The online version of this article can be found at:

https://groundedtheoryreview.org

The Grounded Theory Bookshelf

By Vivian B. Martin, Ph.D.

Bookshelf will provide critical reviews and perspectives on books on theory and methodology of interest to grounded theory. This issue includes a review of Heaton's *Reworking Qualitative Data*, of special interest for some of its references to grounded theory as a secondary analysis tool; and Goulding's *Grounded Theory: A practical guide for management, business, and market researchers*, a book that attempts to explicate the method and presents a grounded theory study that falls a little short of the mark of a fully elaborated theory.

> **Reworking Qualitative Data, Janet Heaton (Sage, 2004). Paperback, 176 pages, $29.95. Hardcover also available.**

Unlike quantitative research, where secondary analysis of data is common, qualitative research has yet to understand or take advantage of the possibilities of secondary analysis. **Janet Heaton's** book focuses more on the hurdles to qualitative secondary analysis — the ethical and legal issues, as well as the operational challenges of analyzing interviews one did not conduct or witness — rather than providing protocols. But of special interest to grounded theorists are the possibilities grounded theory might offer for secondary analysis. Heaton does not launch such an argument; however, in the book's preface, Heaton notes that Barney Glaser—yes, the co-developer of grounded theory— provided some of the first discussion in the literature about the possibilities of secondary analysis. She quotes from a 1962 *Social Problems* article in which Glaser writes:

> *To be sure, secondary analysis is not limited to quantitative data. Observation notes, unstructured interviews and documents can also be usefully analyzed. In fact, some field workers may be delighted to have their notes, long buried in their files, reanalyzed from another point of view. Man is a data-gathering animal.* (Glaser, 1962: 74).

Grounded theorists would run into some of the same hurdles as other researchers viewing qualitative materials for which they could not go back to interviewees and seek elaboration, though grounded theory's limited concern with full coverage might decrease such hurdles. Heaton does cite some secondary analyses projects for which grounded theory was invoked as the method for re-use. However, the main issue addressed in the book is the limited number

of secondary analyses in general. The "secondary analysis of qualitative data remains an enigma" (viii), she writes.

Heaton provides a literature review of secondary studies, though they are primarily in the health and social care literature. Importantly, calls for re-use of data have been explicit in these areas, and funding from the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK supported the initial literature review of the health studies. Heaton provides a typology to discuss secondary analyses thus far, but she acknowledges that "secondary analysis" is a vague term, and many studies that appear to be secondary analyses do not make it explicit. Secondary analyses, according to Heaton, include (p. 38):

Supra analysis: Transcends the original topic for which the data were collected.

Supplementary analysis: Expands on some aspects of the original study through more in-depth investigation.

Re-analysis: Verifies or corroborates original premises.

Amplified analysis: Combines data from two or more studies for comparison.

Assorted analysis: Combines secondary data with primary research and/or naturalistic data.

Most of the secondary analyses Heaton examined involved researchers going back to their own data. She notes that, although some researchers espouse the idea of making data available to others for secondary analysis, many have not taken the next step to make such data accessible. Nonetheless, Heaton finds encouragement in the increase in archives of qualitative data, and she provides information about such sites in the book.

This work is useful for its "state of the methodology" discussion, as well as information it provides about data archives. For grounded theorists, there's something else: a challenge to see how grounded theory might provide an intervention to break the current methodological stalemate in secondary analysis.

Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market Researchers, by Christina Goulding (Sage, 2002). Paperback, 186 pages, $37.95. Hardcover also available.

Christina Goulding attempts to give management, marketing, and related business researchers an overview of grounded theory to meet the growing interest those disciplines have in the methodology. Goulding introduces readers to some of the differences between grounded theory as espoused by Barney Glaser and the model, with its complicated coding scheme, presented by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, which Goulding states is more typically preferred in management and related studies. To illustrate how grounded theory works, Goulding presents a study of heritage tourism that she reports she developed in keeping with Glaserian methodology. Adherents of Glaserian grounded theory will take issue with this claim, however. Though useful in some ways due to its references to a mix of perspectives on grounded theory, Goulding's grounded theory research is a good example of how studies can implode when analysts insist on incorporating techniques and practices that run counter to Glaserian protocols.

The book is divided into three parts: one with chapters on grounded theory principles and discussions of qualitative research in general; chapters on a study on consumer behavior at heritage sites; what the author describes as a "critical review of the methodology." Exercises for students appear at the end of chapters in the first and second parts of the book. Goulding starts with a discussion of the rise in qualitative research in management research. In an effort to highlight the move toward more interpretive research she spends time distinguishing phenomenology, ethnography, and postmodern perspectives. Here is where a knowledgeable reader is confronted with the first of several wrong turns. Like many other writers on grounded theory, Goulding incorrectly presents grounded theory as a qualitative methodology. Certainly, it has been most utilized with qualitative data, but as Glaser has taken increasing pains to note, grounded theory is a general methodology for which qualitative and quantitative data can be used.

