

# Humanistic theory

Psychology



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Humanist Theories 2nd, November, This paper examines the concepts behind humanist theories to define their role in forensic psychology when assessing people like Jeffrey Dahmer and Charles Manson. In addition, the paper will examine how the humanist theories differ from psychodynamic theorist.

1. Self-actualization theory has the motive of realizing one's full potential as a basic drive. Self-actualization is a term widely used in modern psychology especially when discussing personality in the humanistic approach. Charles Manson is an American Criminal convicted of Tate-LaBianca murders. Manson was a king of pop music, which propagated insanity and violence (Linder, 2008). Jeffrey Dahmer is an American psychopath involved in serial killing, sex offending, and cannibalism. Forensic psychology refers to application of psychology to the legal system Forensic psychology started about 100 years ago in evaluating the mental capacities of personalities and their intelligence (Nuys, 2012). Forensic psychology includes understanding criminal law that will facilitate effective interact with the judges, attorneys and legal professionals in the presentation of cases. Humanistic needs can be used in forensic psychology. Forensic psychology evaluation involves evaluation of possible malingering, mental state for insanity plea, competency to stand a trial, prediction of violence and assessment of risk. In addition, forensic psychology includes evaluation of child custody in divorce, assessment of personal injury, and interpretation of polygraph data. It is possible to achieve some explanations through humanistic theories that define why human beings will behave in a certain manner. For instance, Dahmer's violence bloomed under the domestic violence and eventual divorce of his parents, which killed his ambitions.

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2. Some key humanistic concepts are applied in this case. It is good to understand that humanistic psychology is one of the methods used in psychology for studying, understanding, and evaluating personality. The boy in question cannot achieve his ambition because of lack of self-actualization. First, he cannot maintain a healthy relationship because he did not get anybody to love him and has no sense of belonging. This comes out well from the fact that Jim cannot maintain a healthy relationship with the mother and others in the society. Secondly, Jim lacks in safety and security needs that a boy of his age would get from the family. We do not get to hear of a present father to provide him the security. This impact heavily on Jim's self-esteem making him a social misfit. Thirdly, Jim lacks in physiological needs something that hinders his performance rendering him a failure in his classes. Self-actualization comes from fulfilling physiological needs, safety and security needs, love and belonging needs, and self-esteem needs. Individual have to fulfill the above lower order needs before achieving higher order needs. Self-actualization is an example of a humanistic concept applied in this case. Lack of fulfilling lower needs leads to non-fulfillment of one's potentiality and hence a misfit in the society. Humanistic concepts differ from psychodynamic theorists in that while humanistic concepts delve on healthy and motivated people, psychodynamic theorists study unhealthy individuals with weird behaviors. In addition, psychodynamics is advanced in that it includes the studies of human thought process, response patterns, and influences. It includes both conscious and unconscious undertakings (“NCSSS” N. d)

#### References

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