. He was uncertain whether the murder could have been prevented, but although others might disagree, he knew in his heart that it would not happen again. He became very careful, dealing with that part of his life very firmly and permanently. He never again wanted to put himself in a situation where he could not cope. He felt people would have reacted differently in the same circumstances, and nobody could say how he or she would react. Life was very unpredictable. He was the type of person who was not really equipped to be in a relationship with a woman. He fell very hard and his eyes were very wide open for life three years after that fall.

Drugs and alcohol were something in his past, and John was generally better off then than before. When he would have been asked whether he planned the build-up and the murder, his answer would be no. Circumstances out of his control drove him. His inability to control his anger was the trigger and caused the action. He was like a robot out of control. If he had had control over his actions and emotions at any time, this “thing” would never have happened. The thought **never**¹⁸ came across his mind to kill her and, in fact, he was very much opposed to violence against women and children, and remained of that view. This is what made him so confused about what had happened, and why it was also so difficult for him to accept her death. Three years after her death, he still felt very sensitive about the murder and he still had confused feelings and a lot of pain. Yet by considering it from all angles he had learned a very important lesson in life: never again would he allow himself to get involved in a relationship because that was one thing with which he couldn't cope. He realised that there was a possibility that he might be in a similar situation in the future, and it scared him. He would always be very alert to what he had learned and how he felt about it.

John just wished the steel pipe had not been in the room. He might have used it because when he lost his temper he tended to grab whatever was at hand; it had always been like that. He did not lose his temper easily: it took a lot to get him angry, in his mind. He thought that was the problem, since when he lost it, all that bottled-up anger came out in a few seconds. He always was and still would be very sensitive to people.

In a spontaneous, untitled and undated essay that John wrote around the middle of 2000, he described his life as *"a pattern or a weave of colours: white and black, some gray as well"*.

¹⁸ John highlighted this word.

He saw pain, regret, sorrow and a "heaviness" involving drugs, booze, sex and lies, and he also saw changes, good and bad, family problems and financial problems. He also saw dreams scattered, dreams come true and goals put aside because of circumstances. He saw anger, hate and love, confusion and misunderstanding. Everything happened in a short span of five years. Sometimes he wished he could switch off, but did not find that at all easy. First, he was on a high with life, then in the deepest imaginable depth. He wrote poems, he was dreaming, he had nightmares, sleepless nights, and then he discovered why, and that he could do something about it. He had been happy in the recent past, but at a cost that not only concerned him, but also concerned his family, his friends and his community. Yet he did not regard himself as a danger to his community any more. His honest opinion about why he took drugs was that it was to be in with the crowd. Even so, it could not be regarded as the crowd's doing since it was his choice: a wrong choice, and he now realised it. A drug, for him, was a wonderful thing if used for its intended purpose, but the minute he started abusing it trouble began: trouble he had never imagined in his worst nightmares. It led to financial ruin, mental and physical harm, an unstable mind, anger, tension, a craving for more to feel better, and, eventually, to murder. His worst time was that very moment in his life. It wasn't a decision he had consciously made; subconsciously, perhaps – he did not really know what it was and how he had decided, but it had happened and so fast that he only realised afterwards what he had done. He had grasped the consequences of his deeds only in retrospect. He was madly in love, and very blind about reality. He was on such a "*high from life*" that he blinded himself from reality. He did not see at the time what he would see later; and if only he could have seen it, things could have been very different now. He would not have done what he had done. It caused pain for himself, his friends, his family and lot of heartache and non-acceptance of facts: disbelief.

His deeds' consequences were something John would carry with him to his grave, and there was not a single thing he could do about it. However, he learned from it and he would not make the same mistakes again. He feared what he might do in a similar situation in future, and it concerned him; yet he also knew the penalty of his actions if he should do it again and that was a big deterrent to him. To be in jail was something, but it was not his main penalty or struggle. The fact that he took a life that was not to be taken – the pain of a lost one, the shame to his family, the hardships he caused others – that was the worst penalty. This penalty was for life, and even if released from prison it would always be with him.

John wanted to show a glimpse of what he went through, and if it would only help one person he would be happy. He came from a good background and family, but did not realise it. He rebelled a lot, he fought a lot and had a very violent temper, but he tended to bottle

everything up. For a long time it was bottled up tightly. He then became an alcoholic and a drug addict, he lost his job, his car, his friends and even his self-respect. He then lost his beloved, his dreams and his goals. He lost the will to live. He became a *"walking, talking, doing time bomb"* to himself and others. He was set on self-destruct. He even left God behind in his life. It resulted in his having blood on his hands. He did not wish on anyone to know how it feels to kill someone. It was a big thing for him – it was the end of the world. In a way, he did gain from it, yet he also lost a lot. He gained no satisfaction, no financial reward, and no happiness. He gained pain and sadness. He learned a big lesson: do not lose your temper, do not use drugs, do not abuse alcohol, and keep your life clean and open. Do not pretend to be what you are not. He went through hell and back and he came out well, but at the cost of a life.

The only purpose he saw in this murder was that it stopped him in life, enabling him to take stock and to get out of an inauthentic existence. He learned that life is very precious, and it cost a life to put him on the right track again. That is why he made a serious and committed effort to change his way of living. He succeeded by being drug-free and alcohol-free. In fact, he became a person of normal behaviour, and in his eyes he even would become an asset for life: someone with a purpose. He was angry with himself for letting himself into situations where he could not cope. However, he was convinced that he would never do it again. He now actively avoided similar situations. He did not think he was perfect. He knew his strengths and also his weaknesses. He could plan accordingly. If he were perfect, he would not have ended up in situations and places such as prison.

4.5 Conclusion

John's story, as presented above, requires further interpretation. He used language, especially written language, as a way to deal with the implications of his story. Interpretations of others in his life, such as his family, his fiancée's family, and everyone involved in his hearing and court case also had an impact on his life. These preliminary interpretations and their effect had a very significant influence on what a crime of passion meant for him. The meaning of a crime of passion as John experienced it in his living world is described in Chapter 4. These perspectives and interpretations were used as a point of advantage for a further analysis and interpretation using the research paradigm of this study. This further analysis and interpretation according to the phenomenological method described in Chapter 3 is presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

5 NATURAL MEANING UNITS IN JOHN'S STORY

Chapters 5 and 6 basically present step 6 of the data analysis process summarised in 3.8.6, p. 3-74. The first, inductive data analysis process (presented in Chapter 4 and Appendix B) narrowed the available data by selecting and presenting the most appropriate parts of John's story in a way such as to highlight his own description and interpretation of his crime of passion and their implications. The second, deductive process of data analysis broadened this data again by linking it to the research questions and applying the research method to answer them. The new knowledge yielded by the research was described.

The same procedures as in phase 1 were repeated for phase two, analysing the reduced text in order to obtain a further explication and interpretation of the meaning of crimes of passion. Yet during this second phase of data analysis, steps 2 and 3 (see 3.8.2 and 3.8.3) were combined for a *description of the psychological meaning of a crime of passion*. The result of this combined step is presented in Chapter 7. Chapter 5 consists of step 1 of the deductive process of data analysis. The result of the deductive process of classification of the data into categories or natural meaning units thus forms the body of Chapter 5.

During the first phase of the process (inductive data analysis), which is presented in appendix B, and during the later stages of the process presented in this chapter, natural meaning units that emerged in the process of analysis were specifically used to clarify the phenomenon of a crime of passion. Love's (1996) data analysis model served as a guideline to identify the most appropriate meaning units from the selected data.

During the process of deductive analysis the following nmu's were identified in John's story:

- repetition within and across diary entries and other written communications;
- expressions of emotion;
- historical explanations, descriptions, and interpretations,
- explicit and implicit interpretations; and
- other insights that crystallised or surfaced during the psychotherapy process.

These meaning units overlapped, although we attempted to classify John's story only under the most applicable category. That is, if some statements or phrases were repeated in more than one of the meaning units, the meanings were condensed during the later phases of data analysis. The natural meaning units were presented below, and they identified the psychological content of John's writings and expressions. The alpha codes indicated the natural meaning units, and the alphanumerical codes identify the sub-headings within the

meaning units. The nmu's' appropriateness is that they refer to aspects of the data that explicated the meaning of John's crime of passion.

The identified meaning units are listed in table format in Appendix C, with alphanumeric codes in a column on the left that refer to this chapter. These alphanumeric codes are based on the nmu's: A for Repetition, B for Emotion, C for Historical, and D for Explicit/Implicit interpretations. Semantically linked statements within these nmu's (A, B, C or D) were then given the same number (e.g., A01 were given to statements in the nmu, Repetitions, related to restitution and repentance). Paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4 describe these linked statements. As paragraph 5.5 deals with coincidental information that evolved later but shed further light on the subject matter (serendipity), this meaning unit's whole description was included in the text. Throughout Chapter 5, where references to John's original diary were made, italic font was used.

5.1 Repetition within and across diary entries and other written communications

When John's diary was studied, it first prompted an awareness of being loaded with meaning. Yet, as many of his expressions, ideas and issues are repeated several times, this awareness of fullness soon changed into a feeling of being bored and confused about its real meaning. Identifying the repeated issues and themes might precipitate a more meaningful description of the most important aspects of his crime of passion without changing the meaning that he tried to convey.

Throughout his written communications, John repeatedly raised several ideas, beliefs, concerns, and issues. He also raised some issues at least once in specific entries of his diary and noted it again in other written communications; we consider these repetitions significant.

Appendix C lists and categorises the repetitions identified in John's diary and other written texts. The repeated issues or statements are listed first, and then coded according to their central meaning. Statements with the same central meanings are grouped together. An analysis of central meanings brought to light about ten issues that occupied John's mind. Although I tried to remain open to being guided by the text, or the number of nmu's identified, I also tried to limit myself to ten units. It often happened that semantic fields overlapped, and when it did, I tried to group a repeated issue within an existing category instead of creating a new one. When it might possibly fit into an existing nmu, I placed it in the category with the most appropriate semantic field. Each of these categories will now be mentioned and briefly described.

- A01 Restitution and repentance:** John often wrote in his diary long apologies for Mary and other significant people in his life. He apologised for things that he had done in his past which he realised were wrong, such as being too concerned about Mary's ex-boyfriends or not showing interest in her activities. He would repent in writing and then write about possible restitution through deeds or rituals that he would like to do in future. For example, he wanted to put 12 pink roses wherever Mary's ashes were, and start a life serving needy people, such as his elderly parents.
- A02 Poetry:** John commemorated his love for Mary by writing many poems dedicated to the remembrance of their love. He also wrote about his dreams of publishing his poetry in order to share emotions that he could not express in any other way with others.
- A03 John's love for Mary:** John repeatedly affirmed his love for Mary, expressing the fear of losing her in both anticipatory and retrospective verses, and other writings. He emphasised that their love was "*without equal*" and that they could communicate without words. After her death, he often mentioned that Mary's love kept him from committing suicide, and inspired him to do good things for others.
- A04 Memories:** John wrote nostalgically about commemorative moments and "*firsts*" with his beloved. This applies especially to intimate moments, e.g., he refers to when he was intimate with Mary on the train, in her mother's flat, and in their own flat as "*the first time we made love*" without further qualification. He also often recalled sentiments he shared with Mary, calling her pet names such as "*Teddybear*" and "*Babe*." He also recalled her pet name for him ("*Babylove*").
- After her death, John had repeated, evolving visions of Mary that reminded him of their plan to have children together. He often said that he would always love Mary, and that there would never be another Mary in his life.
- A05 Perceptions about himself:** John referred to the fact that he abused alcohol and drugs in his diary. But he did not perceive himself as jealous or violent, even while intoxicated. He recognised that he had murdered Mary, but also believed that it was "*not me*" who killed her. He described himself as someone who cannot be loved. After the murder, he hoped for a breakthrough in understanding himself and realised that it is going to be a continuous and difficult task to "*work on my shortcomings*".
- A06 Temper and regrets:** When John was reminded about Mary's ex-boyfriends, this often resulted in arguments with her. He sometimes lost his temper and said things to her that he later regretted. One word he very often uses in his diary when referring to his crime of passion was "*undo*." More than once he also mentions that he told Mary lies. He

referred to a clash between how he perceived their relationship and what he did to Mary. He blamed himself for destroying their lives and future plans, expressing a willingness to pay for it with his life.

- A07 Problems:** John repeatedly wrote about physical problems that made life difficult for him. He wrote about a sensitive sexual problem that he had to deal with. Later, he wrote about constant migraine headaches that made him feel tense, short-tempered and tempted to commit suicide. He also had financial problems. Other problems that he often referred to were his longing for his family, especially his sister's children, the fact that noise upset him, and that he could not sleep properly. He also reacted to dealing with these problems by taking medications (he made daily notes in his diary about his physical problems and his medications), by writing, and by talking about them.
- A08 Emotional turmoil:** After losing his job and shortly before the murder, John stopped writing in his diary. He later blamed himself for lying to Mary about his education and employment. He often referred to his stormy relationship with his own father, and to their reconciliation after the murder. He repeatedly mentioned that Mary's father was the only person who would understand the special relationship he had had with her. He also referred to the unanswered question "why?" that plagued his mind, and to the fact that he was very close to breaking point. In prison he wondered whether there was any purpose in his situation, and longed for his relatives.
- A09 Family influences:** John often wrote about his bad childhood relationship with his father, and his closeness to his mother. After the murder, he raised his reconciliation with his father more than once. He also began writing about how grateful he was for the love and support of his family, which helped him through this difficult time. Their support inspired him to work hard on improving himself, prompting him to better decision-making, and to find answers to his questions. He often raised issues related to his parents' ageing and physical problems. He blamed himself for adding to their emotional turmoil, repeatedly mentioning that he wished to resolve the unfinished business in his family relationships.
- A10 Rethinking his life while imprisoned:** John experienced some doubts about what had happened during the murder. He even doubted if he had done it. A lot of time elapsed since the murder, but to him it also felt like yesterday. He noted his daily counting of days of incarceration in his diary. Special days, such as Christmas, New Year and his birthday, did not feel special. His visions and thoughts of Mary were often raised in both the context of his emotional turmoil and as inspirational thoughts. He battled with his intolerance for marijuana smoke, and over crowdedness and noise. He wrote many

letters to the prison authorities requesting privileges such as practising a hobby, receiving reading material and even requesting the conversion of his incarceration into correctional supervision. The arrival of the new millennium indicated a ‘new millennium’ in his life, and he wrote about his difficulty in forgetting the pre-millennium part of his life. He wanted to stop pretending, and searched for a safe context. In this regard, he pictured himself in the future as isolated and busy with some restitutive duties, without allowing himself the privilege of close relationships, especially with members of the opposite sex who were unrelated to him. Yet he was sure that he would never find such a safe context without undergoing many “*purifying and compensatory rituals*”.

5.2 Expressions of emotion

This section focuses on specific words, metaphors, adjectives or phrases that could be taken as expressions of emotion or affect. Expressive words, their nature and level of intensity are considered as indicating significance. Hardly anything in John’s writings could be excluded from this category, since he particularly used written language as a vehicle to express his emotions.

Four major human emotions — love, anger, hate and anxiety — are our starting point that is expanded as the analysis evolves. The emotions identified in John’s diary and other written texts are listed and categorised in Appendix C. The statements with the same central emotion were then grouped together. I tried to remain open to being guided by the text about the number of major emotions identified, while to keep the presentation digestible I tried to limit myself to ten major emotions. Emotional fields often overlapped, in which case I tried to categorise an issue in an existing category instead of creating a new one. Each of the major emotions will now be mentioned and briefly described. Some of John’s original words, metaphors, adjectives or phrases are included in Italics as examples.

Expressions of emotion

B01: Love

When John wrote about love, he used words reflecting absolutes or extremes such as “*totally*”, “*as long as I live*”, “*do anything*” and “*ace*”.

John’s expressions

She sent a chill down my spine, make my hair stand on end and make me lame in the knees, by just kissing her

I am totally in love with Mary. And I will do anything for her even will kill for her.

I love my Teddybear totally

My Babe

The word to describe the way I love her I

Expressions of emotion

He also became very poetic and tender/romantic, such as in the case where he wanted to give her the teddy bear.

He experienced very intense feelings when he dealt with his love for Mary. The intensity of his love experience for Mary affected his experience of his whole living world.

B02: Anger / Aggression / Jealousy

John's description of his emotions around anger included aggression and jealousy usually expressed using profanities swear-words ("...get the moer in", "...going to fuck the people up...". These expressions left me with the impression that he was close to doing something physically: "... so angry I can kill", "... I will kill them", "...about to explode majorly".

He described that when he was intoxicated, he would withdraw into himself with little or no conversation. He also kept quiet when he had aggressive feelings towards his father — for his mother's sake — but was willing to note them in his diary.

In his poetry, where he addressed these emotions, he was, however, much more expressive.

As with love, he likewise experienced anger, aggression and jealousy very intensely, and he seemed to feel it was easier to handle

John's expressions

finally got it is an ace

I want to give you a small teddybear with a pouch and inside... that teddybear all my love so whenever you hold that teddybear the love would flow out into your heart

The ground opened up underneath me

The heavens fell down...

I was on a high

On cloud nine...

As long as I live

I will love you so

OH so much

I had a very stupid argument with my Beloved Mary. Main reason. Jelousy... I was pissed of because she was pissed

When I want to make love and she don't I get the moer in

Only tiny fragments of a memory,

Flashed by morsels of time,

The faint Perfume of disbelieve!!

hangs around.

A tale to brief to tell.

I was extremely angry when I wrote these words angry with myself angry for what I have done

I had a major argument with my dad this morning about parking my car in the yard and I get so angry I can kill him, but for mom's sake I just keep quite.

When I loose my cool when I am sober it is bad when I am drunk I become very quiet and tend to draw into myself with very little or no talking or having a conversation this was my normal pattern ...

I promised bear I wil not kill myself I rather pay for it.

"I don't want you any more I don't love you no more You must pack you stuff and go now" those word realy killed me inside and I cant believe Bear has said them it is total... (unreadable) not her at all she was very upset inside...

Expressions of emotion

these intense emotions while intoxicated.

B03: Hate

John expressed feelings of hate towards himself, his father, his fellow inmates, and (ironically enough) towards violence against women and children. He was able to describe these feelings very effectively with the help of poetry. He referred to his hate of violence against women and children as “*a absolute block and massive hate*”, meaning he could not handle thinking about it or dealing with people who did such deeds.

B04: Anxiety / Fear / Desperation /**Dread**

John's expressions of these emotions seem to be rich metaphoric images. “*My soul my very Being crys out WHY WHY WHY*” was one of the strongest and most repetitive expressions of desperation.

John's expressions

I don't really care about it anyway I am going to fuck the people up today I don't feel lus for their shit

their car is stolen by fucking ... bastards I wish I can get my hands on them I will kill them

I am on a total edge about to explode majorly

I feel very depressed, angry upset and hate for myself

The feel in Me

It is bad

It smells

It hurts

It want to come out

I don't know how

I blame myself

I hate myself

I have got a absolute block and massive hate for violence against a woman and a child

(Dad,) You are the one

That left me alone

You are the one

I hate

I am starting to hate them with a passion and I know it is wrong but it is their own fault

I do not want to loose her love, it is something I have to earn

I just won't be able to live without Mary in my life.

My soul my very Being crys out WHY WHY WHY

... I am so scared and nervous..

... a constand battle,

Just to stay between the shores

Expressions of emotion

His fear of losing Mary or not being able to live without her seemed to mingle with a fear of himself. He also felt his poems were scary and negative after the crime of passion, and dreaded the possibility that he might explode again – against which there was no safeguard. The expression “*this fragile peace*” was used to describe the relationship with his father, and summarised his constant fear and anxiety of his being.

B05: Grief / Anguish / Loss

John used meaningful and loaded metaphors to express his grief and loss, as seen in his reference to the autumn of his life. John’s sense of grief and loss was very intense. It haunted him at night, turning his life inside out. He also believed that he has “lost” the possibility of engaging in another relationship. He experienced his grief so intensely that he was convinced that he could not cope with it, that what he did was fatal, and that he would always be plagued by this sense of loss.

John’s expressions

*I am breaking apart
just feel like giving it all
Dad I pray
That this fragile peace
May last to the end*

I feel naked now and cold... I am very nervous and my tummy is full of butterflies very very nervous indeed

i am very ratly and upset a cher died here today

Poems I wrote since am in prison is very negative and scary

Never again will I allow myself to get in such a situation as I know I could explode again.

For me time is a thing I never really noticed before 1996 but it come to lie heavily on my mind and in fact my whole being

*Oh I am broken and dead inside
My days are in autumn now
The flowers the fruit all gone.
The pain, the sorrow and grief.
All mine alone
The fire that was in me
is as dead as ash
it hurts talking about Bear*

never again will I allow myself to get involved with a relationship as it is one thing I cant cope with

*This murder has turned my life inside out and things will never be the same again
that fatal night*

Everytime I think about that murder I feel that emotions going tru me and it is hell believe me I still dont cope well with it and have many a nights I dont sleep thinking about it and it haunts me.

What did it do to me is something I will carry with me to my grave

Expressions of emotion**B06: Excitement**

John's experiences of excitement had all been related to his time with Mary. There were fewer striking metaphoric phrases to describe this emotion, but he mostly related his excitement to their "firsts", intimate experiences with Mary. One gets the impression he was extremely happy when he was with her, forgetting entirely about other responsibilities. He wrote "I was on such a high from life I stared myself blind at reality."

B07: Relief / Contentment / Consolation / Hope

Four major issues apparently contributed to John's feelings of relief, contentment, consolation or hope. The first was the positive memory of Mary that got him through tough times. Secondly, his relationship with family, which he felt was "there" for him, and gave him hope. Thirdly, the turning point in his life that coincided with the turn in the century, when he decided to leave the old behind and to work on his new life, gave him a sense of contentment again. The phrase that best describes this time is: "Well my friend it is an end of an era end of a part of my life as well". The fourth means of relief from all his atrocities was that his

John's expressions

I kissed the lady of my life for the first time

We slept at the train last night because we got too frot to drive, and that was a lovely night. We made love and then just fell asleep into one another's arms.

We are so excited about a place of our own that I cannot wait to have that first cup of tea from our kitchen

noways will I make love to her if she don't want to and last night was the first time we made love and it was wonderfull and beautiful something I treasure now and always will

The first time we made love was at your moms flat first time we bath together the fist time I saw you naked the first time was oh so wonderfull my Babe Nobody can take that away from us

I was on such a high from life I stared myself blind at reality I did not see at that time what I can see now

We talked last night and I am more understanding now

Mom and Julie (his sister) will be there for me so in spirit I am there by your funeral today my love of my life.

But because I love her I will not comit suicide I will push through and hold on

Dad I pray

That this fragile peace

May last to the end

Deep inside of me

I know she can see

there is so many good memorys from her and yes it will be for the rest of my life and yes I treasure them a hell of a lot and it is in my heart and soul for life. My mom, dad, Sister, brother and brother in law supports me all the way and I owe them big time

I have picked up 8 years yes my friend 8 years. Now I know how long Now I can

Expressions of emotion

writing gave him an outlet for his agonising emotions. He regarded his poems as “a memory in time but still very real and perhaps also an outlet valve”.

