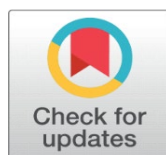


SILENCE, SUFFERING, SAVAGERY: PSYCHOANALYSIS ON THE SERIAL KILLERS OF HANNIBAL LECTER SELECTED MOVIES

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ABSTRACT

Serial killers pose a mystery about their observable motive for the murder. This study aims at the psychoanalysis of three serial killers of the psychological horror thriller movies Red Dragon (2002) directed by Brett Ratner, The Silence of the Lambs (1991) directed by Jonathan Demme, and Hannibal Rising (2007) directed by Peter Webber. These movies are adaptations of Thomas Harris's psychological horror thriller novels Red Dragon (1981), The Silence of the Lambs (1988), and Hannibal Rising (2006). The character Hannibal Lecter—performed by Anthony Hopkins, the protagonist of the movie series, is a cannibalistic serial killer and famous former forensic psychiatrist, Francis DolarHyde or the 'Tooth Fairy' from the movie Red Dragon and Jame Gumb or 'Buffalo Bill' from the movie The Silence of the Lambs are analyzed through the lens of the Psychological theories of Sigmund Freud's Freudian psychoanalysis and Eric Fromme's personality theory to explain their monstrosity exhibited and trailing down to its initial cause. This research explores the psychological aspects behind the evolution of these characters from having challenging childhoods to becoming monstrous serial killers.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Red Dragon, the Silence of the Lambs, Hannibal Rising, Sigmund Freud, Freudian Psycho Analysis, Eric Fromme, Personality Theory

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of 'becoming' and 'transformation' is well known within the Hannibal Lecter cinephiles. The Hannibal Lecter movie series, comprising Red Dragon (2002), The Silence of the Lambs (1991), and Hannibal Rising (2007), with its psychological depth, complex characters, unnerving depictions of crime, and cannibalism, has fascinated audiences. Defined by all that is good and evil of humanity, these films examine the complex figure of Dr. Hannibal Lecter, a highly intelligent psychiatrist known for his disturbing fondness for murder and psychological manipulation. The Silence of the Lambs, the most celebrated in the series for being one of only a few films in history to win the 'Big Five' Oscars, provided the perfect platform for the

unmatched association between FBI agent Clarice Starling and Hannibal Lecter. While *Red Dragon* further pursues the path of crime and investigation of the FBI agent Will Graham. *Hannibal Rising*, a prequel, trudges about rectifying the origins of his monstrous tendencies and aims at humanizing a character who has thus far remained inscrutable.

Serial killers pose mystery about their observable motive for the murder and so are severely criticized and condemned without proper analysis by the public. In her book *Lady Falls* (Black Rose Trilogy, #1), Renee Bernard said, "Villains are not born—they are made", where it substantiates that circumstances make one do evil deeds. Hannibal Lecter, the dual protagonist of the movie series, performed by Anthony Hopkins in the movies *Red Dragon* and *The Silence of the Lambs*, and Gaspard Ulliel in the first movie sequel *Hannibal Rising* as the young Hannibal Lecter, was a victim of the World War II and traumatising events followed by it during his childhood. Similarly, the antagonists and the serial killers of the movie *Red Dragon*, Francis Dolar Hyde alias 'the 'Tooth Fairy' and Jame Gumb alias 'Buffalo Bill' from the movie *The Silence of the Lambs* are identified with shared traumatic and abused childhood just like Hannibal.

In the movies, the titular character, Hannibal Lecter is constantly requested assistance by the FBI agents to capture the serial killers as he is an exceptional forensic psychiatrist and is well acquainted in understanding the working of the human mind. He has a fervour towards culinary art. He was obsessed with experimenting on food and host dinner parties and invite guests to flaunt his culinary skills. He serves human flesh to the guests as it satisfies his desire for pleasure. He was then caught during such an act by the FBI agent Will Graham and sentenced to lifelong lock up in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane under the care of Dr. Frederick Chilton. The serial killers are plotted, sketched and then caught with the help of Hannibal Lecter while he tries to escape the asylum as his benefit for the service he offered. The cops who were supposed to watch Hannibal eventually fall prey for his mind games and meet horrific ends. The Hannibal the cannibal was then fled to begin his new life chapter and to hunt his next victim.

