From the Editor's Desk

We are pleased to publish this December 2019 issue of the Grounded Theory Review, an online journal dedicated to supporting those who conduct classic grounded theory research. First developed by Glaser and Strauss in the early 1960s and further established by Glaser in the intervening years, classic grounded theory is a unique method of discovering never before recognized processes and patterns of human behavior. This issue includes three papers that discuss educational issues surrounding the method and four original classic grounded theories.

Preserving Autonomy: A Cry for Help was written by Glaser and first published in 2016. In this paper, Glaser discusses cries for help he has received over the years—often from novice grounded theory researchers who are striving to obtain the highly valued PhD. As is often the case, many cries for help come from students who struggle to learn the method without the support of experienced classic grounded theory mentors. In this paper, Glaser stresses that autonomy is essential, even for the novice. Grounded theory mentors are encouraged to support novices' autonomy, thereby preserving the joy of freedom of discovery that comes with doing grounded theory.

Glaser is a master teacher. He taught for several years at University of California, San Francisco, where he developed a seminar method of teaching. He adapted his "delayed action learning process" to three-day intensive grounded theory seminars that he conducted for many years. The second paper in this issue, *How Classic Grounded Theorists Teach the Method*, outlines the teaching strategies of 15 experienced grounded theorists, all of whom learned the method from Glaser. Although the settings and types of students vary, all who contributed to this paper offer strategies to teach grounded theory through experiential learning.

An important initial aspect of teaching is to differentiate classic grounded theory from other research methods, particularly remodeled versions of grounded theory. In *Teaching Qualitative Research: Versions of Grounded Theory*, Andrew P. Carlin and Younhee H. Kim, both from University of Macau offer a scholarly discussion. The paper identifies problems associated with remodeled versions of grounded theory. Based on a critical incident analysis of literatures as 'fieldwork sites,' this paper discusses iterations of qualitative research—particularly, what Carlin and Kim call the versioning of Grounded Theory. Carlin and Kim identify misapprehensions regarding the use of qualitative methods and alerts researchers in interdisciplinary fields to adverse consequences of using remodeled versions of grounded theory.

In the theory, *Neutralizing Prejudices* Rúni Johannesen presents a social profile of a tolerant and global ideological behavior. Johannesen found that the in-group-behavior revolves around enforcing the tolerant virtue and rooting out and eliminating prejudiced attitudes that affect minorities and the collective environment. Johannesen discovered that neutralizing prejudices is a means to engage and deal with prejudiced oppression and prejudice-related behavior. Mindsets with a tolerant worldview use neutralization to assert their worldview and cope with the prejudiced attitudes they experience towards minorities and the collective environment. Neutralizing prejudices is a way to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect. Neutralizing prejudices is a basic social process of collective regrouping in relation to

a social, moral, and global objective.

Karen Jagiello discovered the theory of *Seeking to Do What's Best for Baby*. Focusing on a sample population of breastfeeding mothers who had been encouraged to exclusively breastfeed without offering other nutrition supplementation to their babies, Jagiello identified a temporal three-stage process that included pre-pregnancy nescience, working through, and succeeding or surrendering. As is the case with many classic grounded theories, the processes that emerged were unexpected. Through the process of emergence, Jagiello found that seeking to do what is best for baby is influenced by evolving internal conditions and basic social processes which account for the variation in the pattern of behavior.

Maureen P. Molinari and Kara Vander Linden, both of Saybrook University, present their classic ground theory that explains a four-stage process for resolving moral distress encountered in professional environments. Value-based mavericking explains that misalignment between personal and professional values may lead to moral distress and burnout and, that while coping strategies may ease symptoms, the underlying problem still exists. Value-based mavericking presents a process that includes evaluating professional alignment and values and then choosing if and how to continue working in the current professional environment. As is the case with many classic grounded theories, value-based mavericking presents a different way of approaching moral distress and burnout that has not been previously addressed in the literature.

Debbie Garratt and Joanna Patching, both of Notre Dame University, present their theory of *Manipulative Dominant Discoursing: Alarmist Recruitment and Perspective Gatekeeping.* This theory explains the main concern of practitioners in Australia when interacting with women on the issue of abortion. Recognizing Glaser's dictum, *all is data,* Garratt and Patching utilized a broad data set including practitioner interviews, professional notes, and discourse data. The theory of manipulative dominant discoursing: alarmist recruitment and perspective gatekeeping emerged from the data.

The theories of Johannesen, Jagiello, Garratt, and Molinari & Vander Linden illustrate how new and unexpected theories can emerge when researchers have the freedom and autonomy that is afforded by classic grounded theory. Since some of the authors in this issue attended intensive grounded theory seminars, their theories demonstrate the value of experiential teaching strategies and delayed action learning processes.

I wish to thank the many people who make the *Grounded Theory Review* possible. Barney Glaser continues to support the publication. His intellectual contribution is invaluable. Without Glaser, the *Review* would not be possible. I also wish to thank Barry Chametzky, a PhD prepared university faculty member whose dedication to the grounded theory method involves many volunteer hours copyediting papers for the publication. Thanks also to our international, interdisciplinary colleagues who give their time in peer review, paper submissions, and other contributions. To all of them and to you, our readers, we at the *Grounded Theory Review* wish you a very Happy New Year.

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD
Editor

Preserving Autonomy: The Cry for Help

Barney G. Glaser

Editor's note: Preserving Autonomy was first published in Glaser's 2016, *The Cry for Help: Preserving Autonomy Doing GT Research* and re-published as the first chapter in Glaser's 2019 *Chapter One: A Grounded Theory Review Reader*, both published by Sociology Press*.* Preserving Autonomy has been lightly edited for clarity and context.

The most desirable cry for help is a specific question requiring only a direct specific answer. However, this seldom occurs in over half the cries for help. Most requests are not that simple nor answers that brief. In this chapter we see the amazing variations in request and replies for help. The novice proceeds as best as possible to the highly valued goal—the PhD.

The cry for help with a specific question getting a specific answer can free up the novice to maintain his autonomy in completing his dissertation. Some questions are too general for a specific answer and thus the novice may be referred to a training seminar, a network of GT researchers, or a mentor, etc. Sometimes the learning answer can change the novice's way of thinking about life. When the answer clinches getting the PhD, the novice can become so thrilled that he may email and phone the mentor many times to thank him. The value of CGT [classic grounded theory] research for obtaining a PhD is so great it cans stimulate a long period of sweet talk between novice and mentor. There is much appreciation for a good helpful answer beyond belief on the part of the novice.

New novices are usually very shy about getting help from a senior GT mentor. They usually focus on one next procedural question in their research. The shy novice often says, "I have one last question for you." One question and answer is usually not enough to put the novice's autonomy at stake. If the mentor knows a lot about the area of study and the next procedure . . . in the research, the novice's autonomy could be at stake for a time. Novices best stick with one humble question and trust their autonomy. He should avoid a takeover by a non-experienced GT mentor, who can change his view of a GT. The academic mentor from a non-GT department can use the power of a departmental perspective to take over the novice. Then the novice could lose the control of his GT autonomy to the social structural department power. The mentor can be a supervisor, committee member, peer reviewer, or just a friend.

A little brief help can last for years with positive results. A little can go a long way, punctuated at the end of researched final theory by obtaining a PhD and excessive thank yous from the novice. A novice from the Philippines wrote me, "I am pleased to inform you that after two years from the troubleshooting seminar that I have successfully passed my final PhD defense. The trouble shooting seminar helped me a lot. I could not have done the PhD without your help. My gratitude to you."

The novice must be careful not to yield or give away his power of autonomy given by the GT methodology. He may yield his autonomy to satisfy his desperate need for help. But no matter how desperate he may feel the need, he should be careful not to give up his power of autonomy to a mentor who takes over control of the research. And the mentor

may know little about GT and advise according to a descriptive QDA [qualitative data analysis], sanctioned by a departmental perspective. A true GT mentor will usually not take this control. The goal of the novice is to be freed up, not entrapped, by a mentor.

Some cries are too general for a specific answer and the novice is referred to a training CGT program, a seminar or a mentor with time to train. The cry can get an answer that changes the novice's whole way of thinking about life, such as stopping preconceptions, looking for behavior patterns and letting things in life emerge. The novice becomes thrilled with the CGT method and shares his joy with many colleagues. Another answer can clinch receiving the PhD and the novice is so thrilled that he cannot stop emailing his mentor his appreciation. For some mentors this is a nuisance, for others they share in the joy and even boast to colleagues how effective their help was. In some cases, the successful novice will ask to join a CGT research team as a strong and ready CGT researcher; however doubtful this may be to others or his mentor.

The cry for help in research for obtaining a PhD is so valuable that it often stimulates much sweet talk when requesting a helpful answer and when an effective answer is received it can stimulate effusive sweet talk thanks. Appreciation beyond belief can easily flow from the novice who is getting the PhD. It can be overwhelming for the mentor and seem like an apparent sacrifice of the novice's autonomy by a novice wanting more and more help. Keeping up the successful help can become a problem for the mentor, when he must cut off contact with the novice for lack of time and resources.

I shall deal with these issues previewed above and many other issues in the cry for help, a major issue being preserving autonomy while being helped—as the reader can see from the preview of problems above. The reader will likely think of many more problems. The goal of this book is to help, maintain, use, and enjoy the autonomy provided by GT, while getting help. My data includes emails from over 100 novices throughout the world crying for help while doing GT research for obtaining the valued PhD degree. This goal is highly valued as GT spreads throughout the world and novices devote their total lives to earning the PhD using GT. I deal with the many patterned consequences of type of cries, threats to autonomy, and how they are dealt with by novices and mentors. Sweet talk and excessive thanking are major variables for novices in this situation.

The reason for offering this book is clear. As grounded theory spreads, its use to produce dissertations to obtain the PhD needs help to preserve generating GT correctly and to maintain its value. Novices, soon to become "doctors" based on GT dissertations, need this support and reputation of their mentors. They sacrifice a few years of life to devote themselves to GT research for achieving an approved dissertation for the PhD. Solving important research issues correctly is very important to these novices and especially so at the beginning of their GT research.

Many problems emerge throughout the GT research, especially at the beginning when no preconceptions lead to much confusion. Help is necessary, vital, and very valuable to get to a conceptual level. We experience many cries for help from beginners from all over the world. Thus, I hope this book will supply some of the help that is surely and so fatefully needed. GT methodology is not simple; thus, GT questions are not simple, nor are

the answers simple. Help is needed on a myriad of GT procedures as GT spreads with "grab" throughout the academic world and the cries for help increase and spread with it. Hopefully this book will help those novices in need of help to find the help they need to produce worthy GT theories.

Autonomy

One reason many novices choose using GT is that it offers individualized autonomy. No academic department, as yet, has chosen GT as their perspective and methodology. The choice of GT is individualized and can put the novice in conflict with his departmental perspectives, which is usually a version of a QDA methodology. GT attracts on the individual level with its autonomy. GT does not attract on the group level. Most often, then, the novice has the task of convincing his supervisor and PhD committee of the value of his choice of GT. This conflict puts his autonomy at risk.

By autonomy I mean total freedom for the researcher of letting the research participants main concern emerge with the core conceptual variable and sub-core variables that continually resolve it. Many other GT procedures require and provide autonomy also. Avoiding a takeover by a senior mentor is vital, especially by a supervisor with a different methodology, but also with those mentors who have the GT perspective and are just controlling. Most QDA versions of qualitative data research require preconception of the research problem and its solving before research begins. In contrast, GT methodology allows a do-not-know approach to an emergent full discovery to put into a conceptual theory. Correcting existing research conjectures is not the goal. Just generating an emergent conceptual theory is the goal. Correcting existing research may be a consequence of a GT if it emerges. Losing the autonomy GT gives the research is a major loss. Hopefully, this book will stop any block on autonomy and help preserve the joy of freedom of discovery in doing GT.

This autonomy that is so attractive to many novices has many problems with several dimensions. Claiming autonomy when doing research with a structure of control by superiors can be highly problematic for the novice. Level of success varies from losing all control, thus failure to get autonomy, to achieving a high level of autonomy and being sometimes quite alone with no help. Most PhD candidates have been trained in their student careers to seek expert help from mentors and to seek and "ok" as their research proceeds. Though autonomy is a big draw to choosing GT for a dissertation, it can become very frightening about doing it right. "Am I using the GT procedures correctly?" [….] "Am I doing it right?" is their constant question. So, they seek help, if only a constant OK.

Also, many who have chosen CGT for its autonomy do not realize until they start their research that they cannot tolerate autonomy. They need a constant OK and some help and are almost paralyzed without it. They need a mentor available at a moment's notice. Trusting to mentors for a cry for help can be difficult at times of research difficulty. Thus, the autonomy offered by GT procedures is a mixed bag. The autonomy varies with the proper use of GT procedures. It is not a manifest glory of freedom that it sounds like to many novices at first glance when choosing GT.

Generating a grounded theory when done correctly with autonomy at all stages goes fast, taking less than a year to generate an emergent theory. Yet, I have talked with novices who have taken up to five years waiting for OKs. They are bogged down, especially at the beginning stages of confusion. "Am I doing it right" and "will my supervisor approve" are constant concerns for novices who have foregone their autonomy. They are constantly questioning for help.

Tolerating the beginning confusion and "not knowing" that goes with starting a GT research project can become intolerable autonomously. Patience with confusion and trusting to the emergent is required so existing frameworks and preconceptions do not force the research. The "aha" eureka moment will come soon from constant comparisons of interchangeable indicators, but not immediately. The experiential growth with clarity that comes over time in doing GT requires autonomy from routine help. Only experienced GT researchers are suitable to giving moments of help that enforce the novice's autonomy with direct, brief realizations.

The initial confusion that comes with coding by constant comparisons of indicators before emergent conceptualization taxes autonomy to the maximum. Preconceptions and seeking authoritative help eases the autonomous responsibility, yet undermines it if not careful. Few novices can take it. Many cry for help to be sure they are "doing it right." Once concepts emerge for a main concern and a core category and a few subcategories, autonomy can go into full force. The autonomous novice now can go it alone and be told nothing to threaten his autonomy. So, novices with some doubts should trust to emergence and preserve their autonomy. It will be solidified by emergence of conceptual discovery. Do not yield autonomous control for safety out of fear. Confusion from constant comparisons and preconscious processing are part of the beginning GT research process. Only a well-trained, experienced GT mentor will know how to help without taking away autonomy with preconceptions from a departmental perspective. Good help only takes a few moments of support and with foreign students adding a little help with a methodology written in English.

The intense rhetorical wrestle between senior researchers on the merits of GT versus other versions of jargonized GT and also straight QDA may also threaten or erode the novice's autonomy. He may be forced by his academic department to support and adhere to a methodology perspective that denies of limits autonomy on many aspects of GT, for example in collecting data procedures of choosing a problem before it emerges. . . . The novice is too new in research GT to argue with a sophisticated senior researcher his way out of these controls that erode autonomy. It takes a very strong novice to win such rhetorical wrestle theory arguments, and thus keep his autonomy in the face of such pressure. The senior often has the PhD degree in hand to use to win by pressure the argument. Autonomy is easily eroded in such cases.

"Am I on the right track" is a question expressed by many autonomous novices, no matter what stage of GT theory generation they are at. Their autonomy may leave them without normal ongoing "OKs" on current progress from PhD supervisors or committee members. This is a normal need of the autonomous novice and should not be allowed to erode autonomy, especially at the beginning stage of GT research. Toward the end of

research, the "OK" may become more important as a generated theory is about to be submitted to seniors for the PhD. Thus, there is a growing need for the "OK" for final drafts that will confirm the novice's autonomy and success in obtaining the PhD award. The novice is not left alone forever. Approval is necessary now. GT is not like other QDA methodology. GT has a delayed action learning curve. It requires patience with autonomy in the beginning stages. It moves forward much faster during the sorting memos stage and the resulting first drafts should get a brief "OK" as the novice plans his submittal for the PhD. In short, autonomy does not mean totally alone at the end. It means that the novice's judgments prevail among "OKs" on submission issues with committee and defense of the dissertation.

The autonomous novice is rewarded as the complete owner and discoverer of his theory as he seeks necessary approvals. Autonomy pays off with self-satisfaction as he approaches the PhD. Novices needing constant help and "OKs" at later stages may never experience this rewarding self-satisfied autonomy, though they may get their degree under supervision. GT can offer the autonomous reward that attracts many an independent-oriented novice. These novices tend to be independent in every day life as a natural inclination. This explains why GT is still independent based and not yet department based. The excitement that comes with discovering a main concern and the core category that continually resolves it confirms for the novice his safe autonomy that can be finally shared as a discovered grounded theory as real. It is no longer to be evaluated and corrected.

Autonomy helps the novice decide on his own many vital procedural issues when doing CGT. Some are: how to vet the participants without preconceiving their thoughts, when to theoretically sample, when are memos mature enough to sort, when is enough interchangeable indicators enough for generating a concept so data collection can stop, is a main concern with a core category "OK," and many more issues to decide, which materially affect the resulting generated theory. These many decisions keep the research going at a good pace. Needing constant help from senior mentors and colleagues before making these procedural decisions can slow the research down too long and usually unnecessarily. Autonomous decisions can keep the research moving at a good pace and the decisions become self-correcting to achiever "grabby" emergence. "Am I doing it right" gets self-answered all along the way by what is generated by autonomous self-correcting decisions. Waiting for supervisors with lingering adequate office hours to review and comment can take much time and bog down the GT research. Autonomous deciding can keep the novice on the "right track" with a comparatively early pay off with an emergent theory. Discovering a significant main concern and core category clinches the autonomous novice's position. The personal reward backed by others praising the GT is wonderful for the autonomous novice. Collaborators and heavy supervision were not necessary.

Mentoring

Of course, the right kind of help helps if it is help with supporting autonomy. Here is an expressive note from a recent honor-receiving PhD who received autonomy maintaining support from three experienced GT mentors. "There are no words to describe the sense of "awe" and deep honor to be trained in GT from the master seminal theorist, himself, Barney. It was a life-changing experience. I used several of Barney's quotes supporting

my autonomy like 'you are confused, stay that way, just do it or drop the ideology.' I wish to thank Dr. Helen Scott and Dr. Judith Holton for their methodological mentoring and counseling." Thus, good mentors help preserve the autonomy provided by GT methodology and they ensure excellent results.

I have many colleagues who give the right kind of help, fully supporting the novice's GT research autonomy leading to successful PhD dissertations. Also, many of them are giving trouble-shooting seminars like I do to help novices and help them help each other with methodological issues. Thus, autonomy allows the novice to be "whatever" to help other novices. They have and establish networks of support using the internet. In these networks and trouble-shooting seminars autonomy is not threatened by heavy evaluation of seniors steeped in other perspectives. It is supported and applauded by the joy of discovery shared by others. This is in stark contrast to the usual demanding use of preconceived formats typical in academic practice of routine QDA methods. My model of the trouble-shooting seminar is now used all over the world by my former students. Many excellent GT dissertations have come from these seminars, often done by novices who were incredulous at first and wanting to be told preconceptions on what to do.

Coding

Constant comparative coding of interchangeable indicators often leads to much confusion for novices in the beginning of a research. The cry for help with "Am I doing it right" is strong, which threatens autonomy. Open coding can shock the novice researcher when he discovers that the emergent main concern can be strikingly different than the one he preconceived and especially so if the preconceived one was according to the academic departmental perspective of a field. And the preconceived problems mostly are preconceived since research on the field's academic problem is supposed to contribute to the field. Emergence of the main concern can take the novice into a different field. I have seen this many times. It is to be expected. Staying open with no preconceptions is the procedure that leads to emergence.

For example, studying the risk behavior of steeplejacks turned into a study of voyeurism. Studying the low self-image of prostitutes in a Reno House turned into a study of perfection of service. Studying the career perspectives of financial executives turned into a study of financial crisis survival. Studying the abandonment of family home life in the Height Asbury turned into a study of vaguing out. I could go on with many more examples. Many novices call me with wondering what to do when the emergent problem is so different from the preconceived one. "I am supposed to study XX and it is not there" is their cry for help. The answer to end their confusion is simply to do a theory of "what is there." The answer gives them back their autonomy to study the emergent concerns. Studying what is supposed to be there and was not there threatens their autonomy from superiors who could not tolerate not knowing in advance. To repeat, tolerating confusion and no preconception while waiting for the emergent main concern takes autonomy. Performing the data with standard field jargon to get rid of confusion is a loss of autonomy. It blocks the thrill of discovery that is so exciting to share with others. It blocks autonomy and the surety of generating a contribution to the discovered field. Allowing emergence of a "grabby" main concern and core category confirms the novice's right to his autonomy offered by the GT

methodology. If the novice asks a supervisor who is not GT aware, he is liable to be derailed by another descriptive version of a QDA and lose his autonomy. Keeping autonomous and following GT coding procedures soon results in preconscious generating discovery. So, the novice tolerates with autonomy the coding confusion and patiently engages in the excitement of discovery. The cry for help becomes a cry of excitement over being the sole generator of a discovered theory. Supervisors can no longer undermine the novice's confidence in his autonomy.

The preconscious processing that goes on during constant comparative coding and feels like confusion requires autonomy from others. Otherwise, preconscious processing that yields realizing patterns in the data can easily be snuffed out by preconceived forcing suggested by others who cannot tolerate confusion. This is especially so with senior mentors who cannot tolerate their student's confusion and require it being structured with the perspective demands of a departmental PhD program. Procedures of analysis from other QDA methods that allow pre thought are often used to structure confusion by forcing clarity on it. They are rescue efforts that undermine autonomy from a GT point of view.

Constructive help encourages keeping up comparative coding of interchangeable indicators with patience waiting for emergence of categories. The eureka moment will happen. Pattern emergence is natural and normal. It happens for all of us in every-day normal life all the time. In GT, it is simply seen and tapped as a conceptual procedure to discover what patterns are going on in the data. Confusion should not be seen as ineptness by senior mentors with other methodological perspectives that force data by reporting perspectives to avoid confusion.

The interminable rhetorical wrestle with no solution between multiple versions of GT and QDA methodologies can easily entrap the novice into a loss of GT perspective and into confused perspectives that can result in a loss of grounded autonomy. He will join any perspective to rescue his self-confidence and a bit of autonomy from the wrestle confusion. In any case, the probability is high that he will lose autonomy by commitment to a QDA method that requires forcing categories in lieu of autonomous emergence. Only GT provides the clear autonomy that allows emergence of whatever discovery may emerge, irrespective of whatever version perspectives a QDA may provide beforehand. Self-confidence is required to accept with patience GT autonomy for its no preconception purpose.

I always advise, "Just do it" regarding GT. The rhetorical wrestle will not stop. It is academic life to constantly argue for perspectives one over another; even more as an academic ages. Novices are often forced to adhere to a perspective to be part of an academic department and part of academic life. It takes a lot of self-confidence to ignore these socially structured perspectives and just stay open with autonomy to what GT procedures allow. To choose autonomy in the face of fear of getting no emergent categories takes knowing oneself and liking the autonomy given by GT and following GT procedures and trusting to the coming of the eureka moment that comes with the emergence of the main concern and core category. For help, the novice should trust only an experienced GT mentor. As one student wrote me, "The results are fantastic if GT is used as designed." Then, the novice can glory in his autonomy of contribution and the rhetorical wrestle is

forgotten, as it could not achieve the goal of discovery and contribution of a good product. Preserving the novice's autonomy preserves the general strength of GT procedures used autonomously. The rhetorical wrestle undermines this strength to no advantage in achieving a worthy contribution.

I often receive a copy of a GT PhD dissertation for one or both of two reasons. One is great pride in achieving the PhD with a GT dissertation and two is thanking me for my help along the way. There is a great threat of being required for major revisions to make it consistent with department perspectives and imagery. Thus, I receive a desperate cry for help in dealing with the PhD committee. My success in helping with revisions in this final stage of obtaining the degree is iffy and questionable. The novice's autonomy that got the novice this far can be strongly resented by committee members. Thus, the cry for help can go on and on until the committee signs off to accept the dissertation. Revisions can take months and often need the constant help of experienced GT mentors. During all this, the novice's autonomy is lessened or lost, hopefully just for the time being.

Jargonizing

Jargonizing satisfies to a minor degree the cry for help and preserving the novice's autonomy. It gives a language to the confusing procedures of one's GT research. Thus, the novice can explain what he is doing in the GT research like he knows what he is doing as an autonomous researcher. This jargonizing can go on irrespective of what he is actually doing at whatever stage of the research he is at. In short, he can sound in autonomous control. This jargonizing can make his research autonomy unassailable on the word level. It is only by having his actual procedures exposed that his autonomy can be in question. For example, saying he is theoretically sampling sounds great, but is the novice actually doing it. Solid autonomy comes in action, not words.

As noted grounded theorist Hans Thulesius wrote me, "GT jargon is slowly spreading all over the world in different languages. The spread of doing the method is way behind it and novice oriented questing for action help and assurance is beyond the jargon." Jargoning when used wisely can be very helpful in maintaining autonomy while the actual research progress catches up with action. Often enough, the novice will need a senior mentor to jargonize the PhD committee for patience that an impending dissertation will be a significant contribution. Such polite pleasing jargonizing help by a senior to a committee can be crucial to the novice's finalizing the PhD dissertation with autonomy.

Post PhD

Post PhD can be a very needy time for help to maintain autonomy. The intense priority attention to the novice PhD and his research is over. The PhD returns, in all likelihood, to the mixed methodological and theory perspective of an academic department that can make him feel quite alone. It can be quite demanding on his autonomy to be perpetually in the middle of the rhetorical wrestle with no solution in the offing. The wrestle is perpetual in academia, so his autonomy is subject to the continual stress of no resolution to an unsolvable conflict. One solution is to travel globally to conferences on GT to network and share on the strength and joy of autonomy in research. Skype and email provide the solution to a lesser extent in connecting the lone PhD novice for autonomous strength from

sharing. This networking and regrouping among GT post PhD novices is very important to keep GT going and subsequent research from not slipping back to QDA forcing and thereby losing the autonomy GT provides its next novice dissertation researchers. Networking also helps post PhD depression that comes from being alone with no more intense interest and supervision in one's autonomous work.

Flattery

The introduction to a cry for help for dissertation research is typically some form of flattery to me or a senior mentor. The flattery indicates how important and strong the GT perspective and methodology is for the dissertation research. Novices relate how GT methodology has changed their lives and how it has changed the way they see the world. And then they say they need help with this change in research method perspective. Then the problem is stated typically as a major conflict with supervisor and committee. Of course, there are several resolutions to this conflict. . . . But, simply giving support for the novice's GT perspective helps his confidence and autonomy confirming to supervisors that he has the right to his GT perspective, and he has the right to use GT like so many others have.

The following quote is a typical flattering approach to getting help from some senior mentor (me) unknown to the novice. "Hope this email finds you in good health and spirits. Please allow me to introduce myself first. My name is P and I am a PhD candidate at the University of B in the UK. I admire your work and contribution to the development and contribution of GT to our scientific community. Your work has had tremendous impact on my study and has helped me significantly in my research endeavor." Then comes the cry for help. "However, I am struggling with identifying data to prove the external and internal validity of my concepts. I am aware of the quality and rigor criteria explained in your book, *Theoretical Sensitivity*, but my supervisor disagrees with it and states that I have to use criteria more suitable to the concepts. This disagreement between me and my committee views creates unnecessary tension and confusion in my research journey. Please help."

The issue to explain to the candidate, that is simple enough, is that conflict with committee is very fateful for a PhD candidate and requires help. His autonomy can only go so far with a PhD degree at stake. A super polite request for help is warranted by novices in this conflict with committees and there are many such novices. A little help can go a long way and often saves the academic life and the PhD degree of the novice and preserves his feeling of autonomy.

The novice continues with his cry, "I realize that you are a very busy person but it will help me significantly if you could shed more light on this issue and help me justify my decision to use GT not only with my supervisor, but my committee as well. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you." In short, this novice does not doubt the help will come since the need is so great and crucial. I, and my colleagues, have seen this kind of help in the PhD dissertation defense needed and given many times. And in the bargain, the novices' autonomy is rescued.

Senior mentors can get great satisfaction in continually mentoring a novice PhD candidate who has a good grasp of GT methodology and is on the verge of generating a significant theory contribution to a field. This often happens in the fields of medicine and

management. Mentor satisfaction is to the maximum. These mentors will argue for and stand firm with pride for the novice against a committee and supervisor who challenge a GT with their own QDA perspective or GT version. The committee has the social structural power to demand extensive revisions. Irrespective of outcome, the novice needs continuous mentoring help in this situation. The mentor may easily feel attacked also with his GT perspective at stake. The novice is fortunate to find a mentor who will stick by him during such conflict.

The novice's cry for help does not stop with the awarding of the PhD…. Here suffice to say that the new PhD wanting to continue with GT will need recommendations for jobs, seminar and workshop appearances, and support and help with publications. His autonomy will be lonely without his mentor. His satisfied mentor is the best source of support for these immediate career needs. He may be asked to join a department as a resident GT teacher, which is in deep conflict with departmental perspective. In this case, to tolerate this, his autonomy will be in dire need of support and legitimation from his past PhD mentor who may be at another school.

How Classic Grounded Theorists Teach the Method

Alvita Nathaniel

Contributing Authors in Alphabetical Order: Tom Andrews, Toke Barfod, Ólavur Christiansen, Evelyn Gordon, Markko Hämäläinen, Agnes Higgins, Judith Holton, Tina Johnston, Andy Lowe, Susan Stillman, Odis Simmons, Hans Thulesius, Kara Vander Linden, Helen Scott

Grounded theory upsets PhD students' world view. By the time they reach the classroom to learn grounded theory, research, to them, usually means deductively verifying established propositions. In quantitative research courses, they learned that they must design research that can be objectively judged to be reliable and valid; that research questions and related hypotheses (which remain static throughout a study) must include standardized measurements for strictly defined dependent and independent variables; that the pre-investigation literature review and synthesis must be comprehensive and phenomenon focused; that measurement of concepts must have internal and external validity; that the findings can be verified through replication; that exacting descriptions of sample selection, procedures, and instrumentation must be specified and approved by an ethics committee; and that significant findings are measured by strict statistical benchmarks. Imagine students' confusion when they begin to learn about classic grounded theory, a unique research method of inductive discovery, rather than deductive verification. A method in which the processes are standard, yet fluid; the phenomenon of study is not known beforehand; the sample selection changes as data emerges; the literature review follows data analysis; and the final product is tentative. The rules of quantitative research that they believed were carved in stone simply do not apply to grounded theory. Those of us who teach grounded theory understand that we must help students move toward a different way of thinking about research. I have taught grounded theory to PhD students for many years, with variable results, so I wanted to learn more about how others teach grounded theory. I reached out to expert classic grounded theorists around the globe, who shared their strategies. This paper is not a primer on classic grounded theory. It is simply a synthesis of teaching approaches that these professors and mentors use to guide students as they learn the grounded theory method.