Specific words / phrases to describe these feelings were: “more understanding”, “will be there for me”, “will push through and hold on”, “I know she can see”, “(her memories are) in my heart and soul for life”, “supports me all the way”, “Now I can begin to organise”, “I wish I was there”, “can be agro in a positive way”, “gratefull”, “(poems are) an outlet valve”, “my days of pretending is over”, “Thank God (for) family I thought I lost”, “be with my family soon”, “hey it is time to change” and “an end of an era”

B08: Incompetence / Powerlessness /**Despair**

John mainly used poetic verses and conative phrases when he wrote to Mary in an attempt to share his emotions around his feelings of

John’s expressions

begin to organise my life and build it up

My friend today I want to phone my mom, dad and family and I suspect I will get them at Sus’s place as it is normal every Christmas for them to gather and yes I wish I was there

*yes I can be agro in a positive way now
Without losing my self control*

I am gratefull I have the opportunity (to see a psychologist) as it is for me the one and only chance in life and mainly because of what has happened in my life I want to better my life and is determined to do so and I have succeeded in a few areas, this has given me the drive force to carry on no matter how hard.

I wrote 3 poems and yes in general these 3 is just thoughts in thought of a memory in time but still very real and perhaps also an outlet valve

my days of pretending is over

Thank God Mom dad, Ben, Julie, Patrick, Rene and Cameron is there and yes I have found a family I thought I lost

I have got a place to stay and yes I even got wheels waiting for me and babe I can only hope to be with my family soon as they need me now very badly and babe you know who gave me hope a while ago is René and Cameron their spontaneous love and care and yes their acceptance was the breakthrough and to me they are like my own and yes I have got dreams and I am looking forward to be with them

say hey it is time to change

Well my friend it is an end of an era end of a part of my life as well, a part of my life I rather want to file away in the deepest folds of my mind

B08: About / for Mary:

I pray to the lord that I will be able to make her a happy woman for the rest of my life.

I need you Babe

more than words can say

I just wish

Expressions of emotion

despair, incompetence and insatiable desires. Communicating about, and with, Mary put him in poetic mode.

When John described his powerlessness, however, it was mostly in the context of being unable to *undo* what he did (his crime of passion). He then used a rather normal paragraph/prose style to reflect his thoughts about his crime of passion. He also reflected on his self-knowledge about his behaviour while he was angry by emphasizing his inability to predict or control his impulsiveness following his losses of temper: *“I have got a bad thing if I loose my temper I tend to grab whatever comes near at hand and it always has been like that”*.

John used beautiful images in poetry to express his (fatalistic?) view that life is laid out for you: (*“And a dreamer is just a vessel, That must flow where it (river) goes.....”*).

He also becomes very philosophical in his

John’s expressions

She was still here

She would have been so glad

To see all of us in peace

How much it would have pleased

The love from you.

Is no more now.

Oh the pain

tears and shame!

Why did I lie to you.

Oh my love.

B08: About the crime of passion:

I don't know how I could have done it Not ME No No No.

I want to speak to Dad Dough so badly I am very nervous about it. But he is the person that can understand and he knows me I mean he was and still is a dad for me. I just want to say to him how sorry i am to take his daughter away from him

Bears mom is so anti me and want me to sit in jail. My friend i see her point of view and i understand how she feels Bear is also part of me but no mother how much revenge we want it is not going to bring Bear back to live. Why ruin another few lifes and cause even more misery.

I am so upset about this thing I have done I wish I could undo it and Babe believe me I truly truly mean what I say when I say I want to undo it

Why did I use a steelpipe. I just wish it was not there in the room because I have got a bad thing if I loose my temper I tend to grab whatever comes near at hand and it always has been like that

there is not a thing I can do about I

B08: About life:

a dream is like a river,

Ever changing as it flows.

And a dreamer is just a vessel,

That must flow where it goes.....

... Just go with the flow and bear.

Expressions of emotion

thoughts about time (*"Time is a thing like dust..."*).

John's remarks about himself reflect feelings of incompetence and inadequacy. He uses phrases such as *"unworthy"*, *"emotionally... just cruise on..."*, *"shaky"*, *"confused"*, *"intolerable"*, *"won't cope"*

John's entries in his diary became much shorter after he remarked that *"...i am so confused i don't even know how i must write"*. It is as if he used this phrase to indicate an awakening from a dream world shortly after he had been sentenced. After this awakening he began addressing his anxiety in more immediate and direct ways. He continues writing in his diary, but also starts writing letters and essays where he tries to deal with specific obstacles in his life. Marijuana, which *"soothed"* him before, began to become *"intolerable"*. His eyes started opening to who he really was, and to how his approach to others in his life affected them. This greater interpersonal awareness and existential pain were experienced in his senses and his whole body.

B09: Rejection / Loneliness

John mainly used ordinary writing styles to describe his rejection and loneliness. However, he liked using metaphoric images

John's expressions

*Learn from what is behind us.
But you never know what
Is in front of you*

Time is a thing like dust it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it but at times it gets disturbed and it is what is happening to me.

B08: About himself:

Unworthy to love to care.

That what was clear to me.

Is no more.

So I will choose the ground

Where they can bury me.

*if I do get jail sentence it will destroy my life
Moms as well as dad and yes even Ben
(bother) indirect I know I won't cope
especially with the jail system*

*emotionally you just cruise on in automatic
mode it is the easiest that way and yes i
hate it very very much*

*My friend i am so confused i don't even
know how i must write*

*I notice the las few days I have become
intolerable of dagga smoke and I was forced
to sleep in a cell with a lot of dagga smoke
My eyes were burning my nose running and
a hell of a headache. Also when I have
these migraines I notice I don't smoke at all
it makes it feel worse. Last night I had one of
those pins and needle feelings in my right
side of my body again and I don't see so
well with my right eye today it is if everything
is a bit blurry I don't know why I feel very
shaky as well today.*

*i don't want dad to die while i am in prison
there is so much we need to say to each
other and time can be so short*

*we have been snapping at each other for a
while now especially in the kitchen about
cooking who is doing what. It started when I
couldn't find a job*

I am getting very withdrawn and I can't stop

Expressions of emotion

to enhance his descriptions of his own loneliness. The metaphors he used in the latter part of his story are noteworthy. A plant in his cell became the “*main living thing around me*”. Another phrase he used was “*My world has become very small...*” The effect of John’s crime of passion on his perceived ability to engage in another serious relationship is related to the question regarding “*... how will she react to telling her you killed your fiancée...*” His career, dreams and love life had always intermingled: His irritability “*started when I couldn’t find a job*”, and he longed for “*a private peaceful hole where I can curl up and dream dreams of a future that is real*”, “*...a private peaceful hole where I can curl up and dream dreams of a future that is real*”.

B10: Guilt / Repentance / Remorse

When John wrote about **repentance**, he repeatedly conveyed the message that he needed to pay for what he has done. Mary lost her life because of what he did (“*babe it has cost you your life*”). His personal penalty could be best summarised with the following paragraph: “*... to be in jail is something it is but not my main penalty ... the fact that I took a life ... and the pain of a lost one the shame for my family the hardships I caused for other people that is what’s the worst penalty and that is for life ... it will always be with me*”. John planned to repay the community by “*helping old people ...(and) to*

John’s expressions

thinking about my Teddybear and I had a bad nightmare or Vision and I think it was the later

Missing a loved one is a very painful thing especially when that loved one is dead

... how will she react to telling her you killed your fiancée...

My world has become very small and I have no friends just a lot of people that know of me

...I have got a plant in my cell and yes it give me great pleasure and it is now my main living thing around me.

All I can say is give me space a private peaceful hole where I can curl up and dream dreams of a future that is real but also not real where I can stretch my imagination to its full, and plan and set my goals.

B10: On Repentance

Mary thank you for forgiving me for what I have done my Babe it doesn’t mean I am not guilty but it give me more reason to pay for what I have done.

...I promised my Teddybear I will Pay an so I will even with my life.

Yes to be in jail is something it is but not my main penalty or struggles the fact that I took a life that was not to be taken the fact I did it and the pain of a lost one the shame for my family the hardships I caused for other people that is what’s the worst penalty and that is for life even when I do get out of prison it will always be with me.

... I would like to do one is helping old people no two is to help with the kids at Avril Elizabeth home My friend thes two things has become an important thing in my life and I feel compeled to do whatever I can do I feel I owe my community and financialy I would never be able to repay them but there

Expressions of emotion

help with the kids at Avril Elizabeth home”.

In John's description of **remorse**, he often uses the words “sorrow” and “regret” together. He also feels a need to describe the intensity of his feelings with phrases like: “God knows how I regret...”, “I regret this so much... I got no words for it”. John also used poetic forms regularly to describe this regret. He uses a metaphor in a prose-paragraph style to describe the last five years of his life as, “A pattern a weave of colours, white and black some grey”, in which one could see “pain regret sorrow” and other elements of his life.

John's expressions

is other options

...and yes you have learned me that live has got a purpose and babe it has cost you your life

In the recent past I was happy but at a cost. A cost of what you may ask and yes you have the right to ask as it do not only concerns me, my family my friends and also my community You may ask if I am a danger to my Community and there the answer is no bet you may not think so and can I blame you No I dont think so.

B10: On Remorse:

I don't remember much of today I am to heartbroken and sorry for what I have done I have given my statement to Cobus Brown and to Peter White and I have been at court. I have asked for a attorney and now is a wait and see situation.... I just want to undo everything I done that night and I regret it deeply.

God knows how I regret hurting my Beloved Teddybear

I just want to say to him how sorry i am to take his daughter away from him Teddybear you know how I feel inside of me

I regret this so much I cannot even explain it to myself how much. I got no words for it

Lies ...cause Sorrow.

And pain.

Regret on top.

....

But I have lost you.

The love from you.

is no more now...

I look at my life and what do I see? A pattern a weave of colours, white and black some grey as well and yes pain regret sorrow and a heavyness, drugs, booze, sex and lies and yes I also saw changes good and bad. Family strive, problems and financial. I see dreams scattered I also see dreams come true and goals been put aside because of circumstances, I see anger, I see hate and love confusion misunderstanding and all that in a short span of 5 years.

Expressions of emotion

John's **guilt** and sadness are clearly expressed in the sentence: "*I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY I KILLED YOU MY LOVE OF MY LIFE.*" John also asked for forgiveness from both Mary and God for "*this sin*", "*what I have done*". He was ashamed of the consequences of what he had done and felt guilty about it being humiliating for his relatives to visit him in prison.

John's expressions

B10: On Guilt

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY I KILLED YOU MY LOVE OF MY LIFE. SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED THAT NIGHT BUT WHY (Ends with a big scribble).

Mary thank you for forgiving me for what I have done my Babe it doesn't mean I am not guilty but it give me more reason to pay for what I have done.

...and please forgive me for this sin I have committed o Lord help me through this and please look after my Beloved Mary and let us see each other again sometime in the future when it is my time

time I feel so guilty about them coming to visit me in this place and ashamed

5.3 Historical explanations, descriptions and interpretations

John's (hi)story has already been described in Chapter 4; the next section, "Explicit and implicit interpretations" deals with John's own interpretation of his history as it relates to his crime of passion. In this section, I focus on and highlight significant explanations, descriptions and interpretations from the data that specifically referred to his history and the way in which these past stories might clarify present behaviours and meanings. These stories consist mainly of John's own interpretations, although a brief excerpt from the court's interpretation has been included in order to see how it compares with John's interpretations.

The stories that were considered significant are presented and coded "Cxx" in Appendix C. They are listed in a chronological timeline of events as my paraphrase of John's words that does not try to summarise them. All the data gathered for this project were regarded as possible sources. Unit C06, John's own summary of the history of his crime of passion, was chronologically integrated into the other units in the way that has been presented below.

The following are selected, summarised references to John's history, in my own words, using the criteria described above:

C01 Childhood and family relationships: John was the eldest of three children living with their family in a major South African city. He experienced a bad and stormy childhood relationship with his father, and his relationship with his mother was good and supportive. His relationship with his sister, who was two years younger, and her family, was a major positive encouraging factor in his life. He had one adopted brother, thirteen years younger than himself, who, during the time of the research was working as a mechanic, still single and living with their parents. John saw himself as a sort of a surrogate father figure for this adopted younger brother, and often felt responsible for sharing with him some of the lessons he had learned in life.

C02 Romance with Mary: John's relationship with Mary began on Monday 5 May 1996. They met during an evening of playing Blackball. He fully fell in love with her, and, although he sometimes doubted his ability to do so, he yearned to spend the rest of his life with her. She still had another boyfriend and he (John) "*gave her the choice*" between the two of them. He was glad that she chose him. He spent many memorable moments with her, and they were soon cohabiting. Mary cried when they went to fetch her belongings from her previous boyfriend's apartment. John was very excited, experienced it as a victory and prayed that their relationship would last. The first time they made love was in her mother's flat. John recalled other "*firsts*" such as the first time they bathed together, their first dinner date, and their first weekend away at Green Valley. He recalled their night on the train, and how intimate and intense that had been.

John had positive memories of Mary's family members, such as her father, her grandmother and her brother, who told him that he was the best boyfriend she had ever had. He asked her father if he could marry her. He mentioned what the engagement at her grandmother's place meant to him, and their plan to have a boy and a girl — even choosing their names. Their wedding date was set for October 1997. But when John's workplace closed down, after one of the managers' act of fraud and subsequent suicide once it was discovered, his anxiety became overwhelming for all parts of his life, including his relationship with Mary.

C03 Conflict with Mary: An argument they had had after an ex-boyfriend said good-bye to Mary at a wedding is a good example of the impact of John's anxiety on his relationship with Mary. On their way back home he made some sexual overtures to her. At home, after he undressed her, she did not want to have sex with him. He then lost his temper and said some things to her that he later regretted. She pointed

out to him that he got angry when she was not ready for sex and demanded it from her, that he handles her too roughly, and that her ex-boyfriend was merely a friend. She went on to undress and challenged him to do with her whatever he wanted to. He was taken aback, and could not have sex with her as he thought it was not right if she did not agree to it. The first time they had sex again was four days later. He experienced that as a very significant positive change in his approach towards the intimate part of their relationship. After more than a month John made his next entry in his diary; it turned out to be his last entry before the murder. He was unemployed again, and was having serious financial problems. Yet he was more convinced than ever before that he was totally in love with Mary. John made the “*mistake of my life*” when he lied to her about his background. Shortly after that he committed his crime of passion.

- C04 The crime according to court records:** The court records mention that John told Mary several lies about his occupational status because he wanted to impress her. The report further describes how John decided to tell his beloved the truth. At first, she did not react very angrily, but soon afterwards she took off her engagement ring and threw it against the wall. After several arguments, she also ordered him to take his things and leave. The crime took place after this. Apparently he hit her on the head with a pipe-like object. When John came to his senses again, he phoned her mother, asked her to call an ambulance and tried to bandage his beloved’s wounds. When he discovered that she was dead, he fled to a coastal town, approximately 500 km away. He said that he could not remember either how the crime took place or how he got to the coastal town. He phoned own his mother from that coastal town, and she persuaded him to return home and make a statement at the nearest police office, which he did.
- C05 The crime in John’s mind:** John immediately regretted his crime of passion, and wished to “*undo*” what he had done. He later remembered some bits about what had happened on the night of the murder. He remembered that he had phoned his mother after it happened. He also remembered that Mary had told him that she did not love him any more and that he should pack his belongings and leave. He felt as if those words killed him inside, and he could not believe that she had said it. He recalled past times when she had said tender, loving and gentle words to him, and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears but that “*it went straight to my soul and heart and I will store it there forever*”.

5.4 Explicit and implicit interpretations

Explicit interpretations are obvious and direct interpretations that were already contained in the data before rewriting it in psychological terms. Implicit interpretations are implied and metaphoric phrases within the data before rewriting it, and which clearly suggest a specific interpretation by the data's author.¹⁹

The data mostly involves John's own interpretations. True to the phenomenological method of allowing things to reveal themselves, I regarded these as a valid primary source of information. Other interpretations, such as those from the court report and insights obtained by John and me during the psychotherapy, are regarded as valid additional sources of information. In a way, the names given to the categories can be regarded as early interpretations that I made as researcher, although I tried to use as category-names words implied in John's text.

Interpretations that contribute to clarifying John's living world during his crime of passion are considered significant. These interpretations imply connections between thoughts and activities and the meanings ascribed to them, whether they are obvious and direct or implied and metaphoric. They are significant firstly because they are significant to John, and they are also significant to anyone interested in understanding human experience involved in John's crime of passion.

All the interpretations identified as significant were listed and categorised in Appendix C. They were coded as "Dxx" according to their central meanings in such a way as to highlight how the nmu's connected to the different parts of John's story – e.g., drug abuse, awareness of his own insecurities, inability/fear in relationships, etc. As we saw previously, it was often the case that the central meanings overlapped. When this occurred, I again tried to categorise the interpretation in an existing nmu with the most appropriate central meaning, instead of creating a new one. As they were interpreted in the data under analysis, each of these nmu's will now be mentioned and briefly described.

D01 Drug Abuse: John expressed the view that all of his problems started in 1976, when he began smoking cigarettes at age fourteen. From there, his addictive behaviour and abuse of street drugs escalated gradually. When he tried LSD, it did not agree with him at all, and he ended up in hospital. However, when he tried

¹⁹ Usually John — although in some instances, such as in the court reports and my meta-communications, it can be someone else.

cocaine, he felt it was just the thing for him. He used it for a long time, even in prison, often mixing it with marijuana and Mandrax (methaqualone, a barbiturate – very popular in South Africa) and alcohol in the form of wine, whiskey, rum and tequila. He had a short temper and thought the drugs helped him to control it. Although he thought they would calm him down, they just made him quieter and bottled up his emotions. During John's unemployed time, drugs became a larger part of his and Mary's lives than previously. Both used dagga (marijuana) and Mandrax, but he used cocaine as well. It all cost money. During incarceration he realised that it was a very dangerous situation. His drug abuse had probably contributed considerably to his loss of self-control, resulting in his crime of passion. This realisation led to a *"breakthrough decision"*, a year after which he was living drug-free. He had committed himself to change, and felt he needed secure surroundings to help him become a "normal human being"

D02 Awareness of his own insecurities: John came to the conclusion that his crime of passion represented a build-up of tension, worries, fears, anger, frustration, insecurity, inability to control his emotions, immaturity, internal personality problems, lies, pretending, trying to impress people and to be part of the crowd, fear of losing love, over-sensitivity, and many other things for which he had no label. This even included the *"mental hell of longing, heart-sore and regrets"* subsequent to the crime of passion. He was afraid of losing Mary, and felt that he had to earn her love. The drugs he took shortly before the crime, and the words she said after their argument, ordering him to take his belongings and leave, precipitated a *"moment of insanity"* during which he killed Mary. Afterwards, he realised that Mary might have been right when she said that things could not work out for them. He was not aware of his own mental condition. He wanted to pretend that he was someone who was not bound by reality, and he made the *"mistake of my life"* when he lied about his background and situation. He could not cope with pretending any more.

D03 Inability/fear about relationships: John was always afraid of losing his loved ones. For example:

- When Mary told John that she did not have enough space in her heart to love him completely, due to the fact that two of her ex-boyfriends and her puppy still occupied some space in her heart, John felt upset but did not interpret his emotion as jealousy.

- He experienced the reconciliation with his father as very fragile.
- Writing to his sister instead of to his father made it easier for him to express his emotions.
- He experienced Mary's mother as "anti-me".
- He felt that he failed himself and his family.
- He wrote that only time would tell whether he would ever have children of his own. At that moment he was content with being able to see, love and hold his sister's children. The members of his core family were his cornerstones for the moment and, he believed, for the future as well, although he nearly lost them too.

D04 Possessiveness: John interpreted his love for Mary as a *"total"* and *"possessive"* love that could make him *"kill for her"*. Mary was so special for him that they were parts of each other. Their love was *"without equal"* for him. Their relationship was sacred and very intense. He talked about his *"fire that changed into dead ash"*, and his *"jealous care"* and love that he lost. After her death he kept longing for Mary, and when he thought about their relationship he realised that they had only been apart one night since they had started dating.

Mary had had previous relationships, and so did he; but he was very wary about her previous boyfriends as they remained in her life and still contacted her, which he did not like.

D05 Absolutism: Many of the interpretations John makes in his diary reflect absolutes and extremes. Words and phrases such as *"total"*, *"never"* and *"for ever"* are often used in connection with his experience of love. There were very little *"in-between's"* for him. He once stated that time was *"everything and nothing at the same time"* (see D09). During the time he lost his job, John realised how seriously he felt about his relationship with Mary. He had not only fallen in love with her: he *"worshipped"* her. *"Never"* before had he felt like this about a woman, and he was ill equipped to handle this *"absolute love"*. He focused only on wanting her, and that he did not want to lose her love. Jealousy did not play a big part, but he was very *"possessive and protective"* of her. Their shared interests made him feel very close to her. He trusted her and decided that the best word to describe his love for her was as an *"ace"*.

When Mary told John that she did not love him any more, and that he should pack

his belongings and leave, he felt as if those words “*killed*” him inside; he could not believe that she had said it. He recalled previous times when she had said tender, loving and gentle words to him, and he wrote that he did not hear it with his ears, but that it went “*straight to his soul and heart*” and that he would store it there “*forever*”.

He realised that there would “*never*” be another Mary in his life, and he did not want another lady. He felt it would be unfair to another lady if he still had all the memories of his beloved inevitably causing him to make comparisons. His love for Mary kept him from committing suicide.

D06 Introversion: Since he had been 18, John yearned for a secure, peaceful life; in many ways he had that. However, he had some problems and a tendency to push them aside and avoid dealing with them. He had seen himself as a peaceful, non-violent person before, but now he began to see himself differently - especially after the “*thing*”. This murder has turned his life inside out, and things would never be the same again. He was stopped dead in life’s tracks and was forced to look at himself: where he stood and where he wanted to go. He had to start dealing with problems that he had put aside for years. He looked at the time before the murder with an open mind, and did not hide anything from himself. He was honest with himself for the first time, and it felt good.

He regarded himself as an “*unpopular loner*” during his schooldays, who did not talk very easily. However, he always had to deal with very intense emotions. He often started entries in his diary with “*my friend*”. It was almost as if his diary had become a surrogate for an imaginary friend he had created in early childhood when he had no real friends. He later shared his image of his ideal “*life partner and wife*” with this “*pen friend*”, and then thought he found her in real life. His deepest emotions were always shared in the context of talking to his most intimate friend, who was partly imaginary but was later often represented by his beloved. He expressed his anger, fear, jealousy and ideas of inferiority and incompetence in metaphors, poems and letters addressed to his “*friend*”. When he had to face up to some discrepancies between his ideal friend and its representation in the form of his beloved, something snapped and it became too much for him. After the murder, he continued to write to “*my friend*”, although it was as if a fusion had developed between his friend and his memories of his beloved.

The first difference that John discovered between Mary and him was that she liked to party and be socially involved, while he found it hard to handle noise and loud

music – including even the music he loved. It hurt his ears and gave him migraine headaches. While they had very similar music tastes, he liked it soft and she liked it loud; they constantly experienced a mental battle in this regard. He usually gave in and let her have her way.

Shortly before his court hearing, he began using the lower case when referring to himself: he wrote “i” and wrote that thinking about Mary was upsetting and hurting him so much that he had refrained from communicating with her in writing or speech.

His poems were acting as an outlet for his painful, sometimes devastating memories. He felt they represented a permanent scar, but that time and being with his family could bring some healing.

One of the reasons for keeping the diary that John often brought during psychotherapy, was that writing was the only way he felt that he could really express his real emotions.

