



GROUNDING THEORY REVIEW

An international journal

From the Editor

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The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

From the Editor

Two particular challenges for which novice grounded theorists often seek advice and assistance occur at the outset and at the end of the research process – seeking institutional approval to undertake data collection and, as work progresses, the process of writing conceptually. In this issue, both novice and experienced grounded theorists offer perspectives and suggestions on both, grounded in their own experiences.

Carey (pp.19-33) recounts her experiences as a novice grounded theorist in addressing a range of challenges while seeking ethics approval for a grounded theory study with a sensitive population in Ireland. Her perspective is coupled with responses from three more experienced grounded theorists – Nathaniel (pp.33-41) from within the American context, McCallin (pp.43-49) the New Zealand context, and Thulesius (pp.51-54) the Swedish context. Together, their commentaries on the processes within each jurisdiction suggest some common issues to be considered and some varying perspectives on how best to approach and achieve the required approvals with as little eroding impact as possible on the proposed grounded theory study.

We ‘book-end’ the issue with papers that we hope may help illuminate the importance of that other perennial challenge to many novice grounded theorists; that of writing conceptually rather than descriptively. The paper by Glaser (pp.1-18) is an extract from his 1968 book, *Organizational careers: A sourcebook for theory*, a work based on his doctoral research at Columbia University. The extract offers an overview of his proposed emerging formal theory of organizational careers; the emerging theory based on his use of secondary data from a wide range of published sources. While our interest here is primarily in illustrating the conceptual elegance of a well written grounded theory, it is worth noting that the use of secondary data offers an alternate route to navigating those sometimes choppy channels of ethics review.

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What is particularly striking about Glaser's work is the enduring grab and persistent relevance of the concepts addressed. While certainly much has changed in the world of organizations and the careers within, concepts such as "recruitment, motivation, loyalty, promotion, demotion, succession, moving between organizations, and career patterns" (p.7) persist as areas of research and scholarship in management and organizational studies. Over forty-five years later, Glaser's work literally beckons us to revisit his "forward theory" and constantly compare it with more recent empirical studies, modifying it for an emergent fit with today's organizational environment. More generally, however, the reader is asked to study the style of writing – this elegant abstract conceptual approach that leaves behind the 'face-sheet' detail that so quickly dates and limits so many descriptive studies. The theory is written not as past-tense 'findings' from his constant comparison of previous published work but is raised to the conceptual level and written in the present tense, as a living theory that fits, works, and continues to have relevance today.

We round out this issue with two reviews of Suzanne Kaplan's moving theory of children in genocide and the extreme traumatising of their experience. As Kaplan notes, she is a novice grounded theorist who was attracted to the methodology for three reasons: its emphasis on empirical grounding, a noticeable gap in the research related to children's experiences in genocide, and her personal experiences as a participant in seminars given by Dr. Glaser. Having completed her writing and achieving publication of this powerful work, Kaplan was curious to know how her work would hold up to the methodological scrutiny of the classic grounded theory community of practice. Roderick's (pp.55-59) and Martin's (pp.61-64) critiques and Kaplan's (pp.65-69) response remind us not only of the importance of embracing grounded theory as a full package methodology but also that developing our skills in using that package entails a learning curve that cannot be perfected in advance but only through experience. Kaplan herself acknowledges this experiential criterion of grounded theory and calls on Glaser's assurance that even a little GT is better than none at all!

- Judith A. Holton, Ph.D.

Submissions

We welcome papers presenting substantive and formal classic grounded theories from a broad range of disciplines. All papers submitted are double blind 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; these will be shared with the authors and may be published in subsequent issues of the Review. Manuscripts should be prepared as Word (.doc) files using single line spacing and New Century Schoolbook 11 pt typeface. Forward submissions as Word documents to Judith Holton at judith@groundedtheoryreview.com

Title Page: Include names of all authors, their affiliations and professional degrees. Include the address of the corresponding author, telephone number & email. A brief biographical statement of each author is welcome although optional.

Abstract: The title page is followed by an abstract of 100 to 150 words. Include maximum of five key words.

Introduction: Briefly overview the focus of the study. Comment on data sources, data collection and analysis.

Theory: Using sub-headings, clearly identify the theory's core category (variable) and related concepts, explaining each briefly. Under an additional subheading, articulate the main theoretical propositions (hypotheses) of your theory.

Discussion: Discuss the general implications of your theory for practice. Discuss its contribution to knowledge by addressing extant theory and literature. Discuss its limitations.

Notes to the Text: Notes to the text should be kept to a minimum and should appear at the end of the text.

References: References should appear as a separate section titled 'References' at the end of the paper following the text and any endnotes. References should conform to APA publication format.

Word Count: As a rule, papers should not exceed 8,000 words.

Graphics: Our preference is to minimize the use of graphics, figures and tables. If they are necessary, authors of papers accepted for publication will be asked to supply print ready artwork.