# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

**Volume 4, Issue no. 2, March 2005**



**Sociology Press**
P.O. Box 400
Mill Valley, CA
USA 94942
Tel: 415 388 8431
Fax: 415 381 2254

# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

**Editor-In-Chief**
**Judith Holton**
10 Edinburgh Drive
Charlottetown, PE
CANADA C1A 3E8
Tel: 902 566 5837
Email:
Judith@groundedtheoryreview.com

**Publisher**
**Barney G. Glaser**, Ph.D., Hon. Ph.D.
Sociology Press
P.O. Box 400
Mill Valley, CA
U.S.A. 94941
Email:
Barney@groundedtheoryreview.com

## Peer Review Editors

**Tom Andrews,** Ph.D.
School of Nursing and Midwifery
University College Cork
Cork, Ireland
Email: t.andrews@ucc.ie

**Barry Gibson**, Ph.D.
Lecturer in Medical Sociology
Department of Oral Health and Development
School of Clinical Dentistry
Claremont Crescent
Sheffield, UK
S10 2TA
Email: b.j.gibson@sheffield.ac.uk

**Cheri Ann Hernandez**, RN, Ph.D., CDE
Associate Professor
Faculty of Nursing
University of Windsor
Email: cherih@uwindsor.ca

**Vivian B. Martin**, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of English (Journalism Program)
Central Connecticut State University
Email: martinv@mail.ccsu.edu

**Antoinette M. McCallin**, Ph.D., RN
Senior Lecturer, Research, MHSc
Division of Health Care Practice
Faculty of Health Science
Auckland University of Technology
Email: mccallin@ihug.co.nz

**Alvita Nathaniel**, DSN, APRN, BC
Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner Track
School of Nursing
West Virginia University
Email: anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu

**Mark S. Rosenbaum**, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Marketing
Research Director, Center for Retail Excellence
University of Hawaii
College of Business Administration
Email: mark.rosenbaum@hawaii.edu

**Hans Thulesius**, GP, Ph.D.
FoU-centrum
Jacob Lundhs vag 2, Box 1223
351 12 Vaxjo, Sweden
Email: hans.thulesius@ltkronoberg.se

# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

**Volume 4, Issue no. 2, March 2005**

# Contents

# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

## Publisher's Note

Sociology Press is pleased to publish The Grounded Theory Review. Our primary goal in publishing this journal is to provide a forum for classic grounded theory scholarship. To this end, we will focus our efforts on:

- publishing good examples of the grounded theories being developed in a wide range of disciplines
- publishing papers on classic grounded theory methodology
- creating a world-wide network of grounded theory researchers and scholars
- providing a forum for sharing perspectives and enabling novice grounded theorists to publish their work
- promoting dialogue between authors and readers of the journal

- Barney G. Glaser,
Ph.D., Hon. Ph.D.

## Editor's Comments

We are delighted, in this issue of the Review, to offer readers a preview of Dr. Glaser's new book, **The Grounded Theory Perspective III: Theoretical Coding** to be published this spring by Sociology Press. The book addresses several challenges that researchers experience in using theoretical coding to conceptually integrate a grounded theory. We present here Chapter 10, *The Impact of Symbolic Interaction on Grounded Theory*.

Classic grounded theory (GT) is a general research methodology that can be used with any type of data and the theoretical codes (TCs) from any discipline. Among the most popular TCs used in GT are typologies and basic social processes. This issue of **The Grounded Theory Review** offers examples of both and clearly illustrates GT's general nature by offering papers from three diverse disciplines – marketing, nursing and economics. Mark Rosenbaum's paper, *Beyond the Physical Realm: A proposed theory regarding a consumer's place experience,* challenges traditional

marketing theory's focus on the consumer's experience of place as a servicescape isolated from their personal lives and experiences. His theory's typology of consumers' place experience holds general implications as well for those who plan gathering spaces, residential services, schools, hospitals and other public and private servicescapes.

Tom Andrews and Heather Waterman's theory of *Visualising Deteriorating Conditions* presents a basic social process that nurses use to recognize and assess soft cues to the deteriorating condition of a patient that they can then use to engage the attention of medical staff. The process has general implications for anyone faced with the responsibility of monitoring the condition of others against the potential impacts of deteriorating health, behaviour or performance.

Frederic Lee's paper, *Grounded Theory and Heterodox Economics*, is an excellent example of the use of grounded theory to create new theory where extant theories are deemed to have failed to offer sufficient conceptual scope.

Rounding out this issue is our new feature, The Grounded Theory Bookshelf, where our peer review editors will regularly offer critical reviews and perspectives on books of theory and methodology that may be of interest to grounded theorists. My thanks to Vivian Martin for initiating this new feature.

- Judith Holton

Congratuations!

- To Hans Thulesius, a member of our Peer Review Board, whose GT on Balancing in End-of-Life Cancer Care has been selected as the Swedish Family Medicine Doctoral Dissertation for 2003. Hans' paper was published in Volume 3 of the **Grounded Theory Review.** *Volumes 1-3 are now available as a consolidated edition through Sociology Press. Price is $ 25 USD.*

- To Krzysztof Konecki and colleagues at The Institute of Sociology, Lodz University, Poland on the launch of the new on-line journal, Qualitative Sociology Review www.qualitativesociologyreview.org. We wish them much success!

## Submissions

All papers submitted are peer reviewed and comments provided back to the authors. Papers accepted for publication will be good examples or practical applications of grounded theory and classic grounded theory methodology.

Comments on papers published are also welcomed, will be shared with the authors and may be published in subsequent issues of the Review.

Forward submissions as Word documents to Judith Holton at Judith @groundedtheoryreview.com

# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal Order Form

*Published 3 times per year (November, March, June)*

**Annual Subscriptions**

**Individual** Annual Subscription (per volume/3 issues)

- Hard Copy $ 60 USD _____
- PDF Downloadable $ 45 USD _____

**Institutional** Annual Subscription (per volume/3 issues)

- Hard Copy $ 90 USD _____
- PDF Downloadable $ 60 USD _____

**Single Issues**

**Individuals**

- Hard Copy $ 25 USD _____
- PDF Downloadable $ 20 USD _____

**Institutions**

- Hard Copy $ 40 USD _____
- PDF Downloadable $ 25 USD _____

**Submit Orders by Fax, Email or telephone to:**

Sociology Press
P.O. Box 400, Mill Valley, CA, USA 94942
Tel: 415 388 8431
Fax: 415 381 2254
Email: Barney@groundedtheoryreview.com

**The Grounded Theory Review (2005) vol. 4, no. 2**

# The Impact of Symbolic Interaction on Grounded Theory

*By Barney G. Glaser, Ph.D., Hon. Ph.D.*

*(Chapter 10, The Grounded Theory Perspective III: Theoretical Coding, Sociology Press, 2005)*

As I stated in the introduction to chapter 9, GT is a general inductive method possessed by no discipline or theoretical perspective or data type. Yet the takeover of GT by Symbolic Interaction (SI) and all the departments and institutes that SI informs and resides in is massive and thereby replete with the remodeling of GT. The literature on qualitative methodology is massive and replete with the assertion that SI is the foundation theoretical perspective of GT. GT is reported as a SI method. That GT is a general inductive method is lost.

Sure, GT can use SI type data and its perspective, but as a general method it can use any other type data, even other types of qualitative data, as well as quantitative, visual, document, journalistic and in any combination, and any other theoretical perspective, such as e.g. systems theory, social structural theory, structural functional theory, social organization theory, cultural theory etc. Thus, the takeover of GT as an SI perspective methodology is just discipline-perspective dominance, as discussed above, and nothing more. It, of course, dominates with a set of TCs (process, strategies, conditions, context etc) I have considered at length in chapters above.

Researchers, especially in nursing, just want a theoretical perspective. SI institutionalizes GT as its own! Researchers like it because it gives them an ontology (what is data) and an epistemology (a philosophy of research). The takeover becomes structurally induced by researchers, especially nursing, in their research, since they want a theoretical perspective in advance. It gives them a feeling of power, while they do not realize that the SI takeover reduces the general method power of GT. The writers on GT as a SI method use as their legitimating source because of Strauss's (my co-author of discovery of GT) training in SI. They ignore the roots of GT in my training in concept-indicator index construction in quantitative survey research.

In the following pages, I will discuss these issues at length. Much has already been said in this book about SI and its set of TCs. This chapter just focuses and adds some ideas. The goal of this chapter, as in all the above chapters, is to free GT from this dominance so GT analysts will have the fullest range of TCs – from any and all perspectives-- possible at his fingertips for emergence. No one discipline with/and its theoretical perspective defines and possesses GT, as I discussed at length in chapter 9. Obviously many GTs use a SI perspective (as well as others), whether bounded or not by it. Earned, emergent relevance is the TC of best choice.

## Sources of SI Dominance

Obviously, the impact, dominance and possession of SI on GT came from Anselm Strauss's training in SI at University of Chicago. Many authors assert this one source of SI. Carolyn Weiner (op. cit. page 6) says: "GT derived from the tradition of SI, this sociological stance is based on the perspective of George Herbert Mead as developed by the Chicago school of sociology and asserts that people select and interpret meanings from their environment, formed in many definitions of the situation. The individual acquires a commonality of perspective with others as they learn and develop together the symbols by which aspects of the world are identified. In other words there is a social construction of reality."

Marjorie MacDonald and Rita Schreiber (op cit page 42) "to begin, we must explicate what we mean when we speak of grounded theory. Central to our understanding is SI, a theoretical perspective rooted in the philosophy pragmatism (Blumer 1960/86, Dewey, 1922, mead,1934/67). Human action and interaction and the construction and reconstruction of meaning within levels of context are central phenomena of interest and foci for theory development. This is a synergistic and dynamic process in which action/interaction changes the context, which leads, in turn, to the construction of new meaning and new action. In light of this, GT is concerned fundamentally with the relationship between person and society."

Marjorie MacDonald says (op cit, page 126) "For Strauss, pragmatism was central to his thinking. Although people acknowledge the theoretical origins of GT as being rooted in SI, it seems that insufficient attention has been given to its pragmatist underpinnings, as originally outlined by Dewey (1922) and later articulated by Blumer."

Janice Morse affirms in her article "Situating GT, ("Using GT in Nursing, "op.cit. page 2. ) "The second point is that I treat GT as a method-- that is, as a particular theoretical perspective to analyze data that originally evolved through a particular theoretical perspective i.e. symbolic interaction"

P.Jane Milliken and Rita Schreiber recently wrote a chapter entitled "Can You Do GT without SI? (GT in Nursing Research op cit, page 177 to189) They begin by quoting Ian Dey referring to the sources of GT – quantitative (Glaser) and qualitative (Strauss) methods: In the marriage of these two traditions , it was intended to harness the logic and rigor of quantitative methods to the rich, interpretive insights of the symbolic interactionist tradition." (Dey, op cit 1999, page 25) The ladies conclude "Thus, GT emerged from and is intrinsically tied to symbolic interaction." There follows this initial statement of the ascendancy and claim on GT of SI ( at the start of their chapter), After this assertion, 12 pages of close argument leads to their conclusion, which is: ."To achieve this end the researcher necessarily engages in symbolic interaction within her self or himself and with the data, with participants and with the emerging theory. Thus it is our view that symbolic interactionism is inherent in GT research, whether the researcher is aware of it or not. If research is truly grounded theory, it cannot occur in the absence of symbolic interactionism, which is intrinsic to the process. This does not imply that other theoretical perspectives – such as feminism, critical theory or hermeneutics-- may not be incorporated as well, but that these other perspective are superimposed onto symbolic interactionism." (op cit page 188-9).

In short in their view, GT is possessed by SI as ascendant, no matter what other theoretical perspective may also be included in the study. It is their "philosophical justification" for doing GT.; it is their "epistemology that guides its unfolding." (op cit page 189). Their discipline dominance of GT by SI is wrong. No data type defines GT. We must keep in mind that their misguided view, is because (1) qualitative data, particularly long interviews are very suitable for nursing research , (2) they are only trained in interview research which is SI oriented, and (3) because of their training they are not really aware of other theoretical perspectives or their TCs – such as systems , social organization, social structural, phenomenological, economic, etc, etc and other types of data.—survey, documents, visual, experimental, library, observational etc, etc. Thus their focus on GT as needing SI, or GT as an SI method, is a socially structured

vested fiction. It is vested in discipline dominance, departments and careers with a specific SI research orientation in nursing. These fictions do not overturn or disappear easily; there is too much vesting at stack. All I am saying here is that there would be no threat to their limited view by staying open to TCs from all theoretical perspectives.

The Strauss origination of GT using SI has a pretty heavy impact and dominance, which given the above discussion, is hard to resist., but GT is just not an SI in possession. But I, Barney G. Glaser, was co originator, if not the originator of GT. I was clear in Discovery of GT, Theoretical Sensitivity (pages 62-64) and Doing GT that GT was "based in a concept-indicator model" leading to conceptualization (page 62) taken from psychological research and used extensively in quantitative research. I then added the constant comparative method – comparing the indicators – to conceptualize the categories and their properties. And I then added Lazarsfeld's notion of the interchangeability of indicators., which led to theoretical saturation, so no more indicators need be attended. Thus GT came straight from survey research analysis. And it came from Robert K. Merton's training his students in substantive and theoretical coding – conceptualization.

GT is just a relatively simple inductive model that can be used on any data type and with any theoretical perspective. It is just a general inductive model, or paradigm, if you will, that is sufficiently general to be used at will by any researchers in any field, any department and any data type. . No one theoretical perspective can possess it.

Thus SI perspective people can use it as a sensitizing perspective ,of course, but they are in error to say that it is an SI method and SI must be used in all GT as its foundation. SI is not necessary to legitimize the GT method. And in the bargain, this takeover stultifies the emergence of a full range of possible TCs.

The GT model is used in survey research all the time. I read many papers and monographs while at Columbia University., the most impressive being Lazarsfeld's "the Academic Mind" a study of apprehension during the McCarthy era.. My dissertation, "Organizational Scientists: their Professional Careers" (1964), a study of scientific recognition, which was published immediately, was a quantitative GT. The GT model is used on qualitative data that is not SI oriented.. See also Diane Vaughn: "The Challenger Launch

Decision." , which book is done from documents. Strauss also gave a long discussion in Discovery (chapter VII) on the use of library materials. But keep in mind I am not arguing here for the use of GT on whatever data, as I have said in my previous monographs: "all is data" for GT. What I am discussing here is the use of a full range of TCs for the emergent integration of GT, which means TCs should not be restricted by one theoretical perspective like SI does.

In Theoretical sensitivity I list 18 TC families which come from general sociology, not linked with any perspective, e.g. cutting points are cutting points, ranges are ranges, binaries are binaries. Etc. Their use has been squelched in large measure by the impact of SI. In Doing GT I listed more TCs. The full range is awesome and fun to learn, but SI curbs this knowledge. In Theoretical Sensitivity I coined the terms Basic Social Process and Basic Structural Process as TCs in trying to bring structure into SI oriented research.

MacDonald says that (op cit page 128) " Strauss's important contribution in this era was that of SI with a concern for organization and structural perspectives. In fact, Denzin, in his response to charges of an a structural bias in SI, cites Strauss's early work as evidence that social structures were given their due in terms of their role in human action." Their brief allusion to increasing the range of TCs was small and brought back into the control of SI research. It was a brief acknowledgment at most. They ignored my 18 TC families, and now we see they ignore the fullest range of TCs by being shackled by SI. The biasing power of SI as ascendant is very strong!

Using qualitative data does not make GT a qualitative method, it is a method that can be used on all data and accuracy is not the issue, conceptualization is for GT. Thus it follows that when SI researchers use GT, it does not make it an SI method. The reverse is correct, SI simply used a method that can be used by any theoretical perspective from which many TCs can emerge. Yet the QDA remodeling of GT is clearly aided by the impact of SI on GT. (See GT perspective II)

## A Paradigm

The quest for an ontology and epistemology for justifying GT is not necessary. It will take these on from the type of data it uses for a particular research FOR THAT RESEARCH ONLY. GT is simply

an inductive model for research. It is a paradigm for discovery of what is going on in any particular arena. It provides a global view by "providing a method of solving the puzzle of viewing human experience and of structuring reality." Wendy Guthrie, "Keeping Client In Line" (1998).. Whether GT takes on the mantle for the moment of prepositivist, positivist, postpositivist , postmodernism, naturalism , realism etc, will be dependent on its application to the type of data in a specific research. But in any case any TC that emerges to integrate the theory should still come from the fullest range possible. GT is not only appropriate for nursing research, but also for education, medicine, public health, management, organization, accounting, social work, business, finance, sociology, social psychology etc etc. as many studies I have read can attest to.

GT as an inductive method, would seem to fit Klee's notion of paradigm offered in his book: "Introduction to the Philosophy of Science:" (Oxford University Press (1996) page 135)

> *"A paradigm is an achievement that defines practice for a community of researchers. It defines practice because the achievement constitutes a model to be imitated and further extended. Future research tries to fit itself to the same pattern as the original achievement. This definition of practice brings in its wake, the seeding of the fundamental principles of the domain, the subsequent possibility of extremely precise research, a pedagogical tradition that trains succeeding generation in the use of the paradigm, a collection of institutions designed to promote the paradigm (professional journals, professional associations), a worldview with metaphysical consequences."*

Yes GT is a paradigm as Klee portrays. But the reader should keep in mind that in generating its subsequent dimensions of used and institutionalization, that it does not become discipline, theoretical perspective, and department dominated -- as SI has done -- and then the openness of GT is lost to the power of the dominators. And then subsequently, of course, the fullest range of TCs is lost in the takeover.

Klee recognizes this drift to dominance of a paradigm when he says (op cit page 134) "A general approach to research come to dominate a field – becomes a paradigm – when the practitioners working under its direction score an amazing research achievement , an achievement everyone recognizes as such, even those practitioners

committed to competing approaches." To be sure this happened to GT, based on its achievements, BUT in the bargain it became mixed with those practitioners who are wedded to the SI perspective. Then of course with SI dominance GT was remodeled. (See GT Perspective II).

## SI Possession Everywhere

As I said above, the methodological literature is replete with the notion that GT is a SI methodology. Much GT to date, in nursing and management, seems to use qualitative data, which tends to be SI oriented. But bear in mind that neither the type of data or the theoretical perspective of the SI TCs, which are many, define the GT method. The GT method just uses them as it would any other type of data or any theoretical perspective with its own TCs.

An immediate cause of SI possession of GT , is that nursing research is usually highly interactional (though it need not be), so nurse GT researchers and QDA researchers are highly and easily drawn to SI thinking and use it for preconceived. frameworks to model the research. SI provides a source of many TCs which have grab for intense, long interview data, which detracts from the using the fullest range of TCs that could be emergent. Those supervisors of dissertations coming from departments that embrace GT as an SI method, can easily require those SI TCs to be used as if that is all there is to it in doing GT. It is not, there are many TCs that are lost by this SI possession.

I can only give the reader a taste of this SI possession of GT– so replete, so dominating, so remodeling and so ascendant and so limiting to the full generality of GT. Here are a number of samples of assertions to this effect. Keep in mind that they are simply followers in style of the original, but not accurate, assumption that GT is an SI method. They simply take for granted the SI foundation of GT. Also keep in mind that researchers could say the same about systems theory, social structural theory, cultural theory, social organization, or any other theoretical perspective.

Karen Daley in her very good dissertation on Asthma and Decision Making, asserts on page 32 "GT is based on the philosophic perspective of symbolic interactionism. SI assumes that human action depends upon meaning that people ascribe to their situations. This assumption drives grounded theory research by allowing the

researcher to look closely at an individual's interpretation of self and their actions."

Alvita Nathanial in her dissertation on Moral Reckoning of Nurses says: (page 34) "Moral Reckoning" which emerged from the present study, is supported by extant research and theory. It is congruent with SI, a common theoretical foundation of GT. Inquiry from the SI perspective is particularly appropriate for a study of nurse's moral distress. GT is a natural product of the postpositive movement and SI."

Locke in her book of GT(page 30, op cit) asserts "A theoretical perspective informs how we understand complex social realities and what we direct our attention to when collecting and conceptualizing data. (Becker 1986). In his guide for conducting fieldwork, William Foote white (1984) underscores the importance of having an explicit theoretical perspective….. a good theoretical perspective, such as SI, helps qualitative researchers orient themselves to the worlds they study, but it does not specify what they will find.". To be sure grounding her SI assertion using the history of QDA helps legitimate the SI possession of GT and remodels it.

Janice Morse in her article on "Emerging From the Data" The Cognitive Processes of Analysis in Qualitative Inquiry."( in Critical Issues in QDA, Janice Morse Editor, Sage 1994, page 34) simple states in her chart that the conceptual basis of GT is SI, as if no question is involved. She further keeps the same point in 2001, seven years later, without budging, in her article "Situating GT": She says: "The second point is that I will treat the GT as a method – that is as a particular theoretical perspective (i.e. symbolic Interactionism)." Possession by SI of GT is sure and complete---, no question, no further analysis among these authors.!

Alvesson and Skoldberg in their book "Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research,( Sage 2000, page 11) states: "Roots. Glaser and Strauss's 'GT" has dual roots in SI in the person of Strauss, and the other in the statistically oriented positivism that was part of Glaser's intellectual luggage. General surveys of SI such as Plummer (1991) usually mention GT as particular orientation with this movement. Although we do not altogether agree with this description, we do regard SI as the most important source of inspiration for GT." At least I +(Glaser) was mentioned with roots before SI took over in their minds. SI does take over with

ease, because the roots of GT in inductive survey analysis are not understood by many researchers.

Lamborg and Kirkevold in their article on "Truth and Validity of GT", Nursing Philosophy 4, pp. 189-200 write: "From a SI perspective, Glaser and Strauss provided the interaction perspective of GT. GT relies heavily on Mead's and Blumer's SI (Milliken and Schreiber, 2001). Inspired from SI, GT is concerned with the dynamic relationship between person (individual or collective) and society." The mutual quoting among author of GT being an SI method is replete.

Here are two more affirmations; Karen Locke in her book on GT in Management Research (op.cit., page 20) says: "American pragmatism and , in particular, sociology's SI school of thought constitute the disciplinary traditions that help to inform GT. SI can best be understood as working through of the pragmatist world view." Locke also says on page 25: "GT's association with SI school of thought is repeatedly articulated by its originator and their students. It is particularly important for those organization researchers who work outside sociology's disciplinary boundaries to appreciate this link between GT and SI." "And often as a research product, GT reflects SI's theoretical and methodological presuppositions about the nature of the social world and the way it can be studied." These statements certainly shut down the openness of GT to a full range of TCs, by outright assuming of SI's ascendance over GT.

Phyllis Stern, a noted GT teacher and researcher ordains GT as possessed by SI in her famous article "Eroding GT" in "Issue in Qualitative Research Methods" (sage 1994 page 215). She says: "the framework for the GT theorist is rooted in SI (Blumer, Mead, op cit). wherein the investigator attempts to determine what symbolic meaning artifacts, clothing, gestures, and words have for groups of people as they interact with one another."

The ordaining of GT as SI, the worldview is purports to project, and theoretical capitalism involved is unending. GT will be possessed and taken off the general level for specific people and field purposes, irrespective of its general power. And in the bargain the full range of TCs is lost – there is no staying open in the face of the takeover. But this is not necessary once the reader gets the idea:-- openness is not a threats, it helps.

Two senior researcher, Schrieber and Marjorie MacDonald state flatly with confidence : "this pragmatic view flows directly from the philosophical foundations of GT in SI and pragmatism." (Using GT in Nursing, op cit., page 43) In the same chapter they say: "Central to our understanding of GT is SI, a theoretical perspective rooted in the philosophy of pragmatism (Blumer, 1969, Dewey, 1922,Mead 1934,67)."(op cit page 42 ) Their confidence has roots in the past, always a legitimating approach. But these roots provide present blind unthoughts also like, they say,: "SI is a theoretical perspective that illuminates the relationship between individuals and society, as mediated by symbolic communication, which…looks beyond the behavioral component to the underlying meaning that motivates it."(page 178)." Good jargon, but so… what has this to do with GT discovering the latent patterns in any kind of data from interchangeable indices. This confident sureness strangles GT!, especially the constant comparative approach to generating emergent substantive and theoretical codes !

Rita Schreiber and Jane Milliken were shocked by my statement: "GT can be done outside the theoretical framework of SI (Glaser, 1999) (Schrieber and Milliken "Using GT in Nursing" page 177). They then devote a whole chapter trying to handle this rather simple statement, not realizing GT is a general inductive method.. It is called "Can you 'Do" GT Without SI" They engage in a heavy, erudite analysis of SI always concluding with sentences as this: "Clearly, in our view, the epistemology of GT is steeped in SI;" (page 180) or "Clearly, in our view GT is a methodology in the sense that Harding (1987) uses the term, in that it bridges the philosophical underpinnings of SI and the conduct of GT research endeavor." (page 181).

They continue "What follows is a discussion of key elements of technique used in GT as they relate to SI." These elements fall into their line since they deal with only one qualitative data type: high interactional, interpretive data, as if all qualitative data is this type. In fact there are many types of qualitative data., which they leave out and which would undermine their contention. :"SI penetrates even the technical level of GT so that, in our view, an adequate GT cannot be divorced from SI" (page 187) . They concluded firmly: "Thus it is our view that SI is inherent in GT research, whether the researcher is aware of it or not. If research is truly GT, it cannot occur in the absence of SI, which is intrinsic to the process" .