His poems were more personal for him, yet he thought that others might also find some clarifications for their own problems by reading them. He later mentioned that he might stop writing letters to Mary after coming to terms with himself, but “*only time will tell*”. He wrote many poems in his first 18 months in jail, and he used it as a way of venting his emotions. In the beginning he did not even realise it was happening, but as he made therapeutic progress, he realised that writing was a way to help get healed; later he wrote with this in mind. However, he still only did it when he had words. He did not force himself.

D07 Intuitiveness: John uses the word (verb) “*sense*” several times in his diary. He thought Mary and he could communicate without words, and he “*sensed*” her forgiveness after the murder. He interpreted Mary’s appearance in his recurring visions as indicating that she was trying to say something to him. He reckoned strictly within himself that she may have been pregnant with their first child during the time of the murder, and that she wanted to tell him about that.

Sometimes when he felt that he sensed things, he also thought it made him act impulsively. He mentions that the negative aspects of his verses since he had been in custody were scary for him, but that the “*words just came faster than I could write*”. On occasion, he also mentioned that Mary made him show compassion to people about whom he did not have a natural feeling of compassion.

D08 Powerlessness: John often commented in different ways/words about how he did not feel in control of what was happening in his life. In April 1996, he was promoted from production supervisor to production manager, and he later thought that this was the first thing to go wrong. He enjoyed his work very much, but hated all the paper work. He has never been keen on paperwork. He likes writing poems but admits that is how far his love for paperwork goes. With all this daily paperwork, he was less on the workbench where he felt most comfortable. In July 1996, he reached a point where he either had to resign or get fired. He chose to resign and from there on his life just fell apart. However, he kept it to himself.

Other issues, such as his differences with Mary, became problematic for him when he lost his job. Mary was a type of person that was very neat and tidy; John was not. With time he became very conscious about where and how he packed or put things. He always helped her cleaning up, and did not mind because he loved her so much and his mother had trained him well in household things, e.g., cleaning, cooking and planning. Mary did not like cooking much, yet he loved cooking and eating. He was very happy in kitchens. Money issues were not a problem until he lost his job. Suddenly, he had no income, which put a severe strain on him. He could not handle that she paid for everything. It made him very tense and angry with himself. He tried to obtain a job for 6 months, and there were a few jobs he could have, but it meant night shift work, which she did not like and would not allow him to take. This frustrated him, but because he did not want to lose her, he did not protest. Not having a job put a lot of pressure upon him, especially since they had got engaged and were planning to marry. He sold his car for R8,000-00 to pay for rent and food, as he was not happy that she paid for everything herself. He lied to her and told her his car was stolen.

Finally, during "*that fatal night*", John told Mary about his lies and his life of pretending. She was shocked, but at first accepted his story and agreed to help him. Later on, she told him very loudly and in no uncertain terms that she did not love him, and that she did not want him. He pleaded for her to reconsider, and she calmed down. Then she compared, amongst other features, his sexual traits with those of her previous boyfriend. This was a sensitive issue for John who had problems in this area. However, he kept quiet although it hurt him very much. Later she exclaimed: "*That is it. I don't love you, I don't want you, pack your stuff and go!*" John does not think it was what she said as much as how she said it that made him lose control. He does not recall very much about what happened immediately after

that. He remembered that he went for her, that he was hitting her; and he remembered the blood afterwards.

Later, John found out that he had killed Mary using a steel pipe. To him, that was the end of his life, as well. He tried to kill himself but couldn't do it because he had promised her that he would pay for what he did. Her death killed him inside, and even three years later it still haunted him a lot. He had never been a violent person, except when he lost his temper. When he lost his temper, he lost control completely. He has thus always been careful not to lose his temper, but at times it happened so quickly that, before he knew it, it had happened.

Although he admitted guilt, he interpreted it as "*not him*" who had committed murder.

On Christmas day 1997, he wrote that it felt just like another day, and that the prison made him "*cruise on in automatic mode*".

D09 Time: In his written communications, John often reflected on his past, his present and his future. He wanted to correct the wrongs of his past in the present, to create a better future. He wrote that only weakness and his will to overcome it, would help him at the moment. In time, he might look back and say, "*I told you so*". His mind was his worst enemy since a person's heart can forgive and forget, but the mind forgives but never forgets. It made for a scar that is only visible to him, and which he sees every day.

Right from the beginning of the entries in the available parts of John's diary, it is clear that his family relations play a major role in his development and notions around the prelude and aftermath of his fiancée's murder. It becomes an even more pressing issue once he was arrested, since he felt that there was a lot of unfinished business in his family relationships to deal with.

He felt a need to speak to Mary's father because he would understand, and was like a father to him. Her father was the only other person whom she loved as much as she loved him. One of the most difficult issues for John seemed to be how to deal with his fiancée's parents. He experienced her father (dad Dough) as a very understanding and reasonable man, but that her mother blamed him directly for her daughter's death, and was nurturing thoughts of revenge. It seems obvious that these experiences represent nearly the opposite of his experiences of his own parents. He often experienced a need to talk to his potential in-laws, but also expressed some understanding that it would never be the same as before. He often

expressed a feeling that it may never be possible to talk to her mother again, and that he thought it better to leave it that way. In a letter to his beloved, he confirms his intention not to initiate any contact with them when released from prison. As part of his reason for this decision, he mentions that he is still very fragile inside and often feels that he is close to another breakdown. He mentions that Mary might have been right during the night of the murder when she sensed that things between them could not work out.

In 2000 he felt ready to face the facts of his life as an obstacle, but also a stepping-stone helping him to learn. It had changed his life in a way that he had never expected.

In retrospect, he thinks he acted about the murder like a robot. He did not plan it consciously – if he did, he would have walked out on her that night. Despite the fact that his memory is normally very good, his recollections of that night are very patchy. Since then, John lives behind a mask covering a tender and festering wound. Time is like dust – it settles and sometimes it is better not to disturb it. However, at times it is disturbed in his life. Pain is his situation part of the time for him, and he has more of it than he can cope with. However, he has no choice. The eight year sentence he got is a very long time for him. During the first three, he abused drugs and started seeing himself as an uncaring, sometimes violent monster. He finds it difficult to start seeing himself as a normal human being again. He often exploded in Medium B prison, triggered by just small incidents. A few times people were nearly killed by him. He was sometimes scared of himself too. After two mini-strokes and many migraine attacks, and after he had physically hurt some people, he decided to seek help. It was difficult for him to admit that he needed help, but he felt that time drove him into a corner to beg for help. Help did arrive, but he still had to decide what to do with it. He later realised that it was the only chance that he would ever have. For 35 years, his life had been going unstopably in the wrong direction, costing a life, a murder to make him stop in his tracks and realise that it was time to change.

In the past, he had avoided addressing his own shortcomings, and now he realised how complicated the required process of change within himself had become because of his procrastination. Time was something John had never really noticed, but since he had met Mary it had become something lying heavily on his mind and being. He concluded that time is what you cannot define in just one certain way. It is everything and nothing at the same time.

5.5 Insights, not specifically mentioned before, that crystallised or surfaced during the process of psychotherapy

The following section concentrates on serendipity. Serendipity in this context refers to communications and interpretations noted during the process of psychotherapy that were different from or additional to the insights obtained through analysing the written texts. These communications might be significant because they helped me to recognise possible authentic knowledge. In this section, my clinical notes and observations as therapist are important sources for analysis. Some of my own meta-communications in and about my clinical notes and observations were thus included in this meaning unit.

5.5.1 Handwriting, writing style and features of the language John used

The first thing I noticed on reading John's diary was that he did not write it in his first language, Afrikaans. When I asked him about the reasons for this, he just said that he felt it is easier to express his emotions in his second language, English. He could not really say why. Factors that could have contributed to this are:

- John often interacted with English South Africans;
- He experienced English people and their language as more open to recognising and allowing emotions;
- He fantasised about publishing some of his works, and saw the English literature "market" as more acceptable and bigger than the Afrikaans market; and
- The section of the Afrikaans community in which he was educated and brought up was often stigmatised as very strict, "narrow minded" or conservative, and inclined to restrict rather than be constructive – and John protested against this.

Secondly, I noticed that John often avoided using punctuation. He often indicated a new sentence or even paragraph just with a space between his words. He sometimes even neglected the use of capital letters at the beginning of new sentences or names. Possible reasons for this were:

- It reflected John's experience of the flow of time in his life as ongoing, without any pauses and with many intermingling issues. While working on the analysis of his writings, I also became very aware of this feeling of "ongoing words and expressions," and the inability to reach a point of conclusion;
- It reflected his inability to assert himself verbally in short, clear and understandable words or phrases. This made him feel powerless and

'misunderstood.' These feelings reached a climax while awaiting his trial in prison. At that time, he even started using the lower case "i" when referring to himself;

- When John did use capitals and punctuation, it was usually to indicate some intense emotion, and not necessarily to follow rules of grammar; e.g., he used many exclamation marks (instead of question marks) and capital letters regarding the word "WHY";
- He did not concentrate on stylistic features of language while writing about his emotions. His pen just became an extension of his mind, allowing him to put on paper what he thought and felt – it flowed from his mind through his arm, hand and pen without his realising the appearance of his writings; and
- It reflected his level of education and his inclination to be practically oriented, rather than verbally orientated.

A third tendency that might be significant is that he often made spelling errors. Together with the two reasons given above, this could be interpreted as indicating:

- John's tendency to rush things, because many words were just cut off or shortened as if he was leaving them unfinished; e.g., he used "*rember*" for remember (see Figure 8 below);
- A symbolic meaning of the specific word, e.g., when he used "*rember*" for remember, this could indicate that his memory was short; and
- His feeling of incompetence or being "unfinished" as a person in general, and/or in a more specific related area or mode of existence such as sexuality. He often left out the last letters of words. Some researchers (Olivier, 1999) go as far as to link this tendency literally to feeling castrated or sexually impotent, in cases where a male's penis is physically damaged.

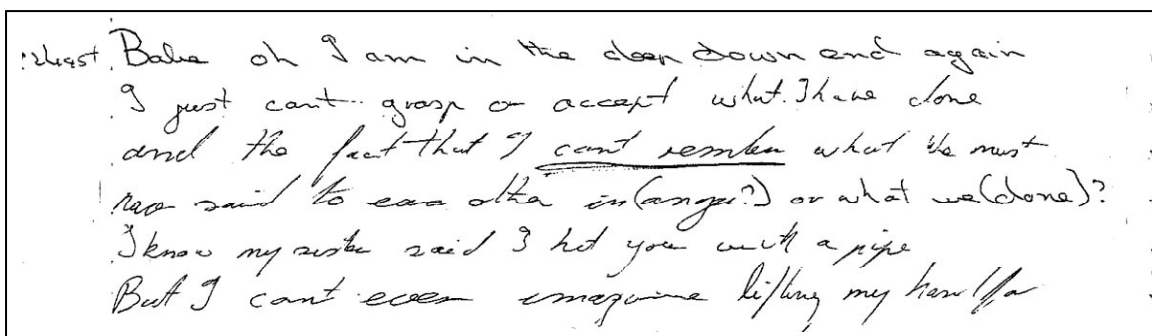


Figure 8: Example of John's tendency to cut off or shorten words

Finally, it is notable that John's handwriting and writing style often changed. The size of his letters fluctuated from big to small, and their inclination from forward to

backward. A closer analysis of when and how his handwriting changed revealed the following:

- A change in handwriting often went hand in hand with a change in the scenery or the emotions that John described (Figure 9);²⁰

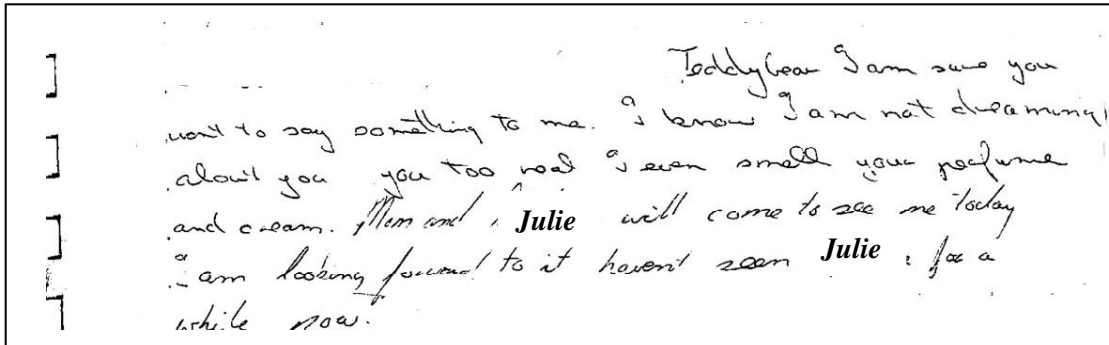


Figure 9: A change in John's handwriting coinciding with a change in scenery or emotions

- His handwriting was bigger, the letters untidy, and the inclination farther forward, when he was expressing very strong negative feelings such as anger, frustration and powerlessness. He also sometimes underlined strong, negative emotions (Figures 10, 11 and 12);

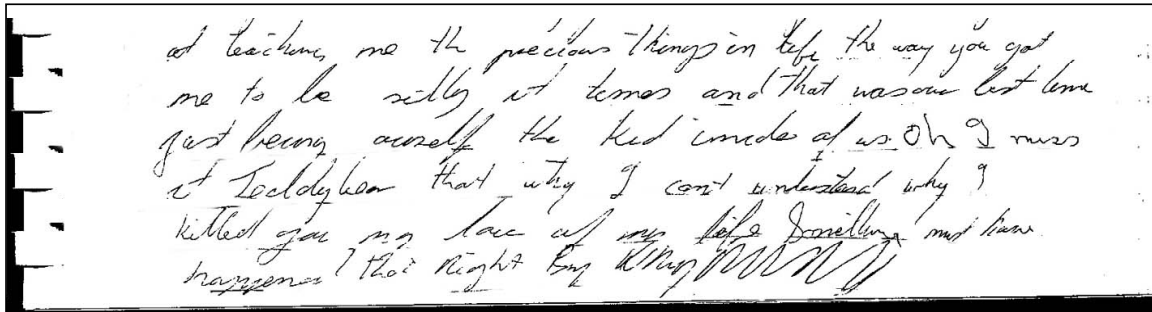


Figure 10: Big, untidy, forward-inclined letters coinciding with the expression of strong negative emotions

²⁰ Julie is John's sister

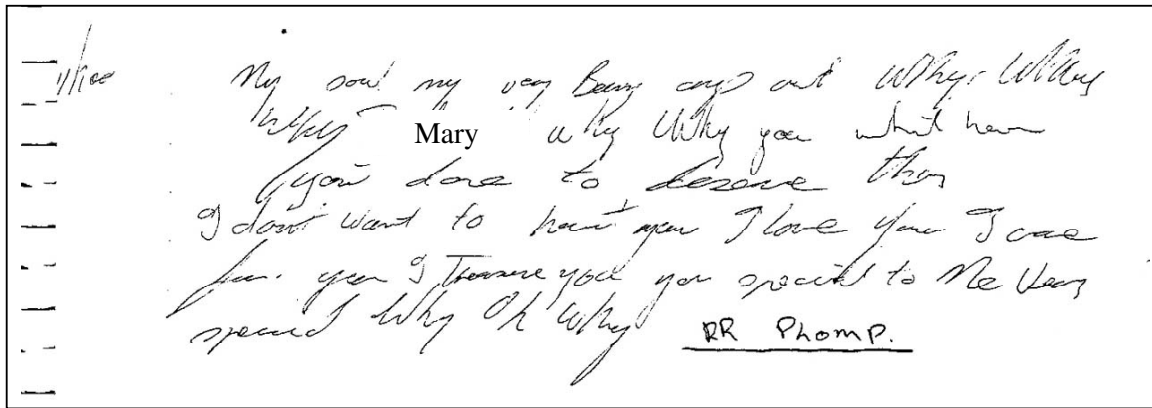


Figure 11: Big, untidy, forward-inclined letters coinciding with the expression of strong negative emotions

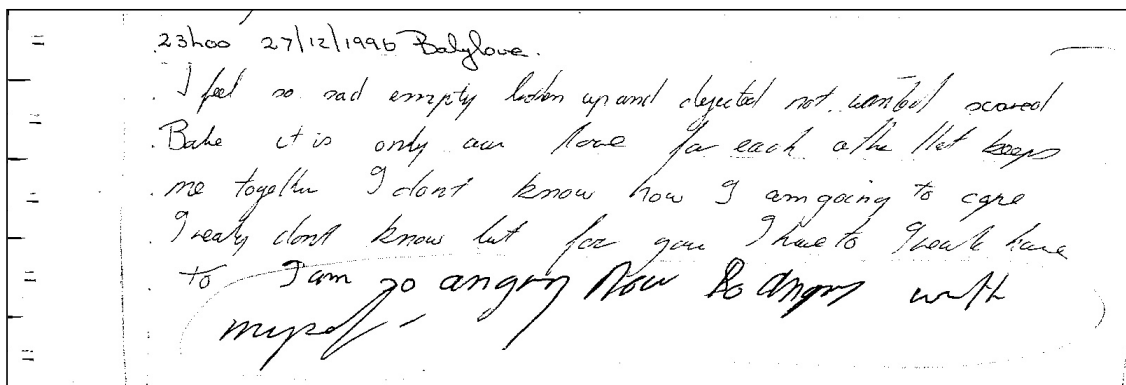


Figure 12: Big, untidy, forward-inclined letters coinciding with the expression of strong negative emotions

- His handwriting was smaller, the letters tidier and the inclination more backwards when he wrote about pleasant emotions. He sometimes also used pictures to demonstrate what he wrote (Figure 13);²¹

²¹ "Sandy" and "Ben" are aliases (for the sake of confidentiality) for the children that John wanted to have with Mary

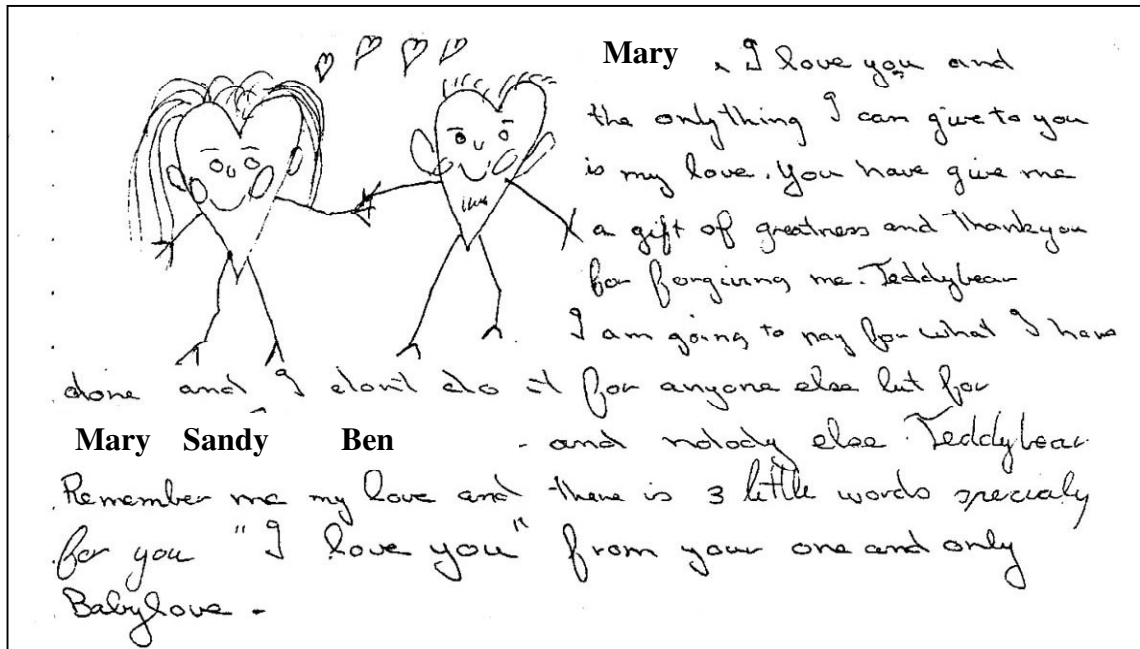


Figure 13: Small, tidy, backward-inclined letters coinciding with the expression of pleasant emotions as well as pictures as a non-verbal form of expression

- He used metaphoric and poetic styles when he tried to express very strong emotions – either positive or negative (Figures 14 and 15);

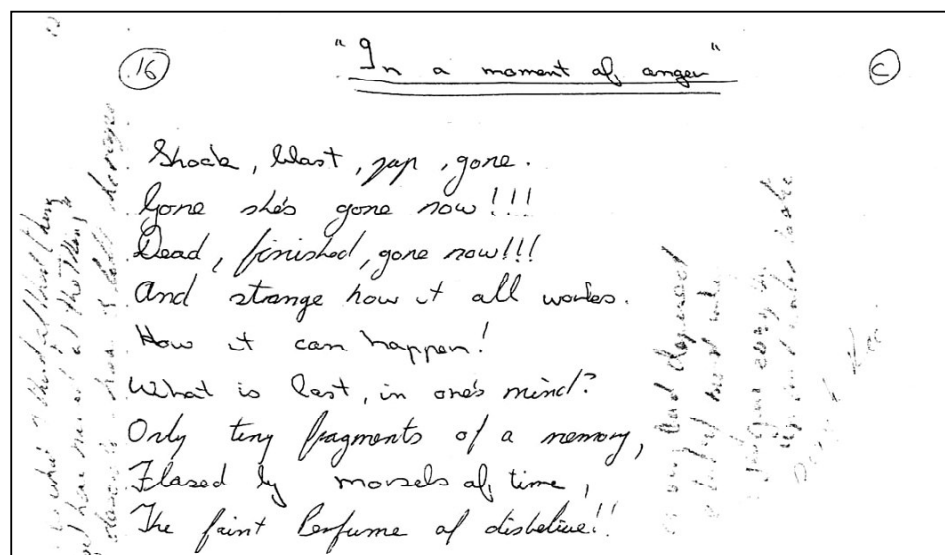


Figure 14: Example of metaphoric or poetic styles expressing strong emotions

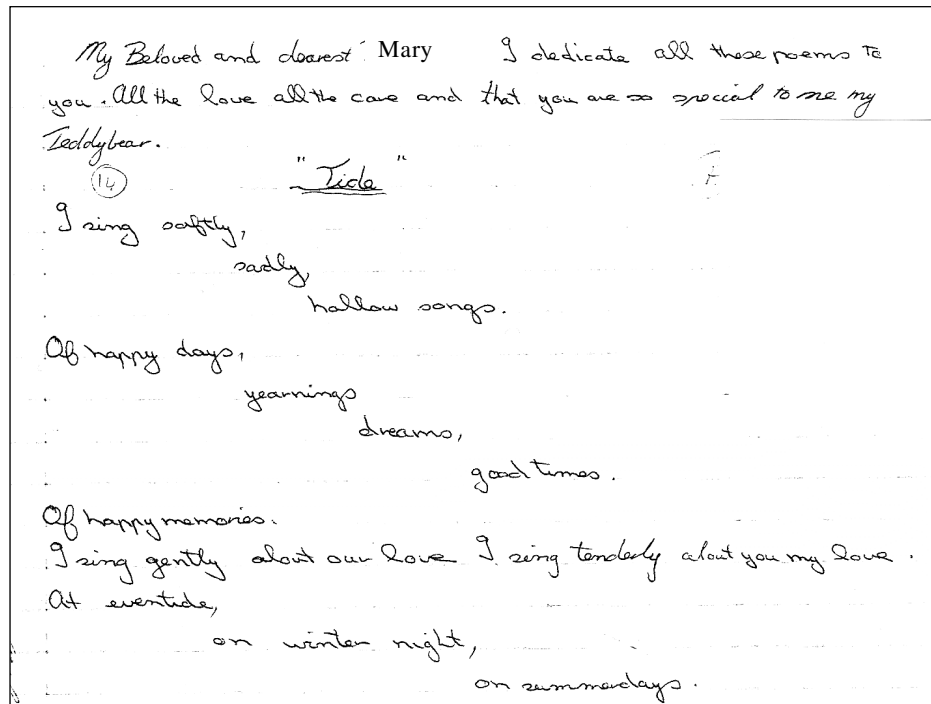


Figure 15: Example of metaphoric or poetic styles expressing strong emotions

- He used normal literary style when simply reporting facts or events or daily chores or actions (Figure 16);

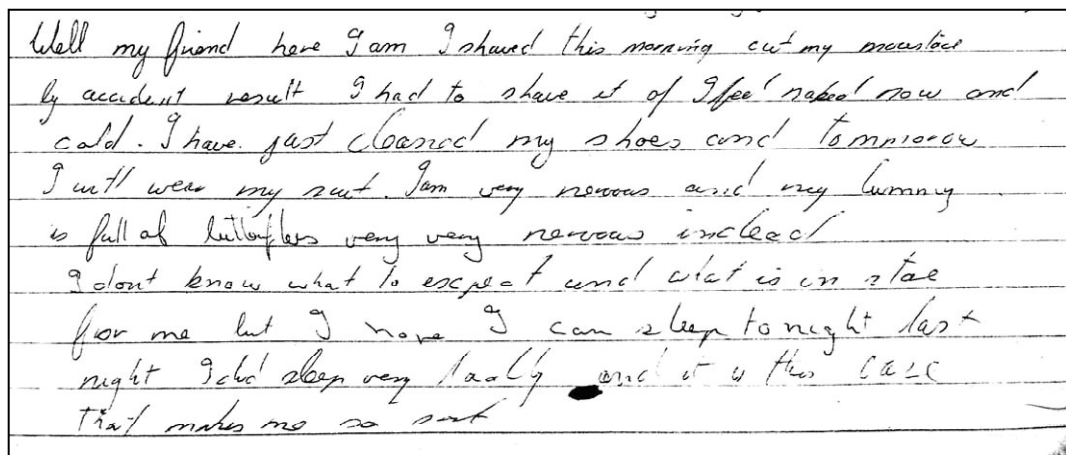


Figure 16: Example of normal literary styles expressing facts or daily chores

- He used essays or letters when he tried to clarify unresolved issues or analyse his own life or some aspects of it. His handwriting was usually neat, small and slanted backwards in letters and essays, especially when they were not part of his diary; e.g., when he wrote to Mary (Figure 17); and

20/01/2000

Sandra / Marcia

I have a few points I need to get clarify on and also a few things I am very concerned about and I feel the need to bring it up as it concern not only me but peoples future as well and if not addressed it could lead to major problems.

