



GROUNDING THEORY REVIEW

An international journal

From the Editor

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Special Call for Papers

November, 2009. This issue will focus on writing and publishing CGT. The numerous remodeled versions of GT have resulted in many misunderstandings of the classic methodology, most particularly, the misconception that GT is a qualitative research method. The resultant confusion of CGT with qualitative methods is a frequent frustration – and sometimes obstacle – for CGT scholars seeking to publish in mainstream academic journals where the criteria for publication may be inconsistent with CGT methodology and where reviewers will often assess a CGT paper against established criteria for qualitative research. We welcome papers that address these issues and offer advice to others in successfully overcoming the obstacles to publication in mainstream journals. **Deadline for submissions is August 31.**

In addition to this special call for papers, we continue to welcome papers presenting substantive and formal grounded theories from a broad range of disciplines.

Submissions

All papers submitted are peer reviewed and comments provided back to the authors. Papers accepted for publication will be good examples or practical applications of classic grounded theory methodology. Comments on papers published are also welcomed, will be shared with the authors and may be published in subsequent issues of the Review. See our website www.groundedtheoryreview.com for full submission guidelines. Forward submissions as Word documents to Judith Holton at judith@groundedtheoryreview.com

The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

From the Editor

This issue focuses specifically on the adventure of learning and doing that first GT study – the trepidation, challenge, inevitable confusion, eureka excitement and energizing satisfaction that each of us has experienced as a novice GT researcher. Barney Glaser holds that GT is best done in the hands of the novice researcher and has written extensively on the novice experience. In this issue, we are pleased to reprint Chapter 5 of **The GT Perspective II: Description's Remodeling of Grounded Theory Methodology** (Glaser, 2003, pp.61-79) in which he expounds his confidence in the novice advantage with its quest for relevance, openness to learning, ability to tolerate not knowing and ability to trust in the method's time-tested and product-proven outcomes.

The other papers in this issue are the result of a special call for papers on the novice experience of learning and doing classic grounded theory (CGT). I am very pleased to say that the papers we include here, in true GT fashion, encompass a range of disciplines and levels of experience. The papers offer us first-hand accounts of the novice experience at various stages in the GT process.

Novice classic grounded theorists often find that they are breaking new territory at their institutions where, not only are they undertaking the mastery of a methodology that is new to them, but one that is unfamiliar to their supervisors and indeed their institutions; a methodology that is most often conflated with qualitative research and therefore mistakenly required to meet the proposal formats of qualitative research. Both Jones (pp.23-34) and Xie (pp.35-47) discuss the challenges of crafting a PhD research proposal that can stay true to CGT while also meeting institutional and supervisory requirements. Xie's study of Dr. Glaser's work provided her with a level of confidence and knowledge that enabled her to take on the proposal process. Jones used his knowledge of various methodologies to persuade

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his committee that CGT was not only the appropriate but possibly also the only feasible methodology to achieve his research objectives. Both offer honest accounts of the proposal process; setting out the challenges encountered and describing how they addressed committee concerns.

Roderick (pp.49-63) and Pergert (pp. 65-75) have successfully achieved their PhDs within the last year. Their papers recount their experiences of learning and doing GT. Roderick describes her initial reluctance to accept some of GT's procedures; she shares with us her attempts to use interview protocols, taping and transcribing and how she came to see the wisdom in coding and memoing from field notes. Pergert shares her experience in learning how GT differs from other research methods in regards to sampling, delimiting and saturation. She also shares another challenge experienced by many GT novices – that of coding and conceptualizing in a second language. Both authors attest to the wisdom in Glaser's insistence that the only way to really learn GT is to "just do it!" Both offer as well valuable advice in ways to foster and support the experiential learning curve that is foundational to GT skill development.

Rindell (pp.77-87) describes for us how she wrestled with two key issues in her first GT research study: how to situate her study within her disciplinary field, particularly as her emergent theory did not appear to align with extant theory, and how to decide whether to do a substantive or a formal GT; or, in other words, how to distinguish between substantive and formal GT. Her 'lessons learned' remind novices of the importance of letting go of preconceptions and discipline boundaries to trust in the data and the GT process and of memoing as the ideational foundation of any GT.

Scott's (pp.89-111) forthright account of her GT learning journey illustrates beautifully Glaser's contention of GT as an experiential learning process where letting go of preconceptions, resting in confusion and trusting in the preconscious processing of GT's delayed action learning curve enables conceptual emergence. Her journey illustrates the importance of being open to learning, to acknowledging 'not knowing' and to unlearning before realization is possible. Scott's use of memos to illustrate her learning along the way should remind all of the power in memoing. Her theory demonstrates the elegance of a good

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grounded theory in explaining a complex pattern of social behaviour. Those who wish to read a full account of her theory are referred to [Scott \(2007\)](#), "The Temporal Integration of Connected Study into a Structured Life", *The Grounded Theory Review*, vol.6, no.2, pp. 95-116.

Breckenridge (p113-126) focuses her paper on theoretical sampling – one of the foundational pillars of CGT - and offers her understanding of the process, its distinction from sampling procedures in other methodologies and its fundamental role in CGT. Her references to GT as interpretive (rather than conceptual), to its having "evolved" (what a classic grounded theorist would describe as remodelled) and to her concerns regarding the need for 'evidence' of the credibility of a GT study through detailed description of sampling procedures (rather than using Glaser's four criteria of fit, works, relevance and modifiability) suggest that she is still in the process of 'unlearning' the remodelling impact of qualitative research's 'embrace' of GT procedures. Like many new to GT, Breckenridge may continue to cling to the fundamentals of good research in other paradigms until she has experienced the full GT learning curve. Perhaps only then can the trust in emergence be fully expressed and appreciated. Certainly, her scholarly engagement with this essential element of the methodology holds promise of another budding classic grounded theorist and a successful PhD.

All of the papers in this issue offer much encouragement to those who are also engaged in their first study or are contemplating the same. Whether you are a novice or more experienced grounded theorist, I trust that you will find something of interest and value in this issue – something that inspires you to "Just do it!"

- Judith A. Holton, Ph.D.