They say lastly "other perspectives (used in GT research) are

superimposed onto SI." (page 188) This is a "bit" of a nod to other perspectives by a perpetually ascendant, impenetrable, possessive SI perspective. This remodels GT to a QDA method, with all its negative consequences, but here I simply point out that they endorse only a small set of TCs. They are not staying open to the sensitivity of the fullest range of TCs that can emerge. Their possession closes them down to TC possibilities and stultifies GT.

Their colleagues Crotteau, Bunting and Draucker, in their article "GT in Hermeneutics" (Using GT in Nursing, op cit ,page 193) echo Schreiber, Mac Donald, and Milliken, They say: "GT is rooted in SI, which focuses on the meaning of events to people in natural settings." This is the same sureness about the SI takeover of GT. The echo is everywhere. The roots of GT in general induction and concept-indicators analysis are lost to these SI owners of GT and with it is lost emergent TCs.

In a solo chapter Marjorie MacDonald does register a small doubt about the SI takeover and possession of GT (Using GT in Nursing op cit page 121) She says: "There are good reasons why critics have charged both SI and GT with an astructural bias… It is difficult not to make the judgement that GT does indeed ignore issues of power, culture, social organization, economics, gender and other structural influences on human action." Anti critiques she says have "concluded that many interactionists have not neglected social structure, especially since the mid-1970's. They argue that the notion of astructural bias as a defining feature of SI should be reconsidered.(Page 119). MacDonald explains this argument or controversy (page 117): "Many social theorists saw SI as being in distinct opposition to the classical European sociological perspective which was concern with macro-social analyses of societal structures (e.g. economy, polity, culture) as the primary determinants of human action. Thus SI emerged as a reaction to the dominance of structural functionalist perspective in sociology."
The astructural criticism and complaint of SI is MOOT for GT, unless, as these researchers would have it, that GT is possessed by SI. But GT is not possessed by SI, so let the this SI controversy be argued any which way, it is irrelevant for GT. It is GT's general method power that puts it outside this argument. But these researchers do not realize the distinction and difference between SI and GT, thus they do not realize the full implications for remodeling GT by SI notions and the loss of TCs.

Perhaps to counteract this critique of SI and GT, caught in the bargain, Strauss offered the conditional matrix to bring in a bit of social structure to GT research. But this gesture is mere tokenism to maintain the takeover of GT by SI. It barely touches the fullest range of TCs, which bring all kinds of structure, culture, systems, social organization. etc...into GT, once is it allowed to stay open and be free of the SI possession. Once GT is seen as a general , inductive method that can use any kind of data, since as I have said in many places: for GT "all is data", this controversy is truly irrelevant. The researcher will be sensitive to only those categories, both substantive and theoretical that emerge as relevant.

This distinction is seen clearly by one of my former students: Dr Barry Gibson. In excerpts from an unpublished paper posted to the online forum of the GT Institute website.(Sep 2000): He says referring to the SI takeover of GT: "This coupling process risks the possibility that the data become pre-conceived in relation to the distinctions that are received within existing theory.. The argument is that such distinctions must not be preconceived as relevant before the process of theory generation commences "(Glaser, 1992, page 116.) . I see this preconception as SI TC based in interaction studies. But bear in mind that GT is conceptual, not interactional. Further Barry says, quite rightly, "The epistemological implications of using the incident as the basis of data analysis are clear that there can be no subjects (participants) in data analysis and theory generation should be guided by the concept of constant comparison and theoretical saturation.. In terms of the method of GT, there are subjects and these are constituted as both the research and the informant. These both disappear, however, during the process of data analysis whereby the incident (as conceptualized) becomes the unit of analysis and all 'individuals' in the research process fade away."

The SI takeover is clearly a remodel with many negative consequences. GT is simply a general inductive method that conceptualizes into a generated theory, which explains the latent patterns in any type of data of a general area, whether substantive or formal.

Naomi Elliot, a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Nursing. St James Hospital Dublin, Ireland, and a student on my seminar saw this takeover instantly when as she says (email Feb. 2003): "I was challenged by a colleague who considers that an exploration of how

SI underpins GT is critical to any discussion on GT methodology. Having read your Chapter 2, "The Roots of GT", I am left thinking that to restrict such a discussion to SI alone is to ignore the influences such as survey design analysis, explication de text, or qualitative math etc on GT. So my questions are, to what extent does SI underpin GT?" My answer to Naomi is above: to no extent. It depends on the type data used, of which only ONE kind is SI data, even within the scope of qualitative data.

I could go on but the pattern is clear. In the literature everywhere SI possesses and GT! And this possession is reinforced by senior researchers, junior researchers, departments, different fields that like qualitative research and writers on qualitative methods. A robust full range of possible emergent TCs is lost to the domination of SI. GT's generality is lost to the drive for ontology and epistemology which discussions have turned to SI for foundation. Now let us look at some consequences of this possession.

## Consequences of SI's impact on GT

My colleague, Judith Holton, (email 10/2004) expresses quite clearly the general consequence of SI's take over of GT. She says, in her words, "GT has been co-opted by the critical mass of those working within SI and constructivist theoretical frameworks (esp. nursing and related health services). The result is a remodeling and eroding of classic GT as a general methodology; its being lost by sheer dint of their numbers and by their mutual echoing in peer-reviewed journals.. In this echoing of one another, they lost the ability to see beyond their own preconceived worldview. Instead, they continually reinforce mutually held perceptions thereby blocking out their ability to remain open to GT as a general methodology that works with any theoretical framework, as appropriately emergent and with any data as available."

There follows here several more specific consequences. The SI takeover of GT transfers to GT all its problems in the bargain "as if" they are problems with GT. For one problem, as we have just seen above,. SI is seen as astructural which deflects focus from relevant structural categories and structural sensitivity. And, of course, it is SI which has the astructural problem, not GT. Many feel this problem with no idea how to solve the lack of fitting TCs from other perspectives.

SI as the foundation of GT leads to a theoretical capitalism that admits of no other theoretical perspective, hence search for other TCs outside the SI perspective. Staying open is hard if not impossible., when facing a theoretical capitalist as supervisor or just teacher. Their identity is based on an SI orientation! Training in their department will be based on SI, not other theoretical perspectives. Resulting TCs are prioritized to an SI orientation. For the few who may wish to break out to staying open and finding relevant, emergent TCs, the wrestle is often just too hard. to take on, especially for students.

Why? Because SI which is mixed in with QDA and then remodels GT, as part of the takeover, to suit its data type (interaction), blinds GT researchers to being sensitive to other theoretical perspective's TCs. Staying open to extricate GT and oneself from this replete massive, possessive, takeover is too much to expect of the average researcher. Especially if he/she wishes a career and publications in the social structures that enforce this thought. Taking GT outside the SI orbit is too contrary, even subversive. If fact there is certainly nothing wrong with the SI perspective and its use in QDA. They are ascendant to be sure in the literature. They are just NOT characteristics of GT as a general, inductive method, as SI devotees would co-opt it. The loss of this takeover is, of course, a loss of tremendous theoretical power brought to GT by discovering emergent TCs (from any field) that fit and integrate the generated theory. Instead we often get from the takeover a retreat to a descriptive, tiny topic research, devoid of but a few concepts and lacking conceptual generality. It is then called GT which is nothing more than a legitimating label. (See several journal issues of Qualitative Health Research).

This condition makes the researcher feel like a part of the SI, QDA takeover while it lets him off the hook of studying the GT method to the extant its precise procedures of induction can be followed. Impressionism creeps in place of careful constant comparison of indices until their interchangeability reaches saturation. It changes the use of literature to the degree of preconception of its relevance and use, and it messes up the nature of memoing. It preconceives theoretical sampling by its directing to, not letting emerge, substantive and theoretical categories.

This takeover is so assumed, so automatic, so natural and so wrong for GT. It is unscholarly and bias educated. It harps on accuracy,

verification, constructivism, interpretation and naturalism as binding a GT product instead of conceptualization which is abstract of all these SI/QDA concerns as I have written about at length I(See GT Perspective I and II,2001,2003) . They are lost in meaning making patterns based on evidence based impressions , not as GT requires latent behavioral patterns arrived at by careful constant comparisons. In doing so they force TC frameworks on data and conceptualizations before hand,-- usually a pet TC. The full range of TCs from whatever perspective has no chance of emerging.

Again the prominent (heavy) QDA methodologists by citing the prominent SI theorists (especially Blumer and Mead) hang tight to GT as subordinate to SI's possession. It is their worldview in the center of a professional network., which kills curious transcendence. GT looks for the latent patterns which explain what is going on as people resolve their main concern, not the meaning, interpretive patterns that are exchanged, which itself is a small part of the variety of data that GT uses. SI's possession of GT would have it as all the data of GT, which is so wrong. And to be sure the consequence is to close down the TC range available to integrate a generated theory.

Just because Awareness of Dying. Glaser and Strauss, which gave rise to the "Discovery of GT", dealt with qualitative data did not make is an SI book. We discovered many latent patterns from the interviews and observations that were simple fact that upon comparison generated conceptual latent patterns (categories) abstract of any joint interpretation and meaning analysis of interviewer and respondent as SI would have it. Also the main concern of the nursing staff -- managing awareness of dying – was an abstraction the nurses did not voice directly and clearly but it was acted out all the time around dying people. SI data was but a bear 25% of the study, if that. It is not 100% of all GT, which is an overstatement the SI methodologists want to make as they wed it to concerns of constructionism, accuracy, long guided interviews and non-latent meaning patterns. Actually, SI accounts for only a small part of the data that GT is used with.

SI is a natural type of data that occurs in interaction, but one can question whether or not it is a discipline or perspective at all. But this argument is for the espousers of it as a theoretical perspective.. Here I am just asserting that for GT "all is data"., no matter the implicit theoretical perspective involved. And this openness allows for the emergence of a full range of TCs. Latent patterns are

everywhere, in all types of data. GT is the method for their discovery and conceptualization.

Taking the same type position as the SI methodologists, I could just as easily say that GT is a social structural functional founded methodology, or a systems founded method, or a cultural founded method dealing with norms and values, or a social organization founded method, a positivist founded method, etc, etc on and on, And each would have its own ontology and epistemology. Every grand scheme or perspective is implicit and sometimes explicit in social action. And then off they run with an epistemology to justify it. Fine, but GT is abstract of all this as it just depends on what data and data mix is used to see the epistemology(s) involved. The open GT researcher on choosing an area of interest will use whatever data there is to generate his/her theory. He will let the main concern emerge (the research problem) and generate a theory as "whatever" level seems appropriate, whether middle range, grand, substantive or formal. The credibility of his work is based on the careful comparing of incidents to generate concepts that fit (with validity). And his theory will be integrated by whatever TC emerges from the fullest sensitivity he may have unstultified by SI.

For all the supposed positive functions to SI methodologists of possessing and taking over GT, it just does not work. GT is simply a general inductive method. The SI methodologists have in GT terms not earned relevance for their assertion. They only have the vested social fiction of socially structured power of their organizations: institutes, departments, journals, careers etc. And it is no news to sociologists that vested social fictions have great power.

The SI takeover of GT limits the data, the substantive categories and subsequent TCs that the researcher will use or hopefully let emerge. What constitutes appropriate data and what the SI researcher is open to seeing in the data – how they construct meaning, means that the researcher will miss much that upon constant comparison will yield the latent patterns necessary to explain is going on. The overwhelming SI perspective blinds the researcher to all the data types, based on other perspectives, that are going on that are part of it, in favor of just some meaning making. There are always social structural features, social organization features, system features, cultural features, economic features, etc, going on that will be missed or slighted.

SI focuses on intense long interaction or conversational interviews, often based on preconceived interview guides,. as meaning is developed. The GT researcher listens to verbal quips, sees much structural and cultural constraints etc and listens to participants spilling their concerns, briefly or at length. He reads associated documents , journals and newspaper articles, always comparing to generate categories. SI drastically curtails theoretical sampling as a framework and/or the problem is perceptively preconceived.. SI is identity and legitimacy forming and in the bargain reduces sensitivity to other data for research. The bargain of the SI takeover is not good for GT as it stultifies it as a general method.

SI's takeover of GT and it consequent data limiting then generates complaints that SI is astructural or too empirical. MacDonald says: "Grounded theory has an enduring respect for the empirical world and the perspectives of the people being studied. But because theory is linked so closely to empirical reality, Layder argues that GT is limited to what can be observed or recorded about human behavior and the action/interaction among people: (op.cit. page 120)". This is, of course, descriptive capture (that I discussed at length in "The GT Perspective I"), which itself stultifies conceptualization required for GT. And SI itself is very compatible and useful in descriptive qualitative research. Thus SI's takeover of GT tends to remodel it from conceptual theory to descriptive capture and its accuracy concerns., so the resulting product looks very empirically descriptive, NOT conceptually abstract of time, place and people. The result is that Layder will say, "The entire thrust of GT is tied to the empirical world as it appears to our senses.(Layder 1989a)" This statement is based on reading studies of QDA barren of conceptualization., and steeped in SI data., as if it was GT, and it is not.

The SI perspective is very capturing as it is easy in comparison to other more difficult perspectives such as structural-functional, systems theory etc… It just requires making meaning out of action/ interaction which we all do readily in everyday life. Everything is seen as interpretive, which is only one minimal type of qualitative data. And SI's tendency to result in preframed ,descriptive capture leading to routine QDA, Not GT, means that TCs lose relevance, since they only integrate theory, not description. They are not necessary for description or conceptual description, except maybe to keep saying "process" as a catch all term.

The self-fulfilling effect of SI on nursing research is replete: virtually all routine researchers see their research work as SI. This capture is very desensitizing to the researchers, so they see no TCs that emerge that come from other related qualitative and quantitative data. that comes from other perspectives. For example, variation in work shifts, hospital nursing turnover, authority structures, nursing career effects cultural ethics, etc. As Carolyn Weiner says (op.cit., page 8) "All this can only happen if one has a view of humans as shaping their worlds to some extent – but in the face of inevitable structural constraints." I would take her comment further saying humans are immercifully shaped by structural processes, cultural norms, systems, etc, etc. All this is out of view to the SI devotee, hence the emergent TCs that come with it. Again SI limits the data for research, the TCs used if any, and when calling it GT, it denudes GT from a general method to a SI possess method.

The socially structured vested fictions about SI in nursing research will not change by my words, or the words of others. Choosing the SI perspective allows peer reviewers to critique routinely research with discipline dominance of department and journals. And the critique will often include the conjectural, elaborated, logical think up theory of the grand SI theorists. And GT is co-opted into this critique. It is time for GT to be used for what it was generated: a general method.

I only wish the GT researcher to stay general and open by studying other perspectives and their TCs so as to be open to their kind of data and emergence of the best fit TC form the fullest range. Central to our understanding of GT IS NOT SI , I affirm strongly and correctly. This is in contrast to the MacDonald, Schreiber statement: "central to our understanding of GT is SI, a theoretical perspective rooted in the philosophy of pragmatism." (op. cit. page 42).

There is a growing dissatisfaction, however, with the limits that SI puts on type data, data processing and by consequence the TCs used if the research climbs out of description and becomes conceptual. For example MacDonald (op cit page 122) makes the avant-garde statement: "Nursing, however, and other health disciplines, are moving away from an individualist perspective, particularly with the increasing emphasis on the importance of health promotion practice. More and More, health promotion practitioners are becoming concerned with societal level concerns and the way social structures and institutions influence health and

health behavior". She also quotes Pendergast and Knotternerus (op.cit., page 135) as "having suggested that SI must deal with the astructural bias if it is not to be increasingly marginalized in sociology. Health promotion insists that social and structural influences on health must be taken into account." These statements apply to all SI oriented research, no matter the area or the problem.

There will be no threat to SI, if it advocates allow other types of data (structural, cultural, system, organizational, etc ) to be used and its consequent TCs to emerge. It will likely enrich the SI aspects of a research even as it loses the possessive takeover. And in the bargain it will release its possession of GT as a SI method, so GT can be seen for what it is : a general , inductive method suitable to all types of data , whether qualitative (baseline, proper line, vague, interpreted or conceptual (see Doing GT, page 42) or quantitative. And then the true inductive roots of GT in survey analysis can be seen and used carefully in the GT procedures.

In short SI severally limits type data collection among all qualitative data possible, with consequent lack of openness, lack of sensitivity, and the lack of TCs. Releasing researcher from these limits will not undermine SI. It will enrich its use combined with other data dealing with other perspectives (e.g., nursing and management go on usually in highly bureaucratic organizations which yield many structural, cultural and system variables) Then GT is raised to its true general level and the researcher can be open to all possible TCs. GT IS NOT as MacDonald asserts (op cit page 116) "an interpretive research methodology such as grounded theory."
Students being trained in GT research for generating and emergent theory need to be trained in the TCs of many fields so they are open and sensitive to all data which may be involved in a theoretical completeness of a GT. This will stop the incessant rhetorical wrestle that tries to link GT with only one theoretical perspective (SI or Systems) since a good GT will likely have data from many theoretical perspectives, which data when compared result in the conceptualization of latent patterns leading to an explanation of continued resolving of the main concern in an area. There are many, many TCs that possibly have emergent fit. The reader (teachers and students alike) should study the 18 TC families I listed in "Theoretical Sensitivity" and the subsequent ones I listed in "Doing GT", as a start to learning the theoretical perspectives from which they derive, their roots in many other fields and then study TCs of other theoretical perspectives and fields. The resulting sensitivity to a

fuller range of TCs will enhance seeing their possible emergence to integrate a generated theory.

---

In closing this chapter and this book, I wish to talk briefly of the results of GT research which I used as I have tried to explicate above and in previous books. First of all I hope I have answered Naomi Elliott's question, a Ph.D. candidate at a School Nursing in Dublin, Ireland, to me in Feb 2004 email – a question many others have asked: "The reason I am writing you is to ask for clarification on the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of GT methodology. Just recently I was challenged by a supervisor who considers that an exploration of how SI underpins GT is critical to any discussion on GT methodology. So my question is to what extent does SI underpin GT. Does it do it alone or is GT also based on other influences?" I trust this chapter and book answers this frequent question.

Vivian Martin emailed me in Oct, 2003, her trouble in trying to force SI limits on her Ph.D. dissertation research. She wrote: " The big TC that has knitted together my conceptualizing is that to think of these interpenetrating processes as being part of an autopoietic system. I do not have a deep grasp of systems theory, but I do know that Purposive Attending is autopoietic, sort of a mix between SI and structuration. A big problem with SI is that it does not deal with structure effectively and it does not really tell how things come to take on meaning." TCs such as awareness contexts, boundary work, normative culture and structural identity, helped he also handle Purposive Attending. She settled on awareness structuration. SI analysis could not be forced, as we see above that some would prefer.

I have been involved in many dissertations that go way beyond SI by combining it with other types of qualitative data and other TCs. Wendy Guthrie's (University of Strathclyde, Scotland) superb dissertation on Keeping Clients in Line, deals with four types of ascendant relationship control of professional clients. Barry Gibson's ( Ireland) dissertation on Cautionary Control gives a typology on compliance with cautionary rules in dentistry regarding HIV patients. Brene Brown's (University of Texas, Houston) dissertation on professional accompanying relationships in social work focuses on staying relevant , binary deconstruction and binary retreat. Amy Calvin, (University of Texas, Houston) received the best dissertation

award for her dissertation on personal preservation while dying from a deteriorating disability. Berit Brinchman (Bodo, Norway) dissertation of proximity ethics and patient vitality. Hans Thulesius, (MD, Ph.D., Faculty of Medicine, Lund, Sweden) on balancing cure vs. comfort care in Palliative care. Judith Holton,(University College Northampton, England) dissertation handles the problem of rehumanizing in the knowledge workplace by joining fluctuating support networks. Maria De Hoyos Guarjardo (University Warwick) has accomplished an excellent dissertation on solutioning in problem solving in higher mathematics. Hans Lehman (university of Christchurch, New Zealand) did his dissertation of the conflict between undue control and utility and is structuring in the arena of international information networks. Walter Fernandez (Queensland University, New Zealand), did his thesis on Metateams in Major Information Technology Projects. Alvita Nathaniel, (University of West Virginia, Nursing) a professor of nursing, did her dissertation on Moral Reckoning of personal values, professional ethics, norms and organizational constraints for nurses in situational binds on wards. Tom Anderson, (University of Manchester, England) amazed us with his GT dissertation on the visualizing of patient deterioration based on soft data on intensive care wards.

And there are many more GT dissertations and post doctorate work, that have come my way. The point is that, as I said in "Doing GT" chapter 3, the rhetorical wrestle is a waste of time regarding ontology and epistemology. There are too many different types of data involved, GT being possessed by no one theoretical perspective for any data type. These authors have dealt with whatever is going on in their areas of concern with the "all is data" principal in mind, while doing laudable work as far as they can go. and being available to as many TCs as their current studies have allowed. Teasing out one particular perspective in these complex GT's would be a waste of time with futile results. Product proof is the goal for GT as a general inductive, rigorous method.

So the answer to Schreiber and MacDonald is two-fold. Yes, I am far more experienced than they are and their connection of SI to GT is flawed. These two answers are to their paragraph (op. cit., 179) "For us, the connection between SI and GT was obvious. Nonetheless, we recognized our own inexperience relative to Glaser and found forced to rethink our assumptions, as we face the possibility that our beliefs about the relationship between SI and GT could be flawed." Instead of their immaculate 12 page super-rethink

on why GT is an SI method, they need only do a GT of the dozens of extant GT dissertations, to realize my points made ad nauseam in this chapter.

## Works by Barney G. Glaser

The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967) *with Anselm L. Strauss*

Theoretical Sensitivity (1978)

Basics of Grounded Theory: Emergence vs. Forcing (1992)

Doing Grounded Theory: Issues and Discussions (1998)

The Grounded Theory Perspective: Conceptualization Contrasted with Description (2001)

The Grounded Theory Perspective II: Description's Remodeling of Grounded theory Methodology (2003)

The Grounded Theory Perspective III: Theoretical Coding (2005)

All books available through:

Sociology Press
P.O. Box 400
Mill Valley, CA, U.S.A.
94942
(415) 388 8431 (phone)
(415) 381 2254 (fax)
bglaser@speakeasy.net
www.sociologypress.com

The Grounded Theory Review (2005) vol. 4, no. 2

# Beyond the Physical Realm: A proposed theory regarding a consumer's place experience

*By Mark Rosenbaum, Ph.D.*

## Abstract

Marketers view place as a marketing mix tool that denotes activities associated with the distribution of products and services. Thus, the discipline believes that places are alienated from consumers' lives and experiences. This article looks at the place concept anew and offers an original theory of consumers' experience in place.

## Introduction

The concept of place is well engrained in the marketing discipline as a basic marketing mix tool that refers to distributional and to organizational activities associated with making products and services available to targeted consumers (Kotler 2000, p. 87). As a result of this conceptualization, it is not surprising that marketers perceive that places are isolated from consumers' personal lives and experiences. Indeed, pundits often chastise contemporary retailers for creating an urban marketplace that represents a rendition of human alienation and that is replete with impersonal, cold relationships between buyers and sellers. This perception of place, as a mere subdivision of physical space (Sherry 2000), is especially prevalent among marketing researchers who adhere to the regional school of thought (Sheth and Garrett 1986; Sheth, Gardner, and Garrett 1988). Researchers, in this school, consider marketing as a form of economic activity that bridges the geographic gap, or spatial gaps, between buyers and sellers (see Grether 1983). Consequently, these researchers are guided by a philosophy of consumption which espouses that general laws exist for predicting spatial regularities between consumers' residential location and their selected shopping areas. Although regional researchers have been developing models since the 1930's, no encompassing marketing theory has yet emerged from their endeavors (Sheth, Gardner, and Garrett 1988).

Marketing's conceptualization of place has been unwavering since

its inception in the early 1960's (McCarthy 1960); however, as the discipline entered the new millennium, Sherry (2000) suggested that all is not sanguine with it. Sherry's (1998, 2000) point of contention with the place concept is that marketers deem consumption settings, or servicescapes (Bitner 1992; Sherry 1998), as being comprised of physical elements (Turley and Milliman 2000). Thus, he believes that marketers fail to consider that places may also be comprised of intangible, symbolic realms, which may be integral to consumers' personal worlds and experiences.

Rather than consider that consumers view places as points-of-exchange where they satisfy essential consumption needs, Sherry posits that places have different dimensions of meaning for consumers, based upon their personal experiences in them. In addition, he speculates that the impact of these meanings, on consumer behavior, ranges on a continuum from the subtle to the profound. However, like Trickster, Sherry (1998, 2000) stops conjecturing mid-stream; leaving future researchers with the challenge of generating a theory of consumer's being-in-place.

The goal of this article is to heed Sherry's (2000) challenge by conceiving a theory that (1) illustrates why and how consumers experience places in their lives, (2) uncovers major antecedents that impact consumers' place experience, (3) links place experience to patronizing behavior, and (4) is parsimonious, relevant, and modifiable.