First I will bring the things up that concerns me directly.

No. 1 is you are aware of my mental problems and I will go into them in detail. These problems I am having stem from a long time ago and currently I am aware of them and is trying to sort them out with the help from Arnold. I am grateful I have the opportunity as it is for me the one and ~~of~~ only chance in life and mainly because of what has happened in my life I want to better my life and is determined to do so and I have succeeded in a few areas, this has given me the drive force to carry on no matter how hard.

Figure 17: Example of essays or letters for clarifying unresolved issues

- His fluctuating writing style reflected his frequent mood swings (Figure 18).

11/12/0 I feel so empty broken torn apart empty like just a shell
 angry heart sore cant remember much around me not even time I had at my
 watch and read the time two minutes later I dont know even what the
 time is dates I dont remember nor what day it is if I want for
 this diary I would not even know it is this day today or what the
 day it is I dont feel hungry dont feel like food I just
 go through the motions every time I eat I cant enjoy what
 eat because my hand feel so dirty it is
 not my hand I dont want it I hate it
 hate it for what it did to my beloved
 my Daddy been Oh I am so
 sorry for what I have done to the
 12/10 Oh I was so angry earlier on and I am angry

Figure 18: Example of fluctuating handwriting reflecting a mood swing

5.5.2 Non-verbal forms of expression

When I refer to non-verbal forms of expression, I am referring to or use it as synonymous with “without written or spoken words.” Although writing itself can in a sense be considered a form of non-verbal expression — as when there is no real interpersonal communication, despite the use of language — the non-verbal aspects of writing itself are covered elsewhere. For instance, the section immediately prior to this one treats handwriting, writing style, and the language features John used, addressing some non-verbal aspects of handwriting. Here, by contrast, I report my impressions about John as a person from what I learned through my person-to-person interactions with him. While looking for meanings through non-verbal communications, I was aware that I had gained my first exposure to many of the stories about John’s non-verbal ways of expressing himself while reading his writings. Things that John wrote in his written documents, such as that he preferred the workbench to a management position, contributed to my knowledge. Such information enabled me to identify the meaning units in this section.

However, I concentrated on my own observations that added to what John had already mentioned explicitly within the gathered data. For example, that John tried martial arts is presented here because it is not explicitly mentioned in the gathered written communications. It was regarded as a significant item of non-verbal expression, because, for John, it represented his difficulty in controlling his reactions to perceived physical and/or emotional attacks. Specific nmu’s in the written data were not indicated, because the following meaning units were mainly taken from oral stories and observations that evolved over time spent in with John *in his world*, either through studying his diary and other “things” in his world, or by listening and talking to him. These additional forms of non-verbal expression disclose to me the following nmu’s about John:

- **Martial arts:** A considerable time before the murder John began taking karate lessons. He enjoyed them and made rapid progress. Yet it came to an end when his instructor noticed John’s tendency to lose control and his temper during one-on-one fights. After an incident where one of his opponents was injured, John was advised to discontinue the sport;
- **Going away / withdrawing:** The stories in John’s diary about his trips reflect a tendency to get away from his normal environment when he felt stressed. Although many consider this is a normal way to reduce stress, John’s personal reports about this confirm it as almost a passion that he saw as a *necessity* for his

survival. He often talked about “*the space that he needed*”. He also confirmed that crowds and noise often made him very irritable. He felt easily enclosed or smothered emotionally. His drug abuse might have been one of his ways of dealing with this constant need. He often also just isolated himself from others when he felt this way, by walking away or going into his room or cell, where he could engage in writing in his diary or practical activities such as a making figures out of plaster of Paris and painting them;

- **Drawing and sculpturing:** John sometimes drew pictures in his diary to express his emotions. He did not do this very often, probably because he did not have a very special talent for this. His human figures were stick figures and he liked to use symbols such as hearts to indicate love (Fig. 13). He very much enjoyed making figures and sculpted objects out of plaster of Paris, and painting them. He even expressed some thoughts of using this to generate an income when released from prison. He also sometimes made some woodcarvings; and
- **Music and movies:** The most important feature of the type of music that John loved was that it had to be soft and not in any way very “loud or heavy.” He liked it if the words or rhythms reflected his nostalgic dreams and fantasies. He did not play any instruments or sing himself, but just listened to music to calm down or escape reality for a while. He very much liked some Disney characters, songs and movies, such as those in *The Lion King* and *The Beauty and the Beast*.

5.5.3 Other information obtained during and after psychotherapy

John raised the following issues during psychotherapy. His description of the issues that he addressed in conversation and in writing often contained terminology from psychological schools other than phenomenology or existentialism. Despite this, I try to adhere to or reflect his terminology in order to report his living world as he presented it. Yet, where possible, I try to add some semantically overlapping terms from existential phenomenology in order to indicate the possible similarities.

Sensitivity

During psychotherapy, John revealed that he was not only physically sensitive to things such as light and sounds, but that he was also emotionally quite sensitive. His ego (being-in-the-world) was sensitive. He easily felt offended, hurt or taken aback. His fear of losing Mary and the possessiveness of his love for her was closely linked to this sensitivity. He realised that he tended to “smother her with my love”. His sensation of “being on a high in life”, his need to “break away” and to “find some

space”, and his tendency to escape reality through the help of drugs might have been rooted in this ego sensitivity (existential anxiety). It is as if he were hyper-alert to any possible signs of rejection or acceptance (a changing world or atmosphere) in his environment (living spaces). This made him thrive on opportunities to escape the harsh reality by looking for anything that could induce a trance.

His diary, his mother and his fiancée symbolised the friends in life from whom he received the acceptance for which he so yearned. If they were to be taken away from him, his whole world would crumble. The following facts are very telling in this regard: that he had called Mary’s mother after the murder, and then fled until his own mother convinced him to go back and face the world again; and then his thanking Mary through his “friend” (the diary) for convincing him; as well as her post-mortem forgiveness — all of these are significant. Such “automatic” responses reflected something about this search for a friendlier world by using powerful ways to communicate with fused representatives of sources of affirmation (being authentic) in his life.

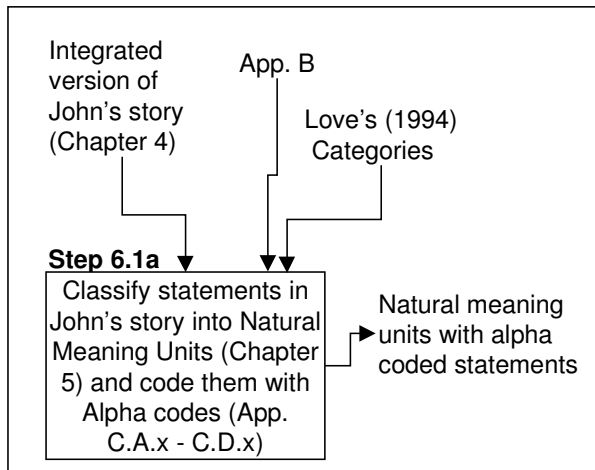
Inferiority/superiority issues

Closely related to John’s sensitivity, as seen above, was an underlying battle between feelings of *inferiority and superiority* (inauthentic being). He was afraid that revealing himself as he really was would make him lose Mary, who represented the only source of affirmation (being authentic) in his life. The fact that he could not gain his father’s acceptance and confidence enhanced his feeling of inferiority (awareness of inauthentic being). It prompted in him a compensatory superiority while, after competing for Mary’s love with her ex-boyfriends, he “*won the battle*”. The fact that Mary’s father and brother approved of him enhanced this. However, the sense of superiority that it produced was very *vulnerable* (anxiousness). The slightest sign of rejection could make it flick back into a hurtful sense of inferiority.

John’s mother acted as a sort of stabiliser when he was prone to emotional outbursts as a result of this inner conflict. To the contrary, Mary’s mother was somewhat of a hostile mother-in-law, as depicted in many traditional folk tales and jokes, to him. However, what he actually wanted was “a blessing from male authority.” Coaching his younger brother in life, winning bar fights, and winning a lady’s affection were some sources to counter-act his inferiority feeling. This is why he tended to behave in a “paternalistic” way, choosing pet names such as “*Babe*” and “*Teddy Bear*” for his beloved, and even feeling very flattered when she called him “*Babylove*”. Ironically, this made him fantasise about becoming a competent father and being a poet, a

writer, and an engineer who won prizes at university. These fantasies became so real for him that he started to act them out and build his self-image (way of existence) upon them. It became part of his everyday life. Unfortunately, however, they were not *real* (sincere or authentic).

5.6 Concluding comments



The first step of the Deductive process of data-analysis (Step 6.1a) has now been completed. Natural meaning units and statements have been identified, classified and coded from the gathered data, and they have been described deductively. The next three steps in the process of deductive data-analysis are presented in Chapter 6.

In summary, the following Natural Meaning Units with Alpha coded statements have been identified:

A. Repetition within and across diary entries and other written communications:

A01	Restitution and repentance	A06	Temper and regrets
A02	Poetry	A07	Problems
A03	John's love for Mary	A08	Emotional turmoil
A04	Memories	A09	Family influences
A05	Perceptions of himself	A10	Rethinking his life while imprisoned

B. Expressions of emotion

B01	Love	B06	Excitement
B02	Anger / Aggression / Jealousy	B07	Relief / Contentment / Consolation / Hope
B03	Hate	B08	Incompetence / Powerlessness / Despair
B04	Anxiety / Fear / Desperation / Dread	B09	Rejection / Loneliness
B05	Grief / Anguish / Loss	B10	Guilt / Repentance / Remorse

C. Historical explanations, descriptions and interpretations

C01	Childhood and family relationships	C04	The crime according to court records
C02	Romance with Mary	C05	The crime in John's mind
C03	Conflict with Mary		

D. Explicit and implicit interpretations

D01	Drug Abuse	D05	Absolutism
D02	Awareness of his own insecurities	D06	Introversion
D03	Inability/fear in relationships	D07	Intuitiveness
D04	Possessiveness	D08	Powerlessness
D09	Time		

E. Insights not specifically mentioned before, that crystallised or surfaced during the process of psychotherapy

E01	Handwriting, writing style and features of the language John used
E02	Non-verbal forms of expression
E03	Other information given during and after psychotherapy
E04	Sensitivity
E05	Inferiority/superiority issues

The next Chapter consists of a transcription of the nmu's and alpha-coded statements into more descriptive terms within the paradigm of existential-phenomenological psychology. Nmu's that do not explicate the meaning of a crime of passion have been eliminated, and the final description was applied to the original data and compared with it as a test of its plausibility. The end-result of Chapter 6 therefore resulted in plausible paradoxical truths about John's Crime of Passion (Authentic knowledge).

6 DESCRIPTION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING OF JOHN'S CRIME OF PASSION

Before I proceed with describing Chapter 6, a brief broader contextualisation of this Chapter may help clarify my location in the overall research process. As mentioned in the introductory paragraph of Chapter 5, Chapters 5 and 6, as a whole, represent step 6 (the deductive phase) of the data analysis process that was summarised in 3.8.6 (p. 3-74) and depicted in Figure 7 (p.3-77). The first step in the deductive phase (Step 6.1a) was presented in Chapter 5. The rest of the deductive data analysis is presented in Chapter 6. The final integration of data or knowledge gained involves a combination of results of the data analysis process and the insights gained through the literature study; these are presented in Chapter 7. That final integration of research data and existing knowledge represents this study's concluding synthesis.

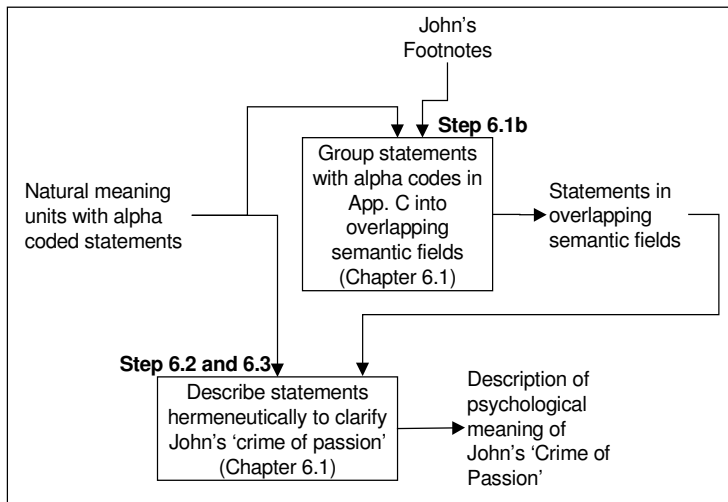
Chapter 6 is basically a description of the authentic new knowledge gained through our research. It is an attempt to explain the paradoxical phenomenon of a crime of passion within a phenomenological-existential framework. According to the process of analysis seen in section 3.8 and Figure 4 (p. 3-56), the result of combining Step 6.2 and Step 6.3 of deductive data analysis appears in section 6.1 of this Chapter. The order of Steps 4 (plausibility) and 5 (integration) of the inductive data analysis were changed to enable me to do a final test of plausibility on the final description of the meaning of John's crime of passion. Step 6.4 (integration) is presented in section 6.2, and the application of the final description of knowledge gained through the research in order to test the plausibility of the data (Step 6.5), is presented in section 6.3, followed by some concluding remarks.

In sum, the description of new knowledge gained through the data analysis began with an in-depth study of the nmu's described in Chapter 5. Semantic fields within these descriptions were identified, and repetitive meaning units were eliminated. However, overlapping semantic fields were grouped together, and any overlaps were regarded as indicators of significance. These fields are described in the following section.

6.1 Overlapping semantic fields

In the search for new knowledge during the analysis process, and especially in the description of the psychological meaning of John's crime of passion, I always kept in mind that I was looking for answers to the research questions within the existential-phenomenological method paradigm. Within this framework, I also considered the notion of juxtaposition by looking at possible coincidences or concurrent themes emerging from the

data. In this section this was done by comparing the coded subsections of the natural meanings units presented in Chapter 5, and grouping them according to semantic overlaps



(see Section 6.1.1 to 6.1.6, below). Studying the semantic overlaps (similarities between different meaning units) within his description of his world revealed five semantic fields within which John described his living world in the analysed data: himself as a person, his experience of Mary, his anxiety, his relationships, and

his restitution. A sixth semantic field was added for insights that surfaced during my interaction with John and his writings, which John did not describe directly, but came unexpectedly to light serendipitously. The figure for the above is extracted from Figure 7 (p. 3-77) in Section 3.8.6, to remind the reader of what is represented in this Section 6.1.

The grouping of the meaning units appeared as follows:

6.1.1 John as a person

Statements A02, A05, A06, B08, C01, D02, D06 and D07 describe how John experienced and expressed himself as a person. These statements provided a picture of his "Eigenwelt" (May, 1958) because they mainly describe his own world before, during and after his crime of passion. They tell the story of his struggle with issues, such as his joys in life and his fear of representations of death. These statements also picture his fluctuating levels of awareness of himself and his world, his pretending, and his unstable moods and environment.

6.1.2 John's experience of Mary

Statements A03, A04, B01, B06 and C02 provide a picture of a very specific part of John's "Mitwelt" (May, 1958). These statements portray John's experience of his relationship with Mary before, during and after his crime of passion. They tell the story of his struggle with issues such as his fear of losing Mary and his possessiveness of her before the murder. The statements also picture John's powerlessness in terms of explaining and changing the course of past events, and his intense regret and thoughts about restitution.

6.1.3 Anxiety

The central theme of statements A08, B04, C03, D01, D05 and D08 is John's experience of his relationship with his environment. Although relationships with other people and with himself form part of the experiences described in these statements, they deal mainly with his anxiety about the fragile environment that he encounters all the time – his existential anxiety. The things around him are all experienced as fragile and uncertain. These statements thereby report John's experience of his "Umwelt" (May 1958) before, during and after his crime of passion. They portray John's mental imprisonment and some of its physical manifestations. His world is experienced as unstable and full of obstacles. Prior the murder, he struggles to make an impression and strives to be welcomed in the world. He later reflects about these issues and begins to reflect about some alternative to that world. The fusion between reality and fantasy in his experience of his environment seem to reflect his anxiety.

6.1.4 Relationships

Statements A09, B02, B03, B05, B09, C04, D03 represent John's "Mitwelt" (May 1958) before, during and after his crime of passion. They portray his experience of his world of relationships with other people: his with-other-people world. They address John's issues about different, significant other people in his life. He struggled to make himself understood so that he could contribute to having constructive relationships. The destruction of many relationships in his life, and his attempts to restore them and belong in a community or family circle is, again, thematic to these statements. The contradiction between his passion for romance and his wish to protect woman and children and the elderly, on the one hand, and the fact that he killed his fiancée, provide a thematic thread connecting these statements.

6.1.5 Restitution

Statements A01, A07, A10, B07, B10, C05 and D09 deal with the more encompassing theme of John's thoughts about restitution after his 'crime of passion.' He wanted to restore not only one aspect of his world, but all of it. His Mitwelt, Eigenwelt and Umwelt came into play before, during, and after his crime of passion. When John wrote about time, and that he wanted to "undo" what he had done to start a new life of community service, complete restitution was what he had in mind. However, he also realised that he would have to remember his past and that time could not be reversed. His restitution involve a new lifestyle that would affect every aspect of his new world (present and future) and the way in which he would deal with his old world (past). It also had to do with his experience of freedom, his ability to

participate in his world, and the way in which he participated. Furthermore, restitution implied a new look at where to draw the line between fantasy and reality in his world.

6.1.6 Serendipity

The nmu described in Section 5.5 dealt with information from John's written and unwritten communications that unexpectedly revealed some knowledge about his crime of passion. It revealed many frequent fluctuations and even some contradictions in his experience of himself in his world. His brutal deed of violence happened within the context of his hypersensitivity. His claim of superiority was made while he was experiencing extreme inferiority. This information links to and may even provide a key to further unravel the information in all of the semantic categories indicated above. The serendipity highlights something about how John's living world was structured during the time of his crime of passion. The fact that everything in his life was experienced in close proximity to its opposite or recursive pole seems to link all the identified semantic fields.

My attempt to involve John in testing the plausibility of the information revealed through the research led to further information confirming his tendency to fluctuate between opposite poles. After the first phase of analysis (App. B.5), on 31 October 2002 an account of John's story was put together and given to him for comment. He read that account and made the following remarks — which are italicized below:

- About his love for Mary before the murder: *Total love. Possessive and protected.*
- About his tendency to change to poetry or metaphors when trying to express emotion in his diary: *I still tend to do it in my writing, depending on how I feel or what my mood is. It is something I try to control but not with much success. It portrays in my writing the exact feeling at that very moment.*
- About the fact that he started using lowercase i's when writing about himself shortly after his court hearing: *I do now use capital I as I don't see myself worthless any more. This is not something I controlled. It just come out how I felt mental wise then".*
- About his idea to publish a collection of poetry: *It is still my intention, but a lot of them needs to be refined in some way.*
- About his relationship with his father: *It has improved to the point where we can have a normal discussion with no hang-up although still a bit on the stiff (formal) side".*
- About his intolerance of marijuana smoke in prison: *I do hate it with a vengeance and can't tolerate it. My reaction to it has gone into a physical form by my nose running and my eyes watering just by smelling it.*
- About the population of the prison where he is kept (previously 5,000 and already overpopulated): *Now close to 10,000.*

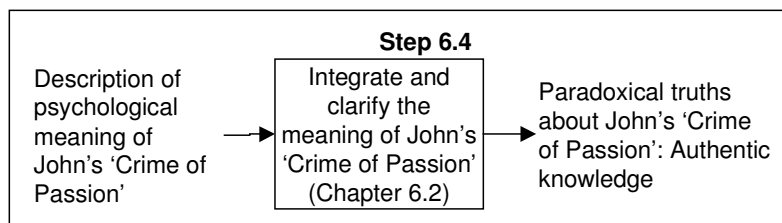
- About the way in which he is writing: *I am making constant notes and sometimes essays for remembering things for when I get home on the computer because I decided I will write what is in my mind on a given time and later arrange it so that it will make sense.*
- About his determination to become more assertive, especially while in prison: *I still am fighting the system and it has been noted by the members (popular name for Correctional Services personnel - researcher's comment) because they became more helpful and respect me for what I am.*
- About the “healing” effect of having peace and quiet around him: *It still do help and yes, it is the only way for me to calm down.*
- About his future plans regarding employment: *I already have my business plans drawn up and I will partner with my brother.*
- About the effect of noise on him, and how he deals with it: *Noise is still a main trigger, but instead of blaming I just try and move away from the noise. If I cannot then I address it in some physical form that suits the circumstance, but I never become violent anymore.*

John was asked to read through the description of his story and comment on its accuracy. He was not specifically asked to make notes at specific places in the written pages, but spontaneously chose to do so. The statements he chose to comment upon, and the nature of his comments, proved significant in understanding his way or mode of existence during his crime of passion. He tried to highlight and confirm statements that reflected significant relationships in his life and significant areas of change in his life. A close look at these areas confirms the observation that he experienced things as fluctuating between opposite poles. His love for Mary, for instance, was *Possessive and protected* (contradictory? – my comment). He also confirmed that his writing style reflected his mood swings, and that significant changes occurred in his relationship with his father, his experience of the effect of marijuana, and his awareness of the effect of noise on him (reflecting an overall enhancement of tolerance? – my comment).