Psychoanalysis is a dominant field of social science that aims to explore the unconscious mind and the complex layers of human psychology. The researcher's objective is to traverse through the complex characteristics of Hannibal Lecter, Francis DolarHyde, and Jame Gumb and draw psychoanalysis based on the theories: Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and Eric Fromm's personality theory.

2. OVERVIEW OF RED DRAGON (2002), THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (1991) AND HANNIBAL RISING (2007)

The Hannibal movie series trails down the life of Hannibal Lecter, the cannibalistic serial killer, from his childhood towards his late adulthood, trudging through the issues faced during his childhood, which transformed him into a cold-blooded monster, followed by the various other incidents where he killed and devoured several people. Hannibal was of Lithuanian descent, from noble Lithuanian and Italian families (Visconti and Sforza), the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union turned their region into the main ground of the attacks. Hannibal, along with his parents and his sister Mischa, moved to their family's hunting lodge to secure themselves from the German troops, but an explosion of a Soviet tank attacked by the German troops killed everyone but Lecter and Mischa. While they manage to survive there alone five Lithuanian men from a Waffen-SS militia, led by Vladis Grutas. These men, blinded by hunger, attack Lecter and kill and cook Mischa and

forces the chained Lecter to drink the broth which altered his brain chemistry and led to selective mutism. His childhood trauma because of the World War II transformed him from a vindictive Nazi hunter to a cannibalistic serial killer. He learns Japanese martial arts and kenjutsu from the lady Murasaki, his widowed aunt along with studying medicine. He avenges the five men and eats specific body parts, and flees the country. Hannibal Lecter was very organised while selecting his victims. He chooses people whom he believes deserve punishment or even death, as they contributed to societal menace. He was then caught during an investigation on murder and cannibalism, ironically aided with Lecter, by the FBI agent Will Graham and sentenced to lifelong lock up in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane under the care of Dr. Frederick Chilton. He was constantly requested assistance by the FBI agents to capture the serial killers as he is an exceptional forensic psychiatrist and is well acquainted in understanding the working of the human mind. Francis Dolar Hyde, alias the 'Tooth Fairy', was killed by Agent Will Graham and Jame Gumb, alias 'Buffalo Bill', by Agent Clarice Starling with the guidance of Hannibal. Both serial killers had childhood traumas which led to their 'becoming'. The film series greatly impacted the fans as it opened a new realm of more profound understanding of characters and their psychologically intertwined and complex motives. The films are contentious for intensive study with themes of psychoanalysis, personality study, trauma studies and war studies.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Hannibal Lecter movie series have been a significant subject of psychological analysis. The films delve into the psyche of serial killers and convey the notions on psychopathy, trauma, control and personality disorders. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory provides a foundation for understanding the unconscious motivations of criminal behaviour. Fromm's theory delineates various personality types according to how power, love, and destruction are integrated into their experiences. More specifically, these concepts of necrophilous, exploitative, and authoritarian personalities pertain to these characters. The field of trauma studies shed its light on early-life experiences and the serial killers' behaviours. These studies discuss how extreme forms of trauma result in dissociative states, violent inclinations, and distorted self-conceptions. These films are beyond mere horror entertainment and become psychological case studies that manifest patterns in real life patterns of trauma and personality disorders.

Not many studies exist exploring such a multi-theoretical and psychological analysis of Hannibal Lecter, Francis Dolarhyde, and James Gumb by integrating Freud's psychoanalysis and Fromm's personality theory. While most of the works produced focus on the titular character Hannibal Lecter, this study focuses on how each character's behaviours, thought processes, and interactions reflect deep seated psychological disturbances rooted in past traumas and personality structures.

4. RESEARCH GAP, FOCUS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This research paper aims to fill the contextual gap providing a double-theoretical psychological analysis of Hannibal Lecter, Francis Dolarhyde, and James Gumb by combining Freud's psychoanalysis and Fromm's personality theory. While existing studies have explored the psychological synopsis of Hannibal Lecter, Francis Dolarhyde, and James Gumb, most focus on individual characters rather than a comparative study across several psychological contexts. Most studies often examine Lecter's psychopathy remotely, with less attention given to Dolarhyde and

Gumb. Studies tend to emphasize either Freudian psychoanalysis, Fromm's personality theory, or trauma studies separately, rather than integrating these frameworks to create a comprehensive understanding or a multi theoretical approach of their behaviours and motivations. These theories have few interdisciplinary intersections defining the intersection of trauma-personality development-violent psychopathology in serial killers in this film series.