Classic grounded theory is a unique inductive research method with language, rules of rigor, procedures, and a final product that is different from other research methods. It is highly misunderstood. Glaser and Strauss first described the method in the seminal work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967).   Glaser further described and refined the grounded theory method over the intervening years and continues to write prolifically (Glaser, 1965, 1978, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002, rev. 2007, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2019, 1993, 1994, 2017; Glaser & Tarozai, 2007; Holton & Glaser, 2012)

Although grounded theory is one of the most frequently utilized research methods, many novice grounded theorists have struggled to find qualified mentors. A surprising number of universities have no experienced grounded theorists. Institutions often rely on

faculty who may understand the basics of research but are not familiar with the unique and essential aspects of classic grounded theory. I was struck by the magnitude of this problem after a grounded theory workshop at a large national research conference when a professor who taught a PhD-level qualitative research course asked, "But, grounded theory doesn't really have to produce a theory, does it? Can't it consist of a list of themes?" At another research conference I learned that PhD students at a prominent university were assigned to learn the different qualitative methods on their own and teach their classmates about them—truly a blind-leading-the-blind teaching strategy.

Even though grounded theory is elegant (once learned), it requires autonomy, an openness to emergence, and a respect for preconscious processing. Students must be guided. Barney Glaser recognized this problem of mentorless novice grounded theorists. To solve the problem, Glaser conducted small student-centered seminars in the North America, Europe, and Asia for many years. Researchers who attended these seminars are now the leading classic grounded theorists around the globe, some of whom conduct their own grounded theory seminars. This paper presents the teaching strategies of these experienced, multidisciplinary, international classic grounded theorists with one major caveat: while using these strategies, teachers and mentors must guide while strongly supporting students' autonomy.

Starting Out

All contributors to this paper agree that students must prepare by reading very specific primary source texts about grounded theory. Glaser wrote about the constant comparison method in 1964, but the method was first introduced through Glaser and Strauss's publications of the theories *The Social Loss of Dying* (1964), *Temporal Aspects of Dying* (1965b), and *Awareness of Dying* (1965a). After publication of these theories, Glaser and Strauss were asked to describe the research method they used to investigate dying processes in an institutional setting. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was a response to these inquiries. This revolutionary book laid out the foundation of a new, mostly inductive, approach to research. Subsequently, Glaser has written many books and papers further discussing the method. Several remodeled versions of grounded theory have been developed since the publication of *Discovery,* however each version utilizes different language, deviates far from Glaser and Strauss's method, and fails to capture its true essence. Therefore, when preparing for formal learning sessions, grounded theory students should begin by reading Glaser and Strauss's *Discovery of Grounded Theory* or Glaser's subsequent works, chiefly *Theoretical Sensitivity* (1978) and *Doing Grounded Theory* (1998). Students, especially in academic settings, may also be asked to read published theories developed via the classic method prior to teaching sessions. Excellent examples of classic theory studies can be found in the online *Grounded Theory Review* or in grounded theory readers (Glaser, 1993, 1994; Holton & Glaser, 2012). Because it is confusing and can contaminate the research processes, students are discouraged from reading remodeled forms of grounded theory such those by Strauss and Corbin or Charmaz and research papers utilizing those methods. Students should also be discouraged from reading secondary sources prior to beginning their research projects.

Atmosphering

Barney Glaser's three-day intensive seminars always began with what he called, *atmosphering,* in which a comfortably dressed Glaser created an informal tone. Having attended a number of Glaser's seminars, Gynnild (2011) concluded that atmosphering is a conscious teaching act aimed at elevating participants' conceptual discovery through a set of "deliberate, sequentially spread actions" (p. 31). Further, through comparison of data from nearly a dozen troubleshooting seminars over a five-year period, Gynnild proposes that Glaser's use of atmosphering for conceptual discovery "refers to a holistic, experiential, exploratory, and yet grounded mentoring approach to the generation of new theory" (p. 32). Troubleshooting seminars were always conducted in a comfortable space where Glaser, seminar participants (troubleshootees), observers, and experienced grounded theorists (troubleshooters), sat at tables arranged in a circle. The atmosphere Glaser created was one of intimacy, safety, collegiality and occasionally "good vibes through playfulness" as noted by Gynnild. Participants were required to bring samples of their initial research data. Seminars were limited to 12 to 15 PhD candidates of various disciplines from around the globe. Seminars usually included participants from several continents with varied disciplines including nurses, physicians, mathematicians, sociologists, therapists, entrepreneurs, social workers, managers, teachers, journalists, and many others.

Judith Holton, who first met Glaser at one of his seminars in Sweden in 2003, has written about teaching and using classic grounded theory. She notes that Glaser began each seminar by emphasizing its pedagogy, which is grounded in the four basic principles of cognitive stripping, seed planting, preconscious processing, and realization (Holton, 2019). *Cognitive stripping* results in a disruption or dislodging of preconceptions, which enables emergence. *Seed planting* sets the stage for seminar participants to have later emergent realization, raising the potential for originality in emergent grounded theories. Glaser suggests the importance of *preconscious processing*, by which ideas "cook" somewhere beneath conscious thought—a natural process that speeds analysis. He calls grounded theory a delayed action phenomenon by which significant theoretical *realization* come with "growth and maturity in the data, and much of this outside of the analyst's awareness until it happens" (1978, p. 18). Holton suggests that realization seldom occurred at the seminars but was aided by the cognitive stripping and seed planting that did occur there.

Relying on a few handwritten notes in the seminars, Glaser introduced grounded theory. He shared established grounded theories in a way that allowed participants to understand that important patterns emerge from inductive data gathering. As they shared their budding research, participants, with seemingly little in common, became quickly and intensely engaged in the research interest of other participants, regardless of discipline. There seemed to be no professional competition or one-upmanship as is often the case in professional and academic institutions. An excitement about the possibilities of grounded theories created instant connections among participants. A Finnish entrepreneur student might become intensely engaged in discussions with an Australian midwife, an American mathematician, or a Filipino physician. It was exciting to see a group of disparate people eating dinner together or sitting around a fire and talking in an animated way about their research interests. By the end of the seminars, participants were energized and excited to begin their own grounded theory studies. Foster Fei was so interested in grounded theory

after his first seminar, for example, that he returned home and translated Glaser's *Basics of Grounded Theory* into Mandarin in 2009 and likewise, seminar attendee, Hans Thulesius, translated *Doing Grounded Theory* into Swedish in 2010.

The grounded theorists who contributed to this paper teach grounded theory in different venues. Tom Andrews and Helen Scott, for example, conduct short seminars similar to those of Glaser, as do Markko Hämäläinen, Judith Holton, and others. Andy Lowe, on the other hand, co-teaches a five-day course designed to help PhD researchers choose the research method most relevant to their own research interests. PhD physicians, Hans Thulesius and Toke Barfod, mentor medical students. A champion of atmosphering, Barfod meets with students in his home and discusses their research as they enjoy a cup of tea or glass of wine—pure atmosphering! Other contributors to this paper have taught grounded theory in academic settings, sometimes as part of integrated qualitative research courses. Regardless of the setting or type of students, all adopt a casual, student-centered approach while tailoring their teaching to the type of students.

Class sessions, even at the university level, are generally conducted as informal lectures, seminars and discussion. Slides, when used in a classroom setting, offer explanatory illustrations or jumping off points for discussion. For example, Andrews starts with examples in nature such as footprints in the snow. He moves to animal behavior and then human behavior and asks students summarize in a couple of words what they are picking up. Students are surprised to learn that what they are doing is a form of coding and that pattern identification and theorizing is a natural human process. Markko Hamalaien distributes envelopes with randomly selected comic frames of Donald Duck. With these, he gives participants different progressive tasks such as comparing and finding similarities, open coding, selective coding, memoing, and writing theoretical codes. Students learn various grounded theory procedures via this fun exercise. Thulesius connects with medical students by drawing comparisons to medical diagnoses. He explains that diagnoses are conceptual labels for what is going on in a person's body. Based on observations from many people across time, each diagnosis is a label (concept) that identifies a unique cluster of signs and symptoms (indicators) and a predictable course (pattern) over time. Thulesius uses this illustration as a comparison with grounded theories, which employ conceptual labels for what is going on at the social, rather than physical level. When introducing grounded theory, Stillman uses a combination of basic concepts, practice in class, and personal stories. She encourages optimism that following a strict process, students, themselves, could become classical grounded theorists. Regardless of the setting, atmosphering culminates in exchanges of ideas that give students a glimpse of a research process that, as Stillman expresses, can be life changing.

Teaching grounded theory to PhD nursing students in the academic setting, I often begin the first session with informal introductions and general conversation. While seeming to casually chat with a student seated beside me, I casually ask, "Have you ever had a troubling experience in nursing?" Invariably, the student will begin to talk about a troubling patient care situation. Other students begin to turn to our conversation and join in. Someone will say, "I will never forget…." and begin a heart-rending story about an experience. All in the room struggle for an opening to tell their stories. Or I might ask, "Did you ever sense that a patient's condition was deteriorating, but could not convince the

physician?" This, too, has happened to most nurses—and was identified as a basic social process in Andrews' theory of *Making Credible: A Grounded Theory of How Nurses Detect and Report Physiological Deterioration in Acutely Ill Patients* (2003). After a few minutes, I tell them that their experiences fit in with the theories of moral distress in nursing or making credible. Through their conversation, they have demonstrated the practical essence of theory grounded in the real-life experiences of people like themselves. Students are entranced by theories such as these that have personal meaning to them. These theories have what Glaser terms "grab." Once students have experienced the truth value of specific theories, they are eager to learn the grounded theory process.

Distinguishing Classic Grounded Theory from Other Methods

Early in the teaching/learning process, classic grounded theory must be distinguished from other research methods. Grounded theory is mostly inductive and is conceptual, rather than descriptive. As Odis Simmons, Andy Lowe, and Ólavur Christiansen point out, the very purpose of classic grounded theory differs from other methods. Whereas positivistic research seeks to confirm or reject propositions through deduction and qualitative methods might seek to describe phenomena in depth through thick description, the purpose of classic grounded theory is to conceptualize what is going on in people's lives—from their own perspectives—and to propose theories that can explain and predict processes. Christiansen articulates a common theme among contributing authors—that a hallmark of classic grounded theory is a researcher's openness that allows patterns to emerge from the systematic treatment of the data, recognizing that preconceived professional interests ultimately mask what is actually going on in the field of study. Further, Christiansen states that classic grounded theory is "normally unfit for use when the research question is preconceived—as it is in most cases."

Some students are confused by remodeled versions of grounded theory. In 1990, Strauss and Corbin wrote *Basics of Qualitative Research,* which proposed a form of grounded theory that deviated substantially from classic grounded theory, both in language and process. So different, in fact, that Glaser refers to this version as qualitative data analysis (QDA), rather than grounded theory. Another remodeling of classic grounded theory was Charmaz's (2000, 2014) constructivist approach, deviating both the spirit and language from the classic method. Students must understand they cannot maintain research integrity if they mix classic grounded theory with the philosophical assumptions, language, aims, or procedures of remodeled versions. Qualitative research textbooks often present a selected version of grounded theory or a messy amalgamation of classic with remodeled versions. Therefore, students should also be wary of secondary sources.

Resolving Misconceptions

Misconceptions should also be resolved before students move forward with research. Students must be acutely aware that classic grounded theory prohibits forcing *a priori* concepts derived from a particular paradigm into a grounded theory. First, there is a common misconception that symbolic interaction is the philosophical foundation of grounded theory. Neither Glaser and Strauss in 1967 nor subsequently Glaser (1965, 1978, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2002a, 2005a, 2005b) suggested that symbolic interactionism was the

philosophical foundation of classic grounded theory. Knowing exactly how the method was first developed, and impatient with what he considers an the "rhetorical wrestle," Glaser views grounded theory as an aphilosophical method. However, symbolic interactionism or any other ideology, he admits, can be a sensitizing agent if the researcher wishes. Holton and Walsh (2017), for example, conduct classic grounded theory studies through the lens of critical realism because they consider themselves critical realists. Another possibility is for students to rely on a philosophy of science, which does not distort emerging theories nor does it force an ideological paradigm on the research. For example, George Sanders' Peirce's original version of pragmatism offers a philosophy of science compatible with the epistemology and ontology of classic grounded theory without forcing unnecessary and incompatible dogmatic layers over the research process and product (Nathaniel, 2011). If the university requires inclusion of a philosophical foundation in students' theses or dissertations, professors and mentors should encourage students to select a philosophical foundation compatible with their own personal ontology, as in the case of Holton and Walsh, or one that fits grounded theory discovery within a philosophy of science.

A second misconception is that classic grounded theory is strictly a qualitative method. Glaser refers to grounded theory as a general method that can be used with different types of data. While most grounded theories are, indeed, conducted with qualitative data, the method may also be used with quantitative data. Students interested in quantitative grounded theory should read Glaser's *Doing Quantitative Grounded Theory* (2008).

Ensuring Common Language

Classic grounded theory has its own language. All contributors to this paper acknowledge that students must be introduced to grounded theory language and each term must be clearly explained, early on, so students can better understand their readings and teachers and students will be using a common language. Specific terms that have somewhat unique usage in the method require careful definition. Terms and phrases in grounded theory that are either unique to the method, likely misunderstood, or defined in a way that varies from common language include the following: category; core category; indicator; interchangeability of indicators; fracturing of data; constant comparison; memoing; emergence; fit, work, relevance, and modifiability (measures of rigor); substantive codes; theoretical codes; theoretical sampling: basic psychosocial processes; basic social-structural processes; tentative hypotheses; and others. Definitions for these terms, which are not necessarily self-explanatory, can be found in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and *Theoretical Sensitivity* (Glaser, 1978).

Interactive Teaching

Glaser is a master at interactive teaching. His grounded theory seminars were restricted to PhD candidates, who distributed and presented excerpts of their work during the seminar. The work students presented included thesis/dissertation proposals, raw data from interviews, memos, or emerging theories—at any stage of the thesis/dissertation process. Glaser, troubleshooters, and other participants discussed each person's work— assisting with conceptualizing, coding, and theorizing. Reflecting on this method of

teaching, Andrews says, "instruction in research should be experienced and not simply read from a book or taught through lectures only."

Although their approaches are varied, all contributors to this paper utilize active learning strategies similar to Glaser's, recognizing that students learn best by doing. Tina Johnston, a mathematics educator, developed a "nested strategy" of teaching by which she utilizes students' data or theories in progress; encourages small groups coding of data and memoing; clarifies misconceptions; codes along with students; and concludes with reflection. In the informal setting of his home, Barfod encourages medical students to discuss their work during which he interjects explanation when needed. Andy Lowe, on the other hand, distributes to management research students a 10-page syndicate exercise. The students work in small groups, using the raw data to discover substantive and emergent theoretical codes and to create memos. Lowe asks students to identify the main conceptual issues. This demonstrates how to move beyond narrative description toward conceptualization. Further, Lowe asks students to highlight the main conceptual issues that should be followed in future participant encounters—thus moving them toward theoretical sampling.

Reading and coding raw data is an excellent exercise to help students begin skill development. Higgins provides extracts of field notes she has written for students to code. Like many others contributing to this paper, Simmons, begins exercises with others' data. I present nursing students with excerpts from publicly available online blogs written by people with panic disorder—a dramatic way to grab students' attention. As Higgins points out, providing examples that have application to practice is helpful. Whether students have raw data, field notes, or excerpts, they are instructed to code the data line by line and to attempt to elevate their codes to the conceptual level, comparing one interview or field note with others, thus beginning to learn the constant comparative method. Simmons comments that students get excited when they identify and name their first concept. His students share their work and help each other between classes—enhancing everyone's skills and theoretical sensitivity. All agree that students very much enjoy this approach.

To enhance students' theoretical sensitivity, Simmons, Higgens, Barfod, Stillman, and other contributors assign students to read some published classical grounded theories such as those in Glaser's grounded theory readers or (instructor approved) completed theses or dissertations. The authors of published papers may present theories in a way that is not obvious to novice readers, for example, authors seldom, if ever, label the parts of the theory. They might not explicitly identify the concepts, nor identify them as substantive or theoretical. This gives teachers an opportunity to demonstrate how to identify the concepts, theoretical codes, tentative hypotheses, and most important—the core category. For example, the teacher might say something like, "This theory has three stages and a cutting point. Each stage has four properties. Let's identify the three stages, the major properties of each, and the cutting point."

Teaching Emergence

Emergence is a pillar of classic grounded theory that requires skill and vigilance. Everything emerges. The researcher cannot know beforehand what the theory will entail.

Emergence requires student autonomy and a very specific set of circumstances.

First, emergence requires that students are as free as possible from preconception, which can come from many sources including personal beliefs, professional dogma, forced ideology, or immersion in the literature surrounding the substantive area. Since preconceptions are often subconscious, Kara Vander Linden guards against preconceptions by organizing students in interdisciplinary groups. The groups discuss each student's data. As the students from different disciplines listen, they can easily identify the preconceptions of those in other disciplines.

Second, as Simmons comments, to allow for emergence, the research question must be broad enough to permit unexpected changes in direction. Unlike in quantitative research proposals, those wishing to properly conduct grounded theory studies cannot stipulate beforehand the dependent, independent, intervening, or any other variables or their relationships, because, as Simmons points out, grounded theory is not about what is relevant to the researcher, but to the people in the research area. Grounded theory is about categorizing patterns of behavior. Thus, the student must be careful to choose the correct sample. Since the theorist seeks to understand what is going on with a group of people, he or she will focus attention on that specific group. For example, the student who wishes to learn about the transition from freedom to prison should interview prisoners, not prison guards. Therefore, the teacher should guide students to craft grounded theory research questions that specify the sample population but allow for emergence. Good research questions for a grounded theory study might be so broad as to include language that asks simply 1) what is going on in a sample population, or 2) what is the main concern and how is it continually resolved in the sample population. These types of research questions allow for rich participant-driven data that can uncover previously unidentified processes.

Third, the spill question must strike at an area of relevance for participants without introducing researcher bias. Grounded theory seeks to conceptualize the problem as experienced and perceived by the participant, so it must be a problem for that person. The researcher chooses the substantive area and sample population and allows the main concern to emerge from the investigation. Few participants will have much to say in response to a problem that they do not perceive as a concern. For example, Amélia Didier, a PhD candidate in nursing at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland, focused her research on interdisciplinary collaborative care teams in hospitals. When she began to interview hospital patients, she found that they had little interest or knowledge about interdisciplinary care teams. Whether or not a collaborative process took place in the interdisciplinary team was not a main concern of the patients and they had little to say about it. Patients' main concern was simply to receive good care and they had plenty to say about that. So, if participants seem confused by the question or have little to say in response, the student should reconsider the initial interview question that will encourage participants to talk about their own main concern.

Students should understand that crafting the spill question requires avoiding false assumptions that will derail the theory. The student should not assume, for example, that a parent loves a child, an alcoholic wishes to be sober, or a middle manager wishes to advance in the organization. Perhaps a parent despises his special needs child, an alcoholic

enjoys drinking, or the middle manager is comfortable in his position. If the posed question assumes a falsehood, spill cannot occur.

The interview question should consist of common language appropriate to participants' education and cultural group and be as free as possible from connotations that confuse meaning. Many terms in the common language have contradictory meanings and are easily misunderstood. On the other hand, the student should avoid professional jargon. Participants cannot meaningfully answer a question they do not understand. A good question should be clearly stated, simple, and free from confusing connotations.

Conducting an interview with one open-ended question is not easy. Before actually beginning the research process, I ask students to compose a grand tour or spill question and interview one person in their substantive area of research interest. Similarly, Andrews asks students to interview each other about an innocuous topic such as being a PhD student. He emphasizes that the interviewer's main job is to listen and follow leads. According to Andrews, this introduces students to conducting interviews without an interview guide or list of questions. This method helps students to begin thinking about writing field notes, rather than recording interviews.

Students should begin each interview with an open, non-judgmental question that encourages participants to tell their own stories. The question can begin with the words, "Tell me about…." or "What was it like when…." If the participant is comfortable, the story will flow. Unless it is culturally inappropriate, the student should make good eye contact and listen carefully without worrying about the next question. If the narrative stalls, the student can encourage the participant to continue by using statements such as, "Go on," "Tell me more about that," and so forth. Even though silence is difficult for novices, gaps in the narrative and periods of silence allow the participant to gather thoughts and give the impression that the student believes the story is worth waiting for.

Analysis

Analysis is an iterative process that begins with preconscious processing and includes writing field notes, coding the raw data word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence, fracturing the data through constant comparison, identifying incidents that indicate a concept, writing memos focusing on concepts and their indicators, recognizing the relationship between concepts, theoretical sampling, and sorting memos to complete a theory. Students worry that they will never reach this place. Gordon lets students know up front that the grounded theory process is iterative, and they should stay with it to allow concepts and their relationships to emerge. The key process, one that is difficult for students, is conceptualizing.

Conceptualizing. Christiansen describes conceptualization as the transformation of data such as pure descriptions or storytelling to substantive concepts and theoretical codes that explain what is going on in the recurrent solving of a main concern. Simmons tells students that a concept is merely a word or short phrase that does not interpret or add meaning to a pattern. Since most grounded theories revolve around a process, many concepts are verbs—often gerunds. All contributors to this paper teach students the value of finding gerunds to indicate a concept. Lowe teaches students that gerunding (see how it

works, Lowe created a gerund from the word *gerund*) consists of transforming the emerging code from a noun to a verb. He cites Chrisiansen's concept of making the most of opportunities--*opportunizing*. Once a concept is gerunded, it is much easier to investigate the dynamics. Again, citing Christiansen, Lowe offers that there might be several different categories of opportunizing such as perpetual, spasmodic, incremental, active, passive, and so forth. As data is analyzed categories and their indicators, dimensions, and properties will begin to emerge.

Lowe makes a point to ask students to clearly discriminate between data and conjecture from data and to identify different types of interview data. For example, baseline data is totally reliable and free from manipulation. Grounded theorists accept the truthfulness of the person being interviewed when baseline data is identified. Properline data, on the other hand, consists of institutionalization of fiction as a means of perpetuating reality. For example, a college Dean might recite the mission of the department in answer to a personal interview question. Vague data is a result of the participant being vague or economical with the truth, whereas interpreted data occurs when participants tells the interviewer what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Higgins reminds us about a lesson she learned from Glaser—to also code for what was not said, or code for absence.

Similar to other contributors to this paper, Lowe instructs students to very carefully read every sentence in the raw data, highlighting anything that might have the potential to reveal the latent patterns of the main concerns of the participants. He instructs students to fracture the data by breaking it up into logical categories and to analyze the cutting points such as when it begins and when it ends, what triggers it to begin or end, or what are the causes and consequences. Lowe also articulates what all classic grounded theorists understand—the interplay between substantive and theoretical codes. Theoretical codes conceptualize how substantive codes relate to each other, creating modeled, interrelated, multivariate hypotheses that account for resolving the participants' main concern. Lowe calls this procedure "tricky and often illusory" and warns that the student (and teacher) must be patient and not force them. After practicing selective coding and theoretical sampling, Simmons notes that students become familiar with Glaser's theoretical coding families as listed in *Theoretical* Sensitivity, by choosing ones that work by comparing, relating and fragmenting their memos into theoretical code categories. I often use a slide to demonstrate how the grounded theory process builds from the ground up and culminates in a set of interrelated tentative hypotheses. Hypotheses consist of concepts connected by theoretical codes (this comes before that, this causes that, and so forth) and theory consists of interrelated hypotheses. Simmons points out that the outline and memos students generate from the process will organize the write-up of the theory.

Delimiting. Good grounded theories are parsimonious. A solid classic grounded theory does not consist of thick description and is never a "theory of everything." Christiansen reminds us that instead of rejecting hypotheses by testing, generated theories are recurrently modified in order obtain better conceptual fit to what the data relate about the main concern of the participants being studied, and its recurrent solving. The core category is not merely the most pronounced concept, rather it sums up and explains the recurrent solving of participants main concern—what drives and directs participants' behavior as they repeatedly solve their main concern. For example, nurses whose main

concern involves being forced to participate in actions that violate their own personal values solve the problem through a lifetime of reckoning their decisions and actions. Thus, moral reckoning is the core category. Christiansen also notes that when the core category has been found, the rest of the study is ultimately delimited to what is most related to the core category. Anything that is not related is left out of the theory.

Memoing. Memoing is one of the most important processes of grounded theory, yet students find it difficult. Let's go back to the source to find out what Glaser has to say about memoing in *Theoretical Sensitivity* (1978). Memos focus on concepts. According to Glaser, "Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding. Memos lead naturally to abstraction or ideation. Memoing is a constant process that begins when first coding data, and continues through reading memos or literature, sorting and writing papers or monographs to the very end. Memo-writing continually captures the 'frontier of the analyst's thinking' as he goes through either his data, codes, sorts, or writes" (p. 83).   Glaser suggests that the grounded theorist should stop immediately and memo when ideas are sparked, regardless of what it interrupts. He lists four basic goals of memoing 1) to theoretically develop *ideas* (codes), 2) with complete *freedom* into a 3) *memo fund* that is 4) highly *sortable.* In terms of *ideas*, Glaser notes that a memo can be a sentence, a paragraph, or a few pages that exhausts the analyst's momentary ideation based on data—with "perhaps a little conceptual elaboration," but no logical elaboration (p. 84). Memos are aimed toward *ideas* that raise "description to a theoretical level through the conceptual rending of the material" (p. 84). Codes conceptualize the data, while memos serve as a means of "revealing and relating by theoretically coding the *properties* of the substantive codes" (p. 84). When he speaks of *freedom* Glaser gives the grounded theorists permission to write without constraints of proper rules of writing, claiming that "proper writing tends to freeze theoretical renditions prematurely" (p. 85). This freedom allows the analyst to work faster by communicating ideas without having to think about precious writing rules. When teachers have access to students' memos, they should remember Glaser's advice about memo writing. Glaser suggests that a large *memo fund* should consist of all memos and writings from the grounded theory study. In addition to building the theory, these memos can yield many lectures, papers, and books. For example, Glaser and Strauss's initial study of dying processes in the hospital setting yielded several monographs that continue to be relevant in today's health care environment. The final write-up of a grounded theory is usually done through an extensive process of memo *sorting*. Sorting requires a cognitive process that allows for emergent meanings that cannot be known beforehand. Therefore, sorting cannot be done via electronic programs. Glaser suggests that each memo should be introduced by a title which indicates the category or property it is about. In addition, any other concepts or theoretical relationships mentioned in a memo should be highlighted to make sorting more efficient.

Contributing authors offered a few strategies they use when teaching about memos. Johnston stresses to students that coding is not what we use to form theories—but memos are. Simmons and Gordon ask students to practice memoing. Simmons asks students to write some practice memos, which consist of concepts and the relationships between them, stressing that memos are not mere descriptive summaries of the data. Working with students that are farther along in the process, Gordon asks students to practice sorting,

organizing and re-organizing theoretical memos to build a core category. Lowe offers students a structure for memos, which includes the title of the memo, a summary of substantive issues and their properties that are embedded in the text, substantive categories, conceptual indicators, emergent theoretical issues, issues to be clarified in future interviews, initial conjectures not based on data, and links with this memo and other memos. As Johnston suggests, a grounded theory emerges when well-written memos are properly sorted, highlighting theoretical relationships among concepts and categories.

Conclusion

While grounded theory is one of the most frequently used methods of research, teachers must use careful strategies to help students maintain integrity of their resultant theories. Classic grounded theory has unique language, criteria for rigor, and procedures that are inviolate and cannot be mixed with other iterations of grounded theory. Classic grounded theory is paradoxically simple, yet complex. Teaching strategies as demonstrated by Glaser, himself, and communicated by expert grounded theorists can assist teachers to help students understand the basic principles and procedures of the method.

Contributors

Many thanks to the following grounded theory contributing authors:

Tom Andrews, PhD; Lecturer, Retired, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork, Ireland

Toke Barfod, MD, PhD; Associate Professor of Medicine, Zealand University Hospital, Denmark

Ólavur Christiansen, PhD; Associate Professor University of the Faroe Islands and General Secretary of the Economic Council of the Faroe Islands

Evelyn Gordon, PhD; Assistant Professor in Psychotherapy and Chair of Doctorate Programme in Psychotherapy, Post Graduate Research Convenor, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy & Community Health, Dublin City University, Ireland

Markko Hämäläinen, PhD; Entrepreneurship Researcher and Grounded Theorists, Visiting Scholar, Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, Aalto University, Finland

Agnes Higgins, PhD; MSc, BNS; Professor of Mental Health Nursing, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Judith Holton, PhD; Discipline—Business Management; Associate Professor & Department Head, Commerce, Mount Allison University, Canada

Tina L Johnston, PhD, Mathematics Education, Oregon, USA.

Andy Lowe, PhD; Grounded theory practitioner in any context; Visiting professor at Aalborg University Denmark; UK citizen currently residing in Bangkok, Thailand

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD; Professor Emerita, School of Nursing, West Virginia University, USA

Susan Stillman, EdD; Emeritus Director of Education Global Office, at Six Seconds, The Emotional Intelligence Network, USA

Odis Simmons, PhD; Discipline—Sociology, University Professor, retired; USA

Hans Thulesius, MD, PhD; Professor of Family Medicine, Linaeus and Lund Universities, Sweden

Kara Vander Linden, EdD; Discipline—Education, Social Sciences, Integrative Medicine and Health Sciences; Research Faculty, Saybrook University, USA

Helen Scott, PhD; Research Consultant, Grounded Theory Online, UK

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Teaching Qualitative Research: Versions of Grounded Theory

Andrew P. Carlin, University of Macau

Younhee H. Kim, University of Macau

Abstract

This paper concerns the teaching and iteration of Grounded Theory, taking published accounts referring to Grounded Theory as instructional materials on the workings of Grounded Theory. The paper identifies problems associated with later versions of Grounded Theory that are anticipated and avoided in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It alerts practitioners and students to theoretical options in doing research. Based on a critical incident analysis of literatures as 'fieldwork sites', looking at information science and dentistry research, this paper discusses iterations of qualitative research – particularly, what we call the versioning of Grounded Theory – in clinical settings and interdisciplinary studies. Reading accounts of qualitative studies revealed misapprehensions regarding the use of qualitative methods. Critical reading facilitates the examination of analytic claims, to alert researchers in interdisciplinary fields to adverse consequences of using inferior accounts.

Keywords: Cumulation Problem, Grounded Theory, Qualitative Research, Research Evaluation, Thematic Analysis, Theoretical Imperialism

Introduction

This paper seeks to contribute to an important thread in this journal (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Evans, 2013; O'Connor, Carpenter & Coughlan, 2018), continuing a focus on readers and the communication of qualitative research methodologies. The origins of this paper are located in the authors' shared concerns with children's storytelling practices, and their disillusion with thematic analysis as a methodologically adequate means to study how accounts are produced within interaction. In terms of research design, the use of thematic analysis (e.g. Jones & Argentino, 2010; Nelson et al., 2008; Ross & Green, 2011) produces studies that are about analysts' research decisions rather than people's orientations to stories; and is reductionist by treating stories as simplistic conduits for information on topics for operationalization. The current authors' specific interest in stories (Carlin, 2009; Kim, 2016, 2019), and finding extant analyses of stories to be wanting of phenomenological integrity, led to a broader consideration of accounts of research methods.