The theory serves as a milestone for marketing as it addresses a chasm in the marketing mix. Namely, that marketing mix, along with its consideration of place as distribution, is not entirely complete, is somewhat inconsiderate of consumers' needs, and focuses on investigating unidimensional relationships between stimuli and responses, rather than on the much richer concept of exchange relationships (van Waterschoot 2000; van Waterchoot and Van den Bulte 1992). To date, the majority of place studies in marketing have attempted to discern stimulus-response regularities between specific environmental conditions (e.g., music, crowding, scent) and consumer behavior (Bone and Ellen 1999; Chebat and Dube 2000; Chebat and Michon 2003; Harrell, Huff, and Anderson 1980; Hightower, Brady and Baker 2002; Milliman 1982; 1986). Although this research is insightful, a limitation of this methodological philosophy is that marketers construe that consumers simply react to environmental stimuli. Thus, marketers have essentially failed to consider that consumers may seek out and patronize places as

a response to internal, unfulfilled needs. Consequently, marketers are estranged from fully comprehending the interconnectedness that often exists between consumers and places.

For too long, marketers have been content with permitting sociologists to explore the evocative relationships that consumers in consumption settings such as taverns, taxi cabs, department stores, second-hand stores, and coffeehouses (Lofland 1998 for review) often form with other customers and employees. Because sociologists have conducted their studies primarily via participant observation, their research is rich in description, yet it lacks theoretical conceptualization. Hence, sociologists have failed to offer research propositions that explain the preponderance of behavior regarding how and why consumers transform consumption settings into significant centers of personal experiences. Thus, the proposed theory represents a first attempt to unravel and to describe the experiential nature of place, from the consumer perspective, and in doing so, it offers an explanation as to why and how places become meaningful for some consumers.

The plan for this article adheres to Cunningham and Sheth's (1982) suggestions for writing a theory development piece, as well as to established grounded theory methodological procedures (Glaser 1998; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 2001; Strauss and Corbin 1998). The article commences with a historical review of environmental, and place, research in marketing. The review is used to expose a shortcoming in the discipline's current stance towards place and to buttress Sherry's (2000) request for its reassessment. Next, I present the proposed theoretical framework that emerged from the data and provide a brief explanation of its conceptual categories. Then, I turn our attention to developing and to defining each conceptual category, one "block" at a time (Cunningham and Sheth 1982). I conclude the article with a discussion of possible future research endeavors and of research limitations.

## The Study Of Place In Marketing

Marketing's pursuit of place originates with the 1931 publication of William J. Reilly's, *Law of Retail Gravitation* (Sheth, Gardner, and Garrett 1988; Sheth and Garrett 1986). Reilly's objective was to develop models that espoused rational and economic regularities concerning consumers' spatial movements into the marketplace. Since then, other researchers, primarily those in the regional

school, have continued to pursue the development of general laws regarding consumers' movements into shopping areas (Craig, Ghosh, and McLafferty 1984; Grether 1983 for reviews). Because regional researchers believe that consumers initiate movement into the marketplace solely as a response to unfulfilled consumption needs, and that these spatial movements are perceived as costly endeavors, they assume that consumers formulate rational and economic decisions regarding their decision to patronize specific shopping areas (e.g., patronizing closest stores to residence). Although this assumption is typically sound, it is highly susceptible to a fundamental weakness that limits its theoretical generalizablity. However, to expose the weakness in the place concept, we must turn to ecological theory.

Ecology refers to "the study of the interrelations between organisms and their environment" (Stokols 1977, p. 7; Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995). Encouraged by Darwin's research, biologists began developing ecological theory in the early 1900's by investigating how organisms collectively respond to objective stimuli that are present within a spatially-bounded area. By the 1930's, ecological theory entered other fields, such as sociology, geography, economics, and marketing, as researchers searched for general laws to explain individuals' collective movement into spatially-bounded areas. These beliefs gained further entrée into marketing as gravitationalists (Converse 1949) and behaviorists (Huff 1964) sought to discover logical relationships between consumers' residential locations and their decision to select specific shopping destinations.

Ecological perspectives also entered marketing via environmental psychology, most notably with the work of Barker and the publication of *Ecological Psychology: Concepts and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior* (Barker 1968). Barker applied traditional psychological stimulus-organism-response thinking to environmental studies by assuming that individuals respond to observable stimuli (e.g., noise, and temperature) that are present within a specific environment, or "behavior setting." For example, Baker stated, "To laymen they (behavior settings) are as objective as rivers and forests - they are parts of the objective environment that are experienced directly as rain and sandy beaches are experienced" (Barker 1968, p. 11). Barker's research, and methodological philosophy, influenced the work of other environmental psychologists, including Mehrabian and Russell (1974) and Russell and Ward (1982), who influenced the work of marketing researchers,

including Kotler (1973/1974), Belk (1975), Lutz and Kakkar (1975), Donovan and Rossiter (1982) and Bitner (1992).

Kotler (1973/1974) was one of the first researchers to explore the impact of objective environmental stimuli on consumers' behavior. He coined the term, atmospherics, to denote stimuli present in the "air" that all customers, in a specific consumption setting, respond to via their senses. In a similar fashion, Belk (1975) and Lutz and Kakkar (1975) sought to uncover situational variables, such as store location and appearance, which influence all customers in a specific consumption setting, at a specific point in time. In contrast to isolating specific time and place stimuli, Donovan and Rossiter (1982) found that consumer approach/avoidance behaviors are influenced by their perceptions of a broad range of objective properties contained in a consumption setting. Bitner (1992) expanded upon Donovan and Rossiter (1982) by conceptualizing the properties inherent in a consumption setting's built environment, or servicescape, which evoke behavioral and social responses from customers and employees.

By drawing upon theories and disciplines that all share a common lineage to ecology, it is understandable as to why marketers conceptualize places as being comprised of physical, objective elements that work in harmony to evoke consumer approach and avoidance responses. Accordingly, this is not to say that the present conceptualization of place is entirely awry; however, it is not entirely complete.

## *The Place Concept's Theoretical Weakness Exposed*

In a classic essay, Firey (1944) puts forward that ecological theory is based upon two premises. The first premise postulates that individuals regard spatial movements (e.g., making a trip to the mall), as being costly and impeditive to their daily routines. The second premise assumes that individuals are economizing, "fiscal" agents. On the basis of these two premises, individuals are said to formulate rational, cost-minimizing decisions regarding their movements into specific spatially-bounded areas. Although ecological premises are by and large solid, Firey (1944) points out that they are susceptible to a major shortcoming. Namely, ecological premises, along with its theoretical offshoots, which espouse that individuals formulate rational and economic spatial decisions, fall by the wayside when individuals imbue a specific place with sentiment due to the nature

of their social relationships held with others in the place. Therefore, if consumers instill a commercial establishment with emotion due to the nature of social relationships that they sustain with others in the place, then marketing frameworks designed to predict approach/avoidance behaviors, such as servicescape and atmospherics, may no longer be entirely valid.

Although it is odd to fathom that some consumers sustain meaningful social relationships with others in commercial establishments, consider the regulars who routinely gathered at Cheers, the fictionalized Boston-bar "where everybody knows your name," or with Homer Simpson at Moe's. Furthermore, the psychosocial literature is replete with studies that illustrate that some consumers, typically older-aged adults, form emotionally-laden relationships with customers and employees (Cheang 2002; Day 2000; Lofland 1998 for review). Thus, places must exist, in the marketplace, which serve as prime forums for hosting meaningful social relationships—*meet the third place*.

## *The Third Place*

Third places denote places outside of home and work (which represent the first and second place, respectively) where people gather to enjoy each other's company (Oldenburg 1999, 2001; Oldenburg and Brissett 1982). Third places are typically eating or drinking establishments, such as simple, or even run-down, neighborhood pubs, diners, or coffee shops where a group of customers, referred to as a regulars, routinely gather (see Tuan 1974 for "fields of care"). Even though the physical surroundings of third places are often unadorned, the internal atmosphere of these establishments is vivacious as the regulars come together in these establishments to engage in sociability and lively banter. This is not to say that every neighborhood diner or tavern represents a third place. Third places are viewed from a customer's perspective. Thus, although a group of regulars may consider a place such as a neighborhood McDonald's a third place, other customers may consider the same establishment as a straightforward, point of exchange.

For nearly a century, marketing researchers have considered the impact of place on behavior from an ecological perspective. Therefore, the discipline has generated a plethora of macro-level research regarding the impact of observable environmental stimuli

on consumer behavior and has generally accepted the philosophy that place is alienated from consumers' personal lives. Yet, this predominant methodology of consumption, which espouses the unearthing of environmental stimulus-response regularities, has constrained marketing researchers from looking beyond a place's physical realm and into its intangible realm. In fact, researchers have not fully explored the psychological and social significance of a place, and, are unable to fully understand the particularity of place as a consumer's lived experience (Sherry 2000)--until now.

## *Theoretical Framework*

FIGURE 1
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

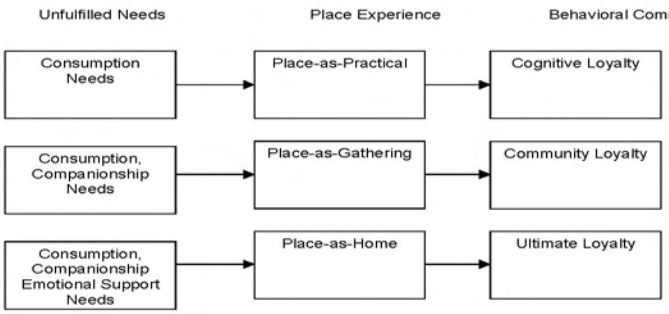


Figure 1 illustrates the proposed theoretical framework that emerged from adhering to grounded theory methodological procedures (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Glaser 1978, 1998, 2001; Strauss 2001; Strauss and Corbin 1998). The framework breaks the traditionally held perception that consumers simply experience places in order to satiate utilitarian, consumption needs (Bagozzi 1975) and that they only respond to objective environmental stimuli present within a consumption setting. Indeed, the framework illustrates conditions under which consumers may be encouraged to actively seek out and to patronize places and how consumption settings may become associated with widely-shared social meanings and personal, psychologically-oriented meanings.

The framework is centered upon the proposition that consumers instigate marketplace movement in order to successfully resolve

consumption-oriented needs, socially-oriented companionship needs, and psychologically-oriented emotional supportive needs. As such, the proposed model brings the place concept into the consumers' perspective. Rather than suggest that place is conceived as activities that organizations "do" to consumers (van Waterschoot 2000), the model proposes that consumers determine the purpose of entering specific consumption settings by opting to experience them as either place-as-practical, place-as-gathering, or place-as-home. Place-as-practical is conceptualized as a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy a consumption need. Place-as-gathering refers to a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy both consumption and companionship needs. Lastly, place-as-home is conceptualized as a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy consumption, companionship, emotional supportive needs.

Therefore, the model supports Sherry's (2000) claim that place is more than subdivision of space that is separated from consumers' personal lives. In actuality, feelings of unity and interrelationships may emerge between consumers and places as they deem certain commercial establishments as not only forums in which they satisfy consumption needs, but also forums in which they exchange feelings of human togetherness with others. In essence, the proposed framework brings the concept of place into the relationship paradigm by putting forward that consumers transfer their warm-hearted feelings for people in a specific place to the place itself. Therefore, marketers do not need to refute their current conceptualization of place; as a place is a physical locale where buyers and sellers come together to engage in utilitarian exchange activity. Yet, our goal is to expand the place concept and to posit that beyond the physical realm, places can also be conceptualized as repositories and contexts within which interpersonal relationships among customers and employees occur (Low and Altman 1992), and it is to those social relationships, not just place qua place, to which consumers become loyal to.

In the following sections, I first discuss the methodology that was utilized in this study and then we turn attention to defining and to developing each of the framework's conceptual categories.

# Methodology

## *Purpose of Grounded Theory*

Grounded theory is an appropriate methodology when the focus of the investigation is on theory generation versus theory verification. Grounded theory is a general methodology that yields the generation of substantive theory from data that is systematically obtained and analyzed. The term, general methodology, is utilized because while it is true that grounded theory is inductive methodology, meaning a theory is induced after data collection begins, it also contains a deductive element. Namely, grounded theorists use deduction to derive, from induced patterns of collected data, which groups, or subgroups, to sample next during the data collection process in order to generate a reliable, broad-based, substantive theory (Glaser 1978; Strauss 2001). This technique, which is unique to grounded theory, is referred to as theoretical sampling. The key difference between grounded theory methodology and traditional deductive methodology is that researchers do not deduce research propositions from pre-existing frameworks; but rather, from emerging relationships between conceptual categories.

More specifically, theory emerges when researchers generate patterns, denoted by categories, and their related properties, from collected qualitative, or quantitative, data. A property refers to an aspect of a category, while a category encompasses a set of related properties. Conceptual categories represent the components that comprise a theoretical framework and the relationships between the categories represent propositions that can be empirically verified in future studies. The propositions can be put forward in either a "discussional" format or a "frozen" statement.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) established the basic rules of grounded theory methodology; however, they separated in later years, each continuing to refine the methodology. A point of contention between the researchers is that Glaser posits that free-forming theoretical structures should be permitted to emerge from data, while Strauss (2001), later joined by Corbin (Strauss and Corbin 1998), espouse that data *could* also be exposed to pre-established theoretical structures, such as those produced by axial coding, in order to assist with forming a core category (Strauss 2001; Strauss and Corbin 1998; Glaser 1992). Although this difference in methodological ontology has generated debate, the value of the debate is actually quite minimal (Strauss 2001) as the methodological foundation of

grounded theory has always remained germane to both Glaser and Strauss. Regardless of which school of thought grounded theorists utilize, key grounded theory methodological aspects, such as the core category, open coding, selective coding and theoretical sampling, should appear in each and every grounded theory study (Strauss 2001).

Interestingly, although many marketing researchers have employed grounded theory methodology (Flint, Woodruff, and Gardial 2002; Manning, Bearden and Rose 1998; Mick and Founier 1998; Noble and Mokwa 1999), many researchers have become lax in there adherence to fundamental grounded theory methodological requirements. Therefore, an objective of this article is to clarify the process of theory creation, via grounded theory methodology. In doing so, this article illustrates how researchers can successfully field original theories that encapsulate the consumers' perspectives, rather than opt to borrow theories from disciplines far removed from marketplace realities.

## *Methodological Overview*

The first task of a grounded theorist is to analyze collected data in order to develop and to define the core category. The core category represents the main concern of the participants in the study. All of the other conceptual categories in the theoretical framework relate to the core category. The core category emerges during the initial stage of theoretical analysis, referred to as the open coding process. The mandate of open coding is that a researcher analyzes data patterns without having preconceived notions regarding the categories that will comprise the core.

It is worth noting here that one can argue that researchers cannot possibly enter the field without possessing preconceived notions, and hence, the methodological rigor of grounded theory is often questioned. However, this argument can be countered by the fact that a key reason why researchers employ grounded theory is that an insufficient amount of extant theory exists regarding the phenomenon in question. Additionally, if researchers decide to employ grounded theory in order to reconsider a topic that appears to be theoretically exhausted, or if they possess a significant knowledge of related literature, then they must engage in "stepping back" (Strauss 2001). Strauss coined this term to refer to a researcher's ability to momentarily set aside his or her knowledge

of the extant literature in order to develop the core category without having conceptual biases. The bottom line is that grounded theory is designed to provide researchers with autonomy to freely conceptualize categories, to determine possible relationships among the categories, and to assume ownership of original theoretical ideas. If researchers collect data that simply supports the existence of known concepts, then emergent theories will be trite and unlikely to be published in quality, peer-reviewed journals.

During open coding, a researcher reads collected data, which may be quantitative or qualitative, in an attempt to identify incidents. An incident refers to a phrase or a few sentences that are indicative of a categorical property. Researchers conceptualize theoretical categories by grouping similar properties together. Open coding terminates when the core category emerges.

Once the core category is conceptualized, a grounded theorist employs selective coding. Selective coding refers to a process by which a researcher delimits coding to only those variables that relate to the core category in sufficiently significant ways that generate relevant and parsimonious theory. During this process, a researcher may search collected data, or obtain new data, in order to discover conditions, consequences, and so forth that relate to the core and that complete the theory. To acquire an understanding as to the types of questions that may require probing, researchers may turn to literature for guidance, often in unfamiliar fields, as relevant literature emerges in conjunction with theory emergence. After all of the theoretical categories have been developed, researchers turn to theoretical coding, which refers to offering the relationships between categories as propositions that can be empirically verified using traditional survey or experimental techniques.

## *Generating Theory by Theoretical Sampling*

Theoretical sampling refers to a means by which a researcher decides which groups or subgroups one turns to next in the data collection process and for what theoretical purpose. The purpose of theoretical sampling is to generate a relevant theory by assessing whether the conceptual categories that comprise the emerging framework are supported by other data from different samples or whether the data supports the conceptualization of additional conceptual categories. Hence, in order to maximize theoretical relevancy, Glaser and Strauss (1967; Glaser 1978) urge researchers

to collect and to constantly compare data from groups that are "apparently non-comparable" due to demographic differences such as location, age, religion, or ethnicity. Thus, theoretical sampling, along with the comparative analysis of data from different groups, or subgroups of individuals, helps to ensure that the emergent theory is expanded and refined by constantly considering collected data with data collected from comparison groups. Although researchers may theoretically sample indefinitely, it ceases at theoretical saturation. At theoretical saturation, the researcher is confident that the emergent framework is relevant, parsimonious, and modifiable for future research.

## *Sampling Plan*

Fifty-six depth interviews with customers (44), employees (8), managers (2), and the owners (2) at Kappy's, a casual dining restaurant located in a suburb of a large Midwestern city, during two data collection waves. The first data collection wave, which represented the open coding stage, consisted of interviewing 15 customers and the owners, George and Gus, during a three-week period. The second data collection wave, which represented the selective coding stage, occurred three months later and lasted for two weeks. During this time, 29 additional customers were interviewed along with eight employees and two managers. The open coding and selective coding stages will be discussed in depth in later sections.

Kappy's opened in 1979, replacing a former "Big-Boy" restaurant and older-aged Greek, Italian, and Jewish customers typically patronize it. The restaurant's exterior is basically non-descript, but its interior is fully of vitality and sounds of lively banter. When customers walk into Kappy's, George, the owner, greets his regular customers by their first name and kisses them hello. Then, George escorts the regulars to their usual seating areas. In fact, George has embossed several booths with brass names plates that denote regulars' names and serve to demarcate their usual seat location. For instance, Kappy's regulars, such as Toby, Jean, Max, and Anna, tend to sit in the corner booth, so their brass name plates are affixed to that particular booth.

Kappy's was elected as the sample site because its patrons seem to vary widely in terms of their behaviors with respect to the restaurant. For some customers, Kappy's is simply a place where they purchase a meal or buy a cup of coffee. For others, Kappy's is a place where

they “hang” two to three times a day, seven days a week. These customers are the regulars whose personal worlds are often deeply intertwined with the restaurant, more specifically, to their social relationships held with others in the restaurant.

Another reason why Kappy’s was selected for study is that the primary author’s mother had become a regular at the restaurant after she experienced the death of her husband. Therefore, the author was able to immediately join several eating groups in Kappy’s and to obtain rich insights from customers in a naturalistic manner. This personal connection to Kappy’s customers greatly enhanced the ability to collect rich, personal data (Lofland and Lofland 1995). In addition, the author’s personal connection to the study is critical in grounded theory studies as the methodological procedures are time consuming as the emergent theory is typically slow to emerge and the relationships with categories are often difficult to define (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 2001). In addition, George, managers, cashiers, and the servers all assisted in the primary author in collecting data as they were enthused about the interest that the author displayed regarding the role that Kappy’s plays in its customers’ lives.

The interviews were theoretically sampled in a manner that maximized variance in data responses. For example, the primary author helped the restaurant staff open the restaurant. By doing so, the author was able to conduct interviews with regulars, typically older-aged retired, widowers, who volunteer their time at the restaurant to help the staff prepare for its opening. After the restaurant opens, these men move to their usual seats at the counter. Throughout the day, the primary author was personally introduced to different other regulars, via George, the managers, employees, or by his mother. In addition, interviews were conducted with customers who eat with large groups at Kappy’s, such as members of the “Boys Club,” the “Wednesday Night Bowling League,” the “Thursday Night AA meeting,” the “Village Hall Breakfast,” the “Tuesday Synagogue Group. Finally, interviews were conducted with customers who patronized Kappy’s simply to “get a bite to eat.” The personal introduction served to set a tone of immediate comfort as most customers would ask the researcher to join them at their table while they ate. In fact, over the course of study, several of the regulars assigned the nickname to the primary author as “prof”. Interviews were also conducted in the restaurant’s enclosed waiting area, or outside of the restaurant, in order to

interview customers who do not maintain social relationships in the restaurant.

## Open Coding

The open coding stage of grounded theory represents the initial stage of a grounded theory. As I previously discussed, the goal of this stage is to delimit the core category. Because researchers enter the field without possessing a clear understanding of the primary research problem, the questions asked of informants typically change during this data collection stage. In addition, because a grounded theory study focuses on understanding people's actions and interactions related to a particular situation, it follows that some people are more involved in the situation compared to others. As a result, the depth and length of the interviews varies across the informants. For example, in this study, interviews with customers who simply stopped at the restaurant for a meal would last five to ten minutes, while interviews with regulars often lasted an hour.

The primary author wrote detailed notes, representing informant quotes and personal observations, during each interview. Each informant was permitted to read, and to delineate, his or her statements. Memos, which represent a compilation of researcher thoughts and comparisons of the interviews to one another, were written at various breaks throughout the day. In fact, the restaurant permitted the primary author to set up computer equipment at the Boy's Club booth in order to transcribe notes and observations during the day.

Consistent with Glaser's (1998, 2001) and Strauss' (2001) recommendations, interviews were not tape-recorded. Both Glaser and Strauss profess that researchers should focus on writing field notes by listening intently to informants and that listening is dulled by a researcher's reliance on a tape recorder. Also, taping slows down data collection because transcription yields a plethora of unnecessary data to code. Finally, tape recorders often inhibit the free-flowing responses of informants. Pilot interviews revealed that older respondents provided much richer data when the interview results were manually, versus tape, recorded. Overall, 250 pages of field notes were collected.

### *Place Experience as the Core Category*

The purpose of grounded theory is "to account for a pattern of

behavior which is relevant and problematic for those involved" (Glaser 1978, p. 93). As such, the core category of this study centers upon uncovering the manner in which Kappy's customers experience the restaurant and the role that it assumes in their lives. In order to develop the core category, each interview began with questions such as "why are you at Kappy's today" or "what does Kappy's mean to you." To maximize data variance, five interviews were each conducted with customers whom George denotes as family, relatives, and friends. As George said:

> *We have three types of consumers. I call the first group the family. They are the regulars that we take care of. They're the base of our clientele. They represent fifty to sixty percent of the business. They're typically here at least five times a week. The second group is the relatives. They're semi-regulars who are in once a week. They tend to restaurant hop, although they love the name recognition and warm feeling that they get at Kappy's. They represent thirty percent of the customers here. The third group of customers is the acquaintances, not friends. They typically come in with coupons for a purpose, like a quick nit. A lot of them don't come back. They represent 20% of my customers.*

In addition, in order to maximize theoretical sensitivity, referring to a researcher's ability to be sensitive to thinking about data in theoretical terms (Strauss 2001), the primary researcher altered sampling so that different types of customers were continuously interviewed one after the other.

## *Place-as-Practical*

The customers who were personally unknown by the staff, or the acquaintances, tended to point out that Kappy's is simply a place where they satisfy food and beverage consumption needs. Many of these customers stated that they patronize Kappy's because it is a place where they can purchase quality meals at reasonable prices and that is located near their homes. For these customers, the restaurant is merely a place of exchange activity that is isolated from their personal lives. When they were inquired about what Kappy's means to them, these customers were stupefied. For example, a customer said:

> *I live downtown. My mom lives in the neighborhood, so I'm here about once every two to three months. We only have breakfast here, no lunch or dinner. That's it (F, early 30's).*

Another customer mentioned that the restaurant is only acceptable for lunch:

*I only came to Kappy's today because I had a $5.00 coupon. There is nothing outstanding here. The food was average and we had a good waitress. It was fine for lunch (F, late 30's).*

Overall, the incidents in the data collected from these informants revealed that they patronize Kappy's merely as a response to unfulfilled consumption needs. For example, incidents that explained why these informants were at Kappy's included phrases such as, "to have breakfast," "to get a bite," or "to get a cup of coffee." As a result, these incidents, or properties, were brought together under the category, place-as-practical. Place-as-practical is then conceptualized as a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy a specific consumption need. Therefore, this conceptualization of place, from a consumer's perspective, corresponds to the discipline's present conceptualization of place, as a locale where buyers and sellers engage in utilitarian exchange activities.