This research paper considers how different patterns of character's behaviours, thought processes, and interactive styles lead into the very deeply embedded psychological problems, most probably originating from recurrent strains in their past and personality structures. Furthermore, to explore this matter, this paper centres on Sigmund Freud's concept of the id, ego, and superego in shaping each character's violent tendencies and dissociative behaviours. It also explores suppression, unconscious desires, and defence mechanisms that's evident in their actions, Eric Fromm's classification of destructive personalities in essence of necrophilous, exploitative, and authoritarian is applied to categorize each character's psychological tendencies and their need for dominance, control, or transformation and finally the aspects of trauma studies like how early-life trauma, neglect, and abuse contribute to the psychological development of these characters and evinces in their behaviours, shaping their violent compulsions and distorted self-perceptions.

By synthesizing these theoretical perspectives, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how psychological trauma and personality formation can contribute to the psychopathy of the serial killers in the movie.

5. ANALYSIS

Sigmund Freud's concept of Thanatos, Id, Ego, and Superego

Psychoanalysis is a dominant field of social science that aims to explore the unconscious mind and the complex layers of human psychology., that had the effect of radically transforming human self-understanding. According to Sigmund Freud, "Psychoanalysis is to be counted among the natural sciences; it is a specialized branch of medicine (with the caveat that medical training gives no necessary expertise in psychical affairs), with mental life the object of inquiry" [Lapsley & Stey \(2011\)](#). According to W. H. Auden, he described Freud as "a whole climate of opinion under whom we conduct our different lives" [Auden \(1939\)](#). "Sigmund Freud separated mental life into the three agencies or "provinces" of id, ego, and superego in his essay Id, Ego, and [Superego \(1923\)](#). The Id, which stands for the biological underpinnings of personality, is the earliest and the most rudimentary psychic agent. The organism is motivated to seek pleasure by its basic instinctive urges, especially the libidinal drive. Because of the direct impact of the outside world, the ego develops as a modification of the Id, and it controls libidinal drive energies to ensure that satisfaction aligns with the demands of reality; it is the "executive" of the personality. It is the centre of logic, reason, and reality testing. It possesses a variety of defence strategies that can redirect, suppress, or change the manifestations of drive energies that are unrealistic or prohibited. The ego's ideal is represented by the Superego, which is a further distinction within it. The Superego urges the psychic machinery to strive for idealistic objectives and perfection, whereas the id functions in pursuit of pleasure, and the ego is governed by the reality principle. It is the origin of conscience and moral censorship." [Lapsley & Stey, \(2011\)](#). He also disclosed that a disruption of the infant's sexual life was always reflected in major traumatic events that occurred during infancy. Thanatos is

described as the death instinct by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as the unconscious drive toward aggression, destruction, and ultimately death.

Hannibal Lecter embodies id and superego in a very sophisticated form. His id is satisfied through cannibalism and control over the minds of people. At the same time, he is well organised and a person with moral codes. He didn't follow a murder spree but carefully chose his victims, whom he believed rude or unworthy. His superego replaced social morality with his own with lack of empathy. Organized serial killers can be structurally psychotic who use sadistic practices to stabilize themselves. He masterfully balances his desires and reality as he does not murder impulsively rather meticulously. His ego is the life he leads in concealment as a highly professional forensic psychiatrist who often showcases interest in helping investigators solve crimes. He advocates reverse psychology to build his character. He loves culinary art and hosting dinner parties and finds pleasure in feeding his guests human flesh in oblivion. Hannibal Lecter followed Repetitive Compulsion, another key concept by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, endlessly repeating patterns of actions which was distressing in earlier life. According to Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis' *The Language of Psycho-analysis*, Repetitive Compulsion is described as "At the level of concrete psychopathology, the compulsion to repeat is an ungovernable process originating in the unconscious. As a result of its action, the subject deliberately places himself in distressing situations, thereby repeating an old experience, but he does not recall this prototype; on the contrary, he has the strong impression that the situation is fully determined by the circumstances of the moment" [Laplanche & Pontalis \(1993\)](#). His murders began once to avenge his sister's killers but ended up obsessing over it and led to multiple murders of people from different spectrums of his life with similar characteristics to Mischa's murderers because of the regression caused while hearing the final words from Vladis Grutas. "You ate her too, so why don't you kill yourself? Pot watcher fed her to you in a broth. You have to kill everyone who knows it, don't you? You ate her half-conscious, your little lips greedy around the spoon" [Webber \(2007\)](#), 1:55:51).