The authors of this paper are interested in qualitative research, and the utility of qualitative research methods for education, linguistics, logistics, the study of second language acquisition, urban studies and the analysis of public space. Therefore, the authors seek to engage with accounts of qualitative research in various fields. Further, as teachers of qualitative research, the authors have been struck by students' uncritical acceptance of accounts of qualitative methods in different fields. Thus, while the pool of discipline-specific, relevant and student-friendly materials has increased (Davis 1995; Hadley 2017), our arguments complement teaching and learning arguments that distinguish between "downloading information" (Brabazon 2007, p. 99) – having materials available – from the effort of reading original sources and interpretations. In this paper, the authors draw upon their engagement with information science

and education in various professional environments, including clinical settings, to consider the presentation of qualitative research in general, and the use of recent versions of Grounded Theory (GT) within these fields.

Publication of studies in professional journals confers tutorial status, or authority, on accounts of research paradigms and research methods which, even mediated by peer-reviewed journals available through bibliographic databases hosted by institutional libraries to ensure quality, may not be completely warranted. Readers may take published studies as credible, pedagogic materials; as formative accounts of research methods for use in their own projects. Accordingly, their education about these methods, and the qualitative evidence-base, are compromised when inferior accounts or incomplete methods are not challenged. For educators, this trend is "worrisome" (Glaser, 2002, p. 1) and an "abiding concern" (Glaser, 2002, p. 1).

As a conceptual discussion of qualitative research – and GT in particular – this paper considers the 'versioning' of GT, i.e. the application of variant iterations of GT that have been noted to impact upon inquiries in different ways; and how this finds expression through 'the cumulation problem', 'theoretical imperialism', and the 'tutorial' (or pedagogic) status of published accounts of GT, that are reliant on later versions.

The authors of this paper suggest that recent iterations of GT neglect important aspects of the original formulation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), such as the connection between library research and sociological research; as a result, subsequent iterations of GT are less radical for doing sociological inquiry. The tutorial status of recent accounts of GT displaces research effort to return to the original formulation of GT, which remains unaffected by issues of cumulation or theoretical imperialism.

As suggested in further detail below, the cumulation problem was anticipated in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in the improper or incomplete application of GT to sets of data. When steps are missed in the development of GT, the potential for making a contribution to theory-building is reduced. The cumulation problem – when outcomes of studies remain unattached to bodies of research – is avoidable by following the guidance for doing qualitative research in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*; however, as suggested elsewhere (Glaser, 1998), it is an attendant risk for researchers who are reliant on subsequent iterations.

Similarly, "theoretical imperialism" (Schegloff, 1997, p. 167) is an issue that results from the use of more recent versions of GT, and it is strongly associated with a piecemeal approach to the procedures of GT as set out by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Theoretical imperialism is an analytically imposed reconstruction of the procedures of a setting, insufficiently sensitive to the understandings of a setting's participants, and importantly is at variance with the admonitions for doing qualitative research as set out in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*.

Both theoretical imperialism and the cumulation problem are avoidable if researchers follow the procedures of doing qualitative research contained in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. In particular, these issues relate to 'desk research', which was discussed in the original formulation[1] but does not receive the same prominence in subsequent iterations. The library research – fieldwork connection within the original (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is of such importance that Barry Glassner (1980, pp. 41-56, 152-156) used "literature sites" as an organizing principle for his own monograph treatment.

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[1] See "Part II: The Flexible Use of Data", especially "Chapter VII, New Sources for Qualitative Data".

Borrowing Glassner's nomenclature, this paper proceeds to look at discipline-specific uses of qualitative research – including the salience of the 'versioning' of GT – in clinical settings and in information science.

Literature as Fieldwork Sites: Information Science

Articles intended to surface 'qualitative' research methods, to bring qualitative methods to the attention of wider disciplinary areas, tend to gloss over organizing principles in the philosophy of research. The authors of this paper were alerted to this during projects in information science. Information science is a perspicuous setting for considering the nature and profiles of paradigms and interdisciplinary commitments: an important paper (Cronin 2008) highlighted the contribution of sociological work within a field that was resistant to sociological approaches – for information science, sociology represented a 'paradigm' in itself, sociology was one paradigm among several, e.g. 'cognitive', 'behavioural', 'neuroscientific', 'psychoanalytic' (Hjørland 2002), and information science did not distinguish between the competing paradigms that constitute organizing devices within sociology. For instance, in trying to formulate another paradigm for information science – 'socio-cognitivism' – Hjørland (2002) glosses over the cognitivism immanent within sociological work that is incorporated into information science. For the practical purposes of teaching and learning sociology, 'quantitative methods' and 'qualitative methods' are recognized to depend upon distinct paradigmatic bases; yet, such recognition does not account for different paradigmatic bases that may draw upon qualitative research (Murdoch, 2013).

Yet, what Glaser (2002, p. 1) noted as "worrisome" extended from the philosophy of research into the use of particular methods. Blaise Cronin (2008) importantly highlighted the 'turn' towards sociological forms of inquiry and their interdisciplinary potential; unfortunately, and significantly, Cronin's celebration of sociology's contributions to and potentialities for interdisciplinary inquiries was to be deflated by the variable application of sociological work. For example, in attempts by Elfreda A. Chatman to introduce sociological work as relevant to information science, that were based upon distortions of the internal debates within sociology (Carlin, 2003).

In a similar manner, the review article that averts "Qualitative research, is, of course, the basic alternative to quantitative research" (Powell, 1999, p. 102) – this broad claim misses the nuances of the philosophy of research and the linguistic bases of both 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' forms of research (Rose, 1960). When a renowned instantiation of 'quantitative methods' in sociology (Downey, 1967) is examined, the author complains of the "folk parlance" (Downey, 1967, p. 49) of categories. However, in the attempt to operationalize these folk categories in terms of "the typical language used by professionals" (Downey, 1967, p. 49), the work involved is not 'quantitative' but requires the use of natural language activities to organize the work and to re-describe 'folk' categories as 'professional' categories in order to be seen as recognizably 'quantitative'.

That being so, we can see 'quantitative' research as necessarily requiring 'qualitative' research, as a ubiquitous feature of its own quantification practices. The practicalities of published accounts of 'quantitative' research, the presentation of 'quantitative' research and setting up the logics of operationalism, implicates phenomena that would be topics for 'qualitative' research – the broad gloss provided by Powell (1999) does not account for the instability of the qualitative/quantitative dualism. In any case, "the distinction usually drawn between qualitative and quantitative data [is . . .] useless for the generation of theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 9).

Nevertheless, while qualitative research was gaining a higher profile within information science, as documented in and by dedicated monographs and collections (Glazier & Powell, 1992;

Gorman & Clayton, 1997; Mellon, 1990), the coverage of qualitative methods conformed to such paradigmatic bases.

Within information science, the authors found the use of GT to be rather arbitrary, with inconsistent levels of application. Some accounts of GT are more adequate (Attfield & Dowell 2003) than others; and GT provided the methodological approach for one of the classic studies in Library & Information Science (Mellon 1986), through which the library-specific concept of "Library Anxiety" was identified. Mellon's original study was accorded classic status and admitted to the canon of LIS research through the process of a systematic review (Bailey, 2008), evaluating its usefulness for future inquiries, and through its inclusion in the 75th anniversary issue of *College & Research Libraries* as one of its classic papers (Mellon, 2015):

> Mellon's article was chosen as one of the seven most important in the 75-year history of *College & Research Libraries* because it made 'library anxiety,' a phenomenon observed by practitioners, official and uncovered its origins. The article also legitimized the use of qualitative research methods by giving grounded theory wide recognition in a premier journal. (Gremmels, 2015, p. 268)

However, some accounts of GT are heavily dependent on quotations from prior accounts (Westbrook 1994); or contain a perfunctory description of GT method and display a reliance on secondary literature (Talip 2015), of the "worrisome" variety. There is contempt for the discipline-specific origins of GT for interdisciplinary studies (Seldén 2005); and, following the thread of this journal, the conflation of versions of GT (e.g. 'classic' and 'constructivist'), of not seeing these as different (Mansourian, 2006) – nor, concomitantly, seeing the differences as problematic, or having implications for the use of GT in information science inquiries. Such accounts contrast with a paper (Star 1998) that aligns core principles of GT (constant comparison and constant iteration) with core competencies of information work (classification and its practices).

The authors of this paper see that the reductive cast of adopting disjunctive versions of GT continues in information science, as a recent study (Hicks, 2018) endorses constructivist GT for the very reasons that constructivist GT should be approached with caution: namely, its aprioristic and ideologically-driven approach to GT – attaching theoretical commitments to GT, such as positional reflexivity based on erroneous understandings and complexities of its coordinates (Lynch 2000), which are ironically antithetical to the hypothetico-inductive method of generating theory from data. Induction – working from data to generate theory – is a raison d'être of GT, in its classic formulation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In bringing preformed theoretical commitments to data – what we may call 'theoretical imperialism' – the constructivist version of GT, in various iterations (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Bryant, 2008), ceases to be GT.

The 'measurable' commitment to GT is questioned elsewhere:

> While it is important that methodologies are open to development and improvement, it is important to be wary of the point at which a methodology has been changed so much that it has become something different altogether. (Breckenbridge et al., 2012, p. 65)

In this paper, the authors suggest that any refinements to the methodological procedures of GT, as developed in Straussian (or Corbinian) GT and constructivist GT, are distortions of classic GT at the epistemological level.

As such, constructivist GT exemplifies the paradigmatic confusion referred to at the beginning of this paper: in redefining the 'classic' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) version of GT there may have been an intention to increase the distance from normative, positivistic approaches

(Clarke, 2007), but the admission of aprioristic theoretical commitments to the research process is in itself derived from normative, positivistic trajectories.

Literature as a Fieldwork Site: Clinical Settings

The authors now turn to bringing some of these issues into greater visibility for clinical education. The use of qualitative research methods has provided extraordinary insights into clinical environments (e.g. Becker et al., 1961; Cahill, 1999; Smith & Kleinman, 1989). Taking dentistry research as the next exemplar, the authors explore the use of GT in illustration of distortions of 'qualitative' research in dentistry education.

These observations are connected with the notion of "theoretical imperialism", which will be returned to later in the paper. Theoretical imperialism refers to the imposition of analytic categories on data that are external to the settings of investigation, which are then used to codify these data. In the classic version of GT, Glaser and Strauss (1967) were clear that such a procedure is a departure from the production of GT. The use of exogenous categories produces an intervening and unwarranted 'layer' to analysts' accounts of these data. In these circumstances, theoretical imperialism conceptualizes the practices whereby these data are produced by analysts, not the participants who, purportedly, featured in the study design.

Commentaries on the use of qualitative research for dentistry scale up as qualitative studies proliferate (Gussy, Dickson-Swift and Adams 2013; Masood, Masood, and Newton 2010; Meadows, Verdi and Crabtree 2003; Stewart, Gill, Chadwick and Treasure 2008). This is problematic when qualitative research in dentistry is traduced by the misapplication of terms, in a similar way that was noted above when information science incorporates concepts such as "reflexivity" (Hallbert, Camling, Zickert, Robertson & Berggren, 2008, p. 28), which are admitted to the dentistry research base.

Whilst the growing corpus of commentaries on qualitative studies may seem an axiomatic feature of the research, that over time there are more studies to review, there are a number of misconceptions upon which this growing 'meta-literature' is based. Rather than separate research studies, these items are literature reviews that synthesize qualitative studies intended to highlight the significance, and advocate the admissibility of, qualitative research studies within dentistry research. However, this paper suggests out how recommendations for judging qualitative research are misleading (Masood, Thaliath, Bower, & Newton 2001).

In part, this relates to the use of measures for evaluating research that are not suitable for the assessment of qualitative research (Given 2006; Grypdonck 2006; Peräkylä 1997). However, noting the existence of different paradigms (Gussy, Dickson-Swift, & Adams, 2013) and the problems in assessing research studies from different paradigms, does not reflect the whole story. The relevance of distinct paradigms is not limited, as some commentators assume, to the assessment of research studies from different paradigms.

The authors' readings of qualitative research located in various fields requires comment for dentistry research, particularly regarding Grounded Theory, and what is frequently taken as GT. This is significant for peer-review processes: that dentistry researchers are able to use the insights of qualitative studies; and are enabled to discern quality among qualitative studies. This is important so that their own research practice is not compromised by inferior qualitative studies, nor qualitative studies making erroneous analytic claims. The potential for qualitative research studies is further reduced by such lowering of quality in published research: "poorly conceptualized and executed qualitative studies that continue to unintentionally 'make the case' that qualitative research has limited value" (Joy, 2013, p. 272)

When accounts that are claimed to be 'outcomes' of the application of GT are consistently what Glaser (1998) warns against, e.g. disconnected observations rather than the careful, cumulative generation of theory, then as Joy (2013) suggests readers with reservations about qualitative research may have their doubts confirmed. Thereby, a disservice is being done to qualitative researchers who are following through with rigorous, robust methodologies.

Literature as a Fieldwork Site: The Cumulation Problem

There is also a 'cumulation' problem with the application of more recent versions of GT, both in dentistry research and in information science. The cumulation problem is witnessable in the atomization of individual studies, which do not address prior research except for the purposes of reviewing 'the literature'. Such atomization may be explained, in part, by the allocation of research grants to original studies, rather than to studies that seek to build upon existing theories; also, more speculatively, by the desire of researchers in these fields to make their own, unique contributions to the research-base. These conjectures on atomization were addressed in the original formulation of GT, where there may be a possessive or ownership relation in regards to field notes, or recordings of interviews and their transcripts: "This kind of ownership can yield great depth of substantive knowledge but add little to social theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 168).

The cumulation problem is exhibited in iterations of GT which pass over one of the neglected aspects of the original formulation of GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) – the connection and relevance of library research. Distinguishing between "technical and non-technical literatures" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 48-56) is a lessening of the sophistication provided by the identification of similarities between doing fieldwork, and doing library research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The cumulation problem is illustrated by a use of prior research, e.g. made available through library databases, as topically relevant. We refer to this as a "'reading list' approach" to topics (Carlin, 2016, p. 628), rather than the exploration of the array of library materials that (potentially) constitute data for the development and extension of GT. Documentary, or text-based sources may provide data relevant to ongoing inquiries or provide the impetus for new inquiries. Furthermore, the cumulation problem is evidenced by a lack of engagement with existing studies as the basis for the development of GT:

> If we do not practice […] extending grounded theories, then we relegate them, as now, mainly to the status of respected little islands of knowledge, separated from others, each visited from time to time by inveterate footnoters, by assemblers of readings and of periodic bibliographical reviews, and by graduate students assigned to read the better literature. While the owners of these islands understandably are pleased to be visited, in time they will fall out of fashion and be bypassed. This is no way to build a cumulative body of theory. (Strauss, 1973, p. 53)

The cumulation problem marks a missed opportunity that users of recent iterations of GT for Dentistry and Information Science contribute towards. In passing over the original formulations of GT, and the many advisories for doing quality qualitative research that these contain, current constructivist GT studies produce a series of discrete, disconnected inquiries that fail both a constant comparison requirement, and fall short of building a corpus of adequate GT studies that demonstrate the value of 'qualitative' research for interdisciplinary fields. An adequate corpus evidences the value of GT, and qualitative research, to sceptical practitioners unconvinced of the relevance of qualitative research to their own inquiries.

Grounded Theory or Thematic Analysis?

A feature of discussions of 'qualitative research', originating in sociology but adventitiously relocated to different disciplinary contexts, is the recycling of work that may be characterized as "theoretical imperialism". A range of 'qualitative research methods' are outlined but to what extent do these methods actually afford knowledge of participants' understandings of their worlds? Or are readers of such studies recipients of what the researcher claims are participants' understandings? This can be illustrated with reference to GT: in its original form (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), we find the careful administration of data-generated categories, which are inductively available through sensitive analysis; however, sensitivity to people's understandings of settings is not carried forward in more recent versions of GT, and a diluted form of categorization is witnessable in various studies (e.g. Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018) known as 'thematic (or 'content') analysis'.

GT was a serendipitous outcome of a series of organizational ethnographies (which happened to be hospitals) in the Nineteen Sixties by a research team, led by Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser (Glaser and Strauss 1965, 1968; Strauss et al., 1964). These were distinctive (or applied) studies because they were oriented to sociologists and health professionals. GT emerged from internal debates within Symbolic Interactionism, a perspective in sociology, about the verifiability of qualitative research; a significant aspect which has been airbrushed out of recent accounts of GT (Travers 2001), and one which causes difficulty for interdisciplinary practitioners when accounting for its development (Seldén, 2005).

GT was formulated as an assembly of methods for developing theory. Even though its authors regarded it as a preliminary exploration of GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* is a highly sophisticated book – in methodological and sociological terms. This original formulation in its entirety was not followed through within sociology, however; for instance, in the connections made between library research and fieldwork: "Although this methodology is mentioned by Glaser and Strauss, its potential has not been explored beyond their initial descriptions, neither theoretically nor in actual fieldwork" (Glassner, 1980, p. 43).

Thus, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* was used selectively, and was cited much more frequently than it was used or even understood. It is somewhat ironic that their identification of "conveying credibility" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 228-230) in academic reports would be inverted, so that the book is itself invoked to confer 'credibility' upon 'qualitative' presentations (Gilbert, 1977; Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984).

Within the literature sites that the authors were interested in, the "user-friendly" (Travers, 2001, p. 43) *Basics of Qualitative Research*, which demonstrates how GT can be used (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), is preferred to the original formulation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967); and a second edition, published in 1998, claims an even wider applicability of GT and comparative approaches (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This claim to accessibility is illusory and not supported by close reading and analysis of the texts concerned (O'Connor, Carpenter & Coughlan, 2018). Yet any accessibility hides a permissiveness to the point of analytic 'incoherence' attempts to refine GT resulted in a situation in which data became subjacent to the workings of the methodic procedures themselves – a betrayal of the core principles of GT in its original formulation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which put data at the forefront of theory generation: "The additional prescribed steps encourage students and researchers to *look for data* rather than *look at data* leading to emerging theory" (Robrecht, 1995, p. 171 [emphasis in original]).

The importance of the remarks above, regarding sociological paradigms, is brought into focus by a prefatory statement wherein Strauss demonstrated that GT was not limited to 'qualitative' analyses of organizational structures (Strauss, 1967). However, he does not give any

indication that GT was unsystematic, which could be yoked into research studies, and he (along with Glaser) repeatedly emphasized the importance of "constant comparison" (Glaser & Strauss, 1970, pp. 102-105) as a method for theoretical development. It is important to note that some sources fail to distinguish between GT and thematic analysis, and the rigour which theoretical sampling provides (Rice & Ezzy, 1999); the contribution that robust sociological methods bring to clinical environments is diminished through misrepresentation.

This impoverished version – ersatz GT – has since been introduced to dentistry research (Amin, Harrison & Weinstein, 2006; Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008), in sources citing the original formulation of GT to "convey credibility" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 228-230). However, only the Strauss and Corbin formulations would allow these authors to use GT as a variant of thematic analysis. It was Glaser who 'revised and updated' GT in the light of subsequent advances in available methods (Glaser, 1978). It is Glaser who is continuing GT, the introduction of a complicating constructionist version of GT notwithstanding (Charmaz, 2006; O'Connor, Carpenter & Coughlan, 2018), which he argues Strauss had diluted (Glaser, 2009). There is some justification for this, as *Basics of Qualitative Research* (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) is looser, with regard to data, than its original formulation.

Glaser (1998) argued that GT can be so rewarding and stimulating that researchers only make it half way through the method. He suggests that the practices of categorization and the development of categories are so engrossing that these are not used properly, for the generation of theory:

> Grounded theory methodology leaves nothing to chance. It provides rules for every stage on what to do and what to do subsequently. If the reader skips any of these steps and rules, the theory will not be as worthy as it could be. The typical dropping out of the package is to yield to the thrill of and seduction by developing a few new, capturing categories. The researcher then yields to using them in unending conceptual description and incident tripping rather than analysis by constant comparisons. (Glaser, 1998, p. 13)

Instead, this stage is taken as the outcome of the research, not the beginning; examples of which are commonplace within the dentistry research literature (Lönnroth & Shahnavaz, 2001) and other clinical features (Dimond, 2014). One of the problematics of applying GT in this form is not progressing beyond the generation of categories. Indeed, this is a theory-lite form of analysis, and exemplifies the misrepresentation of qualitative research – claiming "flexibility" as a virtue of qualitative research when this term may conceal insubstantial application (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Justifications for a thematic analysis approach have appeared in the literature, attempting to establish thematic analysis as "a method in its own right" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78); unfortunately, advocates of thematic analysis reify "flexibility" (e.g. Overcash, 2003) but sacrifice meaningful contribution to theory, or conceptual distinction.

Discussion

In clinical contexts, the sociological 'paradigm' (as constituted by both the normative and interpretive paradigms) is only one of a number of competing paradigms. Dentistry is not the only field in which researchers treat topics in paradigmatic terms (Hjørland, 2002), though the rubric of paradigms is more focused on treatment outcomes (Fejerskov, 2004), and studies have been oriented towards 'techniques' rather than 'paradigms' (e.g. Salvi & Lang, 2001). Trends in sociological research are resulting in outcomes wherein the sociological and cognitive paradigms are less distinct. But the selection of a sociological paradigm over a rival paradigm does not in itself result in "better" realizations of a research problem, merely different ones (Coulter & Sharrock 2007, p. 212).

It is in the generation of categories that we see a particular, pernicious problem with presentations of qualitative research, and the claim to be using GT, in information science and in dentistry research. As this paper explains, sociology is characterized by its orientations (quantitative/qualitative) to phenomena, its paradigms (including interpretive/normative paradigms) and by its sub-fields. One of the most significant contributions to the sociology of health/medicine was the thesis of "professional imperialism" (Strong, 1979). Whilst professional (or theoretical) imperialism has its critics much of this is misdirected (Conrad & Schneider, 1980). The original article (Strong, 1979) prosecuted the thesis by reviewing the arguments that the medical profession was extending its reach beyond the medical; suggesting that a "medical model" (Strong, 1979, p. 211) is a simplistic approach and that studies indicating that there was an increasing medicalization of society were, in the light of data, 'exaggerated'.

In an analogous way to missing literature sites, research based on the classic formulation of GT (Glassner, 1980), Strong's correlative argument – that imperialist tendencies were not confined to medical professions but were evident in sociology itself, too – remained unaddressed. However, in this paper, it should be noted that whilst 'qualitative' studies provide dentistry research with dentists' and patients' understandings of oral health, the tendencies towards coding people's understandings within thematic analysis says more about researchers' practices than about the social world they purportedly describe.

'Qualitative methods' can be used to capture people's understandings; however, unless researchers are careful to follow the admonitions of the original formulation of GT, the coding of these understandings may be at variance with the lived experiences of those who participated in the research study. This point is evident with the (mis)use of software programs for qualitative analysis (Amin, Harrison & Weinstein, 2006). As noted elsewhere (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014: 134-135), these are expedient data management tools but analyses remain contingent upon the codes inputted by the researcher. Whatever claims are made for qualitative methods, they remain instruments of what Strong (1979) and Schegloff (1997, p. 167) called "sociological" and "theoretical" imperialism.

The form of the foregoing analysis is crucial for researchers in interdisciplinary fields. This critical incident analysis of literature sites in information science and dentistry research indicates that researchers are recipients of inflationary and distorted analytic claims. This has ramifications for those reliant on a qualitative evidence-base within these areas.

'Qualitative research' glosses a wide range of methods and methodologies, and is not reducible to Grounded Theory (GT). As accounts of theoretical considerations testify (Talja et al. 2005), methodological ramifications of doing qualitative research cause problems for the introduction of qualitative research to interdisciplinary literature sites. GT requires researchers to follow a series of stages. The incompleteness of research designs that claim use of GT reflect looser analytic strategies such as 'thematic analysis'.

Researchers using qualitative research methods need to take care in regard to the generation of categories used to codify data. The current state of the art in information science and dentistry research is characterized by "theoretical imperialism": the imposition of analysts' categories external to the data they are used to codify.

The observations made in this paper are connected with "theoretical imperialism". Theoretical imperialism refers to the imposition of analytic categories on data that are external to the settings of investigation, which are then used to codify these data. This produces an intervening and unwarranted layer to analysts' accounts of these data. In effect, theoretical imperialism conceptualizes the practices whereby these data are produced by analysts, which documents a failure to follow the original formulation of GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

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Neutralizing Prejudices

Rúni Johannesen

Abstract

This study presents a social profile of a tolerant and global ideological behavior. The in-group-behavior revolves around enforcing the tolerant virtue and rooting out and eliminating prejudiced attitudes that affect minorities and the collective environment. The main concern is conceptualized as "enabling a nonjudgmental environment" for oneself and others. The recurrent solution to this concern is "neutralizing prejudices." Neutralizing prejudices is a means to engage and deal with prejudiced oppression and prejudice-related behavior. Mindsets with a tolerant worldview use neutralization as a way to assert their worldview and cope with the prejudiced attitudes they experience towards minorities and the collective environment. Neutralizing prejudices is a way to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect. As such, neutralizing is mainly a rhetorical requisite. As a basic social process, neutralizing prejudices is a process of "collective regrouping" in relation to a social, moral, and global objective.

Keywords: Neutralizing prejudices, prejudiced oppression, tolerance, enabling a nonjudgmental environment, global ideology, collective regrouping.

Introduction

This classic grounded theory study started out examining how ordinary people from the Faroe Islands saw themselves in a global context. About half of the subjects, who were interviewed, are the focus of this paper (in conjunct with a considerate amount of data from social media sites, news articles, and letters to the editor). This group saw themselves through a tolerant worldview having to deal with an out-group, referred to as "people with prejudiced attitudes" or "prejudiced people." In this global context, the main concern of the tolerant group was "enabling a nonjudgmental environment" that is free from prejudiced oppression. More precisely, the main concern is to enable a nonjudgmental *collective* environment, wherein both minorities and tolerant attitudes are safe and free from being judged or confronted with certain sensitive issues. A collective safe space, so to speak. The way the subjects handled and resolved this concern, was through "neutralizing prejudices." People with a tolerant worldview neutralize prejudiced attitudes as a mean to engage and deal with prejudiced oppression and prejudice-related behavior. The core variable will also be simply referred to as *neutralizing*. "Prejudices" or "prejudiced attitudes" refer in this context to "prejudiced attitudes related to minorities," which also represented the subjects' prevalent use of the saying. Neutralizing is a mode of behavior that people with a tolerant worldview use to assert their worldview and cope with the prejudiced attitudes they experience towards minorities and the social collective environment at large. When a tolerant worldview comes in contact with an opinion, expression or context, that is perceived prejudice, it will eliminate the prejudiced content by neutralizing it. What is being neutralized, are *the critical or negative differences between majority and minority identities that are*

proposed by the out-group. The notion "out-group" is referring to out-group derogation, where an out-group is perceived threatening or hindering the goals of the favored in-group to which one belongs. The notion "neutralizing" refers in general to "making something neutral," "defusing," "disqualifying," "to counterbalance or counteract the effect of something," "to render ineffective," "to negate," and "to nullify." Neutralizing prejudices is in simple terms defined as "to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect." Prejudiced context refers to the situations, attitudes, opinions, assertions, and accusations concerning critical, negative or hostile attitudes towards minorities, made by the out-group, "prejudiced people" (or "people with prejudiced attitudes"). Hence, prejudiced people are perceived to proclaim critical differences between majority and minorities in a segregating manner and creating an "us and them-framework." Neutralizing prejudices is a strategy for wiping out and dissolving these proposed critical differences and eliminate prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced oppression along the way.

As a basic social process (a BSPP [Glaser, 1978]), neutralizing prejudices is a process of "collective regrouping" in relation to a social and moral objective. The collective can be seen as the larger dominant societal in-group or the meta-societal in-group, the social society as a whole that one belongs to. Collective regrouping is about creating and enforcing a new, tolerant and diverse collective identity from a global framework. The process of collective regrouping integrates minorities and tolerant attitudes into the new collective and out-group's prejudices or prejudiced people out of the collective environment.

There are five sub-variables in neutralizing, which are directed at or assisting the process of neutralizing. They are (1) diagnosing, (2) reversing bias, (3) mobilizing, (4) degrouping, and (5) withdrawing. (1) *Diagnosing* refers to diagnosing the out-group's attributed vice and biases as in "diagnosing prejudices;" (2) *reversing bias* represents the engaging and argumentative part of neutralizing through rhetorically correcting and identifying the prejudices and biases that are attributed to the out-group; (3) *mobilizing* refers to how the in-group interactively is group-mobilizing in relation to the out-group; (4) *(collective) degrouping* refers to the act or process of stigmatizing and removing prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes from the collective environment; and (5) *withdrawing* refers to the act of withdrawing from prejudiced attitudes when the psychological irritation or distress gets too overwhelming.

Methodology

The research method used is classic grounded theory (CGT) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). It is assumed that the reader is familiar with the basics of the CGT method. CGT is an inductive conceptual method that presupposes an open approach to interview, analysis and theory building (Christiansen, 2011; Holton, 2010). The aim is to generate theory directly from data, expressed as generalized concepts. In other words, the behavior is meant to be explained and unified through generalized concepts, often written as a conclusion. The prime objective is to find a core variable that explains the main concern in a substantive area. One looks at what the subjects are most concerned with, the main concern, and the associated core variable is how they recurrently handle and resolve this main concern (Glaser, 1978). Basically, the researcher tries to generalize and organize several relevant and connected concepts that explain a certain behavior. Within this framework, there is a "center-" or core variable, which explains the

other variables and thus explains the overall behavior from a single, abstracted core perspective. Further, the core variable is branched out and explained through several sub-variables, which can also contain their own sub-sub-variables.

The GT elements that are applied in the analysis are coding, line-by-line coding, constant comparison, theoretical sampling, memoing and sorting. Fifteen subjects were interviewed for 1-2 hours. All the interviewees were Faroese, Caucasian men and woman, educated, and seemingly not a part of any general minority group (with the exception of half of the subjects being women). It should be noted that the Faroe Islands is a fairly isolated geographical area with a relatively homogenous culture. The contrast between a small, isolated, and relatively homogenous population, and the vivid character of the "global arena," gives the study a particular interesting outlook.

In addition to interviews, data has been collected from Faroese social media sites, political websites, letters to the editor, news articles and political discussions, online and offline (comprising of both civilians and politicians). The purpose of this type of data was to come closer to how the in-group is managing its out-group (which was not so directly observed through interviews), especially in relation to the rhetorical aspects of neutralizing prejudices. A few data incidences from the overall data will be used as examples for giving the reader a more nuanced illustration of the tolerant behavior.

Overall, this study has been an on-and-off analysis for the past three years, started in the fall of 2015. The first stage of this study was done in a project-collaboration with Jóna K. Thomsen (Author & Thomsen K., 2016) as part of our master's degree in Social analyses and planning at Fróðskaparsetur Føroya (University of the Faroe Islands). Concepts which arose from this project, and are further developed in this paper, are "the generalization of prejudices," "tolerance versus prejudices," "non-threatening environment" (not as a main concern), "constant comparison," "withdrawing," "global belonging," and "neutralization-logics" (the last concept is from an exam-presentation (Author & Thomsen, 2016, slide 1)).