### *Place-as-Gathering*

In contrast to the acquaintances who patronize Kappy's solely to purchase a meal or beverage, the relatives, who typically dine with friends in the restaurant, discussed that in addition to eating, they patronize the restaurant to socialize, to kibitz, or to "hang" with the group. A Boy's Club member said:

*The Boy's Club…On Taylor Street, there were all clubs, not gangs, clubs. But, when you move to the suburbs, it's all different. At some point, you don't even know who lives next door to you. And, George, one day, said I'm going to build a booth, a special booth, for us…the Boy's Club (M, 72).*

For these customers, Kappy's is a place where they eat and socialize:

*The food is excellent, quality and quantity, and the service is excellent. They josh around with you here. It's a lot of kidding around. They're friendly. They got to know our names, all of them (M, 87).*

As the social camaraderie may be more valuable than the meal itself:

> *We get camaraderie for our money; the latest jokes, commentary on whatever is in the news or sports team in Chicago, a wager here or there. If the food wasn't good, we would still be here. The food might have brought us in, but it has become more than that (M, 65).*

In excerpts from these customers, the incidents revealed that they patronize Kappy's not only to eat a meal but also to gather with their commercial friendships (Price and Arnould 1999). For example, the incidents that explained why these customers were at Kappy's included phrases such as "to have fun," "to josh with the girls," "to kibitz," or "to socialize." These incidents were considered as properties that were subsumed in the category, place-as-gathering. Place-as-gathering is conceptualized as a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy consumption and companionship needs. This category transcends the discipline's view of the place concept, as a mere subdivision of space, into a space in which they sustain meaningful social relationships.

### *Place-as-Home*

The richest data arose from the family members, referring to regulars who patronize Kappy's with alacrity two to three times a day, five to seven days a week. The typical Kappy's regular is an older-aged, or elderly, widow or widower, who is also retired and who resides alone. When asked what Kappy's means to them, the regulars usually described the restaurant as their home-away-from-home and they talked about the care, the sense of being acknowledged, and the kindness that they receive at Kappy's.

> The following excerpt, from a recent widow, provides insight into the love, kindness, and assistance that regulars receive at Kappy's:
>
> *It's sometimes tough for me to get up in the morning. Sitting alone has not been as painful as I expected it to be. You see, it's a friendly atmosphere here. I am lonely at times, I have friends, but I'm still alone. But, I'm not alone at Kappy's. This place is my home away from home. I feel like I belong here, it's the kindness, friendliness, and so much love. You know, when I couldn't get my car doors open because of the ice, I didn't know what to do. So, I called Kappy's and talked to Mike (morning manager). He told me what to do (F, early 70's).*

Another widow relishes being acknowledged and feeling safe at Kappy's:

*I'm told that I belong. I'm told, "It's nice to see you." I'm acknowledged, they tell me, "Where were you? I looked for you". This tells me that someone cares. I feel safe knowing that if I have a panic attack that there is always someone there that I know will do the right thing for me (F, 62).*

While another widow experiences Kappy's in order to escape the eerie quietness of home:

*I feel at home here. It's hard going places alone. In a way, it's my second home. I feel better when I'm here. I like seeing other people; it's not an empty, quiet place. There are different people here and I like to hear the music. I enjoy my meal better eating with other people than I do sitting in my house with nobody (F, 70s).*

Another regular uses the restaurant to escape their humdrum everyday life:

*I feel better about myself when I'm at Kappy's. When I'm at work, at about 3:00, I think about going to Kappy's. You're getting away from the regular stuff, it's an escape. I can't go to Florida or Vegas, so I come here. It's an hour or two away from the world (F, late 50's).*

These incidents revealed that regulars tend to patronize Kappy's not only to satisfy a consumption need and to socialize with others, but also to satisfy a need for personal, emotional support. For instance, in addition to coding incidents relating to the food and to commercial friendships, these informants discussed that they were at Kappy's because "this is where I belong," "they care about me," "so much love," "to temporarily escape" and "to feel safe." These incidents were classified as properties that were fused into the category, place-as-home. Place-as-home is conceptualized as a place that consumers experience in order to satisfy consumption, companionship, and emotional supportive needs, such as feelings of well-being and care. The concept of place-as-home greatly extends the discipline's understanding of the place concept. For the place-as-home concept reveals that customers can humanize a servicescape and transform it into a second home; a place of rest and refuge in the contemporary marketplace.

To date, marketers have essentially perceived that place is comprised of objective elements that are isolated from consumers' personal worlds (Sherry 1998, 2000). Yet, place-as-home demonstrates that this conceptualization of place, as a simply point-of-exchange is not entirely valid as consumers may experience places in order to obtain more than products and services, but a sense of togetherness, belongingness, and love.

It is worth noting here that we do not believe that consumers initially experience places-as-home; in fact, it is unlikely that many consumers initially plan to experience a commercial establishment in this manner. By speaking and eating with customers who experience the place-as-gathering and place-as-home, it became clear that many of them had an aura of loneliness, often due to experiencing negative life events such as retirement, empty-nest syndrome, an empty marriage, divorce, or death of a spouse. Perhaps, in an attempt to escape, or to prevent, the melancholy and isolation of their personal lives, regulars attempt to vivify a servicescape into a new home. Hence, a third place may be conceived as a human place, where customers are at ease, in a place that is their home-away-from-home.

Open coding represents that initial step of a grounded theory analysis and the mandate of this stage is that the researcher enters the field with "conceptual nothingness" and ends the stage with creation of the core category. The core category for this study was finalized at the end of the three weeks. The next step in the study was to turn to the selective coding stage.

## Selective Coding

As we previously discussed, during the selective code a researcher rounds out the core category by delimiting coding to variables directly, or indirectly, related to it. Given that the core variable in this study explains how consumers experience places, a pertinent question regards understanding why consumers experience the same place differently. In addition, from a marketing management perspective, it is worth exploring how a consumer's place experiences impact behaviors such as loyalty and repeat patronage.

### *Alleviate Social and Emotional Loneliness in the Marketplace*

In order to acquire an understanding as to the questions that will be asked of informants during the selective coding stage, researchers may turn to relevant literature, usually outside one's substantive area of research, for guidance. Given the predominance of loneliness within data collected from customers who are either family or relatives, we turned to the loneliness literature for guidance (Forman and Sriram 1991; Goodwin and Lockshin 1992; Kang and Ridgway 1996; Lofland 1982; Lopata 1969; Rook 1987; Russell et al. 1984; Sorkin, Rook and Lu 2002; Stroebe et al. 1996; Stroebe and Stroebe 1996; Stroebe, Stroebe, and Hansson 1988; Weiss 1973, 1975). Within this literature, researchers typically discuss the "driving force" of loneliness; a force great enough to cause people who were normally shy to aggressively seek social activity. Along these lines, loneliness appeared to represent a driving force that encourages many of Kappy's customers to seek out and to patronize it on a regular basis.

In order to develop an understanding regarding the possible relationship between loneliness and place experience, I turned to Weiss' (1973) classic loneliness typology, which is often cited in health and social psychological literatures. Weiss postulated that individuals could suffer from two types of loneliness; social and emotional. Individuals confront social loneliness when they perceive that they lack a sufficient number of friendships and the feelings of companionship that friends provide. Individuals often tackle social loneliness after they experience events such as relocation, retirement, empty-nest, or the death of friends. As a consequence of social loneliness, individuals also endure its negative symptoms including boredom, aimlessness, and feelings of marginality. Individuals may permanently remedy these symptoms by forming new friendships. Perhaps, we can now understand why some customers experience Kappy's as place-as-gathering. The ability to habitually "hang out" with commercial friendships alleviates pathogenic effects associated with social loneliness.

Individuals confront emotional loneliness when they perceive that they lack a close, emotional relationship with another individual, such as a spouse, or partner and the feelings of emotional support (e.g., well-being, security) that these individuals typically provide. Individuals often suffer from emotional loneliness after

they experience events such as the death of a spouse or partner, divorce, or marital separation. As a result of experiencing emotional loneliness, individuals often confront negative symptoms such as anxiety, isolation, or a "nameless fear" that prevents one from concentrating on activities such as reading or television. In addition, after experiencing the lose of a spouse or partner, individuals often experience social loneliness, along with its negative symptoms, as established friendships tend to diminish, or to lessen in quality after conjugal bereavement and divorce (Lofland 1982; Weiss 1973).

Individuals may temporarily allay symptoms associated with social loneliness, by forming a close relationship, marital or non-marital, with another individual who provides emotional support. In fact, Weiss (1973) coined the term, supplementary relationship, to delineate relationships betweens individuals who are "in the same boat" and who are able to provide each other with emotional support. A caveat is that although individuals allay feelings of loneliness with their supplementary relationships, the pangs of loneliness rematerialize when individuals return at night to their empty homes (Hunt 1973)

Perhaps, we can now understand why some customers experience Kappy's as place-as-home. As a result of experiencing the death of their spouses, individuals confront negative symptoms associated with both social and emotional loneliness. By serving as a forum for large eating groups that engage in pure sociability, as well as a place where the conjugally bereaved and divorced may routinely assemble, regular patronage to a third place becomes cathartic to customers' overall health.

In order to probe whether or not Kappy's customers alleviate loneliness symptoms via patronage, a second data collection wave occurred approximately ninety days after the first wave. Twenty-nine customers, eight employees, two managers, and George, the owner were interviewed during a two-week period in the restaurant. Similar to the first wave, informants were asked questions such as, "why are you at Kappy's today" and "what does Kappy's mean to you." However, the customers were also asked questions about their patronage and to explain whether or not their patronage to Kappy's had changed over the years. In addition, employees and managers were asked questions such as their opinion as to why regulars patronize the restaurant.

During the second interview wave, it became evident that many customers patronize Kappy's in order to remedy pathogenic effects associated with social and emotional loneliness. For example, George said:

> *People come to Kappy's for the social as much as they do for the food. There are a lot of single people. People have passed away. I don't want to say they're lonely, but they come to Kappy's. And, they come and we kibitz. We sit around and talk. After a mate passes away, the customer always comes to Kappy's more.*

While a waitress explained the real reason why a regular patronizes the restaurant:

> *A regular is looking for good service and conversation. They like the entertainment. We have squirt gun fights in the restaurant. I have so much fun here. I'm the Easter Bunny here at Easter, and at Christmas, I'm an elf or Santa. Last summer, we were goofing around and the guy at the counter tipped me for being entertained. He said, "You know, it's my first time here. I'll be back for the entertainment.*

The data also revealed that customers who experienced the place-as-gathering did so after they experienced events such as empty-nest or retirement. For example, an empty-nester said:

> *I'm not cooking anymore. My children are out of the house. What do I need it for? We come here six nights a week for dinner. Why do we come here? The food, the social, George; he is so caring. We're regulars here so they cater to us. They make us feel welcome (F, 62).*

While a retired customer said:

> *We come here to get out of the house and to have adult conversation. Otherwise, I'd sit in the house doing nothing but clean all day. We're both retired. (F, 66).*

And her husband commented:

> *Sure, I'd sit home and watch war tapes all day (M, 70).*

The data also revealed that customers who experience the place-as-home often maintain extremely close relationships in the restaurant.

For example, many customers maintain a relationship with George that is analogous to a parent-child relationship. For instance, a widower said:

> *Well, you have the atmosphere of this person, George. He is warm and he has a good heart. He is cordial. And, he makes you enjoy being in his company. He makes you feel like you belong, like your part of his family, his extended family; not his immediate family (M, 80).*

While a widow considers George as her adopted son:

> *It's fun here; it's hamesha (Yiddish for cozy, home). I get kissed by George every time I'm here. He is my adopted son. I'm sure that he has a lot of adopted mothers here (F, 72).*

Another widower described why she left Ruthie, a waitress, a $20 tip on an $18 bill:

> *You see, if I went to a psychiatrist, he would charge me a hundred and sixty dollars. So, Ruthie listens to me for an hour, and I give her a twenty dollar tip on an eighteen dollar bill. I feel better telling her my problems. So, it's really a deal (F, 65).*

Another customer, whose wife is dying from cancer, spoke about how his patronage to his "second home" will change after his wife passes away:

> *This place is damn near my second home. People tell us that all the time; that it's our second home. The owners treat you like family. My wife can't walk, but we still come here on Saturday for breakfast. That's all my wife can do now. It makes her feel good to see the people. We have Ellen on Saturdays, but all the waitresses are good to us. When my wife is no longer here, I'll be coming here for two meals a day (M, 72).*

This discussion leads us to argue that place becomes interconnected into customers' worlds as the drive to remedy, or to prevent, symptoms associated with social and emotional loneliness encourages them to seek out and to experience place-as-gathering or place-as-home. Rather than create new conceptual categories regarding the antecedents that impact the manner in which consumers experience place, I linked together Weiss's loneliness typology with the core category. As a result, I put forward the following propositions:

**P1:** As a response to unfulfilled consumption needs, consumers will experience a place-as-practical.

**P2:** As a response to unfulfilled consumption and companionship needs, consumers will experience a place-as-gathering

**P3:** As a response to unfulfilled consumption, companionship, and emotional support needs, consumers will experience a place-as-home.

### *Relationship between Experience and Behavior*

I now explore the relationship between place experience and outcomes such as patronage behavior and expressed loyalty. To probe this relationship, the informants were asked when they plan to patronize Kappy's again, and whether or not they consider themselves loyal to Kappy's. The data revealed that customers who experience the restaurant as a place-as-practical typically expressed a weak, or a nonchalant commitment to patronizing Kappy's. These customers typically stated that their future patronage depended upon whether or not they were in the neighborhood at the same time that they felt like eating "diner food" or whether they had a coupon to the restaurant. Other customers said that they would return to Kappy's in a few weeks, when they were in the neighborhood doing errands, such as visiting relatives who live close to the restaurant. For example, a customer said pointed out:

> *I wouldn't say that I'm loyal to Kappy's. I like having a diner in the neighborhood. I like the prices and I like the food. So, I wouldn't care what was on this corner, as long as it served good food at reasonable prices (M, 45).*

For these customers, the drive to repatronize the restaurant is based upon their commitment to objective elements that is found within the physical servicescape, such as prices, location, and product selection (Bitner 1992; Sherry 1998). Thus, loyalty among customers who experience Kappy's as place-as-practical is directed towards information about the place, rather than to the place per se. The properties that delineate this information (e.g., location, prices) were encompassed under a category conceptualized as cognitive loyalty. Oliver (1997, 1999) coined the term, cognitive

loyalty, to describe a shallow type of customer loyalty that stems from customers having a commitment to "information" (e.g. attribute performance levels) about a particular brand, rather than to the brand itself. In this state, purchasing is routine and customers do not even process their satisfaction with it. By extending the cognitive loyalty concept from brands to places, I put forward that customers who experience a place-as-practical demonstrate a cognitive place loyalty as they are loyal to information about the place (e.g., product selection, prices, location), as opposed to being loyalty to the place per se.

Customers, who experience Kappy's as place-as-gathering, tended to express a desire to patronize the restaurant primarily in order to sustain their social relationships with other individuals inside it. Overall, these customers discussed that their loyalty stemmed from their commitment to their social relationships that they sustain with other customers and employees in the context of the restaurant, rather than to the place itself. For example, a customer said:

> *I'm a regular because my brother-in-law and his wife come here. If they stopped coming here, we would stop coming. We come to Kappy's mainly to socialize with them, more so than the food (F, 60's).*

Another customer said his family's patronage is dependent upon Lucy, a waitress.

> *We come here for Lucy, then the food. Breakfast food is pretty much straight forward. Now that Lucy is pregnant, we've talked about leaving Kappy's. We're not sure if we'll come back if Lucy doesn't come back (M, 30's).*

The properties such as "loyal because of my friends here," "loyal because of an employee or manager," "loyal because of a person or persons" were conceptualized under the concept of community loyalty. Community loyalty extends Oliver's (1997) loyalty phase concept by putting forward that customers may express a loyalty to patronizing a commercial establishment because of their coveted membership in a place-based social village (Oliver 1999), or given the meaningful nature of their commercial friendships in the place. Thus, the depth of this loyalty to is strong; yet, it is also entirely contingent upon a group consensus to gather in a particular commercial establishment.

Many of the customers who experience Kappy's as place-as-home expressed having an affective bond to the establishment, so that the place and social relationships held with others in the place, become deeply integrated into the customers' personal lives and experiences. For example, a customer stated:

> *I wouldn't leave this place even if someone gave me a $1M home on a beautiful island in a beautiful place. I depend on George (the owner) for my meals and he said he would never let me down (F, 60s).*

Another customer said that her peers could not prevent her from patronizing Kappy's:

Now, when I call my girlfriends and I tell them that I want to go to Kappy's and they say that they don't want to go, I still go by myself. You're never alone at Kappy's. If I had my choice, I would eat here every single day (F, 60s).

In fact, some customers expressed that they feel disoriented without the restaurant:

> *Kappy's was closed Christmas and New Years Day and I felt lost. George said I should come to his house for dinner. So I did. Kappy's is comfortable, it's home, and I've become friendly with the people, with the waiters, waitresses (F, 50's).*

After all, Kappy's is more than a restaurant; it is a sacred, hallowed place:

> *We're here to serve and I personally believe that God wants me at Kappy's. God brings people together at Kappy's for a reason (George, Night Manager).*

For these customers, their commitment to patronize Kappy's is indisputable as they use terms such as "loyal until the day I die," "forever loyal," "can't live without Kappy's" to describe their loyalty to patronizing the restaurant. Thus, I encapsulated these properties under Oliver's (1999) concept of ultimate loyalty. Although Oliver conceptualized the term to denote an intense, resilient loyalty between a customer and a brand, we suggest that customers may also express ultimate loyalty to a place.

This discussion leads us to put forward that a relationship exists between consumers' place experience and their future behavioral intentions. The findings suggest that as a place assumes a role in customers' lives, beyond that related to facilitating austere product or service consumption, customers become increasingly committed to repatronizing the place. While many places may satisfy utilitarian consumption needs, fewer can simultaneously satisfy social needs, and fewer places yet can further satisfy both social and emotional needs. As such, I propose the following propositions:

**P4:** Consumers who experience a place-as-practical will exhibit a cognitive loyalty to the place.

**P5:** Consumers who experience a place-as-gathering place will exhibit a community loyalty to the place.

**P6:** Consumers who experience a place-as-home will exhibit ultimate loyalty to the place.

## *Grounded Theory Workshop*

At this point in the research, all of the conceptual categories that comprise the emergent framework (Figure 1) have been developed and defined. In order to ensure the accuracy of the core category, as well as methodological procedures, the author attended three of Glaser's semi-annual grounded theory workshops (see Glaser 1992, p. 230-233, or www.groundedtheory.com for details). During these workshops, both Glaser, and approximately 12-15 doctoral candidates, who are involved in grounded theory dissertations, meet to exchange and to code each other's data. In addition, participants have the opportunity to have their working papers critiqued by Glaser and to meet with him personally to discuss individual research projects.

Although Glaser and the participants approved of the framework's core category and related antecedents and consequences, Glaser pointed out that the core category could also be centered upon a process that illustrates how senior citizens move from "hanging out" with their traditional families to commercial friendships. Another participant took a philosophical view of the Kappy's data and suggested that the core category could be conceptualized as consuming food-for-body, food-for-spirit, and food-for-soul. Overall, both Glaser and the participants concluded that the offered

framework illustrates a relevant and interesting explanation as to why older-aged adults develop meaningful relationships with customers and employees in commercial establishments.

## Discussion

The primary objective of this article was to heed Sherry's (2000) challenge by generating a comprehensive theory regarding how and why consumers' experience places in their lives. I met this challenge by adhering to the tenets of grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Glaser 1978, 1998, 2001; Strauss 2001; Strauss and Corbin 1998). In doing so, I generated a parsimonious, relevant, and modifiable framework that centers upon the manners in which consumers experience places in their lives. In addition, by clarifying grounded theory methodological procedures, which have somewhat disappeared from articles that claim to utilize the methodology, I demonstrated a process by which other researchers can follow in order to field original theories that arise from consumers, rather than from samples and from disciplines far removed from the realities of the marketplace (Sheth, Bagozzi, and Chakravarti 1992).

Sherry (1998, 2000) was the first marketing researcher to suggest that the discipline's widely accepted conceptualization of place, which dates back to the work of McCarthy (1960), and which considers place analogous to organizational distributional activities, was imperfect. Also, it was Sherry who exposed that marketers tend to deem place as being alienated and isolated from consumers' personal lives and experiences. Consequently, he speculated that marketing researchers have become estranged from understanding how consumers vivify a built environment and how consumers may transform physical servicescapes into significant centers of their lives.

Interestingly, Sherry forewarned that others in marketing might perceive his call to reassess the place concept as him "peddling the strange." Yet, I found Sherry's call enlightening. This was especially so as I was intrigued that his mother began demonstrating unexplainable loyalty to a neighborhood diner following the death of his father. In actuality, it is the discipline's frameworks, which postulate that satisfaction miraculously leads to loyalty, and not Sherry's assertion, which are somewhat unsettling (see Oliver 1999). Most extant frameworks fail to offer an explanation as to why and how regulars transform a non-descript neighborhood diner into their

home-away-from-home. As a result, I dedicated myself to exploring the place concept anew and to momentarily setting aside my knowledge of the literature in order to field an original, parsimonious, relevant, and modifiable theory of why and how consumers experience places in their lives.

By utilizing grounded theory methodology, with its emphasis on generating theory from groups, or subgroups, of individuals, I developed an understanding of the role that places may assume in consumers' lives *from their perspective.* As such, I discovered that consumers might deem certain places as more than mere subdivisions of space where they engage in utilitarian exchange. If truth be told, it is not Sherry who is "hawking the anomalous," but rather, it is the widely-accepted marketing mix, and its one-sided emphasis on how consumers simply respond to seller initiatives, that has estranged marketers from fully understanding how and why servicescapes can be profoundly meaningful for some consumers.

Is it not intuitive that consumers must do more in the marketplace than simply respond to a seller's product, price, place, and promotional efforts? Indeed, this study demonstrates that consumers are active social agents who enter places not only to purchase products and services but also to obtain feelings of human togetherness, such as companionship and emotional support, which only other individuals can provide. Furthermore, while products and services are integral to sustaining a consumer's health and wellbeing, so to is companionship and emotional support. Perhaps, it is now clear why regulars patronize third places with steadfast loyalty. Regulars not only buy a meal; but also, they purchase a remedy that helps them either prevent or assuage the pathogenic effects of loneliness that ensues from their experiencing negative life events.

A half-century ago, the sociologist, Gregory Stone (1954), postulated that some consumers enter the marketplace not only to obtain products and services, but also to obtain feelings of friendship from retail employees in order to counter loneliness. Since then, marketing researchers have also found that some consumers engage in exchange activities as a means to obtaining feelings of friendship from service providers and from other customers (Adelman and Ahuvia 1995; Adelman, Ahuvia, and Goodwin 1994; Forman and Srinan 1990; Goodwin and Gremler 1996; Gremler and Gwinner 2000; Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner 1998; Kang and

Ridgeway 1996; Price and Arnould 1999). In addition, over twenty-five years ago, Bagozzi (1975) put forward that most marketing exchanges are laden with social and psychological significance, and yet, he reiterated that marketers insist on exploring utilitarian marketplace exchange activities. Finally, I can offer the discipline a theoretical framework that organizes these disparate articles and that provides an explanation as to how and why consumers can satiate unfulfilled biological, social, and psychological needs in the marketplace.

Future researchers may consider utilizing the proposed framework to heed Bitner's (1992) and Sherry's (1998) call to extend the servicescape framework. In fact, the framework suggests that a consumption setting may be comprised of three types of servicescapes. The first servicescape delineates physical elements comprising a consumption setting (1992). The second servicescape appears to denote the existence of a social servicescape (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003), referring to the social relationships that are held among customers and employees in a consumption setting. The third servicescape may be considered as the humanistic servicescape, referring to personal, emotional elements such feelings of well-being and security, which customers may receive from other individuals. Truly pioneering work regarding the impact of each servicescape on consumer approach/avoidance behavior remains to be accomplished.

In addition, other researchers may attempt to apply the framework to recent research on consumers' desires to participate in product or brand related communities (McAlexander, Schouten, Koenig 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001; Oliver 1999). Perhaps, the need to remedy symptoms associated with social and emotional loneliness, compared to mere brand affinity, is a more powerful influence that encourages some consumers to partake in brand/product communities. This is not to say that all consumers who partake in communities do so as a response to loneliness; however, the prevalence of loneliness among older-aged adults may encourage many to seek solace in the commercial domain.

Beyond doubt, we know very little in the discipline about loneliness as a driver of consumption. Yet, with the graying of America, this topic is of extreme relevancy. Additionally, while this study emphasized how older-aged consumers may remedy loneliness in the marketplace, other researchers may explore how other consumer

groups, who are susceptible to loneliness, such as teenagers, business travelers, or ethnic (e.g., African-American, Hispanic;) or subcultural (e.g. gay/lesbian) consumers (Meyer 1995; Weiss 1973), utilize the marketplace in order to remedy loneliness symptoms.

A limitation of this research is that the data emerged from Kappy's present customers; hence, the restaurant played some positive role in each informant's life. However, it is possible for places to assume negative roles in consumers' lives. For example, rather than facilitate exchange between buyers and sellers, some places may encourage consumers to engage in place avoidance via discriminatory practices. Interestingly, place avoidance is also a topic worthy of future exploration.