Francis Dolar Hyde, also known to be the 'tooth fairy' from the movie [Red Dragon \(2002\)](#) directed by Brett Ratner, is the main antagonist who suffered from major childhood traumas and body dysmorphia. He chooses his victims by viewing home videos of families. Francis Dolarhyde is torn between primitive drives and a savage inner voice, with an ego struggling to connect with reality and others. The inner workings of Freud's theory reveal a tortured soul whose id is unleashed in a series of sadistic aggressions, sexual desires, and power needs over his victims, causing a tragic identity collapse and spiralling downward into psychotic violence. The Red Dragon was his projection—his sadistic aggression, sexual desire, and need for power and control over his victims. His ritualistic killings are tied to his sexualized violence. The FBI agent Will Graham describes the crime scene: "The pieces of mirrors are to make their eyes look alive. He wanted an audience. He wanted them all lined up watching him while he touched her. You took your gloves off and touched her with your bare hand and wiped her down" [Ratner \(2002\)](#), 00:22:00). Dolarhyde's obsession with transformation into "becoming" the Dragon is a direct manifestation of the id's demand for domination and escape from the repression he endures. He is described as "stimulating himself" while watching while watching a film that he edited of a married couple and three kids. Dolarhyde's ego is weak and often overwhelmed by the Red Dragon and the internalized voices of his abusive past. He does attempt rational functioning— he works in film development and is an introverted character who never keeps any personal connection with his colleagues. His ego works out as a mediator between his

destructive impulses and his attempts to relate with others; it finds itself battling in conflict internally, especially when he seeks to repress the Dragon for Reba McClane. The abusive grandmother of Dolarhyde is the major shaping factor of his superego, the humiliation he faced, which deeply impresses him with moral condemnation, feelings of guilt, and worthlessness. Instead of serving him with sound conscience, his superego becomes a sadistic internal critic, reinforcing the shame regarding his body, sexuality, and identity. This sadistic superego further constrains him into self-hatred through which he tries to transcend by "becoming" something tremendously powerful and monstrous. Dolarhyde's vile grandmother often abused him when he was a boy in various ways. When Dolarhyde wet his bed at the age of five and hurt himself on the eye while running in distress to his grandmother's room, she changed his bed in silence, gave him a washcloth, told him to undress and wipe himself off. She then grabbed the back of the boy's head and threatened the boy with castration if he ever made his bed dirty again and put his penis "across the bottom blade of the open scissors" and "closed the scissors until they began to pinch him" [Harris \(1993\)](#). Francis Dolarhyde identified himself to the Red Dragon from William Blake's painting, *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun*, symbolizes "Dolarhyde's process of 'becoming'". This watercolour shows "the emergence of the man-God" (like in many other paintings by Blake). The painting portrays "the Man-Dragon" raging over the "pleading woman caught in a coil of his tail". The metamorphosis of Francis Dolarhyde depends on "accumulation of power at the expense of women" who act as his spectators, as well as ritual sacrifice (Magistrale pp. 34-135). Dolarhyde struggles with a split identity where a part of him craves love and connection, but the other is his alter ego, the Red Dragon, which is dissociative and ambitious, through which he channels his rage and trauma. His identity is unstable and defensive, shaped by early childhood trauma, bodily shame—cleft palate, and a need to disown his fragile self by transforming into something "magnificent". Thanatos is deeply present in Dolarhyde's actions—his murders are deeply symbolic acts of death, not just for his victims, but for his psychic death. Throughout the film, he exhibited self-destructive behaviour, which, in its extreme forms, led him toward fantasies of his suicide and his final death.