Background and Basic Social Process

The background of this GT study will be emphasized and elaborated on with the aim of giving a better understanding of the psychological, behavioral, and ideological context, that this grounded theory is situated from. The study started out by asking ordinary people "how they saw themselves in a global context?" From this question came forth a lot of perspectives and values attributed to a global context. The most prominent trait for about half of the subjects was a wish to meet global relations through tolerant values. This became a starting point for the first theoretical sampling and the study began focusing on tolerant-based behavior. Later on, after the second and third theoretical sampling, a consisting mode of relating to prejudices became apparent, namely through neutralizing prejudices. As a general trait or concept, tolerance is the capacity for, or the practice of recognizing and accepting the beliefs, identities or practices of "the other." In this study, tolerance deals with minority-issues and is taken a step further and to a certain extent becomes an end-goal in itself in relation to enabling a nonjudgmental collective environment. Subjects that exhibited a tolerant worldview placed their worldview in a global context. What was hindering a global tolerant outlook was a local out-group, "prejudiced people," which were part of the larger collective.

As a basic operation, neutralizing is the act of negating, defusing, and disqualifying attitudes and propositions that express a critical or negative difference between minorities and the majority. Neutralizing is then achieved by means of delegitimizing and de-objectivizing the out-group's attitudes and propositions. As a more general variable, neutralizing is always contextual and differentiated to a specific value-framework. There has to be a generalized contrast, opposition, or polarity from which one neutralizes. In this context, the contrast or polarity is an anti-virtue and a virtue, or the vice of the virtue. The virtue is tolerance and the vice is prejudices. The in-group is attributed a virtue and the out-group is attributed a vice. These two values are generalized in relation to each other and make a framework from which to neutralize.

Neutralizing happens in a basic social process of "collective regrouping" by means of tolerance prevailing over prejudices. In this process, minorities and tolerant people are integrated into an extended collective and prejudiced people are out-grouped from the collective. As the minority-group in a sense is a [positive] out-group which is being integrated, they are referred to as the "other-group," which is being in-grouped. "The other" also refers to something that is different from the in-group and the out-group in condition or identity.

Collective regrouping and neutralizing as a whole are far easier to conceptualize and clarify when explaining the group-dynamics from the perspective of a tolerant worldview. The tolerant outlook can be conceptualized in three parts from the perspective of a tolerant worldview: (a) the in-group generalization and polarization of vice and virtue; (b) the construction of the groups involved; and, (c) the implications and consequences of vice and virtue.

(a) The in-group generalization and polarization of vice and virtue can best be understood through the generalization or unification of the vice, "prejudiced attitudes." This vice is the anti-virtue of the virtue tolerance. Within the tolerant framework, when a person in the out-group is perceived as prejudiced towards one minority group, he or she is usually also expected to hold prejudice towards other minorities. Further, the notion of prejudice is almost solely used in plural form (implicit or explicit), "prejudiced people," "prejudiced attitudes," "prejudices," "to be prejudiced," "to be prejudice." In the North Germanic languages, the plural form is more obvious: "fordóm*ar*" (Faroese) or "fordom*me*" (Danish) is the translation of "prejudices." Further, "to be prejudiced" is more or less translated as "at vera fordómsfullur" (Faroese) or "at være fordomsfuld" (Danish) (there is a greater and clearer distinction in the North Germanic variations of the notion). In the American and English language, the noun "prejudice" is countable and uncountable, resulting in a more fluid singular and plural form. The conceptual concern here is not whether a general concept of minority-related prejudices is defined as a specific number of discrimination categories. The key is that the concept is used in a certain plural form, and consequently, encompasses at least some of the (Western) historical main discrimination areas such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation etc. Hence, the notion of "prejudiced attitudes" takes on a generalized or unified plural form, that works as a vice-related reference point for the virtue of tolerance. This does not mean, that the subjects' use of "prejudiced attitudes" as a general concept is enclosed to minorities, but rather that this minority-differentiation of the notion takes a dominant place. As a polar-value, tolerance takes

the place of a uniform virtue that integrates the in-group and grounds the ideological framework. The vice and virtue can be conceptualized as a *polar-unit*, a unit with two poles, one positive and one negative (*a* unit that contains *two* polarized values). The virtue is tolerance and the vice is prejudices. The polar-unit is a feature of the *polar-composition*. The polar-unit only states which polarized units are involved while the polar-composition represents how the polar-unit is composed. In other words, how the vice and virtue are arranged and constructed in relation to each other, opening up for an ideological tolerant framework. It is from the polar-composition, that neutralizing takes its impetus, its offset, its core perspective and objective. The nature of the polar-composition in this study is explained throughout the paper.

(b) The construction of the groups involved is explained through the polar-composition. The virtue is attributed to the in-group, "tolerant people," and the vice is attributed to the out-group, "prejudiced people." Vice and virtue are based in *dealing with minorities* or minority-related subjects. As such, "unified minorities" (the other-group) represents the third group in the ideological framework. Minorities are not necessary seen as a single group, but the minority-approach is usually generalized through vice and virtue. Minorities are more or less experienced as an adaptable cluster of unified oppressed identities, and thus minorities *serve* as a unified focal-group. However, minorities are simultaneously a part of the in-group, but also different from the in-group. In addition, there exists a fourth group, which is partly outside of the group-framework, but is vitally relevant for the group dynamics. This is the "unenlightened group," the rest of the people, so to speak, who are not perceived to necessarily adhere to tolerant or prejudiced attitudes. This group becomes subject for accommodating tolerant values or subject for being fostered with tolerant values. Therefore, the basic ideological framework consists of a fourfold group-approach.

(c) The implications and consequences of vice and virtue can be illustrated through an oppressive effect and a liberating effect. Prejudiced attitudes are seen oppressive and result in states of minority-oppression and societal social segregation, meanwhile tolerance leads to non-conflict, integration, and social unity--a social unity that is made possible by enabling a nonjudgmental environment. The consequences of vice and virtue are also part of the polar-composition, as this involves the process of collective regrouping: the collective in-grouping of the other-group (integration of minorities) and the collective out-grouping of prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes. What is further noticeable is that the concept of minorities has transnational implications. Minorities can be either local or transnational/global or both. But the prejudiced attitudes are consistently identified as local. "Local" as in national or local supranational (e.g. the Nordic countries, Europe, or the Western countries). The national aspect is however the most frequent.

Potentially, the polar-composition is able to transcend cultural and national group-limits through unification of prejudiced oppression and unification of the liberation of minorities, making the process of collective regrouping a global one. Liberation of minorities is therefore also a liberation of a social collective environment. Altogether, the polar-composition represents the in-group's construction of vice and virtue and the consequences of the overall group-dynamics.

At a more existential aspect, in its core, neutralizing is a process of collective regrouping that is connected to a sense of 'collective essence': a social transformation of

collective essence where the new essence is based on tolerance, diversity and social unity. The in-group behaves as the "modern alternative to the old conservative establishment;" It is a distancing from the establishment, a positioning-away. A form of positioning that is in a progressive state, a state not yet manifested collectively. The key aspect is that people with a tolerant worldview want to be *"free together" with the minorities* in a nonjudgmental (and tolerant) collective environment. As such, the nonjudgmental environment can also be seen as a global environment wherein one is safely able to connect with oneself, connecting with fellow group-members, and connecting to whatever the global collective environment has to offer. Hence, we are both dealing with a liberation of differentiated identity (minorities) and a liberation of collective identity in regard to enabling a nonjudgmental collective environment. It is this essence of combined liberation that is the source of this type of collective regrouping.

Combined (or integrative) liberation of collective identity and collective environment can interestingly be compared to Amy Russell's (2011) grounded theory, "A Grounded Theory of Liberated Identity: Lesbians transcending oppression," a theory which has been discovered subsequently after the conceptualization of neutralizing prejudices. Although her study is dealing with lesbian women, it is valuable to compare the concept of neutralizing with concepts such as liberated identity, verbal correcting, integrating, and being pathologized.

Core Variable: Neutralizing Prejudices

As mentioned, neutralizing is to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced attitude or a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect. When a tolerant mindset runs into an opinion, a behavior, or a situation, which is perceived prejudiced, the reaction is to neutralize the proposition, behavior, or situation through various neutralizing behaviors, e.g. through *relativizing differences* or *degrouping*. These are described in the upcoming sections. Neutralizing prejudices is a basic social process in the (collective) strategy family (Glaser, 1978). As a strategy, its goal is to resolve the main concern, enabling a nonjudgmental environment, and work towards a tolerant society. The concept of "attitudes" refers here to the ABC model of attitudes, including affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects (Jain, 2014). The following data illustration is a case where neutralizing takes the form of a counter-argument in an ongoing public debate.

> **Male A** (from a letter to the editor):
> It makes no sense to hold on to, that this case is not about discrimination. . . . In debates about discrimination and human rights it has been common for a long time to distinguish between direct and indirect discrimination. . . . Direct discrimination is, plain and simple, when the same rules do not apply for everyone.
> Indirect discrimination is on the other hand when the same rules apply to everyone, but the rules cause, that some people are worse off than others.

In the aforementioned argument, the author of the letter is responding to a prejudice context and is trying to neutralize prejudiced attitudes through edifying the public on some of the different types of discrimination.

Since the conceptualization of the core variable, two main versions of neutralization have subsequently been identified in the sphere of social science. The

most prevalent version of neutralization is primarily found in criminology (Sykes & Matza, 1957). It is about excusing and justifying an immoral or criminal act, e.g. to say that the victim, one is stealing from, deserved it or that the victim did not suffer from the theft. Another example of neutralization is found in Diane Beeson's master thesis "Women in Karate: Neutralization of Sex Roles" from 1973 (Glaser, 1978). In this thesis, a group of women use karate as a mean for the neutralization of sex-differences. This latter use of neutralization has a familiarity to the core variable of this paper. In the process of neutralizing prejudices, there is always an underlying or concurrent element of *dissolving or wiping out propositions and attitudes which state critical or negative differences* between majority and minority/minorities. These are critical or negative differences that are proposed by the out-group. That is, when a person with prejudiced attitudes criticizes a minority group, a minority behavior, or a minority condition, and proposes that the minority-group *differs* from the majority in a critical or negative manner. What follows, is that the tolerant attitude will usually attempt to enforce the message, that there are no critical or negative differences between the majority and the minority, and thereby dissolving any proposed critical or negative differences. A prejudiced attitude, in a tolerant context, is namely constituted by making a critical or negative *judgment* about how a minority differs from the majority. It is the proposed critical or negative difference that is being neutralized, thereby enabling and retaining a nonjudgmental environment. Therefore, neutralizing prejudices is a way to seek social union and equality between majority and minorities through enabling a nonjudgmental environment. Being part of a nonjudgmental environment is illustrated in the data incident below.

> **Female A** (interviewee):
> It is so wonderful at my workplace. We are all a little bit alike . . . a little left-wing with the same opinions . . . It's a place where you're not being judged and don't have to be on your guard and think all the time . . . .
> **Interviewer**:
> Did you say, "not being judged"?
> **Female A**:
> Yes, especially that, that you're not being judged . . . .
>
> **Male B** (interviewee):
> It's not so much about women's rights per se, it's more about bringing forth more tolerance, I want to make it [this society] more tolerant.

When a nonjudgmental environment has become enabled or stays enabled, it is then possible to connect with oneself, to connect with others and to connect to the collective environment itself – enabling as a condition for connecting.

> **Male C** (interviewee, talking about the tolerant community):
> People got dreams about the Faroe Islands. A common denominator is to connect with the outside world . . . . Religion and all that is on an individual basis. People don't talk about the big questions because it creates division. One downplays certain subjects, they create division, and one doesn't want to be part of it. I think it's great. In that way it is possible to be harmonious within the group.

As a more general rhetorical requisite, neutralizing can be seen as a basic component in constructing arguments. One often negates and disqualifies when building counterarguments; one identifies an incorrect argument from the counterpart, categorizes the vice and bias, and then constructs a counterargument that involves some form of virtuous pattern. Neutralizing prejudices on the other hand differs from the simple act of "negating something" which generally is more of a neutral notion. Neutralizing has both a *negating* aspect and a *disqualifying* aspect due to its value-laden emotional charge. In other words, a tolerant mindset that is presented with prejudiced attitudes will usually be inflicted with worrying, irritation, or psychological distress and react by neutralizing the prejudiced attitude or prejudiced context.

There are two layers to neutralizing. It is an act *and* a process. As an act, neutralizing takes various forms in the present, both in social and private settings ("private" as in individual, alone). This can for example happen in discussions, dialogues or in a private reflecting seclusion. When prejudiced attitudes are observed, they are always linked to some kind of information in the form of a statement, subject, opinion, or emotional/symbolic expression. Therefore, a great deal of neutralizing prejudices is about neutralizing prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced propositions, making neutralizing, in a broad sense, mainly a rhetorical activity.

As a process, neutralizing is about a greater goal: to neutralize prejudices and uplift minorities from prejudiced oppression into a new integrated collective constituted by equality, diversity, and social union. Technically speaking, the goal is to dissolve a perceived identity-hierarchy of the "oppressor versus the oppressed" and "judging versus being judged." The top of the hierarchy is represented by non-minorities and is upheld by the oppressor, represented by prejudiced people and prejudice behavior. The bottom of the hierarchy is represented by the oppressed minorities. Hence, the immediate acts and behavior of neutralizing prejudices serve the greater goal (or process) of neutralizing prejudices from the overall societal condition.

It is worth noting, that the main concern could also be conceptualized as "enabling a *tolerant* environment." The reason for choosing the concept "a nonjudgmental environment" is because the core variable is focusing on out-group management and not on the behavior of the in-group in general. A nonjudgmental environment is more associated with "not being judged," while a tolerant environment could be said to be much more than that, for example through proactively helping people or through being part of a tolerant ecosphere. The out-group is perceived to judge and to be condemning, and it is this aspect which comes into the forefront of the main concern in this paper (as in "if you're not being tolerant, then at least be nonjudgmental or silent"). While a main concern of the tolerant behavior is to enable a tolerant environment, a precondition for that concern is to enable a nonjudgmental environment. Hence, a nonjudgmental environment is one of the primary conditions for a tolerant environment, especially in dealing with the out-group.

Properties of Neutralizing

There are four properties to neutralizing: (1) polar-composing, (2) framing prejudices, (3) resiling, and (4) inversing protective instinct.

Polar-composing. A prerequisite for neutralizing is the use of a stereotype. The stereotype is "prejudiced people," or "prejudiced attitudes." In here the polar-composition of vice and virtue comes into play as explained in the background-section. One must neutralize against something--a set of perceived faulty beliefs and oppressive attitudes. As the generalization of vice is constructed as a general concept for prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes, one is able to neutralize against the vice from a virtuous standpoint, namely from a tolerant attitude. Hence, vice and virtue are generalized, polarized and unified into a polar-composition: "tolerance and prejudices."

Framing prejudices. *Framing prejudices* is the continuing process of identifying, defining, constructing, and structuring prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced content in relation to tolerant aspects. The term is borrowed from framing theory (Arowolo, 2017), and includes framing in mind and framing in communication. There are two main elements in framing a prejudiced attitude: vice and bias. Vice represents the moral and emotional aspect of the prejudice meanwhile bias represents more of the faulty logic and information in the prejudiced content (a bias can of course also involve aspects of a vice and vice versa). Hence, the framing of prejudices can be said to include an ethical aspect and a more logical aspect, which usually are intertwined and almost entangled in the framing of prejudices. Framing prejudices can happen explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the framing of prejudices is directly communicated. Implicitly, the framing of prejudices is not communicated directly, but is implied, insinuated, or hidden. The term hidden refers to the time when the neutralizing message is communicated in a way that can show the receiver a prejudiced content without giving the impression of the framing intention.

Framing theory obviously encompasses more dimensions than expressed in this section, but the main point is that framing prejudices in general is both connected to perceptions of vice and to perceptions of biases, which together grounds a "whole prejudice" for further framing. Overall, most of the behavior involved in neutralizing prejudices should be seen in a framing context.

Resiling. *Resiling* comes from the word "resile" meaning "to spring back; rebound; resume the original form or position, as an elastic body" (Dictionary.com, 2017). When a tolerant worldview is inflicted with a prejudiced attitude, irritation or psychological distress is generated. When neutralization is carried out, psychological distress is reduced, and relief takes place. Further, resiling also includes resiling back into a nonjudgmental (or tolerant) atmosphere. Resiling to the original tolerant framework does not necessarily mean that nothing has changed. Resiling is a form of adaptation, where the neutralized prejudiced content is processed and adjusted to a continuous tolerant outlook. Any informational or opinionated content that is incongruent with a tolerant attitude can be ignored, adapted or incorporated, as long as the basic nature of the polar-composition stays intact.

Inversing protective instinct. In defining what inversing protective instinct is, it is sensible to first define what protective instinct means in this context. Protective instinct refers here to a 'basic collective protective instinct.' A 'basic protective instinct' refers here to protecting something from something else as in "protecting us from them" in an "us and them"-dynamic. Thus, one is limiting an outside influence or creating a border to uphold a segregation of "us and them." A border can be physical, cognitive and/or discursive. "Collective" refers to the "us"-part as a collective rather than a family-

-or a smaller group-unit for example. In general, and historically speaking, the prime collective identity is either national or supranational, the latter encompassing certain neighboring countries with integrated interests. The prime collective is therefore usually anchored in a geographical context. Hence, a basic collective protective instinct creates an "us and them"-dynamic in a collective defensive outlook. As mentioned, it is here referred to as a general "protective instinct."

Inversing protective instinct is about flipping the general framework: "protecting them from us," as in protecting minorities from the majority. In unifying minorities, a tolerant outlook encompasses local identities and transnational identities, anchoring prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes in a local context and placing tolerant people and minorities in a local and a global context. Minorities represents something that is in a different condition or different identity from the majority, and thus one is trying to protect something that is part of another group in the process of regrouping to a larger diverse collective. One is caring for and protecting "the other." Inversing protective instinct is a form of detachment from a basic collective protective instinct to a more "caregiving collective protective instinct." Caregiving, as in caring for "the other," involves caring, sacrificing, restraining, or opening oneself and fellow others.

Dimensions of Neutralizing

Neutralizing prejudices has three dimensions: (1) communicative charge, (2) metamorphing, and (3) collective and individual communication.

Communicative Charge. Most of the behavior in neutralizing is communicative and takes various forms of communication. The most prominent communication styles are "aggressive,' "rational," "diplomatic," and "pedagogic." These four styles shall be seen in a dimension of an emotional and communicative charge. From aggressive to rational to diplomatic to pedagogic. The *aggressive style* is offensive and is usually carried out in an accusing manner and can be highly charged with emotions. The *rational style* is usually more detached and usually conveys arguments based on principles, with the purpose of letting people know where one stands. Rational is often the least engaging aspect of the four. The *pedagogic style* is in a sense the opposite of the aggressive style, and is *reaching out* to prejudiced people, tolerant people and the unenlightened group in an attempt to foster understanding and acceptance of minorities --usually through presenting minority-related perspectives or a broader human perspective. The pedagogic style can also reach out to minorities and express sympathy, empathy, or inclusiveness. The *diplomatic style* behaves in an advocating manner. It takes fewer risks, but is usually more effective, due to its semi-detachment and use of prudence and situational awareness. This style can also adapt and make use of the three other styles or compose a blend of them. Additionally, there is a fifth prominent style named "trendy," which can be incorporated in all the other styles, and thereby framing neutralization in a more popular and contemporary manner.

Metamorphing. *Metamorphing* represents the dimension from *morphing* to *metamorphosing*. This dimension essentially represents the degree of collective regrouping. The basic social process of collective regrouping has two prominent modes, namely morphing and metamorphosing. Morphing refers to when neutralizing is more rule- or principle-based (as for example in the previously-mentioned rational style). In this scenario, a mindset that is morphing is not directly identifying with minorities as a

larger collective but is rather stating principles of for example individual freedom or individual wellbeing, and thereby not intruding on other groups or not holding prejudice in general. The main concern though is about the same: the concern for enabling a nonjudgmental environment (although the participation in the nonjudgmental environment is less "organic" in morphing and is rather based on proper civil conduct).

Metamorphosing on the other hand is an attempt to integrate minorities and majority into a new and larger tolerant collective environment. Ideologically speaking, metamorphosing is a more emotionally invested concept. Hence, metamorphing is a conjoined social concept for the interconnected and sometimes interchangeable behavior between morphing and metamorphosing. Some tolerant behaviors can shift from morphing to metamorphosing and some tolerant behaviors usually stay in one of these conditions. Further, metamorphing also represents the fluent discursive structure and the diversified interactive behavior that happens between these two modes of collective regrouping. In other words, an in-group can collectively regroup in a stronger and more fluent mode if the members can be affiliated through either emotional attachment (metamorphosing) and/or principled or rule-based attachment (morphing). Therefore, the concept of metamorphing can also be categorized as a social structural process ("xSSP") (Glaser, 1978, p. 102).

Collective and individual communication. "A tolerant behavior can either be characterized by an individual communication (a person who speaks on behalf of him- or herself), or by a social voice, representing the larger in-group." Communicating with a social voice usually involves an implicit tone of communicating in third person, as in communicating on behalf of the in-group, on behalf of the majority or on behalf of the minorities. Further, it is also possible to represent abstract concepts in the communication, e.g. to portray or personify tolerant or prejudiced attitudes. The communication is usually geared in such a way that a member of the in-group implicitly speaks for and with the in-group–including when a member of the in-group is speaking to or addressing one of the three other groups (see the second paragraph in the section on "Background and Basic Social Process").

In this study, the core variable is tightly connected to an ideological framework and is carried out through a broad category of behaviors. The sub-variables of neutralizing in the coming sections are very versatile and shall be seen in a highly interconnected manner. Two of the sub-variables are more comprehensive than the other three. These are "Reversing bias" and "Mobilizing," which have their own sub-sub-variables.

Diagnosing

The term *diagnosing* represents the more analytical behavior of neutralizing. Diagnosing refers to diagnosing prejudiced attitudes or diagnosing vice and biases in relation to (a) the out-group, (b) the unenlightened group, (c) the in-group, or (d) oneself. Diagnosing can also happen in conjunct with analyzing how prejudices affect minorities. As tolerance is the reference point of prejudices, tolerant aspects can also be researched in this context. The term "diagnosing" indicates dealing with a pathology. In this case, it is a psychological pathology of attitude connected with vices, biases, and prejudices. Diagnosing is a frequent activity which is included in almost all kind of neutralizing. Basically, all the analytical behavior in neutralizing requires diagnosing,

including subconscious analytical behavior. It takes diagnosing to reverse a bias, to mobilize, to degroup, and to withdraw. Diagnosing can happen whenever there is a need for it, including in social settings. Although diagnosing is generally about analyzing, reflecting, and introspecting on prejudiced contexts, there are four properties which often take place in the diagnostic activity: (a) *self-diagnosing*, (b) *gathering information*, (c) *pathologizing*, and (d) *prescribing*.

(a) In general, as prejudiced attitudes are a tolerant concern, **self-diagnosing** comes into play; checking and exploring oneself for potential prejudices in the aim of becoming more tolerant, introspective, and aware are required especially in relation to detecting unconscious reasoning patterns that can cause a person to take his or her privileged aspects for granted.

(b) **Gathering information** is about seeking and collecting information and knowledge on aspects of tolerance and prejudices in the aim of neutralizing prejudices. Gathering information can, for example, happen through directly analyzing group-behavior or through researching informational content.

(c) **Pathologizing** refers to determining the nature and cause of a prejudice condition. When a tolerant worldview comes in contact with a perceived prejudice, it can determine the nature and cause of the prejudice through analyzing and classifying it. The prominent perceived causes of prejudiced attitudes are (1) resentment, (2) domination/power, (3) fear, (4) ignorance, or (5) a lack of understanding. These causes are predominantly attributed to a lack of postmodern intellectual edification.

> **Female B** (interviewee):
> I don't like prejudices towards different kinds of human beings. I must get involved when debates get too condemning. It affects me to be part of for example the debate on refugees. I think that I should be better updated, and it provokes me that I must see pictures of dead people to really react. And that is what it takes to get other people to react. Now I feel, that I must have an opinion and defend them against prejudices. One feels that people are afraid of the unknown.

(d) **Prescribing** refers to resolving a cure for a prejudiced attitude. Prescribing usually takes a starting point from former classified pathological causes in one's recollection. That is, former types of prejudiced attitudes that a tolerant mindset has specified, categorized and classified in their "library of prejudices." When a prescription is made for a specific prejudice or for prejudices in general, it is ready for use in for example reversing a bias, mobilizing, or degrouping.

Reversing Bias

Reversing Bias is the most dominant behavior in neutralizing. It represents the engaging and argumentative part of neutralizing. This happens through rhetorically correcting, modifying, or showing the out-group's attributed bias or biases. Reversing bias is about taking the validity out of the counterpart's argument, attitude, or discourse, by means of identifying and pointing out the counterpart's biases. In other words, focusing on the counterpart's vice and biases and counteracting through pointing them out and reversing them, results in correcting a bias or at least revealing or diffusing it. In addition, reversing a bias can also happen in conjunct with self-diagnosing. Reversing bias is a

communicative variable and is essentially a free variable due to that it is argumentative and rhetorical in nature; every rhetorical aspect which can be used in reversing a bias becomes relevant. Nevertheless, there are sub-sub-variables that are quite dominant. These are (a) addressing, (b) relativizing, (c) incompatibilizing, (d) logical formations, (e) constant comparison, (f) advocating, and (g) critical questioning.

Addressing

Addressing prejudices is a frame-opening variable that is frequent and significant. Addressing refers to the *identification of* prejudicial aspects and *pointing them out* in a social setting. The properties of addressing are "identification of prejudices" and "pointing out prejudices." The behavior of addressing works as a premise for the entrance of other communicative aspects of neutralizing, thereby opening and framing the tolerant and prejudicial, communicative context.

Relativizing

Relativizing is to make an argument relative and inapplicable. Relativizing deals with taking the validity out of an argument from the out-group. For example, when a person from the out-group is perceived to *enforce* and praise the values, identity, or behavior of the "current conservative establishment," a tolerant mindset can relativize the argument by uttering "that applies to everyone" or "that applies to no one." Technically speaking, relativizing is about negating a proposed *singular essence* and breaking down the foundation of that essence. A singular essence refers to something being special in relation to something else. A frequent example of relativizing is: "Women and men (or homosexuals and heterosexuals, Arab and Western cultures/ethnicities) are the same, they are just social constructions born in different environments." This is one example of relativizing through negating nature and promoting nurture. The purpose is to wipe out proposed critical or negative differences through relativizing them. A general in-group-consensus is that understanding individual, social, and societal relativity in an academic postmodern manner is a precondition to being self-conscious about various biases. There is more complexity to the variable relativizing that partly is elaborated on in the sub-sub-variable "logical formations." The following data illustrate one of the common types of relativizing. In this case, it is used in connection with mental illness.

> **Female C** (from a letter to the editor):
> Mental diseases and physical diseases should be prioritized in the same way, because they affect the individual, relatives, and society in the same manner.

Incompatibilizing

Incompatibilizing is about taking a counterargument and making it incompatible to general reasoning or to today's modern societal context. There are two aspects to incompatibilizing. The first one is to push forward, that a counterargument is invalid in relation to a better rhetorical framework, e.g. "you can't differentiate people like that," or "the goal of integration is not assimilation but is about inclusion." The latter form of incompatibilizing is about validating what is relevant for a modern societal context, e.g. today's modern society is about diversity and tolerance and not about tradition and creating boundaries. Hence, *incompatibilizing* is about making an argument invalid, either through the argument itself or in relation to what contemporary society should be about.

> **Male B** (from a letter to the editor):
> It should be unnecessary to talk about this in 2015, but so long as marriage does not include us all, we will continue [with the cause.]

Logical Formations

Logical formations represent the underlying logics, or logical patterns, that have evolved to dominant theoretical formulas used in a wide variety of arguments. It can also be understood as the theoretical backgrounds or basic theoretical structure of various neutralizing arguments (it can also be viewed as theoretical codes as in CGT). The logical formations in neutralizing are termed *neutralization-logics* (the first four neutralization-logics are found in Author & Thomsen K., 2016, slide 1). There is obviously a great deal of other applied neutralization-logics in neutralizing prejudices, but these are some of the most common.

Neutralization-logic 1: The non-generalization rule. *The non-generalization rule* is a generalized rule to "not to generalize." A sort of all-or-nothing logic. More precisely, the rule is "not to make negative or critical generalizations about minorities." This is observed when a minority-group is criticized, and the tolerant
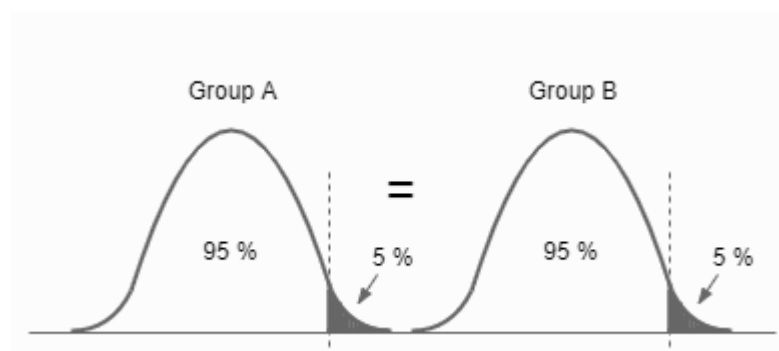

Figure 1: Group-generalization by group-distribution (the figure is inspired from the project, "The Polarized field of Reversed Bias" (Author & Thomsen K., 2016, slide 1)

response is "you can't generalize" or more implicit "that's a generalization." A negative or critical generalization is wrong in itself. The rule has a dimension of three premises that can be applied and can also overlap: (a) The first premise is a generalized statistically distributed perspective on groups in general, wherein one group has about the same behavioral distribution as another group. For example, in proposing that Arab and Western cultures are identical with the same proportion of "normal people" and the same proportion of "extremists," metaphorically illustrated in Figure 1 (95 % presenting "normal people" and 5 % presenting "extremists").

(b) The second premise is that people, groups and group-traits are so diverse, that they are impossible to generalize. Or, that people cannot be reduced to generalizations. (c) The last premise is that people, groups and the world in general, is too complex for humans to generalize. Hence, what happens in this category is a form of group- or cultural standardization in relation to distributed behavior and identity, usually applied in relativizing a counter-argument. Thus, this generalization is about group-behavioral-standardization by means of similarity *or* by means of diversity/complexity.

Neutralization-logic 2: Cancelling out. *Cancelling out* is based on the group-generalization in the first neutralization-logic. When a minority group, members of a minority group, or traits of a minority group are being criticized, one makes a negative comparison of the majority and defuses the counter-argument and cancels it out. For

example, "there is no guarantee that heterosexual couples are good parents," cancelling out a critique regarding homosexual's biological situation in relation to adopting children.

Neutralization-logic 3: Source rejection. *Source rejection* is about discrediting and rejecting a critical information-source regarding minority-related issues, potentially without any review. It can happen in two ways. The source is either rejected on the basis that the source itself is perceived prejudice (by content, author, website, organization etc.) or the person sharing the source is perceived prejudice. Source rejection is frequently observed on social media sites.