Goulding's unfortunate conflation of grounded theory with qualitative research ("the qualitative methodology known as grounded theory," p. 38) becomes all the more problematic in the book's second chapter, where, under the heading of "the influence of symbolic

interaction," she provides a distorted history of grounded theory. She writes that the "roots of grounded theory can be traced back to a movement known as symbolic interaction" (p. 39). Moreover, she writes, "Using the principles of symbolic interactionism as a basic foundation, two American scholars, Glaser and Strauss, set out to develop a more defined an systematic procedure for collecting and analyzing qualitative data" (p.40). Never appearing in this "history" is mention of the quantitative background and analytical qualitative techniques that Glaser, trained at Columbia with Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton, brought to grounded theory. These techniques form the basis for the concept-indicator model of analysis on which grounded theory is based.

Goulding's rationale for ignoring this history is not clear. A good part of the first part of the book is intended to differentiate between versions of grounded theory, not just contrasting Glaser with Strauss Corbin's scheme, most famously laid out in *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Principles* (1990) but also other variants like dimensional analysis. For these reasons, Goulding should have been aware of Glaser's critique of Strauss and Corbin's work in particular; she quotes from Glaser's 1992 (*Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emerging v Forcing*), which contains a chapter-by-chapter rebuke of Strauss and Corbin's *Basics of Qualitative Research* as well as a reiteration of grounded theory's link to the quantitative techniques pioneered at Columbia.

We may find the answer deeper into the book, however. Despite Goulding's claim that her work proceeded based on Glaser's guidelines, it begins to appear that Goulding was working off of her own version of Glaserian grounded theory. In introducing her research on consumer behavior, Goulding notes that "data were collected in keeping with Glaser's description of the methodology with the emphasis on emergence and theoretical sensitivity" (p. 106). She notes that this means that certain techniques associated with Strauss and Corbin, "such as the continual use of the conditional matrix do not form a central role in interpretation" (p. 106). Correct enough, but in the next sentence she writes: "However, the basic principles of open coding, axial coding, theoretical sampling, and theoretical emergence and the process of abstraction remain pivotal."

Axial coding? That complicated coding scheme that has caused so many people to throw up their hands declaring that grounded

theory doesn't make sense and is impossible to do? Axial coding is a Strauss-Corbin "intervention" that forces grounded theory analysis, as Glaser has argued. Nonetheless, axial coding is built into Goulding's research project; she also spent time spent identifying research questions, and adding other twists that ultimately misshape her project. But there is something valuable for grounded theory students: Goulding provides excerpts from transcripts, memos, and other discussions that help the reader see her process; her transparency allows students to see how a project can go up course, certainly providing interesting information, but missing the mark when it comes to development of a fully integrated theory. Clearly, this was not her intent.

Goulding shares an example of one of the codes she comes up with: Nostalgia, which seems to have properties and factors into some museum visitors' motivations more than others. She then introduces us to various types of museum visitors, suggesting that she is using a typology to organize her theory. Because she gives short shrift to theoretical codes, the shape of the theory is not clear. The reader never gets a sense of a core and its satellites. The reason for this becomes evident on page 127. She writes: " With regard to abstracting the interpretation, this involves identifying the most salient literature which gives theoretical credence to the interpretation. "

With this quote, the author shows a misunderstanding of how grounded theorists use theoretical codes to move into an integrated theory. Grounded theorists do not have an "interpretation" that they then go to get verified by extant theories. Such hitchhiking has been the approach that qualitative researchers take in an effort to generalize and legitimize their studies. Grounded theory is intended to get away from that. The approach Goulding has described is one of the ways in which qualitative researchers have imported some of their quantitative-research envy into qualitative data analysis, then into grounded theory.

Grounded theorists are not hostile toward extant theory, but there must be an emergent fit between the new and extant theory. A classic grounded theorist would develop his or her theory, moving out from the core category, and communicate with the extant literature with which there are intersections. In explaining how she went to the literature, Goulding writes that the most "appropriate starting point for analysis is to examine the concept of the 'self' in relation

to the past" (p. 127). Noting literature indicating that any theory of motivation needs a self behind it, Goulding began integrating this in her analysis. Such codes are not necessarily incorrect additions, though one should note that the self seems to becoming a vague entity in much research. Goulding notes that the literature of the self help "enhance theoretical understanding of the nature of interaction" (p. 127); however, while the importance of her growing theoretical sensitivity cannot be minimized, it also seems that Goulding's assumption that she needed to go to the symbolic interaction well and "self" literature for "theoretical credence" instead of building her own theoretical argument seems to have forced her analysis and cut off her own theory before it could grow.

Grounded theory researchers need to read successful and not so successful grounded theories to help them understand the nuances of the methodology. Goulding's work is recommended with that in mind. Unlike some who have undertaken entire books on the methodology without doing a grounded theory project, Goulding wrestled with the method and produced a product even if it is not as elaborated theory as classic grounded theorists would hope. Many of us are still struggling to reach that ideal ourselves. In addition to useful references, this book can help the intermediate-to-advanced grounded theorist understand how seemingly innocuous decisions can block theories.