Although not put in so many words, it is as if he was trying to highlight that he realised that he had to become aware of how close opposites may be, and that he was trying to avoid sudden possible swings or fluctuations. He was striving for balance and stability in his world. These concepts were regarded as a hermeneutic key to unlocking the authentic knowledge about John's crime of passion, by rewriting it in such a way that the inherent structure of John's living world becomes clearer.

6.2 Authentic knowledge about John's crime of passion

While categorising or grouping the semantic fields described above, in my search between the lines of the available data of authentic knowledge about a crime of passion, I tried to keep in mind the existential-phenomenological paradigm. May's (1958) phenomenological concept 'world,' referring to a person's being-in-the-world, was used as a broad indicator of possible significant aspects of John's living world (his structure of meaningful relationships in which he existed, and in the design of which he participated during his crime of passion). The three existential aspects that further define the term 'world' and characterise the being-in-the-world of all people — i.e., the Umwelt, (world around), Mitwelt (with-world) and Eigenwelt (own world) — were seen as further guidelines in the search to clarify the meaning of John's crime of passion. A closer look at the six identified semantic fields revealed that, although they often related to more than one of the aspects of John's living world, all had to do with one **major** aspect. The statements grouped under John as a person mainly described his own world (Eigenwelt). The statements grouped under John's experience of Mary and his other relationships mainly described his world of relationships with other people (Mitwelt), and the statements grouped under anxiety and restitution encompassed views of his environment (Umwelt). The information grouped under serendipity did not fall under only one aspect of John's living world, but could be added to the knowledge in these areas where they belonged in order to confirm and further clarify the authentic statements.



As a next step in the process of textual data analysis, the authentic new knowledge about John's crime of passion was reorganised and rewritten

within the three aspects of his living world (described above). During this process of explicating authentic knowledge by hermeneutical re-writing of the textual data, many contradictions emerged in John's writings, emotional experiences, life history, and even in the insights gleaned from the psychotherapeutic process. There appeared to be a culmination of many clashing truths in his world that eventually led to him committing the crime of passion. During the process of hermeneutic textual analysis, contradictory truths or concepts were identified by carefully studying, re-grouping, and exegesis of the contents of the semantic fields. It came to light that most of the identified concepts appear within the proximity of their opposite, contradictory or clashing concepts. For this reason, and in order to highlight these contradictions, Section 6.2 was written in a format that shows how they emerged from John's presentation of his living world presented in Section 6.1 and Chapter 5.

Although it became apparent that John was involved in a lifestyle of contradictions, only those relevant to the explication of the meaning of a crime of passion were described.

6.2.1 Knowledge related to John as a person

The statements in the discussion of John's own world, specifically those classified under restitution and serendipity, represent the sources of knowledge that guided the forthcoming theoretical formulations. The contradictions identified in John's living world, as he revealed it in the analysed data, are used as sub-headings for the following discussion.

6.2.1.1 Life and death

John's crime of passion represented a way of living (existence) that led to an unexpected encounter with death. Living in a world of dreams and pretending created the illusion that death was excluded or defeated - until the rude awakening where the possibility of death entered life again. The excitement of a life with his first love then turned into the last moment together and a life of separation. There was interplay between **first and last** that thus manifested a parallel to his encounter with life and death.

The meaning of a crime of passion for John involved him in striving for experience characterized by continuous states of "beginner's awe." He wanted to experience everything in life as if it were the first time he had engaged in it, acting out an attitude of 'carpe diem' or 'seize the day.' "Let us live to the full, because tomorrow we might die" was the motto. Ironically, this way of living also implied that if John wanted to keep up this experience for himself only, the first time something new was experienced should also be the last time: the next time he engaged in that thing that he had encountered before would not be a first time any more. The possibility that this "beginner's awe" with regard to love and passion might have been lost soon, generated an anxiety in him. When this anxiety became intolerable, it led to desperation. Such desperation contributed to an involuntary urge to turn the 'firsts' of passion into 'lasts' through a radical, thoughtless act. Beginning a relationship became beginning a new life together, holding out the possibility of creating new life and a new family together. This became a beginning for facing new responsibilities together, which suddenly became too much and resulted in an abrupt end to it all.

6.2.1.2 Tenderness and brutality

Tender love and caring developed into brutal anger and aggression during John's crime of passion. This development might have reflected the fact that these experiences had already become intermingled prior to the criminal act in John's life. Experiences of having a tender, loving mother and a brutal, aggressive father might, for instance, have precipitated conflicting emotions and bad expectations about future relationships. Perceiving the opposite poles of such models of male and female authority present in John's potential in-laws might enhance the intermingling of these experiences. The presence of these mental images could contribute to a spectrum of factors building up to the moment when tenderness turned into brutality during John's crime of passion. Tenderness and intimacy then translated into hypersensitivity. **Sensitivity** caused a fierce reflex-like reaction when John was touched or disturbed by a perceived insult (emotional noise) and/or loud physical noise. In his case, such a reaction was brutal, destructive and fatal.

6.2.1.3 Awareness and ignorance

John simultaneously experienced awareness and an acknowledgement of being the executor of his crime of passion, and a belief of not being responsible for it. He knew that he had done the deed but also sincerely believed that a hostile and violent part of himself had been in control at that moment. He referred to this part of himself as "not me". This part did not control him very often, yet it created an experience of estrangement or unawareness when it took over.

Although John had not been ignorant in the sense of not caring about the deed, he admitted to being ignorant about not realising what was happening. Although he had not been unconscious in the literal sense of physically paralysed, he was in a state of being unconscious in being unaware. When we take into account that existentialists refer to human beings as 'consciousness,' it would not be too far-fetched to say that there existed a moment of being animal-like, inhuman, or even dead as a human being. In this sense, John's act could be regarded as both intentional and unintentional. If the 'not me' is regarded as part of the self, it was intentional. Or, if the 'not me' is regarded as imposed on the self from somewhere else, it must be deemed an unintentional act.

Guilt and innocence thus also became paradoxically intermingled in John's crime of passion. He had been captured, in a sense, by the 'not me' which both belongs in him as well as outside of him. When his 'not me' was outside of him, a reflexive reaction was provoked, and when it was inside of him it he could only control it by proactive decision-making.

6.2.1.4 Stability and instability

Underlying the different paradoxes in John's crime of passion was a gradually developing imbalance, fluctuation and instability, that precipitated his state of breakdown over time. The fluctuation and instability preceding the moment of breakdown involved many aspects of life, such as upbringing and parenting, education, social life and occupational life. This swinging between opposite poles happened more on a covert emotional level than on an overt behavioural one, until the very moment of breakdown, when it peaked with the occurrence of the crime. The instability continued after the crime, yet it slowly but surely stabilised again with the necessary restorative actions and restitution over a considerable period of time. However, ironically the balance was mainly maintained through the constant realisation and knowing that the possibility of another breakdown could never be excluded.

6.2.1.5 Express and impress

There was a history of pretending behind John's crime of passion, given his difficulty with expressing some truths. He experienced a need to impress by withholding truths and replacing them with impressive lies. This withholding could cause a build-up of tension and guilt feelings, leading to the realisation that the mask of pretending had to be removed to reveal or express the truth. Removing the mask, or the revelation and expression of the truth, happened within a context not conducive for containing John's very strong emotions, consequently precipitating his crime of passion.

John's attempt to impress brought forth his pretending, and his attempts to express brought forth genuineness. Unfortunately, his lifetime of pretending caused such an entanglement in the pretended images that an escape into the freedom of genuineness caused sensations of strangling, rejection and severe incompetence. He could only express himself genuinely within or to his diary. He experienced speaking genuinely to Mary and her mother as if exiting a theatrical play of peace and tranquillity and entering a real war, hostility and danger. His experience of competence had so depended on the fantasy world of the theatre of pretending that his sudden feelings of incompetence triggered a form of "fight and flight." His beloved became a victim of this fight-and-flight mode when she acted as a reminder about his pretending and/or perceived incompetence.

The interplay between **pretending and genuineness**, and the swinging between **competence and incompetence**, were both implicit in the movement between expression and impression in John's life. This is also the case regarding the

extremes of **guilt and forgiveness**. For John, issues surrounding guilt and forgiveness were already implicitly present in him before his crime of passion, yet after the crime they figured as a continuous mental tribulation. He was haunted by a deep, sincere awareness of guilt and an accompanying desire to be forgiven. Yet he also realised that no ransom could be large enough to restore the damage. Expressions of sincere repentance and some restitution and restorative action brought him some relief, but not enough to cover fully his grief and sorrow.

6.2.1.6 Obstacle and stepping-stone

John's crime of passion represented a large obstacle in that it involved everyone in the proximity of his fatal act, and in his living world. Its ripple effects were numerous and lasted for a long time after the deed. A sudden fluctuation in perception caused what was intended to be a stepping-stone in the development of the relationship to be perceived as an obstacle to be removed. The unthinking removal of this obstacle, which had been unintentionally represented by his beloved herself, completely destroyed the relationship, the life of his beloved, and every possibility of restoring that particular relationship. The unthinking removal of the perceived obstacle also caused numerous new obstacles preventing the development of further relationships in John's life.

These obstacles could never be completely removed, but approaching them over time, with great care and consideration, some of them turned into stepping-stones to a learning experience. One by one, these obstacles became milestones in a life of restorative action. Despite this, all the obstacles or stones still stood in the shadow of the tombstone of his beloved, which reminded John of the endless hardship and irresolvable turmoil that he had caused.

6.2.2 Knowledge related to John's relationships

The statements indicated under the discussion of John's experience of Mary and his other relationships, including those under restitution and serendipity, were representative of the sources of knowledge guiding the forthcoming theoretical formulations. The identified contradictions in John's living world as he revealed it in his story and diary entries were used as sub-headings for the following discussion.

6.2.2.1 Jealousy and contentment

Jealousy was involved in John's crime of passion in the sense of possessiveness. When John was confronted with the fact that Mary still interacted with previous boyfriends, he denied in his diary that he was jealous about this. Yet later in his

diary, after describing how he had lost his temper for the first time with Mary, he admitted to being jealous because others (including her dog) still occupied space in her heart. Jealousy was apparently only a small part of a much more encompassing whole, involving a whole human living world and a full spectrum of emotions developing over time. John confirmed this in his later essays about his life that the dictionary definition's way of referring to jealousy in a crime of passion is too narrow. He often mentioned his possessive feelings towards her. The fact that John really adored Mary and that he was afraid of losing her made him very possessive towards her. This possessiveness was enhanced when she interacted with or talked about previous boyfriends or other objects of her love. John felt jealous about them, but realised that he should give Mary space to deal with other objects of her love. The possessive part of his jealousy was experienced as a willingness to accept others, and to "let live," as in the saying "live and let live". It was when the "letting live" threatened the "living" that his possessiveness triggered rage where the "letting live" became trivial against the background of his survival instincts. John denied his jealousy because he perceived his possessiveness as protectiveness, which, as he saw it, was a constructive and necessary part of love. This denial of jealousy, by seeing himself as more protective than possessive, caused a perception of Mary as very vulnerable, while he perceived of himself as tough enough (emotionally and physically) to possess and protect her. This **vulnerability and toughness** became confused or entangled when he as protector and possessor was wounded, and confronted with his own vulnerability or inability to keep possessing and protecting. This realisation was sudden and unexpected, and it resulted in his crime of passion.

Also involved in John's crime of passion, and parallel to the intermingling of jealousy and contentment, was the interplay between **self-sufficiency and dependence**. When John was prone to commit a crime of passion he had the outer appearance of a self-sufficient loner, appearing to have very few close relationships with family or friends. He was more practically oriented and preferred avoiding paperwork and administrative work. At work, he moved behind the scenes where things were made or done, not where they were discussed or marketed. Socially, he preferred places where games are played, such as in a pub-like atmosphere. He also liked breaking away to places of natural beauty and isolation. However, his apparent self-sufficiency or security may have been a mask to hide a deeper desire for acceptance or approval, and fears of rejection or disapproval. When the mask was removed, in a context somehow not conducive to containing very strong

emotions, his feelings of dependence became so strong that he was precipitated into a trance within which the crime of passion happened.

John felt that he had won (as in winning in a gamble or duel) Mary's love from her ex-boyfriend. When they went to his apartment to fetch her belongings, he experienced a sense of victory. This sense of victory implies another recursive opposite, closely related to jealousy and security. That is the recursive opposite between **victor and victim**. Although the act of murder might have been inspired by an inauthentic or insincere life of pretending victory, dominance or assertion of power of one over the other, the defensive act or reactive attack was completely misdirected.

John's crime of passion had no victor. Both parties were victims. The crime originated in a feeling of anxiety and inferiority due to a perceived background of a lacking education and social standing, when compared to that of the beloved. However, this anxiety was not a physically attackable enemy, especially when Mary, John's beloved, represented his object of anxiety or unintentionally reminded him of that by rejecting him. Then, in the absence of a real, identifiable enemy, in a moment of rage and anger the closest person (ironically, his beloved) fell victim to his act. Afterwards, the victor (in the sense of survivor) also became a victim of the violent act through the continuous emotional tribulation and physical restriction (incarceration and fear of relationships) that it caused. An overpowering moment caused a lifetime of disempowerment, and a moment of dominance caused a lifetime of sub-ordination in John's crime of passion. A desire for **superiority**, in this instance resulted in further, continuous humiliation and **inferiority**.

6.2.2.2 Understanding and misunderstanding/over-standing

In this context understanding, apart from the normal meaning, also means standing under in the sense of allowing the other to lead or guide. Over-standing then means to lead, guide or rule the other. When over-standing is forced or abused it takes the form of over-ruler, one who overpowers. A feeling of being fully understood, adored and respected before John's crime of passion became a feeling of being misunderstood, rejected and humiliated shortly before the criminal act. This probably applied to both parties involved. Under-standing the other in a supportive relationship changed into over-standing the other in a destructive rage. John's sudden attempt to overpower Mary might have been precipitated by his experience of being over-stood by Mary when she ordered him to leave. His phrase "*to communicate without words*" used in the context of his experience of his

relationship with Mary before the crime, reflected an experience of being fully understood on a conscious level. However, on a meta-level this phrase also reflected his fear of being misunderstood when or while using words. During John's crime of passion the fear of being misunderstood suddenly became confirmed and it was represented in Mary's words.

Sensing what Mary felt or wanted to say, or understanding her without words, implied having insight into her thoughts and feelings without the normal communicative sensory organs. Recursively, it also implied a blindness and deafness when the sensing connection was disturbed. Sensing without using the senses was strongest when these normal senses failed, or were experienced as redundant. John's crime of passion probably spring from and suggest a sudden disturbance in or failed bond that he had perceived to be so close that he could rely on sensing when few other functional communicative senses existed to rely on.

6.2.2.3 Construction and destruction

John's crime of passion evinced a very possessive, overwhelming way of conducting his loving relationship with Mary. This way of regarding the relationship translated into a strong need to protect his beloved and his relationship with her. This possessiveness was accompanied by a fear of losing Mary as well as the sense of security brought along by the relationship. Seeing the reality of the relationship depended on this view of protection and possession, which also involved total indulgence in the relationship that included a lot of petting, pampering and coddling. The relationship was thus conducted in an atmosphere of self-centred security needs, rather than other-centred or altruistic motives. Ironically, this way of regarding the relationship already contained the germ for undermining or destroying it. As soon as John's perceived ability to protect and isolate the relationship from external perceived dangers came under threat, a sudden and complete destruction followed. Protecting then changed into destroying. The impulsive non-verbal message was, "if I cannot have everything, then I would rather have nothing." The relationship was then destroyed in a desperate, uncontrolled attack on his beloved. This brings us to an interplay implicit in the one between conducting or construing that relationship in certain ways, and its eventual destruction, i.e., the interplay and tension between **damage and repair**.

John's crime of passion involved severe, irreversible damage. The possibility of such damage (in the sense of the destruction of the relationship, including both material things and the person) or John's potential to inflict damage might,

ironically, have been reflected in a continuously apologetic attitude. This attitude could be recognised in his repeated efforts to repair or compensate for things by giving gifts and verbal praise. The tendency or need to compensate or repair, in John's case, was present even before any major physical damage was done. The "doing" of the damage, when the act of the crime of passion happened, was very soon followed by a desire to "undo." There was a recursive relationship between this **doing and undoing**.

This recursive relationship between doing and undoing explicated another contradiction that is secondary to and implied by the one between construction and destruction. The "doing" or act of John's crime of passion was experienced as completely unintentional. Afterwards, he had an intense desire to reverse or "undo" the act. This desire provoked feelings of remorse and regret. The realisation of being the actor in an irreversible act of murder caused a sensation of powerlessness, hopelessness and despair – being out of control. Ironically, it also precipitated an effort to pay ransom and make restitution. He wanted to **re-do** what he could not really undo. However, even making restitution was difficult, especially shortly after the act. John's restitution started with more symbolic acts, promises and verbal efforts to make sense of what had happened through writing and/or talking about it. Later, it started taking on the form of more concrete acts, such as community service or a desire to live a life of dedication to higher ethical and moral standards or goals.

6.2.2.4 Love and hate

The most obvious, but also the most complicated opposite involved in John's crime of passion is the one between love and hate. Passionate love seemingly suddenly switched in his case to devouring hatred. All the other interplays between extremes and opposites discussed in this chapter are captured within this complicated entanglement of love and hate, which made passion turn into crime in a fatal moment of insanity. Also inherent in this opposite was the interplay between intimacy and violence.

Intense intimacy in passionate love provoked possessiveness and its consequent feeling of protectiveness. The protectiveness could have been perceived as a justification or precipitator of violence in the face of a perceived threat or danger. The violence then became misdirected in a moment when matter overruled the mind. A deep fear of incompetence might have been behind this sudden switch into a defensive mode. This feeling comprised his sexuality, and might thus have

translated into a fear of being impotent or, more broadly, a fear of not being a fully potent lover. This sexual aspect brought about hypersensitivity about anything that reminded him of or confirmed the fear. Such a reminder directly before the crime, as well as earlier in the relationship, preceded John's crime of passion. The feeling of impotency or the perceived inability to be a potent lover became overwhelming when intermingled with the other negative sensations in the moment preceding the crime. The feeling of in/m(com)potency translated into a general feeling of being unable to respond appropriately to the love of the beloved. This response-inability brought about a complete failure of responsibility in a desperate attempt to respond in a potent way during the state of alert or defence preceding the crime.

6.2.2.5 Justice and injustice

During John's crime of passion, justice and injustice, right and wrong, good and bad, and ethical and unethical, seem to have become subject to the overwhelming, explosive heat of the moment. However, their boundaries might already have been fading before that moment. The continuous strife of passion and build-up to it seem gradually to turn ethical and moral questions of right and wrong into pragmatic questions of euphoria and dysphoria, until ethics became completely irrelevant. Immediate experiences overshadowed long-term consequences. After the crime, the issues of injustice became the dominating drivers in life again. Everything then began to centre for John upon restorative justice.

6.2.2.6 Belonging and uprootedness

In his crime of passion, John experienced himself as belonging to his beloved, and his beloved as belonging to him. This sense of belonging might have been a replacement for experiences of not belonging anywhere else, and/or of being uprooted from previous relationships. In a sense, the couple experienced themselves as members of each other. They lived (cohabited) and loved together, and might even have experienced themselves as breathing together as one body. This could probably be a mutual experience, but even if it were not, it was at least John's experience. In his living world, their relationship was completely symbiotic. When this relationship was threatened, it provoked a feeling of being completely uprooted and severely injured. This threat was experienced as a dismemberment or amputation of a vital limb or organ of his own body. Against this background, the murder was seen as an attempted suicide. Even after the murder, John experienced himself as forlorn, 'dead' or ruined, and completely uprooted.

6.2.3 Knowledge related to John's environment

The statements indicated under the discussion of John's experience of anxiety as well as serendipity and restitution were representative of the sources of knowledge that guided the forthcoming theoretical formulations. The identified contradictions in John's living world, as he revealed it in the analysed data, are used as sub-headings for the following discussion.

6.2.3.1 Fantasy and reality

John's crime of passion implied a fusion between fantasy and reality. When the tribulations of reality brought about continuous dreaming or visions of "a better world out there," it provoked efforts to escape into that world. The efforts to escape might have taken the form of physical travelling or "breakaways," inducing a trance with chemical substances and/or falling "madly" in love with someone nearly "too good to be true." A fantasy world was then created next to the real world, where destructive actions had no effects in real life. In such a fantasy life, an act like hitting a beloved over the head with a hard object when losing your temper was reversible – it had no effect in real life. John's crime of passion happened when these two worlds overlapped to such an extent that a clear distinction was no longer possible.

Even after the murder, the fusion between reality and fantasy went on. It took on the form of visions or dreams in which Mary appeared to John with a message of forgiveness. The image was so vivid that he experienced it as real. However, there remained a sensation of inability to communicate directly or verbally.

Another similar and related contradiction, i.e., the one between **transcend and descend**, is implied by the manifestations of the interplay between fantasy and reality. It is as if John's crime of passion also represented an attempt to transcend reality by escaping to another realm where human limitations, such as the inability to move back in time, do not apply. However, behind it was a desire to be real – to be accepted as a real human being in reality. His world became cruel and rejecting for him. The fact that he did not feel accepted made it unbearable for him. It simultaneously became a desire and unbearable to be real for him. The unbearableness of reality generated the desire to transcend into fantasy. On the other hand, there was a sincere need to descend into reality and be accepted as a real human, being despite many shortcomings and limitations. When these two worlds clashed, it caused a feeling of belonging nowhere. Desperation then led to the crime of passion.

6.2.3.2 Withdrawal and participation

John's crime of passion reflected an intense desire for affirmation. Affirmation is only possible through the medium of communication and participation (verbal or non-verbal). When exposure to "the river of life" (B08) during participation did not bring affirmation for John for a long time, he searched for it through a single passionate heterosexual relationship where communication happens "without words" (A03). Withdrawal from other participation into such a relationship caused a sense of affirmation and belonging. When the relationship became his only source of affirmation, and other communication and participation diminished, the dependence on this relationship became so overriding that a perception was framed that life depended on it. When the relationship was threatened, the threat precipitated inappropriate (misdirected and unnecessarily strong) life-threatening defence mechanisms. Such defensive rage was preceded by a breakdown in communication, which could be described as the silence before the storm (John did not even write in his diary).

The silence before the storm reflected an intense sensation of rejection and loneliness or isolation. Paradoxically, it also reflected a need for acceptance and reassurance, which was only possible through an affirmative message or communication. When this message was perceived to be absent and/or when an opposite message was then received, the strong possibility of a crime of passion, and very fertile soil for its occurrence, presented itself.