Neutralization-logic 4: Sensitive treatment. The fourth neutralization-logic is about treating a minority or treating minorities different from the majority in a sensitive way. This can happen in two ways. (a) Reacting relatively mildly when worrying, unethical, offensive, or criminal behavior is observed with an individual member or members of a minority group, due to a wish to avoid expressing critical concerns. (b) Giving minorities special treatment in general because they are in an oppressed state. Sensitive treatment also shows how neutralizing can be intended to level up minorities with the aim of equalizing the positions of the minorities to the majority.

Neutralization-logic 5: Collective defusing. *Collective defusing* is about reducing an expected aggressive escalation or a fearful escalation in social opinions. This preventative action is about downplaying the importance of a specific event or new information. This can, for example, be a news-thread that is being distributed on social media sites, wherein someone tries to calm other people down by downplaying the importance or the intensity of a certain event that potentially can get people geared up. Collective defusing usually happens through phrases like "aren't all groups extreme in some areas" or "well, there are probably many aspects to this story, which are excluded." Like many other of the variables, collective defusing can happen in a multitude of ways, source rejection being one of them.

Constant Comparison

The constant comparison method in grounded theory deals with constantly comparing codes and categories in order to reach an end result, the core variable (Holton, 2010). In this study, constant comparison is primarily defined as an academic, habitual pattern for relativistic reasoning. It is the tendency to compare a subject constantly to another subject or idea. In general, this basic reasoning pattern deals with getting different angles on a perspective to expand and nuance the perspective. In neutralizing, the goal of constant comparison is to relativize or delegitimize a critical counter-perspective or counter-proposition. For example, if a critique of a minority issue takes place, the process of constant comparison starts comparing all sorts of different perspectives in the aim of neutralizing the critique, mainly through relativizing or cancelling out the counter-proposition.

Advocating

Advocating for tolerant values shall be understood as pleading and arguing for the case of another group while at the same time promoting one's own in-group through the tolerant worldview. There are two properties of advocating: "confessing virtue" and "inclusioning." Confessing virtue is about showing and exposing one's innermost values and communicating them to members of the in-group and to members outside of the in-

group. Inclusioning (also found in Michal Lysek's [2016] grounded theory on "Collective Inclusioning") deals with advocating for diversifying and broadening the larger collective, and thereby making room for minority identities. Recurrent inclusioning can also be viewed as a way to broaden and consolidate the new collective environment. The dimensions of advocating are similar to the dimension of the communicative style of neutralizing. They vary from "assertive" to "reaching out." Advocating for tolerant values can be shown in an assertive way and can also be communicated in a manner of reaching out. The latter of these two is often carried out in a vulnerable or pedagogic manner that exhibits sympathy, empathy, and identification with minorities. Beside from gaining *virtuous recognition* from the in-group (see the section on "Mobilizing"), reaching out is done with the purpose of reaching across social constructed barriers and touching "the other" and hopefully reaching prejudiced people and the un-enlightened.

Critical Questioning

Critical questioning is about asking critical or tough questions to a counterpart which is either a member of the unenlightened group or a member of the out-group. These critical questions are framed from a tolerant outlook, asserting subjects of tolerance and prejudices. Critical questioning can happen in several ways, e.g. in an offensive manner (somehow interrogating), in a defensive manner, in a diagnosing manner, or in a diplomatic manner. In addition, the pedagogic aspect of critical questioning is often characterized by open critical questions.

As was stated in the introduction to this sub-variable, reversing bias is essentially a free variable due that it is argumentative. Hence, if the context is for it, any number of the other sub-variables can be used in reversing a bias, including the variable *withdrawing* (see the section on "Withdrawing").

Mobilizing

Mobilizing refers to how the in-group interactively is group-mobilizing against the out-group. This happens through stepping in formation, expanding, and advancing the group members and the group agenda. Stepping in formation also includes the organization of information flow around the in-group. Collective regrouping is closely connected to mobilizing. Although collective regrouping is present in all the neutralizing behavior, it can take a more explicit form in mobilizing, where the in-group dynamic can happen at a more group-conscious level. The sub-sub-variables are (a) briefing, (b) fostering, (c) role aligning, (d) virtuous recognition, (e) institutionalizing, and (f) expanding the tolerant field.

Briefing

Briefing refers to updating, informing, conforming, and edifying fellow group members in line with a tolerant framework. The subjects span across general opinion, social studies, understanding prejudices, argumentative aspects and tactics, recent updates in the news or local happenings etc. It is about keeping in-group-members edified, skilled, presentable, and up to date with the current societal context of tolerance and prejudices.

Fostering

Fostering is about gaining new in-group members and further edifying existing members. Fostering new members can for example happen through advocating for compassion,

having solidarity, having community, belonging, achieving status, having intellectual edification, or respecting a collective safe space. The aim is to intellectualize citizens who lack intellectual edification and who are ignorant to prejudiced oppression. The focus is primarily on the unenlightened group but can also include reaching out to the out-group. Fostering in-group members can also take place and is different from briefing, which is more associated with informational content (wherein fostering is more edifying). The following data example illustrates how fostering can take place in a friendly in-group-setting, in this case conveying and teaching each other to gain perspective from new angles.

> **Female B** (interviewee):
> I adapt to how certain groups of people are. But I have my own groups where I talk more about conditions in the world. How one can see things from the outside, from the inside, and from different angles. I don't talk about certain things in certain groups, because people are so fundamentally different from another [there is no purpose to it.]

Role Aligning

Role aligning is the inclination to position oneself relative to one's in-group, filling one's part in the larger group-perspective. This can be done in any number of ways. It can happen through public engagement, organizational support, engaging in discussions, learning, observing, storytelling etc. The intensity does also vary. For example, focusing on the most important aspect of manifesting a tolerant environment, making a small effort, that is "satisfying enough," or personifying the virtue and living it. The key in role aligning is that one sees one's tolerant profile in a larger framework of virtuous duty, virtuous belonging, virtuous being, and/or virtuous expansion.

Virtuous Recognition

Virtuous recognition plays a significant role in mobilizing and in the overall in-group-dynamic. Virtuous recognition comes from tolerant peers, whether they belong to a minority group or not. The closer one is to the virtue of tolerance and the tolerant environment, the better potential for virtuous recognition. Further, the higher virtuous recognition, the more one is potentially able to influence and steer the course of mobilizing. Virtuous recognition can for example be attained through (a) one's level of tolerant understanding, (b) one's effort, (c) one's level of empathy for or articulation of minority perspectives, (d) one's level of assertiveness, (e) one's level of creativity in virtuous understanding etc. In principle, virtuous recognition is everything that is worth giving virtuous recognition and everything that is worth attaining virtuous recognition.

Institutionalizing

Institutionalizing is about neutralizing prejudices through institutional means. The use of institutional means can happen, for example, in the process of legislating minority protection or instilling tolerant values into the values of an organization, formally or informally. Institutionalizing can basically happen in every institutional or organizational setting and is about establishing a deeper and stronger tolerant order, overriding the old order.

Expanding the Tolerant Field

Expanding the tolerant field has to do with taking tolerance in new directions. This is primarily done through new areas of tolerant experience, new areas of prejudiced oppression and new areas for using one's skills and interests for tolerant expression. An element of *trending* is usually involved, accommodating the tolerant expansion. Expanding the tolerant field opens up for new tolerant areas for oneself and others.

Degrouping

Degrouping means to remove a member from a group. In this case, (collective) degrouping means removal of prejudiced members (or prejudiced attitudes) from the collective environment. Degrouping is meant in an active sense, as the continuing removal of prejudiced people or prejudiced behavior from the collective environment. Degrouping is a form of collective out-grouping of an established societal group in society, in this case a part of the majority. The word "degrouping" is also meant to signify a form of collective clique behavior. However, degrouping in neutralizing can both be associated with degrouping prejudiced people and with degrouping prejudiced attitudes or behaviors. In the latter case, attitudes themselves are being degrouped from the collective environment, meaning that attitude management and rhetorical management are part of the degrouping.

Accusation and stereotyping are the main drivers of the degrouping behavior. The properties of degrouping are (a) stereotyping, (b) condemning, (c) stigmatizing, and (d) smearing.

(a) As previously mentioned, neutralizing requires a polar-composition (tolerance versus prejudices). One who discredits or displays negative or critical attitudes towards one minority, or a subject where a minority identity is involved, is usually perceived inclined to resent or oppose minority-identities in general. **Stereotyping** happens through generalizing prejudiced attitudes and attributing this unified vice to the out-group and its members. Hence, this type of stereotyping is about generalizing and simplifying the concept of prejudiced attitudes in relation to prejudiced oppression and a range of minority issues. A property of stereotyping is labelling. Labels can for example be "prejudiced people," "bigots," "country folks," "being biased," "being entitled," "white males," "Nazis," "racists," "being narrow-minded," and so on.

(b) **Condemning** is simply the in-group's behavior of condemning the out-group. The dimension of condemning is from "ignoring" to "resentment" to "strong condemnation." Ignoring is the least charged aspect and happens when one is not taking another person seriously and will rather just ignore him, either mildly or directly. Ignoring can also be less condemning and be more based in critical judgment. In the middle of the dimension is resentment, from mild to strong resentment. Strong condemnation is at the other end of the spectrum and represents when there are wishes to outcast prejudiced people from society, send them to jail, or for example exposing them publicly and so on (based on data from social media sites). Condemning can also be extended to accusing and installing feelings of guilt in the out-group.

(c) **Stigmatizing** deals with disgracing the out-group and thereby degroups them from the larger collective. Disgracing is used in the sense of making them social undesirables and misfits for a tolerant society.

(d) **Smearing** the out-group and its members happens within the in-group and in interaction with the out-group and the unenlightened group. Smearing can happen in all social settings, for example in public contexts or in a friendly come-together. Smearing can also for example be characterized by mockery or ridicule which can happen in any number of ways, e.g. labeling or critical questioning.

Withdrawing

Withdrawing refers to the act of withdrawing from prejudiced attitudes when irritation or the psychological distress gets too overwhelming. That is, when a tolerant person experiences too high a dosage of prejudices. Withdrawing entails a variety of behaviors in removing oneself (and sometimes others) from a prejudiced environment or from prejudiced people. This can both happen in a social context for a small period of seconds or minutes and can also happen in the context of a longer period where prejudiced attitudes are avoided altogether. The properties are (a) *shutting off*, (b) *getting offended*, (c) *avoiding,* and (d) *recovering*.

(a) **Shutting off** is when one closes oneself off from the immediate environment. How one shuts off is generally in connection with the environment; logging off social media, leaving an assembly or just ignoring or mentally withdrawing from what is going on in a social setting. Shutting off is frequently accommodated by *getting offended*. The following data example illustrates how one can be motivated to withdraw from the immediate environment.

> **Female A** (interviewee):
> It makes me so mad. Why does she have to enforce herself onto her and have an opinion about her [opinion about a coworker.] Now it's like a new thing comes in over, it disturbs, now everybody must talk about that for a period [and take care of it.]

(b) **Getting offended** is a reaction to prejudiced transgression of some type and can involve getting hurt and upset. On the one hand, getting offended is caused by the fact that one is sympathizing with minorities. On the other hand, getting offended is about an intrusion in one's nonjudgmental or tolerant environment.

(c) **Avoiding** a prejudiced environment happens after withdrawal as a mode of gaining breath again or regaining emotional stability. Emotional instability is meant in a milder and broader sense, encompassing frustration, depressing states, lack of energy, hopelessness, irritation, and anger among others. Avoiding prejudices can also take place as a proactive behavior, avoiding all or certain prejudiced environments in general or for a while.

(d) **Recovering** is the stage of withdrawing where one has gained emotional stability or has taken a required timeout. When recovering is adequate or complete, one is ready to engage in progressive tolerant-related contexts again. A frequent aspect of recovery is the process of diagnosing prejudices and gaining a better perspective. Recovering can happen after seconds, minutes, days, or periods.

Reflection and Further Research

Neutralizing, as a basic social process, entails disciplines such as rhetoric, social psychological group-dynamics, and political ideology. As a result, the interdisciplinary aspect treads in the forefront and can potentially become a subject for further research.

A broader and more nuanced framework of different forms of neutralizing may create a deeper picture of rhetorical aspects and expand the rhetorical awareness in relation to ideological currents. The behavior in different forms of neutralizing will probably always stereotype through some form of polar-composition. Knowing these polar-compositions and how they are generalized, unified, and polarized can be a good rhetorical instrument in closing in on the other's perspective.

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Seeking to Do What's Best for Baby: A Grounded Theory

Karen Jagiello, James Madison University

Abstract

The purpose of this classic grounded theory study was to develop a theory of how rural breastfeeding women respond to their main concern associated with exclusive breastfeeding. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for infants through the first six months of life. Mothers living in rural U.S. communities exclusively breastfeed less frequently than their urban counterparts. The theory *Seeking to Do What's Best for Baby* emerged from the data and describes the process that mothers work through to do what is best for their baby. The theory consists of a temporal three-stage process: pre-pregnancy nescience, working through, and succeeding or surrendering. The process is influenced by evolving internal conditions and basic social processes which account for the variation in the pattern of behavior. The results of this study begin to fill the gap in knowledge about the choices made by mothers to exclusively breastfeed to six months or to end exclusive breastfeeding.

Keywords: *exclusive breastfeeding, rural, classic grounded theory*

Introduction

Exclusive breastfeeding is considered the healthiest source of nutrition for infants from birth through age six months (American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP], 2012; Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014; World Health Organization [WHO], 2015). Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as giving a baby no food or drink other than breastmilk (WHO, 2015). While researchers have provided evidence that there are numerous health advantages to breastfeeding, most new mothers in the U.S. do not practice exclusive breastfeeding through the recommended six-month period. Rates of breastfeeding initiation in the U.S have risen, yet only 18.8% of new mothers continue to breastfeed for six months (CDC, 2014). No regions within the nation have met the Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding goals, and new mothers in rural areas are significantly less likely to breastfeed or exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months compared to their urban counterparts (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau [MCHB], 2015). This is especially concerning for new mothers who live in rural areas as rural residence is associated with negative health outcomes for residents (Fahs et al, 2012; MCHB, 2013a).

The choice to not breastfeed impacts the health of mother and infant, and creates economic and environmental disadvantages for the family and community. For women, failure to breastfeed is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, and type 2 diabetes (Faupel-Badger et al. 2012; Figueroa et al. 2012; Ip, Chung, & Raman, 2007; McClure, Matov, Ness, & Bimla

Schwarz, 2012; Stuebe, 2009; Stuebe & Schwarz, 2010). The benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for infants are dose dependent with an increased odds of disease as the duration and intensity of breastfeeding decreases (Kramer & Kakuma, 2012). Infants never having been breastfed or having limited breastfeeding exposure also have increased odds of infection-related mortality, childhood obesity, type 1 and type 2 diabetes, leukemia, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), gastrointestinal infection, upper and lower respiratory disease, and otitis media (Ip et al. 2007; Taylor, Kacmar, & Nothnagle, 2005). Rural infants have poorer health outcomes compared to urban infants including increased incidence of low birth weight and preterm birth (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 2013b). Moreover, the postnatal mortality rate is 27% higher than the urban mortality rate including SIDS deaths occurring during the first year of life (HHS, 2013b). The negative impact of failure to exclusively breastfeed, particularly in the rural population, cannot be overstated.

The researcher began this study with a preconceived notion that exclusive breastfeeding to six months was a decision making process and sought to determine why some mothers exclusively breastfed to six months and others did not. The researcher was open to discovery and emergence and as is normal in grounded theory research, hence, a change in the purpose of the study occurred. It became quickly apparent that this medical plan to continue exclusive breastfeeding for a period of time was not a concern of the parents, rather it was to do what they considered best for their baby. The initial purpose of the study was altered to reflect the main concern of the participants: to develop a theory of how rural breastfeeding women respond to their main concern associated with exclusive breastfeeding. S*eeking to do what's best for baby* emerged as the main concern and was continually resolved with the core category, w*orking through,* by every study participant. This concept is one that has not been seen in the literature previously.

Method, Data Collection Analysis

Classic grounded theory was chosen for this study. As little was known about mothers' decisions surrounding exclusive breastfeeding, a theoretical approach using grounded theory was determined to be an efficient method to explore socially-related issues that pertain to women and family health such as breastfeeding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Classic grounded theory also allowed the researcher to understand the experience of exclusive breastfeeding as reported by mothers who have breastfed.

Prior to the start of the study, institutional review board approval was obtained from the university as well as from the hospital system in which participants were recruited. Following approval, a purposive sample comprised of participants who met the inclusion/exclusion criteria was collected. Inclusion criteria for the study were: women who delivered a live singleton infant in the last 12 months and exclusively breastfed beyond hospital discharge, and English-speaking. Exclusion criteria were: non-English speaking, maternal health complications that limited the woman's ability to initiate breastfeeding following delivery, prolonged separation of the infant from the mother preventing feeding upon demand, having an infant who was admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), having an infant with congenital or physical illness that impacted breastfeeding, multiple gestation, and unwilling or unable to sign the consent. Fifteen women were initially

recruited and interviewed. Once the data began to accumulate, and relevant concepts and categories emerged, the researcher conducted theoretical sampling of participants and another four participants were interviewed to elaborate the emerging concepts (Glaser, 1978).

The 19 participants were women between the ages of 19 and 40. All lived in communities in Virginia or West Virginia designated as rural using the Rural Health Information Hub "Am I Rural" (Health Resources and Services Administration, 2015). The distance to the hospital where they sought prenatal care and delivered their babies was between 15 and 50 miles from their home. The majority of participants self-reported as Caucasian (89.47%). The majority also reported having private or military insurance (73.68%) with three reporting federal insurance (Medicaid) and two covered by their parents' insurance. Six (31.58%) of the participants were first-time mothers with the others reporting having two or three children (68.42%). Most of the participants returned to work before their babies were weaned from breastfeeding, with six who did not return to outside employment while breastfeeding. All participants had completed high school with the rest completing some college, college, or graduate school.

Data collection commenced following participant consent. Theoretical sampling was employed to continue participant recruitment until saturation of data occurred. Interviews were conducted in a location of the participants' choice and was stimulated with an initial spill question, "tell me about breastfeeding," followed by additional questions to clarify new ideas that emerged from previous data. No notes or recordings were collected during the interview to promote trust and encourage communication; however, field notes containing observations and a summary of the interview were constructed following each interview (Glaser, 1998).

The analysis of data began with an open exploration of notes, starting with the first interview. This exploration of data was not a linear process. Instead, it was a back and forth process of concurrent data generation and analysis in which the researcher examined all of the data collected and continued throughout the entire process of data collection, to memo, to sort, and to write. The data was analyzed, coded, and sorted using constant comparative analysis. Glaser and Holton (2004) described three types of comparative analysis: (1) incident to incident, (2) concepts to more incidents, and (3) concepts to concepts. Employing these three types of comparative analysis allowed the researcher to discover how the data, concepts, and categories were integrated to become a hypothesis followed by theory generation. The researcher employed a continuous internal cognitive process of constant comparison throughout the study. Substantive coding also began with the first interview as the researcher employed line by line review of all notes (open coding) to identify and categorize the data emerging form the participant's experience. As the core category emerged from the data, the researcher began selective coding to limit coding to only those concepts or fragments of data that related to the core category. Fracturing of the data through constant comparison allowed for the conceptualization of the categories and core to become abstract. As the data were fractured in substantive coding, the researcher began to conceptualize the manner in which the fractured data symbolized the core category and looked to generalize the data beyond individual or group. It was during

this process that the fractured data were pulled back together to create a framework for the emerging theory.

Memoing also began with the first interview. For this study, each memo was written individually and stored in a memo fund that was sorted and resorted as new data and memos were added. While the quantity of memos was daunting, the process empowered the researcher to contemplate the data, codes, notes, and impressions while making higher level associations of conceptualization, beyond the individual participant to the process, in the generation of a theory. Through memoing, the researcher was able to identify gaps in existing analyses and develop a conceptualization of the emerging theory. Additionally, the paper trail created by memoing provided an ongoing record of the research process.

As the memos began to accumulate, the researcher began to sift through them and organize them into a conceptual order. This sorting process was also circular in that memos were moved from one pile to another as the theory coalesced. Often the process of sorting generated additional memos or directed the researcher to seek additional data. After sorting resulted in categories that were becoming saturated, the researcher began the next stage of research which was the writing of the first draft of the research.

Methods to assure rigor in all steps of the research were applied and included Glaser's (1998) criteria for rigor—fit, workability, relevance, and modifiability. Throughout the entire process the main concern was identified through the statements of the participants. Each in their own voice and story spoke of the desire and efforts to do what was best for the baby. Therefore, seeking to do what's best for baby emerged as the main concern of rural mothers who planned to exclusively breastfeed. This substantive theory evolved as a three-stage conceptual theory and the concepts that emerged were: (a) stage one, pre-pregnancy nescience; (b) stage two, working through; and (c) stage three, succeeding or surrendering. The component, *working through,* is impacted by four basic social processes and their properties. This substantive theory describes how rural mothers navigate those basic social processes that they encounter as they strive to provide their best for baby.

The Theory of Seeking to Do What's Best for Baby

S*eeking to do what's best for baby* consists of a three-stage process that occurs over time. The stages are *pre-pregnancy nescience, working through,* and *succeeding or surrendering*. The processes are influenced by evolving internal conditions identified as *enculturating*, *believing*, and *lacking knowledge*. Also identified are basic social processes and conditions that influence the core category of *working through* and affect the three-stage process. The basic social psychological processes that impact working through are *struggling, needing support, winging it*, and *admitting fed is best*.

Seeking to do what's best for baby was the most common theme that emerged from all interviews. The actual wording *"best for baby"* was heard repeatedly, particularly in support of breastfeeding as a source of infant nutrition. Indeed, the statement *"best for baby"* was often heard when the participant was asked why she chose to breastfeed–"it's best for baby." The process of *seeking to do what's best for baby* begins with *pre-pregnancy nescience*.

Stage One: Pre-pregnancy Nescience

A period of unknowing exists before women become pregnant and have little or no personal connection with child-rearing. This period is defined as *pre-pregnancy nescience* and describes the insouciant behavior that accompanies a period of time in which concerns of pregnancy, delivery, and childcare are not considered. *Pre-pregnancy nescience* ends when women become pregnant and realize that they will be responsible for caring for their infants. This cutting point signals a change in attitude and focus to the infant.

Evolving Internal Conditions

Most new mothers are concerned with the health and wellness of their newborns. They make decisions on the care and feeding of their newborns while *seeking to do what's best for baby*. Health care professionals recommend that new mothers should exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of their baby's life. A mother's intention to breastfeed her infant exclusively is an essential piece of her strategy when *seeking to do what's best for baby;* with the decision to breastfeed, plans for the duration are frequently made prior to the birth of her infant. A mother will declare her intent to breastfeed often without considering barriers that may occur to prevent her from *succeeding*. Plans to return to work often result in a modification to breastfeeding goals, but mothers adapt and adjust accordingly by pumping to provide breastmilk to sustain their goals of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months*.* An example includes mothers who breastfeed while at home with their infant but pump while at work, carefully storing and transporting the milk home to prevent any need for formula supplementation.

Women entering motherhood experience evolving internal conditions that influence their decisions for caring for their infants. These conditions develop from life experiences, exposure to external ideas, and the vision of themselves as mothers. As *pre-pregnancy nescience* ends, the influence of the evolving internal conditions impacts their plans for childbirth and child-rearing. The three concepts overlap and are titled *enculturating, believing*, and *lacking knowledge.*

Enculturating

This process occurs as women are exposed to breastfeeding. The exposure may have been by having breastfed themselves, having friends who are breastfeeding, and/or education that presented the benefits of breastfeeding. For these women, there is an expectation from their family, friends, and health care providers that breastfeeding will be their choice of infant nourishment. By the time she delivers her infant, the mother has chosen to breastfeed and is prepared to do so regardless of any barriers encountered.

Enculturating was identified in most of the participants interviewed. One reported "breastfeeding is natural, it's what I'm supposed to do." *Enculturating* was reported by the participants as influential in their decision to continue breastfeeding when experiencing issues and barriers to *succeeding.* Indeed, *enculturating* continued beyond the end of breastfeeding with the mothers voicing their intention of breastfeeding subsequent children. A participant who had experienced a very difficult time breastfeeding was asked if she would breastfeed again if she had another child; she responded, "Well yes – why wouldn't I?"

Believing

A second evolving internal condition was identified as *believing* and is comprised of two different components: *believing* in one's ability and *believing* what one is told. The first component describes a mother's vision of her ability to succeed at breastfeeding. *Believing* that breastfeeding is the best way to nourish her infant, a mother also believes that she is able to succeed. *Believing* in the benefits for her infant, she will plan to initiate breastfeeding, and, while aware that she may struggle, will trust that she will be able to overcome any obstacles she encounters. *Believing* overlaps *enculturating* in that it encompasses the opinion that breastfeeding is a normal behavior. This belief was noted in participant statements such as "I knew it was *best for baby*, so I did it" and "I never considered stopping even though it was a struggle."

Before and during pregnancy women are exposed to information related to child care from multiple sources. *Believing* in the veracity of the information, the mother incorporates the knowledge into her plans for raising her infant. This is especially true of recommendations for breastfeeding and infant nutrition. *Believing* in the advice from a trustworthy individual will influence a mother's decision to exclusively breastfeed while she is *seeking to do what's best for baby*, especially when the advice comes from a trusted health care professional. She is conditioned to believe health care professionals and will follow their instructions even when the instructions may oppose her own goals and ideas. This component of *believing* was identified by statements such as "I was told I should breastfeed but no one told me how hard it would be" and "the hospital gave me formula to take home so I guess it's okay to use it."

Lacking knowledge

Unfortunately, while a mother is enculturating and believing, she may be doing so with a knowledge deficit. Her knowledge is limited by her ability to understand, integrate, and utilize any instruction she has received. *Lacking knowledge* impacts a mother's decision-making process to exclusively breastfeed or to problem-solve when encountering barriers to exclusive breastfeeding. Despite the availability of information about breastfeeding, some mothers may not have received instructions, comprehended the content, or were able to apply it as a "hands-on" process. Lack of prenatal education and support after birth further exaggerates the lack of knowledge. Later, while *working through*, mothers who are lacking knowledge will work harder to try to solve a problem. They often fail due to their lack of understanding and fear that they are not doing what is best for the baby. Several participants demonstrated lacking knowledge when issues with breastfeeding, such as poor latch or how to deal with a decreasing milk supply, occurred and no solutions came to mind. One participant offered her infant formula because "her [breast] milk didn't fill her [baby] up." Another reported that she did not know that her "milk supply would decrease if [she] missed feedings and didn't pump."

The most significant example of lacking knowledge was the failure to understand what exclusive breastfeeding entails. Many participants considered exclusive breastfeeding to be the abstinence of any formula supplementation. They did not realize that offering any other food, including cereal, constituted an end to exclusive breastfeeding. Lacking

knowledge was perpetuated by getting mixed messages from pediatricians who informed participants that they should introduce cereal to their infant between four-six months of age.

Stage Two: Working Through

 The theme of *working through* represents a mother's decision to continue to breastfeed despite various barriers she encountered. The suggestion of *working through* evokes an image of an individual struggling through something that is difficult. This refrain is one that was heard during every interview--whether from a mother who *succeeded* in exclusively breastfeeding through the first six months or one who had quit breastfeeding in the first weeks. One participant even used the term when she reported that she "*worked through* the pain" to breastfeed. The idea describes the mothers' commitment to breastfeeding regardless of the difficulty or situation--they simply *worked through*.

Basic Social Psychological Processes (BSPP)

During the process of *working through*, the mother experiences different situations identified as BSPPs that influence the success or failure of her exclusive breastfeeding attempt. These events are variable in nature with mothers experiencing some or all of them at different periods while *working through.* The BSPPs are *struggling, winging it, needing support,* and *admitting fed is best. Struggling* is influenced by the properties *sacrificing, lacking knowledge, searching for help, pumping instead, changing emotions,* and *encountering public stigma*. For the sake of brevity the discussion of the properties will be limited to *sacrificing, pumping instead,* and *encountering public stigma.* Properties of *needing support* are identified as *receiving validation* and *getting mixed messages.*

Struggling. The first BSPP to impact mothers while *working through* is *struggling.* Many breastfeeding mothers experience s*truggling* in their effort to exclusively breastfeed their infant*.* The specific difficulties that trigger s*truggling* are unique to each mother and are not isolated to a single incident. Rather, *struggling* is a fluid variable that occurs randomly, may be repeated, or may be one of many different events experienced. Some causes of s*truggling* include lacking the necessary support to exclusively breastfeed, decreasing milk supply, and experiencing other physical issues such as fatigue, pain, or illness. Participants recounted *struggling* to pump or increase feedings in an attempt to keep up their milk supply to provide breastmilk for their infant. One participant reported that she "struggled to keep her baby's weight up" while exclusively breastfeeding. The *struggling* mother will *work through* successfully or she will not; either outcome would result in an end to the struggle.

Mothers who are *struggling* while *working through* may experience different elements that influence how the mother resolves her main concern of *seeking to do what's best for baby.* Five properties of *struggling* were identified in the study and three are discussed in this section. They were identified from the data and titled *sacrificing, pumping instead,* and *encountering public stigma.* Each was noted to exert either a positive or negative force towards successful *working through.*

Sacrificing. The first property of *struggling* is *sacrificing.* Mothers are often called on to give up or "sacrifice" something for the sake of their infants. One notable example of *sacrificing* is the loss of sleep when exclusively breastfeeding. While nearly all infants will sleep through the night by six months, the months and weeks until then are often disrupted by mothers waking to nurse several times during the night. Mothers are cognizant that these nighttime feedings are essential and that their infants will eventually sleep through the night; however, it is a *sacrifice* of sleep which later impacts a mother's daytime hours.

Pumping instead. A second property of *struggling* is *pumping instead* and describes the extreme actions that a mother will take to provide breastmilk to her infant rather than supplement with formula. Mothers aware of the benefits of breastfeeding decide to use a breast pump to extract milk, store, and later feed their infants. This commonly occurs when mothers are returning to the workforce. Allowing working mothers the opportunity to pump at work is supported by state and federal policies, yet some mothers are unaware of the benefit. One participant stated, "I didn't know that pumping at work was even a thing…"

Pumping instead can also be instituted when mothers believe that their milk supply is low. It can be a means by which to increase their supply. One participant set an alarm to wake up every three hours to pump during the night. The amount of work that is needed to organize, schedule, pump, and store the milk is significant; yet the participants interviewed recounted many examples of *pumping instead* including "breastmilk is best so I pumped even though it was a hassle."

Encountering public stigma. A third property of *struggling* is *encountering public stigma.* One significant issue impacting any breastfeeding mother revolves around what to do in public when the baby needs to breastfeed. For mothers who are exclusively breastfeeding, this topic is of utmost importance. Public breastfeeding has been a topic of discussion in social media and mothers are aware of the stigma related to it. Therefore, they must decide whether to breastfeed their infants in public and how they will deal with any negativity associated with the act.