Jame Gumb or 'Buffalo Bill' from the movie *The Silence of the Lambs* [\(1991\)](#) directed by Jonathan Demme is a serial killer nicknamed after famous cowboy and bison hunter because he skins his humps. Jame Gumb's specific type was plus-sized women, large enough to harvest their skins to create an anatomically correct female suit that would help towards his transformation from man to woman. The identification of Gumb is incomparably tied with his sexuality, which entails murdering women, skinning them, and attempting to "transform" into a different being, reflecting the uncontrolled, primitive urges and wish fulfilment. Gumb's world is governed by fantasy and compulsion rather than reality or ethics. Gumb's ego, the part of the psyche responsible for dealing with reality, was severely compromised. His dissociation and detachment from reality led to the collapse of a balanced ego that would rationally control the subject's inner tensions and fantasies. He has a complicated superego, as even though he is ashamed and frustrated about his identity, he objectifies his victims. His behaviour indicates a lack of guilt, remorse, and empathy. Gumb's identity is deeply fractured. He struggles with self-definition and constructs a new identity in reaction to inner pain and gender confusion. He is not transgender, but his wish for transformation is an escape from his self, which he hates. In Freudian terms, this may be seen as a defensive reaction to trauma, which could be related to his childhood deprived of a mother's love. In Sigmund Freud's concept of melancholia, as outlined in his 1917 essay *Mourning and Melancholia*, "he suggested that when a personal or object

relationship is lost, then the lost object can be regained nonetheless by “identification,” that is, the lost object is “set up again inside the ego.” When the sexual object is given up, the ego is altered, insofar as the abandoned libidinal object is now set up inside the ego. Further mentioned that the ego incorporates the object within itself as an introjection, “identifies” with it, and thereby builds up its structure or character.” [Lapsley& Stey \(2011\)](#). Thanatos is highly active in Gumb as his crimes are ritualistic, sadistic, and destructive, reflecting not just a desire to kill, but to annihilate identity—his own and his victims’.

6. ERIC FROMM’S CONCEPT OF HUMAN NEEDS AND WAYS TO ESCAPE FREEDOM

“Fromm disagrees with Freud in a fundamental way with the thinkers named above. Fromm contends that biological forces of an innate type do not inevitably drive or develop humanity. Fromm also takes issue with Freud on the matter of sex. Fromm does not view it as a primary shaping force in either normal or neurotic behaviour. According to Fromm, our personality is influenced by social and cultural forces-both those that affect an individual within a culture and those universal forces that have influenced humanity throughout history” [Schultz \(1976\)](#). Eric Fromm’s first book, *Escape from Freedom* (1941), he addresses the psychological effects of freedom and its role in shaping personality. In his other works, *Man for Himself* (1947) and *The Sane Society* (1955) explore his concepts of character orientations, human needs, and the interplay between freedom and societal influences.

According to the *Mechanisms of Escape*, “Fromm tells us that there are two approaches we can take in our attempts to find meaning and belongingness in life. The first approach, known as ‘reaching positive freedom,’ entails trying to reconcile with others while maintaining one’s integrity and independence. Authoritarianism, the first mechanism, shows up as either sadistic or masochistic desires. People who are classified as masochistic believe they are unworthy and unworthy. There is a second expression of sadism that goes beyond controlling or giving orders to other people. It entails taking or using anything that someone else has that they find desirable, whether those goods be material, intellectual, or emotional. The third way that sadism manifests itself is through the desire to cause and see the misery of others. Even while there may be actual bodily pain involved, mental anguish like embarrassment or humiliation is more common.” [Schultz \(1976\)](#).

The character Hannibal Lecter from the movie *Hannibal Rising* (2007) directed by Peter Webber embodies authoritarianism. His traumatic childhood experience of the death of his parents and his sister’s gruesome death left him powerless and adrift. Rather than seeking solace, he becomes authoritarian in his approach to revenge and judgment. He assigns himself the role of a superior being, carrying out moral and physical judgments on those he holds responsible for Mischa’s death. He creates a world where he holds the ultimate power to cope with his feeling of vulnerability. Hannibal’s violence is rooted in deep-seated rage and a need for vengeance, reflecting the theory of destructiveness. When his trauma of his sister’s death coupled with his isolation and suffering faced from the world, it transformed him and he decided to disrupt peace of the world where he felt vulnerable to annihilate his pain along with his victims. Hannibal responds to the harshness of childhood in an utter disavowal of all social forms. Instead of adopting any external social role or automation conformity, he constructs an individualistic, narcissistic persona that is completely independent of what exists in the outside world.