Another limitation of this study is that grounded theory generates propositions that are empirically assessed in future studies. Thus, whether or not the proposed relationships empirically hold is not yet known. In addition, because a grounded researcher may theoretically sample indefinitely, a grounded theory project does not possess a true ending point. However, due to time, monetary, and creative constraints, a researcher terminates a grounded theory study at some point. As a result, although the offered framework is relevant, generalizable, and able to organize disparate articles, future theoretical development regarding the consumer-place relationship is warranted.

## Author

Mark Rosenbaum
Assistant Professor of Marketing
Research Director, Center for Retail Excellence
College of Business Administration
Department of Marketing C501K
University of Hawaii
2404 Maile Way
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-6607 (phone)
(808) 956-9886 (fax)
mark.rosenbaum@hawaii.edu

*Financial assistance was provided by The Research Support Grant Program at Arizona State University, W.P. Carey School of Business, and the Department of Marketing. The authors thank Barney Glaser for his assistance and personal guidance on this project and the owners, managers, employees, and customers of Kappy's.*

## References

Adelman, Mara B. and Aaron C. Ahuvia (1995), "Social Support in the Service Sector," *Journal of Business Research*, 32 (March), 273-282.

----, ----, and Cathy Goodwin (1994), "Beyond Smiling," in *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, eds. Roland T. Rust and Richard L. Oliver, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 139-171.

Bagozzi, Richard P. (1975), "Marketing as Exchange," *Journal of Marketing*, 39 (September), 32-39.

Barker, Roger, G. (1968), Ecological Psychology: Concepts and Methods for Studying the *Environment and Human Behavior*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Belk, Russell W. (1975), "Situational Variables and Consumer Behavior," *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 2 (December), 157-164.

Bitner, Mary Jo (1992), "Servicescapes: The Impact of Physical Surroundings on Customers and Employees," *Journal of Marketing*, 56 (April), 57-71.

Bone, Paula Fitzgerald and Pam Scholder Ellen (1999), "Scents in the Marketplace: Explaining a Fraction of Olfaction," *Journal of Retailing*, 75 (Summer), 243-262.

Bonnes, Mirilia and Gianfranco Sesshiaroli (1995), *Environmental Psychology: A Psycho-social Introduction*, London: Sage.

Cheang, Michael (2002), «Older Adults' Frequent Visits to a Fast-Food Restaurant: Nonobligatory Social Interaction and the Significance of Play in a "Third Place," *Journal of Aging Studies*, 16 (August), 303-321.

Chebat, Jean-Charles and Richard Michon (2003), "Impact of Ambient Odors on Mall Shoppers' Emotions, Cognition, and Spending: A Test of Competitive Causal Theories, *Journal of Business Research*, 56 (July), 529-539.

---- and Laurette Dube (2000), "Evolution and Challenges Facing Retail Atmospherics: The Apprentice Sorcerer is Dying," *Journal of Business Research*, 49 (August), 89-90.

Converse, Paul. D. (1949), "New Laws of Retail Gravitation," *Journal of Marketing*, 14 (October), 379-384.

Craig, C. Samuel, Avijit Ghosh, and Sara McLafferty (1984), "Models of the Retail Location Process: A Review," *Journal of Retailing*, 60 (Spring), 5-36.

Cunningham, William H. and Jagdish N. Sheth, (1982), "From the Editor," *Journal of Marketing*, 46 (Spring), 11-12.

Day, Kristen (2000), "The Ethic of Care and Women's Experiences of Public Space," *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 20 (June), 103-124.

Donovan, Robert J. and John R. Rossiter (1982), "Store Atmosphere: An Environmental Psychology Approach," *Journal of Retailing*, 58 (Spring), 34-57.

Firey, Walter (1944), "Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables," *American Sociological Review*, 10 (April), 140-148.

Flint, Daniel J., Robert B. Woodruff, and Sarah F. Gardial (2002), "Exploring the Phenomenon of Customers' Desired Value Change in a Business-to-Business Context," *Journal of Marketing*, 66 (October), 102-117.

Forman, Andrew M. and Ven Sriram (1991), "The Depersonalization of Retailing: It's Impact on the "Lonely" Consumer," *Journal of Retailing*, 67 (Summer), 226-242.

Glaser, Barney G. (2001), *The Grounded Theory Perspective: Conceptualization Contrasted with Description*, Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

---- (1998), *Doing Grounded Theory: Issues and Discussion*, Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

---- (1992), *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*, Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press

---- (1978), *Theoretical Sensitivity*, Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press

---- and Anselm L. Strauss (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory, Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine.

Goodwin, Cathy (1997), "Communality as a Dimension of Service Relationships," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 5 (October), 387-415.

---- and Dwayne D. Gremler (1996), "Friendship Over the Counter," in *Advances in Services Marketing and Management*, Vol. 5, eds. Teresa A. Swartz, David E. Bowen, and Stephen W. Brown, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 247-282.

---- and Larry Lockshin (1992), "The Solo Consumer: Unique Opportunity for the Service Marketer," *Journal of Services Marketing*, 6 (June), 27-36.

Grether, E. T. (1983), "Regional-Spatial Analysis in Marketing," *Journal of Marketing*, 47 (Fall), 36-43.

Gremler, Dwayne D. and Kevin P. Gwinner (2000), "Customer-Employee Rapport in Service Relationships," *Journal of Service Research*, 3 (August), 82-104.

Gwinner, Kevin P., Dwayne D. Gremler, and Mary Jo Bitner (1998), "Relational Benefits in Services Industries: The Customer's Perspective," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 26 (Spring), 101-114.

Harrell, Gilbert D., Michael D. Hutt, and James C. Anderson (1980), "Path Analysis of Buyer Behavior Under Conditions of Crowding," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17 (February), 45-51.

Hightower, Roscoe, Michael K. Brady, Thomas L. Baker (2002), "Investigating the Role of the Physical Environment in Hedonic Service Consumption: An Exploratory Study of Sporting Events," *Journal of Business Research*, 55 (September), 697-707.

Huff, David L. (1964), "Defining and Estimating a Trading Area," *Journal of Marketing*, 28 (July), 34-38.

Hunt, Morton M. (1973), "Alone, Alone, All, All Alone," in *Loneliness: The Experience of Emotional and Social Isolation*, Robert S. Weiss, ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kang, Yong-Soon and Nancy M. Ridgway (1996), "The Importance of Consumer Market Interactions as a Form of Social Support for Elderly Consumers," *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 15 (Spring), 108-117.

Kotler, Philip (2000), *Marketing Management*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

---- (1973/1974), "Atmospherics as a Marketing Tool," *Journal of Retailing*, 4 (Winter), 48-64.

Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland (1995), *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Lofland, Lyn H. (1998), *The Public Realm*, Hawthorne, New York: Aldine De Gruyer.

---- (1982), "Loss and Human Connection: An Exploration into the Nature of the Social Bond," in *Personality, Roles and Social Behavior*, eds. William Ickes and Eric S. Knowles, New York: Springer-Verlag, 219-242.

Lopata, Helena Znaniecki (1969), "Loneliness: Forms and Components," *Social Problems*, 17 (Fall), 248-261.

Low, Shetha M. and Irwin Altman (1992), "Place Attachment: A Conceptual Inquiry," in *Place Attachment*, eds. Irwin Altman and Setha M. Low, New York: Plenum, 1-12.

Lutz, Richard J. and Pradeep Kakkar (1975), "The Psychological Situation as a Determinant of Consumer Behavior," in *Advances in Consumer Behavior*, Vol. 2, ed. Mary Jane Schlinger, Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, 439-453.

Manning, Kenneth C., William O. Bearden, and Randall L. Rose (1998), "Development of a Theory of a Retailer Response to Manufacturers' Everyday Low Cost Programs," *Journal of Retailing*, 74 (Spring), 107-137.

McAlexander, James H., John W. Schouten, and Harold F. Koenig (2002), "Building Brand Community," *Journal of Marketing*, 66 (January), 38-54.

McCarthy, E. Jerome (1960), *Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach*, Homewood, IL: Irwin.

Mehrabian, Albert and James A. Russell (1974), *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Meyer, Ilan H. (1995), "Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men**,"** *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 36, (March), pp. 38-56.

Mick, David G. and Susan Fournier (1998), "Paradoxes of Technology: Consumer Cognizance, Emotions and Coping Strategies," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 25 (September), 123-143.

Milliman, Ronald E. (1986), "The Influence of Background Music on the Behavior of Restaurant Patrons," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (September), 286-289.

---- (1982), "Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers," *Journal of Marketing*, 46 (Summer), 86-91.

Muniz, Albert M. Jr. and Thomas C. O'Guinn (2001), "Brand Community," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (March), 412-432.

Noble, Charles H. and Michael P. Mokwa (1999), "Implementing Marketing Strategies: Developing and Testing a Managerial Theory," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (October), 57-73.

Oldenburg, Ray (2001), *Celebrating the Third Place*. New York, NY: Marlowe.

---- (1999), *The Great Good Place*. New York, NY: Marlowe.

---- and Dennis Brissett (1982), "The Third Place," *Qualitative Sociology*, 5 (Winter), 265-284.

Oliver, Richard L. (1999), "Whence Consumer Loyalty," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (Special Issue), 33-44.

---- (1997), *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer,* New York: McGraw Hill.

Price, Linda L. and Eric J. Arnould (1999), "Commercial Friendships: Service Provider-Client Relationships in Context," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (October), 38-56.

Rook, Karen S. (1987), "Social Support versus Companionship: Effects on Life Stress, Loneliness, and Evaluation by Others," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52 (June), 1132-1147.

Russell, Dan, Carolyn E. Cutrona, Jayne Rose, and Karen Yurko (1984), "Social and Emotional Loneliness: An Examination of Weiss' Typology of Loneliness," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46 (June), 1313-1321.

Russell, James A. and Lawrence M. Ward (1982), "Environmental Psychology," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 33, 259-288.

Sherry, John (2000), "Place, Technology, and Representation," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (September), 273-278.

---- (1998), *Servicescapes*, Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Sheth, Jagdish N., David M. Gardner, and Dennis E. Garrett (1988), *Marketing Theory: Evolution and Evaluation*, New York: Wiley.

----, Richard P. Bagozzi, and Dipankar Chakravarti (1992), "Acrimony in the Ivory Tower: A Retrospective on Consumer Research; Acrimony in the Ivory Tower: Stagnation or Evolution? Appraising Consumer Research: There's More to Vision Than Meets the Eye," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 20 (Fall), 345-354.

---- and Dennis E. Garrett (1986), *Marketing Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Cincinnati: South-Western.

Sorkin, Dara, Karen S. Rook, and John L. Lu (2002), "Loneliness, Lack of Emotional Support, Lack of Companionship, and the Likelihood of Having a Heart Condition in an Elderly Sample," *Annals of Behavioral Medicin*e, 24 (Fall), 290-298.

Stone, Gregory P. (1954), "City Shoppers and Urban Identification: Observations on the Social Psychology of City Life," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 60 (July), 36-45.

Strauss, Anselm (2001), *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

---- and Juliet Corbin (1998), *Basics of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stokols, Daniel (1977), "Origins and Directions of Environment-Behavioral Research," in *Perspectives on Environment and Behavior*, ed. Daniel Stokols, New York: Plenum, 5-36.

Stroebe, Wolfgang, Margaret Strobe (1996), "The Social Psychology of Social Support," in *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles*, ed. E. Tory Higgins and Arie W. Kruglanski, New York: The Guilford Press, 597-621.

----, ----, Georgios Abakoumkin, and Henk Schut (1996), "The Role of Loneliness and Social Support in Adjustment to Loss: A Test of Attachment versus Stress Theory," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70 (June), 1241-1249.

----, ----, and Robert O. Hansson (1988), "Bereavement Research: An Historical Introduction," *Journal of Social Issues*, 44 (Fall), 1-18.

Tombs, Alastair and Janet R. McColl-Kennedy (2003), "Social-Servicescape Conceptual Model," *Marketing Theory*, 3 (December), 447-475.

Tuan, Yi-Fu (1974), "Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective" in *Progress in Geography* (Volume 6), Christopher Board, Richard J. Chorley, Peter Haggett, and David R. Stoddart, eds., London: Edward Arnould, 211-252.

Turley, L.W. and Ronald E. Milliman (2000), "Atmospheric Effects on Shopping Behavior: A Review of the Experimental Evidence," *Journal of Business Research*, 49 (August), 193-211.

van Waterschoot, Walter (2000), "The Marketing Mix," in *Marketing Theory*, ed. Michael J. Baker, London, Thompson, 216-230.

---- and Christophe Van den Bulte (1992), "The 4P Classification of the Marketing Mix Revisited," *Journal of Marketing*, 56 (October), 83-92.

Weiss, Robert S. (1975), Marital Separation. New York, Basic.
---- (1973), *Loneliness*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

The Grounded Theory Review (2005) vol. 4, no. 2

# Visualising Deteriorating Conditions

*By Tom Andrews, RN, B.Sc. (Hons), M.Sc., Ph.D. &*
*Heather Waterman, RN, B.Sc. (Hons), Ph.D.*

## Abstract

The research aims were to investigate the difficulties ward staff experienced in detecting deterioration and how these were resolved. The emphasis within the literature tends to be on identifying premonitory signs that may be useful in predicting deterioration. Changes in respiratory rate is the most consistent of these (Fieselmann et al. 1993; Sax and Charlson 1987; Schein et al. 1990; Smith and Wood 1998) but in common with other signs, it lacks sensitivity and specificity. The sample consisted of 44 nurses, doctors (Interns) and health care support workers from a general medical and surgical ward. Data were collected by means of non-participant observations and interviews, using grounded theory as originated by (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and (Glaser 1978). As data were collected, the constant comparative method and theoretical sensitivity were used as outlined in grounded theory. A core category of "visualising deteriorating conditions" emerged, together with its sub-core categories of "intuitive knowing", "baselining" and "grabbing attention".

The main concern in visualising deteriorating conditions is to ensure that patients suspected of deterioration are successfully referred to medical staff. The aim is to convince those who can treat or prevent further deterioration to intervene. Through intuitive knowing they pick up that patients have changed in a way that requires a medical assessment. To make the referral more credible, nurses attempt to contextualise any changes in patients by baselining (establishing baselines). Finally with the backup of colleagues, nurses refer patients by providing as much persuasive information as possible in a way that grabs attention. The whole process is facilitated by knowledge and experience, together with mutual trust and respect.

## Background

Mortality from shock of whatever aetiology remains depressingly

high, and avoidable components are contributing to physiological deterioration (McQuillan et al. 1998) often resulting in cardio-respiratory arrest (Rosenberg et al. 1993). Of all patients undergoing resuscitation75% will not survive more than a few days (George et al. 1989) with a survival rate to hospital discharge of 10% to 15% (Peterson et al. 1991; Schultz et al. 1996). Out of 9% of patients discharged from hospital having survived cardiopulmonary resuscitation, 4.3% were in a vegetative state, signifying severe neurological damage (Franklin and Mathew 1994). In an effort to detect shock early, a number of parameters have been measured. Blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature, conscious levels, shock index, central venous pressure, blood gases, blood lactate, pulmonary artery blood pressure, cardiac index, all correlate poorly with physiological deterioration and severity of shock (Rady et al. 1994). Early detection of physiological deterioration remains elusive. A further difficulty is that there are over two hundred normal physiological reflexes that affect the pulse and respiratory rate (Shoemaker et al. 1988).

Current emphasis in the literature is on the early detection of physiological deterioration either through premonitory signs such as changes in respiratory rate (Fieselmann et al. 1993; Franklin and Mathew 1994; Goldhill et al. 1999; Sax and Charlson 1987; Schein et al. 1990) or more recently an early warning score (Department of Health 2000; McArthur-Rouse 2001). The latter attaches a score to changes in such variables as blood pressure, pulse rate, respiratory rate and temperature as a means of detecting early signs of physiological deterioration. The greater the score, the greater is the risk of physiological deterioration. To date these variables lack sensitivity and specificity. The current study is an attempt to redress the continued emphasis on physiological variables by exploring the nature of this complex phenomenon.

## Methodology

The research aims in relation to deterioration were to investigate the difficulties ward staff experienced in detecting deterioration and how these were resolved. The study was conducted on a surgical and general medical ward of an inner city University teaching hospital. Theoretical sampling was used and data collected until saturation was reached (Glaser and Strauss 1967). A total of 44 participants were interviewed, nurses (n=30), doctors (n=7) and health care support workers (n=7). The length of interviews varied

between 30 minutes and 1 hour 20 minutes approximately with a mean length of 55 minutes. Interviews were conducted in a quiet area off the ward. In keeping with the inductive nature of grounded theory, the initial themes for the interviews were generated through spontaneous conversations with participants on the surgical ward. These were supplemented with observations lasting between 3 and 8 hours, over a period of eleven months. Following an initial period of participant observation, the stance of non-participant observer was adopted. It involved the routine of watching what was going on and accompanying nurses if felt appropriate. No participant refused to be observed.

Ethical approval was sought and granted from the Local Research Ethics Committee and the University Ethics Committee. All potential participants received a letter informing them of the study, with an invitation to participate. Verbal consent and agreement was sought before the period of observation, while consent forms were signed prior to each interview. In any event, I observed very little deterioration while on the wards. This had not been anticipated, but may well reflect the subtle and progressive nature of much of the deterioration that patients experience (McQuillan et al. 1998).

Data were analysed concurrently with data collection and in turn this was guided by theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The content of each interview was analysed as soon as possible and coded line by line (Glaser 1978). Its aim was to generate an emergent set of categories and their properties which fit, work and are relevant for integration into a theory. This led to the initial generation of some 83 categories and sub-categories. Writing theoretical memos leads to further theoretical sampling and the generation of more categories and their properties. These were integrated through constant comparison leading to the generation of a core category and three sub-cores.

## Visualising Deteriorating Conditions

The main concern in visualising deteriorating conditions is to ensure that patients suspected of deterioration are referred successfully to medical staff. The aim is to convince those who can treat or prevent further deterioration to intervene. This needs careful management by whoever is making the referral, which in the context of this study is the nurse. It means presenting evidence of the deteriorating condition in a convincing and credible manner, a way that invokes a

response. It is based on knowledge of the situation, however subtle, personal knowledge of the person involved, exercising judgement, as well as knowledge and experience. Establishing trusting relations based on mutual trust and respect with those who can intervene greatly facilitates the process. In this study, the sub-core categories of intuitive knowing, baselining and grabbing attention emerged as the processes involved in visualising deteriorating conditions.

## Intuitive Knowing

Intuitive knowing is the first stage of detecting deteriorating conditions. Far from being vague, nurses know exactly what they are picking up when they are detecting deterioration in a process I term visualising. Intuitive knowing is dependent on nurses knowing patients, having knowledge and experience of their specialist area of practice, as well as understanding the nature of illness. Nurses rely on intuition as a means of detecting deterioration.

### *Visualising*

If someone looks unwell, then they are unwell. This is categorised as visual pickup. It is considered a more holistic basis for visualising deteriorating conditions since subtle indicators such as mental status, mood, making eye contact and reduced motivation are accepted as evidence of deterioration. Initially nurses notice if patients look unwell. This look is different for each patient and is difficult to describe to someone else. An unwell look is characterised as physiological and psychological. For example, patients can be pale and clammy, slumped in a chair or withdrawn. All are considered evidence of a deteriorating condition. Among the first signs is a change in colour. This can be anything from pale or grey, to blue or sweaty. There is no one particular colour associated with deterioration but rather any change in colour from patients' usual one. Patients might be confused or withdrawn, not themselves in terms of how they interact with others. Nurses and doctors notice gross changes such as in mood and confusion but the more well known patients are, the more likely it is that subtle changes will be picked up. Nurses spend a greater amount of time with patients and so come to know them better than other members of the multidisciplinary team. Consequently they have a greater appreciation of any changes in patients, however subtle, and accept them as evidence of deterioration. Visual pickup will prompt further investigation such as recording of vital signs to confirm suspicions.

If patients are not progressing then they are deteriorating since ward staff have a mental picture of how they should be progressing given their diagnosis, age and underlying pathology. Again this is experience dependent. Failure to progress is associated with any number of factors such as vomiting, continued use of oxygen, drowsiness, pain, abdominal distension, not eating, not drinking, reduced motivation, not getting out of bed, and any neglect on the patient's part. Visual pickup is based on experience and formal knowledge. It is through caring for deteriorating patients that the condition is recognised.

Doctors generally do not accept subtle indicators as evidence of deterioration but need more convincing evidence. This is usually in the form of objective, physiological change such as in vital signs (blood pressure and pulse rate) conceptualised here as hard pickup. They are used by nurses to get the attention of doctors and convince them that patients are deteriorating. They provide objective evidence of deterioration in what is conceptualised here as hard pickup,

> *Sometimes they're a good way of actually grabbing medical staff's attention* (No. 10- Sister 7 years).

It is more usual for nurses to use changes in vital signs to confirm what they already suspect rather than as the primary way of picking up deterioration and as a means of making their referral more credible. There is an appreciation that acting on visual pickup alone is insufficient,

> *…I think it's just a way of formalising....what you do know and what you can observe but you can't write that down* (No. 5- Staff Nurse 2 years).

Observations are also used to get the attention of doctors in getting patients reviewed and are used by them to confirm that something is wrong rather than accepting the more holistic evidence that nurses do.

There are occasions when nurses just know when patients are deteriorating. This is so subtle that often they cannot articulate what they are picking up in a process of intuitive knowing. They are drawing on things that remain outside of conscious awareness and for this reason they are difficult to describe. It is that element of knowledge and experience that cannot readily be articulated. It is invariably described as instinct or gut feeling,

> *I don't know. I think some of it is instinct (No. 12- Sister 14 years).*

Experience in this context is essentially dealing with patients in the same or similar situations over a period of time. Intuitive pickup is a matter of seeing and remembering, the making of a connection between knowledge and experience. It is a type of pattern recognition, where something is remembered from past experience that enables recognition that cannot readily be articulated. It is then extrapolated to the new situation which bears a similarity to the past one. Similar cases have been seen before and participants recognise this in the new one,

> *I'm not sure that it's just good old pattern recognition and you're giving it a different label* (No. 42- Sister 8 years).

Knowledge is an essential element of intuition but only when put into context by experiencing situations that it is consolidated and can form the basis for intuition. Although based on some experience, it has the potential to develop fairly quickly,

> *So in reality intuition is actually based on past experience, it's just you can't find the verbal tool to express it. You recognise something but you're still waiting for the old memory cells to produce an awareness* (No. 27- Staff Nurse 4 years).

Intuitive knowing is similarly dependent on knowing patients in that the better the patient is known the more likely that it will be used to detect deterioration. Given time, investigating further has the potential to support the initial gut feeling that patients are deteriorating by uncovering objective evidence. This is consistent with the belief that the evidence is there and simply has to be discovered through further investigation,

> *I think you can, working around the problem, you probably come up with the reasons why (No. 18- Staff Nurse 11 years).*

There is a sense in which intuition is not any particular thing but rather a collection of things that are so subtle that nurses may not often be aware of what they are picking up and so find the concept difficult to articulate. When considered together rather than in isolation, these subtle changes are a cause of concern and are the initial trigger for further investigation. Intuitive knowing is inherently difficult to articulate because often nurses are unaware of how they make decisions or what those decisions are based on. Consequently, when patients are referred based on intuitive knowing alone this results in vague reporting. The language may not exist to adequately describe what it is they are picking up. Changes may

be sufficient in themselves to convince nurses to refer patients to doctors. However there is no guarantee that patients picked up in this way are in fact deteriorating. Intuitive knowing can simply be wrong, misled by the changes that are being picked up.

Being with patients for prolonged periods of time facilitates a nurse's knowing and therefore helps in detecting the more subtle physical and psychological changes associated with deterioration. Although subtle changes are difficult to articulate in clinical practice, there is little difficulty in describing them, particularly in relation to looks. Appreciating the significance of any changes detected, particularly in relation to looks is based on knowledge and experience and is a learned process. The properties of the category of visualising are: visual pickup, hard pickup and intuitive pickup.

## *Experiential Knowing*

This is defined as knowing through the integration of knowledge and experience. It forms the basis of intuitive knowing because they share some indicators as both are based on knowledge and experience. Experiential knowing is so fundamental and important that it underpins many of the processes that are used in detecting and reporting deterioration. It is based on formal and informal knowledge. The former is invariably based on knowledge of physiology, pathophysiology and knowledge gained from clinical practice which is situational since it is determined by the clinical speciality. Nurses rely greatly on knowledge gained from or consolidated in clinical experience. This is developed by caring for patients in different situations and with differing conditions. It is of necessity gained over time and there is a reciprocal relationship between experience and knowledge in that experience enables a connection to be made between formal knowledge and its clinical application,

> *I think once you've experienced something once you're ok. You put in your knowledge file* (No. 36- Staff Nurse 1 year).

While experience is a prerequisite in having the knowledge to deal effectively with deteriorating conditions there is no guarantee that knowledge will come with experience. It is difficult at times to appreciate the influence that formal knowledge has in detecting deteriorating conditions simply because of its reciprocal relationship with experience in that it is so embedded in practice that it is often taken for granted making it difficult to articulate what knowledge

is being used. A lack of formal knowledge may result in increased stress since participants may not know what to do in particular situations or be unable to assess patients effectively,

> *I think knowledge is the thing that decreased your stress and tensions a lot because you know what you're going to do* (No. 33- Staff Nurse 2 years).