Participants in this study all reported being aware of the potential for *encountering public stigma,* but few reported having experienced negative comments or reactions themselves. Regardless, they described putting much thought and planning into how they would react to any criticism encountered. One participant said she "didn't want to feel trapped in her home" so she ignored comments and looks from others. Some comments heard were not openly aggressive but still unkind*.* One example was reported by a participant who was asked by a co-worker, "Aren't you done with that yet?" Ultimately, the real or perceived stigma associated with public breastfeeding was something that each participant considered when planning to breastfeeding their infants.

Winging it. A second BSPP encountered is *winging it.* While some mothers sought help to work through the issues they encountered, other mothers chose *winging it*. This BSPP describes the instances where the mother is unprepared for the breastfeeding experience or specific circumstance related to exclusive breastfeeding but is willing to "give it their best try." It also describes the trial and error method of mothering and breastfeeding. Common characteristics of mothers who wing it include being a first-time

mother, having little social support, and having little understanding of what resources are available. While admitting to *lacking knowledge*, the mother desires to breastfeed her infant and plans to do her best or try by *winging it.* One participant summed it up by saying, "I didn't know what I was supposed to do but I knew I was supposed to do something!" She was *winging it* by seeking out information and using social media. Later, she was offered resources through community agencies.

Needing support. The third BSPP encountered is *needing support* and describes the necessity of emotional and physical support required by the mother to exclusively breastfeed*.* The presence or absence of this perceived or actual support directly influences the outcome of exclusive breastfeeding. The mother's significant other is most commonly considered the primary support. Participants interviewed reported that their significant other "was my biggest supporter," "got up in the night and brought the baby to her to nurse," and helped to "shield her so she could breastfeed in public."

The maternal grandmother is the second most common individual to offer support and encouragement, especially if the father of a baby is absent. Other family members and friends are also called upon to provide support for a new mother. One participant commented "even though my mom didn't breastfeed me, she has been right there to help me from the beginning."

A final external support can come from a mother's employer upon return to the workforce. This support includes an employer's understanding of a mother's desire to continue to breastfeed, as well as the willingness to provide breaks at regular intervals and a private location for mothers to pump while at work. Failure to provide this support to breastfeeding mothers can sabotage her efforts*.* There were mixed reports from participants about their experiences with pumping after returning to work. One participant reported that her colleagues "arranged the room so she could pump privately in a corner and not miss the meeting." This was not always the case, as another participant recounted, "they [employers] said I could only pump in the bathroom but there was only one bathroom and the entire time I was trying to pump people were knocking at the door to use it."

The BSPP *needing support* is impacted by two properties identified as *receiving validation* and *getting mixed messages.* Both were noted to exert either a positive or negative force towards successful *working through.*

Receiving validation. Mothers commonly seek out validation for their breastfeeding efforts and of their ability to do what is *best for baby. Receiving validation* communicates a needed reminder of a mother's self-efficacy, of her success at doing what was best for baby, and by providing the needed encouragement for her to continue *working through* when encountering barriers. This positive reassurance reminds mothers of their goals and promotes their ability to achieve them.

The concept of *receiving validation* was heard throughout the interviews. An example of *receiving validation* was heard from one participant who said that her spouse told her he was "proud that she was able to do this for their baby." In this case the positive statements validated the mother's efforts and encouraged continuation of exclusive breastfeeding.

Conversely, a lack of validation negatively impacted another participant's breastfeeding efforts when her significant other "thought it [breastfeeding] was gross."

  Getting mixed messages. Another property of *needing support* is *getting mixed messages.* The ability for mothers to *work through* and *succeed* at exclusive breastfeeding is impacted by their capacity to understand the information they receive. This includes information from the health care professionals they encounter. Inconsistent information and support are termed mixed messages. Mothers who *get mixed messages* may become confused, frustrated, and angry. *Getting mixed messages* was noted by participants in this study. One reported that she offered cereal to her baby before six months because she was given nutritional guidelines from her pediatrician suggesting the introduction of cereal between four and six months of age. *Getting m*ixed messages* on a larger scale was perpetuated by the hospital in which all study participants delivered their infants. One participant pointed out that "the hospital promoted exclusive breastfeeding while I was there; they stressed how important it was for my baby--then they sent me home with a gift bag of formula."

  Admitting fed is best. The fourth BSPP found to impact *working through* is *admitting fed is best.* The participants all shared the common belief that breastmilk was best for the baby but not all were able to exclusively breastfeed or continue breastfeeding at all. The concept admitting fed is best was heard from several participants who perceived or experienced low milk supply, had infants who did not tolerate breastmilk, or underwent difficulties with breastfeeding. One participant stated that it was "better to feed [baby] formula that to starve her."

  The introduction of formula to supplement breastmilk ends exclusive breastfeeding and often precipitates the early discontinuation of breastfeeding altogether. One participant stated that after beginning to supplement her baby with formula "what I had (breastmilk) got less and less and eventually dried up." While mothers reported *struggling* in *seeking to do what's best for baby*, ultimately they *admitted fed is best* was indeed, best.

Stage Three: Succeeding or Surrendering

The process of *seeking to do what's best for baby* concludes with either *succeeding* or *surrendering.* Either *succeeding* or *surrendering* is experienced by a mother and describes the mother's belief in her success.

Succeeding

Ostensibly, *succeeding* with exclusive breastfeeding signifies that a mother exclusively breastfeeds her infant for the first six months of life. In reality, *succeeding* is less prescriptive and instead symbolizes a mother's satisfaction with *seeking to do what's best for baby.* Meeting set goals for exclusive breastfeeding was less important to participants in this study than the overall health and welfare of their infants. This included supplementing with formula if they believed it was in the infant's best interest. Participants reported no feelings of lingering guilt or remorse for their decisions made in the process of *working through* any barriers or complications experienced. S*ucceeding* in this context is therefore

an individual experience and the perception of satisfaction with the achievement of *seeking to do what's best for baby.*

Some participants in the study believed that they succeeded at their breastfeeding effort despite not reaching their goal of exclusive breastfeeding until six months. While some said they had succeeded with exclusive breastfeeding and "never had any issues with breastfeeding;" others experienced setbacks in their plans but believed themselves to still be *succeeding*. A statement by one participant summed it up: "I wanted to do what was best for my baby and breastfeeding just wasn't it; that didn't make me a failure."

Surrendering

Not all mothers believed they were successful in *seeking to do what's best for baby* and surrendered instead. This symbolic giving-in occurs when mothers determine they are no longer able to maneuver through the obstacles encountered during *working through.* The *surrendering* results in the discontinuation of breastfeeding, either voluntarily or unwillingly. In some cases participants were encouraged by either a support or health care provider to "give up" when they were no longer able to work through the struggles encountered, or the health of the mothers or infants was in question. Many different scenarios bring about a *surrendering,* but ultimately it is an emotional giving up of the plan for providing their baby breastmilk for nourishment and a belief that they have not been able to do what's best for baby.

Surrendering was most often heard by participants stating they had done everything they could but were simply unable to continue breastfeeding. Examples included an infant who would not nurse from the breast, a participant's diminishing supply of milk, and instruction by a health care professional to cease breastfeeding. Another example of *surrendering* occurred when a participant received discouragement for breastfeeding from her significant other. In that situation, the mother felt compelled to give up and surrendered to keep the status quo of her family. This situation highlights the influence of the BSSP within the culture and hierarchy of families.

Once mothers work through *changing emotions* associated with *struggling* and then *surrendering,* they again focus on *seeking to do what's best for baby*. Each participant was willing to breastfeed if she had another child. One participant said it best: "It didn't matter how hard it was, I would do it again because it's better for the baby."

Discussion

Seeking to do what's best for baby represents a new substantive theory that emerged from the stories of the participants. The theory explains how rural mothers attempt to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months and navigate the basic social processes they encounter to resolve their main concern: doing what is best for their baby. The three stage process occurs over time during which mothers are influenced in their decision to exclusively breastfeed by their families and social interactions. Mothers also find that they are faced with both BSPPs that may support or hinder their success at exclusive breastfeeding. Exclusive breastfeeding ends the process of *working through* and the mother is left with the emotional response of *succeeding* at her goal to do what is best for baby or *surrendering* to

the realization that she did not do what was best. Regardless of the response, the mother will eventually move forward in her plans to do what is best for baby.

Limitations

Limitations of the study included having a small, relatively homogenous, and well educated group of participants. Another participant-related limitation was identified when one participant self-identified late in an interview that she did not meet two of the inclusion/exclusion criteria having had a history of Buprenorphrine use and her baby being admitted to NICU. The interview was completed and the data translated to field notes. The memos and coding were not affected by the inclusion of this participant's data. Indeed, there were such similarities to other data collected that the researcher was struck by commonalities despite the breach of protocol.

Other limitations of the study related to the rigor of the study. Credibility was impacted by the researcher's personal experience as well as an early literature review required in the dissertation process. Fit may have been compromised by potential forcing of data although a clear relationship between the participants' stories and the concepts found in the theory were recognized. The emerging concepts were generalized and each participant was able to identify their own journey in the process of *seeking to do what's best for baby*, but until the study is repeated the generalizability and relevance to other groups is unknown. Finally, modifiability was addressed by the many revisions and ongoing mixing and remixing of components and their properties. The ending of the study should not limit the introduction of new ideas nor close the findings to correction and change (Glaser, 1978).

Implications

The new grounded theory of *seeking to do what's best for baby* is one that has many potential implications for nurses and the discipline of nursing. While the theory speaks of the mother caring for her infant, the need for changes in education, practice, breastfeeding policy, and research was identified as essential to promote exclusive breastfeeding and maternal success in doing what is best for her baby. Further, the need for closer scrutiny of the health care and organizational policies related to exclusive breastfeeding is essential. In keeping with the focus and concepts, the new grounded theory *seeking to do what's best for baby* contributes to the discipline of nursing by exploring the meaning of the situations experienced by new mothers as they exclusively breastfeed, provides an understanding of the pattern of evolving forces shaping their experiences, and guides future actions to promote exclusive breastfeeding (Newman, Smith, Pharris, & Jones, 2008).

Education

To promote success, health care workers must provide mothers with comprehensive education endorsing exclusive breastfeeding prior to delivery and offer resources for continued education throughout the duration of their breastfeeding efforts. Education offered only during pregnancy will increase the rate of initiation but will not support long-term exclusive breastfeeding (WHO, 2016a, UNICEF, 2005). This includes elaborating on what the actual practice of exclusive breastfeeding involves. Many mothers do not understand that the introduction of cereal before six months ends exclusive breastfeeding

(Arts et al., 2011; Nor et al., 2011; Thet et al., 2016). Having an understanding of what defines exclusive breastfeeding may produce an increase in the duration of exclusive breastfeeding for some mothers.

The educational resources should also be available for families as well as mothers. Educating fathers and grandmothers can promote successful exclusive breastfeeding through hands-on and emotional support. The lack of familial support has been shown to interfere with exclusive breastfeeding support (Goodman, Majee, Olsberg & Jefferson, 2016; Herndon, 2015; Hohl, Thompson, Escareno, & Duggan, 2016). Including families in breastfeeding education and advocating for exclusive breastfeeding may be one way to help achieve success.

Practice

The need for consistent and standardized education for rural mothers is essential to success in exclusive breastfeeding. Nurses who provide care for new mothers should practice using current evidence-based methods to establish early exclusive breastfeeding (Allen, Perrine, & Scanlon, 2015; Hjalmhult & Lomborg, 2012: Sheehan, Schmied, & Barclay, 2013). Therefore, nurses should be trained to provide consistent and standardized education and care to new mothers' that is uniform between nurses and practitioners and in accordance with CDC recommendations for breastfeeding (Baby-Friendly USA, 2012; CDC, 2015).

A repeated theme of a perceived lack of compassion and assistance from lactation consultants was heard from participants during interviews. This perceived failure of support during the first days following delivery later impacted the mothers' willingness to seek out help when *struggling* with exclusive breastfeeding. The perception of lack of caring by lactation consultants is very concerning and should be investigated.

Finally, the need to cease offering mixed messages to mothers is paramount to promoting exclusive breastfeeding to six months. This idea was identified by other authors (Ahluwalia, Morrow, D'Angelo, & Li, 2012; MacVicar, Kirkpatrick, Humphrey, & Forbes-McKay, 2015) as well as in this study. The specific concern was voiced by mothers who received formula at discharge from the hospital and who received instructions from their pediatricians to introduce solids to their infant between four-six months of age. The mixed messages created confusion and negated the mothers' intention to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of life. Acknowledging that the journey of breastfeeding is individual and specialized for each mother/baby dyad, the baseline information must still be consistent and evidence-based following set guidelines.

Policy

State and federal breastfeeding policies should be reviewed, revised, and enforced. Lack of support for continued breastfeeding after returning to employment was noted in the literature (Hohl et al. 2016; Thet et al. 2016). Participants in this study reported a lack of knowledge regarding their rights for public and workplace breastfeeding. Participants reported being allowed to breastfeed their infants or pump their breasts at work but then were forced to do so in a non-private place or in a public bathroom. Laws that endorse public and workplace breastfeeding or pumping are state-specific but are all supportive in

their language of advocacy. Unfortunately, the message is not publicized or enforced. Methods to communicate a mother's right should be clearly stated on websites of federal and state laws.

Research

The findings of this study exposed many gaps in literature and demonstrated many avenues of future research to promote exclusive breastfeeding practices for rural women. A majority of the empirical literature concerning exclusive breastfeeding for rural populations is from international studies. The need for research focusing on rural U.S. populations was identified. Other areas that were identified as needing specific emphasis include: exploration of theory concepts, assessment of educational innovations, enculturating to breastfeeding, providing additional resources, and failing in exclusive breastfeeding.

Conclusion

The theory *seeking to do what's best for baby* is supported by scientific and theoretical literature. It helps to fill the gap in knowledge that was noted between the mothers' decision to exclusively breastfeed to six months and the end of their exclusive breastfeeding experience. The knowledge that previously exists does not fully explain the experience nor personalize the journey that occurs when exclusively breastfeeding. Additional research is called for to promote the practice of exclusive breastfeeding for both mothers and practitioners, as the lack of consistency in information and care impacts all mothers who are seeking to do what's best for baby. The issues relating to exclusive breastfeeding have not changed over the last thirty years, yet new literature identifying methods to improve the statistics are slow to emerge. This research employs grounded theory to return to the root of the problem by exploring "what is going on" and discovered several new insights that beg further exploration by all researchers to promote healthy outcomes for infants living in rural communities.

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Value-based Mavericking

Maureen P. Molinari, Saybrook University, USA

Kara Vander Linden, Saybrook University, USA

Abstract

This classic ground theory (CGT) study presents a theory to explain a four-stage process for resolving moral distress encountered in professional environments. Value-based mavericking explains that misalignment between personal and professional values may lead to moral distress and burnout and, that while coping strategies may ease symptoms, the underlying problem still exists. Value-based mavericking presents a process that includes evaluating professional alignment and values and then choosing if and how to continue working in the current professional environment. Following the CGT method, data from primarily healthcare professions were collected. Data were analyzed using coding and constant comparative analysis to develop the theory. Value-based mavericking presents a different way of approaching moral distress and burnout that has not been previously addressed in the literature.

Keywords: classic grounded theory, moral distress, burnout, values

Introduction

Burnout has been recognized as an occupational hazard and widely researched since the mid-1970s, when psychoanalyst Herbert J. Freudenberger first coined the term (Freudenberger, 1977). Freudenberger (1977) observed a concerning trend in some of his patients. People who were once enthusiastic and dedicated employees began reporting fatigue, boredom, or feelings of being overworked despite the fact that no other factors in their lives seemed to have changed. Since burnout was recognized and the term coined, numerous researchers have been trying to determine ways to lessen the burden of burnout in the professional environment. Consequences of burnout are pervasive, including affecting physical and emotional health and organizational loss (Awa, Plaumann, & Walter, 2010; Marine et al., 2006). The economic impact of burnout is challenging to quantify and is often measured in terms of absenteeism and turnover (Jacobson et al., 1996; Raiger, 2005). Some of the suggested causes of burnout at the organizational level include "insufficient time, skills, and or lack of social support at work" (Marine et al., 2006, p. 1). Due to significant consequences for individuals and organizations, numerous researchers are searching for ways to ease the effect of burnout. Throughout the literature, moral distress and burnout are recognized as potential threats to wellbeing. People experiencing moral distress and burnout may not experience optimal wellbeing or experience job satisfaction.

This study began by looking at the relationship between healthcare practitioners and their clients. However, the main concern of participants that emerged from the data of this classic grounded theory study was the impact of moral distress and burnout on their professional and personal lives. This occurred as the first practitioner interviewed discussed

the role that one client had in becoming her champion as she modified her career path. The main concern that emerged from this interview and the ones that followed was related to moral distress and burnout experienced by healthcare professionals when various aspects of the healthcare system prevented them from being able to best serve the needs of their clients. Thus, moral distress frequently leads to burnout. Value-based mavericking presents a process that includes evaluating professional alignment and values to then choosing if and how to continue working in the current professional environment.

Methodology

This classic grounded theory study was performed by a doctoral student studying Mind Body Medicine at Saybrook University. To arrive at a theory based on "an integrated set of conceptual hypotheses" (Glaser, 1998, p. 3), the authors were guided by six stages, many which occurred simultaneously throughout the research process. The stages of a CGT study are preparation, data collection, constant comparative analysis, memoing, sorting and theoretical outline, and writing.

In preparation for this study, a general area of interest was identified as the client-practitioner relationship. A preliminary literature review was not conducted to follow the dictates of the method and to limit preconception on the topic area (Glaser, 1998).

Data collection and analysis began with the collection of the first interview with a health care provider, which was coded using open coding as described by Glaser (1978). Initially, every concept in the data that the researcher could identify was coded. The question "what is this data a study of?" (Glaser & Holton, 2007, p. 48) drove open coding. Coding continued throughout the dissertation process, yet switched to selective coding when the core variable, the variable that accounts for the most variation in the data, emerged. During coding, the researcher enacted strategies to increase awareness of and set aside preconceptions. Theoretical sampling, as guided by the theoretical ideas developing from data analysis, was used throughout to identify subsequent data sources, primarily interviews with other healthcare providers, to reach theoretical saturation when no new variation was found in the data (Glaser, 1998).

Constant comparative analysis was used throughout the research process. As each piece of data was collected and coded, the concepts that were identified in the data were compared to each other to discover theoretical patterns and relationships within the data. These patterns and relationships were captured in the form of memos. According to Glaser (2013), "memos are where the emergent concepts and theoretical ideas are generated and stored when doing GT analysis" (para. 3).

As explained by Glaser (1998), theoretical coding was then used to tie the concepts of the emerging theory back together by conceptualizing the relationship between the concepts. Theoretical coding helped identify the underlying structure of the theory as memos were sorted and a theoretical outline was developed. At this point, relevant literature was integrated and the theory was written up.

Value-based Mavericking

A grounded theory seeks to explain a pattern of behavior used by the participants in the substantive area to resolve a main concern.   Within the theory of value-based mavericking,

the main concern is transcending moral distress that is discovered, or uncovered, while building a career. Some people enter professions with preconceived ideas about how their professional role will unfold. Those entering helping professions may be following a calling to serve others and are often guided by ethical and professional standards intended guide the scope of practice. However, in trying to adhere to the ethical and professional standards, organizations sometimes create structures and guidelines that prevent professionals from being able to fully help others creating a scenario where moral distress occurs. Moral distress, within the theory of value-based mavericking, is a feeling of despair, occurring when witnessing situations in professional settings where one's personal and professional values conflict with the values and operational guidelines of organizations. Moral distress may intensify as situations challenging one's moral values continue to present; yet, one feels limited in their autonomy to offer solutions. Feeling unable to offer and implement a different manner of easing situational challenges may cause moral distress.

Value-based mavericking explains that misalignment between personal and professional values may lead to moral distress and burnout and, that while coping strategies may ease symptoms, the underlying problem still exists. Value-based mavericking presents a process that includes evaluating professional alignment and values to then choosing if and how to continue working in the current professional environment or to create a new career path.

Value-based mavericking is a process for creating an integrated value-based personal and professional identity by examining and uniting values in a manner resulting in a unified identity. Stage 1, *discovering a profession*, presents influences such as family values and environment that affect profession choice. Stage 2 is defined by a *growing awareness* that is triggered by encountering conflict within the professional environment. Using mind body skills such as meditation and journaling, may aid in increasing self-awareness. Self-awareness continues to grow, increasing sensitivity to value conflict and identifying areas of moral distress. Stage 3, *superseding moral distress*, is choosing how to resolve moral distress in the professional environment and includes developing a vision and identifying champions who assist in the process. Understanding that the original professional choice may not accurately represent current values marks stage 4, *resolving moral distress: uniting values,* and involves choosing how to integrate and align personal and professional values. Some continue working within the current organizational system; others straddle two worlds–the conventional and unconventional, some change careers, and yet others choose to do nothing.

Stage 1 Discovering a Profession

Stage 1, *Discovering a Profession*, begins with recognizing how values were formed and then understanding if and how values influenced initial career selection. Values play an integral role in professional choice, yet some values may have been reflexively adopted from family, community, and or the environment where one lives. Over time, adopted values, and those not consciously chosen, may not accurately reflect one's present-day values. Values are important because they provide a foundation for interpreting various situations, especially situations in the professional environment that challenge moral values. Fitzpatrick et al. (2016) investigated the processes of articulating or changing values and increasing value-congruent behavior. In the study by Fitzpatrick et al. (2016), the authors explained how

challenges made values more salient to participants. With awareness of values, individuals needed to focus attention on the processes of clarifying and living congruently with values. Value-based mavericking uncovered a similar pattern of behavior. Discovering the connection between one's values and choice of profession is a key concept in uncovering moral distress in later stages of this process. When values are incongruent, moral distress emerges or deepens. Several factors influence values including personal beliefs, family values, external environment, social norms, pursuing financial security, responding to a calling, and discovering proclivity.

Personal beliefs and values. Personal beliefs are values guiding decision-making and are formed by various influences, such as family, cultural, personal experiences, and for some, social norms of their physical environment. Personal beliefs form a foundation to interpret cultural norms and influence how situations are understood. Some personal beliefs are unwavering. Others are shaped by the influence of other people, families, and events occurring in the personal and professional environment. Schwartz (1994) suggested that values are acquired through socialization to dominant group values and "through unique learning experiences of individuals" (p. 21), suggesting that values are fluid and influenced by various factors. In value-based mavericking, personal beliefs may shift over time particularly with additional professional and life experiences, such as an unexpected death of a loved one. A participant shared how financial independence grew into one of her core values following the death of her father, which in turn led to her mother being financially vulnerable. Financial vulnerability led the participant to choose a profession to compliment her desire to be a healer and also to achieve financial independence.

Family values and career choice are also intertwined. Families often share patterns of beliefs and values, such as valuing education, or not, expectations of marriage and family, and financial beliefs, all of which were seen in the data. For example, if families experienced financial scarcity and decreased quality of life, family members may champion professions perceived as providing financial security.   Family influence may be supportive, such as the formal or informal introduction of role models. Role models may introduce professional opportunities not previously explored and may lead to uncovering interests that one had not considered. On the other hand, those not feeling aligned with family values, may not feel compelled to please family members. If family values influenced individual career choice, yet it is later discovered that those values do not represent one's true aspirations, career misalignment may emerge. Some follow family expectations, conforming to family values as opposed to pursuing individual personal interests that may not reflect one's true ambitions.

A calling, in this theory, is an internal feeling, a pull toward a profession that may override other factors, such as family values. Honoring a calling may feel virtuous, a feeling some are driven to fulfill and will do whatever it takes to realize the calling. Some approach professions to which they feel called with a sense of honor or a desire to be of service to others; yet, not all callings are associated with serving others. Participants described feeling a professional calling; one participant stated it this way, "It's totally my calling," when discussing current professional choice to work in the medical field.

Experiencing a calling can also present a challenge, particularly when a calling is drawing someone toward an unconventional professional choice. Whereas conventional careers paths often have clearly defined educational and on the job training requirements,

unconventional professional choices often lack direct educational requirements, training, or career path. This lack of perceived certainty may oppose family and or professional values of conformity. Following the calling may then be experienced as oppositional to norms. Since unconventional career paths may not be as well defined, the person may need to develop resolve or have a champion to overcome barriers. A participant noted how a previous patient became a champion of her skills encouraging her to start a private practice. Yet making the change took time and resolve. Making career choices based on influencing factors such as family values, rather than following an internal desire or calling, may be unsettling. If one feels a calling, yet is unable to honor the call, then a spiritual void may arise.

Experiencing a spiritual void may be precipitated by disconcerting professional and or personal experiences. Researchers investigating the benefits and consequences of pursuing a calling have suggested that a calling may change over time, be influenced by external experiences (Dobrow, 2007), and lead to greater self-congruence and positive life satisfaction (Hagmaier & Abele, 2015). Kaminsky and Behrend (2015) suggested that one may be drawn to a particular profession, yet not experience a calling. Regardless if one is following an internal calling or not, once a profession choice is made, there is usually a period of education and on-the-job training that follows. During a time of education and training, external experiences may uncover a calling or proclivity for something else.

Stage one concludes with developing professional expectations and shaping professional identity. Developing professional expectations is a process that often begins during stage one and while choosing a career. Professional expectations are influenced by various factors and may contribute to expectations of how professional life will be. A participant shared that he chose to pursue a career in medicine yet after working in the field became disillusioned by the expectation of organizations to more time completing documentation of patient encounters than spending time talking with clients. The experience of prioritizing electronic charting over interaction with clients eventually led to symptoms of burnout.

Factors influencing professional expectations include family values around professional expectations, peers in similar professions, time spent during education, and various factors experienced during the continual process of mastering skills associated with professional expectations. Significant resources, such as time, money to pay for education and training, may have been dedicated to achieving the vision of a professional role.

Shaping professional identity is the culmination of developing a professional persona influenced by individual values, education, and training. Career roles are often associated with a specific professional identity, such as developing a sense of authority or being an expert, which may lead to developing confidence. Gaining the confidence of a professional identity may allow one to interpret professional interactions through a lens of experience, rather than relying on professional scope of practice or predominant culture to ascribe meaning to events and circumstances. This is an integral piece of stage one because it is the culmination of developing self-awareness and understanding how various influences shaped professional identity while also becoming an expert. Expertise gained may allow a person to think independently, outside of professional norms or other influences.

Discovering a profession suggests a variety of influencing factors lead one toward a specific profession. Some factors support individual interests, including family values, while others, such as the external environment, may not be supportive, such as having limited access to educational opportunities. Those with strong family values may consciously or unconsciously make career choices in order to appease family members. Sometimes initial career choices reflect a combination of personal and familial values, resulting in career choices providing a fulfilling professional career. That may not be the case for everyone. Many are unable to identify an interest early in their life and instead choose a career for other reasons, such as seeking financial stability, which is still often linked to values. During stage 1, some are learning and mastering the skills of a profession, while simultaneously identifying and clarifying individual values.

Stage 2 Growing Awareness

Stage 2 of Value-Based Mavericking is *Growing Awareness.* Growing Awareness involves recognizing a gap between values when continually experiencing events in the professional environment that challenge values. Feeling challenged by this misalignment is distressing and for some, affects family life. In the beginning of becoming aware of misalignment, some people use mind body skills to help increase awareness of the source of discontent or to help identify the cause of distress. Using mind body skills, such as meditation, or mindful movement may aid in the process of determining how to respond to moral distress. *Growing Awareness* is composed of two phases: *encountering conflict* and *recognizing and identifying areas of moral distress.*

Encountering conflict. Encountering conflict in the professional environment is likely, yet the source of conflict differs for each person. Encountering conflict is experiencing events that conflict with one's values, such as perceived marginalization of others as seen in the data. It may also involve ineffectively and repeatedly managing problematic situations without changing the outcome. Experiencing repeated events that are in contrast to one's values may be stressful and result in internal conflict. Some people accept challenging situations as an inevitable part of the professional environment while others are bothered by situations challenging values and may experience an awakening of self-awareness. Stressors occurring in the professional environment, especially repeated ones, may prompt some to begin to question if the professional environment is a good fit. This is the first phase in growing awareness.

When encountering significant events, some choose to reckon the events while others may isolate themselves, cocooning, while reflecting on values and choosing what to do. In a longitudinal study, Fitzpatrick et al. (2016) suggested that the more aspects of a life situation change the more values adapt over time, a process called "values socialization" (p. 8). A period of cocooning or retreating to examine values may assist in determining how to proceed. If life-based and career-based stressors occur simultaneously, then the personal effect may be greater, provoking additional self-awareness.

As a result of feeling challenged by stressors, some seek and learn supportive coping strategies, such as meditation or balanced physical activity in which some participants engaged. For example, one participant, working in a stressful environment, recognized that other people's emotions were causing stress to themselves and to him. Through additional training, he learned techniques to mitigate other people's stress, which in turn help him

better care for his own emotional health. Others turn to unsupportive behaviors to deal with stress, such as substance abuse or emotional eating as described by other participants. When choosing supportive, health-enhancing coping mechanisms, individuals may be introduced to different peer groups and perhaps different ways of thinking or evaluating experiences. The introduction to different peers may also result in deepening self-awareness, especially when accompanied by the introduction of new and different perspectives and ways of coping. Although helpful to immediately ease symptoms of stress, learning and using coping skills may have limited effectiveness for mitigating underlying causes of stress. However, the awareness developed by using these coping strategies may aid in recognizing and identifying areas of moral distress, the next step in growing awareness.

Recognizing and identifying areas of moral distress. The emergence of moral distress, caused by value conflict, is different for each person. Identifying a value conflict and not being able to change the culture, leads to moral distress. Experiencing value conflict in the professional environment, particularly when the source of the conflict opposes the original calling for pursuing a specific profession, may result in moral distress. People working in helping professions may be particularly vulnerable to moral distress when identifying value conflict. For example, a participant, also working in healthcare, shared how external issues outside of her control, such as the lack of insurance reimbursement for preventive healthcare services and changing healthcare culture, awakened feelings of moral distress as her job was more focused on billable services than patient health. Organizational culture and values of prioritizing financial profit over client health opposed the participants value of being a healer who provide care to prevent illness without regard to profit. Recognizing moral distress in the professional environment begins the process of choosing how to reckon such experiences.

Experiencing personal stress while simultaneously experiencing value conflict in the professional environment may also affect how moral distress is perceived, magnifying aspects of personal and professional situations that are incongruent with one's values. Separating personal and professional values may be challenging, professional productivity may decline and/or personal relationships suffer. Consequently, some may not respond to personal or professional stress in the same manner. Those experiencing moral distress and feeling that their profession is a calling may feel compelled to identify solutions, reckoning moral distress to continue working in the chosen profession. One aspect of reckoning personal and professional values is to re-assess professional expectations.

Sometimes, professional life does not mirror professional expectations that were developed in stage one. If a professional environment fails to meet professional expectations, then some experience value conflict and may feel ineffective in his or her professional role and this experience may lead to moral distress. For example, a participant reflected on his dedication to his career, yet expressed frustration and personal conflict with the medical profession when patient care was affected by the need to do excessive paperwork, which made him begin to consider other career options.