6.2.3.3 Remembering and forgetting

Remembering and treasuring good experiences, and forgetting and exorcising bad ones, played an important role before, during and after John's crime of passion. Before the crime, there was a build up of bad experiences, and an attempt to forget them by indulging in possible sources of better experiences — such as a passionate heterosexual relationship, trips to 'better places,' and chemically-altered states. Shortly before and during the crime of passion, a trance had existed wherein control was lost over the remembering and forgetting. The moment was so intense that it effectively blocked out bad memories intermingled with and overwhelming good memories, to an extent sufficient to precipitate a temporary absence of consciousness.

After the crime, a continuous new mental battle developed to reorganise memories. The memory of the killing itself was completely blocked out, and only some sensual experiences such as bad smells and overwhelming sounds could be recollected. The mind that tried to remember was experienced as hostile to the soul that tried to

forget. Mind was experienced as trying to re-enter the body from which it was separated during the crime. The expression 'to lose one's mind' might be significant and meaningful in this context. To restore or regain that mind, or to get it to re-enter the body, became a very long and painful process that never was completed during the research. John had mentioned that his lifetime would probably be too short to finish his restoring and re-remembering activities. However, he started experiencing his life as a learning process during which the integration of good and bad memories, and remembering and forgetting, became a process that began to be controlled more carefully and responsibly.

Forgetting implied for John putting things behind him, or leaving them in the past. Yet he found such an act to be impossible. His past remained with him in the present all the time. Remembering, for John, did not mean bringing things from the past into the present and future. Re-remembering rather implied a re-arranging and re-establishment of his ever-present past in his present – a re-embodiment of the past to make it whole again. His future, consequently, became a restoration of the damage done in his past. Due to the fact that memory played such an important role in John's crime of passion, the paradoxical interplay between past and future in his present experiences became very significant. The crime might have happened in a moment when a complete discrepancy between past memories and present reality, as it pertains to future expectations, was provoked. John's whole existence was threatened by such an experience. A state of emergency was then launched, requiring or appealing for defensive action. This experience was so overwhelming that the defensive action happened 'automatically,' later proving to have been completely inappropriate or unnecessary and even destructive.

6.2.3.4 Stretching time and pushing time

The awareness and experience of time in John's writings fluctuated considerably. During segments filled with good experiences, time was forgotten; during bad stretches of experiences, his awareness of time became very intense. Ironically, during the 'good times' he experienced time as flowing very fast, and during 'bad times' time dragged endlessly. Before the crime the flow of time was experienced to be irrelevant. At the moment of the crime, time stopped and the future seemed to be absent. After the crime, John's awareness of time became a continuous, tortuous issue he had to deal with. He had an intense desire to "push time" in order to end the torturing, or even to "reverse" it, in order to obtain a second chance to deal with what had been ruined. However, there was also a simultaneous need to "stretch time" out, given the fact that there would never be enough time to truly

restore the damage effected by the crime of passion, and to pay the appropriate ransom.

Several other recursive truths were going hand in hand with the contradiction between John's simultaneous desire to stretch and to push or compress time. Dragging time or freezing it implied despair for him because it was evidence of being stuck in the past, nullifying the motivating power of the future. Speeding time implied hope because it provided evidence of a close, desirable future. Despair brought dysphoria, whereas what hope brought was euphoria. John's crime of passion brought to him the experience of a continuous fluctuation of **euphoria and dysphoria**. Numerous references to pain and enjoyment, high and low emotions and heavy and light feelings, which interacted in a paradoxical way in John's living world, proved to be present when his existential experiences were studied. These opposites, in close proximity to one another, triggered some questions about whether it was better to 'be in time' (live) or to quit 'being in time' (die), thereby effectively moving out of time.

6.2.3.5 Freedom and incarceration

John's crime of passion reflected a transfer or movement from freedom to captivity. This happened in both a literal and in a figurative sense. Literally it caused a long period of strict control of his movements through incarceration. Figuratively, it represented not being in control of his actions. It seemed as if there might have been a theme or a threat of yearning for space and freedom in his life. He did not want to be disturbed or controlled any more, because he had already been through enough experiences of being controlled or forced into some situations or unwanted actions in his life. Too many restrictions or too much restrictive motivation caused a yearning for freedom and constructive or attractive motivation. John wanted to live an undisturbed life in order to escape from the possibility of a reactivation of all the bad memories of being rudely disturbed in the past. This interplay between freedom and captivity happened mainly on an emotional level. However, it also had physical manifestations such as feeling excluded from close relationships, and/or the broader community, or being literally incarcerated as a form of punishment.

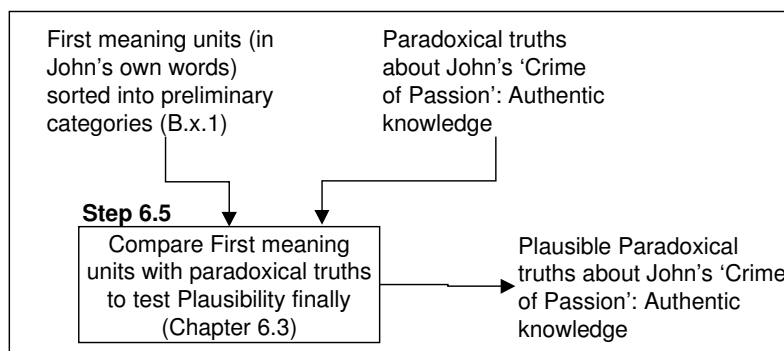
Peace was associated with freedom and anger was associated with encapsulation or imprisonment for John. When the living space that he inhabited felt threatened, peace of mind changed into anger. The threatening of his living space came in the form of scattered dreams and ideas. His dreams and ideas had been built on extremely sentimental and/or materialistic values. His attachment to these values

caused a sudden swing from fulfilment in a passionate relationship to emptiness when he suddenly was left without his sentiments and belongings. A sense of possession for his beloved turned into a sense of loss, while the possibility of producing together suddenly became an extreme notion of consuming her. This scenario was somewhat reminiscent of a wild animal that thrives on freedom and perishes when captured.

This was the last presentation of a contradictory truth that emerged from the analysed data. There might be many more related contradictory truths. However, I tried to keep the analysis within the framework of the selected data. It sometimes became difficult to draw the line between directly emerging truths and truths that are related to, but do not directly emerge from, the analysed data. The deductive nature of this part of the analysis turned the possibilities of knowledge emerging further into a potentially endless process. This might indicate that the last word about crime of passion, even about the particular one that John committed, has not yet been uttered, and will probably not be spoken very soon.

Before taking the explication of the new authentic knowledge further by comparing it with the existing literature, it was necessary to test the plausibility of the knowledge as described above. The following section (6.3) reports on how the original data was applied to the description of the analysed data in order to test its plausibility. This application entailed a comparison of the final description with some sections of the original data as well as comments (6.1.6) that John made when the first draft (App. B.5) was presented to him.

6.3 Application



The description of the psychological meaning of John's crime of passion, or of the formulations of major conflicting psychic issues involved in a crime of passion, was randomly

compared with different sections of the original text. This description proved to contain all the necessary, but also only the necessary elements of the experience described in the data before it was processed. The processed data thus still proved to describe with accuracy what

John tried to express regarding his experiences. However, it is also formulated in such a way that it explicates some authentic knowledge about crimes of passion.

During that application I tested whether my reconstruction of John's life story, the data reduction (according to Love's model for categorising nmu's) and the analysis of the psychological meanings in this reduced database were plausible and convincing. While comparing the final description with the original data I realised that the required phenomenological openness for different interpretations made it difficult to give a very clear-cut answer to this question about the plausibility of the final description. John was satisfied that what had I reported about his life story was still accurate. Also, my further analysis of his story attempted to explicate the authentic knowledge without changing the meaning, and a second look at his remarks convinced me that he would probably still be satisfied — although he was not available to comment during this phase of the analysis. Despite these facts, the answer to the questions posed about plausibility remained merely a subjective opinion. A careful comparison of my psychological formulations with what John had written in his own words (before and after initial analysis) did not reveal any major semantic discrepancies. However, I realised that the very paradoxical meaning of John's crime of passion made it difficult to describe – for John, for me, and probably for anyone who is honest about the involvement of this phenomenon.

When I asked myself whether I managed to do what I had set out to do when progressing along the path of textual analysis, I created a drawing of the research flow process (Figures 5, 6 and 7 in Chapter 3), to trace what I had actually done. This final visual review made me realise that it became more and more difficult, towards the end of the research process, to stick to the research path that had been envisaged originally. It actually prompted me go back and change some of the detail in the description of the research steps as I went along with the application process. I also remembered that I would sometimes switch steps and combined steps as I went on with the research, before I had drawn the flow diagram. This reading and re-reading, to eventually come up with the most likely explanations of what the phenomenon being studied is all about, provided me with a better understanding of what is meant by action research: a process of being guided by the data analysis to continuously reflect upon the actual steps. Even so, I remained within the broader research paradigm and phenomenological method described in Chapter 3. In fact, part of this methodological paradigm was an openness to be guided by the nature of the analysed data. Some of the statements in the formulation of contradictions and paradoxes contained within the meaning of John's crime of passion might even appear to be vague, lacking any links to previous or

subsequent supportive arguments, or susceptible to being read/interpreted in many different ways. Thus, I might have created more confusion than clarity.

However, I tend to agree with what Romanyshyn (1991) said about knowledge in the field of human sciences when he poignantly showed how the original oral world of the person was gradually replaced by a literary world. This process filtered through to psychology as science and the hermeneutic methods it practices. For this reason, he postulated that it is necessary to respect and treat the person as a complex being, and that one should strive toward healthy psychological-scientific methods of interpretation. “We need, then, to remain twisted, soulful, in a linear world if we are to allow the circuitous path of psychological gnosis to find its way” (Romanyshyn, 1991, p.28).

6.4 Concluding remarks

These were the major paradoxes explicated in the phenomenon of a crime of passion, as it was revealed through an analysis of the writings and behaviour of a person who committed such a crime:

- fantasy and reality
- jealousy and acceptance
- withdrawal and participation
- victor and victim
- understanding and misunderstanding/overstanding
- tenderness and brutality
- expression and impression
- construction and destruction
- remembering and forgetting
- stretching time and pushing time
- life and death
- love and hate
- justice and injustice
- awareness and ignorance
- freedom and incarceration
- obstacle and stepping stone
- belonging and uprootedness
- stability and instability

These paradoxes embrace the entire living world of the person who committed the crime of passion – the “Umwelt,” “Mitwelt” and the “Eigenwelt”. These paradoxes overlap considerably, but they also contain several other meaningful contradictions within them. Although they inductively explicate the meaning of crime of passion, they also deductively complicate it. Moreover, the paradoxes highlight the complexity of the phenomenon, while also describing it in such a way that new knowledge can be gained.

The diary and the other texts studied assisted me in explaining the complex phenomenon referred to as a crime of passion by offering first-hand descriptions of the experiences in the mind of a person who committed such a crime. These descriptions contained knowledge that could not be obtained through any type of manipulated or experimental study. Most

importantly, the mentioned paradoxes contained in these texts revealed authentic information about the living world of a perpetrator of a crime of passion. The information could be useful for academic and research purposes as well as practical purposes such as to inform preventative and therapeutic action. However, the extent of the usefulness and applicability remained a matter of subjective judgement and opinion, because it had to do with a uniquely human phenomenon to which one could never gain access through methods traditionally used in the objective, non-human sciences.

The clues found in the words, expressions and/or behaviour of a person who murdered his fiancée certainly assisted in the explication of the phenomenon of crime of passion. Rich descriptions, adjectives, metaphors, repetitive words and phrases, poetic verses, historical explanations and explicit and implicit interpretations, all provided clues for the crystallisation of new authentic knowledge. A final task of this research project would be to compare and integrate this knowledge with the existing theory and insights as described in Chapter 2. This integration will be done in Chapter 7.

7 INTEGRATION OF EXISTING THEORY AND NEW INSIGHTS

Chapter 6 concluded the description of the processes of data reduction, including the inductive and deductive data analysis summarised in 3.8.6 (p. 3-74) and Figures 5, 6 and 7 (pp. 3-65,3-74 and 3-77). The final integration of data or new authentic knowledge gained, involved a combination of the results of the process of data analysis and the insights gained through the literature study. This final integration of research data and existing knowledge represented the concluding synthesis of this study. For this reason, it was regarded as appropriate to present it at the end of this study, as a chapter on its own.

The research done in this study showed that a crime of passion was, indeed, a complicated human phenomenon filled with various paradoxical meanings. Although very difficult to explain, many aspects of the meanings disclosed by this particular crime of passion could be explicated through a rigorous study of inscriptions in a personal diary and other documents compiled by someone who had committed such a crime. I have attempted to demonstrate how spontaneous linguistic forms can be used to gain a better understanding of the dynamics underlying and precipitating a crime of passion. A crime of passion represents a reality where the suffering individual and the therapeutic or research community seem to be either out of control or, in the case of the latter, very vague in understanding and explaining this seemingly paradoxical phenomenon. The main question is: why is the knowing (loving a person) in such cases not revealed in their way of being (killing that person)? Some adequate knowledge for unravelling this paradox was found between the lines of the diary of a specific person while he was being caught up in an inadequate, harmful way of existence. Without realising it himself, the author of this diary might have come very close to an answer by posing his questions spontaneously in writing.

The existing literature on the subject of crimes of passion contained some valuable information that contributed to unravelling and understanding the phenomenon. Even so, most of the literature seemed insufficient to explain the more complicated and paradoxical aspects of the phenomenon. The existing literature studied could broadly be divided in three categories: traditional literature, popular literature and existential-phenomenological literature. Some enlightening perspectives were obtained about information pertaining to a crime of passion through the research done in this study. These perspectives are briefly explained in the following paragraphs, using the three identified categories of literature as headings.

7.1 Traditional literature

The image of the male perpetrator in a crime of passion as a rough and tough, dominating, loud and outspoken individual, as often portrayed in traditional literature, proved to be a very small part of a whole requiring far more to be truly encompassed. John might have appeared like this for short, isolated periods and under certain circumstances, or when provoked. Yet, most of the time, John appeared like most other normal individuals. He appeared even more withdrawn and sensitive about the possibility of hurting another individual's feelings than the average person might ordinarily show.

Furthermore, it became apparent that the current dictionary definition of a crime of passion, which describes it as "a crime, especially murder, committed in a fit of sexual jealousy" (The Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 1998, p.333), is, indeed, very narrow. Such a definition, for example, ignores the fact that, when someone kills his beloved or sexual partner, sexual jealousy might have been only a small part of the motivation, or it might even be absent as a real motive. Furthermore, the definition makes no mention of the many other related factors, such as possessiveness or the build-up of contextual tensions over time that might also act as a key motivating factor.

Concepts from other disciplines and even spheres of human endeavour that might help to account for why someone might suddenly turn from being nurturing and affectionate to being destructive and hateful might include theoretical concepts from medical-psychiatric paradigms (e.g., a germ, virus or chemical imbalance caused a state of psychosis), concepts related to specific psychological trends, such as object-relations theory (e.g., split-off ego parts causing an unstable personality) and even spiritual-theological terms (e.g., 'demon-possession caused him to lose control over his body'). Even mythological characters, such as werewolves in legends or even characters in tales such as *The Beauty and the Beast* or *The Princess and the Frog* might also help to explain or at least to deal with the complicated psychic realities contributing to a crime of passion. John referred to *The Lion King* as one of his favourite movies. In this story the character of Simba is very reluctant to accept his royal qualities. For a long time, Simba has lived a life of 'Hakuna Matata,' pretending to have no worries while avoiding his responsibilities and hiding his real identity.

Concepts such as the ones in the titles of fictional literature and fairy tales, and in the medical-psychiatric and spiritual paradigms, imply that there can be within the same person an angel, king or prince, and a devil, swindler or beast. These concepts had often been used successfully in traditional literature to deal with or attempt to account for fluctuations within the same person. However, these explanations all have some limited advantages in

explaining the phenomenon of a crime of passion, and in finding some ways to explain how contradictory parts of the same phenomenon can be related. They imply that something damaging, harmful or destructive that should not inhabit, control or influence the person entered the body of the individual. Many medical-psychiatric, fictional and spiritual explanations or metaphors imply that unwanted or non-corresponding elements can cause a person to lose control. Explanations implying dualisms between good and bad ignore the fact that human beings are integrated, subjective entities, experiencing their bodies and surroundings as part of themselves uniting the mind, soul, body and world.

Considering various approaches and possible theoretical paradigms for explaining the phenomenon of a crime of passion has highlighted certain of its key aspects. My impression was that the psychodynamic approach focused more on the unconscious processes involved, and the possibility of intra-psychic dynamics having a causal effect on a temporary or long-lasting loss of control (Wright, 1984). On the other hand, a cognitive-behavioural approach emphasises issues such as irrational beliefs (Ellis, 1969) or cognitive constructs leading to a state of learned helplessness (Beck, 1972). Other approaches also include social discourses that proposed the ways in which partners in an intimate relationship construed their realities (Hollway, 1989). However, analysing John's story made me realise that many of these approaches seem to ignore the human nature of the issues and perceptions leading to a crime of passion. In different ways, all of them attempt to explain it in terms of mechanistic and deterministic cause-effect processes.

Studies such as that by Viano (1992) on "batterers," and Stacey *et al.* (1994) on "violent couples," were helpful in suggesting some strategies of early identification and preventative measures. Yet they too fell short in not really or fully taking into consideration the uniqueness of every human being and the ways in which she or he interacts with his or his world. The research done in this study showed that it would have been very difficult to use the paradigms and language indicated in these studies to identify the possibility of a crime of passion in this specific case early enough to prevent its happening. Instead of clearly definable, early indicators and warning signals, John revealed only subtle suggestions such as a need to pretend, to "break away," to be possessive and to withdraw into the realm of fantasy. Environmental factors and influences, such as his difficulty to find a proper job, recollections from past experiences with role models and various other factors acted in an intermingled way to give rise to the fatal crime of passion.

The attempts that have been made in the past to identify some roots of violent behaviour that occurs within intimate couples that have led to a clearer awareness of the complicity of such factors and influences proved closest to the elements revealed in John's writings.

Furthermore, the literature that recognises the fact that every case is unique proves to get rather closer to the truths expressed in the material explored in this study. Against this background, the way that Barnett and LaViolette (1993) find “captivity” as part of the cause of intimate violence, rather than its cure, seemed to be more accurate and insightful. They observe that, although conformity is an everyday occurrence, its effects as evidenced by the research of Milgram (in Barnett & LaViolette, 1993) are no less significant than the behaviours resulting from captivity; this seems to be more in line with my observations during my study of John’s story. This finding by Barnett and LaViolette (1993) are reminiscent to me of both the captivity within John’s insincere existence before the crime, and his experience of physical incarceration. Indeed, the strength of the natural human tendency to conform provided a very helpful clue to unravelling the intricacies behind his crime of passion. John yearned for both freedom of mind and freedom of physical movement in his world: the former yearning was expressed in his writings, while his yearning for physical freedom was most clearly expressed through his attempts to create all kinds of breakaways. When he encountered obstacles to these freedoms, in the form of an inability to find a job and to keep Mary, he conformed by creating his own fantasy world: pretending that he had a good professional standing, and that Mary was unquestionably his.

Later on, while in captivity, he conformed by initially participating in the violence and substance abuse that characterized the new world of his fellow inmates ...until he realised that the way of least resistance, conformity, was proving to be disastrous for his life. Conformity proved to be related to John’s inauthentic existence, and his unethical and irresponsible behaviour at that time. He had to start thinking more sincerely about where, when and how to conform – if conformity was to be at all necessary. This realisation became a significant doorway or stepping stone to his path of a more sincere (authentic) existence.

The predictors of violent behaviour in intimate couples discussed by Creatney and Davis (1995) — such as the consumption of alcohol, location, the victim’s own criminality, and the victim’s role in precipitating the assault — appeared to be factors that were referred to either directly or indirectly in the material analysed in this study. Even so, some of their conclusions, such as that the roots of the violence are in the male’s assumption of superiority and in his need to assert this assumption in his relationships with women, appeared to be a somewhat dangerous generalisation. My study proves that factors such as these are likely involved in the build-up towards the crime of passion, but that none can be singled out as the real “root of the violence.” The violence could rather be seen as the culmination of a complicated intermingling of several factors over time. It arose, rather, as a manifestation of an insincere way of existence. In John’s case, different manifestations of pretending and

conforming clearly built up gradually towards and led to an unethical and irresponsible existence in his living world, culminating in his crime of passion.

When my analysis of John's story was considered against the background of the literature discussed above, it could be said that it did not satisfactorily explain the intricacies involved by such a paradoxical phenomenon. Browne (1987) made the insightful observation that specific predictors still fail to explain why some men who witnessed violence as children do not grow up to batter their intimate partners, while others who did not come from abusive backgrounds later become violent. Although Browne (1987) made his observation earlier than many of the previously reported observations and interpretations, my analysis of John's story found them to be quite accurate. Ptacek's (1990) opinion that issues of gender and power, more than the intervention of temporary insanity, underlay the build-up towards violence in men towards their spouses; this also proves to be quite insightful. However, the research reported in Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this study shows that, although 'temporary insanity' could have been present during this particular crime of passion, it was not really a primary underlying factor in the build-up towards the fatal violent spell. The same applies to issues of gender and power. These issues were present in John's mind when he felt inferior towards Mary, but that feeling of inferiority and powerlessness seemed to be more related in this instance to a lack of education and a combination of background- and circumstance-related issues, rather than to gender. Although factors related to his background, current context, assumptions of superiority, and power and gender issues all proved to be involved in the mental build-up towards the crime of passion, none of them stands out as a single precipitator.

After studying John's writings, I tend to agree with Wilson and Daly (1992) that being out of control because of jealousy could also not act as an excuse for criminal behaviour in any context. However, in John's case the fact that his jealousy did not serve as an excuse, certainly does not imply that his fatal action was completely intentional. Mowat's (1966) notion of "morbid jealousy" explains only a small part of a much more encompassing whole in John's case. Jealousy could be a "normal" human emotion, experienced by a sane person indeed. However, John's violent jealousy was 'insane,' even though that is not meant to necessarily imply that **he** was always 'insane.' His crime of passion could be considered as insane because it did not make sense – no matter from what perspective it is viewed. The fact that he was very angry and anxious, as well as afraid of losing Mary during the moments preceding his crime, does not help to show how morbid jealousy could be the key to an explanation of John's crime of passion. No third party that was involved threatened him at that time.

Although traditional literature provides some perspectives that assist with the analysis and understanding of some aspects of John's crime of passion, several of the crime's areas remain inexplicable within the existing paradigms. Because much of the traditional literature about crimes of passion are based upon psychodynamic theory, I became aware of an inability of psychodynamic perspectives to bring about restitution, because of the underlying pessimistic view of human nature. Many areas of John's crime of passion proved to be inexplicable in the paradigm provided by the traditional literature. A search for some new alternatives to understand crimes of passion was necessary to explicate the meaning of his crime of passion. An openness to look at alternative forms of literature in this regard was required. Views advocated by popular literature, the existential-phenomenological literature, and the spontaneously written literature by a perpetrator of a crime of passion provided such alternative forms of literature for this study.

7.2 Popular literature

The popular literature considered in this study for providing alternative perspectives on crime of passion was divided in non-fictional literature, fictional literature and virtual literature. The findings of the research of this study were considered against the background of these three forms of popular literature.