The approaches of *Mechanisms of Escape* is deeply intertwined with the life of Francis Dolarhyde alias the 'Tooth Fairy'. Based on authoritarianism, Dolarhyde exhibits both domination and submission. He is submissive towards his alter ego—Red Dragon. The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun, and becomes a symbol of power, strength, and transcendence. He considers his dragon as that which gives him purpose, identity, and release from his assumed inadequacy. But when he is transformed into the Dragon, he asserts dominance over his victims. His killings were ritualistic and hand-picked— perfect families who were envied by isolated people. This duality was perfectly exemplified by Fromm's description of sadomasochistic tendencies in authoritarian personalities, who build with both the desire for domination and submission to escape the burdens of freedom. His destructive behaviour includes the gruesome slaughter of the whole family and sexual assault of the mothers while the corpse of the husband and children are lined up as the audience. It is a symbolic destruction of what he is unable to achieve—love, family, self-confidence, and normalcy. His physical deformity led to self-hatred and insecurities coupled with his childhood trauma inflicted by his monstrous grandmother. Obsession with destroying others was his way to make others share in his pain and regain control over reality, and is not rooted in sadism but to overcome fearlessness. Dolarhyde unknowingly challenges the automation identity that he had created. He confirms to the myth of the Red Dragon and surrenders his autonomy in Favor of a ritualistic identity that offers power and significance. But challenges this identity while Reba McClane offers him a genuine emotional connection, leading to a conflict between both of his internal psyches.

Jame Gumb alias "Buffalo Bill" employs a perverse form of authoritarianism, asserting power over his victims to mask his inner feelings of vulnerability and insecurity. His routine involves abducting the woman, imprisoning them and starving and objectifying them, and then imposing authority over them physically in a nonconsensual manner by applying lotion over their bodies and skinning them afterwards for suing a woman's suit for him. The transformation isn't about changing his sexual identity but an escape from his worthless life. It makes others bow to its own fantasy, one of Fromm's classic sadomasochistic patterns: a dominating other to avoid conflict with the unbearable self, defining him as an authoritarian personality himself. Gumb's act of murders are the symbolic annihilation as he destroys others during the act of destroying parts of himself. Gumb's self-hate and insecurity is deeply rooted in childhood trauma, societal rejection and deprivation of a mothers love and he projects it onto the victims. Even in the mechanized, depersonalized way he executes the murder of his victims, his destructiveness tragically becomes manifest in the same process. He dehumanizes them by referring to his victims as "it," depriving them of their identity, and treating them as mere materials in an act of transformation. Rather than conforming to society's norms, Gumb conforms to a fantasy identity, a fabricated self that he believes will give him meaning. The belief that he is becoming someone else through a woman's skin suit screens a total rejection of his identity. He does not challenge the conditions of his trauma or the source of his alienation; instead, he escapes into a false identity, one that requires dehumanizing others to sustain.

7. CONCLUSION

Through the psychoanalytical lenses which Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and Erich Fromm's personality theory, the psychological study of the serial killers of the selected movies— Hannibal Lecter, Francis Dolarhyde, and Jame Gumb reveals that their monstrous forms are deeply rooted in traumatic childhood, disoriented

identities, and dysfunctional psychological issues. Given that each character reflects their unique manifestations of Freudian concepts like the dominance of the id, weakened ego environments, and the failure of the superego to provide moral guidance, this end is compulsive yet, very often, ritualistic acts of violence. Along with Fromm's mechanisms of escape based on *Escape from Freedom*—authoritarianism, destructiveness, and automaton conformity—offer insight into how these individuals respond to the existential burden of freedom and alienation by either dominating others, destroying what they cannot possess, or conforming to fantasized identities.

By applying a multidisciplinary psychoanalytic framework, it sheds light on serial killer psychology portrayed in cinema and suggests that fiction serves as a metaphor for real conflicts with trauma, identity, and the will to create meaning in a fractured self.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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