The culmination of stages one through three lead some to a threshold, a time to choose what to do. Choice becomes an important personal tool, choosing to remain in one's current situation or taking a leap and making a change. Change is inherently challenging

and often a slow progression if the choice is to make a change. However, making a choice to change is often needed to proceed to the next stage, *Superseding Moral Distress*.

Stage 3 Superseding Moral Distress

Stage 3, *Superseding Moral Distress*, is about assessing the current situation and determining what may be required to reckon moral distress. Often, the initial reaction is to seek out new skills or ways to ease conflict in the professional environment, yet that may not provide a solution.

Value conflict is the essence of moral distress and understanding values may provide clarity about how situations opposing foundational values may lead to moral distress. Clarity about values assists in the process of noticing solutions. Superseding moral distress is fluid, different for each person and situation and therefore a range of actions exists. A common solution is assessing if additional skills or a different approach to challenging situations might be required to improve the current situation. Seeking an external solution is important because it exposes people to different people and ideas.

In many instances, when encountering moral distress, the current professional situation becomes unbearable and fraught with internal conflict that affects quality of life. Some look for ways to assuage feelings by considering if and how new skills may help, placing value on an external solution to an internal conflict. Actively seeking answers often leads to the introduction of new people and developing a support system. Meeting new people may introduce new ideas or a different way of approaching the problem. Meeting new people and seeking social support, often outside of one's usual support system, may be part of the process of superseding moral distress by fostering connection. Connection may ease feelings of being different from peers and the conundrum of how to navigate encountering moral distress in the professional environment. Social support may include identifying champions, supportive people who help identify ways to build or enhance professional networks. Identifying champions is a key piece to this stage as a relationship with a champion may feel validating, rather than feeling alone, stuck, and lacking a solution.

Reaching out to different people is taking a step toward being open to change. With openness and curiosity, champions, who are people supporting another person's skills and ideas, may be found. Champions may provide support and encouragement and may also provoke different ways of thinking about how to address barriers. One participant shared about the supportive role a champion played in her journey to open a private practice. The champion was a supporter of her skills and was sure to introduce her to potential clients, championing her therapeutic skills and recommending her services to friends and colleagues. Champions may also introduce individuals to different professional networks, expanding professional boundaries. Relationships with champions may also help a person become more self-assured, a useful skill if leaving a conventional professional environment to pursue unconventional, undefined profession. Champions may provide a bridge for people who may be conflicted between wanting to do something else yet lacking self-assuredness to move forward.

Identifying champions may also lead toward creating a tribe. A tribe is a group of individuals that share common ideals, not necessarily professions. A participant shared an experience of awakening when identifying a tribe, "You're with a group of similarly minded people and almost always some amazing things happen."

In the process of assessing if additional skills are necessary or determining how to supersede moral distress, some may choose inaction as a choice. Inaction may be based on current life circumstances, such needing to provide financial security for others, or a variety of other reasons unique to individuals. Developing clarity by examining values and assessing skills and professional options may also lead toward developing a vision for resolving moral distress.

Stage 4 Resolving Moral Distress: Uniting Values

Resolving Moral Distress: Uniting Values, the fourth and culminating stage of Value-based Mavericking, is characterized by mavericking, an individualized pursuit to unite personal and professional values guided by clarity of individual values gained during previous stages. Armed with self-awareness of the intersection between professional and personal values gained during previous stages, and how uniting both may lead to professional fulfillment, people make choices about to proceed forward. Some choose to continue working within the current organizational system; others straddle two worlds–the conventional and unconventional, some change careers, and yet others choose to do nothing. With awareness of one's values, professional choices may be assessed with the intention of understanding and then perhaps, uniting personal and professional values. How people choose to align values varies based on a variety of factors. Some change professional roles, others remain in a current role despite value misalignment. However, when choosing to remain in one's current role, there is an increased personal self-awareness regarding the cause of the misalignment and also an understanding about reasons to remain.

Choosing how to align personal and professional values is the uniting piece of this process theory, even choosing to do nothing is a complex decision influenced by various factors. Choices are unique and based on a reckoning of adopted and current values with a clear understanding of how one's current life situation and responsibilities may influence choices. For some, the lack of a clearly outlined professional path and not knowing how to navigate a new path may be unsettling, especially for those who have followed a linear professional life path and have been influenced by conventional values. This stage highlights the importance of developing or enhancing self-awareness around values to then be able to choose how to create a professional life that complements one's values. Understanding various factors that led one to identify and choose a career are pivotal pieces in understanding oneself more clearly. Factors such as family, geographic location, exposure to a variety of career options, or not, influence career choice. Understanding such factors during previous stages of the theory may be important for understanding how and why moral distress and professional misalignment emerged and then this knowledge and self-awareness may be part of the solution for resolving moral distress.

Elements of previous stages inform how one navigates stage four. Options for resolving identified in Value-based Mavericking include doing nothing, remaining in a current role, leaving a current profession in pursuit of one that better reflects one's values, straddling two professional environments to meet different personal needs, or remaining in the current environment and seeking solutions to problems. Resolving moral distress varies depending on various influencing factors, yet choices are made with a higher degree of self-awareness. There is a complexity of balancing life's demands, such as meeting financial needs for family, while holding one's values in high regard.

The non-linear process results in choosing a pathway that best serves a person in his or her current life and is not a dogmatic linear, one-size fits all process.   The process one chooses begins by examining and uniting values. Examining and understand the root of some values, is essential in beginning the process for unifying one's identity. Additionally, value-based mavericking includes making intentional career choices and decisions, uniting personal and professional values into an integral representation of oneself.   This representation of oneself may occur in a conventional professional environment, or by creating a different, or sometimes unconventional professional environment. The unique aspect and driving force of value-based mavericking is the intention of uniting values.

Conclusion

The main concern of participants of this classic grounded theory study was the impact of moral distress and burnout on their professional and personal lives. The pattern of behavior used to address this concern is value-based mavericking. Value-based mavericking explains that misalignment between personal and professional values may lead to moral distress and burnout and, that while coping strategies may ease symptoms, the underlying problem still exists. Value-based mavericking presents a process of evaluating professional alignment to choose if and how to continue working in the professional environment. Value-based mavericking is a process for creating an integrated value-based personal and professional identity by examining and uniting values in a manner resulting in a unified identity. Individuals experience and resolve moral distress and burnout differently, yet the connecting thread of how each person resolves his or her moral distress is using individual values to guide the process. Values, based on the family and cultural environment that people are born into, begin to be examined to determine if current values aligned with current worldview. This theory proposes that examining and understanding how a variety of influences, such as family and environment, unconsciously leads to the development of individual values that then proceed to guide behaviors, such as choosing a career. Each person chooses a unique career path based on individual values and various life circumstances. If misalignment between personal and professional values within the career leads moral distress individual values may guide resolving moral distress encountered in the professional environment. With an awareness of how various influences may have guided original career choices, some begin the process of resolving moral distress encountered in the professional environment. The process begins with a reckoning of the values one is born into and with the acknowledgement of influences that shaped those values, moving forward, aligning, and then choosing an action that is most suitable. Some make changes, some do not. Not everyone has the ability or willingness to acknowledge how the past has shaped choices and to do something about it, such as make career changes. Value-based mavericking is about the process of making a choice.

Discussion

Value-based mavericking has obvious connections to literature in the area of moral distress and burnout but also to self-determination theory. A brief discussion of the related literature and its relation to value-based mavericking is presented next.

Moral distress

Jameton (1984) originally coined the term moral distress in the mid-1980s and defined it as, "when one knows the right thing to do but institutional constraints make it nearly impossible

to pursue the right course of action" (p. 6). Varcoe, Pauly, Storch, Newton, and Makaroff (2012) expanded the definition to say that moral distress is "the experience of being seriously compromised as a moral agent in practicing in accordance with accepted professional values and standards. It is a relational experience shaped by multiple contexts, including the socio-political and cultural context of the workplace environment" (p. 59). Using open-ended questions to study nurses' perceptions of moral distress, Varcoe et al. (2012) demonstrated that differing opinions about handling situations in the healthcare environment led to moral distress. Responses to the open-ended questions of the study revealed that nurses felt they were compromising care when following orders of superiors, yet when raising concerns nurses' opinions were overshadowed by organization culture (Varcoe et al., 2012). Further, the experience of moral distress was due to a perceived and also actual sense of powerlessness to provide decisions within healthcare organizations (Varcoe et al., 2012). Value-based mavericking suggests that when experiencing situations compromising values, moral distress emerges triggering some to examine personal and professional values and professional affiliation.

Nathaniel (2007) created a classic grounded theory three-stage process called, Moral Reckoning. The stages include: Stage of Ease, Stage of Resolution, and Stage of Reflection. In the Stage of Ease, "each person evolves a set of core beliefs and values through the process of becoming" (p. 2). In value-based mavericking, values are explored as they relate to choosing a profession in stage 1 and then play an integral role in uncovering moral distress in the professional environment in stage 2. While Moral Reckoning focused only on nurses, the theory supports aspects elucidated in value-based mavericking, such as the importance of value clarification. Additionally, Moral Reckoning suggests "Professional or institutional norms may challenge core beliefs" (p. 3). In value-based mavericking, some were confronted with the dissonance between individual and institutional values that later became a pertinent piece when choosing where and how to unite values. Value-based mavericking suggests that when experiencing situations compromising values, moral distress emerges triggering some to examine personal and professional values and professional affiliation.

In value-based mavericking, experiencing moral distress was a catalyst for increasing self-awareness, examining one's values, and making small steps toward uniting values. Value-based mavericking suggests that moral distress emerges as a consequence of value conflict, which may then lead to burnout.

Burnout

Authors in the area of burnout has focused on defining what it is, its characteristics, and its consequences and there continues to be an ongoing debate and lack of consensus about the application of the term. Freudenberger (1977) was one of the first to describe burnout, which he defined as "becoming exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources" (p. 159) in the workplace. Despite the popularity of the term burnout, there continues to be a lack of consensus among researchers and mental health professionals regarding the significance of the term and if burnout syndrome is a distinct medical disorder and worthy of being included in the DSM IV (Heinemann & Heinemann,

2017).   Burnout has in many instances become a catch all term to describe a common experience.

Key characteristics of burnout include "overwhelming exhaustion; feelings of frustration, anger, and cynicism; and a sense of ineffectiveness and failure" (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998, p. 63), impairing personal and social functioning. Three core dimensions of burnout are described as: emotional exhaustion, referring to feeling depleted of emotional resources; depersonalization, describing a detached response to other people; and reduced personal accomplishment, a decreased sense of self-efficacy leading to possible depression and inability to cope with job demands (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998).   Value-based mavericking suggests a progression from moral distress to burnout.

Consequences of burnout are pervasive, including physical and emotional health and organizational loss (Awa, Plaumann, & Walter, 2010; Marine et al., 2006). The economic impact of burnout is challenging to quantify and is often measured in terms of absenteeism and turnover (Jacobson et al., 1996; Raiger, 2005). Some of the suggested causes of burnout at the organizational level include "insufficient time, skills, and or lack of social support at work" (Marine et al., 2006, p. 1).   Due to significant consequences for individuals and organizations, numerous researchers are searching for ways to ease the effect of burnout.

Yet, despite numerous efforts to resolve burnout, value-based mavericking suggests examining foundational values to identify if one's current professional environment is in alignment with values.   Value-based mavericking suggests that when the gap between personal and professional values widens, symptom management may not appropriately address moral distress and or burnout.   In value-based mavericking, there are several options for resolving moral distress, such as creating a different professional environment, doing nothing, or pursuing a different career. Moral distress and burnout may act as catalysts, sparking the process of value-based mavericking. Self-determination theory is a complementary framework for understanding conditions supporting progression through the theory of value-based maericking.

Self-determination theory

Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory (SDT) proposes that conditions supporting autonomy, relatedness, and competence facilitate high quality forms of motivation and optimal functioning. There are concepts in value-based mavericking, including developing mastery, creating community, and self-awareness that share similarities with SDT.

Autonomy. According to Deci and Ryan (2008), "autonomy means to act volitionally, with a sense of choice, whereas independence means to function alone and not rely on others" (p. 16). In value-based mavericking, experiencing value conflict may be a catalyst for uniting personal and professional values, an autonomous choice. The theory of value-based mavericking also suggests that identifying a tribe and creating community are key aspects supporting value-based mavericking, also supported by SDT, specifically, autonomy. However, as discussed previously, autonomy does not imply independence. In fact, one of the key concepts facilitating value-based mavericking is creating community. Furthermore, in SDT, relatedness "refers to feeling connected to and cared for by others" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 153) and strengthens value-based mavericking which will be discussed next.

Relatedness. In SDT, relatedness "refers to feeling connected to and cared for by others" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 153) which satisfies a basic human physiological need fostering well-being. In value-based mavericking, creating a community of like-minded individuals who provide support and positive feedback is part of the process of identifying how to resolve moral distress. Additionally, feeling connected and sharing similar visions may increase commitment to determining individual solutions, fostering a sense of connection. Identifying a community may also support envisioning different ways of being in the professional environment or creating a different environment, as opposed to remaining in one's comfort zone. In value-based mavericking, fear of stepping out of one's comfort zone seemed to be assuaged by creating community.

Competence. Using an evolutionary framework, Deci and Ryan (2008) proposed that an intrinsic need for developing competence might be an inherited skill used to develop "new potentialities for adaptive employment" (p. 252). The authors suggested that "striving for competence may be seen as a route for flexible functioning of human group in the context of changing environmental demands" (p. 253). In value-based mavericking, the need and desire to achieve mastery has multiple adaptive outcomes, including incorporating unconventional skills into a current professional role and achieving mastery to increase credibility and validity to others as they may be viewed as experts. The credibility gained when developing mastery may also increase self-assuredness in one's skills, further enhancing autonomy in a variety of environments.

Self-determination Theory shares similarities to value-based mavericking, particularly the core tenets of achieving basic psychological needs for optimal human functioning through autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Vansteenkiste and Ryan (2013) suggested that those in environments lacking conditions for optimal functioning might be at risk for defensive functioning, particularly when exposed to controlling, critical, or environments rejecting psychological needs. Value-based mavericking suggests that when encountering moral distress in a professional environment, rather than reverting to defensive functioning, some progress through stages creating supportive environments that may assist in determining how to resolve moral distress.

Implications for Practice

The consequences of burnout have been well-established in the healthcare literature. Addressing burnout predominantly focuses on relieving symptoms. Yet relieving symptoms may not address underlying issues of career misalignment. Implications for practice based on research from this study suggest that career misalignment may increase the experience burnout. Addressing career misalignment begins with a person developing self-awareness of values and then determining if values are aligned with current professional choice. The implications of developing additional self-awareness may be uncomfortable. Some may recognize misalignment and be faced with a choice for how to resolve, a complex decision with numerous confounding factors. Resolving misalignment is a dynamic process and the result may lead to making change, or not. The implications of this research are offering a different way to resolve burnout.

Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of this research was that most participants interviewed were working in various roles within healthcare, reducing the types of professions represented. Yet, the

process of value-based mavericking may share similarities to other professions, particularly the process of identifying, clarifying, and uniting values in a congruent manner to resolve moral distress. Another limitation of the research was that many of the participants were highly educated and financially stable which provided them with the opportunity to explore other options. Poverty or a lack of extra financial resources often affects people's access to options, including accessing additional education if needed or having time to dedicate to develop self-awareness and understanding of values.

Future researchers may consider how value-based mavericking might apply to other professions outside of healthcare to determine if the variables hold true. Initially, it looks like it might apply to other social service professions like teaching. Future researchers may see if it also relates to non-service oriented professions. Additionally researchers may look at how education and poverty affect the process and how organization change, such as increased use of technology that limits human interaction and value-based mavericking maybe related. The authors are also interested in researching more about values, specifically how the process of identifying and clarifying values affect decision-making and perhaps job satisfaction.

Future researchers might also try to determine if awareness of individual and professional values alone impacts moral distress and burnout. Without awareness, an uncomfortable and also unexplainable discontent may be expressed in the professional environment. Yet with awareness of what led to moral distress and burnout, people may be better able to navigate and figure out solutions to ease moral distress and burnout.

Conclusion

Moral distress may progress to burnout, prompting a deeper inspection and understanding of individual values. A deeper understanding may lead toward a desire to unite professional and personal values. The process of value-based mavericking is often met with challenges, such as making decisions that oppose cultural norms, particularly for those who choose to create an unconventional path.

The process of choosing to unite values includes examining the current professional environment and then deciding if one wishes to remain in that environment or do something else. Career decisions are often fraught with complexity, yet if the internal desire to make a change is strong, some reach a threshold and change directions. Mind body practices such as meditation, journaling, and mindful movement lead toward clarity and may assist in uncovering one's individual professional choices, rather than remaining in a profession that does not fulfill one's needs. As Joseph Campbell (n.d.) wrote,

> Work begins when you don't like what you're doing. Tension, a lack of honesty, and a sense of unreality come from following the wrong force in your life. As an adult, you must rediscover the moving power of your life. (para. 1)

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Manipulative Dominant Discoursing: Alarmist Recruitment and Perspective Gatekeeping. A Grounded Theory

Debbie Garratt, Notre Dame University

Joanna Patching, Notre Dame University

Abstract

This paper is a grounded theory explaining the main concern of practitioners in Australia when interacting with women on the issue of abortion. Based on a broad data set including practitioner interviews, professional notes, and discourse data, collection and analysis were undertaken using Classic Grounded Theory research design. The analysis led to the development of the grounded theory, Manipulative Dominant Discoursing: Alarmist Recruitment and Perspective Gatekeeping.

Keywords: Classic grounded theory, alarmist recruitment, abortion, perspective gatekeeping

Introduction

This paper presents a grounded theory on manipulative dominant discoursing developed as a research project undertaken for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The theory provides a conceptual model of the way in which a dominant manipulative discourse can be identified, is maintained, and is perpetuated. Alarmist Recruitment and Perspective Gatekeeping work together to create an environment within which the thoughts, beliefs and actions of those exposed to the discourse are controlled in some way.

The theory was developed in the context of abortion discourse in Australia. The study began with the researcher seeking to understand the knowledge and practises of practitioners interacting with women who disclose an abortion experience or concern. Responding to the expectations of the dominant discourse became the primary concern of practitioners who came into contact with abortion disclosing women. Practitioners are defined as any professional who may encounter women who have ever had or may be considering, an abortion.

Abortion is considered one of the most common procedures undertaken by women in Australia with an estimated 80,000 per year (Chan & Sage, 2005). Current research demonstrates that up to 20% of women can suffer serious, prolonged mental health disorders following abortion (Coleman, 2011), the number of women negatively impacted by this, and other adverse effects is cumulatively very large over time.

The impetus for undertaking this study was sparked by almost two decades of working with women impacted by abortion and in the provision of resources and education to the community and professional sectors on the impact of abortion on women's mental health and wellbeing. Talking with hundreds of women and

practitioners through conferences, education and private consultation suggests that women are generally not effectively supported after abortion. The motivation for the study was to identify practise issues that may inform the development of practitioner education which in turn could enhance their ability to more effectively support women. It became clear very early in the data collection that knowledge about abortion or its adverse impact was not the main, or even a minor identified concern of practitioners. It became evident that practitioners' concern lay predominantly in what they felt they were expected to communicate, or not communicate to the women.

This article briefly describes the methodology, introduces the main concern, and resolution of practitioners within the context of the broader theory of dominant discourse and includes relevant data as quotes throughout.

Methodology and data collection

Classic Grounded Theory as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was the chosen research design for this study. Initial data were derived from 12 practitioner interviews, with further practitioner experiences drawn from the literature after the core category of the dominant discourse had been determined. Using the dictum that "all is data" (Holton & Walsh, 2017, p.59), data were also collected from mainstream media articles, political documents, professional organisation policy documents, journal articles, and my own professional notes gathered over many years. To ensure I was absolutely true to the methodological process, I engaged a mentor from the Grounded Theory Institute, whose guidance was invaluable throughout in helping me understand the methods and tolerate the confusion which often ensued as part of the processing. This mentoring ensured that I stayed on track with methodological requirements and developed a theory that identifies the main concern of participants, the resolution of that concern, and one that makes sense. Data drawn from participant interviews are identified by (P:*) * being code of practitioner. Data drawn from the discourse are identified as (DD).

The mentoring/tutoring process was particularly helpful as my anxiety rose about where my data were leading. As themes began to emerge, I struggled with the main concern of participants being one that was familiar to me and within my area of expertise. I wrote about these challenges and my subsequent conclusion as I worked through them, that had I not held expertise in this area, I may not have been sensitised enough to the data to recognise both the nuances and the relevance (Garratt, 2018).

Data analysis

Analysis of data began as soon as the first interview was complete and continued using the grounded theory procedures of coding and constant comparison. As it became apparent that practitioners were more concerned with what they were expected to say, the core category of the dominant discourse emerged. Practitioners identified a range of expectations and sources of such expectations, guiding the data collection which included mainstream media, professional body standards and policies and legal documents.

Context of practitioners' main concern

The theory of manipulative dominant discoursing conceptualises a pervasive and alarmist context within which practitioners express their main concern. Before explaining the main concern of practitioners, it is helpful to understand the context within which this

experience takes place. This section will first provide a brief overview of the theory of manipulative dominant discoursing in order to provide context. The actors within the discourse will then be introduced, followed by the main concern and resolution of the practitioners, after which further detail of the discourse theory will be provided to link the practitioners and the context.

The principle of abortion rights advocacy dominates discussion on the issue of abortion in Australia with abortion being legal and accessible during the entirety of pregnancy throughout most parts of the country. The majority of states have legislated against the right to conscientious objection to abortion, meaning practitioners can be prosecuted for failing to refer a woman for abortion or being seen to obstruct women's access to abortion. States have also enacted safe access zones preventing the public from speaking about the issue within certain distances of abortion clinics. Such legislation has strongly reinforced other sources of abortion rights advocacy which were identified by practitioners during this research, many of which existed prior to legislative changes.

In the dominant discoursing of abortion, the principle of abortion rights is absolute, and it is this principle which is recruited to and must be upheld. Recruitment to agreement or compliance with the principle is achieved through a combination of *alarmist recruitment* and *perspective gatekeeping* which work together and are pervasive across many dimensions including legal, social, educational, media, medical and professional realms (Fig.1).
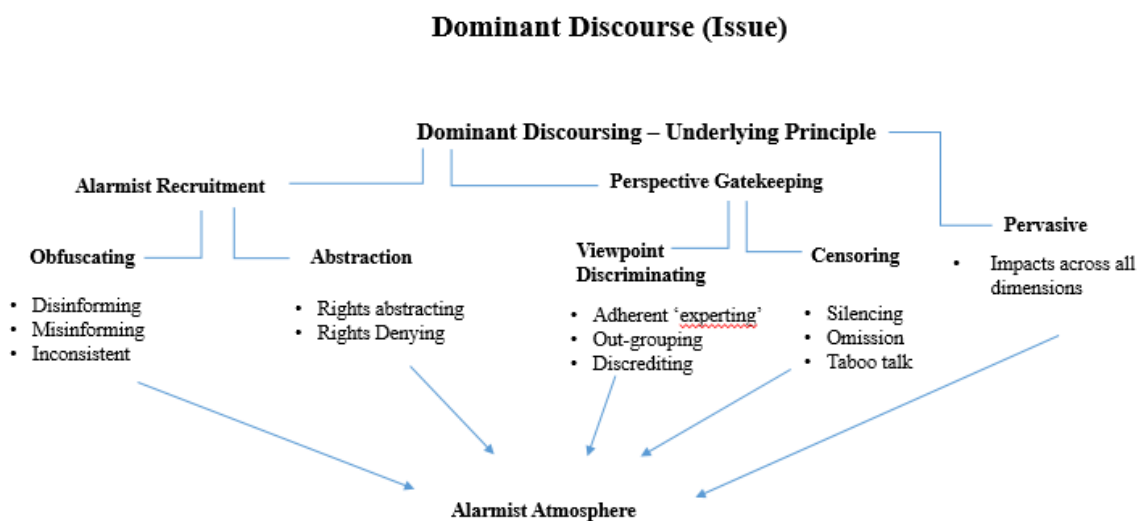

Figure 1. Dominant discourse

The theory of *manipulative dominant discoursing* developed in this study is complexly layered, with properties interwoven and often difficult to distinguish from one another. It is the synergistic effect of each element, strengthening and reinforcing the other that gives the discourse its greater power as opposed to individual discrete instances of communication. For example, the individual properties of *alarmist recruitment,* even when utilised together, may have less power in discourse if not combined with the *out-grouping* and *discrediting* which is prevalent in *perspective gatekeeping*.

Discrete pieces of information can also be identified as having multiple properties such as being untrue (*disinforming*) and *alarmist*. The same information may at the same time be *inconsistent* with the information presented in another forum or setting creating confusion through being inconsistent, which forces people to decide which information to ignore, believe or adhere to. Whether being inconsistent is strategic, or a manifestation of the challenges that may be inherent in maintaining consistency in the face of constant presentations of *disinforming* and reactionary alarm is irrelevant to the consequences it has.

There is no single accepted definition of what constitutes manipulation in the literature (Van Dijk, 2006; Rigotti, 2005). Discourse manipulation in this study is defined as a combination of strategies, evidenced by its consequences in controlling behaviour (Rigotti, 2005; de Saussure & Schultz, 2005; Van Dijk, 1998, 2006, 2016). Identification of the deliberately strategic processes as well as the consequences of the dominant discourse is therefore essential to explicate its manipulative power. According to van Dijk (2015) one of the most powerful consequences of effective manipulation is the ability to influence not just what people think but also what they do: "If we are able to influence people's minds – for example, their knowledge, attitudes or ideologies, we indirectly may control some of their actions, as we know from persuasion and manipulation" (p. 470).

The dominant discoursing of abortion has not only significantly influenced the minds and actions of the public, and specifically in the setting of this study, practitioners, but during the last decade it has also influenced legislation, further reinforcing the single allowed view on this polarising issue; that is to support abortion. People's knowledge and views on abortion are both restricted and distorted by the information that is more widely available through the manipulation of information, or discursive evasion that occurs (Clementson, 2018). Discursive evasion in this dominant discourse theory occurs in the first instance through *alarmist recruitment* aspects of *disinforming* and *abstraction*. *Disinforming* is intentional dissemination of false information or lying as defined by Stokke (2016) who proposes that there is a significant difference between lying and misleading which depends on how the information relates to the question under discussion. Is the person responding directly, but untruthfully to the question, a lie, or are they avoiding a direct answer by sidestepping in some way, being misleading?

Here is one of Stokke's (2015) examples:

Q: Rebecca: Are you going to Paul's party?

A1: Dennis: No, I'm not going to Paul's party. (A lie because he is going)

A2: Dennis: I have to work. (The questioner may presume this means no, but this is misleading, not an explicit lie about the party) (p.3)

An example from the abortion discourse:

Q: Does decriminalising abortion allow babies to be killed up until the moment of birth?

A1: This is untrue and completely unsupported by evidence. (disinforming)

A2: Most abortions take place before 12 weeks gestation. (abstraction)

Levine (2014) described deception as "intentionally, knowingly and/or purposely misleading another person" (p. 367) with forms of deception including omission, evasion, equivocation, and the generation of false conclusions with objectively true information. In the manipulative dominant discoursing of abortion, we see all of these occurring, conceptualised as censorship, obfuscation, abstraction, and disinforming. Casagrande (2004) described the process of abstraction as "abstractification" (p. 2) describing it as a *"discursive solution to an emotional response to cognitive processes"* (p. 2) thus enabling obfuscation and ignoring of inconsistencies or contradictions. Strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984) also serves the purpose of abstraction as compared in this theory. Strategic ambiguity promotes "unified diversity" (Eisenberg, 1984, p. 230), and means people can agree on a vague, abstract message with some consensus, resulting in a reduction in conflict and differing implicit messages. In abortion discoursing the abstracted agreement may be "we all want women to have equal opportunities" or *"women have the right to control their own bodies".*

Further examination of the question posed earlier in this section, *"Does decriminalising abortion allow babies to be killed up until the moment of birth?"* reveals the manipulative aspects of the discourse seen throughout the responses of abortion providers to this same question,

"This is an anti-choice talking point and is untrue and completely unsupported by evidence. Most abortions take place before 12 weeks gestation." (DD)

This response contains a combination of *perspective gatekeeping* manifested by *out-grouping* and *discrediting* (it is an anti-choice talking point), and *Alarmist Recruitment* in *disinforming* (it is untrue), and *distraction* (changing the subject to early abortions).

"Later-term abortions are very rare, with the consensus figure being that about 1% of abortions fall into this category. Later-term abortions take place in a hospital setting in 'complex, challenging and extreme circumstances." (DD)

Abstraction is used effectively here to draw attention from the question completely through the *"intentional use of imprecise language"* (Hamilton & Mineo, 1998, p. 3) also called equivocation. The response does not address the question under discussion directly however this fact may bypass the processing of many readers for a number of reasons discussed by Clementson (2018).

This is a myth. There are areas in the world where, in theory, abortion until birth could be allowed... there are almost always strong caveats about the situation needing to be one of life or death for either the mother or foetus. *(DD)*

This response too, is an equivocating *abstraction* designed to be misleading, combined with *disinforming* ("*this is a myth*"). The respondent does not directly say this can't or doesn't happen, conceding that it might happen somewhere in the world. He also used the words *almost always* which allows some backtracking if he was to be confronted with this as *disinforming*. Misleading may be construed as more consistent with *abstraction* within this theory (Stokke, 2016; Clementson, 2018). The fact that the respondents to this question are abortion providers and therefore *experts* means they

are also more likely to be considered a trusted source (Happer & Philo, 2013; van Dijk, 1998).

Maillat and Oswald (2009) take a pragmatic approach to the issue of defining manipulation in discourse by asking how manipulation works on a cognitive level rather than *what* is manipulation. While the theory of manipulative dominant discoursing within this study details a number of *whats* in terms of identifying properties such as those present in *alarmist recruitment* and *perspective gatekeeping*, it is the overall effect of the combined properties that is achieved on the minds and actions of the population that justifies the term 'manipulative' as a descriptor.

Van Dijk (2006) said that manipulation is more than just the discrete individual occurrences and proposes discourse manipulation as a form of power abuse that can be viewed through a 'triangulation' framework linking discourse, cognition and social aspects. The theory developed in this research provides a similar linkage with clear connections between the explicit and implicit messaging of the dominant discourse, the cognitive impact and behaviour of individuals and the subsequent power to influence and direct social change. Van Dijk went on to say that, "none of these approaches can be reduced to the other, and all three of them are needed in an integrated theory that also establishes explicit links between the different dimensions of manipulation" (p. 361).

This is consistent with the elements of this theory: *alarmist recruitment* without *perspective gatekeeping* would be less influential as dissenting voices would be more available in the discourse to dispute information. Compliance is more likely in an environment of *out-grouping* and *discrediting* as people try to avoid these negative consequences.

In terms of manipulative intent, De Saussure (2005) discussed parameters of speaker knowledge of what is true suggesting that it is not only disinforming but also the withholding of certain relevant information or fabricating relevance of aspects that may not be relevant in a particular context. Huckin (2002) agreed that what isn't said may be as important as what is said, particularly in the way in which public issues are framed. In the framing of a topic, a speaker will mention some relevant issues while ignoring others so as to provide a particular perspective. He provides three criteria, deception, intentionality and advantage for determining whether the omission of some detail can be considered manipulative. He claims that it is deceptive to leave out or conceal information that could be considered relevant to understanding, in order to give prominence to other information, which doesn't then provide a balanced view. Abstraction in the developed theory of this study conceptualises this phenomenon.