7.2.1 Non-fictional literature

Popular non-fictional literature such as the story of Heather and Josh that led to a date-rape, as told by Rizzo (1994), proved to contain valuable information to better understand crimes of passion. Date-raping is the subject of this book, and in this case it did not result in the physical death of one member of the couple. However, the dynamics of the relationship before the criminal act, as well as the experiences of the parties touched by the criminal act, were very similar to the interactions and the emotional experience described by the subject of this study. Themes such as the deep passion felt by the male partner and his strong sense of possessiveness towards the female partner were very evident in both the stories of Josh and Heather, and of John and Mary. The conflict between a positive physical attraction and chemistry when together, along with a strong sense of moral principles and pre-conceived ideas of about how the relationship should develop, seemed to run like a thematic thread (threat?) through the development of both relationships.

Other factors that seemed to be similar in these stories were the sudden physical nature of the relationship and the fact that the male partner in both relationships reached an "edge to compromise and ruin" (Rizzo, 1994 dust cover) during a rage of

uncontrolled behaviour after receiving messages that indicated their rejection from their respective female partners. However, no indications were found in this research that the sudden physical chemistry in the relationship could be regarded as an indicator of a risk for criminal behaviour. It seemed, rather, to be the fact that physical chemistry somehow became separated from love, responsibility and respect in these relationships. In both cases, it happened unexpectedly and unintentionally during a heated argument in an isolated, private environment. The moment when love, responsibility and respect were forgotten for a moment, the chemistry (of love) turned into a violent adrenaline rush, which resulted in rape in Josh and Heather's case, and in murder in John and Mary's case.

In true stories such as these, people tend to exclude from their world any negative feelings — such as feelings of inferiority towards their partners — by trying to pretend that they were someone different (the spy syndrome). They often hid their jealousy towards other friends or partners by denying it completely, or by pretending that these feelings did not exist. In the end, the dark, negative side of their living worlds became so overwhelming that it destroyed one of the partners, either literally or figuratively. This course of events caused the other “surviving” partner to be excluded from “normal” society for a considerable period of time, either by self-imposed isolation or by forced isolation in the form of incarceration or correctional supervision. However, the tendency to conceal the negative side of crimes of passion is clearly manifested in the fact that most of the reported perpetrators were involved in some kind of isolation shortly before their crimes. They often also engaged in attempts to romanticise the crime of passion, or in trying to present these crimes as belonging to an attractive world of fantasy and fiction, as a kind of forbidden fruit. The presence of references to the latter in the literature about intimate crimes highlighted the possible role that a consideration of fictional literature could have in the explication of the meaning of John's crime of passion.

7.2.2 Fictional literature

The romantically coloured picture of sex-related horror and violence in fictional book series, such as “The Hot Blood Series,” apparently tried to hide the negative side of the dynamics that might lead to a crime of passion. When Gelb and Garret (1997, p.xi) explain that elements of sex and horror are “married” within their stories, and that sex is a primary motivating factor behind the behaviour of their major characters, they clearly assume that sex (as opposed to violence or jealousy) is the primary motivator behind behaviour of people committing crimes of passion. Assumptions such as these provide some insight into how people interpret a crime of passion pre-

reflectively, when uninformed about its real nature. This study has shown that such assumptions are not only very thoughtless and reductionistic, but also as something very near the opposite of the truth. As with rape, sex seems in fact not to be the primary motivator in crimes of passion. It rather seems to be a complicated build-up and intermingling of several factors over time that result in such destructive violence. In John's case, the violent act itself did not involve any sex – only senseless violence.

I found it significant that one of the ways that people create to deal with incidents where the negative and positive opposite²² sides of passion meet is to create a reserved category for adults in art and literature, such as the one described in Gelb and Garret (1997, p.xi). On their promotional page at the beginning of their book, Gelb and Garret (1997) mention that the book is about "The Horror of Love" and "The Beauty of Death." Love and death (or for that matter, love and hate) in crimes of passion are often fictionalised or moved into a romantic world of fiction where they have the opposite meaning than they do in real life. In fictional categories such as these, the real effects of crimes of passion, such as ruined lives and endless feelings of guilt and worthlessness, are hidden from society, because facing the negative or dark side of us directly is too difficult.

In fictional literature, crimes of passion can sometimes be given a romantic flavour by using the 'forbidden fruit' effect and presenting the crime, stripped of the negative or bad side of experience, as if in the name of art and literature. Phrases such as 'primal urges,' 'forbidden instincts' and 'wildest fantasies' are used to suggest that there is an attractive aspect of exciting sexual interaction involved in crimes of passion. However, in John's case a crime of passion literally resulted in an isolated life of self-imposed isolation from other people through imprisonment. His crime stripped him of his romantic view of life; it certainly did not enhance his romantic life or provide him with more excitement or enjoyment from life in general. Although John had never mentioned that he was interested in literature about crimes of passion, his own life story confirmed this tendency to romanticise and to create a world of fantasy, fiction and pseudo-reality. He created his own pseudo-world next to his real world when things in his living world did not work out the way he had planned or wanted. He might have been influenced by images he had encountered in fiction, but apart from short references to movies that he enjoyed, including *The Lion King*, he never explicitly mentioned that he was influenced by fiction. However, his dreaming about being a competent, award-winning engineer, his frequent breakaways with Mary, his

²² See Muller, 1998b for a discussion of the psychological meaning of opposites

drug abuse and his poetry, all provided evidence of the existence of a pseudo-reality in his mind. His own life story read as fiction. His way of dealing with the atrocities or the dark side of reality was to create a pseudo-reality where they could be dealt with without feeling stuck or unable to handle them efficiently. Fictional literature often pictured such a reality in a romantic way. It could even be romanticising crimes of passion.

A classic representation of this pseudo-reality could be found in literature about virtual sciences or cyberspace. It was as if the world of electronic media took one step further the human tendency to create a separate space to relegate the negative or hidden part of reality. For the sake of classification, I refer to the relevant literature about virtual sciences as literature about cyberspace.

7.2.3 Literature about cyberspace

In section 2.3 (p. 2-37) it was indicated that the tendency to deal with the dark side of our world was classically represented in Dibbell's (1998) book, *My tiny life – crime and passion in a virtual world*. Dibbell (1998) described how we deal with our desires that are unacceptable in society, and sometimes with our deeds or even some people in our world, by pushing them out of sight, out of the "normal" world or even out of life or reality by dealing with them in cyberspace.

In my opinion, this book reflects an attempt of modern man to deal with the Cartesian split between mind and body. More specifically, the pressure experienced by human beings to "mechanise" and objectify their subjective human experiences when they lack the ability to accept and live with their humanity in a materially obsessed world is translated in a fantasy flight into cybespace. Furthermore, as Dibbell (1998) specifically postulates, this virtual reality of cyberspace can be regarded as a prison for our anti-social mind constructs. Although the escape into virtual reality and cyberspace could be regarded as a whole different field of study that did not exactly fit the topic of my research, there were some interesting parallels between this trend in modern literature and John's way of dealing with his problems. There were definite parallels or commonalties between the escape into cyberspace and John's life story that helped me to understand John's crime of passion, which I will briefly discuss below.

The most striking commonality appeared to be represented by the fact that John yearned to be able to "undo" what he had done. Ironically, something made him wish that he could become part of the virtual world and transcend his human limitations when he had to face the trauma caused by the repercussions of his partial existence

in a fantasy world. He wanted to escape to a fictional world where his life could become a piece of computer software, which he would be able to edit, delete, undo and redo. Unfortunately, through painful experiences and many hardships he had to face the fact that “undoing” would not be possible in the real world. John explained to himself how his life had been a “lie”, how he had pretended, and how it all culminated in a disastrous deed that he would regret for the rest of his life. Yet whereas his world of fantasy before the murder was a refuge for escaping from his fear of exposure, it turned into a source of haunting images and memories after the murder. In his life no virtual reality could function as the prison for his anti-social mind constructs. His thoughts became deeds with very serious implications in real life.

John was forced to face reality again and again, and to start dealing with the illusions of his “virtual” world where “undoing” deceptively pretended to be possible. After his crime of passion, he would often fantasise about the possibility that his fatal criminal action could be reversed, providing him with the opportunity to “redo” what he had done, but in a better way. Realising that this was not possible, made him gradually change his existence from inauthentic and insincere (virtual?) to a more sincere one. He had to integrate pain and suffering into his reality, instead of separating it from his real world. The lines or borders between reality and fantasy had to be re-established and redefined. These insights were made possible by a phenomenological perspective on John’s life story, as he presented it in his own handwriting and oral reports.

7.3 Existential-phenomenological literature

Existential phenomenology provided the guiding paradigm for this study, and linguistic phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology were road signs along the way to find the hidden meanings in John’s diary and reports. Linguistic phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology helped to reveal some of the not so obvious elements in John’s life story as it pertained to his crime of passion.

In order to resolve the difficulty of explaining the apparently paradoxical phenomenon of a *crime of passion*, the aim of this study has been to explore the complicated hidden meanings (knowledge) within the diary by qualitative techniques of research that might help unravel the possible paradoxes. The knowledge (epistemology) in John’s spontaneous self-expression provided a key for a better understanding of his way of existence or being (ontology) within a specific context, time and period of his life. This knowledge proved to be authentic in the sense that it revealed more not only about the dynamics of John’s specific crime of passion,

but also something about the dynamics of his crime of passion as a complicated, paradoxical human phenomenon. A brief reflection on this point might help provide a clearer understanding of the meaning of the authentic knowledge that crystallised through this study of John's self-revelations in his written and oral communications.

7.3.1 The authentic knowledge in John's communications

John used his diary as a vehicle to vent his personal emotions and express his innermost feelings and existential questions. He did this spontaneously, as a natural way to try to make sense of his life and to record his personal history. In a sense, his diary acted as his 'overflow reservoir' for emotions and questions that were difficult to contain in the normal flow of life. He used it as a reflective space for his existential questions and experiences. When he entered psychotherapy, he started to use oral communications as well, and written communications prompted by the psychotherapeutic process for the same purposes. Through all of these forms of communication he revealed knowledge that would not have been accessible through any more structured or pre-planned type of research.

Smith (1984, p.33) postulated that May's (1958) concept of phenomenology and psychotherapy (which was grounded in existentialism) could provide an apt and healthy theoretical foundation for psychotherapy. On many occasions, May expressed the conviction that therapy should be based upon "a human model, a science of man, one that would be relevant to man's distinguishing characteristics as man". From this perspective, John's routine of making entries that expressed his subjective, emotional battle in his diary could be regarded as a spontaneous attempt at self-healing. John tried to express his experience of his living world through the 'at-hand things' in his world. He used real scenes and metaphors from his world of experiences in an attempt to interpret and re-interpret his life.

Although John's natural outreach towards self-cure did not exclude externally induced remedies such as drugs, the only uninterrupted, fully internally motivated therapeutic ritual that remained was his continuous, linguistic expressions through the written word. He searched for a revelation of the truth about himself that caused him to inflict a monstrous act of murder upon his beloved. This is reminiscent of the postulation by Lacan that we saw already (see 2.2.2 p. 2-31) pointing out that psychoanalysis (in John's case, spontaneous self-analysis) is not about healing, but about finding the truth about the self.

John realised that his whole existence was threatened by something that he found very difficult to explain (existential anxiety?). He experienced himself as threatened

and controlled by something that he did not want to encounter by his own free will. Ironically, he discovered that this hostile and destructive entity was a part of himself that he had tried to deny or avoid before. This is reminiscent of what Jager (1989) writes in his insightful chapter about the transformation of the passions. He refers to the creation story that Plato puts into the mouth of the comic playwright Aristophanes, an original human race of two-bodied persons is severed by the gods into two incomplete parts. Once John, too, realised that he was actually dealing with an estranged part of himself, he had no choice as to whether he wanted to deal with it any more. He was forced to face it and to integrate it as part of his existential reality. He became aware of the fact that he was in an existential crisis (his insincere being now reflected for himself in his being insincere). What this existential crisis entailed was difficult to describe, yet his attempts to put it in words provided some authentic knowledge that was explicated by taking a closer look at it.

7.3.2 John's existential Crisis

John's diary and other studied communications reflected the self-expression of a unique person who found himself in a unique crisis. John was trying to find meaning and therapeutic healing from something that he did which was still beyond the scope of understanding for himself and most others around him. His search for understanding and healing (therapy) included writing about his experiences in his diary and communicating with his psychotherapists. In his own words, he described how he gradually entered into a life-threatening crisis that ended up culminating in disaster: he lost control over his conscious deeds and killed the one person in his life whom he loved and most appreciated. Since that moment, the theme of his life changed to a lamentation or regret, and a search for compensation, restitution and healing.

John's crisis indeed functioned as a crush-pen²³ (Jager, 1989) or a channel through which he reached the light or liberation. His passion moved toward its own point of culmination: his pretence-riddled, masked world of fantasy burst out into reality when he lost control and killed Mary. This movement through the channel of his crisis was accompanied by an existential anxiety (in a way, his anxiety had to do with his insincere being now manifesting itself as being insincere, or pretending), building up towards a failure of consciousness. When John found himself in the turbulent waters of crisis, he could not ponder or determine the path at will (compare 2.1.2, p. 2-16).

²³ A discussion of a crisis from a phenomenological perspective can be found in Muller (1997) www.mamuller.cjb.net

He faced another realm of being inhuman or inhumane, reminding him ruthlessly about the importance of being human, as well as the importance of living up to being a humane being.

In writing his diary and in the other communications studied for this thesis, John, their author and the main actor, revealed that he had reached the limits of his own ability to control his behaviour and/or his ability to understand himself. Literally and figuratively, he had to face death: not only the actual death of his fiancée, at his own hands, but also his own realisation that his own health and life were not a self-evident given to be taken for granted. His existential anxiety moved from the hidden layers of his dark world of fantasies and seemingly harmless thoughts, with no effect on real life, to his everyday life experiences that needed to be dealt with in reality. The line between fantasy and reality, between life and death, and between love and hate suddenly faded away. He could not separate these dualities so clearly any more. They became paradoxical truths of his life history and existence. Previously, he had been able to pretend his dark fantasies away, but now he had to deal with them as *his* existential dualities. A brief explanation of what these existential dualities were might contribute to a better understanding of crime of passion.

7.3.3 John's existential dualities

The opposites of love and hate, support and destruction, life and death, fantasy and reality, intermingled in the studied criminal act of murder in a way that allowed only the dark and negative side to show. For a moment — a moment that affected more than a lifetime — crime and passion became fused, and passion coincided with crime. 'Crime of passion' is a phrase that already shows the co-existence of opposites without any need for deep analysis or explanation. However, the exploration and explication of this phenomenon provided further clues to the understanding of this topic.

In this study, the person under investigation confronted not only his own death or limitations, but also the fact that his insincere and dual existence caused the death of the person whom he regarded as closest to him at that time. He realised that there was a side of himself and his reality that he had never faced before, and he was stunned by the awfulness of that part of his existence. All aspects of the existential world were touched by this realisation. John often referred to the fact that many things in his world changed.

The focus of John's awareness not only became much more intense, but also very different in terms of priorities as well as the range of important things in his living world. He realised that actions that he had previously regarded as harmless, such as pretending and lying, could have very serious implications, and that he should make it a priority to act more ethically in this regard. Also, things and actions that were regarded as unimportant before — such as showing respect and love in concrete ways, e.g., buying flowers and doing restitution — were included among the most important things on his agenda. There was no way in his normal day-to-day life that he could take the world for granted any more. He had become very aware of his co-existence with everything and everyone in his living world. He could not see himself as a helpless, manipulated part of the world, which could only drift along without affecting his environment any more. Every action and thought of his became an intense, intentional action affecting others in his world. He could not separate himself from his world any more, but he had to re-unite with his real world of existence. To understand the significance of this reunion of person and world, it would help to take a look at how the cleavage between mind and body revealed itself in John's case.

7.3.4 The cleavage between John's mind and body

When entries in John's diary were studied, it was confirmed that he experienced his mind and body as an inseparable unit during his whole encounter with his world before, during and after his act of murder. Intermingled with his descriptions of emotions such as love, regret, anger and hatred, one finds statements about migraine headaches, a mini stroke, high blood pressure and sleeplessness. Even his tolerance of loud sounds and sharp smells was affected. Sometimes the line separating dreams from reality also became very thin or completely blurred.

The changes in John's experience of his body and his world also affected his interactions with other people. He often wrote about people he wanted to be with and others he wanted to be separated from. He also wrote about how some of the relationships in his life had changed, especially his relationship with his father and, more obviously, his fiancée. The healing of the split between mind and body that caused him to stop pretending also affected the way he related to others. Even his choice of with whom he wanted to relate mostly had been affected. After his crime of passion, John developed a sincere desire to relate with and serve physically weaker and needier people. Ironically, while he was in the process of finding and living the answers he often wrote about the why's of his existence, and about the inexplicable harmful, disastrous and irreversible course that his behaviour within his relationships had started to take prior to his crime. Yet, between the lines of the entries in his diary

at least some of the answers to his questions were coming to the fore when properly read, studied and analysed carefully. What emerged from his experiences was that he needed to start a more sincere life of caring.

While writing, contemplating and talking about it, John's relationships with his fellow human beings slowly but surely began changing for the better, although the death of his fiancée remained at the back of his mind as the indelible reciprocal of his positive changes in his dealings with others. Lacanian concepts²⁴ would suggest that it is plausible that John struggled with the Real or that which lay outside of the limits of meaningful structuring. John's crime of passion represented the "impossible to say" (Hill, 1997, p.41) or the impossible to imagine: a return of the repressed. However, his crime of passion at the same time helped his development from an imaginary "I" to a symbolic "I." For some time John had dwelled in the imaginary – in the domain of images — and he had defined himself accordingly. The relations between his signifiers (which defined him, or made him believe who he was or signified him) became fixed. John defined himself only in terms of his relationship with Mary. For Lacan, the 'symbolic' was characterised by the absence of any fixed relations between signifier and signified. Contemplating the course of his life after Mary's death made John enter the symbolic realm where no fixed relationships existed between signifiers and the signified. He started attempting to connect other, less inauthentic signifieds to his signifiers, and new ways of defining himself and his world began to make themselves apparent. He entered the symbolic: the realm of language, where his empty speech (inauthentic existence) was replaced by full speech (authentic existence).

Although John tried to engage in a dual existence where mind and body could be separated by living in an imaginary world, the attempt at separation caused such a dissonance that a radical re-unification became inevitable. Something that was naturally connected, automatically strived to reconnect when it was forced to separate. The metaphor of stretching an elastic band might help to grasp the effect of this dissonance. John's attempts to separate his mind and his body in several ways, such as pretending to be who he clearly was not, culminated in his crime of passion. However, this radical moment of forced separation when he actually did what he could not associate with himself with, only ironically emphasised the inseparability of mind and body. *The world* outside of him, the imaginary, became *his world again*, when he could not separate himself from the impact of his own deed(s) any more. He

²⁴ A brief discussion of Lacanian concepts can be found in Muller (1998), www.mamuller.cjb.net

had to accept responsibility for all his deeds, including the *real* crime of passion. Crime in his world could not co-exist with passion. Passion implied human-ness, even when John did not allow it to have that connotation. Passion re-entered his life in his realisation of what he had become and what he had done. Unfortunately, it was one moment too late for having to pay the ransom, yet the necessity and awareness of the importance of the ransom, and his acceptance of responsibility, brought authenticity or sincerity back into his life. How this happened provided a further topic for some brief reflections.

7.3.5 John's inauthentic and authentic existence

John sincerely (authentically) loved his fiancée, Mary. However, why and how his behaviour towards her suddenly took that very disastrous turn apparently completely escaped his comprehension. While writing about it in his diary, and talking about it to others whom he trusted in his life, at least some of the reasons for what he did began to surface in such a way that it almost seemed to become obvious. The course that his life took before the murder is reminiscent of Heidegger's (1962) notion of an inauthentic existence, as well as Lacan's (1988) concept of empty speech.

Kunz's (1998) concepts²⁵ of responsibility, altruism and respect, as he adopted and redefined it from the philosophy of Levinas (1979), were very helpful to expand and explicate John's description of the reasons why he killed Mary. When trying to analyse John's diary, the very fact that John *murdered* or completely *overpowered* Mary directed the description towards the importance of the concept of power as it manifested itself in interpersonal relationships. Kunz (1998) explains at some length how power-abuse could become a causal factor in relationships in all the existential spheres of life. When formulating his interpersonal concepts he elaborates on the concept of infinity of Levinas (1979), maintaining that our fellow human beings are always *infinitely more than our ability to define or grasp* them. Responsibility is about the deeply-rooted respect for fellow human beings that causes sincere caring and love (altruism) to be a basic vantage point in life.

Both Levinas's (1979) concept of infinity and Heidegger's (1962) concept of time refer to real life issues that John tried to deal with through his self-expressions. He did not experience altruism or respect in his relationships, and often had to struggle to show altruism and respect in the relationships that filled his time. John often referred to the influence that his relationships and his experiences had upon his perception of time. Time started to move either slower or faster for him before, during and after the

²⁵ A summary of these concepts can be found in Muller (1999), www.mamuller.cjb.net

murder. As we saw, time also varied considerably in quality, controllability and accessibility. Sometimes he had to “buy time”, sometimes he “pushed time” and at other times, he wished his time to be over. All along, he realised that he couldn't turn time back, although he would have loved to, and that he did not have enough time to in some way compensate for what he had done.

John realised his own responsibility towards Mary. He often expressed his respect for her, as well as his more than just altruistic feelings for her. However, he thought he could understand her totally. According to Levinas (1979) ‘*totality*’ is the opposite of ‘*infinity*.’ When you think you can “box” someone within the concepts of your own mind, you violate her or his infinity. Maybe, John's belief that he could understand Mary was the most striking part of evidence of his inauthentic existence that led to the murder. After the murder he started to realise this violation of her infinity. He then tried to respect her infinity and the infinity of other persons, again in such a way that it gradually started to lead to a more responsible and authentic existence. His language (speech) or mode of existence started to change. He discovered some of the truths reflected in this language. We will now focus on how his language acted as this source of meaning-making or consciousness-making, with specific reference to the discovery of the meaning of crime of passion.

7.3.6 John's language as a source of meaning

The Lacanian concept of language, as explained in 2.2.1 (p. 2-26), shows that language is a ‘figuring forth’ or manifestation of human existence (Cambefort, 1998; Evans, 1996; Lacan, 1988; Schneidermann, 1983). It contains the truth about human existence that human beings often have not yet discovered. John struggled to find the truth about himself after many volumes and hours invested in linguistic expression in the ordinary sense of the word. A rigorous study of this linguistic material that John presents us with allows something about his language, in the Lacanian sense, to transpire. The material that he had presented provided a gateway to access to at least some truths — not only about him and his crime of passion, but also about crime of passion as a human phenomenon. Finding out more regarding the truth about himself allowed John to start having a more sincere or authentic existence. Unfortunately, in his case it happened at a terribly expensive cost. It is hoped that the truths about crimes of passion discussed in this study may provide others engaged in similar lifestyles (languages or insincere existences), or in witnessing them, with a key to changing things before something similar occurs to them.

Lacanian thought would submit that it was finding the truth about himself that allowed John to switch to a more sincere way of existing again. Lacan (1988) held that language is the release from a childish, narcissistic existence, and that being born into language marks the achievement of consciousness. John used language to move from the imaginary “I” and the symbiotic mother-child relationships he had with Mary, to the symbolic “I.” His continuous writing helped him to face up to the truth of his relationships with others and his world. His words acted as a mirror in which he saw himself. This view(ing) of himself in the mirror of his own words (linguaging) made him realise that his insincere existence and empty speech had to stop. This realisation gradually brought on a change or switch towards full speech and a sincere existence. This switch was closely related to finding his real desire in life and living again.