Also they underestimate the skill, knowledge and experience that is predicated on knowing when something is wrong with patients,

> *I can't describe it. I can't ..... don't know, you just know. You know when somebody is sick* (No. 3- Sister 13 years).

If physiology and pathophysiology are not emphasised in education and drawn on explicitly in clinical practice this leads to problems in articulation and application of that knowledge. It is important to keep up to date in the ever changing clinical environment. Clinical work takes precedence over all else and if individuals are not supported in a formal way by organisational support then keeping up to date is problematic.

> *I did want to keep on top if it but I find that when you're here it's just like this is work, work, work isn't it*

Creating an environment that encourages and supports life long learning is essential in enabling individuals to keep up to date with clinical practice. This is more likely where there is organisational support for continuing education and where there is ready access to educational material in the form of books and journals at clinical level.

### *Functional Relations*

As discussed earlier, knowing patients is essential in detecting deteriorating conditions. Nurses attempt to know patients by establishing functional relations. This is based on personal contact achieved through communication. It is a function of proximity and time in that the closer the proximity to patients and the longer the time spent with them the greater is the perception of knowing them. This makes it easier to detect deterioration,

> *But when you see patients that you know nothing about, it's quite difficult to know where to start* (No. 20- Doctor 10 months).

Knowing patients enables the establishment of a baseline as to

how patients normally are. This can be social, psychological or physiological, but usually is a combination of all three. It is used to determine if patients are deviating in any way from their established norm and to evaluate its significance, enabling subtle changes to be detected and is inextricably linked to the process of visualising and baselining.

There is a sense that this is a functional relationship rather than an interpersonal one. The intention is to build up a picture of patients' normal condition and behaviour rather than to get to know them on a personal level. Talk is not social but has the function of patients' norm,

> *Not going into detail with their social lives but just his or her medical condition* (No. 26- Staff Nurse 3 years).

Establishing functional relations is facilitated by a constant presence. The expectation is that patients will respond to and develop a relationship because this. It enables them to be known in a social as well as a medical sense and helps in establishing a baseline as to how patients are responding to their illness. To facilitate functional relations, information is sought from a number of sources such as patients themselves, relatives, other personnel, formal reporting, charts and records. This further facilitates the gathering of baseline data. Any serious deviation is taken as a sign of deterioration as well as facilitating the pickup of subtle signs of deterioration.

Through visualising, experiential knowing and establishing functional relations nurses begin to pick up on deteriorating conditions in a process conceptualised here as intuitive knowing. It is the integration of knowledge, experience and knowing patients in the realisation that something has changed, that the patient is somehow different. Initially these changes are so subtle as to be very difficult to articulate. By establishing how patients are in terms of their interaction and progression that any changes can be contextualised. How this is done will be discussed next.

## Baselining

This second stage in visualising deteriorating conditions is concerned with establishing norms. It is the process of establishing a patient's usual condition to enable any changes to be contextualised in deciding if patients are deteriorating. Nurses do this by establishing how patients are in terms of their vital signs (e.g. blood pressure,

pulse rate), their response to any treatment, their progression and how they generally interact with staff. This is done by establishing a baseline against which any changes can be compared in a process termed baselining. How this is done will now be outlined.

## *Vigilising*

Nurses in particular are keen observers of patients. They assess patients both formally and informally by being continuously vigilant or what is conceptualised here as vigilising. It seems that every opportunity is used to observe patients in establishing a baseline,

> *Every time that you're in a bay near patients, you need to be looking at them and observing them to some degree or another. I don't think you can just do it when it's blood pressure time* (No. 5-Staff Nurse 2years).

To facilitate the process of vigilising nurses need to assess patients to establish patients' baseline and also to pick up on any deviations from it. This enables changes to be contextualised. Like so many elements of deterioration, nurses in particular are often unaware of how they assess patients or make clinical decisions. However in patients presenting with obvious signs of deterioration, assessment is done very quickly. Unlike doctors, nurses differ from each other in how they assess patients. One way is to have a systematic approach whereby nurses use a predetermined series of questions or ways of looking at patients. This can help them to more effectively prioritise care ensuring that nothing is missed and provides a framework for assessment. Developing such an approach is a function of experience and developed over time and not every nurse uses this but instead have what can best be termed an idiosyncratic approach in that it is particular to the individual,

> *Newly qualified will do it in another way; someone who's been here 3 or 4 years do it another way* (No. 33- Staff Nurse 2 years).

Despite not sharing a common way of assessing patients, nurses go through a similar process of looking at patients, asking a series of relevant questions either of patients or of themselves to account for the problem as well as measuring vital signs but not necessarily in any order in a process of seeking confirmation. These are the steps in determining if patients are deteriorating while at the same time ruling out obvious causes such as blocked urinary catheters being responsible for poor urine output. Once an assessment has been

made and all relevant information gathered it is pieced together, as an artful interpretation, in deciding if patients are deteriorating. In this context the focus of the assessment is on the likely problem and its cause,

> *We tend to concentrate on the area we think there's a problem and then spread out from there….gathering as much information as possible for them to make a diagnosis* (No. 12- Sister 14 years).

A deficit in knowledge leads to a poor assessment of patients, something that is recognised in practice. Therefore a prerequisite for a good assessment is a sound knowledge base. The greater the knowledge and experience the more effectively and confidently an assessment is carried out. Assessment relies on baseline data in order to establish if there have been any changes and to place those changes into some context, particularly changes in physiological variables. The way nurses assess patients is therefore modifiable with time and experience. Less experienced staff rely on keeping charts up to date in an effort to exert some control over what is happening and as a means of dealing with uncertainty,

> *It was so much based on: if your charts were right your patients were well looked after because you had seen them each hour making sure they were ok* (No. 2- Staff Nurse 9 years).

A more holistic assessment facilitates the contextualising of the findings. The less the experience, the more the concentration on individual tasks and the more difficult it is to contextualise the information gathered. As confidence grows with experience and familiarity with the work of the ward, this changes and nurses are able to assess patients more effectively and understand the significance of their findings. Also it is a matter of learning how to apply their knowledge in a more effective way, essentially linking it to practice. This is done through exposure to patients and experiencing patients with different conditions. It further reinforces the reciprocal relationship with intuitive knowing.

### *Routinising*

Having a routine is another way of vigilising. This is needed to reduce the uncertainty of missing something vital. Routine is a way of organising work, particularly that of more junior nurses and support workers. It provides structure and security. One example is the frequent measurement of vital signs. Its importance in relation

to deterioration is to ensure that nothing is missed while monitoring patients for how they respond to treatment,

> *I think you need routine ones 'cause otherwise they'd just never get done and people would get missed* (No. 11- Staff Nurse 3 years).

Importantly they provide a baseline against which patients are ultimately judged to be deteriorating or not, a permanent record of how patients are progressing. Routinising the observations also has the benefit of freeing staff from the need to constantly review how often they need to be done. It also avoids the confusion that may arise out of different decisions being made about the same patients regarding the frequency of monitoring vital signs. It is difficult in practice, particularly when busy, to differentiate between a conscious decision to reduce frequency and a simple omission. One way this is dealt with is by getting on with the work reducing the need for constantly referring to someone else. There is a tension however between the time consuming nature of doing observations routinely and their sometimes limited application. Currently there is no strategy for reviewing how frequently these measurements should be made,

> *So I would reduce if I felt that people would do them properly and would discriminate on who needed 4 hourly observations and* stuff (No. 12- Sister 14 years).

However, routinising observations gives no guarantee that abnormalities will be detected or reported as it depends on many factors such as who is measuring the vital signs as well as how busy the ward is. In addition, staff need some knowledge and experience to enable them to interpret what they are picking up. As a result, something could be missed. As with any routine, measuring vital signs can become an end in itself with the emphasis on the task. This could result in nurses becoming desensitised to any changes. The trained nursing staff try to overcome these problems by counter checking, sometimes while doing other things such as drug rounds. The paradox remains that if changes in vital signs are relied on as the only indicator of deterioration, then nurses will not pick up on more subtle indicators or investigate other causes such as bleeding from surgical wounds.

### *Mechanicalising*

In order to overcome the time consuming and routine nature of

"doing the observations" ward staff mechanicalise the process by use a machine (dynomap) which automatically measures blood pressure, pulse rate temperature and oxygen saturation. It offers both convenience and quickness in dealing with this problem. However mechanicalising results in the loss of valuable information, such as the detection of cardiac arrhythmias, since the pulse is not palpated. The only touch required is to apply the blood pressure cuff. Other problems include deskilling,

> *that's taken all the skills out nursing hasn't it* (No. 40- Staff Nurse 10 years*).*

Despite worries about its accuracy, vital signs are seldom manually check, unless there is a convincing reason for doing so simply because it is too time consuming and often the task is delegated to health care support workers. However nurses are becoming deskilled not only in the task of measuring blood pressure manually but in failing to pick up the vital information gained by palpating pulses and the close physical contact with patients that this entails. Touch alone has the potential to provide valuable information about patients' condition.

No one sign has the sensitivity or specificity to detect deterioration but together with other signs and symptoms are used to contextualise deterioration. Nurses deal with this lack of sensitivity and specificity by focusing on patients' diagnosis in evaluating any changes in vital signs and also by emphasising general changes such as the more subtle changes picked up in the process of intuitive knowing. However, with education and experience both nurses and doctors come to understand the significance of any alteration in respiratory rate and its sensitivity in relation to other observations. This is especially so where the early warning score has been introduced to aid detection of deterioration.

### *Constraining Professional Factors*

Both nurses and doctors face practical difficulties in dealing with patients who are deteriorating. These centre on interacting with each other, dealing with patients and lack of knowledge and experience. Disagreement between nurses and doctors about the appropriate treatment for patients is one source of professional difficulty. To enable a complete assessment of their condition to be made, patients must be active participants in that examination. If they are unable to co-operate in any way, for example through confusion,

being poor historians, then it is likely to lead to an incomplete assessment and a missed or inappropriate diagnosis resulting in possible delays in treatment,

> *So co-operation of patients really to make it more of a team effort* (No. 21- Staff Nurse 4 months).

A lack of education or knowledge and experience is a constraining factor in detecting deterioration. This may result in a failure to understand the seriousness of the deterioration and a failure to act on the information. For example, there is often confusion about when to refer patients to the critical care team or seek appropriate expertise and when or how to intervene,

> *But I think the more advanced step I think our teaching's probably quite poor in terms of recognising when you need to get someone else involved* (No. 23- Doctor 10 months).

There are occasions when staff simply do not know how to deal with the situation that faces them provided they recognise its significance to begin with. Consulting with others is a means of overcoming a lack of knowledge and experience, provided limitations are acknowledged.

### *Constraining Organisational Factors*

Time constraints are a problem for many staff since often there is not enough time to do what is needed. This may result in an inadequate assessment particularly when dealing with complex signs and symptoms and lack of opportunity to consult with others. For example, nurses are sometimes unable to attend ward rounds with resulting in a loss of opportunity for them to contribute to and influence care in a meaningful way. It diminishes the role of nurses, making it seem as if they have little to contribute. The ward round is after all the forum where patient care is discussed and decisions made. The organisation of medical work is problematic in that the greater the geographical spread of patients and the greater their number, the less likely doctors will respond promptly to referrals from nursing staff, particularly when referrals are based on intuitive knowing, particularly when this is not backed up with objective evidence. It also makes it difficult for nurses to appreciate the work of doctors. Doctors attempt to deal with these constraining factors by trying to prioritise care. At times, this leads to delay in seeing patients as well as frustration and misunderstanding,

> *Sometime if you don't get there fast enough, and even if*

> *you've explained it to them, they will start getting a bit ratty with you; it's difficult for them to appreciate because you know that you've not stopped working since the morning* (No. 25- Doctor 10 months).

Distraction tasking is time consuming and is anything that is not directly related to patient care. It is a significant source of frustration for all and involves staff dealing with things that could more appropriately be dealt with by someone else. For example, trying to find essential equipment that is not readily available is both time consuming and frustrating. Distraction tasking also includes convincing others to carry out investigations that are needed to confirm a medical diagnosis. This leads to more time wasted on negotiation or argument, time that could be spent on direct patient care. Co-operation is essential in detecting deterioration since team work is essential for its detection. Currently, diagnoses can rarely be made in isolation and need the confirmation of laboratory investigations as well as other tests,

> *It's like arguing with radiographers and biochemists in the middle of the night, echo technicians. It's like why do you have doctors if you're not going to believe us?* (No. 24- Doctor 10 months).

For nurses distraction tasking includes essential housekeeping matters that ensure the smooth running of clinical areas. Examples of these include organising television rental, serving meals and unnecessary paper work. Distraction tasking is wholly inappropriate for professionally and academically prepared personnel to engage in. Where adequate support is provided by giving as much relevant information as necessary and being readily available to assist, the task of assessment and treatment is made much easier.

### *Hierarchical Intervening*

Once physiological deterioration is established the next step is to intervene whether to prevent further deterioration, reverse the current trend or both. This is done through hierarchical intervention. Nurses act either to prevent further deterioration, reverse the deterioration or both. If the situation is judged not to be immediately life threatening, than nurses will intervene within their capabilities and then reassess patients as to its effectiveness. However there is a professional boundary that nurses will not cross therefore they only intervene within their scope of practice rather than within their capabilities.

Junior nurses however exercise excessive caution. They are less likely to act autonomously,

> *Yes, as long as I have been given appropriate instruction to and it had been charted, prescribed as such* (No. 14- Staff Nurse 9 months).

Senior nurses are willing to take actions in situations they judge to warrant immediate intervention even if in their opinion they are in conflict with their regulatory body and hospital policies governing practice. However nurses need the tacit approval of nursing management and permission from doctors to support what on the face of it appear to be autonomous, independent actions. They are willing to take verbal instructions via the telephone and act on them. Initiating treatment is a matter of pragmatism since it ensures prompt intervention given the geographical spread of doctors' work. Nursing intervention is therefore characterised by seeking backup and cautious intervention.

If problems persist then patients are referred to doctors. If patients continue to deteriorate despite nursing intervention or do not respond to therapy, nurses refer patients to doctors. It is a matter of recognising the limitations of what they can achieve by their interventions. However in life threatening situations nurses refer patients immediately while they support patients in whatever way they can. Hierarchical intervention therefore comprises of a series of steps. Following an assessment, nurses intervene within their capabilities and professional regulations to prevent further deterioration. If patients do not respond then they are referred to doctors except where it is life threatening, in which case, referral is immediate.

The aim of baselining is to establish patients' usual condition so that any changes can be contextualised. The routine of baselining is accomplished by vigilising, routinising and mechanicalising. When deterioration is detected, it is dealt with through hierarchical intervention. Constraining professional and organisational factors detract from the early detection of deterioration. For a referral to be successful, it must be presented in a way that grabs the attention of doctors. How this is done will be discussed next.

## Grabbing Attention

This final stage in visualising deteriorating conditions is the process

that nurses engage in when presenting evidence of deterioration to doctors. It is how they make a convincing referral, one that ensures medical assessment and intervention. Its categories will now be presented.

## *Legitimising*

When nurses are convinced that patients are deteriorating whatever its basis, they attempt to refer patients to doctors. This conviction is often based on subtle changes as well as objective, quantifiable changes such as in vital signs. Nurses want patients to be reviewed when they suspect deterioration but face the difficulty of convincing doctors, especially if they refer based on intuitive knowing only, since doctors often only respond to quantifiable evidence. They overcome this difficulty feed doctors information in such a way as to ensure a credible referral. Their strategy is to legitimise their worries any way they can. Nurses consult with others in order to legitimise their concerns as well as seeking general support for any proposed action including making a referral. This is in situations where they are worried about patients but are unsure as to the significance of those changes. Nurses are prepared to consult with anyone who knows the patient involved. These include relatives as well as other nurses. Also they seek advice on what else to do particularly if they are less experienced. Discussing matters is also a means of supporting less experienced nurses and to provide them with guidance, ensuring that they benefit from the experience of others as well. This legitimises their actions and the decision to refer patients.

Referrals have to be persuasive if they are to be successful. This is more likely if nurses present factual information that is contextualised within patients' baseline state so that the relevance of any deviations from that can be more easily established. If doctors are well known to nurses, then this information is reinforced by personal opinion. When they do not respond in a way that nurses consider appropriate, they persist in contacting doctors until they do. If they are reluctant to come and review patients, nurses use emotionalised inflection of their voice as a strategy. This helps to convey the urgency of the situation and the expectation that something needs to be done. It complements the persistence strategy.

In situations where nurses are convinced that a patient needs to be reviewed and they cannot convince a doctor, nurses do not hesitate in threatening to contact a more senior doctor. Generally this is done

in an assertive way,

> *Perhaps you would like to come and review this patient or perhaps I can speak to your SHO or perhaps I'll speak to the Registrar* (No. 18- Staff Nurse 11 years).

If a doctor is perceived as being obstructive or difficult then the individual is referred to more senior nursing staff in the expectation that they will deal with the situation and convince those reluctant to attend the patient. If nurses are unsure about whether to refer patients to doctors or not, they usually err on the side of caution even if subsequently proved wrong rather than take the risk of further deterioration. This is similar to the cautiousness that is characteristic of nursing intervention. In referring patients there is an element of opportunism in that if doctors are readily available on the ward nurses take advantage of this and ask them to see patients irrespective of their seniority. This has the effect of ensuring that things are done for patients that otherwise might not be and also nurses can reinforce and further legitimise their referral to junior doctors by invoking the authority of more senior ones,

> *While I'm passing I'll just have a look because they can say: right get the house officers to do this, this and this and then the house officer can't argue really* (No. 11- Staff Nurse 3 years).

Presenting quantifiable evidence of deterioration convinces doctors of the need to review patients. Vague reporting by nurses makes it difficult for doctors interpret what is happening to patients. Despite this, if convenient they will come and assess patients. Quantifiable changes are used by doctors to prioritise workload and judge the serious nature of illness. However factual information has to be contextualised and trends reported thereby linking this to the process of baselining presented earlier. For example, using the early warning score doctors need to know why patients are triggering. Factual information also enables doctors to start thinking of a diagnosis or the likely cause of the problem and possible interventions before they see patients. With vague reporting or reporting based on intuitive knowing alone, doctors often find it difficult to interpret what is happening to patients since they have not changed in any quantifiable way making it difficult to know what to treat. The vital signs effectively package deterioration in that they provide a succinct way of communicating deterioration and its degree.

To be convincing nurses need to present factual information in a

particular way. Referring speech itself must be convincing. This is sometimes problematic since nurses use intuitive knowing in detecting deterioration making it difficult to articulate subtle changes. Another problem is not being able to use medial language in an articulate and confident way to convey deterioration,

> *The junior nurses don't know what words to use to get their patient reviewed. I think that's part of the problem* (No. 44- Sister 5 years).

Nurses take time to understand and develop confidence in using such language. Convincing reporting is indicated by familiarity with medical language and the confidence to use it. If nurses lack the confidence in using medical language then they use lay terms because they are afraid of looking stupid or being undermined and ridiculed if terms are used out of context, running the risk of not being able to legitimise their concerns,

> *Whereas you wouldn't say to them (doctors) - the man in bed whatever, his saturation's are this and his respirations are that. You'd just say- his breathing's gone off If you think about it that way it is more of a social sort of speaking mode* (No. 36- Staff Nurse 1 year).

## *Packaging*

With confidence and education, nurses are able to draw together their clinical findings and present them much more convincingly. They learn how to package deterioration convincingly**.** The more confidence and experience, the more likely is the use of medical language. There is a sense that nursing students are being socialised into this use of non-medical language rather than being educated in its use, simply because it is the way nurses speak to each other. Disadvantages associated with it include nurses undermining themselves and their knowledge base since the use of language is linked to credibility. This makes them seem inarticulate, increasing the possibility of ridicule. Even where there is an objective scoring system such as that for assessing consciousness (Glasgow Coma Scale), nurses tend not to use it but instead continue to report using subjective terms. Doctors take time to understand this use of lay language and understanding develops as they get to know nurses better. Often they have to seek further clarification and information resulting in nurses becoming antagonistic because they think that doctors are looking for an excuse not to come. This is less of a problem where nurses and doctors have good relations.

The early warning scoring system has improved communication between nurses and doctors and compliments the reporting of vital signs. Doctors are obliged to act on it and nurses derive their empowerment and confidence from this. It provides nurses with a precise, concise and unambiguous language to communicate deterioration to doctors. It enables doctors to focus quickly on the problems identified by nurses. For both therefore, it provides a way of assessing patients in that it guides them to identify problems commonly associated with deterioration. It provides commonly agreed criteria against which deterioration can be measured. It has changed practice since it has made nurses more aware of deterioration and particularly the significance of measuring respiratory rate.

## *Trusting Relations*

Trust is fundamental in convincing doctors to come and see patients. It is something that has to be worked at and gained. When it is present, things run a lot smoother and people get on better together. Trust is indicated by listening, discussing and mutual decision making. Likewise, where these are lacking, there is no trust and relations are poor. If doctors respect nurses' judgement, then less quantifiable evidence is needed to convince them to review patients. As it develops nurses and doctors learn to trust in each others' judgements so that the greater the trust the less the evidence and this trust is based on how experienced nurses are. Trust is so powerful that even doctors on call will respond to vague reporting. It is also based on social interactions, simply how well nurses and doctors interact with and know each other,

> *If you get along with them socially and you can have a laugh with them then you learn to trust them* (No. 7- Doctor- 10 months).

Where there is mutual trust nurses can express themselves more freely and with more confidence in getting patients reviewed. Communication is therefore less inhibited and much more effective. Simple measures for developing trust and maintaining good relations include being mutually supportive, ensuring that doctors are familiar with the way the ward operates by using experience to guide those with less experience to enable them to do their job more effectively and to help them to establish priorities. Where there is mutual respect between nurses and senior doctors, then it is more likely that junior doctors will respond likewise. This sets the tone of relations

between nurses and doctors.

The essential basis of trust is a matter of having confidence in the thoroughness of the assessment that competence in dealing with situations, intervening within remit and referring appropriately,

> *So there is that influence from above where they do, the senior ones listen to the nurses* (No. 12- Sister 14 years).

Other factors influencing good relations include having ward based teams of doctors, informal social gatherings and shared facilities. All promote effective communication about patients since nurses and doctors are more likely to meet informally, providing the opportunity to discuss patients. This tends to be done spontaneously. Establishing and maintaining trust and good relations is all about promoting team work. However there is nothing done at an organisational level to promote this. However good relations are difficult to establish and maintain when doctors move wards regularly and when the workload is heavy.

### *Negotiated Intervening*

This is the process of intervening effectively to treat patients in physiological deterioration. It is where nurses and doctors come to a mutual decision about any interventions that are appropriate while trying to maintain each others professional integrity by trying not to undermine credibility. It includes giving treatment time to make a difference to patients, essentially seeking evidence of improvement. If there is no improvement then nurses will suggest alternatives. Keeping options open and appealing to protocols are effective strategies in dealing with any disagreement about treatment and avoids alienation. An undertaking to review treatments, explaining interventions and generally listening to concerns and suggestions ensures that everyone feels that their point of view has been acknowledged and nobody feels undermined. If disagreements persist nurses will refer patients to more senior doctors. Provided this is done assertively rather than subversively, this is relatively unproblematic. The partnership approach to decision making is much more effective in ensuring that the right decision is made,

> *They don't trust you, they don't trust your decisions….You feel undermined, you feel incompetent and you feel what's the point* (No. 24- Doctor 10 months).

Trust plays a major part in maintaining self-confidence. The

uncertain nature of physiological deterioration means that nurses sometimes refer patients inappropriately. As a result nurses have a fear of being ridiculed. One way of overcoming this fear is by having their findings and worries confirmed by some external source, usually a more senior nurse or even a protocol. Confidence is a function of time and personality. Confidence can develop fairly quickly and is linked to experience. The more experience gained the more likely individuals will be confident in their ability to detect deterioration. It also depends on personality in that the more assertive the personality the more confident will be the referral.

### *Non-Responding*

There are times when doctors do not respond. The more a referral is judged to be inappropriate, the more likely it is that doctors will not respond to future referrals. This includes contacting doctors for more routine work such as replacing IV cannulae as well as inappropriate referrals such as patients with nothing obviously wrong with them. Inappropriate referrals are time-consuming to deal with. There are times when despite clear quantifiable evidence that patients are deteriorating doctors still do not respond. Workload, geographical spread of work, reluctance to refer to more senior doctors, inexperience and lack of knowledge are considered common reasons for not responding. However a more compelling reason may be simply that doctors do not know what to do w and instead of referring patients they simply ignore what is happening in what is termed here as problem avoidance behaviour,

> *It was pure and simple he didn't know how to deal with it. It scared him so he didn't deal with it* (No. 24- Doctor 10 months).

Grabbing attention is the final step in detecting deteriorating conditions. It is based on legitimising suspicions of deterioration and presenting the evidence in a way that results in a successful referral. Trusting relationships are a significant factor in ensuring an effective referral and when present facilitates mutual respect and cooperation. Negotiated intervening means that where there is mutual decision making and where different points of view are acknowledged and accommodated, then professional integrity is maintained. This facilitates the management of deteriorating conditions.