Main concern and resolution

Three groups of actors are represented within the population; manufacturing, maintaining, subject to, and perpetuating the *dominant discourse* by either actively promoting it, internalising and complying unquestioningly, or complying less willingly with its expectations. Reflecting the general population of actors in the *discourse*, the three distinct groups are also present within the substantive population of practitioners with each group experiencing differing levels of awareness of, and agreement or disagreement with the *discourse*. The main concern of all practitioners was identified as *meeting the expectations of the dominant discourse* while *managing perception* and *balancing risk* and for some this also included *walking a tightrope* (See Figure 2)*.

Walking a tightrope

Adherent:	Says nothing to suggest negative perception of abortion (high awareness)
Incognisant:	Says nothing at all. Believes negatives to be manipulative (low awareness)
Dissident:	Does not want to appear manipulative (high awareness)

Practitioner — *Managing perception* / *Balancing risk* — **Client**

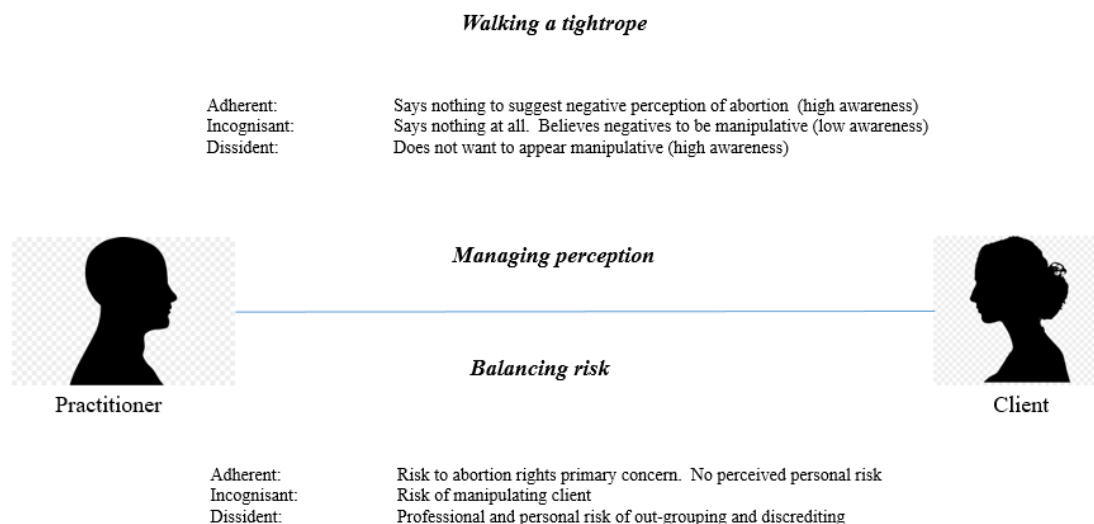| Adherent: | Risk to abortion rights primary concern. No perceived personal risk |
| Incognisant: | Risk of manipulating client |
| Dissident: | Professional and personal risk of out-grouping and discrediting |

Figure 2. Walking a tightrope

While each type of practitioner enacted their resolution in slightly different ways and with different priorities, each was a variation of *toeing the line* by either *opting out* or *self-censoring.* In their interactions (or lack of, by opting out) with women, and with each other, practitioners are participants in perpetuating the dominant discourse, even when they disagree with it.

Walking a Tightrope is experienced more by those with an anxious awareness of the discourse, *Adherents* and *Dissidents* and less or not at all by *Incognisants*. For *Adherents,* it describes the tension between upholding rights (*Adherents*) and not participating in *Taboo Talk*. For *Dissidents,* it describes the tension of *Balancing Risk*, *Managing Perception* and compliance with the *Discourse* by *Toeing the Line* (see Figure 3).

Managing Perception is multi-layered and involves the perceptions of the woman, professional bodies, other practitioners the woman may see in the future and professionals who may be associated with the practitioner.

Being *out-grouped* and *discredited* by *Adherents* can be a significant professional threat and is of concern, not just for the general threat, but also for the relationship between themselves and their clients. Management of perception is not exclusive to the time of interaction with a client but extends to concerns about how the client may relay information about the interaction and to whom.

Balancing Risk is complex and involves consideration of risk to the woman, the future relationship between the practitioner and the woman, the likelihood of being *out-grouped* as a *Dissident* and whether or not such an occurrence would adversely impact the reputation of the practitioner and to what degree. *Balancing risk* is also an aspect of the panoptic effect whereby the practitioner has to determine not only what is expected from those external to the consultation and who may discover what they say, but also what is expected from the client. They have to ask themselves: is this information too risky to share and is this client a potential threat to me either today or in the future if I don't *toe the line*?

> There's also the problem of her going off and seeing someone else in the future and saying 'well he (first practitioner) said that I wasn't properly informed, or properly screened or something similar, and that person telling her that the reason she suffered is because of what I said, not because of what happened. (P:7)

> There can be accusations that you pushed something on to her, that you exacerbated her condition, or even caused it. Finding the balance between validating her, knowing that she won't be able to do anything about it, and taking the risk of repercussions is like walking through a minefield. You've got to be so careful. (P:3)

The fact that this occurs within the privacy of a one to one consultation is evidence of the powerful effect of the *discourse*. While practitioners respond in different ways depending on their agreement or disagreement with the *discourse*, all *toe the line* in accordance with the *discourse* expectations in their client interactions as a way of resolving the main concern.

Adherents

Adherents have the most influential voice, defining the language and ideas that are allowed as well as those which are considered a threat to abortion rights, *taboo talk*. They also determine which people can be heard according to their language and ideas, both present and past, and their possible affiliations, and censor them in a variety of ways accordingly. They are quick to *out-group* and to silence or *discredit* those who engage in *taboo talk*, or in any activity they perceive may threaten the principle of rights. Adherents idealise the principle above individual experiences and self-describe as pro-choice.

Adherents are sensitive and quick to react to any issue they perceive may negatively impact the principle of abortion rights. This includes sensitivity to other pregnancy-related issues such as legislative attempts to protect a foetus from criminal harm. "The redefinition of a foetus as a living person infringes on the rights of women seeking abortion." *(DD)*

When perceiving a threat to the principle, the most common response is a swift reaction of alarm, for example utilising *disinforming* the public about risks women face if abortion is threatened, "Anti-abortion groups will often claim women aren't warned of the risks but neglect to state that abortion at any gestation is safer than childbirth." (DD)

Adherents actively create a dividing line between those who support the *principle* and those who do not; in other words, pro-choice and pro-life or, in their terms 'anti-choice'. They hold power to accept or reject any person from their ranks based on whether the view of the person in question constitutes a real or perceived threat to the *principle*. This includes people who may self-identify as an Adherent but who may have inadvertently moved into areas that are considered a threat.

Adherent practitioners assume that women who seek abortion have already made up their minds and that attempts to have them consider or reconsider or talk about their decision-making constitutes a threat to their autonomy and is patronising. In order to

manage the perception that they uphold the *principle* absolutely, *Adherents* may avoid providing information that may be essential to a woman if it is considered *taboo talk*.

> I'm aware that any bad experience could set us back so much …if… people talk about it and... tell people how bad it is, and how you can get hurt from it. I feel like it's part of my responsibility in some fucked up way to make sure that I help keep abortions going. (Martin et al., 2017, p. 77).

When the assumption that a woman who seeks abortion is already informed and has decided includes that a woman has considered all options and understands all consequences, only cursory – if any – information may be provided about these issues. The idealisation of autonomy is so powerful that *Adherents* can withhold professional and experienced guidance on methods of termination in accord with their own circumstances (Newton et al., 2016). Counselling may be offered, but there is already a subtle pressure about what the outcome of such counselling will be if a woman is scheduled for both counselling and a procedure on her same first appointment as is the usual practise in private abortion clinics in Australia (Blue Water & Marie Stopes, 2018).

Adherents agree with and act in accord with the *discourse*, and experience their compliance in upholding a woman's right as crucial and more important than the identification of individual risk or harm to a woman,

> Sometimes even in the best of circumstances, we understand that a person is to a degree being coerced but feel they still need to go ahead... because it's their only choice because otherwise, this person will leave them, and their four kids (for example). It's very hard to know what to do in those circumstances, so you go ahead with what their choice is even though to a degree they are being coerced. (Portman, 2018)

Interactions with a woman who may seek support after abortion are focused on ensuring she frames her decision making as having been her own and an exercising of her rights. Balancing of risk in this setting is ensuring that the woman takes full responsibility for her own decision and that abortion rights are not threatened by any negative experiences. Any perceived suffering of the woman is determined to be either a pre-existing emotional flaw in the woman, pressure or guilt by others who do not support her decision or social stigma that she is experiencing as a result of abortion.

Professional responsibility with either group of women is primarily focused on rights and their responsibility in upholding such rights and ensuring women understand they are exercising them.

Incognisants

Incognisants make up the majority of the population and are those who do not self-identify particularly with either group and have accepted the dominant discourse as factual. Adherents and Dissidents will claim individuals in this group as belonging to their group, dependent on whether their 'talk' is deemed to be supportive of either position.

Incognisants have internalised the *discourse* and accept at face value the information provided. They may describe themselves as *Adherent* (pro-choice) without too much consideration of what this means and are likely to agree that *Dissidents* are

against women and their rights. This group may express disbelief at *taboo talk* when it is presented. There is value in the population of *Incognisants* to *Adherents* who will utilise the opinions of this group as supportive of abortion in community attitudes research recruiting them to their ranks. This is often achieved through statements of abstraction that avoid the individual woman and her circumstance and appeal to the principle for example, *"we all agree women have the right to control their own bodies".*

It is important to understand that the expressed opinions or agreements with the discourse of this group may not accurately represent their beliefs or opinions on abortion itself. *Incognisants* may be more inclined to *toe the line* in order to avoid *out-grouping,* and they have generally profoundly internalised the misinformation which drives the *discourse*. In this regard, community values surveys hold questionable reliability if not accompanied by an assessment of knowledge and education.

Incognisant practitioners assume that practitioners more experienced than themselves have information and provide it to women. They are generally unaware that decision-making is a concern and accept the standard rhetoric that women make up their own minds and abortion is freely chosen. Even when not exposed to either end of the ideological spectrum, *Incognisants* will be conscious of not appearing manipulative by the provision of certain information or any at all.

> I wouldn't tell a woman that she may suffer negative effects necessarily because I may set her up for that . . . yes, even though I know it's a possibility . . . if she was saying this is what I'm doing (have an abortion) and didn't seem interested in more information, I wouldn't say anything, especially if her values seemed more aligned with abortion. (P:2)

Because *Incognisants* believe women to be fully informed they also believe there are people better equipped than themselves who provide comprehensive information and support. They will defer to the expertise of another, or simply gloss over, avoid or ignore disclosures of abortion from a client.

> Especially if she was asking me, I would say that to make the decision that's best for you, its best for you to talk to someone about it . . . but I would never say . . . 100% never say I've seen women suffering after it, that could be me being too persuasive. (P:8)

Their compliance with the *Discourse* is therefore achieved by not participating in discussion with a woman who is decision-making and referring her on to the professional they believe exists in this field. In this way, they both eliminate professional risk and meet what they see as their professional obligation.

Dissidents

Dissidents may include people who both self-identify as agreeing with the Discourse either in part or in its entirety, as well as those who actively act against the Discourse. Some are in full agreement with the Discourse, acknowledging the shortcomings, but continue to uphold it while expressing some aspects of *taboo talk*. Others may identify as being against abortion in any circumstance or may express ambivalence or concern around specific issues, for example, gestational limits, coercive factors or parental notifications of minors seeking an abortion. Since these concerns are perceived as a

threat to the *principle* by Adherents, such questioners are likely to be outed as Dissidents even if they self-identify as agreeing with the discourse.

Dissidents may attempt to challenge the discourse with information about adverse harm of abortion, coercion, or women's stories of regret or grief. However, such attempts, even if they gain traction in mainstream media will generally be countered by contributions from *experts* who refute the information or *discredit* the Dissident. In effect, unless a person upholds the totality of rights to abortion, they are identified by Adherents as Dissidents and become a potential target of the *censoring* process. Identification of belonging to one side or the other is a pre-requisite for determining whether their message is trustworthy. Failure to declare which group one belongs to is viewed with suspicion by Adherents, but also on occasion by one's own group.

Dissident practitioners comply by a more complicated process of balancing their obligation to the woman against their professional and personal risk. Risk is perceived as much higher in this group because of their disagreement (in part or whole) with the *discourse*. Such risk may be apparent where structural conditions such as State laws where medical practitioners are required to refer for abortion or to another practitioner who will refer for abortion.

> I am breaking the law when I talk to a patient about her pregnancy options, especially if I'm talking to her about not having an abortion. I've had numerous patients who have strong risk factors for harm after abortion, and the law says I can't perform my medical duty of care for them like I do on every other issue. (P:12)

However, the risk is not always as clear and may comprise both the risk to the practitioner today and in the future and the risk to the future trust and relationship with their client.

Dissidents are more likely to experience the withholding of information from a client as an abrogation of their responsibilities which creates a conflict for them. However, the risk of being perceived as manipulative or persuasive will outweigh this if the practitioner believes the client may perceive them negatively or that the client is likely to be told by other practitioners that they were misled. "It is easier to talk about things that you at least think won't get you into more trouble, or be more upsetting" (P:8). In order for the professional responsibility to outweigh the perceived risk, a high level of trust needs to be present between practitioner and client, and/or known shared values.

Dissidents will avoid *Taboo Talk* in certain circumstances, making continuous assessments of the woman and her willingness to hear information and their perception of the potential risk. If a woman uses terms such as 'baby' or 'father' a *Dissident* will feel more confident in matching these terms in their interaction. *Adherents*, on the other hand, are more likely to depersonalise the language in line with Discourse expectations using terms such as *foetus* or *man involved*.

Women experiencing adverse emotional effects after abortion are more likely to have their concerns affirmed as attributable to abortion by *Dissidents* as opposed to the reframing that is undertaken by *Adherents*.

> *I've had women say they went back to an abortion clinic after having an abortion… when they found it too emotional... and they were told they must have had an emotional problem before the abortion, or that they aren't coping because of some inadequacy on their part. That doesn't help them, and it's not true. (P:12)*

> Some women had already been told that their grief was abnormal, that it meant there was some deficit in their coping ability, that it wasn't to do with the abortion itself, after which most women feel relief and just get on with things. (P:7)

Power and personal cost

Noelle-Neumann's (1974) Theory of the Spiral of Silence adds an explanation to the power of this control over practitioner behaviour. Noelle-Neumann talks about the social control of public opinion, with 'public' defined as in the public eye and visible to all, and opinion as both audible expressions and public behaviours, specifically of value-laden issues. She asserts that the power of public control of public opinion stems from the willingness of people to both threaten the social isolation of those who dissent from the required view, and the individual's fear of isolation. This doesn't mean that all people come to agree with the dominant view, but that fewer people have the courage to speak their disagreement and alternate views in order to avoid being isolated. Noelle-Neumann also suggested some cognitive processes a person undertakes in order to decide when they might risk isolation: "by observing his social environment, by assessing the distribution of opinions for and against his ideas, but above all by evaluating the strength (commitment), the urgency, and the chances of success of certain proposals and viewpoints" (p. 44).

This process may also be considered a process of conformity as described by Cialdini and Goldstein (2004) in their review of research on social influence. Conformity is a process whereby the individual matches their own behaviour or responses to what they see others doing as a means of belonging. These processes add to the power of manipulation that the Dominant Discourse has in that it drives legislation which further reinforces the view of majority public opinion. Isolation in Noelle-Neumann's theory equates to the Out-grouping that occurs in the manipulative dominant discoursing theory of this research.   Out-grouping within this theory is however often accompanied by both professional and personal Discrediting which can have career-long impacts from which recovery may not be possible.

There is a personal cost to the self-censorship involved in *toeing the line*. All interviewed practitioners talked about their concerns for their clients in their interactions. However, some were also conscious of the toll it was taking on themselves to be so constantly on guard or feeling as though they had to compromise themselves in some way.

> I'm forced to live such an internal conflict because I believe the science that says there is no health benefit to this path for women, and potentially some serious harm. I can't tell her that, well I can, but I risk my career. How is that even good medicine? (P:12)

Bar Tal (2017) cited a number of negative effects of self-censoring including an increase in personal distress when it is known that information is being withheld.

Personal distress can also manifest as guilt and shame if the withheld information is considered to be significant.

> One of the hardest days I've had is when I found out that one of my clients went ahead and had an abortion. The grief... everything in me just protested, because of all the things I hadn't said to her. (P:8)

Bar Tal (2017) also talked about the effects on society of the self-censorship of individuals in preventing the free flow of information, decreasing transparency, and the reinforcement of particular dogmas and ideologies. In the dominant discoursing of abortion what is left out is as significant as what is allowed, as it leaves women, the general public, and practitioners both subject to *disinforming* and lacking accurate information.

The selective advancement in the discourse of information about any important issue, in a way which promotes its necessity and benefits, while minimising or denying negative potential, results in a reduction of the rights that are supposedly intrinsic. The right to participate in an act can only be fully enacted when a person has all the information they need, and the option to choose a different way that is equally supported.

When people are not aware that there may be negative aspects to a decision they make, and they have little access to such information due to the internalised censoring of professionals on whose expertise they may rely, their rights have been impeded not supported. It is not only the *disinforming* perpetuated within the *Discourse* that is problematic for women seeking support on the issue of abortion, but also the external and internalised censoring of practitioners, researchers, educators, politicians and even those close to them who may be afraid to say the 'wrong' thing. When everybody is afraid to speak, nobody hears the essential information. When practitioners lack information due to the *censoring* of professional publications and education and have professional body affiliations with organisations which hold political views upholding the *dominant discourse principle*, their ability to fully inform and support women to an ethical standard is compromised.

Within the abortion discourse individuals or organisations which act to advance services for pregnant or parenting women within the community, universities or other settings are viewed with suspicion by Adherents unless they profess their agreement with the principle. If such people or groups refuse to declare their position or engage in *taboo talk*, regardless of the value of the services they provide, they and their service will be *outed-grouped* and *discredited*. This process has consequences of reducing the available supports for women who may want to continue a pregnancy and parent.

As this research was being undertaken, other controversial and polarising issues dominated the media in Australia that may be worth exploring through this theory including climate change, gender theory and euthanasia. As an example, on the issue of climate change, it was of note that the Australian Psychological Association (APA), theoretically supposed to concern itself as a professional body for Australian psychologists, has taken a strong position in support of climate change. The APA (2018) publicised a policy statement promoting the importance of empowering people to change their behaviour using specific key points that they encourage psychologists to share with clients. These include instructions to:

- Bring climate change impacts close to home to show people that it threatens their health, families, communities, jobs or other things they care deeply about,
- Understand your audience's values. Look for the overlap with values such as 'protecting the environment', 'helping others', and 'caring about your kids'. Build a bridge between their values and those of a more sustainable society.

These statements would meet criteria of *alarmist* and *abstracting* within the developed theory of *manipulative dominant discoursing*, particularly as they are being publicised to members who may not agree with the dominant discourse on climate change and may not be based on fact regarding climate change. As a professional body, questions arise as to why such organisations develop policy statements on a climate issue that may not align with the values of all members and which isn't directly related to the profession they represent.

On euthanasia, there have been recent calls to prevent Dissidents from communicating information that doesn't support euthanasia as a concept by legislating 'safe zones' around euthanasia service providers as are currently legislated around abortion facilities.

These are two among many possible discourses that could be studied within the framework of this theory. It is also probable that manipulative dominant discourses exist among less dominant or minority groups. The essential criteria being not just about what is said and whether it is supported by evidence but also what is not allowed to be said and the consequences to those who insist on voicing the latter.

Perpetuating loop

The power of the discourse in maintaining itself is significant. The combination of the prevalence of censorship combined with the manipulation of actors to self-censor is powerful. While censorship is so successful, disinformation drives changes in legislation which further reinforce disinformation as factual to the general public. People want to believe that laws are in their best interests, so when a law supports the Discourse, it is even less likely to be questioned, and those who may have questions are less likely to speak out.

Perspective gatekeeping with its *silencing* and *discrediting* of Dissidents and their subsequent compliance by *toeing the line* means the cycle of *disinforming* continues. In turn, community values are heavily influenced by the dominant discourse with few prepared to speak against what they have been conditioned to believe are more acceptable views. Community values surveys, which are often used to support legislative change and dominant discourse perspectives are an inaccurate portrayal of actual views when respondents are subject to the discourse. The consequences of such perpetuation are far-reaching, not only for practitioners, but more importantly for women who are potentially facing one of their most significant life choices; women seek to be informed decision makers and who seek genuine options when facing challenging circumstances during pregnancy.

Implications

The theory has some serious implications for people affected by this important and sensitive issue, including practitioners who may be compromised professionally in regard to serving the best interests of women and the women themselves who may not have

access to reliable and accurate information. In many ways Adherents' focus on abortion rights as absolute creates an environment where such rights, which must include access to accurate information and appropriate supports, may be more impinged than enacted.

With legislation driven by the processes of alarmist recruitment and perspective gatekeeping, the reinforcement of the discourse perpetuates and increases the risks of those who challenge it. Legislative changes often incorporate processes of seeking public perspectives on important issues, however the basis on which the public form and feel free to express their opinions and values on important issues when exposed to a manipulative dominant discourse is severely restricted and this distorts the perception of legislators who may be doing their best to meet public expectation. This theory raises questions about the basis of legislative changes that have occurred and whether they do in fact provide benefit for women or represent the public expectation.

Other research opportunities arising from this theory include:

- Exploring the experiences of women who seek or had abortions and how and whether they access reliable information and support within the current context,

- Understanding the processes of self-censorship and how these effect practitioners personally and professionally,

- Determine the usefulness of this theory in identifying other manipulative dominant discourses.

The use of this theory in identifying manipulative dominant discourses may provide some benefit in challenging such discourses to ensure that access to more balanced information on important issues exists, that legislative changes reflect public views and that those impacted have greater freedoms to act.

Glossary of terms

The terms used came primarily through the process of analysis and conceptualisation and therefore definitions are the author's alone, except in the case of, *Dominant Discoursing* and *Panopticism* which are referenced below.

Abstraction: A strategy used to draw attention away from information that may threaten the *Underlying Principle*. *Abstraction* seeks to prioritise and generalise the *Underlying Principle* as an end in itself and decontextualise the *Principle* from the reality of its enactment or outcome.

Adherents: People who are in conscious agreement with and uphold the *Dominant Discourse Principle.* Only *Adherents* have the power to decide who is in their group*.*

Alarmist Recruitment: the discourse atmosphere created by the use of *Obfuscation* and *Abstraction*. It is also a strategy through which the perception of the public is controlled to ensure that the *Underlying Principle* is upheld*.*

Censoring: Process of exclusion of information that is perceived to threaten the *Underlying Principle* using strategies of *Silencing* from the public discourse, and defining *Taboo Talk*.

Discrediting: Together with *Out-grouping*, *Discrediting* is used to undermine those in the out-group either professionally or personally in order to create doubt and disbelief in their attempts to contribute to the discourse. Negative attributes of character and motive are ascribed to those in the out-group.

Dissidents: People who either openly disagree with the *Dominant Discourse* or who have been out-grouped as such by *Adherents* whether or not they accept the label.

Dominant Discoursing: This encompasses the dominant public communications on a specific issue which is in some way polarising and which exercises control *'by one group or organisation over the actions and/or the minds of another group, thus limiting the freedom of action of the others, or influencing their knowledge, attitudes or ideologies'* (van Dijk, 1996, p.93).

Experting: The process of promoting an *Influential Person* as an expert on the *Underlying Principle* whether or not they have particular 'expertise', but by virtue of their agreement with the *Principle*. An organisation may be *Experted* by publishing a policy statement that upholds the *Principle*, even if that organisation has no direct connection to the *Principle* issue.

Incognisants: People who uphold the *Dominant Discourse Principle* whether or not they privately agree with the entirety of the perspective, because they have passively internalised the dominant messaging as true.

Influential People/Person: An *Influential Person* is always an *Adherent* and has some prominence in the field of promoting the *Principle*. They may be a leader of an *Adherent* organisation or some other person with a public profile who has always promoted the *Dominant Discourse* position. They are *experted* on the issue even if they have no specific expertise other than that they strictly adhere to the *Underlying Principle*.

Managing Perception/Balancing Risk: Perception and risk are interrelated for practitioners, with balancing risk involving the management of perception. Perception includes the way in which clients, colleagues or any other person may interpret information provided by the practitioner. The risk is assessed based on perception factors, personal values, and professional responsibilities.

Obfuscating: refers to statements used in strategic ways to persuade people to agree with the *Underlying Principle*. This is a quality of the discourse that is comprised of the dissemination of disinformation (information that isn't true) through *disinforming and misinforming* (unwitting dissemination of *disinformation*), and being *inconsistent* (the prevalence of inconsistent and often confusing information).

Out-grouping: The categorisation of people as both a minority and a negative force if they are in disagreement with the *Dominant Discourse*, use *taboo talk* that is perceived to threaten the *Underlying Principle* of the Discourse,

Panopticism: Process of internalised self-monitoring (censoring) based on the belief or concern that one is under constant scrutiny (Foucault, 1991).

Perspective Gatekeeping: Conceptualises the action and power of *Adherents* to control the perspective, views, beliefs and behaviours related to upholding the *underlying principle.* It involves processes of *viewpoint discrimination* and *censoring*.

Pervasive: meaning that the dominant perspective is apparent across a wide range of influencing spheres including, but not limited to media, education institutions, professional bodies and legislation.

Taboo Talk: Words, phrases, research, news stories, determined by *Adherents* to be a threat to the underlying principle.

Toeing the Line: To *toe the line* means to comply with the expectation of the manipulative d*ominant discourse* to uphold the *principle*, doing and saying nothing that is a real or perceived threat to the *principle*. Whether a person toes the line effectively is determined only by *Adherents*. Practitioners may *toe the lne* by s*elf-censoring,* that is by withholding, or modifying information or by *opting out*, by not engaging at all with women who disclose abortion.

Underlying Principle or Principle: this refers to the particular perspective or ideal that dominates the way in which the issue is discussed.

Viewpoint Discriminating: The preferment and promotion of the voices of *influential people* described as *experts* by *Adherents* within the discourse. This includes a process of *out-grouping* and *discrediting* those who disagree with the dominant perspective.

Walking a Tightrope: This describes what practitioners do in the process of resolving their main concern, which is to '*meet the expectations of the dominant discourse*'. The expectations of the *dominant discourse* are to comply with the dominant position of abortion advocacy and do and say nothing that may constitute a real or perceived threat. The tightrope is the line between *managing perception* and *balancing risk* and involves a process of internalised censorship.

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Autobiographies

Andrew P. Carlin, Ph.D., is a Visiting Fellow at the University of Macau, SAR China. His central concern is the social organization of scholarly communication. This has provided him with specific research interests including disciplinarity, disciplinary contexts for teaching, the problem of what constitute data for sociology, the history of sociology, information, methods and methodology. He teaches qualitative research at Manchester Metropolitan University, and Library & Information Management at Ulster University. His current projects are on teaching and learning in the higher education sector at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; and in online environments. He has published in a range of international journals. Email:acarlin@um.edu.mo

Debbie Garratt, PhD Candidate, Notre Dame University, Sydney is a clinical nurse consultant, qualified counsellor and adult educator, and founder and Executive Director of Real Choices Australia, an organisation established to provide quality research and education on reproductive health issues. As part of this work, Debbie also consults to community groups and the health sector on professional standards and organisational development for services for women experiencing challenges during the perinatal period. For 20 years she has divided her time between the provision of education and clinical supervision to practitioners and clients locally through her private practice, and research, education and speaking engagements both nationally and internationally.
This paper is an abridged version of her thesis prepared for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (post examination and awaiting review: December 2019).
Email:dgarratt@realchoices.org.au

Karen Jagiello, PhD, RN, CNE, has served as an Assistant Professor and RN-BSN Program coordinator in the School of Nursing at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. She has shared her passion for women's health with undergraduate students for the last 13 years. Prior to moving into academia, Dr. Jagiello practiced at the bedside with more than 20 years as a labor and delivery nurse. Her research interests include women and infants, breastfeeding, and rural health. This publication is portion of her dissertation research completed through West Virginia University School of Nursing. She wishes to thank the participants without whose help this work would not have been completed.
Email:jagielkp@jmu.edu

Rúni Johannesen comes from the Faroe Islands recently finished a master's degree in Social analysis and planning at the University of Faroe Islands (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya). In Rúni Johannesen's words, "I have been working with classic grounded theory for three years and have been working with three different subjects in regard to my education and in regard to my own independent research." The subjects are grounded theory methodology, political economics, and global ideology. Global ideology, rhetoric, and social group-dynamics are the areas of this particular grounded theory. Email:hr.johannesen@gmail.com

Younhee H. Kim, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Macau, in Macau SAR China. She has a research interest in the teaching of qualitative methods. Her main research interests are (second) language acquisition/learning and teacher education, and she has been exploring these areas using qualitative research methods. Most recently, she has been examining parent-child interaction using longitudinal Conversation Analysis. She teaches Qualitative Research Methodology, Discourse Analysis, Second Language Acquisition, and Language Acquisition Studies at the University of Macau. She has published in a range of international journals including *Applied Linguistics*, *East Asian Pragmatics*, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Journal of Teacher Education*, and a few other book chapters. Email:yhkim@um.edu.mo

Maureen P. Molinari, PhD, RDN, LDN, CDE, NBC-HWC is a faculty member in the Integrative and Functional Nutrition Department at Saybrook University, College of Integrative Medicine and Health Sciences. In addition to her faculty position, she consults in hospitals and long term care facilities, providing nutrition oversight. Additionally, Dr. Molinari is a Certified Diabetes Educator and works alongside people living with a chronic disease to improve their health through nutrition. She received her doctorate in Mind Body Medicine from Saybrook University.

Dr. Kara Vander Linden has been an educator for over 20 years, spending the last 15 years working with doctoral students doing research using classic grounded theory and other research methods. She is currently serving as faculty, teaching and overseeing dissertation research in education, mind body medicine, psychology, transformational social change, and leadership and management at Saybrook University and Concordia University. She also consults with and supports students with dyslexia and their parents. Dr. Vander Linden received her Doctorate in Education from Fielding Graduate University. She has a Masters in Special Education from the University of North Carolina and a Bachelors of Arts in Mathematics from Queens University. Email:dr.k.vanderlinden@gmail.com

Joanna Patching, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Mental Health Nursing at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney, Australia. Joanna has worked as a Clinical Nurse Consultant (Mental Health) and a Private Practitioner for over 30 years and currently holds an academic position at the University of Notre Dame teaching both undergraduate students and supervising research students. Joanna co-supervised Deborah Garratt in her Doctor of Philosophy candidature. Email:Joanna.patching@nd.edu.au