John wanted to break out of his self-centred isolation to serve others. Although he struggled to formulate the way in which this ‘altero-centred service’ (Kunz, 1998) could manifest itself, the theme of service to others transpired clearly in John’s self-revolutionary texts – they provided the mirror that revealed his real being, and caused him to enter that real being. When Lacan’s concepts discussed in 2.2 (p. 2-24) were applied to the analysis of John’s diary, it gave answer to questions such as ‘what was the relationship between the signifiers and the signified in John’s life?’, and ‘how far was the imaginary order removed from the symbolic order in his life?’, or, more specifically, ‘was his relationship with Mary part of an imaginary attempt to get connected to his symbolic desire?’

Before John committed his crime of passion there seemed to have been a huge discrepancy between his destiny as represented by the signifiers of his life, and the signified course that his life took. His symbolic destiny became vastly separated from his imaginary life. These discrepancies caused severe anxiety in John’s life. He thought that he had found a way of being true to his symbolic desire in his relationship with Mary, although he discovered that this relationship was still a representation of his imaginary efforts to face up to the truth of his own insincere existence or language. In a harsh and tragic way, John learned through his crime of passion that the way in which he engaged in his relationship with Mary was disrespectful and harmful. The language of his existence, was reflected in this relationship: it was a swearing at life and the real meaning of his life. He thereby missed his purpose of contributing positive meaning to the lives of others.

In his diary and other self-expressions, a considerable amount of ‘full speech’ transpired through the pages of John’s representation of the story of his life through

'empty speech' (his insincere existence prior to his crime of passion). Encountering John's unconscious questions and desires in life alongside of him during the psychotherapy and research processes helped me to discover and reveal the elements of his life story that could make a small, but original contribution to the science of psychology. These encounters provided a port through which his 'unconscious' language or his Real (in Lacanian terms) could be accessed. John resorted to a dead place, namely the blank pages of his diary, for his psychoanalysis. He tried to reconstruct his own life there. When this self-analysis revealed that his lifestyle (speech) was empty and headed for disaster, he also involved some living analysts. Although John's 'living analysts' who entered the 'place of the dead' that he reflected upon were not Lacanian psychoanalysts in the original sense of the concept, a better understanding of psychoanalysis as Lacan understood it provided a key to understand the truths of John's crime of passion as he had expressed it in his diary.

The relationship between language and death as viewed by Lacan, furthermore, provided a significant clue for the analytical study and understanding of the subject and object of this study, i.e., John and his diary. This perspective shows how a sudden encounter with death (his own, as well as that of his fiancée) changed John's life. This paradoxical truth discovered during an analysis of John's crime of passion pointed towards the possibility that the formulation of paradoxes might be a very helpful hermeneutical tool to help gain an understanding of crimes of passion. The formulation of paradoxes proved to be one of the best ways in which the answers to the research questions in this study could be formulated. How the process of formulation of paradoxes proved to be a hermeneutical tool in this study will now be explained briefly.

7.4 The formulation of paradoxes as a hermeneutical tool

When the research questions of this study were formulated, they already suggested that some paradoxes were involved in crimes of passion. In fact, the first question was 'what are the major *paradoxes* involved in the phenomenon of crime of passion?' However, when these questions were formulated, it wasn't clear yet that the process of data analysis would actually result in the formulation of several paradoxes. This happened as a result of a rigorous encounter with the studied texts according to the chosen research method. When the final formulation of the truths about a crime of passion was first attempted, it was observed that these truths or this knowledge presented itself in the form of paradoxes. This observation confirmed the fact that existential-phenomenology was an appropriate paradigm for this study, because very few other research paradigms would allow the formulation of

paradoxes as a final outcome of a research project. This realisation confirmed that Romanyshyn (1991, p.27) made a valid point when he stated that:

... complex, psychological knowing is an erotic singing between reader and text, an incarnated gnosis, a mimetic collusion, a rhythmical dialogue which reveals the poetic, soulful character of mind.

The texts studied proved to be full of attempts to formulate the meaning of crimes of passion in paradoxical language and literary forms such as poetry and metaphors. In line with this, the best way that these formulations could be rephrased to provide an answer to the second research question²⁶ also proved to be the formulation of paradoxes. The types of clues that were uncovered through the words, expressions and/or behaviour of a person who murdered his fiancée, and which might assist to explicate the phenomenon of crime of passion, could not be formulated in any more effective way than to identify and characterize them as paradoxes. Formulating the paradoxes that emerged from those texts turned out to effectively explicate the authentic knowledge about crimes of passion gained from the words, expressions and/or behaviour of a person who committed a crime of passion.

Furthermore, this formulation of paradoxes proved to be the best way to address the third research question²⁷ as well. Based on the literary study and the preliminary impression formed about the research material, the third research question suggested that a crime of passion is a *complex, human* phenomenon. The poetry and metaphors in John's writings suggested that an ordinary reporting literary style would not suffice to express what he had tried to express. Since poetry and metaphors often suggest paradoxes, these last proved to be a natural way in which John's words could be rewritten so as to make it speak more clearly. Briefly stated, the discovery was made that a spontaneously written diary, and other related texts, could help us to explain the complex phenomenon of a crime of passion through a study and formulation of the paradoxes contained within those texts.

A careful consideration of the paradoxes formulated in the previous chapter shows that they are very relevant for the description of the complicated nature of crime of passion as revealed through rigorously analysing the spontaneously inscribed texts that were analysed. The preconceptions of this study were explicated through a literature study and pinning down the contents of pre-reflective conceptions about such literature. Because crimes of passion are human phenomena, they are complex. They involve human beings who reveal

²⁶ What kind of clues can we find in the words, expressions and/or behaviour of a person who murdered his fiancée that may assist in the explication of the phenomenon of crime of passion in such a way that authentic knowledge can be gained from it?

²⁷ How can a spontaneously written diary and other related texts, help us to understand the complex phenomenon referred to as a crime of passion?

themselves through 'things in the world,' such as relationships with others, inscriptions in diaries, and talking. Crimes of passion raise many unanswered or rhetorical questions. The formulation of paradoxes thus proved an appropriate hermeneutical tool to help present the knowledge that this study revealed about one particular crime of passion. The fact that the research in this study revealed some ways of formulating authentic knowledge about a crime of passion by means of specific qualitative research techniques, proved to be one of the major advantages of this study. The coming paragraph will discuss the advantages of this study.

7.5 Advantages of this study

The advantages of this study have been closely related to the strengths of the chosen research method described in Chapter 3. The underlying assumptions behind the method, in turn, closely relate to the underlying assumptions of existential phenomenology in general, as described in Chapter 2. This study assumed that there was a lived experience to be studied, and explored ways in which pre-conceptions about this lived experience could be explicated and bracketed. Furthermore, this study pre-supposed that the existence of a 'human text' (person) or a humanly-produced text (words) could be used to reveal 'the things in the world.' The nature of this study implied divergent, instead of convergent, thinking; and the presupposition was made, as a consequence, that only more complex forms of knowing and presenting data could do justice to the subject being researched.

Against this background, one of this study's major strengths proved to be the ability of the researcher to answer the major research question through the chosen research method. As such, this study:

- helped to shed new light on the paradoxes and hidden meanings behind the phenomenon of crime of passion.
- helped to clarify the conceptual categories through the identification and formulation of natural meaning units in the studied text.
- clarified the meaning of crime of passion.
- explicated theoretical linkages between the different conceptual categories involved.
- revealed the conceptual implications of different viewpoints in existing literature.
- helped by providing a good understanding of the issues and debates in the literature about crimes of passion.
- showed the current theoretical debates and thinking on the subject, including some previous studies and their results.

- highlighted the gaps or shortcomings present in both the previous studies and the current theory.

In summary, this study proved to be suitable to answer exploratory questions, descriptive questions, conceptual and semantic questions, as well as theoretical questions through the existential-hermeneutical orientation and the literature review. This claim can be made because:

- The fact that this study addressed the determination of meaning made it appropriate for clarifying conceptual linkages through classification and categorisation.
- The applicability of this study to the major research objective, as indicated above, enabled not only an exploration, but also a formulation of the nature of crimes of passion and the paradoxes inherent within them.
- The applicability of this study to the major research objective enabled the researcher to formulate and investigate descriptive questions about the subject of research, and to formulate concepts and theories about the subject of research.
- Conceptual linkages between different parts of the studied texts were identified, as were those between the studied texts and the existing literature.
- The related (linked) concepts helped to clarify the phenomenon of crime of passion when they were organised in categories and classified under descriptive and integrating terms or terminological phrases.

This study also gathered new insights regarding various practical aspects of the issue, such as the context of treatment for perpetrators of a crime of passion. A good example of such an insight was made when comparing against my conclusions after studying John's story, Woodward's (in Schwartz & Travis, 1997) critique of the criminal justice system's mission to segregate the convict from society. Woodward's critique seems to hold true regarding the treatment of perpetrators of crime of passion. After working in a criminal justice system for nearly seven years and studying John's story, I have come to agree with Woodward (in Schwartz & Travis, 1997). Segregating the convict from society, with its attendant security concerns, usually relegate education, job training, psychological counselling and other rehabilitative programs to a perfunctory position in the chain of priorities of the prison where I tried to treat John. The prison system probably proved to be the most concrete practical presentation of a tendency to try to get rid of our own "bad parts"(Muller, 1998b) or dark side. Those who represented or gave voice to their own bad parts were locked away, out of the view of society, in the hope that if or when they returned to "the other, acceptable side", some kind of mystical transformation will have had taken place. Highlighting this fatal flaw

and the parallel between its representation in society and within the psychodynamics and some interactive tendencies of human beings, is certainly not an attempt to justify or soften the criminality of deeds such as crime of passion. Confirming Woodward's (in Schwartz & Travis, 1997) critique and applying it to the meanings uncovered in John's crime of passion represented, instead, a plea for some new alternatives to understand the phenomenon called crimes of passion. Finding new ways to understand these crimes could lead to better ways to deal with them, thereby causing less harm to all the parties affected by these most unfortunate occurrences.

Apart from this study's advantages and its answered questions, there were, however, also several questions that could not be addressed by this study.

7.6 Disadvantages of this study

The most important disadvantage of this study lay in the fact that the writing and expressive skills of the author of the text analysed in this qualitative research were major determining factors of the extent of authentic knowledge that could be gained through the analysis. When that author's statements or linguistic forms were not clearly explained or described, they could be interpreted in more than one way during the analysis. I attempted to avoid interpretations that were different from or in conflict with the author's own meanings, yet must admit that several interpretative descriptions might still appear confusing, rather than clarifying. Also, even when applying sound methods of analysis, different readers or analysers of these interpretations may still be liable to interpreting some meanings in the text differently.

Furthermore, the fact that the selected case and texts were bound to a specific context might also have constrained their understanding. John is a member of a specific gender, culture and age group, and was functioning in a specific environment when he committed his crime of passion. The knowledge that transpired through the analysis of his case might, thus, not be universally applicable to any other case without very carefully considering the effect and implications of these contextual differences. The universal applicability of the knowledge gained from this study might thereby be questionable. Only one case was studied. Although the purpose and the nature of this study did not have as a major objective such a wide applicability, questions may be asked about this applicability of the insights gained to other cases.

The conceptual analysis was done with considerable care, but it might still have created conceptual confusion, theoretical ambiguities, and fallacious reasoning when read and interpreted by someone not trained or at least aware of the presuppositions of the theoretical

framework within which the study was undertaken. I must also admit that little *new* knowledge can be gained from the literature review in this study *only*, because it only summarised and organised existing knowledge. This study relied heavily on gaining and validating new information and insights in a relatively short literature review. Only after the information in the reviewed literature was revisited from the vantage point of the new insights provided by the data analysis, could I make new interpretations and contribute to the understanding of the studied phenomenon.

Issues such as the gender of the perpetrator were not taken into consideration. It is thus still questionable whether this gained knowledge would apply to cases where the perpetrator is a female. To provide answers to questions such as these would call for another similar study to this one.

All these limitations centre upon two questions: did I interpret the data authentically? Also: could the findings of such a contextually-bound study be generalised to other cases? However, both of these questions refer to the general limitations of single case studies, and do not necessarily take away from the legitimacy and plausibility of case study analysis as an empirical study.

7.7 Postlude

Although this study attempts to contribute valuably to the body of knowledge about the notion of crimes of passion, I certainly cannot claim to have spoken the last word about understanding this complicated phenomenon. It is my view that the existential-phenomenological research paradigm and method provided effective means to deal with the intricacies of this phenomenon. This research paradigm allowed for the explication of meanings that one would have been hard-pressed to describe by means of any other conceptual framework. Implicit in the concept of "crimes of passion" as a human phenomenon, lies a paradox raised by the very juxtaposition of the notions of "crime" and "passion." The best way to explore and explicate this paradox further is to continue to examine further paradoxes that might come to light in replicating the present study over a different time and context. I want to express the hope that the outcome of my research may stimulate new interest to see crimes of passion for what they appear to be: tragic and paradoxical, uniquely human phenomena that are often misunderstood, misinterpreted and then presented in misleading ways by both scientific and fictional literature.

By the time of completion of this study John has probably been out of prison - very close to being a free member of society again. I am quite confident that he was honest when he wrote in his diary about how he wanted to be a more responsible member of his community again. I

hope that this study may help him to fulfil his wish that others may learn and benefit from his experiences as well.

REFERENCE LIST

- Aronson, J. (1994). A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 2(1). Retrieved December 31, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/aronson.html>
- Barber, K. (Ed.). (1998). *The Canadian Oxford dictionary*. Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada.
- Barnett, O.W. & LaViolette, A.D. (1993). *It could happen to anyone: Why battered women stay*. London: Sage Publications.
- Beck, A.T. (1972). *Depression: causes and treatment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bjerre, A. (1981). *The psychology of murder*. New York: Da Capo Press.
- Breakwell, G.M. & Wood, P. (1995). Diary Techniques. In G.M. Breakwell, S. Hammond & C. Fife-Schaw (Eds), *Research methods in psychology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Breakwell, G.M., Hammond, S. & Fife-Schaw, C. (Eds). (1995). *Research methods in psychology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Brinker, M. (1993). Theme and Interpretation. In W. Sollors (Ed.), *The return of thematic criticism* (pp.21-37). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Browne, A. (1987). *When battered women kill*. New York: The Free Press.
- Burggraeve, R. (1985). *From Self-development to Solidarity: An Ethical Reading of Human Desire in Its Socio-political Relevance According to Emmanuel Levinas*. Leuven: Peeters.
- Cambefort, J. (1998). *Seminar on psychotherapy & French Psychoanalysis*. Unpublished paper, University of Pretoria.
- Chessick, R.D. (1986). Heidegger for psychotherapists. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 40(1), 83-95.
- Colaizzi, P.F. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R.S. Valle & M. King (Eds), *Existential-phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48-71). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Creatney, A. & Davis, G. (1995). *Punishing violence*. London: Routledge.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds). (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). California: Sage.
- Dibbell, J. (1998). *My tiny life: Crime and passion in a virtual world*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Edwards, D.J.A. (1998). Types of case study work: a conceptual framework for case-based research. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 38(3), 36-70.
- Ellis, A. (1969). *The essence of rational psychotherapy: A comprehensive approach to treatment*. New York: Institute for rational living.
- Evans, D. (1996). *An introductory dictionary of Lacanian psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge Press.
- Gadamer, H. (1976). *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gelb, J. & Garrett, M. (Eds). (1997). *Hot blood: Crimes of passion*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Giorgi, A. (1985). Sketch of a psychological phenomenological method. In A. Giorgi (Ed.), *Phenomenology and psychological research*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Gruber, T. R. (1993). A translation approach to portable ontology specifications. *Knowledge*

Acquisition, 5(2), 199-220.

- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Heylighen, F. (1993). Epistemology, introduction. In F. Heylighen, C. Joslyn & V. Turchin (Eds.), *Principia Cybernetica*. Brussels: Author. Retrieved October 12, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/EPISTEMI.html>
- Hill, P. (1997). *Lacan for beginners*. London: Writers and Readers Publishing, Inc.
- Hollway, W. (1989). *Subjectivity and method in psychology – gender, meaning and science*. London: Sage Publications.
- Jager, B. (1989). Transformation of the passions: psychoanalytic and phenomenological perspectives. In R.S. Valle, & S. Halling (Eds), *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology* (pp. 220-221). New York: Plenum Press.
- Jones, R. (1995). Why qualitative research? *British Medical Journal*, 311, 2.
- Juranville, A. (1998). Ethics with Psychoanalysis. In S. Harasym (Ed.) *Levinas and Lacan* (pp. 121 – 138). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Kazdin, A.E. (1982). *Single-Case research Designs – Methods for clinical and applied settings*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kelly, K. (1999). Hermeneutics in action: empathy and interpretation in qualitative research. In M. Terre Blanche & K. Durrheim (Eds), *Research in practice: applied methods for the social sciences* (pp. 398-420). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Kruger, D. (1988). *An introduction to phenomenological psychology* (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Juta.
- Kunz, G. (1998). *The Paradox of Power and Weakness: Levinas and an Alternative paradigm for Psychology*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Kvale, S. (ed.) (1992). *Psychology and Postmodernism*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews – an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.
- Lacan, J. (1988). *Seminar of Jacques Lacan – Book II – The ego on Freud's theory and in the technique of psychoanalysis 1954 – 1955*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Laplanche, J. (1976). *Life and death in psychoanalysis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Leininger, M.M. (1985). Ethnography and ethnonursing: Models and modes of qualitative data analysis. In M.M. Leininger (Ed.), *Qualitative research methods in nursing* (pp.33-72). Orlando, FL: Grune & Stratton.
- Leonard, V.W. (1989). A Heideggerian phenomenologic perspective on the concept of the person. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 11(4), 40–55.
- Levinas, E. (1979). *Totality and Infinity*. Translator: A. Lingis (4th ed.). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Love, J.G. (1992). *A co-evolution of marriage and medicine: Systemic, constructionist, and thematic voices on medical families*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- Love, J.G. (1994). The Hermeneutics of Transcript Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 2(1). Retrieved December 31, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/love.html>
- May, R. (1958). The origins and significance of the existential movement in psychology. In R. May, E. Angel & H.F. Ellenberger, *Existence*. New York: Basic Books.
- Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative Content Analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(2).

Retrieved October 21, 2002, from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/2-00/2-00mayring-e.htm>.

Mensch, J. (n.d.). *Derrida-Husserl: Towards a phenomenology of language*. Retrieved January 4, 2003, from the World Wide Web:

http://www.stfx.ca/people/jmensch/Derrida-Husserl_Towards_a_Phenomenology_of_Language.doc

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *The phenomenology of perception*. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's & Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Mowat, R.R. (1966). *Morbid jealousy and murder: a psychiatric study of morbidly jealous murderers at Broadmoor*. London: Tavistock.

Muller, L. (Ed.). (1997). *Background to North Gate Properties, (a service company)*. Unpublished paper, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Muller, M.A. (1997). *Crisis theory and phenomenological psychology*, Unpublished Paper, University of Pretoria.

Muller, M.A. (1998a). *Lacan's short psychoanalytic sessions as an expression of some of his theoretical views*, Unpublished Paper, University of Pretoria.

Muller, M.A. (1998b). *The significance of the analytic group context as a reflective space for integrating the object and socio-cultural dimension: The concept of Recursive Complementarity as a key to understanding the presence of positive and negative forces in-groups*, Unpublished Paper, University of Pretoria.

Muller, M.A. (1999). *Levinas, Ubuntu and the Power of Weakness: Some basic philosophical similarities and psychological implications*, Unpublished Paper, University of Pretoria.

Olivier, L. (1999). *Hypnotherapy with Children*. Unpublished paper presented at the Annual Conference of Psychological Society of South Africa, July 1999. Durban.

Park, J.L. (2001). *Our Existential Predicament - Loneliness, Depression, Anxiety & Death* (4th ed.). Minneapolis: Existential Books.

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). Phenomenological Research Methods. In R.S. Valle & S. Halling (Eds), *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology* (pp. 41–60). New York: Plenum Press.

Ptacek, J. (1990). The clinical literature on men who batter: a review and critique. In, G.T. Hotaling, D. Finkelhor, J.T. Kirkpatrick & M.A. Strauss (Eds), *Family Abuse and Its Consequences* (pp. 149–162). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Radford, J. & Russell, D.E.H. (Eds). (1992). *Femicide – the politics of women killing*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Rapmund, V.J. (2000). *Enhancing students' personal resources through narrative*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Richardson, W.J. (1989). Phenomenology and psychoanalysis. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 1, 1-19.

Rizzo, K.D. (1994). *She said no, but he crossed the line between passion and violence*. Oshawa: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

Romanyshyn, R. (1991). Complex knowing: Toward a psychological hermeneutics. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 19(1), 10-29.

Sacks, H. (1992). *Lectures on conversation* (2 vols). Edited by G. Jefferson with introductions by E.A. Schegloff. Oxford: Basil Blackwell

- Schneidermann, S. (1983). *Jacques Lacan – the death of an intellectual hero*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Schwartz, M.D. & Travis III, L.F. (1997). *Corrections – an issues approach* (4th ed.). Cincinnati: Anderson Publishing Company.
- Silverman D. (2000). Analysing talk and text. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). California: Sage.
- Smith, D.L. (1984). Phenomenological psychotherapy: A why and a how. In A. Giorgi, R. Knowles & D.L. Smith, *Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology* (Vol.III), (pp. 10-29). Duquesne University Press.
- Smith, J.H. (1991). *Arguing with Lacan – Ego, psychology and language*. London: Yale University Press.
- Sollors, W. (Ed.). (1993). *The return of thematic criticism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Stacey, W.A., Hazlewood, L.R. & Shupe, A. (1994). *The violent couple*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Stake R.E. (2000). Case Studies. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). California: Sage.
- Valle, R.S. & Halling, S. (Eds). (1989). *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Van den Berg, J. H. (1972). *A different existence*. Duquesne: Duquesne University Press.
- Van den Berg, J H. (1980). Phenomenology and psychotherapy. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, **11**, 21 - 49.
- Van Haute P. (1989). *Psychoanalyse en filosofie – het imaginaire en het symbolische in het werk van Jacques Lacan*. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters.
- Van Kaam, A. (1969). *Existential foundation of psychology*. New York: Image Books.
- Van Manen, M. (2000). Inquiry: Epistemology of Practice and Inquiry: Phenomenological Inquiry. *Phenomenology Online*. Retrieved October 21, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/inquiry/>
- Van Vuuren, R. (1997). *The past past isn't in our memory - it is in the trend of the world*. Unpublished paper, University of Pretoria. (Text is in Afrikaans)
- Viano, E.C. (Ed.) (1992). *Intimate violence – interdisciplinary perspectives*. Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.
- Wertz F.J. (1993). A phenomenological critique of cognitive psychology. *Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, **24**(2), 107-129.
- Wren, T.E. (n.d.). Phenomenology Defined. *Studentshout.com*. Retrieved on November 28, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.raynet.mcmail.com/behaviour/phil.shtml> but originally retrieved on April 19, 2000, from the World Wide Web: <http://members.aol.com/CazadoraKE/private/Philo/Existentialism/zKdaphen.html>
- Wright, E. (1984). *Psychoanalytic criticism – theory and practice*. London: Routledge.