## Discussion

Visualising deteriorating conditions is a three stage process.

Through intuitive knowing, nurses pick up that patients have changed in a way that requires a medical assessment. To make the referral more credible, they attempt to contextualise changes by baselining that is, establishing how patients are in terms of their progression and vital signs through vigilising. Finally, grabbing the attention of doctors is facilitated by nurses seeking the backup of colleagues, and providing as much persuasive information as possible in a way that most effectively packages deterioration. The whole process is facilitated by knowledge and experience, together with mutual trust and respect. Cautiousness characterises each step.

Nurses report that they just know when patients are deteriorating. They primarily rely on subjective evidence in its detection, particularly on how patients look. Cioffi (2000b) describes similar changes in patients such as “not right”, colour, agitation and changes in observations. Others refer to changes in mood and reduced eye contact as neurological alterations (Goldhill et al. 1999). The subjective nature of nurses’ initial detection of deterioration is well supported in the literature (Daffurn et al. 1994; Grossman and Wheeler 1997; Rich 1999; Sax and Charlson 1987; Schein et al. 1990; Smith and Wood 1998). In a study of triage in accident and emergency nurses, Gerdtz and Bucknall (2001) comment on how little objective physiological data were collected when deciding urgency.

To get to know patients nurses must spend time with them. This enables them to detect more subtle physical and psychological changes associated with deterioration. This is similar to the findings of Taylor (1997), Chase (1995) and Cioffi (2000b) and is supported in this study by nurses establishing functional relations with patients. In the present study, knowledge and experience emerged as important factors in picking up deterioration. Taylor (1997) also found that knowledge and experience form the basis of cue acquisition in that the greater the knowledge and experience the more effective the assessment. Nurses attempt to corroborate their subjective awareness of change with objective evidence and has been described by Smith (1988) and Cioffi (2000b) also. Pattern recognition as the basis of intuition is widely supported in the literature (Benner 1984). This process has been conceptualised in the current study as intuitive knowing.

The more knowledge and experience nurses have the more likely it is that they will have a systematic approach to assessing patients. Having some routine in place enables the acquisition of multiple cues

and that knowledge leads to the recognition of signs and symptoms (Taylor 1997). King and Macleod Clark (2002) also report increased vigilance in response to worries about patients and maintain that nurses with more knowledge and experience have a more analytical approach to assessment, the ability to look beyond the initial trigger. By this they mean that experienced nurses look for further evidence of deterioration to substantiate their worries. This is consistent with the sub-core category of baselining conceptualised in the current study.

There are similarities between the sub core category of "grabbing attention" and persuasion or argument theory. Van Eemersen et al. (1987) defines an argument as a social, intellectual, verbal activity serving to justify or refute an opinion consisting of a series of statements and directed at convincing someone of something. Simons (1976) defines persuasion as communication designed to influence others by modifying their beliefs, values or attitudes. The more someone is known the better prepared the persuader is to select persuasion strategies that work (Reardon 1991). However there is no consensus at present about how relationship influences persuasion outcomes and the process of gaining compliance (Boylan 1993) but emerged as very significant in this study since mutual trust and respect form the basis of good working relationships resulting in less inhibited communication.

In grabbing attention, there is always the fear that nurses will be ridiculed for referring patients inappropriately, a similar finding to Smith (1988) and Cioffi (2000a). One way of overcoming this fear is by having their findings and worries confirmed by some external source such as a more senior colleague or by protocols. This has the effect of increasing confidence in referring patients. It is termed collaborative decision making, evident when nurses are unsure about diagnosis (Cioffi 2000a). Similarly Smith (1988) found that nurses consulted with other nurses and reassessed patients when they became subjectively aware of changes. Clinical judgements are almost made in a group context, involving other nurses and doctors (Chase1995). This has been conceptualised in the current study as legitimising.

### *Limitations*

- Few incidences of physiological deterioration were observed therefore it is always possible that there are more categories

to emerge.

- The study was limited to doctors of house officer (intern) grade. It is possible that the inclusion of more senior doctors would have generated more categories.
- Theoretical sampling could have been carried out elsewhere such as critical care areas, medical or surgical specialities and in other substantive areas in an effort to further elaborate the emerging theory.

### *General Theoretical Implications of the Theory*

The concepts generated from the study are unique. No other research has generated them but instead rely on descriptive categories such as looks (Cioffi 2000b) as well as changes in mood and reduced eye contact (Goldhill et al. 1999; Rich 1999; Schein et al. 1990; Sax and Charlson 1987). The study focuses on the complexity of detecting deterioration, rather than on describing the signs and symptoms usually associated with this phenomenon. With further theoretical sampling in different substantive areas, this theory could be generalised to all situations of deteriorating conditions and not just to hospitals patients. As the findings stand, it has the potential to be used by ward staff to understand the complexity of deterioration, how they make decisions, the importance of trust, and the steps involved in making a successful referral.

## Conclusion

This is the first study to attempt to place the detection of physiological deterioration within the context of clinical practice and the difficulties faced in making a successful referral, rather than concentrating on any one particular aspect such as subtle indicators (Cioffi 2000a; Cioffi 2000b; Grossman and Wheeler 1997) or vital signs (Davis and Nomura 1990; Hill et al. 1995; Schumacher 1995). Early detection of physiological deterioration is inherently difficult. To date no sensitive or specific sign has been identified that reliably predicts deterioration. The early warning score is an attempt to address this difficulty, although its sensitivity and specificity has not been established. The role of staff at ward level in the process of detection, its reporting and the difficulty they face has not been previously evaluated. The findings confirm the complex nature of this phenomenon and reinforces the importance of teamwork in the detecting deteriorating conditions.

## Acknowledgements

We extend my sincere thanks to all who participated in this study and who gave so generously of their time. They shared their experiences with and confided in us without hesitation.

## Authors

Dr. Tom Andrews, RN; BSc (Hons), MSc; PhD,
Lecturer,
School of Nursing and Midwifery,
Brookfield Health Science Complex,
University College Cork,
College Road,
Cork,
Ireland

Email: t.andrews@ucc.ie

Professor Heather Waterman, RN; BSc (Hons), PhD
Professor,
School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Science,
Coupland 3,
University of Manchester,
Manchester M13, 9PL,
England,
United Kingdom

## Reference List

Benner, P. (1984). *From novice to expert: excellence and power in clinical nursing practice*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Menlo Part California.

Boylan, M. (1993). *Process of argument*. University Press of America, Lanham.

Chase, S. (1995) The social context of critical care clinical judgment. *Heart and Lung* **24**(2), 154-162.

Cioffi, J. (2000a) Nurses' experiences of making decisions to call emergency assistance to their patients. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **32**(1), 108-114.

Cioffi, J. (2000b) Recognition of patients who require emergency assistance: a descriptive study. *Heart and Lung* **29**(4), 262-268.

Clarke, M. (1995) Nursing and the biological sciences. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **22**(3), 405-406.

Coombs, M. and Dillon, A. (2002) Crossing boundaries, redefining care: the role of the critical care outreach team. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* **11**(3), 387-393.

Daffurn, K., Lee, A., Hillman, K., Bishop, G., and Bauman, A. (1994) Do nurses know when to summon emergency assistance? *Intensive and Critical Care Nursing* **10**, 115-120.

Davis, M. and Nomura, L. (1990) Vital signs of class 1 surgical patients. *Western Journal of Nursing Research* **12**(1), 28-41.

Department of Health .(1999) Making a difference. Strengthening the nursing, midwifery and health visiting contribution to health and healthcare. London.

Department of Health .(2000) Comprehensive critical care: a review of adult critical care services. 1-32. London, Department of Health.

Fieselmann, J., Hendryx, M., Helms, and Wakefield, D. (1993) Respiratory rate predicts cardiopulmonary arrest for internal medicine inpatients. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* **8**, 354-360.

Franklin, C. and Mathew, J. (1994) Developing strategies to prevent inhospital cardiac arrest: analyzing responses of physicians and nurses in the hours before the event. *Critical Care Medicine* **22**(2), 244-247.

George, A., Folk, B., Crecelius, S., and Campbell, B. (1989) Pre-arrest morbidity and other correlates of survival after in-hospital cardiopulmonary arrest. *American Journal of Medicine* **87**, 28-34.

Gerdtz, M. and Bucknall, T. (2001) Triage nurses' clinical decision-making. An observational study of urgency assessment. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **35**(4), 550-561.

Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. The Sociological Press, Mill Valley, California.

Glaser, B. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: issues and discussions*. Sociology Press, Mill Valley.

Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Aldine De Gruyter, New York.

Goldhill, D., White, S., and Sumner, A. (1999) Physiological values and procedures in the 24 h before ICU admission from the ward. *Anaesthesia* **54**, 529-534.

Grossman, S. and Wheeler, K. (1997) Predicting patients' deterioration and recovery. *Clinical Nursing Research* **6**(1), 45-58.

Hill, M., Fieselmann, J., Nobling, H., O'Neill, P., Barry-Walker, J., Dwyer, J., and Kobler, L. (1995) Preventing cardiopulmonary arrest via enhanced vital signs monitoring. *MedSurg Nursing* **4**(4), 289-295.

Hogston, R. (1995) Nurses' perceptions of the impact of continuing

professional education on the quality of nursing care. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **22**(3), 586-593.

Jordan, S. and Reid, K. (1997) The biological sciences in nursing: an empirical paper reporting on the applications of physiology to nursing care. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **26**, 169-179.

King, L. and Macleod Clark, J. (2002) Intuition and the development of expertise in surgical ward and intensive care nurses. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **37**(4), 322-329.

McArthur-Rouse, F. (2001) Critical care outreach services and early warning scoring systems: a review of the literature. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **36**(5), 696-704.

McKenna, H. (1995) Nursing skill mix substitutions and the quality of care: an exploration of assumptions from the research literature. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **21**(3), 452-459.

McQuillan, P., Pilkington, S., Allan, and Taylor, B. (1998) Confidential inquiry into quality of care before admission to intensive care. *British Medical Journal* **316**, 1853-1858.

Peterson, M., Geist, L., Schwartz, D., and Moseley, P. (1991) Outcome after cardiopulmonary resuscitation in a medical intensive care unit. *Chest* **100**, 168-174.

Prowse, M. and Lyne, P. (2000) Clinical effectiveness in the post-anaesthesia care unit: how nursing knowledge contributes to achieving intended patient outcomes. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **31**(5), 1115-1124.

Rady, M., Smithline, H., Blake, R., Howak, R., and Rivies, E. (1994) A comparison of the shock index and conventional vital signs to identify acute critical illness in the emergency department. *Annals of Emergency Medicine* **24**(4), 685-690.

Reardon, K. (1991). *Persuasion in practice*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park.

Rich, K. (1999). Inhospital cardiac arrest: pre-event variables and nursing response. *Clinical Nurse Specialist* 13, 147-153.

Rosenberg, M., Wang, C., Hoffman-Wilde, and Hickham, D. (1993) Results of cardiopulmonary resuscitation- failure to predict survival in two community hospitals. *Archives of Internal Medicine* **153**, 1370-1375.

Sax, F. and Charlson, M. (1987) Medical patients at high risk for catastrophic deterioration. *Critical Care Medicine* **15**(5), 510-515.

Schein, R., Hazday, N., Pena, Ruben, B., and Sprung, C. (1990) Clinical antecedents to in-hospital cardiopulmonary arrest. *Chest* **98**, 1388-1392.

Schultz, S., Cullinane, D., Pasquale, M., Magnant, C., and Evans, S. (1996) Predicting in-hospital mortality during cardiopulmonary resuscitation. *Resuscitation* **33**, 13-17.

Schumacher, S. (1995) Monitoring vital signs to identify postoperative complications. *MedSurg Nursing* **4**(2), 142-145.

Sheperd, J. (1995) Findings of a training needs analysis for qualified nurse practioners. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **22 1**, 66-71.

Shoemaker, W., Appel, P., and Kram .(1988) Prospective trial of supranormal values of survivors as therapeutic goals in high-risk surgical patients. *Chest* **94**, 1176-1186.

Simons, H. (1976). *Persuasion: understanding, practice and analysis*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, Massachusetts.

Smith, A. and Wood, J. (1998) Can some in-hospital cardio-respiratory arrests be prevented? a prospective survey. *Resuscitation* **37**, 133-137.

Smith, G. (2001). *Alert- a multiprofessional course in care of the acutely ill patient*. The Open Learning Centre, Faculty of the Environment, Portsmouth.

Smith, S. (1988) An analysis of the phenomenon of deterioration in the critically ill. *Image- the Journal of Nursing Scholarship* **20**(1), 12-15.

Spilsbury, K. and Meyer, J. (2001) Defining the nursing contribution to patient outcome: lessons from a review of the literature examining nursing outcomes, skill mix and changing roles. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* **10**(1), 3-14.

Taylor, C. (1997) Problem solving in clinical nursing practice. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* **26**, 329-336.

van Eemersen, F., Grootendorst, R., and Kruiger, T. (1987). *Handbook of argumentation theory*. Foris Publications, Dordrecht-Holland.

The Grounded Theory Review (2005) vol. 4, no. 2

# Grounded Theory and Heterodox Economics

*By Frederic S. Lee, Ph.D.*

## Abstract

The dominant theory in the discipline of economics, known as neoclassical economics, is being challenged by an upstart, known as heterodox economics. The challengers face many obstacles, the most significant of which is the actual creation of an alternative economic theory. However heterodox economists have not settled on what the methodology of theory creation should be. The aim of this paper is to advocate that the method of grounded theory is the best set of guidelines for theory creation. In addition, I shall argue that the grounded theory method results in the creation of heterodox economic theories that are historical in structure, content and explanation.

## Grounded Theory and Heterodox Economics

The dominant theory in the discipline of economics, known as neoclassical economics, is being challenged by an upstart, known as heterodox economics. Heterodox economics can be understood in two ways. The first is as a collective term of many different approaches to economic analysis, such as radical and Marxian economics, Post Keynesian economics, institutional economics, feminist economics, and social economics. Each of these approaches rejects various methodological and theoretical aspects of mainstream economics, including supply and demand curves, equilibrium, marginal products, deductivist approach to theory creation, methodological individualism and the optimality of markets. Because the different approaches utilize somewhat different theoretical arguments and methods of theory creation, there has been little progress over the last forty years towards developing an encompassing theoretical alternative to mainstream theory. But in recent years, this fragmentation among the heterodox approaches has declined as heterodox economists have taken positive steps towards developing a coherent synthesis. This activity has generated the second meaning for heterodox economics; that of referring to the development of a coherent theory that is an alternative to and replacement for mainstream theory. This alternative theory is based on the view that the discipline of

economics should be concerned with explaining the process that provides the flow of goods and services required by society to meet the needs of those who participate in its activities.

Heterodox economists believe that any explanation or theory of the social provisioning process must be grounded in the real world of actual historical events, must incorporate radical uncertainty and social individuals, and must tell a causal analytical story. Consequently, they reject the method of theory creation and development utilized by mainstream economists which is based on positivism, empirical realism, and deductivism. Numerous suggestions for an alternative method of theory creation have been raised by heterodox economists, but none have been widely accepted; and without a widely accepted method, progress towards developing an alternative heterodox theory will be slow indeed. The aim of this paper is to overcome this roadblock by advocating the method of grounded theory as the best set of guidelines for the creation of heterodox economic theory. In addition, I shall argue that the grounded theory method results in the creation of heterodox economic theories that are historical in structure, content and explanation. Thus, the first section of this paper will delineate the method of grounded theory. This is followed, in the second section, by a discussion of three methodological issues--the nature of data, the role of case studies, and mathematics and models--as they relate to the grounded theory method. The final section concludes the paper with a brief discussion of the historical nature of grounded economic theories.

## The Method of Grounded Theory

To develop a theory that analytically explains causally related, historically contingent economic events, the critical realist heterodox economist needs to identify and delineate the structures, causal mechanisms, and causal processes producing them. The best methodological guideline for creating causally explanatory theories is the *method of grounded theory*. The method of grounded theory can be described as a process in which researchers, or more specifically economists, create their theory 'directly' developed from data (which are not the same as the 'objective facts' of the empiricist); and in which data collection, theoretical analysis, and theory building proceed simultaneously.[1]

The use of the method begins with the economist's becoming familiar

with, but not dogmatically committed to, the relevant theoretical, empirical, and historical literature that might assist him/her in approaching, understanding, and evaluating the data relevant to his/her research interest. Then, one engages in 'field work' by collecting comparable data from economic events from which a number of specific categories or analytical concepts and their associated properties are isolated and the relationships between them identified. With the concepts and relationships empirically grounded in detail, the economist then develops a theory in the form of a complex analytical explanation based on the data's core concepts. An essential property of the theory is that it explains why and how the sequence of economic events represented in the data took place.

Hence, the economist does not attempt to construct a simplified or realistically deformed empirically grounded theory by ignoring or rejecting particular data. Rather, s/he endeavors to capture the complexity of the data by establishing many different secondary concepts and relationships and weaving them together with the core concept into structures and causal mechanisms. This ensures that the resulting theory is conceptually dense as well as having causal explanatory power. The process of selecting the central concepts and developing the theory brings to light secondary concepts and relationships that also need further empirical grounding, as well as suggesting purely analytical concepts and relationships which need empirical grounding if they are to be integrated into the theory. After the theory is developed, the economist will evaluate it by seeing how it explains actual economic events.

Let us now consider aspects of the grounded theory method in more detail. First, the collection of data is a complex task that involves collecting the data themselves, that is counting up pieces of data, as well as constantly comparing, analyzing, and interpreting the data collected while simultaneously organizing them into conceptual or generalized categories. The categories that emerge come from the data themselves, not after they are all collected, but in the process of collecting them. Consequently each category is tied to or empirically grounded in its data; and since the data are real, observable, measurable, so is the category.[2] Moreover, since the data lie in time and history, each category is anchored in a particular historical setting. In addition, the purpose of constant comparison of the data is to see whether they support and continue to support emerging categories. Thus, each category that becomes established will have been repeatedly present in very many comparable pieces of data

derived from multi-sources. In this way, individual pieces of data that would not be significant on their own obtain a collective, emergent significance. The categories that emerge are of two types: one that is derived directly from the data and the other that is formulated by the economist. The former tends to denote data self-description and actual processes and behavior while the latter tend to denote explanations.[3] In addition, each category will have properties also derived from data in the same manner, that is using constant comparisons. The more properties a category has the denser and hence the more realistic it is. A grounded theory category does not ignore the complexity of reality; rather it embraces it.

In the process of collecting data, the economist may feel that what is being collected is not revealing additional properties of a specific kind that s/he believes, owing to his/her familiarity with the relevant theoretical, empirical, and historical literature, might exist. As a result, s/he will engage in theoretical sampling. This involves sampling or collecting data that are expected to increase the density of a specific category by producing more properties, as well as increasing the number of pieces of data supporting each of the properties hence making it more definitive and analytically useful. Theoretical sampling and collection of data for a single category, as well as for a range of categories, continues until theoretical saturation is reached, that is when no new data regarding a category and the relationships between the categories continue to emerge. The significance of this empirical grounding process is that the categories cannot be unrealistic hence false since they are derived from the data. If the data collection and theoretical sampling is incomplete then the categories will not be adequately dense, as relevant properties will be missing; thus such categories will be incompletely realistic. On the other hand, if future data emerge which the empirical grounding process shows do not fall into a previously existing category, then that category is not relevant, but it is not empirically false.

Once the real, observable categories are delineated and grounded, the economist, perceiving a pattern of relationships among them, will classify some directly as economic structures and others as components of economic structures. Continuing the practice, other categories that centered on human motivation and action and a set of outcomes will be woven together into a causal mechanism. The resulting structures and causal mechanisms will be real, observable as opposed to unreal, metaphoric, and hidden. That is, to observe

a structure or causal mechanism is to observe the working together of its observed concrete components, including the human actions involved, much as a family is observed through the interaction of its members. Hence structures and causal mechanisms are real, observable precisely because their categories are real and observable.

Given the research interest of the economist, s/he will select from the causal mechanisms identified, one as the central causal mechanism around which the structures and secondary causal mechanisms with their outcomes are arranged. Criteria for selecting the central causal mechanism from among a number of possible causal mechanisms include that it appears frequently in the data as a cause of the outcomes, that it has clear implications for a more general theory, and that it allows for complexity. Thus the causal mechanism is central to the narrative to be analytically developed in conjunction with the economic structures and secondary causal mechanisms. More specifically, the narrative is not a description of present or a recounting of past unique and/or semi-regular economic events, although both techniques of presenting empirical and actual economic events are included in the narrative. Rather, it is a complex analytical explanation of those described or recounted events. Even when the basic narrative is decided upon, its development will involve further theoretical sampling and collecting of data as new properties for the existing structures and causal mechanisms emerge. Consequently, the narrative evolves into an economic theory while at the same time becoming increasingly dense (in terms of properties and empirical grounding) as well as increasingly complex.

The complexity arises because of the variations in the categories and in the properties of the categories that make up the theory. The grounded economic theory that eventually emerges is a complex analytical explanation or interpretation of the actual economic events represented in the data. Thus the theory is not a generalization from the data, but of the data; that is, a grounded theory does not go beyond the data on which it is based--it does not claim universality or the status of an empirical-theoretical law. Moreover, with the grounded theory in hand, the heterodox economist can directly “see” the causal mechanisms and structures and “hear” the economic actors determining the empirical and actual events—the mysterious and unintelligibility is replaced by clear explanation. Moreover, being a weave of a central causal mechanism, secondary

causal mechanisms, and economic structures designed to explain actual economic events in historical time, the theory also consists of descriptively realistic (as opposed to stylized or fictionalized) descriptions of economic events and accurate narratives of sequences of economic events. As a result, the grounded economic theory is an emergent entity, a concatenated theory that cannot be disassembled into separate parts. Hence the question of logical coherence of a deductivist kind cannot be applied to a grounded theory; instead the coherence of the theory is judged on how well its explanation corresponds to the actual historically contingent economic events.

Economic theory centered on a single central causal mechanism is classified as a substantive economic theory since it is an explanation of a single basic economic process that occurs widely in the economy. From a number of substantive theories, a formal economic theory can be developed into a general or holistic theory where the relationship or pattern among the substantive theories is its analytical explanation. As in the process of grounding the substantive economic theory, the formal theory also has to be grounded. In particular, the relationships between the substantive theories that constitute the formal theory need to be grounded in data assisted and directed by theoretical sampling. Consequently, the formal economic theory is grounded, historically contingent, and its analytical explanations are not empirical extrapolations. As the economic world is not static, a formal theory is never complete, but undergoes continual modification with ever newer data relating to newly emerging patterns or configurations of economic reality.

There are two aspects of the grounded theory method that need further delineation. The first deals with the role of pre-existing ideas, concepts, and categories, that is, the issue that all observations, data and descriptions are theory laden. To use the method fruitfully, the heterodox economist must become familiar with the contemporary theoretical and non-theoretical literature, the controversies between economists, and the relevant literature from the history of economic thought. In particular, s/he needs to make a detailed and critical investigation of the pre-existing heterodox ideas and concepts to see which lend themselves to empirical grounding. S/he also needs to be familiar with some of the empirical literature as well as with the relevant literature from economic history. By acquiring a critical awareness of the pre-existing economic theories and empirical findings, the economist acquires a theoretical sensitivity regarding

the data and theoretical concepts s/he will be examining, comparing, and empirically grounding. As a result, the economist will have the ability to recognize what might be important in the data and to give it meaning as well as recognizing when the data do not support a pre-existing concept or category, requires a large or small transformation of the pre-existing concept or category, or 'produce' a new category. Thus, the grounded theory method not only recognizes that observations, data, and descriptions are theory laden, it reinforces the latter by demanding that all economists enter into theory creation as theoretically knowledgeable and aware individuals, as well as with the conviction that the creation of a new substantive economic theory will most likely require them to set aside forever some of that acquired knowledge. By acknowledging the issue of theory-laden observations while at the same time demanding that the economist be skeptical of all pre-existing theory, the grounded theory method is a highly self-conscious, engaging and open-minded approach to economic research, data creation-collection, and theory building.

The second aspect deals with evaluating a grounded theory. It is noted above that, since the categories that constitute the theory are intimately linked with the data, the grounded theory itself can not be falsified. More specifically, because a grounded theory is developed with the empirical data rather than prior to it, it does not stand independently of the data. Thus, it is not possible to test for the truth or falsity of a grounded theory by checking it against independently given empirical evidence. But a grounded theory can be evaluated by how well it explains actual economic events; that is, how well it identifies empirically and weaves together the causal mechanisms, structures, and descriptions into a narrative of the economic events being explained. In short, a grounded theory refers to real things, represents real entities, and is evaluated on how well it corresponds to the causal way the economy actually is. The evaluation process takes place within a community of scholars, in that papers delineating tentative drafts of the theory are presented to colleagues at conferences and seminars for critical comments; and more refined presentations of the theory are published where colleagues have the opportunity to point out inadequacies. Through this cooperative process of economic-writing, economic-reading, and critical commentary, the community of heterodox economists arrives at adequate theories. Consequently, a grounded theory is, in the first instance, only as good as its categories. If the data selected do not cover all aspects of the economic event(s) under investigation; if the economist compiles categories and properties from only part

of the data collected or forces data into pre-determined categories; if the density of the categories is small or the relationships between categories under-grounded due to incomplete data collected; if the economist chooses the 'wrong' central causal mechanism; and/or if the narrative is static, terse, unable to fully integrate structures and central and secondary causal mechanisms and relatively uncomplex, then the commentary of critics will make it clear that the economic theory is poor, ill-developed hence to a greater or lesser extent unrealistic, and unable to provide a comprehensive and convincing explanation of actual economic events. As a result, the economist will have to begin the theory creation process anew.

A second way to evaluate a grounded economic theory is to see how well it deals with new data. That is, the relatively enduring structures, causal mechanisms and their outcomes of a grounded theory are based on data collected in a specific time period. Thus, it is possible to evaluate whether they have remained enduring outside the time period by confronting them with 'new' data derived from replicating studies, especially data from actual events that at first glance appear to fall outside existing categories and not to support expected transfactual results. If the new data fall within the existing categories and conform to the transfactual results, then the structures and causal mechanisms have been relatively enduring.[4] On the other hand, if the new data falls outside the existing categories and not supporting the transfactual results, then at least some of the structures and causal mechanisms have changed. Consequently, the existing grounded economic theory needs to be modified or replaced by a completely new one. Therefore, theory evaluation in the grounded theory method based on the introduction of new data is designed to check the continual correspondence of the theory with the real causes of ongoing unique and semi-regular economic events. Hence, it is essentially a positive way of promoting theory development and reconstruction as well as new theory creation when the correspondence between theory and events breaks down.

The fact that a good or poor research process leads to better or worse grounded economic theories indicates that choices made by economists do affect the final outcome. Therefore, within the grounded theory method it is possible, although not likely, to have good but different substantive and formal economic theories for the same economic events. Given the same categories, a different choice of a central causal mechanism will produce a different theory;

or if the same central causal mechanism is used but integrated with different structures and secondary causal mechanisms a different theory will also be produced. However, since their theories concern causal historical events, heterodox economists do not accept the possibility that there is no empirical data that could distinguish between two incompatible theories. Thus, following the same procedures as above, the way forward for the grounded theorist would be to collect new data to see which of the two theories they support supplemented by critical commentary from colleagues. Hence, although the procedures used are the same and the data collected are, in principle, the same, checking the continual explanatory adequacy of a grounded theory is a different activity from choosing between two different theories, for the former produces a historically linked sequence of grounded theories, while the latter concludes that one of the two theories was not an explanation after all. [Annells, 1996; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Conrad, 1978; Turner, 1981 and 1983; Charmaz, 1983; Strauss, 1987; Konecki, 1989; Strauss and Corbin, 1990 and 1994; Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Glaser, 1992; Dey, 1999; Finch, 1999 and 2002; Tsang and Kwan, 1999; Bigus, Hadden, and Glaser, 1994; Tosh, 1991; Diesing, 1971; Wilber and Harrison, 1978; Fusfeld, 1980; Wisman and Rozansky, 1991; Boylan and O'Gorman, 1995; Atkinson and Oleson, 1996; Runde, 1998; Sayer, 1992; Megill, 1989; Emigh, 1997; Maki, 2001; McCullagh, 2000; Hunt, 1994; Pentland, 1999; and Ellis, 1985]

## Methodological Issues

The grounded theory method of theory creation effectively dismisses not only the traditional issue of the "realisticness" of assumptions but also the role of assumptions in theory creation and development. That is, since assumptions as a basis for theory creation are not part of the grounded theory method and hence not grounded in the real world, the degree of their "realisticness" or their adequacy as a logical axiomatic foundation for theory is not a concern. This implies that logical coherence is irrelevant for evaluating grounded theories. Moreover, because the role of theoretical isolation in traditional theory building and theorizing is dependent on assumptions, their absence in the grounded theory method means that grounded theories are not isolated theories that exclude possible influencing factors. The combination of structures and causal mechanisms with the grounded theory method produces theories that include all the relevant factors and influences, are historically contingent and exist in 'real' space. To exclude some factors would leave

the mechanisms, structures, and theories insufficiently empirically grounded; and to claim to establish laws and certain (timeless) knowledge would remove the mechanisms, structures, and theories from the real world economic events they are to explain. Thus, grounded theory results in theories and theorizing fundamentally different from the traditional mode. In particular, it means that heterodox economic theory is not an axiomatic-based approach to theory creation, does not use deductivist methods to create theory, and rejects every method of theory creation that is not empirically grounded. This means that heterodox theory is very different from neoclassical theory (or any other axiomatic/assumption-based theory) and that neoclassical theory has no empirically grounded meaning. On the other hand, their integration produces its own set of methodological issues, centering on the nature of data, the case study method, and mathematics and economic models. [Spiethoff, 1953; and Maki, 1998]

### *Data*

Originally, the grounded theory method was developed as a way to utilize qualitative data to build a theory; however, the use of quantitative data was not excluded. As economists are interested in developing historically grounded explanations of past and present economic events, their possible sources of data include all existing written, recorded, physical, and quantitative records. Since existing data sources might provide an incomplete record of economic events, the economist must also utilize different research strategies--such as surveys, interviews and oral statements, ethnographic and industrial archaeology studies, questionnaires, mapping, direct observation, participation in activities, fieldwork, and statistical analysis--to create new qualitative and quantitative data. For example, when it is important to explain how and why particular business decisions are made and who made them, the economist will need to create narrative accounts of relevant lived-historical experiences embedded within the cultural milieu of particular business enterprises. Thus s/he will need to examine letters and other written documents, undertake interviews and other oral documentation, and possibly engage in participant observation in which the economist may directly engage with, for example, the enterprise in the process of collecting data. What constitutes appropriate data depends on the object of inquiry; but it is important that much of the data deals with process, intentionality and their outcomes. Consequently, real, observable, and measurable

categories, hence real, observable, and measurable economic structures and causal mechanisms, are empirically grounded in both qualitative and quantitative data obtained from various sources (Goulding, 2002).

## *Case Study*

The conceptual categories that make up grounded theories are based on an array of comparable data generated by case studies. A case study is defined as an in-depth, multifaceted investigation of a particular object or theme where the object or theme gives it its unity. The object or theme can be historical or a current real-life event and the study will use several kinds of qualitative and quantitative data sources. For example, the theme of a case study can be the pricing procedures used by business enterprises; consequently the case study will be the collection, comparison, categorization, and tabulation of pricing procedures obtained from various empirical pricing studies along with a critical narrative that examines and integrates the data. Thus, the case study approach is the principle method of qualitative and quantitative data collection and comparison used to develop categories, structures, and causal mechanisms. Moreover, by providing information from a number of different data sources over a period of time, it permits a more holistic study of structures and causal mechanisms.

A case study does not stand-alone and cannot be considered alone; it must always be considered within a family of comparable case studies. If the economist is faced with a shortage of case studies, the response is not to generalize from them but to undertake more case studies. Moreover, theoretical sampling is specifically carried out through case studies in that the economist makes a conscious decision to undertake a particular case study in order to increase the empirical grounding of particular categories. Thus a case study can be of an individual business enterprise and the theme of the study can be to delineate the complex sets of decisions regarding pricing, production, and investment and to recount their effects over time. On the other hand, it can be concerned with a particular theoretical point, such as pricing, examined across many different case studies of different enterprises. The different cases not only provide comparable data for comparisons but also descriptions of structures and causal mechanisms and a narrative of the causal mechanism in action over time. A third type of case study is a narrative that explains an historical or current event. The narrative includes

structures and causal mechanisms which, when combined with the history or facts of the event, explains how and why it took place. Hence, this type of case study is both a historical and theoretical narrative, an integration of theory with the event. Consequently, it provides a way to check how good the theory is and, at the same time, contributes to its grounding and extension. A robust substantive theory is one that can be utilized in an array of case studies of historical and current events.[5] [Smith, 1998; Stake, 1998; Eisenhardt, 1989; Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg, 1991; Wieviorka, 1992; Vaughan, 1992; Finch, 1999 and 2002; Yin, 1981a, 1981b, and 1994; George, 1979; Glaser and Strauss, 1994; and Sayer, 1992]

### *Mathematics and Economic Models*

Mathematics and economic models are useful as tools and instruments that can contribute to the development and evaluation of causal mechanisms and grounded theory. Their uses are, however, restricted since the method of grounded theory prescribes that the type of mathematics used and economic models constructed are derived from (as opposed to being imposed upon via analogy or metaphor) the empirically grounded theories being developed. Consequently, the economic model reflects the narrative of the theory from which it is derived. To translate a grounded theory into an economic model, its structures and causal mechanisms (which embody accurate measurements and observations) have to be converted, as far as possible, into mathematical language where each mathematical entity and concept is in principle unambiguously empirically grounded, meaning in part they also have to be measurable and observable. As a result, the mathematical form of the model is determined and constrained by the empirically grounded structures and causal mechanisms, and hence is isomorphic with the theory and its empirical data. This relationship between mathematics and empirically grounded theory is similar to the late 19$^{th}$ century view in which mathematical rigor was established by basing the mathematics on physical reasoning resulting in physical models. However, the difference here is that rigor results when the mathematical model is based on social reasoning represented by empirically grounded theory. In this manner, mathematical model-based analysis remains subjugated to the study of economic activity. Thus, while mathematics helps illuminate aspects of the grounded theory and making clear what might be obscure, it does not add anything new to the theory, that is, it does not by itself produce new scientific knowledge.

One implication is that the model's mathematical form is not derived by analogy or based on a metaphor, both of which are not constrained by reality. A second is that the model is an accurate, but reflective, description of the grounded theory and its data and therefore not a simplification of it. Additional implications are that the relationships between the variables in the model are derived from the empirically grounded theory as opposed to being assumed fictions, that the same model is used in both theoretical and applied work; that the model does not operate mechanistically like a machine, and that different grounded economic theories have different models. Consequently the mathematical-theoretical arguments and the measurable and observable numerical outcomes derived from the model are determined, constrained, and real. In particular, the outcomes of the model are not logical deductions from given axioms or unique (or multiple) mathematical solutions; rather they are non-logical empirically grounded outcomes. Such mathematical-theoretical arguments and models derived from empirically grounded theories are characterized as rigorous and non-deductive. Thus, this form of mathematical argument cannot be used to transform economic reasoning and explanation into mathematical formalism with its chains of mathematical-deductive reasoning.

Being isomorphic with the theory and its data, yet an alternative representation of the theory, a model can be used by the economist to obtain a better understanding of the theory itself as well as an analytical-narrative summary for pedagogical purposes. In addition, it can be used to examine and evaluate propositions found in the theoretical literature. That is, the mathematical-theoretical arguments derived from a rigorous economic model can be used to examine whether particular mathematical-theoretical propositions associated with different economic theories and models are also rigorous or have no empirical grounding hence real world existence. Because it is grounded in the existing data, it is independent of new and future data. Thus, it can be used, for example, for discussing economic policies and simulating their possible impacts on future economic events. In particular it is a way of visually picturing the economy and simulating its evolving, moving outcomes. Economic models can also be used to see whether the resulting outcomes of new data conform to the expected outcome patterns of the theory and to explore the impact of changing structures and causal mechanisms on economic outcomes. In this last case, for example, if a structure is hypothetically altered so that the economic model produces hypothetically different outcomes, the outcomes can then

be compared to actual outcomes. If they seem to be the same, then the structures of the theory need to be re-examined and the process of grounding the theory renewed. [Weintraub, 1998a, 1998b, 2001, and 2002; Israel, 1981 and 1991; Boylan and O'Gorman, 1995; Boland, 1989; Dupre', 2001; Morrison and Morgan, 1999; and Carrier, 1992]

## Historical Nature of Grounded Economic Theories

The grounded theory method excludes, as part of heterodox theorizing, ahistorical, atemporal entities and theoretical concepts, atemporal diagrams, models and other forms of analysis unaccompanied by temporal-historical analysis, and the utilization of ahistorical first principles or primary causes. Being outside of history, historical time, and an unknowable transmutable future, these ahistorical entities and concepts are rejected by the grounded theory method as fictitious since they do not emerge as categories in the historical data. In contrast, the grounded theory method prescribes that heterodox theorizing include the delineation of historically grounded structures of the economy, and the development of historically grounded emergent causal mechanisms. Thus grounded economic theories are also historical theories in that they are historical narratives that explain the internal workings of historical economic processes and events in the context of relatively stable causal mechanisms (whose actions and outcomes can be temporally different) and structures. That is, the simultaneous operation of primary and secondary causal mechanisms with different time dimensions ensures the existence of historical economic processes that are being explained. But even when the causal mechanisms conclude their activity, the historical processes do not come to an end for the secondary and other causal mechanisms can also have an impact on the structures so that the slowly transforming structures (and their impact on causal mechanisms) maintain the processes.

Historical economic theories are possible because historical events are, due to the existence of structures and causal mechanisms, narratively structured. Hence, heterodox economists do not impose narratives on actual economic events to make sense of them, but derive them from the events via the grounded theory method. Moreover, being a narrative, the theories have a plot with a beginning, middle, and end centered on a central causal mechanism and set within structures and other causal mechanisms. Therefore, antedated events prompt the causal mechanisms to initiate activity

to generate particular results and hence start the narrative; and it comes to an end when the causal mechanisms conclude their activity. As with all narratives, there is a storyteller, who is a heterodox economist, whose objective is to help the audience—which includes fellow economists, students, politicians, and the general public—to understand theoretically how and why the actual economic events transpired. Finally, a good storyteller is one who is intimately knowledgeable about the 'facts' of the story and therefore must be a grounded theory theorist!

## Endnotes

[1] The method of grounded theory was first delineated by Barry Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967). Similar methodological guidelines going by the names of holism, pattern model, method of structured-focused comparison, and participant-observer approach using case study method were also proposed and developed at roughly the same time--see Diesing (1971), Wilber and Harrison (1978), George (1979), and Fusfeld (1980). Finally, historical economic theories based on pattern models was articulated by Arthur Spiethoff and members of the German Historical School—see Betz (1988), Spiethoff (1952 and 1953), and Hodgson (2001).

[2] Observable data is not solely restricted to sense experience. For example, historical documents or field reports contain data that cannot be verified by the reader's sense experience. The same can also be said for oral histories that deal with past events. On the other hand, non-written data, such as informal rules and hierarchical power inside the business enterprise, are not unobservable in that they can be verbally articulated and hence written down, filmed and then identified at a later point in time, or observed as institutions, that is, as observable patterns of behavior hence capable of being recorded. Thus all data is observable, although the sources and medium in which they exist varies; to be unobservable in this sense is not to be real and hence to be no data at all.

[3] In either case, the language used to describe the categories may be quite different from the existing theoretical language. In particular, the building of a grounded theory may require the creation of a new language and discarding old words and their meanings. On the other hand, the language used may come directly from the data collected and/or from commonly used language which is generally not theoretical language (Konecki, 1989; and Coates, 1996).

[4] This has been called pattern-matching in that the existing theory is seen as a particular pattern of data and narrative and the new pattern of data with its narrative is compared to it to see if they match--see Wilber and Harrison (1978) and Yin (1981a and 1981b).

[5] This type of case study is similar to the extended case method advocated by Burawoy (1991 and 1998), with the caveat that the latter is predicated on a false dichotomy between structures and causal mechanisms, where structures change independently of causal mechanism, not in part because of them.

## Author

Frederic S. Lee
Department of Economics
University of Missouri-Kansas City
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64110
Tel. 816-523-3995
E-mail: leefs@umkc.edu

Frederic S. Lee is a Professor of Economics at University of Missouri-Kansas City. His areas of research are heterodox microeconomic theory and the history of heterodox economics in the 20th century. He has published in a number of heterodox economic journals and is the editor of the University of Michigan Press book series, “Advances in Heterodox Economics.” Finally, he is trying to introduce the method of grounded theory to heterodox economists.

## References

Annells, M. 1996. "Grounded Theory Method: Philosophical Perspectives, Paradigm of Inquiry, and Postmoderism." *Qualitative Health Research* 6 (August): 379 - 393.

*Atkinson, G. W. and Oleson, T. 1996. "Institutional Inquiry: The Search for Similarities and Differences." Journal of Economic Issues 30 (September): 701 - 718.*

Betz, H. K. 1988. "How Does the German Historical School Fit*?" History of Political Economy* 20.3 (Fall): 409 – 430.

*Bigus, O. E., Hadden, S. C., and Glaser, B. G. 1994. "The Study of Basic Social Processes." In More Grounded Theory Methodology: A reader, pp. 38 - 64. Edited by B. G. Glaser. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.*

Boland, L. 1989*. The Methodology of Economic Model Building: Methodology after Samuelson.* London: Routledge.

Boylan, T. and O'Gorman, P. 1995. *Beyond Rhetoric and Realism in Economics: Towards a reformulation of economic methodology*. London: Routledge.

Burawoy, M. 1991. "The Extended Case Method." In *Ethnography Unbound*, pp. 271 – 287. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Burawoy, M. 1998. "The Extended Case Method." *Sociological Theory* 16.1 (March): 4 – 33.

Carrier, D. 1992. "A Methodology for Pattern Modeling Nonlinear Macroeconomic Dynamics." *Journal of Economic Issues* 26 (March): 221 – 242.

Charmaz, K. 1983. "The Grounded Theory Method: An Explication and Interpretation." In *Contemporary Field Research: A Collection of Readings*, pp. 109 - 126. Edited by R. M. Emerson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

*Coates, J. 1996. The Claims of Common Sense: Moore, Wittgenstein, Keynes and the Social Sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

*Conrad, C. F. 1978. "A Grounded Theory of Academic Change." Sociology of Education 51 (April): 101 - 112.*

*Corbin, J. and Strauss, A. 1990. "Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria." Qualitative Sociology 13 (Spring): 3 - 21.*

*Dey, I. 1999. Grounding Grounded Theory: Guidelines for Qualitative Inquiry. San Diego: Academic Press.*

*Diesing, P. 1971. Patterns of Discovery in the Social Sciences. New York: Aldine.*

*Dupre', J. 2001. "Economics Without Mechanism." In The Economic World View: Studies in the Ontology of Economics, pp. 308 – 332. Edited by U. Maki. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

*Eisenhardt, K. M. 1989. "Building Theories from Case Study Research." Academy of Management Review 14.4: 532 - 550.*

*Ellis, B. 1985. "What Science Aims to Do." In Images of Science, pp. 48 – 74. Edited by P. M. Churchland and C. A. Hooker. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.*

*Emigh, R. J. 1997. "The Power of Negative Thinking: The Use of Negative Case Methodology in the Development of Sociological Thinking." Theory and Society: 26: 649 – 684.*

*Finch, J. H. 1999. "The Methodological Implications of Post Marshallian Economics." In Contingency, Complexity and the Theory of the Firm: Essays in honour of Brian J. Loasby, pp. 156 - 177. Edited by S. C. Dow and P. E. Earl. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.*

*Finch, J. H. 2002. "The Role of Grounded Theory in Developing Economic Theory." Journal of Economic Methodology 9.2: 213 – 234.*

*Fusfeld, D. R. 1980. "The Conceptual Framework of Modern Economics." Journal of Economic Issues 14 (March): 1 - 52.*

George, A. L. 1979. "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison." *In Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*, pp. 43 - 68. Edited by P. G. Lauren. New York: The Free Press.

*Glaser, B. G. 1992. Emergence vs Forcing: Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.*

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. 1994. "Case Histories and Case Studies." In *More Grounded Theory Methodology: A reader*, pp. 233 - 245. Edited by B. G. Glaser. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.

Goulding, C. 2002. *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications.

*Hodgson, G. M. 2001. How Economics Forgot History: The Problem of Historical Specificity in Social Science. London: Routledge.*

*Hunt, S. D. 1994. "A Realist Theory of Empirical Testing: Resolving the Theory-Ladenness/Objectivity Debate." Philosophy of the Social Sciences 24.2 (June): 133 – 158.*

Israel, G. 1981. "'Rigor' and 'Axiomatics' in Modern Mathematics." *Fundamenta Scientiae* 2: 205 – 219.

Israel, G. 1991. "Volterra's 'Analytical Mechanics' of Biological Associations." *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences* 41.127: 307 – 352.

*Konecki, K. 1989. "The Methodology of Grounded Theory in the Research of the Situation of Work." The Polish Sociological Bulletin 2: 59 - 74.*

*Maki, U. 1998. "Aspects of Realism about Economics." Theoria 13.2: 310 – 319.*

*Maki, U. 2001. "The Way the World Works (www): Towards an Ontology of Theory Choice." In The Economic World View: Studies in the Ontology of Economics, pp. 369 – 389. Edited by U. Maki. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

*McCullagh, C. B. 2000. "Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation." History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History 39.1: 39 – 66.*

*Megill, A. 1989. "Recounting the Past: 'Description,' Explanation, and Narrative in Historiography." American Historical Review 94: 627 - 653.*

*Morrison, M. and Morgan, M. S. 1999. "Models as Mediating Instruments." In Models as Mediators: Perspectives on Natural and Social Science, pp. 10 – 37. Edited by M. S. Morgan and M. Morrison. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

*Orum, A. M., Feagin, J. R., and Sjoberg, G. 1991. "Introduction: The Nature of the Case Study." In A Case for the Case Study, pp. 1 - 26. Edited by J. R. Feagin, A. M. Orum, and G. Sjoberg. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.*

*Pentland, B. T. 1999. "Building Process Theory with Narrative: From Description to Explanation." Academy of Management Review 24.4 (October): 711 – 724.*

*Runde, J. 1998. "Assessing Causal Economic Explanations." Oxford Economic Papers 50: 151 - 172.*

*Sayer, A. 1992. Method in Social Science: A realist approach. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.*

*Smith, L. M. 1998. "Biographical Method." In Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry, pp. 184 - 224. Edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.*

Spiethoff, A. 1952. "The 'Historical' Character of Economic Theories." *The Journal of Economic History* 12.2 (Spring): 131 – 139.

Spiethoff, A. 1953. "Pure Theory and Economic Gestalt Theory: Ideal Types and Real Types." *In Enterprise and Secular*

*Change: Readings in Economic History*, pp. 444 – 463. Ed. By F. C. Lane and J. C. Riemersma. Homewood: Richard D. Irwin.

Stake, R. E. 1998. "Case Studies." In *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, pp. 86 - 109. Edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

*Strauss, A. L. 1987. Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

*Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. 1990. Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.*

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. 1994. "Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* pp. 273 - 285. Edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

*Tosh, J. 1991. The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History. 2nd ed. London: Longman.*

*Tsang, E. and Kwan, K.-M. 1999. "Replication and Theory Development in Organization Science: A Critical Realist Perspective." Academy of Management Review 24.4: 759 – 780.*

Turner, B. A. 1981. "Some Practical Aspects of Qualitative Data Analysis: One Way of Organising the Cognitive Processes Associated with the Generation of Grounded Theory." *Quality and Quantity* 15: 225 - 247.

Turner, B. A. 1983. "The Use of Grounded Theory for the Qualitative Analysis of Organizational Behaviour." *Journal of Management Studies* 20.3: 333 - 348.

Vaughan, D. 1992. "Theory Elaboration: The heuristics of case analysis." In *What is a Case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry*, pp. 173 - 202. Edited by C. C. Ragin and H. S. Becker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weintraub, E. R. 1998a. "From Rigor to Axiomatics: The Marginalization of Griffith C. Evans." In *From Interwar Pluralism to Postwar Neoclassicism*, pp. 227 – 259. Edited by M. S. Morgan and M. Rutherford. Durham: Duke University Press.

Weintraub, E. R. 1998b. "Controversy: Axiomatisches Mıverstandis." *The Economic Journal* 108 (November): 1837 – 1847.

Weintraub, E. R. 2001. "Measurement, and Changing Images of Mathematical Knowledge." In *The Age of Economic Measurement*, pp. 303 – 312. Edited by J. L. Klein and M. S. Morgan. Durham: Duke University Press.

Weintraub, E. R. 2002. *How Economics Became a Mathematical Science*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Wieviorka, M. 1992. "Case Studies: History or Sociology?" In *What is a Case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry*, pp. 159 - 172. Edited by C. C. Ragin and H. S. Becker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Wilber, C. K. and Harrison, R. S. 1978. "The Methodological Basis of Institutional Economics: Pattern Model, Storytelling, and Holism." Journal of Economic Issues 12 (March): 61 - 89.*

*Wisman, J. D. and Rozansky, J. 1991. "The Methodology of Institutionalism Revisited." Journal of Economic Issues 25 (September): 709 - 737.*

*Yin, R. K. 1981a. "The Case Study Crisis: Some Answers." Administrative Science Quarterly 26 (March): 58 - 65.*

*Yin, R. K. 1981b. "The Case Study as a Serious Research Strategy." Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization 3 (September): 97 - 114.*

Yin, R. K. 1994. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 2nd. ed. London: Sage Publications.

# The Grounded Theory Bookshelf

*By Vivian B. Martin, Ph.D.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Re-analysis:** Verifies or corroborates original premises.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Notes: