From the Editor's Desk

Remembering Barney Glaser

We publish this June 2022 issue of The Grounded Theory Review with sorrow at the loss of our dear teacher, mentor, and colleague, Dr. Barney G. Glaser, the co-originator and constant champion of the original classic theory methodology now referred to as classic grounded theory. Several Grounded Theory Institute Fellows and Grounded Theory Review peer reviewers pay tribute to Glaser in this issue. Imbued with both sadness at his loss and a celebration of his life, heartfelt tributes are offered by Astrid Gynnild, Norway; Judith Holton, Canada; Odis Simmons, USA; Tom Andrews, Ireland; Barry Chametzky, USA; Andy Lowe, UK and Thailand; Kara Vander Linden, USA; and Alvita Nathaniel, USA. Ólavur Christianson, Faroe Islands, and Barry Chametzky, USA, offer scientific papers that demonstrate the possibilities of classic grounded theory.

Also included in this issue are two methodology papers. Dr. Daniel Ash, from the UK, offers a conceptual discussion based on an epistemological debate that took place during a doctoral viva voce examination for a classic grounded theory study exploring police behavior during domestic abuse incidents. The discussion uncovered conflicts regarding how methodology is received and understood by scholars from different research philosophical perspectives. Drs. Robert Wright, Judith Wright, Gordon Medlock, and Mike Zwell, from the USA, write about a study that highlights the synergies between classic grounded theory and the process of non-directive leadership and emergence coaching, both of which focus on the emergence of explanatory core concepts that characterize what is happening in the data field of practice.

As you will learn from the tribute papers that follow, Barney Glaser was a man with vast experience in a number of academic traditions. He traveled internationally and learned research, theory, language, and sociology from world renowned scholars. With fellow sociologist Anslem Strauss, nurse scholar, Jeanne Quint Benoliel, and others, Glaser carved out the new research method while studying dying in San Francisco hospital settings. He went on to refine, explain, and teach the method throughout the remainder of his life. It is impossible to list the qualities that defined Barney Glaser. Even with his vast experience and knowledge, he remained humble, intuitive, generous, funny, and kind. He understood the world at both macro and micro levels and had insight that could cut to the heart of any matter.

Through his academic career, authorship, and troubleshooting seminars, Glaser taught hundreds of grounded theory researchers. Like patterns that can only be seen from a distance, grounded theories uncover important latent processes that would not otherwise be recognized. Grounded theories explain and predict what's going on in people's lives in ways that allow institutional systems and individuals to affect behaviors and avoid potential problems. A multitude of theories generated from classic grounded theory have improved

the world we live in. The application of theories such as awareness of dying, time for dying, super normalizing, credentializing, cultivating, creative undermining, moral reckoning, visualizing worsening progressions, pluralistic dialoguing, rehumanizing knowledge work, opportunizing, purposive attending, routing, sensualizing, becoming an alcoholic, and many others offer insights that continue to improve the lives of people. Thus, Glaser's influence spreads like a gentle wind.

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD
Editor

The Future of Grounded Theory

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

Editor's Note: As we celebrate this great man's life, we re-publish[1] this gently edited paper about what the future of grounded theory is likely to be. Glaser discussed in whose hands the future of grounded theory appears to be as well as what accounts for its spread, its use, and its misuse. Glaser first wrote this paper in 1998 and updated it for publication in *The Grounded Theory Review* in 2010. Much of Glaser's predictions have proven accurate.

I would like examine what I consider the future of grounded theory. I will discuss in whose hands the future of grounded theory appears to be and what accounts for its spread, its use and misuse, and where the majority of grounded theory studies are occurring. I will then briefly review poor grounded theory, qualitative grounded theory, social fictions, and theory bits. Finally, I will touch on the future structures in which grounded theory will be taught and centered.

First, a few guidelines are necessary. Grounded theory refers to a specific methodology on how to get from systematically collecting data to producing a multivariate conceptual theory. It is a total methodological package. It provides a series of systematic, exact methods that start with collecting data and take the researcher to a theoretical piece that is publishable.

Now, all research is grounded in data in some way. It is implicit in the definition of research. Thus, research is grounded by definition, but research grounded in data is not grounded theory, although many jargonizers would have their work designated that way. It is grounded theory only when it follows the grounded theory methodological package. Second, grounded theory is just a small piece of the action in social psychological research. Research methods go in many directions, using many methodological approaches, both quantitative and qualitative and mixes thereof.

Grounded theory is a specific general methodology. It is no better or worse than other methods. It is just another option for researchers. Grounded theory is used in part or in whole by researchers. When used in part, it is "adopt and adapt," with other research methods woven in, based on the training and judgment of the researcher involved. The multi version view of GT is based on jargonizing with the GT vocabulary, not on the GT procedures (Glaser, 2009). I will speak here on the pure or orthodox view, knowing as I

said in my reader, *Grounded Theory, 1984-1994* (Glaser, 1995), that most researchers mix methods by jargonizing.

Third, when Anselm Strauss and I wrote *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* in 1967 (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), Anselm would say to me, "Barney, we are 15 to 20 years ahead of our time." He was right in my view, so I thought, "Good, I can do other things and bide my time." Well, to my surprise, 15 to 20 years later, grounded theory has gone global, seriously global among the disciplines of nursing, business, and education and less so among other social-psychological-oriented disciplines such as social welfare, psychology, sociology, and art. Sociology Press sells books to Russia, Iran, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, China, Poland, Netherlands, Australia as well as Northern Europe.

Everywhere I travel, people come to my workshops at some expense and from some distance to hear me and to ask questions. People compete for my attention and to be my host. I embody what they embrace—grounded theory.

Since I wrote *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis* (Glaser, 1992), I have been traveling in Europe, Down Under, Canada, and the United States. What follows is not a "wish list"; it is not an ideology. Rather, it is a grounded analysis of data from my travels and book sales that indicates what the future of grounded theory is likely to be.

The People Who Use Grounded Theory

Unformed or novice researchers embrace grounded theory for dissertation or master's theses when, in their view, the more preconceived methods do not give relevant answers. Unformed researchers who can choose their own methods do so at the discretion of their advisers. The principal users today, mostly students who are doing M.A. or Ph.D. theses or dissertations, are well into their academic careers and looking for methodologies that will result in data and theories relevant to what is going on in their research areas of interest. This makes grounded theory very appealing on that one point alone—relevance.

They realize that grounded theory is a methodology that provides a total package, which takes one from data collection through several stages to a theory and in a scheduled amount of time. This ensures a finished product that can comply with a deadline. Again, this is very appealing at the M.A. or Ph.D. stage of an academic career when personal resources are limited. It ensures graduation and getting on to the first step of the professorial career. It ensures promotions based on achieving an advanced degree. It helps in getting published.

Whether or not the users continue to do grounded theory varies. Their training directs its use in future research, but with more autonomy. They take it their own way and use other methodology strategies with it. They adopted it for their dissertations, and now they adapt it in many ways for a multitude of reasons. The continued users take it in ways that seem "suitable" in their current careers and contexts. They then wrap their grounded theory identities around the adaptations, and it becomes the grounded theory they teach and do, however recognizable as grounded theory. The multi-version view of GT, based on jargonizing, is unstoppable.

As careers mature, their research identities wrap around these adjustments, and this becomes their grounded theory. The purist view gets mixed with other research strategies and sometimes gets totally contaminated by them. Grounded theory use spreads in this way, sometimes only by name; that is, by jargonizing. At the same time, other colleagues with identities involved in different methodologies might disappear through retirement and attrition, and grounded theory à la adaptation takes a place in departments and research institutes. Its suitability becomes grounded in context, and more Ph.D. students try it and like it.

Types of Grounded Theory Researchers

Now it can be seen that in the beginning, the motivations run high to use grounded theory in the thesis stage of one's career. It is linked with research age, career development, and (least likely) chronological age. It also is firmly linked with a certain type of researcher, whose profile does not fit everybody. One type of researcher is no better than another, although any one researcher might need to think so. Evaluation of these differences is a waste; people vary.

The grounded theory researcher must have three important characteristics: an ability to conceptualize data, an ability to tolerate some confusion, and an ability to tolerate confusion's attendant regression. These attributes are necessary because they enable the researcher to wait for the conceptual sense making to emerge from the data. This is just a fact.

Not everyone has these attributes, but some have them naturally. These latter researchers can do grounded theory almost automatically. Most often, they have self-selected grounded theory because its conceptualization and openness to relevance have grabbed them. They become formed in grounded theory methodology, and these are the researchers who will take it properly into the future.

Students who attempt grounded theory but cannot tolerate confusion and regression, and who need to continually feel in cognitive control, fall by the wayside. They get fed up. They might even decompensate if they do not give up. It is terrible to watch such a colleague break down while trying to do a grounded theory dissertation.

Those who can tolerate confusion and regression love the openness of grounded theory and the chance to really generate concepts that make sense of what is going on. They have come to grounded theory to escape the preconceived problems, concepts, and format methods of data collection and the processing of it. They wish to escape producing the irrelevance that is based on approved formed methods.

Being able to conceptualize is a must so long as it can be linked to the data and is not pure one incident impressionism. It must be linked with the tedium of constant comparisons. So, conceptualizing is just a start that can fail if it is not submitted to the rigor of grounded theory's constant comparisons. I have met students who do not have an ability to relate conceptualization to data, even on the impression level. They are not in the future of grounded theory, nor is the researcher who cannot conceptualize and who is slated to just story-talk or incident trip, never realizing the interchangeability of indicators but continuing to collect the same idea over and over with different data. Redundant data

collection soon becomes a source of phasing them out of a grounded theory thesis. Thus, there is a constant weeding out of those who do not succeed in doing grounded theory from those who do. The people who do succeed in doing grounded theory probably cannot do much else because their natural inclinations lead them to become formed by grounded theory's rigorous methodology. In the bargain, they spread its use. Those who can only incident trip and work at the impression level barely spread grounded theory, even though they may profess by jargonizing that they are spreading it. It is merely a legitimating rubric in their case.

Spread of Grounded Theory

There are several reasons for the spread of grounded theory. First, the disciplines that use and support grounded theory deal with important, highly relevant dependent variables, for which grounded theory gives answers to their variation. These variables are involved in pain, cure, social-psychological fates, profit, management problems, learning, and so forth.

Second, the spread of grounded theory is following on the tail of globalization. Globalization is occurring by communication, spread of business and manufacture, and travel. The core variable in this process is that people, including researchers, are constantly running into the multitude of ways in which diversity affects the worlds of business, health, and education as globalization continues.

The formulated evidentiary methods work far better in more homogeneous environments of culture and structure. Preconceptions fit and hold better. In culturally diverse environments, these methods do not work as well because preconception can lead the researcher far astray from realities that are not in his or her cultural view. These differences cannot be imagined or conjectured. They must be discovered to be relevant, work, and fit.

What is more obvious and visible in the globalization of economies is that cultural and sub-cultural differences abound everywhere. What is more apparent on macro levels now can be seen on micro-levels. Differentials abound, and preconceptions do not tap them because preconceptions are too normative.

Third, as a consequence of cultural diversity, more and more researchers and users of the more evidentiary, preconceived formulated research have become disaffected with their data collection, their findings, what they should find, and whatever hypotheses should be tested. Smoldering disaffection has grown as findings are seen to be beside the point, irrelevant, moot, and unworkable. And Ph.D. dissertations are going under because of this irrelevance and the lack of cogent explanations of important dependent variables. This is very serious on the human level, where identities and careers are in precarious involvement.

So, along comes grounded theory years after its inception, saying, let us find out directly what is going on and how we can account for it. Let us see what the main concern of the participants in substantive areas is and how they resolve it. Let us generate the concepts for the theory. Then, research will help in the area under view.

This promise of grounded theory, which has been fulfilled many times, is highly motivating and a sure thing for doing dissertations. People are latching onto it and feeling confident about producing something; they are feeling creative, original, and meaningfully relevant. Particularly in the world of business and health, people are very disaffected with preconceived evidentiary proof research because it is not producing findings that make business or health problems any better. These dependent variables, which are profit and cure related, are very important. Answers that work are wanted. Grounded theory tells us what is going on, tells us how to account for the participants' main concerns, and reveals access variables that allow for incremental change. Grounded theory is what is, not what should, could, or ought to be.

The conceptual grab of grounded theory is a very important factor in its growing popularity. It frees the researcher to be his or her own theorist, and it is empowering. Once the researcher has a grounded theory for what is going on in a substantive area, no one can tell him or her much different; new data just get compared into the theory, and the researcher's concepts have grab for others. People start to see the concepts everywhere (e.g., default remodeling, commodifying self, super normalizing, "elsewhereism," credentializing, cultivating, risky rapport, creative undermining). As a result, the researcher's empowerment as a theorist continues.

These concepts are not offensive to the people in the area. They help the participants to see that apparent disparate facts have an underlying uniformity. It is offensive to tell them in a descriptive way what they already know anyway, with no conceptual handles. "We spend all this money on research for you to tell us what we know goes on anyway" is the usual complaint. But giving them a way in which to conceptualize the pattern underlying dispersed facts gives them the power to control it better.

A friend of mine who did a study of corporate mergers discovered default remodeling. Everywhere he goes and mentions it, executives will say, "God, that is what is going on." In their heads, these executives see examples of this concept. They are empowered.

The spread of grounded theory is also linked to perceptual empowerment. By this, I mean that the comparative process constantly raises the conceptual level of the study, which gives the researcher a continually transcending perspective, a constantly larger and less bounded picture. A good substantive theory has formal implications. The credentializing of nurses easily leads to the credentializing of all areas of work to ensure "expert" quality and to control abuses. Becoming a nurse, then becoming a health professional, then becoming a professional expert on whatever the subject, and finally becoming an expert is seen as the socialization process of social experts, whatever the subject.

Routinely grounded substantive theory is a third perceptual-level theory. Data go to concepts, and concepts get transcended to a core variable, which is the main underlying pattern. Formal theory is on the fourth level, but the theory can be boundless as the research keeps comparing and trying to figure out what is going on and what the latent patterns are. Now, probably most important for the spread of grounded theory and why we had to wait so long is, as I indicated earlier, that there are fields— particularly business,

health, and education—that require research on high-impact dependent variables that help them to understand and handle problems by 'imbuement'.

They are tired of ideology about how to make profit, relieve pain, and educate. What works is needed. Grounded theory does this. Many grounded theory studies now are altering the preconceived processes in fields of practice. For example, imposing treatment paradigms on patients that do not fit their lifestyles and thereby get ignored is changing to designing treatment regimes that fit their lifestyles, so there is hope for compliance. This is but one brief example of the many preconceptions that are being altered by grounded theory.

I am called by M.A. and Ph.D. candidates from all over the world to discuss using grounded theory in their theses. Their reasons are the grab, openness, freedom, and conceptualization provided by the method. But most of all, they wish to get at what is relevant and works. They want to make meaningful and lasting contributions. Grounded theory, with its conceptual freedom from time, place, and received concepts, gives them this chance. It is a sure thing for success because what is going on always is there, and preconceptions are not. They realize that it is only through discovery that they can find out what is going on. They could not have dreamed it or deduced it from preconceived ideas and are turned off by the blind alleys of reformulated ideas in evidentiary, preconceived research and pre-study literature reviews. Researchers who are new to the scene are looking for a method that yields research that fits, works, is relevant, and is readily modifiable.

That a resulting GT is modifiable is crucial for two reasons. First, in many preconceiving, verificational methods, it is the data that are poor, not the theory. Second, grounded theory shows that all data, no matter what their quality, can constantly modify the theory through comparisons. This modifying of theory is crucial because it constantly keeps up with what is going on as changes occur and it increases its formal abstraction. It constantly corrects for poor data (e.g., response sets of interviewers), and it brings the theory into closer grounding.

I can give two succinct grounded theories of cultural diversity problems. Cultural diversity can ruin the production of a factory when the foremen are Japanese and the workers are English, or it can affect the client relationships and profit of a consulting firm that has one third local nationals and two thirds foreign nationals. The cultural conflicts could not have been anticipated beforehand because they were so subtle.

The survival of a small business is another example. Studies abound in this area, but only the grounded theory studies have shown how various forms of family slavery, black market, cash economy outside the tax system, imposing client relations, moment capture ability and closed networks really help the small business survive. Also, the growth of virtual organizations, while looking large, turns to small business contractors. So, some small business is on the rise under this umbrella.

High-impact dependent variables that are linked to research that yields good interpretations and theoretical accountings are highly motivating to researchers. By contrast, I used to see many researchers trying to study what was not there but what was

preconceived to be there. This condition led to discouragement, reduced energy for the research, disaffection with research and resulted in the loss of potentially good researchers.

Poor Grounded Theory

In the future of grounded theory, there frequently will be poor grounded theory research, but it must be seen as developmental. It takes time to fully learn how to do grounded theory. The realization process takes more than a year and often a few research studies.

Poor grounded theory is fine when it portends the future. People use a bit here and a bit there, and learning grows. There is a lot of competitive incident tripping, there is a lot of impressioning out, and there is a lot of logical conjecture as people take off on very rich theory bits. Grounded theory produces its own conjectures. It is okay when the future is the continuing skill development in doing grounded theory.

Novice grounded theorists with no experienced grounded theory mentor, of whom there are many throughout the world, are particularly subject to this delayed action development. My admonition is to solve the skill problem discovered on one study during the next study. As the critical mass of grounded theorists grows, they will help each other in skill development through joining networks based on telecommunications and the internet, especially when personal contact and seminars are not possible. The future is developmental in skill, which is snowballing in researchers.

Qualitative Grounded Theory

Let me be clear. Grounded theory is a general method. It can be used on any data or combination of data. It was developed partially by me with quantitative data and partially with quantitative data. It is expensive and somewhat hard to obtain quantitative data, especially in comparison to qualitative data. Qualitative data are inexpensive to collect, very rich in meaning and observation, and very rewarding to collect and analyze. So, by default to ease, costs and growing use by many, grounded theory is being linked to qualitative data and is seen as a qualitative method, using symbolic interaction. Qualitative grounded theory accounts for the global spread of its use.

I can only caution the reader not to confuse this empirical spread with the fact that it is a general method. It is a kind of takeover that makes routine qualitative research sound good by positive stigma and jargonizing. Only highly trained grounded theory researchers can see the difference and the confusion. Much of it revolves around the notion of emergence versus forcing and the failure to use all the grounded theory methodological steps. For instance, any kind of data can be constantly compared but that does not ensure a grounded theory. However, it is prudent for researchers to go with qualitative grounded theory when that is where the resources are to do it and when that is where researchers can reap career and personal rewards.

Social Fiction

So much of the action in the world is run by socially structured fictions. Many people have large stakes in maintaining these fictions and have the power to maintain them.

Grounded theorists often find out what is really going on and discover that the "powers that be" are running on fictions.

In the future, grounded theory will uncover more and more of these fictions, which will not always be welcomed by the participants. To prevent these people from stopping the spread of grounded theory, it is important for the researcher not to myth-break, whistle-blow, structure-bust, finger-point, bubble-burst, and so forth. Grounded theorists never should be seen as crusaders, subversives, or underminers. If they are, then they will be averted or crushed. Grounded theorists should engage in incremental changes slowly, if at all. In fact, before even trying incremental change, the grounded theorist should analyze the functional requirement of maintaining the social fiction. Learning the categories involved will help to make the incremental change go smoothly. Furthermore, the functional requirement of the fiction might be more important to both the researcher and the participants than is the change.

Theory Bits

Much of grounded theory's future is in the use of theory bits from grounded theories; bits of theory from a substantive theory that a person will use briefly in a sentence or so, whether as a colleague, teacher, consultant, or student. It is too cumbersome to tell the whole theory, especially when a bit works. Talking about a core category has the necessary irresistible grab on others. But the bit can be any concept or hypothesis from the theory (e.g., he is "supernormalizing," "cultivating" is the way to go, divorce lacks "ritual loss ceremonies"). It is easy to respond to these bits with meaning. Many colleagues will use theory bits when applying grounded theory instead of doing the tedium of emergent fit. In conversations with colleagues or friends, as well as in lectures or seminars about grounded theory, theory bits will be used almost unconsciously.

Theory bits come from two sources. First, they come from generating one concept in a study and conjecturing without generating the rest of the theory. With the juicy concept, the conjecture sounds grounded, but it is not; it is only experiential. Second, theory bits come from a generated substantive theory. A theory bit emerges in normal talk when it is impossible to relate the whole theory. So, a bit with grab is related to the listener. The listener can then be referred to an article or a report that describes the whole theory.

As grounded theory goes into the future and accumulates more and more information, theory bits of both types will be heard. Theory bits are impossible to stop because of their instant grab. The person talking can show his or her skill and power instantly.

Grounded theory is rich in imageric concepts that are easy to apply "on the fly." These are applied intuitively, with no data, with a feeling of "knowing" as a quick analysis of a substantive incident or area. They ring true with great credibility. They empower conceptually and perceptually. They feel theoretically complete ("Yes, that accounts for it"). They are exciting handles of explanation. They can run far ahead of the structural constraints of research. They are simple one- or two-variable applications, as opposed to being multivariate and complex. Theory bits can become stereotypical and routine as they get into the local culture. They are quick and easy. They invade social and professional conversations as colleagues use them to sound knowledgeable. Competitive parlance

stimulates them. They are relatively safe, non-stakeful utterances. The danger, of course, is that they might be just plain wrong or irrelevant unless based in a grounded theory. Hopefully, they get corrected as more data come out. The grounded theorist should try to fit, correct, and modify them even as they pass his or her lips.

Unfortunately, theory bits have the ability to stunt further analysis because they can sound so correct. Theory bits stunt cognitive thought. They can seduce and denude one of motivation to go further in an analysis. Multivariate thinking stops in favor of a juicy single variable, a quick and sensible explanation. Also, they can jinx or label a person or situation badly enough to bring on negative consequences. People force them on us as routine explanations, to be unquestioned by further thought, much less further research.

Theory bits allow us to escape the particularistic, experiential explanation of an incident in favor of sounding as if one is applying sound, fundamental general knowledge. At least grounded theory bits are grounded, not biased, prejudiced, or conjectural. Multivariate thinking can continue these bits to fuller explanations. This is the great benefit of trusting a theory that fits, works, and is relevant as it is continually modified.

As grounded theory spreads, its future will, in part, be in spawning bits (concepts or hypotheses) that, in juicy richness, can be applied to situations or incidents to explain and make sense of them. But a responsible grounded theorist always should finish his or her bit with a statement to the effect that "Of course, these situations are very complex or multivariate, and without more data, I cannot tell what is really going on."

Structural Location of Training

The future structures of training and doing grounded theory are sporadic. It is not yet a widely taught methodology in spite of the qualitative research takeover. Although there are many schools with teachers who train people at some level in grounded theory, usually mixed with other methodologies, it is not yet possible to just go anywhere and expect to obtain training in grounded theory. There is not yet a critical mass of grounded theorists in any school or department. A student searching for grounded theory training must pick known specific teachers of grounded theory and go to the teacher's school.

Given the increased numbers of those who wish to do grounded theory, this apprenticing is not yet easy to obtain. There are many novices without mentors who learn grounded theory from my books and do it as best they can with little or no support. Often, the only formal training they can obtain is in my seminars. As they meet each other and then engage in telecommuting and internet communicating, they become a mutual source of support and can exchange ideas with each other. Soon, grounded theory associations might emerge.

We have started a grounded theory institute and a journal for grounded theory articles. This is abetted by the internet and will empower those learning grounded theory through minus mentoring by connecting them to the growing global network of grounded theory researchers.

Because grounded theory is still an 'adopt-and-adapt' method, it will continue to be routinely offered as an option, to some degree, within departments that support other

methodologies to a greater extent. Where no teachers of grounded theory exist, the minus mentorees must find each other through the telephone, via the internet, and at seminars. Then, they must maintain long-distance contact when returning home.

Justifying Grounded Theory

The future will bring less need to legitimize grounded theory; hence, there will be less need to justify using it. Now, many researchers have to explain it and argue for its use. Its future portends that grounded theory will be as accepted as are other methods (e.g., surveys) and will require little or no explanation to justify its use in a research project. With its use, grounded theory will empower the Ph.D. candidate with a degree, a subsequent career, and the acclaim of an original creative theory.

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Barney Glaser: Remembering a Genius

Odis E. Simmons

I was introduced to the ideas of Barney Glaser in 1967 when I was an undergraduate student at Sonoma State College (now University). I was pondering what field to declare as my major subject. I was interested in sociology, but after reading several randomly selected works of classic and contemporary sociology theorists, I had doubts. These works were written for an academic audience and at that time I didn't envision myself as an academic. Also, I couldn't imagine myself being able to write anything like what I was reading. While browsing through the sociology section in the campus bookstore, I came across Glaser & Strauss' *The Discover of Grounded Theory*. After skimming through it, I decided to buy it, take it home, and read it. It really grabbed me. This book sealed my interest in sociology and prompted me to declare it as my major.

Three of the five professors on the sociology faculty were symbolic interactionists who had done their PhD studies at UC Berkeley. I took every course I could from these three excellent professors. Looking back on it, I realize that I received doctoral level instruction in symbolic interaction from them.

One of them informed me that Strauss had recently founded a PhD program in sociology at The University of California San Francisco, where Glaser was also on the faculty. I was excited about the prospect of being able to learn grounded theory from its originators. When I inquired, I was disappointed to find out that student enrollment for the next year was closed. After a year in the Graduate Program in Social Psychology at The University of Nevada, Reno I applied to the UCSF program. I was admitted for the fall quarter of 1970. By this time, I had read Strauss' *Mirror & Masks*, Strauss & Lindesmith's *Social Psychology*, as well as Glaser & Strauss' *Awareness of Dying* and *Time for Dying*. I also reread *Discovery*. When I joined the UCSF program in 1970, I was well steeped in symbolic interactionism and as steeped in grounded theory as one could be at the time.

I enrolled in Barney's "Analysis" seminar, in which he taught, refined, and further developed grounded theory. I learned a huge amount in these seminars but, for me, they were only a small portion of what I learned from Barney. We both lived north of San Francisco. After my first seminar session with him he suggested we commute together. We met in the parking lot of a Mill Valley supermarket, where I joined him in his Volkswagen Squareback. Because parking around the university was very limited, he parked in Golden Gate Park and we walked a considerable distance to the Victorian house where the seminar was held. During the walk we usually talked about grounded theory. Afterwards we returned

to Mill Valley where we sat in his car and had long discussions about grounded theory, during which he continually took notes.

Our conversations fostered what became a lifelong friendship. We both had daughters close in age. Our families socialized, often at his home. As we watched our daughters play, we talked about grounded theory, "life, the universe and everything." Barney's seminars and these conversations were the most inspiring intellectual times of my life. Through them, my career and even personal life were shaped. I became determined to make grounded theory the focus on my career, even if it meant following a non-conventional academic/professional path, as he was doing.

Enter Anselm Strauss. When I arrived at UCSF, Strauss was in Geneva consulting with the World Health Organization. When he resumed his position at UCSF, I had completed two terms of Barney's seminar and countless deep conversations about grounded theory with him. I knew that Anselm was a highly regarded symbolic interactionist. His mentors at the University of Chicago were two symbolic interactionists, Herbert Blumer and Everett C. Hughs. Blumer interpreted George Herbert Mead's ideas into the symbolic interactionist sociological perspective. He coined the term, "symbolic interaction." He later became Chair of the sociology department at UC Berkeley where most of my undergraduate professors at Sonoma State completed their PhDs.

I enrolled in Anselm's methods seminar. During the first session, he talked about the value of doing a cursory preliminary literature review. He also suggested categories that would be useful for framing interview questions and analysis. I recognized these categories as being very consistent with symbolic interactionism. I was taken aback because in his seminars Barney was telling us specifically not to do either of those things. He advised us to refrain from doing a preliminary literature review to avoid preconceiving the topic. He emphasized we should suspend preconceptions of all sorts. He said we should begin as openly as possible and go where theoretical sampling leads us. Because it was my first seminar session with Anselm, I thought it was best to say nothing. However, during our commute back to Mill Valley, I told Barney, "You and Anselm aren't talking about the same thing." He didn't respond so I thought it best to let it go.

I had and have enormous respect, affection, and appreciation for Anselm. He was always very supportive of me. He was a kind, sweet, generous man. I selected him as my dissertation committee chair. He was a brilliant symbolic interactionist. But during the many hours of conversation I had with him in his office and his home, I felt more like I was talking with a symbolic interactionist than a grounded theorist. I feel blessed that I had these one-on-one conversations with Anselm. I learned a great deal from them as well as from his seminars.

Particularly after Barney's book, *Theoretical Sensitivity* was published, Anselm's view of grounded theory moved closer to Barney's. But in Barney's view not enough as is evident in his response to Strauss & Corbin's 1990, *Basics of Qualitative Research*.

> As the reader has seen in this book, Anselm and I have profoundly different views of Grounded Theory. What started out as a book of corrections ended up showing that Strauss indeed has used a different methodology all along, probably from the start in

1967 and it was not obvious until our more recent articulations and formulations. (p. 122)

The view of grounded theory that Anselm revealed during the seminars I completed with him was tempting because it was less anxiety producing. It gave me a clearer place to start and enabled me to imagine how my final product might look. Being emergent from the beginning and throughout, Barney's grounded theory was a bit scary. But Barney kept telling us, "Trust the process," so despite some trepidation, I did.

I presented this backstory to provide context for my main point. My rich multi-dimensional experiences with Barney and Anselm, beginning a mere three years after *Discovery* was published provided me with a unique vantage point. It enabled me to clearly discern their differences and contributions. No doubt, grounded theory emerged from their brilliant collaboration during their groundbreaking research on dying. They shared a disposition for innovation. They shared respect, appreciation, and affection for one another. They held similar views about the overemphasis in sociology on verifying theories and the underemphasis on developing theories. They also shared a concern with the disconnect between theory and research. They both thought theories should have an empirical foundation rather than being products of the imaginative speculations of theorists. Barney saw his major theory professor, Robert K. Merton's speculative, logically elaborated approach to theory development to be the antithesis of how theories should be developed.

They both made significant contributions to the genesis of grounded theory. Anselm's main contributions were related to the importance of meaning making and the value of qualitative field research. These were grounded in his strong association with symbolic interactionism. These were not a large part of Barney's graduate work. Barney fused what he learned at Columbia about sociological theory and methods—although often not in accords with his professors—with what he learned from studying literature at the Sorbonne and University of Freiberg during his stint the U.S. Army with what he learned during his and Anselm's dying research at UCSF. Amongst his indispensable contributions to grounded theory was the constant comparative method, which he published independent of Anselm two years before *Discovery* was published. It was republished verbatim as Chapter V in *Discovery*. The constant comparative method is the irreplaceable core of grounded theory. Without it we wouldn't have grounded theory as it was originally conceived.

In his seminars, Strauss referred to grounded theory as merely one of many methods of qualitative analysis. Years before his 2008 book, *Doing Quantitative Grounded Theory*, Barney discussed constant comparison as a method of qualitative analysis that could be applied to any type of data, including quantitative. He talked about grounded theory as a full-range, general methodology for generating theories systematically grounded in data.

In 1978 Barney published *Theoretical Sensitivity*. In my view, this book is as important as *Discovery* because it portrays the full methodology. He sent me a prepublication copy. As I read it, I was reminded of our many conversations during my time as his student. When he published it, he sent me what is now one of my most precious possession—an autographed copy with a brief comment, "To my colleague in arms." This

book was only the beginning of Barney's myriad of published refinements, clarifications, and elaborations on grounded theory.

Barney sought complete intellectual independence by pursuing a non-conventional approach to his career, mostly outside of institutional settings. He didn't like to waste time. He maintained that much of what is required by institutions is a waste of time—a sentiment to which I can relate. He sometimes irritated his colleagues at UCSF because he was often absent from faculty meetings. He referred to them as "in-presencing."

Subsequent to *Discovery*, Anselm published two methods books related to grounded theory. The first was in his 1987, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. It was his only solo grounded theory methods book. Initially, it didn't receive much attention as grounded theory, even from Barney, probably because the term grounded theory wasn't in the title. In this book, Anselm borrowed liberally from *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Like he did in the seminars, he characterized grounded theory as merely "a particular style of qualitative analysis of data" (p. xi). He minimized its magnitude and importance as, "one of many used in qualitative research" (p. xi). He also wrote, "There are some differences in his [Glaser's] specific teaching tactics and perhaps in his actual carrying out of research, but the differences are minor." (p. xiv) These statements highlight the gap between Anselm's and Barney's views about the scope of grounded theory. In this book, Anselm introduced "axial coding," to which Barney took great exception in his 1992 *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis* reply to Strauss & Corbin's 1990 *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Strauss & Corbin's *Basics* book was Anselm's final methods book about grounded theory. Anselm had a very successful, wide ranging academic and professional career working in institutional settings. The focus of Barney's research/scholarly career was grounded theory. This enabled him to continually clarify and refine it.

My relationship to Barney was and still is profoundly important to me intellectually and personally. His advice was usually offered in brief revelatory maxims. His morsels of wisdom were so clarifying that my immediate mental reaction was, "Well of course! Why didn't I think of that?!" His maxims often helped me navigate through professional and personal opportunities and challenges.

For example, when I began conducting interviews with residents of an inpatient alcoholism facility for my dissertation research, I was frustrated that they appeared to be attempting to deceive me. I feared that this could bring my research to a halt. I mentioned this to Barney. His quick reply was "make your problem your topic!" He pointed out that they were doing this for a reason, and I should find out why. This simple advice turned my "problem" into an important research opportunity. Over the years I found this tidbit of advice useful in my professional and personal life. I shared it with my grounded theory mentees and students.

A related very useful morsel was his vernacular way of getting you to focus on the issues or problem that was being processed by individuals in an action scene, including ones from your personal life--"what they are working on?." I found this question to be very useful during my days as a counselor/therapist. For example, during the first session with couples, as I listened to each partner for a while, the answer to that question was usually, "trying to

convince me to side with them." This enabled me to quickly address the issue so we could get on with it. This question remained useful throughout the counseling/therapy process.

A maxim he used to reduce students' fears about scholarly criticism was what he termed "the rule of thirds." He maintained, "If one third of the people who read your work hate it, one third are indifferent, and one third love it, you've succeeded."

Barney had an uncanny ability for instantly pinpointing essentials. Sometimes in conversations he would suddenly ask, "What's the core variable?" I couldn't think as quickly as he could so my mind often froze. After a pause he'd blurt it out, leaving me awestruck and a bit humbled. These examples are just slivers of Barney's practical wisdom.

Another thing I will miss about Barney is his sense of humor, which ranged from dry wit to jokes and puns that were so bad they were good, often eliciting tongue-in-cheek groans. His dry wit sometimes left you wondering, "is he joking or is he serious?" I loved that he made me laugh. I also loved to make him laugh. I began the last conversation I had with him when his mind was still fairly lucid by appealing to his sense of humor and grounded theory. This seemed to kick his mind into gear.

I have known many very, very smart people in my life, but Barney Glaser was the only true creative genius I've known. I owe Barney a lot. One of the things I feel I owe him is the truth about his full share of credit for the original design of grounded theory, which he hasn't always received. Like all the many people who loved him, I will miss him dearly. He was not only my teacher, my mentor, and my dear friend, he was my sage.

About the Author

Odis Simmons was one of Glaser and Strauss' first-generation Ph.D. students in the graduate program in sociology at the University of California, San Francisco. He has extensive experience at mentoring, teaching, and supervising grounded theory students from multiple academic and practicing professions. He is the originator of grounded action and grounded therapy. He has served on the faculties of The University of Tulsa, Yale University and Fielding Graduate University. He is now happily retired from these positions, but not from grounded theory. Email: osimm@comcast.net

The Celebration of Barney Glaser:
A Personal Perspective

Andy Lowe

Over 30 years ago, whilst I was running the PhD research methodology program in the University of Strathclyde Business School in Glasgow Scotland, I first met with Barney Glaser. I had just had a book published with two other authors entitled "Management Research." The publishers, Sage [to save money], had produced a double-sided flyer to promote the book. On one side of the flyer was our book and the flip side was another book authored by Evert Gummesson from Stockholm University. Neither Evert nor I had ever met so we independently decided to contact each other for a future possible collaboration. During the course of our conversations, it emerged that Evert was a friend of Barney Glaser and had been his guest at his home in Mill Valley California. I asked Evert to forward Barney's contact details because I wanted to invite him to Scotland so that he could give a seminar to the PhD researchers and faculty in the Strathclyde University Business School in Glasgow. It is worth remarking that it was Evert, a few years later, who successfully proposed to Stockholm University that Barney be awarded an honorary doctorate for his services to research methodology. Although Barney has no idea who I was he immediately said yes to my request to coming to give a seminar providing two conditions were met. Firstly, he would bring both his wife Carolyn and his son Barney Jr. Secondly, Barney required me to make an undertaking that he would not tolerate any kind of rhetorical wrestle from academics. I mention these two conditions in the context of getting a deeper understanding of Barney Glaser's three main concerns. Firstly, his family were the key thing in his life. He had never made any kind of academic visit to the UK previously and he wanted it to be shared by some members of his family. Secondly, he did not want to waste his time taking part in any of empty intellectual rhetoric; rather he just wanted to make sure that people understood the nuances of the Grounded Theory method.

The third issue that emerged during his visit to Scotland was he unlimited generosity. He and his wife Carolyn invited me to come and stay them in California any time I was able. I was very happy to take up this invitation many times.

An important legacy that Barney was always eager to retain is the Sociology Press. He was fully aware of the capricious behavior of most publishers. Publishers frequently just pulp any title if the sales statistics fall below their desired target. The Sociology Press is vital to minimize the contamination of the Grounded Theory which GT remodelers are doing. For more on this check out this YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCy5lRUeqwb2ITjbT7rkuszg.

Barney's generosity was boundless. He always took calls from any genuine PhD researcher who needed immediate help and guidance. Many of his replies Barney captured in his book entitled *A Cry for Help*. Another of the driving forces behind all of Barney's intellectual activities was his insistence in pushing the importance of the intellectual autonomy of all the PhD researchers he came across. He empowered me to retire early because working full time in an academic environment was dumbing me

down. he said to me. The path to discovering one's own intellectual autonomy, Barney Glaser explained, comprised of four essential things. Firstly, the important of always maintaining an appropriate moral stance. Secondly, Barney always displayed due humility when presenting his ideas. Thirdly, Barney never suffered fools gladly because all research must be characterized by academic rigor which avoids frippery. Fourthly, perhaps most importantly, he understood that the grounded theory perspective was the vehicle which systematically revealed how to discover our habitual tendencies. In a way it could be said that GT reveals is what we all do without even knowing it. Barney frequently declared that all serious GT scholars should endeavor to be the custodians of legitimate GT and not be seduced by the various attempts to remodel GT.

The GT community should be wary of betraying his legacy. The continuance of Sociology Press is a vital importance in maintaining his legacy. The strongest memories I do have about Barney is that I was so privileged to have been in his presence. His lasting legacy will his relentless pursuit of understanding the human condition in such a way that we also might be to share his insights.

About the Author

Andy has a PhD from Glasgow University in Scotland and an MBA from Aston University in England. The first half of his working life was in managerial positions in international service companies based in Europe and the US. He has had a close working relationship with Barney for the last 30 years. In the second half of his working life, as an academic, he has delivered GT research seminars and supervised PhDs all using the GT method in the US, Europe, Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Australia. He has held academic positions in the UK, Sweden, Denmark, Finland. He is currently an external academic auditor for the EU Legitimation of Newness and its impact on EU agenda for change [LNETN] project. He is the joint author of a new title to be published by Macmillan in winter 2023 called The Art of Theory Building".

Building a Learning Community: The GT Troubleshooting Seminar[1]

Judith Holton

Abstract

This paper explores the evolution of Barney Glaser's troubleshooting seminar approach to which I add my own experiences as both a participant and facilitator of several similar seminars. The paper begins by situating the seminar approach in Glaser's early teaching experiences from which his pedagogy would develop. After recounting my own introduction to GT seminars, I then explore their design, structure, and process. I conclude the paper by offering some advice to those who must learn GT on their own.

Introduction

Barney Glaser has referred to learning grounded theory as "development driven" (Glaser, 1998, pp. 56–60); a "delayed action learning process" (1978, p. 6, 1998, p. 220, 2001, p. 1, 2003, p. 78) where the experiential is essential to truly understanding and effecting the methodology. Having worked for several years with graduate students at University of California San Francisco (UCSF), he recognized the limitations of *Discovery* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as a methodological guide. Indeed, this was a primary motivation for his authoring of *Theoretical Sensitivity* (Glaser, 1978), in which he offers guidance in applying the "full package" of classic grounded theory methodology. The guidance offered was grounded in his years of teaching at UCSF, from which he concluded that learning together in a seminar format was the optimum way of teaching and learning grounded theory.

 Glaser's early seminars at UCSF adopted what he called a "revolving collaboration" model with "committed full time participants" (Glaser, 1978, p. 33). The intention was to encourage openness to ideas, to "de-contain" (p.34) participants' preconceptions and often strongly defended perspectives, replacing defensiveness with "the right to be wrong" (p. 34), all in aid of advancing the conceptual analysis of the data as presented. Kathy Charmaz was one of Glaser's students at UCSF. She described Glaser's approach as unconventional at a time when the typical graduate seminar was focused on exploring and critiquing extant literature. She suggested, "…Barney's innovative method of engaging students in theory construction in class sessions turned the conventional sociology graduate seminar inside out and, simultaneously, encouraged students' analytic thinking" (Charmaz, 2011, p. 181). Over the years, Glaser continued to employ a seminar approach in his

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teaching and mentoring of grounded theory. While the intention and focus of his seminars remained consistent, the structure changed to what Gynnild (2011) describes as a "fly-in, fly-out" (p. 38) intensive three-day format that enabled students from all corners of the globe to attend. Glaser would later extend the reach of his work by effectively embracing both virtual technologies and a growing cadre of experienced classic grounded theorists whom he had mentored through earlier seminars as aids in overcoming the 'minus mentoring' challenge (Glaser, 1998), a term Glaser had used to describe those students who do not have access to local expertise in grounded theory, whether through supervisors or collegial networks.

Finding Community

My own experience of Glaser's troubleshooting seminars began in 2003. Like many new to GT, I had encountered confusion in working my way through the various GT perspectives offered in texts and journal papers. The more I read, the more confusing I found the advice being offered. My wish was to do GT as it was originally presented in *Discovery* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I had tried using strategies and advice offered in Strauss and Corbin's (1990) text, but I found the advice took me through repetitive cycles of analysis that resulted in what seemed to me to be rather predictable descriptive outcomes. Where was the creativity that *Discovery* has promised? Where were the eureka insights (Glaser, 1978)?

An internet search in March 2003 led me to Sociology Press and the Grounded Theory Institute. Glaser's several books pointed me in the right direction, but it was the notice of face-to-face seminars with Glaser that truly excited my learning. The April 2003 seminar in London was already fully subscribed but I was advised to keep watching the website for future seminars. What truly amazed me, however, was that Barney Glaser emailed me to ask about my research! Thus began a most memorable mentoring relationship; further solidified when I was able to attend a GT seminar in Malmo, Sweden, in September 2003. The seminar experience was exhilarating. To begin with, here was the man himself! The symbiosis between Glaser as author and Glaser as seminar leader was manifest in his tone, his theoretical sensitivity evidenced in his ability to conceptualize data from whatever source, and his passion for just doing it!

The composition of the seminar was, however, unexpected. As participants introduced themselves, the range of disciplines around the table was impressive if somewhat intimidating. I was a PhD student in management. What did I have in common with these students of medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, education, social work? Would I be able to understand their research? Would they understand mine? Was this seminar going to help me unravel my confusion? As the first day progressed, I found myself engrossed in the troubleshooting process regardless of the study focus. It was the data and its conceptualization that focused our attention. Following that first seminar, I progressed my PhD study by attending additional seminars in New York, London, Mill Valley, and Stockholm. With each seminar, not only did my own research progress but I continued to develop my understanding of the GT process through participating in the troubleshooting of over 50 other GT studies in progress. My initial hesitation regarding the disciplinary range of seminar participants had been replaced with enthusiasm for discovering concepts and theories in any data and for seeing how GT can be applied to all kinds of data.

Through the seminars, I also developed collaborative relationships with fellow grounded theorists from around the globe; a network of connections that continues to inform my research and understanding of GT. This fluctuating support network is a living example of my grounded theory of rehumanizing knowledge work (Holton, 2006, 2007). Indeed, seminar attendance certainly rehumanized the PhD trajectory for many of those who attended! In 2006, I began to offer my own seminars; many in collaboration with my GT colleagues. These seminars have been offered in Canada, the USA, the UK, Hong Kong, Sweden, and France. Through seminars, my editorship of *The Grounded Theory Review* (2004–2011) and email connections facilitated via the Grounded Theory Institute, I have also served as a mentor to many novice grounded theorists, all of whom have offered me additional experience as a teacher of the methodology.

Original Design of the Troubleshooting Seminar

Glaser recognized early on the importance of appropriate methodological training. *Theoretical Sensitivity* (Glaser, 1978) was written based on his experiences in developing and leading seminars with graduate students at UCSF as a means of accelerating the learning process. He recognized that students could 'stagnate' if they focused exclusively on their own study; that there was much to be said for breaking up attention to their own data and flexing their conceptualization skills on data from the studies of other students, by hearing what others saw in the data and by working to 'one up' each other's conceptual level. In his seminars, students shared challenges that they were encountering and problem-solved together in a mutually supportive learning exchange. Gynnild (2011) relates Glaser's seminar approach to Carl Rogers' person-centred theory (Rogers, 1969) wherein significant learning is fostered in environments of minimal threat and maximal differentiated perceptions. She suggests, "… both Glaser and Rogers are concerned with opening up to, and theorizing from, experience … [t]he strength in both approaches lies in the focus on presence and relational qualities in a learning situation, and the supervisor or facilitator's function as a role model [offering] genuineness … non-possessive caring … empathetic understanding" (Gynnild, 2011, pp. 46–47). The collaborative learning model helped to overcome the sense of isolation that many graduate students experience as they progress their work. Indeed, Glaser (1996) did intend the seminars as mutual support:

> These seminars were a support group encouraging theoretical sampling in different directions, looking at different slices of data, and a constant source of 'running by' their latest ideas. These seminars did away with the 'put downs' of normal discourse with many colleagues, and the energy draining nature of colleagues who just listen and say little more than an 'OK' for quick closure, instead of fiery feedback which keeps the researcher active, thinking and generating. In short, it is important to have this positive discussion if available, but just as important not to talk to the wrong people and give away the energy for putting down in writing what was just said. (p. xiii)

Structure and Pedagogy

Glaser (1998) explains that the seminar structure he used at UCSF extended over a semester or two, with four to eight students working on a grounded theory for journal publication. Students would meet weekly for three of the four weeks per month, with the fourth week open to provide a necessary break and allow the various works in progress to

'cook'. Meeting weekly on the other three weeks per month was necessary to sustain momentum. He explains that everyone worked on everyone's study in progress. As such, "each participant will end up doing some measure of 4 to 8 studies" (p. 218).

The work of the seminar was divided into four positions: a presenter, two note takers (one substantive-focused and one methodology-focused), with the remaining participants as analysts. "No teachers are needed as people help each other, but a mentor is always helpful … no lectures of more than a few minutes, just lots of discussion" (p. 219). The first session was devoted to coding and memoing an "intuitive sampling" (p. 226) of field notes (10 to 15 pages) from across a participant's data. The sampling would not be taken from one interview transcript, or one long field note but would be "a sampling of many in order to get the patterns over many incidents" (p. 226). Glaser explained, "One goal of the first session is to firm up a choice for core category as best as possible to use as selective coding for session two" (p. 227). This second session would then be devoted to coding and memoing a second "intuitive sample" of field notes that appear to relate to the selected core category, the goal here being to "sufficiently confirm the core category by its relations to other categories and to write many memos on these categories, other properties, and their relationships" (p. 227). During the third session, the group worked on hand sorting all the memos that had been written by the researcher and other group members to "try to firm up an overall emergent integration of the memos into a beginning theory" (p. 227). The researcher then took this 'sort' home and continued to sort and prepare a working paper as a first draft. The fourth session was devoted to reworking and editing the full draft in anticipation of its submission for journal publication.

Of course, these sessions were spread over several months in tandem with the studies of the other participants. Overall, the process took months, thus facilitating GT's delayed action learning curve. Participation was limited to those who were engaged in a GT study and seeking to publish their work.

> The general stance of the seminar is to leave citizen type issues outside the door and become objective analysts, no matter where it takes them. … The right to be wrong is vital since wrong tracks lead to right ways. The objective is to de-contain oneself which being correct inhibits … there is no need to defend. They can one-up each other conceptually, with no fear of implicitly putting each other down, since the job of all is to raise the conceptual level of the analysis. … Fracturing [the data] should be done with no fear of hurting or violating the person who might cherish the story because of collecting it or for other personal reasons. (Glaser, 1978, p. 34)

No 'auditors' or 'observers' were allowed as Glaser felt they constrained the robust engagement of those with a firm stake in the seminar outcome (Glaser, 1978, p. 33). Also important was the rule of no late entries into the group. Glaser believed that unless they were there from the outset, "they would never be able to experientially catch up to the assumptive buildup to which the seminar tacitly refers as they analyse each others [sic] data" (p. 33).

From the mid-1990s, and for over twenty years, Glaser regularly offered GT troubleshooting seminars in both Europe and America. While his seminars at UCSF had run over the course of a full semester or two, for these later seminars, he devised a condensed three-day troubleshooting approach which continued the basic structure of collaborative

support in service to conceptual emergence but in a more intensive learning climate. Each seminar was fully subscribed with PhD students at various stages of the GT process, and generally from all corners of the globe. Participants would "worry whether or not they can truly accomplish a GT dissertation. They [we]re highly motivated to find answers to their GT questions" (Glaser & Holton, 2007, p. vii). Many came seeking to push past a specific stumbling block to advance their theorizing; others came full of confusion as to how to sort through the various approaches labelled GT in the literature. The range of issues and levels of expertise present at each seminar may have created some initial confusion for the first-time attendee – much as I experienced at my first seminar in 2003 – but the relaxed and open atmosphere soon stimulated engagement and accelerated learning for all: "…a few days of intense coding of several people's data goes a long way in teaching coding to all seminar students" (Glaser, 2011, p. 46).

Designing a time-condensed seminar, however, posed a dilemma for Glaser in that learning the basics of GT usually takes about eighteen months of intensive work (Glaser, 1998), given the delayed action learning nature of the methodology. Here both the atmosphere of collaborative support and the temperament of the seminar leader are essential. Gynnild (2011) explored the importance of the atmosphere that Glaser intentionally promoted at the outset of each seminar as essential to facilitating openness to learning and to discovery. She describes it as "a holistic, experiential, exploratory, and yet grounded mentoring approach" (p. 32) and a "…safe psychological space" (p. 37) that facilitates "[a] process of building trust through a feeling of authentic communication" (p. 33), whereby "[i]mplicitly, properties of outspoken curiosity and active problem-solving are encouraged" (p. 34). She quotes from Glaser's opening remarks at a GT seminar:

> We're going to do perspectives on perspectives. People will see data and I'll expect you all to chime in with a potential concept, for the data. I want you to start getting abstract. So, leave the data and get on a conceptual level which is abstract of time, place, and people, and start talking about the general patterns of life. The one thing I can't stand is tiny topics. (pp. 42–43)

Glaser would begin each seminar with an opening talk, emphasizing its pedagogy, grounded in the principles of:

Cognitive stripping as mindset disruption to dislodge preconceptions and enable emergence (i.e., realization). At seminars, participants "can take conceptual flyers (ideational chances) with no fear of being wrong as they try to fit concepts to data or generate theoretical memos" (Glaser, 1978, p. 34).

Seed planting for later emergent realization as participants offer perspectives on a perspective often dislodging the researcher's assumptions about what is in the data and thereby raising the potential for originality in emergent grounded theories.

Preconscious processing whereby Glaser emphasized the importance of allowing ideas to 'cook' as conscious deliberations are too slow to make important conceptual leaps. Preconscious processing is much faster in processing the input from coding and analyzing of data, but it produces 'conscious confusion'; hence, mindset disruption and potential regression. The grounded theorist must be able to tolerate this cognitive stripping to allow the creative intuition of realization to emerge – those eureka moments.

Realization occasionally occurs during the seminar itself but more likely is a delayed action phenomenon, a consequence of the participant's openness to discovery, aided by the seminar's cognitive stripping and seed planting. Realization cannot be pressured by external deadlines. The analyst must develop a pacing and cycling pattern that keeps the work moving but that alternates conscious periods of analysis and writing with periods of respite and relaxation to support preconscious processing. This cycling pattern begins during the seminar as participants feel free to alternate between active and vocal engagement in the troubleshooting of others' work with periods of reflective silence.

The Troubleshooting Process

At each seminar, one individual – usually a returning attendee – offered to take notes for the session so that the remaining participants could fully engage in thinking and talking without the worry of capturing extensive notes. As each person presented their data or memos, the rest of the group would think, analyse, and suggest what concepts or patterns they were seeing and gradually they would begin to recognize methodologically what is going on as the analysis proceeded.

Day 1 of the three-day intensive seminar began with an opening 'lecture' intended to set the atmosphere, where participants were asked to set aside emotions and anxieties around their participation and to expect and indeed embrace confusion as a necessary step to discovering theory from data. The seminar proceeded with each participant briefly introducing themselves, stating their name, affiliation and one or two sentences about their study. Doing so broke the tension as everyone spoke and had an idea about who else was attending. Participants are usually awed by the geographic scope and disciplinary range represented around the table; this was a new experience as most are accustomed to disciplinary-specific seminars.

Following the round of introductions, a participant was invited to present their study, state where they were in the GT process and what they would like help with from the seminar. The order of presentations was important to give participants a sense of where they 'sat' in relation to others' studies and problems, offering both confirmation that others might be facing problems like theirs and reassurance that others had been able to successfully resolve similar issues and progress their studies. In listening to others presenting their challenges, everyone learned by actively engaging in the troubleshooting discussions and suggestions. Presentations and troubleshooting continued throughout the day. A leisurely lunch break offered another opportunity for networking among participants, thus further building a sense of collaborative support that often carried forward into an evening of informal dining and sharing of experiences.

Day 2 began with a short debrief of the first day, offering an opportunity for participants to raise any thoughts or questions that may have emerged overnight. The remainder of the day was devoted to troubleshooting. A celebratory dinner and presentation of certificates often capped the second day. The agenda for Day 3 was more relaxed and informal. For those who wished to explore what had emerged for them over the course of the two days and what to do next, there was an opportunity to sign up for one-on-one chats with Glaser. This also enabled some participants to be more open and candid about issues with their study than they may have felt comfortable doing in the full seminar. The day often included an informal Q&A session that would run in parallel with the one-on-

one sessions. Here, more experienced grounded theorists offered responses to questions from novices seeking to resolve concerns or misunderstandings that may not have been fully addressed in the first two days. The more relaxed and intimate approach on Day 3 also responded to a range of learning dispositions ensuring that those who were more reserved still have an opportunity to air their questions and concerns. Apart from this basic structure, the seminars remained largely emergent, offering help just where each individual participant was in the process and what they were having difficulty with. "This approach brings the workshop right to the edge of current problems of participants in the workshop which is their most meaningful next increment of learning. Its details are planned on the spot according to the ability level of participants as they emerge" (Glaser, 1998, p. 231).

While the format of the seminars had evolved, Glaser's basic rules of engagement hadn't. In *Theoretical Sensitivity,* Glaser (1978), had set out the following conditions for participation: no sharing of experiences – stick to the data; no logical elaboration – stick to the data; no need for apologies or preambles before offering ideas; interrupting is okay if it is in service to generating ideas; and humility not ego, cooperation not competition (p. 34). The seminar process placed no pressure on any participant to compete in demonstrating their expertise, but rather to be open to learning and to accepting suggestions and advice. This "deliberate detachment of personal, emotional, political as well as other presuppositions in the situation … implies training in non-judgmental attitudes" (Gynnild, 2011, p. 43) – a skill that can challenge those who have been trained to know.

To balance the potential regression that first-time attendees might experience, Glaser would make skilful use of humour and playfulness to encourage participants to detach in service to their learning. Gynnild (2011) sees additional value in the role of humour: "Humour helps keep energy up, and it is a generous way of telling people to keep on track. Moreover, playfulness helps create psychological space for exploration and for breaking out within a group … fosters risk-taking … might take the edge off otherwise embarrassing situations" (p. 44). While the first-time attendee might leave feeling somewhat overwhelmed and even deflated, Glaser's anthem to trust in emergence would often provide the longed-for reward: "After my seminar I felt a bit down, everybody seemed to have found the core category after a real experience of epiphany … Barney told me to go back to my data because he suggested I was forcing, and this is what I did. I went home and restarted the analysis from zero … there it was – my wonderful core category." (Email from PhD Student, March 14, 2016)

Gynnild (2011) suggests that atmosphering fosters psychosocial properties of "authentic presence, explicitness, full acceptance, and playfulness" (p. 34) and emphasizes that it is "… a conscious teaching act aimed at escalating participants' learning curve as much as possible within the given time frame [and] … where the structuring of seminars conditions [both] the emergent individual and collective learning processes" (p. 31). She conceptualizes the atmosphering process around five distinct framing principles:

Across-ism whereby the mix of research disciplines, substantive areas, and GT skill levels "takes the edge off unproductive competition between participants in favour of productive, collaborative sharing" (p. 38),

Fly-in, fly-out as a temporary physical relocation and decontextualization whereby "participants literally must let go of their everyday life routines and environment … going global … accelerates the process of opening up for new discoveries" (pp. 38–39),

Sense orchestrating through informality to reduce anxiety and "purposive ambiance" (p. 39) through careful selection of seminar locations (i.e., inspiring global settings) and facilities that excite and inspire through an "aura of distinction" (p. 39). No dreary university classrooms!

Dressing down as Glaser himself would invariably do in blue jeans and sweaters – no suits or tweedy jackets! Dressing down is a sociological leveller "signal[ling] a peer-to-peer approach" (p. 40) intended to further reduce performance anxiety.

Group individualism whereby seminars were designed to accommodate binary needs for both plenary and individual sessions, supporting the idea of "multiple experientiality" (p. 40) as participants were offered an intensive burst of learning by "conceptualizing across disciplines and stages of theory development" (p. 40).

The overall aim was to set the stage for collaborative support, both during the intensive engagement of the three-day seminar and potentially extending this support in follow-up interactions with seminar leaders as well as among participants themselves: "…a future set of intimate, collaborative colleagues in research … with a depth of understanding of what the analyst is doing in generating grounded theory. … Eventually such collaboration becomes an internal dialogue, and the participant is trained to go it alone" (Gynnild, 2011, pp. 34–35). The seminar process "…empowers its participants by building confidence in doing grounded theory … experientially grounding the method … networking … planting seeds for further strategies and methods … clarifying the method jargon … ok-ing the tolerance for confusion and regression" (Glaser, 1998, p. 232).

The expectations were clear and the learning intense, as one first-time attendee confessed: "I'm listening so hard that I'm afraid others can hear it" (p. 42). The learning value was also clear. Seminar participation stimulated energy and a desire to share. Many participants returned a second, even third time for more troubleshooting participation as their dissertation research advanced. Having achieved the PhD, some returned to share their success and continue their learning through troubleshooting new issues all the while experiencing again the mutual support and stimulating learning exchanges. After attending several seminars, some would become 'local experts' at their home universities, mentoring other students or offering their own seminars (Glaser & Holton, 2007, p. viii). As one seasoned seminar attendee commented: "People bring different backgrounds and different experiences with theory and research. But for the two to three days [of the seminar] I always got a sense of renewal with my work" (personal communication, August 10, 2015).

Mentoring for Solo Learning

Barney Glaser's troubleshooting seminar approach had proven an effective way of fostering researcher autonomy. For many PhD students, periodic participation in GT troubleshooting seminars over the course of their research trajectory provided important methodological clarification, motivational inspiration, and sufficient mentoring support to sustain energy and move their work ahead.

However, despite the availability of both virtual and face to face GT seminars offered by experienced grounded theorists who were mentored by Barney Glaser[2], many who wish to learn how to do GT have to do so without experienced guidance – i.e., they will be minus-mentored (Stern, 1994) "…in the sense that their professors do not know the method or ways of teaching it" (Gynnild & Martin, 2011, p. 1). Morse (1997) emphasizes the experiential importance of mentorship by likening the attempt to learn a methodology from reading methodological texts to learning to drive by reading a manual about driving. She asserts: "The fastest way, the most efficient way, and the most painless way is to find a mentor, even if distant" (p. 182). Gynnild and Martin (2011) assert that: "Mentoring not only concerns methodological support; it also socializes and informs new researchers into a community of scholars" (p. 4); that the "…psychosocial aspects of mentoring tend to be just as important as the strictly skill-dependent aspects" (p. 5).

While it is possible to develop the necessary skill in doing GT while minus-mentored, Glaser (1998) cautioned that the minus-mentored researcher "…should not expect conscious results too fast … [should] always take respites from coding and memoing to let the patterns germinate in the preconscious, and then try days later to one-up oneself conceptually … should try and trigger memos and codes by writing a lot. Once it is preconsciously processed, writing allows the conceptual material to pour out" (p. 217). Curbing anxiety and the pressure to know in advance is a necessary part of respecting the integral role in GT of preconscious cognitive processing, with its inherent confusion in service to emergent theorizing. Theoretical pacing is an integral aspect of GT's iterative nature. It is essential to the creative nurturing of ideas into conscious realization:

> [B]uilt into each stage of the method are techniques which ensure some level of creativity … memos allow creative theoretical forays with the data and concepts; sorting forces creative integration of the theory; reworking of initial drafts can be highly creative as the theoretical perspective becomes sharpened; and the inductive logic leans heavily on the analyst's creative boost, which comes from concepts and ideas emerging from the data … creativity is not the gift of some privileged person, rather, it is a matter of developing one's personal recipe for pacing himself through the grounded theory process … creativity can both be learned and turned on when desired. (Glaser, 1978, pp. 20–22)

Each grounded theorist must find his or her own pacing rhythm, fitting it into individual life patterns by cycling periods of intense engagement with data analysis, memoing, sorting and writing with respites for relaxation, other work, and professional commitments as well as time with family and friends. Doing so allows ideas to grow with the data and the theorist's increasing theoretical sensitivity. Glaser (2001) quotes one student's experience of pacing:

> There were periods of intensity interspersed with respites designed to allow me to step back from the all-encompassing effects of being in the thick of the action. The interstices indicated are important. Their function is to enable the researcher to fragment the data, giving some distance in order to allow a more conceptual view to

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[2] See Grounded Theory Online https://www.groundedtheoryonline.com

> prevail. These are breathing spaces that prevent the researcher from suffocating in the intoxicating atmosphere surround[ing] captivating data. (p. 119)

The cycling pattern becomes a personal pacing recipe that aligns naturally with the theorist's temperament, commitments and obligations and keeps the theorist energized and the ideas emerging through to the writing-up stage. However, the pacing pattern may differ from one research project to another. Over time, a grounded theorist may develop several different pacing patterns as they cycle through various GT studies adapting different patterns to meet varying conditions and commitments.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have offered some background on the evolution of Barney Glaser's approach to teaching and learning GT via his famous troubleshooting seminars, elaborating on Glaser's pedagogy, seminar design and the troubleshooting process. I have drawn upon my own experience of the GT learning curve as well as my participation in and leadership of several GT troubleshooting seminars and of mentoring several PhD students to the successful completion of their degree requirements. I have as well drawn upon the experience and advice of others who have also travelled this path, including, of course, the man who pioneered this learning journey. While each GT learning journey is unique and has its own delayed action learning curve, it is hoped that the ideas set forth in this paper will offer some encouragement and support to those who journey the path of GT methodology.

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Judith A. Holton is Associate Professor Emerita at Mount Allison University, Canada. Judith completed her PhD in Management Studies at the University of Northampton, UK. Her research interests include grounded theory research methodology, leadership and management of complex systems, and learning and innovation in knowledge work. She is a Fellow of the Grounded Theory Institute, former Editor of *The Grounded Theory Review,* and was a frequent collaborator and co-author with Barney Glaser. Judith has published in several academic journals including *Management Learning, Organizational Research Methods*, *Journal of Organizational Change Management,* and *The Grounded Theory Review.* She is co-author with Isabelle Walsh of *Classic Grounded Theory: Applications with Qualitative and Quantitative Data* (Sage, 2017) and with Isabelle Walsh and Gaetan Mourmant of *Conducting Classic Grounded Theory for Business and Management Students* (Sage, 2019). She is also a contributor to *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory* (2007)*, The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods* (2018) and *The Sage Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory* (2019). Her paper, "What grounded theory is . . . A critically reflective conversation among scholars", co-authored with Isabelle Walsh, Lotte Bailyn, Walter Fernandez, Natalia Levina and Barney Glaser, won the Academy of Management Research Methods Division Best Paper Award in 2015.

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Reflections on the first Grounded Theory Seminar: A tribute to Dr. Barney, G. Glaser

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I first met Dr. Barney Glaser in April 2002 in Paris, France the evening before the first CGT seminar. At that preliminary gathering I met Dr. Barry Gibson for the first time, who knew Barney. Amongst the PhD students I met was Vivian Martin and Anna Sandgren and we are still in contact. Given the high cost of hotels in Paris, I had to stay some distance from where the seminar was being held. I underestimated the time of getting to the Holiday Inn (the venue) and missed the beginning of the seminar. As a result, I missed Barney's introduction and was unaware of the format of the seminar. He did not do then what he did in future seminars and that is what he refers to as atmosphering, which sets the stage for conceptual discovery by creating a safe environment for participants to learn and have their issues dealt with in a non-threatening way (Gynnild 2011). This became an integral part of all seminars and I use it just the same in seminars that I have been involved in to set the tone. Almost as soon as I sat down, Barney turned to me and asked me to present where I was up to in my study and what I needed help with. Without having any idea what he was looking for, I presented what I had ready. It was enough to get me the help that I needed. He gave me very positive feedback and helpful tips. This is a defining feature of the seminars, where the aim is to get students to what Barney often referred to as the next level in their study. I learned a lot from that seminar because, like so many students, I was a minus mentoree at the time. I was at the beginning of my second year of a PhD 3-year programme and about to collect data. Over the course of the two days of the seminar, Barney gave a general introduction to classic grounded theory (GT) and what I learned from this seminar is outlined below.

Everything is organised in the social world—even disorganisation. This implies systems of organisation, be they macro or micro. GT is a methodology for discovering these systems. Later, Barney was to write briefly about this when he maintained that there is a social reality and that the goal of GT is to enable the natural social organisation of substantive life to emerge (Glaser 1998). This is entirely consistent with the nature of social reality in social constructionism as discussed by Berger and Luckmann (1966) that everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by people and subjectively meaningful to them. At the seminar Barney said that if anything, GT is based on structural realism, but he did not expand on this. However, this is not to be confused with the view of reality evident within the positivist tradition.

In preparation for the seminar, Barney asked us to think about what we needed help with. For example, if that was coding then bring some data for everyone to code.

From the beginning, Barney encouraged us to drop what he termed as citizenship. Of course, this was a new concept to us as were many of the things that he subsequently outlined and discussed. This meant that we were to suspend who we were socially, such as father, friend, nurse, and become analysists for the duration of the seminar. This is very much what Helen Scott and I have continued to emphasise in our seminars to discourage students from analysing data from their own professional perspective, that is, to use concepts emerging from the data and not the received concepts of their profession. It means to code data as an analysist/researcher and not as a nurse, sociologist, psychologist, to name but a few. It is surprisingly effective. Disciplinary interpretations as to what a methodology is or should be, has limited understanding of GT and has contributed to thinking of it as another qualitative method rather than one that stands alone (Glaser 1998; McCallin et al2011). Always in the seminar, Barney emphasised its very important properties such as empowerment, confidence building, and seed planting. He emphasised the development of autonomy both in his seminars and in his writing. He felt that GT gave students and researchers the autonomy to generate their own concepts and theories and not to be influenced by whom he termed theoretical capitalists (Glaser 1998). This is consistent with the PhD and Doctorate programmes, whose main aim to develop and train someone who can become an independent researcher. This is something that some supervisors of doctorate and PhD students do not encourage or seek to develop (Andrews et al 2017). The advice of Guthrie and Lowe (2011) is worth considering when it comes to navigating the PhD process using GT, including the selection of supervisors who will move the GT process forward and a mutual understanding of the purpose of completing a research degree.

Barney also outlined the functions of the seminar. These include to build out confidence in using GT and become more autonomous. He always wanted students to become empowered and to assume autonomy. Over the course of the two days his aim was to inspire us and to give us the help that we needed. He wanted to "jargon us out" that is, to steep us in the language of GT. As he maintains in his writings (Glaser 1978; 1992) he says that learning GT is a delayed action curve, that is, it takes time to understand what is being said, which is why he wanted to engage in "seed planting." He also said that GT is learned through doing (Glaser 1978; 1998). Barney always used humour to keep the atmosphere light. A favourite of his was what he referred to as reverse humour; where something is so obvious that you say the opposite.

He emphasised time and again that conceptualisation is the goal and not description. In what was to become a hallmark of the seminars, Barney encouraged us to interrupt each other, but courteously, if we were describing in the interests of talking and thinking in concepts; learning how to conceptualise rather than describe. Throughout the seminar he always gave examples of concepts. One of his favourites was "vaguing out," a concept that came from a study of hippies in Haight Ashbury, San Francisco during the '60s. The researcher had intended to study how these people survived day to day with little or no money, but they would not talk to him about that because they were afraid of being found and returned home. It is a great concept and I use it all the time in seminars as an example as to how a concept is independent of time, place and people. Those such as politicians, engage in this behaviour all the time if they do not want to answer a direct question. Particularly in this first seminar, I remember that thinking about concepts as independent of time, place, and people in this way was a breakthrough moment. I had finally realised what this means. More recently in a review of "Awareness of Dying" theory, Andrews and Nathaniel (2015) found it to be still

relevant today as it was fifty years ago. This a great example of a theory being independent of time, place, and people. It can be used today for example, if a doctor contemplates disclosure of terminality to a patient, by using awareness theory, he may anticipate a very wide range of plausibly expected changes and consequences for himself, patient, family member, and nurses. He may judge how far and in what direction the patient's responses may go and how to deal with these responses (Glaser, 2021).

Barney continued by outlining and explaining some of the key properties of GT. He taught us to look for patterns, behaviours that are repeated over and over again; that there is no such thing as missing something because if it is there, then we will see it again. If just one person makes an unusual response, then just ignore it unless it becomes a pattern. He reminded us that an incident illustrates an indicator. He cautioned us that there is a lot of performance anxiety in doing GT. This is borne out in our own seminars and with my PhD students who worry about doing it right. This is especially so when it comes to data analysis and memos. Students constantly worry about how to become more conceptual. Part of the role of the GT seminar is to deal in a practical way with these anxieties and worries. Students are concerned if they digitally record interviews, use interview guides and if they wrote a literature review. I remind them as to why Barney cautions against an initial literature review or using interview guides. This is to ensure that they stay open; open to what is going on in a substantive area and to minimise preconceptions. Barney always said that students should do whatever it takes to conform to the requirements of the PhD and if that includes writing a literature review, then do so. This could be related to the substantive area. For example, in my own PhD I researched how nurses detect and report physiological deterioration in medical and surgical patients. I was required to do a literature review and wrote it in the substantive area of physiological deterioration in general and not how nurses detected it and the difficulties they had in getting patients the help that they needed (Andrews and Waterman 2007). This became a background chapter in the final thesis, something I recommend to my students and those attending seminars if this is a requirement.

He also reminded us that a GT is what participants are doing but they may not be aware of it. They may know the indicators of their behaviour but have not named the concept. Also, because researchers see many indicators and patterns of behaviour, they are in a position to conceptualise those patterns. Participants have multiple perspectives, and the GT researcher raises these to the to the abstract level of conceptualisation (Glaser, 2003). This is not to be confused with privileging the voice of researchers over that of participants or as Bryant and Charmaz (2010, p35) term it, truth claims privileging researchers' knowledge over research participants. In later seminars, Barney warned us against studying what he called tiny topics. For example, becoming a nurse in 1966 could be "becoming a professional" or just plain "becoming." GT is a full methodological package that enables researchers and students to go from "knowing nothing" to an "expert." It is not defined by the data it uses but is a general methodology.

An integral part of the seminar experience was always the one-to-one meeting with Barney, where he set aside time to meet individually with students. This was and continues to be valuable, where the focus is on the individual without the presence of other students. Barney always provided valuable insights into individual studies as well as clarifying anything that needed clarification. His aim was to ensure that students left

the meeting with their anxieties quietened. An anecdote: it was lunch time and I was scheduled to meet Barney shortly before lunch for a one-to-one. He suggested that if we have lunch together, I could have double the time. At the end of lunch at one of the local cafes, Barney just left, forgetting to pay for his lunch. I paid for the two of us. Luckily, we both ate very modestly!

Dr. Helen Scott and I continue to do seminars following the template that we inherited from Barney, because we have found it to be an excellent learning and teaching technique. He was always very inclusive and in later years he accepted students doing constructivist GT. This worked very well despite the differences between the two. We outline similarities and differences, but in a very constructive way and for the purpose of teaching. While we emphasise classic GT and structure "athmosphering" around this, the approach works very well as students do not feel that they are being criticised. This approach is mirrored in a research project that I was involved in, where researchers used different types of GT to collect and code qualitative data in the form of interviews (Gallagher et al 2015). In this study the main versions of GT were used (Classic, Constructivist, and Straussian). It worked because of mutual respect and the fact that the project was coordinated by one person. Coding was done by individual researchers but with an overview by me, using classic GT. It should not have worked but it did.

Helen and I have conducted several seminars online because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We had concerns whether something so interactive would work in such an environment, but it did. We thought that "atmosphering" relied on people to be physically present in order to be effective. However, it worked, and we managed to create a safe environment where students were able to share their research and worries with us. The seminar itself transfers very well to the online format and students seem to get the help they need. We conduct the seminars in exactly the same way as conceived and developed by Barney. Like him, we say that the opening session is not organised so that students can get used to tolerating confusion and organise the talk in their own way. We remind them that they may well leave the seminar confused, but that confusion means that they are on the brink of understanding. We also emphasise precognition, the idea that it takes time for things to settle in the mind and for things to emerge.

In conclusion, Barney originated a very effective way of teaching GT in the form of a seminar. He ensured that GT as originated was taught to the next generation of PhD students and researchers. He created a safe environment in which students felt that they were able to present their anxieties and worries about their research and about applying the methodology. He was always very generous with his time and resources. He gave away books to those who could not afford them. He facilitated the attendance of students who had little or no resources to draw on. He was always supportive and influenced countless of students and their subsequent careers. He had a big influence on me and taught me about GT. Through his encouragement I was successfully awarded the PhD and had a very successful lecturing and research career in University College Cork, Ireland as a result. I am sure that the same can be said of countless others. In more recent years other courses in GT as originated have been developed including Grounded Theory Online, the Institute for Research and Theory Methodology, and in an attempt to reconcile differences within the GT community, the International Grounded Theory Alliance. It is an honour and a privilege to continue his legacy. Rest assured Barney, your work continues.

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Grounded Theory Has the Power to Change Lives:
A Tribute to Barney Glaser

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD

In November 2021, I had a very long late-night phone conversation with 91-year-old Barney Glaser. His eyes were failing and his body was weak, but his mind was sharp and clear. I could hear his wife, Carolyn's, voice in the background as our conversation waxed and waned. He told me about the next book he was planning to write—a theory on aging. He was keen to talk about grounded theory. As we ruminated, he mentioned some of his favorite theories. He remembered the names of the theories, their core categories, and the theorists—most of whom he had mentored. He reminisced about PhD students who had attended his troubleshooting seminars and about grounded theory colleagues we both knew. In his presence, I felt as if I were still his student. As our conversation was ending, he talked about all the people who had contacted him with letters, phone calls, and emails over the years. He asked, "You know what the concept is, don't you?" I was silent. "Grounded theory changed my life," he said. "They all told me that grounded theory changed their lives." Barney Glaser understood the spread of grounded theory and power of theory to change people's lives.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) changed the research landscape with their seminal work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, the book that first described the grounded theory method and established its rigorous procedures. The method was revolutionary. It was at the forefront of a qualitative research movement in the mid-20th century because it challenged several dogmatic precepts. *Discovery* and Glaser's subsequent works (1978, 1992, 1998, 2007, 2008) defied the inculcated beliefs about research inquiry: (a) that theory and research are separate endeavors, (b) that qualitative research serves primarily as a foundation for quantitative inquiry, (c) that qualitative research lacks rigor, (d) that qualitative methods are biased and unstructured, (e) that data collection and analysis should be separate processes, and (f) that qualitative research could produce only descriptive findings (Charmaz, 2000). As the popularity of grounded theory has spread throughout the world, the flaws in these precepts have been exposed.

In the *Future of Grounded Theory,* reprinted in this issue of *The Grounded Theory Review*, Glaser recognized the magnitude of change grounded theory had on the research world. He reflected on the worldwide spread of the method. Realizing the popularity of grounded theory, Glaser wrote, "Everywhere I travel, people come to my workshops at some expense and some distance to hear me and to ask questions. People compete for my attention. . . . I embody what they embrace—grounded theory."

Aristotle wrote that change requires the existence of a potentiality which can be actualized (350 B.C.E.). Those clamoring for Glaser's attention were bursting with potential.

In *The Future of Grounded Theory,* Glaser listed critical characteristics of a grounded theorist including an ability to conceptualize data, an ability to tolerate confusion, and an ability to tolerate confusion's attendant regressions. Successful grounded theorists have the desire to learn, courage to let go of the familiar, curiosity to understand others, and the patience to allow patterns to emerge—all potentialities waiting to be actualized.

As Glaser predicted, grounded theorists' lives change as they learn and master the method. But even greater change has been effected through application of grounded theories, which teach us about previously unknown psycho-social and social-structural processes. We know so much more about living with illness, being an alcoholic, convincing physicians, succeeding at business, dying in the hospital, and violating moral values. The list goes on and on. What Glaser gave us with the method he and Strauss developed is a way to look at the world and see hidden processes in everyday life. This gift allows us to understand and predict behaviors and change systems to improve lives.

He didn't say it as we talked on the phone that cold winter night, but I'm sure Barney remembered that I was one of those people who said to him, "Grounded theory changed my life." It changed me as a person, it boosted my academic career, it added to the knowledge base of my discipline, and it made me part of a community of scholars. As I remember that lovely late-night phone call, I know that I will be forever grateful to Barney—my teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend.

About the Author

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD, is the Editor of *The Grounded Theory Review*, an open access online journal focusing solely on classic grounded theory. Dr. Nathaniel is Professor Emerita and past department chair at West Virginia University School of Nursing. Mentored by Barney Glaser, Nathaniel continues with grounded theory initiatives. In addition to her grounded theory publications, she co-authored the nursing textbook, *Ethics & Issues in Contemporary Nursing*, which is now approaching its 6th edition. Writing the ethics textbook led to her grounded theory research on moral reckoning, which she continues to pursue along with additional scholarship focusing on the two main foci of classic grounded theory and nursing ethics. She is Fellow of the Grounded Theory Institute, Fellow of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, and Fellow of the West Virginia University Academy of Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Email: anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu

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"Stop story talking! What's the concept?"
In Memoriam of Grounded Theory's Co-Founder, Barney G. Glaser

Astrid Gynnild, PhD, Professor, and Fellow of the Grounded Theory Institute

There are those rare moments in a life that are just meant to be. You might encounter a person, a piece of text or perhaps an idea that hits you in a way that you couldn´t possibly know beforehand. And yet you intuitively know it is a decisive moment. You get a sense of a cutting point, a transition that leads you on to a new path in life. There is a time before and a time after. But there is no way back.

I have lived with grounded theory for two decades. I was lucky to be part of many activities within Barney Glaser´s expanding methodological landscape, and I used to meet him in person several times a year.

In this very moment I can already hear Glaser´s dark, friendly-teasing voice ring in the back of my mind: "Stop story talking! What´s the concept?"

Since Glaser himself often referred to grounded theory as a delayed action phenomenon, I will take this opportunity to put some important concepts on hold for yet a while. I trust in emergence while writing this piece in memoriam of one of the globally most impactful and original sociologists of the two last centuries. Most probably he would qualify for the title unrivalled winner of concept innovation as well; at least the unrivalled contributor of publicly published new concepts over a lifetime. He didn't like to compete. But he liked to empower PhD students, who were in their early careers and preparing for future service to society.

His stated aim in later years was two-fold. First, conceptual theory building grounded in data. Second, using grounded theory to help PhD students achieving their degrees. The discovery of the first goal manifested already in his early thirties (Glaser and Strauss 1965, Glaser and Strauss 1967). Throughout the rest of his life he never gave in or compromised on these original ideas. Not even when he formally left academia and developed a successful business career using GT tools. He only further developed them as he collected more data. His passion was to create, and facilitate for, abstract concept development that could help people improving their lives.

While Glaser ran his businesses and raised three children as a single parent, academic rivals repeatedly set out to belittle the original grounded theory design. Suddenly, the term grounded theory would take on new meanings that he as a founder did not recognize; "grounded theory" was adopted by concept competitors who deliberately started replacing its built-in tenets as a general method with distracting elements from qualitative data analysis.

Glaser stood up for his academic integrity through disputatious writings in books and articles. As always when disagreement is in the air, the international academic crowd

loved the spectacle. The rhetorical wrestles at the time drowned out the fact that grounded theory was already an established method and a methodology solidly grounded in empirical data. His further writings were meant to further explain the method and differentiate it from others. But from then on, it became more crowded in the grounded theory space. Glaser´s grounded theory concept was re-labeled *classic grounded theory* to keep some conceptual order.

Paradoxically enough, or maybe quite logically, Glaser´s most productive academic years started unfolding from the turn of the century on, at a chronological age when most of his peers were retired. When I first met him, he was 72 and stood in a hotel lobby in Covent Garden, London. He was dressed in a yellow college sweater and a pair of blue jeans, ready to walk to a nearby restaurant for the evening meet-and-greet, which always marked the opening of his seminars.

Looking back from a 2022 perspective, I think some of the seminar magic sprang out of all the fun and wholehearted encounters already at the meet-and-greet. Glaser´s very presence released a remarkable, immediate trust and sharing among most participants. We were of different ages, disciplines, nationalities, with differing expectations and at different stages of our PhD trajectories. The only thing we had in common was grounded theory.

The acrossism approach proved to be an extremely productive dimension of Glaser´s seminars. Personally, I had hardly ever met a person who posited such an innovative and humorous arsenal of new words. This man could apparently name whatever patterns of human behavior one might find. He constantly conceptualized. But without being normative, and with a respectful recognition of diversity. In my study of the seminar model, "Atmosphering for conceptual discovery," (Gynnild 2012a) I included an episode with a seatless chair to illustrate Glaser´s use of reversal humor to tone people, as he called it. He could act like an actor on the spot just to get a spontaneous reaction and to bring you slightly out of balance. Situative humor and joyfulness were his smartest weapons to open up the minds of theorizing newbees.

At the social scenes that he enjoyed the most, Barney Glaser was an artist, a linguistic juggler, an inspirator, a confidence builder, a networker and an empowerer. His focus was to bring participants to the conceptual level. He facilitated idea development and autonomous growth, and downsized competition and prejudice. But he could be tough. Often, new participants would hold their breath when Glaser started demonstrating his verbal skills in cutting through story talk. What is the pattern? The core? The dependent variables? In cases when emotions dominated space, he could say "why worry? It´s just data. Do memos and find out what´s the concept. The concept will help you change the situation!" In such situations, his use of playfulness was invaluable.

Barney Glaser´s grounded theory seminars were a hot spot for steep learning curves, conceptual breakthrough moments and tons of chaotic thoughts as there was so much to grasp and think of. Breakthrough moments led to momentary feelings of lightness and a strong sense of joy. In everyday life they are known as eureka moments, or the aha-moment – when you get a glimpse into another world, become aware of something that you had not previously noticed. And you get incredibly curious about what is going to happen next.

The research joy that I got in touch with through Barney Glaser´s works intrigued me. From the first time when I found *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Glaser and Strauss 1967) at the university library, I got this sense of being uplifted. It was as if the text spoke directly to me, and I got this strong feeling of being understood. How did this author, so precisely, manage to explain and put into words the issues that I as a PhD student so desperately grappled with, for instance the experience of data overload, and how to analyze it all? The opening page of his and Strauss´seminal work was the first in a row of GT moments that changed the direction of both my academic career and my everyday life. Getting to know that academic work could be filled with discoveries and pattern naming really triggered my PhD-to-be-curiosity.

But most importantly: I learned that research could be fun! What a profound discovery! Research took on a totally new meaning; it became energizing. It was like going on a drugless trip, which was Glaser´s term for creative processing.

It was indeed a special occasion when Glaser said yes to come from California to Bergen to be an opponent at my viva in 2006. He seldom engaged in structured academic assessments, and this was one of the few times he did travel to Europe for a viva.

His primary interest was as always the fostering of autonomous research originality. So, he started asking about my future growth as an academic. Where did I plan to publish? What would be my next project? How could the theory of journalists´ creative cycling processes be applied? While on stage he demonstrated how moment capturing could be used in practice: "With the PhD you can walk as a theorist among theorists," he said. A typical trait of doing Barney in action. He constantly empowered grounded theorists by pointing out the unique value of their knowledge work.

Glaser was not concerned with formalities or status as such, but with the products of intellectual processes. At the viva he was dressed in a dark suit and a tie, which gave him a new and different kind of authority. In other settings, his dressing down philosophy symbolically visualized equality. Thus, I came to think of sense orchestrating as a premise to open for abstract conceptualization (Gynnild, 2012a). Creating relaxing contexts might be more important for academic growth than we tend to think. Many times, people were afraid to ask him questions, as they were thinking along right-wrong-lines, and whether they were good enough. Glaser immediately arrested their thinking and repeatedly stated that "there is no such thing as a good question. There are only questions. They lead you to new ideas."

By getting to know people´s patterns, Glaser decided whether they would be trustable. When he asked me to become the new editor of the Grounded Theory Review in 2012, after Judith Holton stepped down, he said: "Feel free to do whatever is needed. But remember there is no money in it. It´s all based on volunteering. Grounded theory should only be done for the right reasons. It is very powerful." In the next six years he never intervened in the editorial work or criticized any articles that were published. But he listened. He would always be there if I wanted to ask about something. In return came his famous one-liners, very quickly, or he would suggest a phone call. He slipped key words, concepts, for me to think about. But never readymade solutions. He would respect my autonomy, as I were to respect his when he, only upon request, would come up with a text that could fit the next issue of the Review. As his book production

escalated, he particularly enjoyed offering the first chapter of his next book. I got to know a distinct writing style constantly developing to explicate the dimensions of grounded theory as good as possible. In his perspective, ideas were always ascendant over presentation. Step by step his grounded theory life plan became manifest. "It is the ideas that count," he said.

At one of the New York seminars he once sighed: "I´m not a university, I´m just a guy who tries to teach a simple method over-complexified by QDA people." And at the Stockholm seminar in 2015: "I am the one writing the books sitting in the hills in Mill Valley," he said with a grin. "I am alive and I´m thriving."

Barney Glaser took on an almost impossible job for a one-man-band, even if he worked on an abstract, conceptual level. As we all know, it is not possible to claim copyright to of a concept or an intellectual idea. Once released, concepts are in free flow. What Glaser had hoped for, was that the originality of the grounded theory concept would be respected and not mixed up with qualitative data analysis (QDA). "I don´t care what they do in QDA," he often said, "as long as they don´t call it grounded theory." In fact, Glaser himself referred to copyrights as anti-science blocks. He saw copyright as preventing new ideas. "And you always want as many ideas out as possible," he pointed out at the first grounded theory seminar I attended in London in 2004.

Barney Glaser did not only build theories. He also built houses, physical houses for people to live in. He enjoyed creating frameworks that could be useful for others. Throughout the years, many grounded theorists were invited to his and his wife Carolyn´s wonderful home in the Californian redwoods. It was designed by himself, built of planks and equipped with innumerous steps and floors, surrounded only by the sounds of the wilderness. "I need much alone-time," Glaser shared in a conversation we had (Gynnild 2012b).

From his wooden nest Dr. Glaser initiated the build-up of a global community of grounded theorists that he served for the last twenty years of his life. The new ideas were prompted by a lifestyle turn due to his wife´s accident, which required they travel less and stayed more in their home in California. Instead, Glaser saw new opportunities for continuing his intellectual life work. He was well equipped for a youthifying career. He managed to balance international seminar activities, writing periods, and a constant flow of emails from grounded theorists who wanted advice or thank him for changing their lives.

He was grounded in the redwoods and in the universe. Many will say he was ahead of time. Others will say that the true value of his contribution will only be fully acknowledged in a distant future. Yet others will point out that grounded theories are timeless. They cut through time and space. And yet, I think, what actually counted most for Dr. Glaser was the grounding in his own family. Without the love and comprehensive support from Carolyn and his children, Lila, Jillian, Bonnie and Barney Jr., grounded theory might not have flourished as it did in his late life.

A dark February night this year I was notified that Barney Glaser was experiencing worsening progressions. There might be a last chance to see him. Would I get in touch?

There are those moments in a life when you get this uneasy feeling, as if the world is about to stop. When you are suddenly surrounded by silence, even if you are in the most crowded of places. And you get this spontaneous need to find out what is going on. It is the kind of silence that can´t be touched. It just encapsules you like an invisible fog. And you know that capturing this exact moment is of great importance, too. There is a time before and a time after. But there is no going back.

"Don't worry – the literature won´t go away," Glaser used to say when PhD students started asking about literature reviews before collecting their own data. After he passed on, his statement took on a new meaning. His books will be available for generations to come. The literature from the original source won´t go away.

For sure, Barney G. Glaser proved that classic grounded theory fits, works and will forever be relevant.

In the end, it is the ideas that count.

About the Author

Astrid Gynnild is a Professor PhD of Media Studies, Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen, Norway. She is Head of the Journalism Research Group, and works at the intersection of journalism innovation, new technologies, and creative processes. She was Editor of the Grounded Theory Review 2012-2018, and is now a reviewer of the journal. She is a Fellow of the Grounded Theory Institute.

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How Barney Glaser and Classic Grounded Theory Have changed and Impacted my Life

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I could never have imagined, how, in 2011 or so, my life would have been positively affected by one person and a research design in my dissertation. At that time, I was starting to write my dissertation and was planning on using an ethno-phenomeno-case study-ology as my research design. Clearly, I was confused and naive. But I connected with an online cohort where I learned about classic grounded theory. I'd like to share some instances of how Barney Glaser and classic grounded theory as a research design have changed and impacted my life.

My first contact with Barney was on the phone ordering one of his books. When I sheepishly asked whether he was Dr. Glaser, he responded yes and I was in shock. I even remember not "getting" his joke about the book costing 100 dollars. Clearly, I was dumbstruck. I had never spoken with a famous person and did not want to come across as a blithering idiot. Well, when I was stammering with Barney, if I came across that way, thankfully, he never let on.

Fast forward two or so years to 2013. I earned my PhD. I remember how I sounded at my oral defense. I was able to quote various passages from several of Barney's books from memory. Since then, I've come to learn that, as Barney stated, the beauty of classic grounded theory is that it is all around us. We just need to be open to seeing and experiencing it.

The next transformative period happened a few years ago in 2017 when I was part of one of Barney's seminars and then had the incredible honor to dine with him at his home. At that time, I was extremely fortunate to meet many classic grounded theorists about whom I've only read. I remember learning that these people, whom I idolized, were just everyday people and scholars as I was. We were able to have great conversations as friends and peers.

At that time, I remember having two short conversations with Barney. The first was about a term used in French literary analysis. But the second was more personal and transformative. As I was leaving for the evening, I thanked Barney and told him that I appreciated him "for being him." Then, he hugged me. And that was a glorious moment I will never forget.

The third and final instance is happening now. Two background points are needed though. First, by training, I am an educator with a specialization in online learning and educational technology. I am not a medical professional (though, to be honest, I wish I could have gone to medical or nursing school). Second, Barney had often explained that a literature review should not be done before collecting data to avoid potentially tainting the information obtained during the data collection process. Preconception could very possibly result in a bastardization of the data. That's great, but Barney also made it clear that a *tabula rasa* is not possible (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). So, what could a researcher do? I think I discovered a viable solution.

My latest research project is very exciting for me. Not only am I broadening my research horizons but also, I am getting as close to a *tabula rasa* as possible. For my research study,

I am interested in understanding a psychiatric disorder called dissociative identity disorder (DID). Since I am not a medical professional with all the "baggage" that comes with formal, clinical training, and since I am interested in understanding the problem of DID from the perspective of the participants, I am finally experiencing what it is like to know very little about a given research topic. I am as close to a *tabula rasa* as I can be. When I am in the data collection process, I know that I will be unencumbered with previous knowledge and will be open to all that will come.

Barney and classic grounded theory have substantially impacted my life. Not only because they helped me earn my doctorate, but because they have taught me how to look at the world through different, questioning, and conceptual eyes. With this new perspective, I find that when I try to understand what is happening in the data, I can do mini-GT studies. The result is a new and uncovered perspective. The beauty of CGT is the simultaneous complex procedure of analysis and the simplicity and universality of the resultant theory. What a mind-blowing concept! People think that a doctoral dissertation topic must be esoteric. While this may be the case, if classic grounded theory is used, the resulting theory can and should be clear and simple.

I saw a LinkedIn post the other day with a quote that was truly appropriate. The quote was from Shai Reshef who is affiliated with the University of the People. The quote is "When you educate one, you change a life. When you education many, you change the world." With that quote in mind. thank you, Barney. Thank you for being you and for giving the world classic grounded theory. And most importantly, thank you for helping to change and impact the world.

About the Author

Barry Chametzky, Ph.D. American College of Education. Dr. Chametzky holds graduate degrees in Music (Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College, City University of New York), French (Middlebury College), and Foreign Language education (University of Pittsburgh). Dr. Chametzky is an active researcher in the fields of andragogy, e-learning, anxiety and online foreign language acquisition, and classic grounded theory with numerous peer-reviewed publications and book chapters to his credit. He is also one of the reviewers

and the copyeditor for the Grounded Theory Review. He facilitates online learning with master's and doctoral students in the fields of educational technology and leadership, and serves as a dissertation chairperson to a number of candidates. Email: barry@bluevine.net

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The Grounded Theory Family Tree: A Living, Growing Testament to the Life and Work of Barney Glaser

Kara Lynette Vander Linden

Abstract

Grounded theory has a rich history which starts with its co-developers Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, each of whom had an impressive research pedigree. Their famous study on death and dying led to the publication of the seminal book *Discovery of Grounded Theory*. For years they taught cohorts of students grounded theory. These students contributed to the growth of the grounded theory family tree. Glaser started Sociology Press to publish his numerous books on grounded theory. He also founded the Grounded Theory Institute and the *Grounded Theory Review,* which facilitated the growth of grounded theory, as did his troubleshooting seminars. The Grounded Theory Institute Fellows and the editors and peer reviewers of the *Grounded Theory Review* have each contributed to the growth of grounded theory.

Keywords: Glaser, grounded theory, family tree, growth

A book called *A Stranger in a Strange Land* (1993) by Leonora R Scholte tells the story of my ancestors' journey from their motherland to a new land. As I look at the life and work of Dr. Barney Glaser, I see a similar journey, a similar story, at least on a conceptual level. While Glaser co-developed grounded theory within the field of sociology in the United States, his story and work extended beyond sociology and spread to other fields and around the globe. Just as *A Stranger in a Strange Land* tells the story of my ancestors' journey, this article depicts some points and figures in the historical lineage of grounded theory that have impacted my life and work.

Glaser and Strauss

Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser each had an impressive research pedigree. Anslem Strauss had a qualitative background influenced by pragmatism (see James, Dewey, Cooley, and Mead) and ethnographic traditions at the University of Chicago, where he studied (Heath & Cowley, 2004). However, symbolic interactionism and the work of Blumer were the most influential on Strauss. According to Simmons (personal communication, April 1, 2022), "Anselm was more of a symbolic interactionist than a grounded theorist, in my experience and view." Glaser had a quantitative background and was influenced by the work of his dissertation committee members, Paul Lazarsfeld, Robert K. Merton, and his dissertation chair Hans Zetterberg at Columbia University (Holton, 2011). Glaser credited Lazarsfeld's work with inspiring the development of four important methodological components within grounded theory: index formation, interchangeability of indicators, constant comparative analysis, and core variable analysis (Holton, 2011, p. 207-208). Laz-

arsfeld's work on research methodology was also a significant influence. From Merton, Glaser (1998) learned theory construction (produced based on logic, not data) and theoretical coding. What he learned from Merton built upon the *l'explication de text* (line by line analysis of text) that he learned at the Sorbonne University of Paris, France (Holton & Walsh, 2017). Zetterberg's "focus on the practical value of social theory and the importance of empirical research as the basis for theory development" (Holton, 2011, p. 210) also shaped the future development of grounded theory. From these mentors, Glaser merged the ideas of theory development and research methodology to make a unique contribution to the research world.

When Strauss recruited Glaser to work on a funded research study on death and dying at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), they married the strengths of each of their backgrounds. The research study moved beyond the limitations of the research approaches that dominated sociology in the 1960s. At that time, theory verification dominated research. In their now-famous study of death and dying, Strauss used his strength in qualitative research to head up data collection, which primarily took the form of field notes from interviews and observations. Glaser focused on methodological aspects of data analysis that built on the ideas he had started to develop at Columbia (Holton & Walsh, 2017).

In 1965, Glaser published the first article explaining what would later be called grounded theory. In this article, he introduced a new form of data analysis which he called constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. Constant comparative method of qualitative analysis became the form of data analysis used within grounded theory and foundational to the method. Constant comparative method of qualitative analysis, as developed by Glaser, forms the roots of the grounded theory family tree. Glaser and Strauss's use of constant comparative method of qualitative analysis and the articulation of the grounded theory method in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967) became the trunk of this family tree. However, not only was their work the birth of grounded theory, but it also became a significant influence in the historical development of qualitative research. Babchuk (2010) stated, "there may not be a single publication that has exerted more influence on the contemporary qualitative landscape than Glaser and Strauss' (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*" (p. 384).

Early Growth

While Glaser and Strauss' publications were widely acclaimed, the growth of grounded theory was slow initially. Glaser and Strauss each taught seminar courses on grounded theory to sociology and nursing students at UCSF for the next ten years. Stern (2009) referred to the "graduates as a virtual Who's Who of grounded theory pioneers" (p. 9 as cited in Babchuk, 2010), which include Cathy Charmez, Adele Clark, Odis Simmons (previously Bigus), to name a few who will be further mentioned in this article. However, Glaser and Strauss' respective training also led them to view and implement grounded theory in different ways. While Glaser and Strauss were not originally aware of their different perspectives, Simmons (personal communication, n.d.), as one of their students in the early 1970s, shared that he quickly because aware of their different perspectives and even shared this with Glaser at the time. Stern (1994, p. 212) had similar observations stating,

"students of Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s and 1970s knew that the two had quite different modus operandi, but Glaser only found out when Strauss and Corbin's *Basics of Qualitative Research* [italics added] came out in 1990" (as cited in Melia, 2010). However, the differences became evident to Glaser and Strauss and the rest of the world with Strauss and Corbin's publication and Glaser's subsequent reply in *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis: Emergence vs. Forcing* (1992). Glaser left UCSF shortly after the publication of this book. Continuing with the tree analogy, grounded theory now had two main branches, and we will continue to follow Glaser's branch.

Expanding Growth

As Glaser continued to write about grounded theory, he started his own publishing company, Sociology Press (http://sociologypress.com), in 1970. He wanted to make sure that his books stayed in publication to remain accessible to researchers around the world. Glaser went on to publish numerous books on grounded theory, often in response to modifications he saw other researchers making that departed from the design or in response to questions he received from researchers working on grounded theory studies. Running his own publishing company allowed Glaser direct access to those purchasing his books as he often personally answered the phone to take orders. Many purchasers were surprised to find out that they were talking directly to Glaser as he started probing them about their research. As interest in grounded theory spread worldwide, Glaser's work was translated into other languages, including Mandarin, Polish, Italian, and Swedish (Grounded Theory Institute, 2021).

During this time, qualitative research grew, and more researchers began using and writing about grounded theory. Some of these researchers made modifications to the original method. This led to other branches of the tree, such as Kathy Charmaz's work on constructivist grounded theory and Adele Clark's work on situational analysis. However, these branches are not the focus of this article which will continue following the growth of classic grounded theory.

In 1999, Glaser started the Grounded Theory Institute (http://www.groundedtheory.com/) to continue to help people learn about grounded theory. Glaser also began the *Grounded Theory Review* (http://groundedtheoryreview.com/), an interdisciplinary, open access, peer-reviewed journal that features the work of classic grounded theorists worldwide. Three influential women, Judith Holton, Astrid Gynnild, and Alvita Nathaniel have served as editors of the *Grounded Theory Review*. They have helped further the research of grounded theory worldwide, adding new branches to the "family tree" and continuing Glaser's lineage as they have mentored new grounded theorists through the process of publishing their work. This work is also supported by the peer reviewers of the *Grounded Theory Review*, which include Tom Andrews, Barry Chametzky, Olavur Christiansen, Naomi Elliott, Gary Evans, Astrid Gynnild, Evelyn Gordon, Agnes Higgins, Judith A Holton, Tina L. Johnston, Vivian B. Martin, Anna Sandgren, Helen Scott, Susan Stillman**,** Michael K. Thomas**,** Hans Thulesius, and Kara Vander Linden (Grounded Theory Review, n.d.). They each represent their own part of the "family tree" and canopy of classic grounded theory spreads.

Glaser also began offering troubleshooting seminars that were designed to help doctoral candidates with whatever their next step was in the process of completing their grounded theory dissertations. Through these troubleshooting seminars, many doctoral students and researchers worldwide received help and support not only from Glaser but from many of the Grounded Theory Institute Fellows, which include Tom Andrews (Cork, Ireland), Toke Barfod (Roskilde, Denmark), Barry Chametzky (Pennsylvania, USA), Ólavur Christiansen (Faroe Islands), Foster Fei (China), Wendy Guthrie (Scotland), Astrid Gynnild (Bergen, Norway), Markko Hamalainen (Helsinki, Finland), Judith Holton (Canada), Tina Johnston (Oregon, USA), Andy Lowe (Thailand), Vivian Martin (Connecticut, USA), Antoinette McCallin (Auckland, NZ), Alvita Nathaniel (West Virginia, USA), Anna Sandgren (Sweden), Helen Scott (UK), Odis Simmons (Washington State, USA), Michael Thomas (Illinois, USA), Hans Thulesius (Vaxjo, Sweden), Kara Vander Linden (California, USA), and Isabelle Walsh (France) (Grounded Theory Institute, n.d.). As these names demonstrate, grounded theory has spanned the globe. These Grounded Theory Fellows each represent their own part of the "family tree" and Glaser's lineage.

Growing Family Tree

To illustrate some of the contributions made by the Grounded Theory Institute Fellows, we can look at the work of Judith Holton, Isabelle Walsh, Vivian Martin, Astrid Gynnild, Helen Scott, and Tom Andrews. Judith Holton's impact can be seen first in her leadership of the *Grounded Theory Review*, as previously mentioned, and in the number of articles, she has published on grounded theory, many of which were co-authored with Glaser. Glaser also encouraged her to write a book about grounded theory, which she co-authored with Isabelle Walsh, the leading quantitative grounded theorist. Their textbook, *Classic Grounded Theory: Applications with Qualitative and Quantitative Data* (2012), is one of the best on grounded theory. Vivian Martin and Astrid Gynnild's edited book *Grounded Theory: The Philosophy, Method, and Work of Barney Glaser* (2011) is a collection of articles and essays by researchers taught by Glaser "from nine countries and four continents" about "a mentor, his method, and the application of its principles" (p.1). It addresses many misunderstandings about the method. Through Grounded Theory Online, Helen Scott and Tom Andrews offer troubleshooting seminars modeled after those offered by Glaser to help grounded theory researchers progress in their research (Grounded Theory Online, 2022). While I have highlighted these Grounded Theory Institute Fellows to demonstrate how they continue to help grounded theory grow, the Grounded Theory Institute Fellows have each made their own contributions to the growth of grounded theory.

Of the Grounded Theory Institute Fellows, Odis Simmons worked with Glaser for the longest. Their relationship developed as they commuted back and forth to UCSF from Mill Valley. During these drives, they discussed grounded theory, and many of the ideas discussed later appeared in Glaser's books (Simmons, personal communication, January 5, 2004). Glaser even credits Simmons with helping develop some of the content (see *Theoretical Sensitivity*, chapter 5). Almost immediately following his own learning of grounded theory, Simmons began teaching grounded theory and mentoring others in using the method. Over the last 50 plus years, Simmons has taught and mentored hundreds of students and researchers on how to conduct grounded theory studies. For many years before his retirement, he led the Grounded Theory/ Grounded Action concentration at

Fielding Graduate University. His seminar-style approach followed that of Glaser and Strauss' early days, and many of the graduates of the Grounded Theory/Grounded Action concentration have gone on to publish and teach classic grounded theory. He also attended and assisted Glaser at many of his troubleshooting sessions. Glaser even commented that no one has taught grounded theory more than Simmons (Glaser, personal communication, 2004). For many years, Glaser encouraged Simmons to write his own book about mentoring and teaching grounded theory. Prior to his death, Glaser read the manuscript for Simmons' book *Experiencing Grounded Theory: A Comprehensive Guide to Learning, Doing, Mentoring, Teaching, and Applying Grounded Theory* (forthcoming). Simmons' book will continue to help researchers worldwide learn how to conduct, mentor, and teach grounded theory furthering the growth of the grounded theory family tree.

Through Simmons, I was introduced to grounded theory nearly 20 years ago when he led Grounded Theory/Grounded Action concentration at Fielding Graduate University. I began teaching grounded theory under Simmons' guidance even before graduating with my doctoral degree. For over 15 years, I have been teaching grounded theory within doctoral programs and chairing and serving on grounded theory dissertations. I have also created the Institute for Research and Theory Methodologies (https://www.mentoringresearchers.org/), a United States-based non-profit, to support grounded theory researchers worldwide through the Glaser Center for Grounded Theory. We train, mentor, support, and connect grounded theory researchers worldwide (Institute for Research and Theory Methodologies, 2022). Glaser's grounded theory has become the work I get to teach, mentor, write about, and do every day. I feel honored to be part of the grounded theory family tree and watch how it continues to grow. May it be a living, growing testament to the life and work of Dr. Barney Glaser.

About the Author

Dr. Kara Vander Linden is an interdisciplinary researcher, educator, mentor, and lifelong learner. She is the founder and president of the Institute for Research and Theory Methodologies and the Director of the Glaser Center for Grounded Theory. She teaches research and supervises classic grounded theory dissertations at Saybrook University. She is a peer reviewer for the *Grounded Theory Review*, *BMC Nursing, and Nursing Open.* Dr. Vander Linden earned a doctorate in education from Fielding Graduate University (Santa Barbara, CA) with specializations in classic grounded theory and higher education. She earned a master's in special education from the University of North Carolina (Charlotte, NC) and a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics from Queens University (Charlotte, NC).

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A Tribute to Barney Glaser (1930-2022):
A Trial to Rethink Economics by Classic Grounded Theory Methodology

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Abstract

The inductive methodology of classic grounded theory (CGT) is extremely different from the logical-deductive methodology of mainstream economics - as well as the inductive econometrics approach. Consequently, it becomes a pressing issue how Barney Glaser's work can be used in the contexts of economic. To use CGT on an abstract concept like "mainstream economics" would be an impossibility. A CGT is about the behaviour of some specific individuals - as for example groups of economic practitioners. These practitioners should be a fairly homogenous group of people – a collective of university economists and business professionals might be too heterogeneous. Thus, it is suggested that a CGT is carried out for each homogenous group of economic practitioners, and that an attempt subsequently is made to generate a formal (higher-level) CGT that covers all these groups. The main principles of CGT are briefly explained with the purpose of demonstrating the generation of a CGT in microeconomics, and how the core variable of a CGT of macroeconomics can be allowed to emerge.

Keywords: Rethinking economics; classic grounded theory; core variables; methodology.

Practicing New Methodological Departures

The title of this article contains two connected issues: (1) Barney Glaser's classic grounded theory (CGT) methodology and (2) its possible use in a "rethinking" (reorientation) of economics. Some important properties of the CGT methodology and of the "rethinking" are as follows:

> First, classic grounded theory methodology is about the discovery of concepts – or conceptualizing. This means the discovery and the naming of latent patterns of behavior (substantive concepts) in the collected and treated data, and the discovery of relationships between these latent patterns (theoretical concepts or codes). The methodology is not based on any particular ontological or epistemological assumptions except the pragmatic assumption that social life is patterned and empirically integrated by a core variable (not logically modelled), and that it is only question of applying a rigorous and systematic methodology for discovering and explaining these patterns. (Christiansen, 2012). It is not about obtaining precise measurements or findings, but

about obtaining credibility by grounded inductions and indications.

Second, the theme is "rethinking" economics; it means a "reorientation" of economics by departing from old paradigms. In CGT, the units of data collection and data analysis are behavior incidents. What matters is what the studied participants, as economic actors, <u>actually</u> do - not what they think. What people or economic actors think or rethink about economics only becomes relevant as far as it provides a better insight into the behavior of the studied participants.

Economic topics have so far not been analyzed or synthesized by the use of Glaser's classic grounded theory methodology. Yet, Frederic S. Lee (2005) has published an article with the title *Grounded Theory and Heterodox Economics*. However, in his article Lee ignores the use of the core variable, and the fact that classic grounded theory is a research methodology that is fundamentally different from what is commonly referred to as "grounded theory." From the viewpoints of CGT, this means that Lee's article becomes irrelevant.

Classic grounded theory methodology (i.e., methodology for generating grounded theory) is itself a classic grounded theory, and this theory (as a methodology) obviously has the core variable of *conceptualizing*. According to English dictionaries, to *conceptualize* means *imaging*. However, in the context of CGT, *conceptualizing* means the discovery and the naming of latent patterns or latent relationships in the data. These data can be qualitative or quantitative but are mostly qualitative.

Glaser's classic grounded theory has its own terminology. An example is the meaning of the term *concept*. Substantive concepts are named latent patterns in the data that as building blocks of theory summarize the empirical substance of the data. Substantive concepts can be on different levels of conceptual abstraction. The core variable is on the highest conceptual abstraction level, while categories, sub-categories and properties are on a lesser level.

The core variable has the pivotal role in CGT. It conceptually (by naming) sums up the recurrent solving of the main concern of those being studied. Its original conception by Glaser seems to be inspired by statistical methods. It partially corresponds to the coefficient of determination in regression analysis, where it is a measure of how well a regression line fits the data, and it gives the percentage of the variation (variance) in the dependent variable that is explained by the model.

Sometimes it is not possible to find existing words/names that can contain the meaning of a latent pattern or latent relationship in the data. In this case, the researcher has the license to generate and to use his/her own concepts. This would be unheard-of and disallowed in mainstream economics. *Opportunizing* is but one example of a new concept. Opportunizing means the recurrent creation and exploitation of opportunities (or convenient occasions) in order to sustain the survival, growth and/or the competitive/cooperative advantage of a business.

Discovering the Core Variable as the First Task

The most important criteria for the discovery of the core variable in any classic

(Glaserian) grounded theory study is conceptualizing the studied participants' main concern and its recurrent solution, which also explains most of the variation in the data (the behavior of those being studied). The recurrent solution of the main concern becomes the core variable. Synonymous and sustaining criteria may be, for example:

- "Conceptualizing what is most important and also problematic for those being studied,"
- "Conceptualizing what actually is going on in the data, as seen from the perspective of those being studied,"
- "Conceptualizing the very essence of reflected relevance in the data, as seen from the perspective of those being studied,"
- "Conceptualizing what essentially drives and directs the behavior of those being studied," "Conceptualizing the perpetual latent agenda of those being studied," and
- "Conceptualizing the concept that is most related to other emerging concepts." (Christiansen, 2007)

The next tasks after the discovery of the core variable

When the core variable of a theory has been found, the remaining conceptualization will be delimited to concepts/categories that are most related to the found core variable, and the following steps will have to be taken: Use of the methodology to discover and generate (from the data) the most important categories and properties of the core variable that explain what recurrently is going on from the perspective of those being studied, and that is highly relevant as well as problematic for those being studies. These sub-concepts (or categories) of the core variable should be as few as possible. The aim is to explain as much as possible with as few concepts as possible.

More About the Methodological Needs

During the recent decennia, a new movement has grown up among students in economics, and also among some academics (Stiglitz, 2011; Juselius, 2019; Werner 2005) that demands a rethinking of university economics, i.e., of economics as economics is taught in universities. These people accuse university economics of being too detached from the real world and to be dogmatically taught from a one-sided perspective. The unofficial program for the movement can be found at: https://www.rethinkeconomics.org/about/.

Nevertheless, due to the use of CGT in this article, and especially due to the use of the core variable concept, the content of this article may be very different from what members of the "rethinking economics movement" might have demanded or expected. The predominantly inductive and pattern-discovering (conceptualizing) research methodology of CGT is very different from the predominantly logical-deductive, rationality-assuming (optimizing), quantifying and hypotheses-testing methodology of mainstream economics.

The methodology of mainstream economics must be well-known among economists, due to their training. It is also all pervasive. The opposite must apply for CGT since it is largely unknown. Therefore, we will also provide some extra summaries regarding the CGT methodology. CGT is not considered better or worse than other methodology. What is better or worse depends on contexts, the research task, and the methodological familiarity of the researcher. Different methodologies lead to different perspectives. There is nothing wrong with

this. Each perspective has its uses, advantages, and limitations. From the author's point of view, methodological diversity is not only acceptable, but also desirable, due to its possible synergistic and complementary effects. However, it is futile to mix elements of research methodologies that are incompatible. Other methodological differences are as follows:

- While mainstream economists usually make no big fuss about the topics of economic methodology and the philosophy of science, it will take a good few months of study and praxis to master the use of the classic grounded theory methodology. Glaser has written more than 30 books about the methodology.
- Classic grounded theory is a methodology for generating a parsimonious theory about the main concern of those being studied, and the recurrent solution of this main concern (which becomes the core variable). Consequently, in this respect, the CGT methodology has no parallels in economic and social science methodology.
- While mainstream economic research begins with the literature review as the first stage of the research, the literature review (i.e., the comparing to literature) in a CGT-study is carried out towards the end of the study. This facilitates discovery and prevents preconceptions.
- CGT can use qualitative and quantitative data, but mostly it uses qualitative data, while economists generally prefer quantitative data.
- While the core variable is of crucial importance in any CGT study, a similar concept is not part of mainstream economic methodology.
- While a mainstream economic study usually involves hypotheses testing, a CGT-study is never a testing or verification study. CGT is a methodology for the discovery and suggestion of new theory directly from data. A generated CGT may come as close as it can, but it can hardly reach the 100% "truth line." It is modifiable, and its credibility will depend entirely on its fit to the data.

Classic grounded theory is predominantly empirical-inductive, but in theoretical sampling and coding (see down below), it has some deductive traits. CGT is a methodology for discovery and not for testing. If a generated CGT lacks fit to the data, the theory can be modified rather than rejected. The credibility of a generated CGT depends on its empirical-inductive grounding in the data, and not on logical deduction. It is not possible to explain for the readers or examiners in detail how the researcher has collected the data, coded, written memos, sorted, etc. However, a few examples of this may be demonstrated. This also means that the criteria for judging a CGT cannot be the same as the criteria for judging the theoretical outcome from other methodologies. Four main criteria for judging a CGT have been suggested (Holton & Walsh, (2017):

- Fit (To what the data conceptually relate about a main concern and its recurrent solving. Fit is another word for validity)
- Work (in explaining, interpreting and predicting)
- Relevance (for those being studied and their core concern – but usually not relevant for people with preconceived professional interest concerns)
- Modifiability (easily modifiable as new data may emerge and have to be included)

Christiansen (n.d.) has summarized the distinctiveness of CGT by referring to the three "hallmarks" of CGT. Below a fourth hallmark is added. These hallmarks are unique for CGT, and they sum up how Glaser's CGT is different from other methods and other versions of so-

called grounded theory:

- Many equally justifiable understandings/interpretations of the same data? Answer: find the core variable (the main concern of those being studied and its recurrent solution) as the first stage of the research. When the core variable has been found, delimit the study to concepts that are most related to the core variable.
- To get through to exactly what is going on in the participant's recurrent solution of their main concern, the researcher suspends his/her preconceptions, remains open, and trusts in emergence of concepts from the data.
- Avoiding descriptive interpretations in favor of abstract conceptualizations by the method of constant comparison, which facilitates the discovery of latent patterns in the data (i.e., emergence of concepts).

Thus, to sum up: CGT is not a hermeneutic research method, neither is it a qualitative-descriptive-analytic method. CGT is a conceptualizing method. Conceptualization is carried out by a method of constantly comparative analysis (see down below). Conceptualization and conceptual analysis provide abstraction from time, place, and people. Qualitative-descriptive-analysis (QDA), on the other hand, is bounded to the given time, place and people, and this invites story-telling. Yet, CGT is not better and QDA is not inferior—they are just different.

Classic grounded theory studies are generally carried out in sequential stages, but stages can also be conducted simultaneously, as the particular study requires. The research is prepared by minimizing preconceptions, avoiding preliminary literature review (it is a discovery method), and by avoiding any predetermined research problem. The research problem will be found simultaneously with the discovery of the core variable. The following outline is inspired by an outline made by Simmons (n.d.):

- Data Collection: The research begins with data collection. The units are behavior incidents. Besides that, any type of data can be used. Later in the process, data collection proceeds by theoretical sampling of data where analysis and data collection continually inform one another (This may be a deductive trait of CGT).
- Constant Comparative Analysis means relating data to ideas, then ideas to other ideas (i.e. ideas about substantive concepts).
- Substantive Coding: Looking for substantive concepts as latent patterns in the data that summarize the empirical substance of the data.
- Open substantive coding (Glaser, 2016): For finding the core variable, the analyst asks three general questions of the data:
  1. "What is this data a study of?" (core problem, core variable?)
  2. "What category (concept) does this incident indicate?" (property of the core variable?)
  3. "What is actually happening in the data?" (theoretical concepts/codes?)
- Selective substantive coding: This takes place when the core variable and its major dimensions have been discovered in open coding. Then selective coding is delimited to concepts most related to the core variable.
- Theoretical Coding: Theoretical codes (concepts) conceptualize how the substantive concepts relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into the theory.
- Memoing: Ideas are fragile. They should be written down at the earliest possible time. Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes (concepts) and their relationships. Data collection, analysis and memoing are ongoing, and overlap.

- Integrating the Literature: Literature without conceptual relatedness to the emerging theory is skipped. Only conceptually related literature is included in the comparison. It is obvious that relevant literature for conceptual comparison cannot be identified before stable behavioral patterns (concepts) have emerged. If the researcher believes either that he/she can derive the participant's main concern and its recurrent solution from this literature, or that he/she can ignore the empirical discovery of this main concern as the first stage of research, the choice of CGT would be meaningless. The different research approach of CGT methodology also means that the outcomes of it conceptually may be very different from what is almost all-pervading in the literature. This usually means that literature reviews of CGT studies are much shorter than literature reviews of more traditional studies (Glaser, 2011a).
- Sorting & Theoretical Outline: Sorting refers not to data sorting, but to conceptual sorting of memos into an outline of the emergent theory, showing relationships between concepts. This process often stimulates more memos, and sometimes even more data collection. There is much iterative rework.
- Writing: The completed sort constitutes the first draft of the write-up, which becomes the basis of the final draft.
- The core variable is a substantive concept that is attached to a theoretical code (theoretical concept). This means that the researcher must be familiar with different kinds of theoretical codes. A loop is for example a theoretical code (Glaser & Holton, 2005).

An Example of a Classic Grounded Theory About Business Management and/or Microeconomics

The raw data for this theory generation have mainly been collected by interviews with managers of private and public business entities. Raw data sources have also been memoirs of business managers—written or taped. Data were collected from a fairly homogenous group of people. This example is an abbreviated and modified (improved) version of Christiansen's (2007) classic GT of opportunizing in business administration.

Each interview for data collection began with the following question: "Please tell me how you solved your problems" (the participant's particular business). This manner of open data collection was used in the beginning in order to prevent preconceptions, and to facilitate discovery of behavior patterns that otherwise could have been overlooked. Later in the process of data collection, more selective questions can be asked.

The coding, the memoing, and the constantly comparing of the collected data incidences revealed a latent and reasonable stable pattern of behavior that was given the new name of *opportunizing*. It is the recurrent creation and exploitation of opportunities (convenient occasions) in order to sustain the survival, growth and/or the competitive/cooperative advantage of the business. After recognizing more than one type of opportunizing in the data, opportunizing seemed to be almost everywhere. In the first instance, two types of opportunizing were emergent. They were defined as follows:

1. "People-predominant opportunizing" is the creation, identification and exploitation of business opportunities through the direct use of people or participants, i.e., their
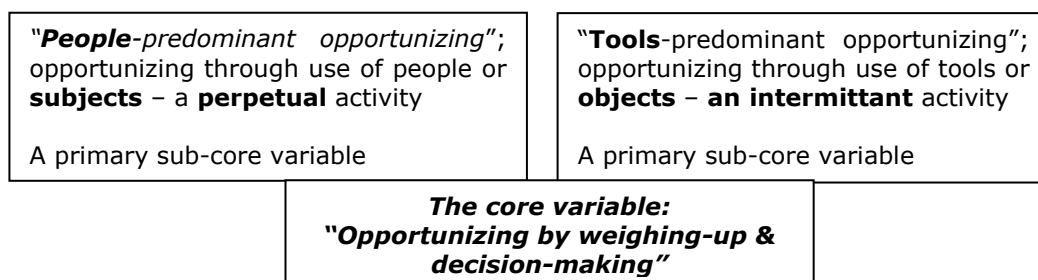
2. "Tools-predominant opportunizing" is the use of tools and supplies and equipment, and the adjustment of the tangible material business organization (including its human structures and buildings) that is utilized as a sustaining "tool" or object for any activity of opportunizing. Its accumulated outcome is the tangible structure of the business, by which the company maintains and exploits business opportunities. This adjustment is usually an intermittent (spasmodic) activity in business.

3. "People-predominant opportunizing" and "Tools-predominant opportunizing" operate in conjunction with one another, and in a balancing (and size-adapting) manner. This conjunctive balancing (and size-adapting) is involved in any act of opportunizing, and consequentially, their interface and linking becomes a criterion for finding the core variable.

The core variable has been given the label of "opportunizing by weighing-up and decision-making." "Weighing-up-and decision-making" is the assessment and observing and knowing of business opportunities. The concept seems to provide the best empirical fit to the criteria for finding the core variable. Weighing-up and decision-making is inherent in any act of opportunizing and determines the efficaciousness of opportunizing in dealing with the most important, problematic and critical for the business. See Figure 1.

Figure 1
People as Subjects, Tools as Objects, and the Core Variable as Their Linking

"**People**-*predominant opportunizing*"; opportunizing through use of people or **subjects** – a **perpetual** activity A primary sub-core variable	"**Tools**-predominant opportunizing"; opportunizing through use of tools or **objects** – **an intermittant** activity A primary sub-core variable

<div align="center">

The core variable:
"Opportunizing by weighing-up &
decision-making"

</div>

Then, more tangible, how do business people "opportunize by weighing-up and making decision?" An attempt will be made to explain this by the secondary sub-core variables of opportunizing and their categories (sub-concepts) and relationships. These are as follows: "opportunizing by steering behaviour," "opportunizing by prospecting," "opportunizing by moment capturing," and "opportunizing by configuration matching"

The sub-concepts of the core variable can also be understood as properties of the core variable - sub-concepts of a higher-level concept can be seen as properties of the higher-level concept. The secondary sub-core variables and some of their most important categories (sub-concepts) are explained as follows:

Steering Behaviour

Steering behaviour (or controlling behaviour) means creating and seizing business opportunities by "confidence building" and "modifying-maintaining-preventing people's behaviour," which are its two basic categories (sub-concepts). The former category

(confidence-building or trust-building) facilitates the latter (i.e., it effects behaviour and lessens the needs for burdensome interventions).

The data revealed a very frequent the use of many different confidence building and behaviour-steering techniques in business management. These can be grouped as "saming" (e.g., appear as win-win, sameness of interest, and identity, and lifestyle, and matching of words and deeds, etc.), "transparency," "distinguishing" (outstanding), and different kinds and degrees of "intervention" by "conditional befriending." (*Saming*, for example, can be grasped as a multidimensional variable with negative and positive values).

Mixtures of these techniques were also widely used. The users of these techniques have hardly been consciously aware of their significance as means of confidence building and behaviour steering. Peoples' *confidence-building* and *behaviour-steering skill*s differ widely, and "manager manage thyself" often becomes an issue. Confidence-building and quality-building are partially synonymous. This partial synonymy could be used to simplify the often complex use of quality-management tools in business (Christiansen, 2011).

Prospecting

Prospecting means identifying business opportunities, e.g., by information gaining. It can take place by deduction, induction, and abduction (combining). Prospecting can be pre-determined, and it can be genuine-original. The social changes create a growing number of information-using occupations. Skills in extracting "opportunizing-relevant" information from data sources therefore become important.

Like the other secondary sub-core variables, prospecting has its trigger in the core variable. *Prospecting*, furthermore, is triggered by *steering behaviour*. *Prospecting* is as well affected by and affects the other secondary sub-core variables. Like *moment capturing*, *prospecting* has a strong connection to the core variable. The centrality and the interconnectivity of the core variable (opportunizing by weighing-up and decision-making) are illustrated in Figure 2. Firstly, the core variable is connected *to steering behaviour, prospecting, moment capturing and configuration matching* (as highlighted by bold arrows). Secondly, the interconnections, as highlighted by the other arrows, provide for a main loop of opportunizing, and smaller loops within the main loop. These loops can provide for an *amplified casual looping* in an upward going direction, as well as in a downward going direction (i.e., self-amplifying chain reactions, as virtuous or vicious cycles).

Moment capturing

"Moment capturing" means the seizing of strategic business opportunities (big and small) when timely intervention is critical for the outcome. It takes place in all businesses. *Moment capturing* occurs intermittently as a single point event, but in addition, it has two weighing-up-related categories (sub-concepts): "perpetual awareness of the moment capture concept" and "weighing-up of weighing-up regarding past moment captures." Moment capturing therefore is closely connected to the core variable (see the illustration in Figure 2 and Figure 3), while the single-point-event becomes tantamount to a *configuration matching*.

Configuration matching

Configuration matching means intermittently re-configuring the current tangible-material business organization (including buildings) in order to aid and facilitate the other activities of opportunizing, and directly by sustaining *steering behaviour* (see white arrow in Figure 2). *Configuration matchings* are necessary adjustments to changes.

Figure 2
*The core variable and the main loop and sub-loops of opportunizing.*
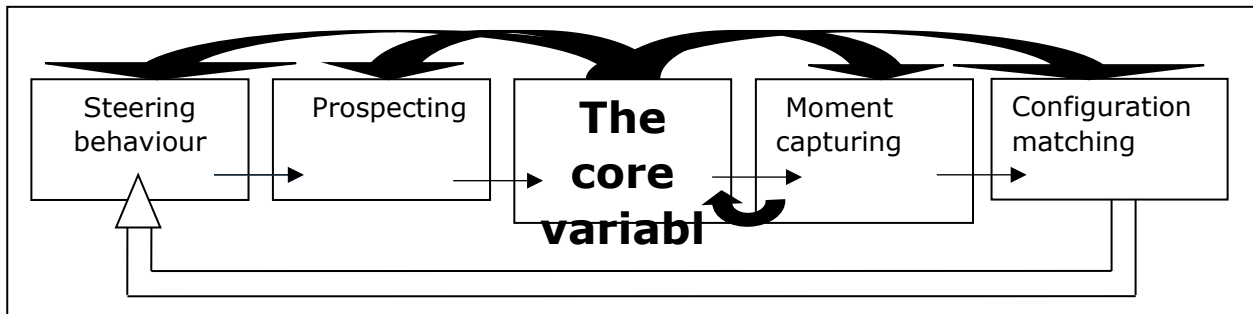
These interrelationships between the concepts also means that any one of them, and their sub-concepts, cannot contribute in isolation without the others. Achievements or lack of achievements in one of them will affect the others. While Figure 2 illustrates the horizontal relationships of the concepts, Figure 3 illustrates the hierarchical-vertical structure. As illustrated in Figure 3, "people-predominant opportunizing" (a primary sub-core variable) has two sub-concepts: "steering behaviour" and "prospecting" (secondary sub-core variables). Likewise, as illustrated in Figure 3, "tools-predominant opportunizing" (a primary sub-core variable) has two sub-concepts: "moment capturing" and "configuration matching" (secondary sub-core variables). As also illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3, "moment capturing" comes apart. Two categories of "moment capturing" serve the core variable, while the one category of "moment capturing" serves "tools-predominant opportunizing" (and thus *configuration matching*).

The primary and secondary sub-core variables are illustrated in Figure 3. The sub-concepts (categories) of the secondary sub-core variables are included in the explanation of the secondary sub-core variables. Some of these categories are listed as follows:

- Steering behaviour: confidence building ("saming," transparency, distinguishing), modifying-maintaining-preventing behaviour, intervention by conditional befriending.
- Prospecting: can occur as deduction, induction and abduction, and it may be genuine-original and it may be predetermined.
- Moment capturing: Two categories join the core variable, and one category joins tools-predominant opportunizing.
- Configuration matching: "the single-point-event" *becoming a configuration matching that sustains steering behaviour.*

Figure 3

The Hierarchical Vertical Structure of "Opportunizing by Weighing-Up and Decision-Making."
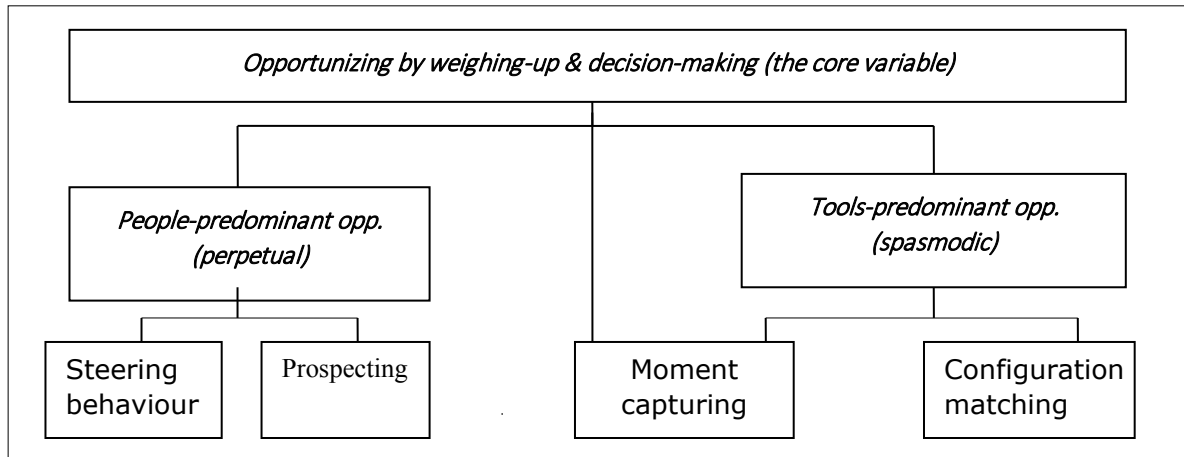
Thus, in our case, *opportunizing by weighing-up and decision-making* provided the best fit to the main concern as well as the recurrent solution of the main concern of those being studied. It also gives good common sense. This core variable and its related sub-concepts can most efficiently explain cases and causes of business successes and business failures. The decisions and actions of the management that are mostly in accordance with the core variable and its closest sub-concepts are expected to have the most penetrating impact on the business results.

The theory is generated by the deliberate intention to include the most relevant and important for those being studies, and especially to avoid preconceived professional interest concerns that are irrelevant for practitioners. Yet, nothing has been proven. The modifiable theory has only been suggested, and these suggestions are based on the credibility that is derived from the grounding of the theory in the data.

Before using a generated CGT as part of a consulting task or a business management development task, coding of new data from the client organization for "emergent fit" with the generated CGT would be a good beginning basis for the consulting or developmental work. It could prevent preconceptions from taking over. An important property of a CGT is its modifiability as well as its fit, its explaining power, and its relevance for those being studied.

We began with the contrasting of CGT and "mainstream economics." Now it should be clearer why and how (1) mainstream economics and "rethinking economics" on the one hand, and (2) classic grounded theory on the other hand, represent such a contrast (Rochon & Rossi, 2018). This contrast is explained most parsimoniously by referring to the use and non-use of the empirically discovered core variable that conceptualizes the main concern of those being studied and the recurrent solving of this main concern. This thus explained core variable and its significance is Barney Glaser's discovery.

The contrast is also explained by the CGT-licence to conceptualize—that the CGT researcher generates his or her own concepts by the systematic treatment of the data. These concepts should be grounded and fit to what the data relate.

In classic GT, the core variable can provide the focus, when a generated CGT is used for business consulting purposes, or management development purposes. The "field" of business consulting - or the "field" of business management - should be delimited to issues that are most related to the core variable. Relevance is relevance for those being studied – but not necessarily relevance for academic researchers with preconceived professional interest concerns.

Some Indications of The Challenges and Rewards in Finding the Core Variable for a Group of Macroeconomic Practitioners

It could be an interesting task to generate a classic grounded theory of macroeconomics, i.e., a theory that explains the main concern of practitioners of macroeconomics, and the recurrent solution of their main concern. However, this task would be easier said than done. It is not possible to do a classic GT about an abstract concept, as for example macroeconomics — it has to be a theory about the behaviour of some specific individuals. A classic GT about a philosophy or a theory would be an impossibility. Furthermore, the input data for the conceptualization could - due to circumstances - be collected from a group of people that are fairly homogenous with regard to, for example, education and occupation. On the other hand, the union of people that practice macroeconomics could be rather heterogeneous. The same may apply for the main concern of these people and its recurrent solving. For example:

- Research and teaching of macroeconomics in universities – main concern & recurrent solving?
- Teaching of macroeconomics in secondary schools – main concern & recurrent solving?
- High-level civil servants and experts with macroeconomic responsibility and politicians with macroeconomic responsibility - main concern & recurrent solving?
- Rethinking of economics movement – main concern & recurrent solving?

The use of CGT for the field of macroeconomics may require that a CGT is generated for each of these four listed groups of people. This would require that a comparison was made between the generated core variables of these four groups of people, and that an attempt also was made to generate a *formal theory* that covers all four groups, and thus explains on a more general level than a substantive theory would do (Glaser, 2006). Most likely, each of these four CGTs would require a workload that corresponded to a PhD project. This means that the application of classic GT in the field of macroeconomics would require that a major research project was brought about. The content of such a research project would have nothing in common with what Frederic Lee imagined in 2005 (Lee, 2005).

The use of classic GT for the field of microeconomics (or business management) has already been illustrated by the opportunizing & weighing-up theory on the preceding pages. This theory could also be included in a formal theory generation.

To generate (i.e., to find, to discover) the core variable within a chosen field of research is challenging. As an eye-opener, it is also significant—it will often be the most significant milestone of a CGT project. It is frequently necessary to reserve about half of the reserved research time to the finding of the core variable. Without a genuine core variable, there cannot be a "Glaserian" or classic grounded theory.

In return, such a generated core variable contains much important and practical-relevant information that can be utilized for consulting purposes, or for management development purposes, or policy development purposes. A generated CGT, together with its core variable, can be used as a tool for grounded problem-solving within the respective field of study. i.e., as "grounded action research." "Grounded action" is the use of a CGT as a change agent within a field of research (Simmons & Gregory, 2004).

Challenges and Rewards in Finding the Core Variable – And Description Versus Conceptualization

> The remainder of this article will demonstrate, by a text example, the challenges inherent in an attempted discovery of the core variable for a selected group of macroeconomic practitioners with political-economic responsibility. The following text as data are (as such) hardly more scientific or advanced or newsworthy than ordinary economic news from radio or TV. What makes this text as data newsworthy is the beginning emergence - from the data - of concepts. The headings in the following text refer to indications of a core variable.
>
> The data were collected by taking field notes. The researcher has also interviewed himself - this is legitimate when he/she is knowledgeable and can suspend his/her preconceptions. Also were used interviews with leading politicians with economic responsibilities, excerpts from memoirs and published diaries of leading economic politicians, and excerpts from popular books written by leading economists. The text is mainly a synthesis of data collection and memo-writing during a beginning coding. In classic GT, data as descriptions (as these are seen in following sections) serve as inputs or raw materials for conceptualization, which is the end-product of a CGT study. In a QDA study (qualitative-descriptive-analytic) on the other hand, analytic descriptions are the end-product of study. This does not mean that a QDA-study is inferior. It is just different.

Indications of the Core Variable: The Significance and Dependability of Work and Employment

The importance of work and employment for society, the economy, the family, the individual person, and his/her personal identity, is uncontroversial. Emigration and Immigration depend on employment and sometimes employment depends on immigrations. Lack of jobs may lead to fall in the size of the population. When planning and conducting economic policy, the employment situation has to be taken into account.

The numbers of employed and unemployed are, of course, dependent on other factors of the economy. Simultaneously, most other factors of the economy are highly dependent on the trends of employment and unemployment. In the macro economy, causes thus become consequences and vice versa. We also have chain reactions, and vicious and virtuous cycles. One single factor can trigger a change the economy, that can affect another factor positively or negatively, which, in turn, effects a third factor of the economy, etc. This is the "domino

effect" (also a theoretical code). These forces make the economy complex and fluctuating. Furthermore, the society as such is changing with seemingly accelerating speed. Technological discoveries and technical applications transform and rearrange industries, consumer habits, transports, and employment. We can take as an example the present shortages in the supply of computer chips. Computer chips are used today almost everywhere, where electricity is used, and the demand for these chips is enormous and increasing. These shortages will not be filled immediately. In the meantime, we can expect price increases. These price increases will spread to all industries that are directly dependent on computer chips, and also industries that indirectly become dependent.

Another trigger of inflation will come from the monetary sector of the economy. The decreasing interest rates, the increasing real estate prices, the increasing stock prices, and the huge increases in the money supply in recent years do indicate a looming inflation. Both sources will have a magnifying effect. Expectations of a higher inflation will reinforce the inflation. With zero interest rates, financial investors have to look for new opportunities to employ capital with higher yield. This search for new financial investment opportunities will contribute to inflation in real estate prices and stock prices. On the other hand, a normalization of the money supply and increases in the interest rate (all else being equal) can reverse these trends, but the consequence for jobs may become problematic.

The main point here may be that macroeconomic actors tolerate inflation when it is made as a sacrifice for employment and economic growth in the short term. Macroeconomic actors seem to understand unemployment as more problematic that shortage of labor. This consideration may be more apparent than real—the aftermath of a boom is frequently experienced as economic recession or depression.

Most of the government expenditures go to (1) education and research, (2) health care and (3) social policy purposes. This is also depending on the employment and job issue. Regarding educational & research policy, education is a preparation for employment, and it can affect job prospects and the quality of employment. Thus, there will be a relationship between educational policy and an employment sustaining policy. Education and research have big implications for jobs and employment, as well as new job creation and job destruction (disruption). The matching between (a) required job qualifications in available jobs, and the (b) actual job qualification of job seekers, will always be somewhat problematic. Regarding health policy, one purpose of hospitals and health institutions is to keep people fit for work, and thus to sustain employment. It is also common knowledge that unemployed people tend to be less healthy. Regarding social policy, kindergartens and day nurseries for children, as well as home care and nursing homes for the elderly do have an obvious relationship to the employment/unemployment issue. Without these institutions, the access to the labor market would be restricted for many.

Indications of a Core Variable: Relationships Between Employment, Economic Growth and Productivity Growth

The economy, as measured by GDP, has an inherent tendency to grow in the long-term. Around its long-term growth trend, there are short-term fluctuations (expansions and contractions) in line with the movements of the business cycle. (The GDP-measure is problematic but that is another story.) This long-term growth tendency of the economy is due

to an unstoppable productivity growth that in turn is due to an unstoppable technological progress. The unstoppable technological progress will require a corresponding educational updating of job skills.

As long as businesses have to match their competitors in their use of new technology in order to survive, productivity will be boosted, and productivity growth will be unstoppable. New technology that sustains productivity growth is normally embedded in public and private investments. These investments create the basis for the long-term growth of the economy. Fluctuation in investment expenditures will also create or affect short-term fluctuations (business cycles) in the economy. The unstoppable technological progress will lead to changes in the employment structure of the nation, i.e., the distribution of the different types of industry (for example the distribution of the so-called primary, secondary and tertiary industries). It will also lead to rearrangements in the educational and training position of the population.

The following explains the relationships between changes in employment, changes in productivity, and changes in the size of the economy (GDP): We have: Y= sum of real value added (GDP); L=hours of work (employment); Y/L= Labor productivity; and the tautology $Y = (Y/L)*L$. We use the natural logarithm as approximation to differentiation (can be used when changes are small): Ln Y = ln (Y/L) + ln L.

From these we can see that a relative change in real GDP is approximately equal to a relative change in labor productivity plus a relative change in employment. The conclusion from the textbox is thus that a relative yearly change in real GDP equals a relative yearly change in labor productivity plus a relative yearly change in employment. For example, if the yearly growth of GDP is 2% and the yearly growth in labor productivity is 2%, there will be 0% yearly growth in the employment. If the yearly growth in GDP is 0% and the yearly growth in labor productivity is 2%, there will be -2% growth in the employment. This gives some indications about the problematic nature of the job & employment issue in the macro-economic policymaking. Zero long-term growth in the economy will lead to unemployment problems and will consequently become an economic-political impossibility.

Productivity growth and specialization by division of labor are correlated. Productivity growth normally leads to division of labor. It is needed for deriving benefits of technological progress. Division of labor normally leads to productivity growth, but sometimes also to management-coordination problems. These latter are possibly preventable by use of new technology.

Indications of a Core Variable: Consumerism and the Employment Issue

Thus, all else being equal, the growth of the economy (GDP) in percent must be higher than the growth in labor productivity in percent in order to allow for a positive growth in employment (i.e., a fall in unemployment). So far, we have only looked at the supply side of the economy. It is the demand side that can keep the economic growth higher than labor productivity growth and thus boost the growth of employment.

Productivity growth makes it possible for companies to lower the prices of luxury goods (price elastic and income elastic goods). Such price cuts will boost the revenue from sales. The

price cuts will also sustain spending on other goods. Both effects lead to higher demand and higher GDP. Over time, luxury goods become necessity goods (price inelastic goods). Over time, people become used to these former luxury goods and cannot be without them. A price increase for price inelastic necessity goods will boost the revenue from sales. This can also lead to higher demand and higher GDP. Thus, employment depends on the recurrent innovation of new luxury goods (price and income elastic goods) that over time become price-inelastic necessity goods. "Consumerism" (throw away and buy new) thus becomes a precondition for sustaining employment.

Regarding (1) the needs for recycling and environmental concern and (2) the pressure of consumerism, we seemingly have walked into a trap of inconsistencies. Zero long-term growth of the economy due to environmental concerns seems impossible due to labor employment concerns. This also indicates the problematic nature of employment in the macro-economic decision-making.

Indications of a Core Variable: Technological Disruption and the Employment Issue

It follows that if the yearly growth of the economy (GDP) in percent is less than the yearly growth in percent of labor productivity, there will be a negative growth in the employment (i.e. an increase in unemployment). This is what happens in the case of job-destruction, or "disruption" due to new technology and new innovations that lead to high gains in labor productivity, but without the balancing factor of increased demand or consumerism. During periods of short-term contraction of the economy (business cycle recessions) jobs are made redundant without the immediate creation of a corresponding number (or a higher number) of new jobs, requiring new job qualifications.

Indications of a Core Variable: "Averting Employment Problems" As a Core Variable?

Repeatedly, the drive to avert employment problems, directly and indirectly, crops up as the selected group of peoples' main concern in macroeconomic policy-making, and in its recurrent solving—and the pattern fits to the characteristics of a core variable. Here follow some other examples:
- Economic crises have affected the quality of sleep of a large proportion of the population; many people have had sleepless nights due to fear of losing their job, which affects the national health.
- The importance of employment for the self-worth and self-identity of the individual is obvious. Job satisfaction and job security are highly appreciated. Fit of job content to the preferences and skills of the individual employee is important for job satisfaction. Payment is important, but so is employment in itself - as a unique access to a reciprocal social membership.
- The effects of unemployment/employment on demand (consumption and investments) and production can be considerable. Geographical areas with high unemployment lose inhabitants, and geographical areas with suitable employment or labor shortages attract immigrants. This has consequences for the demography (age-composition) in the area, and demographic changes have consequences for government expenditures.
- Emigration and immigration are correlated with age. The changes in the age-composition of the population can affect the long-term sustainability of the public finances. An aging of the population has "double effects" on governmental finances:

increasing expenditures and decreasing taxing incomes, and vice versa.
- The balance of the public finances is highly dependent on the employment/ unemployment situation. When people proceed from no work to work, this has a double effect on the public finances—governmental expenditures decrease, and governmental taxing incomes increase. It is vice versa when people lose their jobs. Automatic stabilizers build on these properties.
- The task of influencing employment/unemployment by the standard short-term means of economic policymaking (fiscal policy, monetary policy, income policy, labor market policy, industrial policy, etc.) has been challenging. Interventions by these policy-means can improve the situation in the short term, but at a cost in the long term. A delimiting factor will be governmental debt. To plan a government intervention takes time, and when it is ready to implement, the trends of the economy (the location on the business cycle) may have changed. This means that the planned intervention may have the opposite of the intended effect on the economy.

Indications of a Core Variable: "Apparently Averting Employment Problems" As A Core Variable?

The politicians may be in full control of the macro-economic policy. However, they are highly dependent on the electorate for votes. Seen from the perspective of the electorate, the main concern is improvement and not deterioration of the employment situation. The politicians have to comply with these voter concerns within some limits. The macroeconomics "schools" are also attached to political ideology, that also affects the electorate. This becomes like a kind of semi-religious ideological credos. This ideological attachment also serves the purpose of magnifying the difference between macroeconomic schools, as these differences are seen from the perspective of the electorate. Thus, much looks more apparent than real in the averting of employment problems.

Conclusion

Among economists there has been disagreement regarding the proper content of mainstream economics, and about the balancing of the deductive and the inductive research approaches. Confusion of this kind can become unfortunate; economics is important as a potential key to problem solving in contemporary society. In this article, we have demonstrated that it may be possible to use Barney Glaser's methodological contributions to highlight some blind angles of economics - of both "mainstream economics" and of the "rethinking of economics movement." It is suggested that a classic GT should be generated for each type of economic practitioners. Subsequently, the core variables and high-level concepts for each of these GTs should be compared. Then on this basis, an attempt should be made to generate a more abstract and formal GT that covers all types of economic practitioners. One possible outcome of such an approach may be increased tolerance regarding research perspectives. The outcome of such a CGT-process of constantly comparing is expected to create a better mutual understanding between different types of economic practitioners, and between different economic perspectivations. This could be a major research process, but an inhibiting factor is the limited number of trained CGT researcher.

About the Author

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Discovering and Uncovering:
A new Perspective on Dissociative Identity Disorder

Barry Chametzky, PhD

Abstract

Dissociative identity disorder is not new. Yet, there exists a paucity of emic research on the topic due to its covert nature. In this research, the disorder is presented and understood from the perspective of the person who must live with it on a daily basis. Through the newly discovered theory of discovering and uncovering, the reader will gain a more nuanced perspective of the disorder.

Keywords: dissociative disorder, classic grounded theory, neurodiverse, traumagenic, multiplicity, post-traumatic stress disorder, ketamine

In life, the idea of an elevator speech is extremely important. Consider a job interview where the interviewer states, "Tell me about yourself." In approximately one minute or less, an interviewee needs to present a comprehensive picture of who he or she is. This situation seems innocuous enough to a neurotypical person. But, for someone with a dissociative disorder, a question like "Who are you?" or a request to talk about oneself can potentially be stress-provoking and confusing.

Additionally, there is a famous line from an old song "I hear singing and there's no one there" (Richard D., 2022). With respect to the lyricist Irvin Berlin who wrote the words to the song, people who suffer with a dissociative disorder can legitimately say "I hear voices and there's no one there." People suffering from a dissociative disorder such as dissociative identity disorder (DID) or otherwise specified dissociative disorder (OSDD) may indeed hear internal voices and have internal conversations; they believe that nothing unusual is going on (Anonymous, 2018). As one participant remarked, after all, don't we all talk to ourselves at times?

The foundation for a discussion about dissociative identity disorder is evident in these two seemingly different examples. The idea of one's identity--whether it is an elevator speech for a job interview or hearing internal voices--becomes a crucial and fundamental component for a person who experiences dissociative identity disorder.

Because of a paucity of scholarly research presenting and explaining DID from the perspective of the patient, the goal of this research is to understand more clearly and comprehensively what it is like to live with the dissociative disorder. To achieve this emic objective, a discussion about the disorder with a common language is needed.

Methodology

The research design used in this study is classic grounded theory. One benefit of this design is to understand in a more nuanced manner the main concerns of participants as they address their main concern: living with a dissociative disorder. The author adhered to the principles of classic grounded theory (Glaser, 1965, 1967, 1998). Procedurally, gerund codes were created from the data collected during the data gathering process. Through constant comparison (Glaser, 1965), memos were written to discover and explain connections that were not previously evident. Further comparisons were made among the codes to generate broader categories. Memos were constantly compared one with another as the data were conceptualized ultimately to develop a theory which explains how people deal with their dissociative identity disorder.

Instrument

As a research design, classic grounded theory is a bit unusual when compared with other (qualitative) research designs. With classic grounded theory, the objective is to "instill a spill" (Glaser, 2009, p. 22): a manner in which participants can talk openly and freely about whatever issues they might have regarding their main concern (Spradley, 1979). The beauty of classic grounded theory is that a single instrument is used instead of a semi-structured interview with a list of questions to be validated. In classic grounded theory, a typical instrument is a single "grand tour question" (Leech, 2002, p. 667). For a study like this, the grand tour question was "What is it like living with a dissociative disorder?" With such a question, one would imagine that participants would be able to interpret the question in any way they desire. However, given the nature of this study and the vulnerable population, a slightly different protocol was employed.

Barney Glaser (1998) had a well-known dictum: "All is data" (p. 8; 2007). The significance of this statement cannot be understated, especially in light of this research involving a vulnerable population. With this precept in mind, the researcher was able to use the aforementioned grand tour question as a research question to look at publicly available data on from different online sources (different websites, Facebook, YouTube, and Reddit). With this grand tour question in mind, a total of 20 sources were reviewed. By attempting to simulate a *tabula rasa*, to the extent possible (Simmons, 2011), and through extensive and detailed memo writing, the researcher developed the theory of discovering and uncovering.

Literature Review

In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), a distinction exists between DID and otherwise specified dissociative disorder (OSDD). While DID "is characterized by a) the presence of two or more distinct personality states or an experience of possession and b) recurrent episodes of amnesia" (DSM-5, 2013, p. 291), one characteristic of OSDD is that the alters are less distinctive. Sometimes, with this reduced

distinction of alters, one alter may blend with another (Otherwise Specified Dissociative Disorder, 2021). The result is that the host is not entirely certain which alter is present. Additionally, OSDD-1b presents without amnesia (Christensen, 2022). While these distinctions may be valuable to medical professionals, for the purpose of this research, the term of "dissociative identity disorder" will be used with no distinction to OSDD and its variants.

Definitions

With a brief explanation of DID given, there is potentially great value in having a common language to understand the experiences of participants. To that end, several important definitions are presented here. Given that the author is not a mental health professional, I had to educate myself on the various psychiatric terminology presented here.

Alter: An alter is one specific personality or part of a host. Alters--however similar to the host--are caused by childhood traumas ("Dissociative Identity Disorder," 2022) and post-traumatic stressors (DSM-5, 2013). Alters can have separate memories and awareness from the host.

Co-consciousness: When one or more alters know what is happening with the body and can communicate internally with the host (Dissociative identity disorder research [DIDR], 2022).

Fronting: Fronting occurs when one of the alters presents him or herself and is in control of the body and voice of the host. This personality is said to be dominant (Patrichi et al., 2021). In such an instance, the alter who is fronting may have similar or very different mannerisms and speech from the host.

Host: A host is the physical human being another person sees in everyday life.

Multiple Personality Disorder: This disorder is the older name of dissociative identity disorder. In the DSM-3, until 1994, the name multiple personality disorder was used (Paroma & Ankit, 2021; Pietkiewicz et al., 2021).

Plurality: The idea of two or more alters being associated with one physical body is termed plurality (Reinders et al., 2017). With dissociative identity disorder, multiple personalities exist (Costabile et al., 2018).

Switching: Switching is the term used to mean changing from either the host to an alter, or between alters (Cudzik et al., 2019). A switch may sometimes be seamless or may be more prominently presented.

System: A system is all the alters and host together. When viewed all as a collective concept, the term supports the idea that all the parts make up the entire person (HealthyPlace, 2011). Alters should all work together to keep the collective body and system working well.

Traumagenic: The term traumagenic refers to "the dynamics by which a traumatic event may have long-term negative consequences, including the development of a mental disorder" (American Psychological Association, 2022).

With a basic understanding of what DID is, along with common terms associated with the disorder, a brief discussion of the etiology and diagnosis of DID is valuable. Though this research focuses on the emic aspects of DID, as a non-medical professional, I needed to familiarize myself with the science behind the diagnosis.

Etiology and Diagnosis of Dissociative Identity Disorders

When researchers look at dissociative disorders, three foundational elements come into play which make etiology and diagnosis difficult and delayed: (a) trauma, (b) defense mechanism, and (c) variety. In this section, each element will be discussed and connected to the etiology and diagnosis of DID.

First, traumatic events underpin the disorder. Trauma may consist of abuse, neglect, or any form of mistreatment resulting in post-traumatic stress disorder (Trifu, 2019). Such horrific acts were done to children during their early years of life. Since adults are not usually willing to admit that they were childhood victims of "prolonged child abuse (PCA)" (Gold, 2009, p. 227) and traumatic events--especially if the deeds were done by people who were supposed to be taking care of them--many people are misdiagnosed (Snyder, 2021), undiagnosed, or diagnosed later in life, many years after the symptoms first appeared (Reinders et al., 2018). Also, because each person's manifestation of DID is unique and highly nuanced, and because of the covertness of DID, diagnosis is not made immediately (Reinders et al., 2018), to the detriment of the patient. A diagnosis in children is rare (Wilkinson, 2021). Regardless of the reason for the incorrect or delayed diagnosis (Pietkiewicz et al., 2021), many people suffer unnecessarily with the ever-present condition (Anonymous, 2018).

Second, since dissociation is a defense mechanism (Cudzik et al., 2019), the person might not realize that DID exists. Gold (2009) commented that some adults may selectively recall childhood events thereby further supporting the idea of a defense mechanism put forth by Cudzik et al. (2019). Because of their repeated traumatic events (Cudzik et al., 2019), patients develop different alters as defense mechanisms to cope with the various post-traumatic stress from childhood (Trifu, 2019). The term "traumagenic multiplicity" (Christensen, 2022, p. 1), then, would be when alters are created because of a traumatic event thereby causing long-term negative consequences.

Finally, Kluft (1999) summed up DID succinctly stating that DID has a "chronic, polysymptomatic, and pleiomorphic posttraumatic dissociative psychopathology" (p. 290). More easily understood, DID is a long-term condition with many symptoms which can vary from person to person. Additionally and tangentially, pleomorphism adds to the complexity of DID because what may manifest for one patient may not be completely applicable or present for another. Thus, such variety offers an additional potential reason to explain why a delayed or inaccurate diagnosis of DID occurs (Pietkiewicz et al., 2021).

The lack of talking about PCA (Gold, 2009) may potentially be the primary reason that only 1.5% of the global population has been diagnosed with DID (Paroma & Ankit, 2021). In the United States, the prevalence of DID in adults is 1.5% (DSM-5, 2013) and in Poland, according to Cudzik et al. (2017), DID is a "niche issue" (p. 117). Trifu (2019) believed that 5% of the world population has DID). According to Cudzik et al. (2019), women are "three to nine times more" (p. 118) likely to develop DID than men. Snyder (2021) believed the percentage of people in the world with dissociative disorders is up to 10%. Regardless of these varied percentages, people with a dissociative disorder form a minority in the mental health realm. Yet, these people are not to be forgotten or ignored.

Dissociative amnesia

Many years ago, I was taking a long road trip. The highway was many miles long and consisted of a straight road with little visible scenery. As I was driving, I "zoned out" and lost time; when I realized that happened, I discovered myself a few miles ahead of where I had initially been. In another unrelated situation, many years ago, I began playing a popular online questing game and was so engrossed in it, that several hours passed before I was aware of external reality again. In both these situations, I experienced a type of amnesia. More colloquial synonyms for these two experiences are hyperfocus (Ashinoff & Abu-Akel, 2021) or flow (Marty-Dugas et al., 2020); they are common and everyone has these experiences at one time or another in their lives Patrichi et al., 2021).

Based on the two aforementioned experiences, there was clearly no cause for concern for me. However, what is characteristic of dissociative amnesia is the disruption of the "person's sense of Self" (Patrichi et al., 2021, p. 207). According to Snyder (2021), dissociative amnesia falls "on a continuum, and at the extreme end, pathological dissociation can cause debilitating impairment that affects all aspects of an individual's life" (para. 4).

In the aforementioned two situations, no loss of identity took place. Had I switched and had an altered state of myself compounded with amnesia (Costabile et al., 2018), the situations and root causes would have been very different. Yet, a similarity is present between "zoning out" and dissociative amnesia.

With an understanding of dissociative identity disorder--however superficial it may be, a foundation has been laid to discuss the theory of discovering and uncovering.

Discovering and Uncovering

In the theory of discovering and uncovering, three broad categories exist: destabilizing, opening up, and accepting. Throughout these three categories are two overriding elements--the ideas of non-linearity and flexibility. Before each of the categories can be addressed, a brief discussion about non-linearity and flexibility is needed.

Though one might think, at the outset, that the three categories of discovering and uncovering are linear, because understanding DID is multilayered and iterative, the theory of discovering and uncovering cannot unfold in a linear fashion; a great deal of flexibility and movement between categories exist in this theory.

Flexibility is needed and is a vital component in understanding DID and presents itself in different ways which are inextricably tied one to another. First, regardless of the subject (including DID), the process by which a person learns new information takes time. During discovery, by its nature, neurological flexibility is needed because a person needs to see different perspectives and be willing to learn about those varied ideas.

Next, though DID originates from horrific repeated childhood traumas, the brain is sufficiently flexible and mysterious in its ways to protect the host. In fact, DID is an "ingenious disorder," according to one source, as a defense mechanism to allow a person to escape and hide from the bad and prolonged situations by having alters when physically removing oneself from the environment is not possible.

Finally, one reason that DID is covert is highly individualized of the disorder. How DID presents itself for one person will be different for another. For example, even the alters and the internal world are different for each person. With the sheer variety of alters, their traits, likes and dislikes, mannerisms, and so on, uniformity and inflexibility do not exist.

A foundation now exists for a discussion and deeper understanding about what it is like to live with DID. In the process of understanding what it is like to live with DID, three stages exist: destabilizing, opening up, and accepting. Each stage is discussed in turn in the following section.

Destabilizing

In the first stage, as a person initially experiences symptoms of DID, he or she becomes destabilized. During this stage the patient may present one way externally and feel another way internally.

Externally, the person may push DID away because of disbelief and fear. Minor behavioral changes may be present but they are discounted and possibly ignored. The person wants to "get rid of" DID because of either a misunderstanding or lack of understanding. In short, DID cannot be happening, so it is not true. For example, people who do not understand DID think of Sybil or perhaps Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Often, people think that a person with DID is dangerous. Both examples are not the case.

The disbelief and wanting to "get rid" of DID is self-sabotage, a symptom of the disorder. For example, self-sabotaging can manifest itself, according to one participant, as "dissociative imposter syndrome–an inaccurate feeling of inadequacy or fraudulence." The person is justifiably scared of what is happening and feels like DID cannot be real.

Internally, the person questions and cannot justify feeling different, confused, and scared. He or she is trying to make sense of a seemingly illogical condition. Thus, when a person doesn't believe something, a feeling of antagonism toward or fear against that object may exist. DID is no exception. There is heightened anxiety during this period. He or she is in crisis and not completely certain of how to get healed or what is happening. With increased instability and unbalance, the next phase occurs.

Opening up

The second broad category of DID is opening up. During this stage, the person with DID may experience more frequent switches. As the host goes through switching, he or she continues to try to make sense of the scary process. During this time, he or she attempts to process and understand switching as well as any associated underlying traumas. The process of switching is complicated and can be understood as blurring and balancing, with its component of unraveling and discovering; each will be discussed in turn.

Blurring and balancing

When a person switches, any or all of these three components may take place: (a) physical sensations, (b) blurring and balancing, and (c) dissociative amnesia. Each behavior is presented in this section.

If a person is feeling "switchy," he or she may or may not exhibit any physical sensations or discomfort before the switch occurs. If sensations or discomfort do occur, they can manifest in different ways such as a headache or a tingling sensation. As the switch becomes stronger, a blurring or losing control occurs. Here is when the host might not "feel" like him or herself. The idea of feeling blurry can be nearly instantaneous or can take a long time. Sometimes, for example, from the perspective of an alter, if the switch is not instantaneous, it can feel like "pushing through molasses." On the other hand, sometimes the switch can be nearly instantaneous.

The experience of switching can be viewed as balancing a scale where, as an alter fronts and the host fades (or blurs) into the background, the scale tips from one side to another. During a switch, a feeling of loss of control occurs as the "balance of power" shifts from the host to the alter. From the perspective of an observer, a physiologic change may also occur where the host's face and body relax and a neutrality is momentarily present before the alter appears.

After the host has again fronted, if there had been dissociative amnesia associated with the switch, he or she will most probably be scared because a feeling of being out of control is experienced. Along with blurring and balancing, the idea of unraveling and discovering--a concept connected with dissociative amnesia--occurs.

Unraveling and discovering

A direct result of blurring and balancing is unraveling and discovering. During this period, the host experiences more regular switching and continues to learn about DID and about his or her alters. This discovery helps reduce confusion and fear about DID. Additionally, the host learns about any dissociative amnesia that might have occurred during the previous switch(es). And, as the person explores his or her DID and begins to "[unravel] the mystery," according to one participant, two things happen.

First, as traumas are processed and flashbacks are presented, unraveling of the traumas occurs. Simultaneously, there is a sense of discovery that takes place. The host learns about the alters and their wants and needs along with their roles, purposes, and characteristics. For example, alters are as different as humans are and may or may not share similar traits, characteristics, or gender of the host. They can have different skin

color, accents, genders, even different capacities to endure pain and different brainwave patterns, according to one medical profession from one of the websites that was reviewed. Alters may even exhibit different medical conditions from the host, according to the same source.

Second, as the person begins to understand switching and alters, and processes the underlying traumas, a sense of relief starts to occur in the host and in people around him or her. An understanding of DID emerges. One participant commented, the discovery of DID "explain so much." Participants and observers are now able to explain heretofore "weird" experiences. Unraveling mysterious behaviors helps the host not only understand DID but also be more open to discovering and unraveling the hidden traumas.

The process of discovery needs to occur not only between the host and the alters but among the alters. To give an example of discovery, I will share two personal stories (used with permission of the host and alters). One of my family members had an accident on a cruise ship. In the medical facility, there was a second incident with the stretcher because it was not locked in place. Once the patient was safely on the stretcher, one of his alters, Tom, appeared. Tom looked around and exclaimed, "Oh, this can't be good." While this statement might be a great example of dry humor, it also shows how sometimes a disconnect exists between the host and the alters.

The second story involves internal alters discovering the needs of their peer alters. If all the alters in a system do not communicate with each other, internal frustration can and will ensue. In one instance with a family member, one of his alters, Barb, ate some appetizers before dinner while another alter, Blaine, was hoping to front that evening and enjoy a nice full steak dinner. Because Barb had filled up on some appetizers, Blaine was no longer hungry and chose not to front. As one would imagine, Blaine was annoyed at Barb. Barb discovered Blaine's annoyance and the next day, Barb let Blaine front and have a nice dinner. In this case, internal discovery led to forgiveness and amends being made. In each of these two stories, the process of discovery is necessary for everyone, alters and hosts alike.

Accepting

During the final stage, acceptance is prominent. There are different layers and types of acceptance. First, the person with DID needs to understand the disorder and internalize its existence. While full understanding would be ideal, functional understanding acceptable. Functional understanding means having a clear acceptance and tolerance about the different alters, what they are like, and their needs. Realization and awareness are mandatory. With this understanding, perhaps the alters can help the host further accept the disorder and even begin (or continue) to process some of the associated traumas.

With a functional understanding, too, given the inner dialogue or background chatter that exists in the head of the host, he or she may or may not always know who is communicating inside. And, from the many resources consulted, it is acceptable if the host is not always aware of the alter; the host needs to accept that inner dialogue or background chatter. Sometimes, this acceptance is a major step forward for the host.

Additionally, during this stage, as a person learns about, and deals with, this disorder, getting help and taking care of oneself are vital. As life improves, so will DID. The feelings of overwhelm and "craziness" that had existed during the initial stages of the disorder should dissipate. According to many of the sources reviewed, support and social media groups exist to help reduce any isolation that might still be experienced.

Discussion

From the perspective of a patient, there is a great deal of work to accomplish with DID. For many patients, memory work and trauma processing take time and effort. From the perspective of a medical or psychological professional, there is a great deal of work to be done as well. As a way to continue the discussion about DID, there is value in repeating that DID is a covert disorder due to the oftentimes deep denial about trauma, and the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the disorder in society.

Researchers, medical and psychological practitioners, patients who have DID, and their family members must help remove its stigma by openly talking about the disorder. With talking comes understanding and acceptance. The time has come for tolerance for not fear and misconception of the disorder.

With a sense of acceptance and belonging, the patient will no longer need to mask his or her plurality "to fit in," according to one source, with society. The need for belonging should be present in everyday life. As a society, people need to get away from the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde mentality and move toward something more realistic and wholesome. Society has taken that first step to reverse the stigma associated with DID with a television program like Moon Knight, which can potentially do a great deal to reverse the stigma associated with DID.

From a more academic perspective, various authors have proposed different methods which may aid the patient and professional in unmasking and unpacking the traumas. One potential option, the use of ketamine, is presented here.

Several authors (Cudzik et al., 2019, Dore et al., 2019; Gold & Quiñones, 2022) have proposed that ketamine may be a viable tool in treating posttraumatic stress disorder. According to Gold and Quiñones (2022, ketamine, in combination with therapy, can help minimize the symptoms of C-PTSD [complex post-traumatic stress disorder] (Feder et al., 2014). Dore et al. (2019) reported that "profound psychedelic experiences . . . may improve mental health" (p. 190). In fact, as of 2019, Dore et al. commented that ketamine along with various other psychedelic drugs are being used in psychotherapy and being tested in clinical trials. Given that DID stems from PTSD or C-PTSD, it seems reasonable, at least on the outset, that ketamine might aid in uncovering and unpacking the various components of DID. This belief is strengthened with the fact that there are several benefits of ketamine.

First, it is safe and generally tolerated by patients (Dore et al., 2019). Equally important is that ketamine helps promote neuroplasticity (Gold & Quiñones, 2022) in two ways: through "'synaptogenesis' (creation of new synapses between neurons) and 'neurogenesis' (growth of new neurons)" (Gold & Quiñones, 2022, section 4). With the creation of new synapses and neurons, new neural pathways may be created to help the

person make new connections between statements made during therapeutic sessions and hidden traumas.

Additionally, ketamine allows patients "access to difficult states of mind with less fear of those encounters . . ." (Dore et al., 2019, p. 192). Thus, ketamine could allow the "pressure cooker" feelings that may be building up in a patient to lessen. Anything to help alleviate the patient of the burdens he or she experiences because of DID is worth considering and exploring.

Limitations

In this study, several limitations--to use the broad term--are present. First, in a grounded theory study, participants usually are in the foreground. In this study, though, one might view the lack of participants as a limitation since interviews were not conducted and IRB approval did not happen. However, the choice to use publicly-available data was more of a delimitation. Yet, there was an initial limitation present.

Second, according to Cudzik et al. (2019), women are "three to nine times more" (p. 118) likely to develop DID than men. Thus, men's experiences with DID are not as abundant as women's perspectives and experiences pointing to another limitation.

A third limitation is that data came from a slice of the online population willing to talk about DID. There are, no doubt, many other people who are do not have an online presence and are not as willing to be open about their psychological condition. This limitation presents an opportunity for further research on the topic of DID.

Finally, though all the "participants" in this study were very much aware of DID and working through the later phases of the disorder, investigating people who are in the early stages of the disorder would be valuable. Presenting the voice of these people could and would be highly valued to the DID community as well as to family members and mental health professionals.

Conclusion

The new theory of discovering and uncovering explains the process through an emic perspective, which was rarely considered in the past. The theory sheds light on the internal and external struggles of people diagnosed with a serious dissociative disorder. This new research can be helpful to people beginning their exploration and understanding of DID as well as mental health professionals and other health care workers who are treating these patients. Additionally, family members of people with DID will find this research valuable as it may help explain what their loved ones are experiencing internally.

In many societies or communities, a possibility does not always exist to identify differences in people (Chevrette & Eguchi, 2020). Because of such invisibility--made even more apparent by the covertness of dissociative identity disorder--sensitivity when dealing with alters and systems is vital. And the same is true for using a system name or the names of different alters. To discount one or more alters or a system is insulting, disrespectful, and hurtful. A need exists, therefore, for people to be mindful of what is said and done. "Knowing what to say and how to behave are excellent ways to 'check yourself' before a

situation turns bad" (Chametzky, Winter 2021, para. 1). With the DID community--as with any community--being non-judgmental is needed. People need to put prejudices and opinions aside. If an outsider (that is, a person who does not have DID) has questions, he or she should ask them to learn more about the disorder, the system, and the alters.

As everyone becomes open and inviting, any feelings of powerlessness and disempowerment will (hopefully) dissipate thereby allowing DID to be more overt. No longer would the patients feel powerless or disempowered because of their traumas and feelings of invisibility. From the statistics mentioned previously, approximately 1.5% of the population throughout the world has been diagnosed with DID (Paroma & Ankit, 2021). Though it may seem small, the percentage means that more than 100 million people are diagnosed with DID. There is no way to know how many more people remain undiagnosed. Through research like this and through many online resources and groups, help can come to everyone who suffers from and is affected by this disorder. No one--host, alter, or family member--needs to feel lost, forgotten, or ignored. This research goes a long way to give a voice to these people.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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The Importance of Epistemology When Defending a Doctoral Thesis: The Research Philosophical Nature of Classic Grounded Theory

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Abstract

This article sets out a conceptual discussion based on a lively epistemological debate that took place during a doctoral viva voce examination for a classic grounded theory (GT) study (an exploration of police behaviour during domestic abuse incidents). The discussion uncovered conflicts regarding how methodology is viewed from different research traditions, and the potential impact of this problem on how research (like classic GT) is received and understood by scholars from different research philosophical perspectives, such as positivism. It also revealed how challenging it is, for a novice researcher, to adequately convince others of the rigorous nature of classic GT without reference and comparison to the research philosophical ideas that underpin other research traditions, more broadly. I claim that research philosophy must be addressed more fully by classic GT scholars if they are to encourage the uptake of classic GT by more doctoral candidates.

Keywords: Classic grounded theory, epistemology, research philosophy, police research, positivism, abductive research

Introduction

This article explores a lively methodological debate that took place during a doctoral viva voce examination for a classic grounded theory (GT) study. The discussion uncovered problems with how classic GT is understood by scholars from different research philosophical traditions, and how challenging it is, as a novice researcher, to adequately convince others of the rigorous nature of classic GT without reference to research philosophical ideas. I argue that there are fundamental research-philosophical differences under consideration during the development and deployment of classic GTs, as compared with natural scientific theories. Recognising these differences is the key to understanding the contribution to knowledge being claimed within a classic GT study, and a reason why classic GT studies do not routinely include tests of reliability or validity using the natural scientific method. However, arguing these points to a doctoral committee or examiner can be problematic because there is a general lack of development or agreement in the academy relating to the research philosophical positioning of classic GT. This makes it challenging for other scholars to situate classic GT among their understanding of research philosophical approaches, which is problematic because situating a method within a

philosophical position is often how the academy evaluates the appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach being taken within a doctoral study. In this paper, I claim that research philosophy must be addressed more fully by classic GT scholars if we are to encourage the uptake of classic GT by doctoral candidates.

The classic GT thesis that underpins the discussion in this paper was an exploration of police behaviour during domestic abuse incidents (Ash, 2021). The external examiner, a positivist and police forensic psychologist, challenged the reliability of the classic grounded theory method as an explanation for social behaviour because the thesis did not discuss nor demonstrate how the theory could be falsified using natural scientific techniques. They argued that without using natural scientific validation approaches, the thesis was not rigorous enough viz. the work did not adhere to natural scientific principles. At the core of the scientific method, and this discussion was the positivist concept of falsifiability, which according to Popper (1968) means that before any theory can be considered scientific (and therefore, according to the positivistic perspective, be reliable as a source of explanatory value) (Mingers, 2004), it must be testable using scientific techniques by way of experimentation.

Defending the use of classic grounded theory

Such natural scientific tests are not needed for a classic GT to be of value to practitioners (Glaser, 1978), which is the ultimate destination of any classic GT theory. We must also make a distinction between the way that natural scientific and classic GT theories are placed on the deductive/inductive spectrum. Natural scientific theorising usually adopts a deductive approach whereby theory-building commences with an abstract theoretical idea, which is then empirically tested and developed as a set of hypotheses whereby natural scientists continually aim for correctness and accuracy. In the viva under discussion, the candidate argued that classic GT is an abductive approach, whereby theory is developed based on incomplete knowledge about phenomena; "a creative inferential process aimed at producing new hypotheses and theories" (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014, p. 167). Furthermore, as grounded theorists, we accept that during all stages of GT development, we have an incomplete picture that can be improved with the collection and analysis of more data, but it will always be an approximation–never complete. This concept of "best-fit" explanations of phenomena can be problematic from a positivist perspective because they can be difficult to test experimentally.

There will always be outlying examples of social events that are not predicted by a classic GT because it is not intended to provide complete coverage of the area being examined or a thick description of some social phenomena (Glaser, 1978); a classic GT is not intended to provide conceptual completeness (Glaser, 2005). It follows, therefore, that most classic grounded theories might be falsified (by way of reason or logic) under some set of specific conditions. However, this does not negate their value as a theory of social practice. This is because social events, representing interactions between people, necessarily involve the exercise of human agency–choice (Crewe, 2013). Therefore, people can, and do, behave in ways that are not predicted by social theories, but most of the time they do not. Hence, patterns emerge from social interactions, which support abductive reasoning and can be identified and conceptualized using the classic GT approach.

The classic GT method includes elements that naturally verify the unfolding grounded theory

as being an accurate representation of the social events being studied. These elements include the interchangeability of indices and the constant comparison of indicators, which both ensure that GT development is continual because data are iteratively compared with concepts and data that have already emerged during data collection and analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Continually checking conceptualizations against different parts of the data set and the emerging GT helps to attenuate the impact of any "outlying" datum on the emerging theory, ensuring that the GT being developed is fully integrated, and is conceptually capturing the essence of what is happening (Glaser, 1978).

A classic GT could be understood as being explanatory most of the time because it has been developed from a broad sample of "culturally typical" practice events, and is therefore sufficient for making improvements to practice in most practice situations that are associated with the original parameters of the GT study. The typicality of the examined social practice events can be further verified as "culturally typical" by triangulating data sources, relying on the researcher's professional experience (if they are researching within their field), and through comparison with the literature after the discovery of the core category.

Therefore, we could argue that the explanatory or predictive value of a classic GT emerges from the method, while also being further developed through a culturally defined knowledge framework in a relativistic approach to theory development based on incomplete data that is good enough for explaining praxis (Bernstein, 1983) in support of practice change, viz. an abductive approach to theory development, without resorting to natural scientific tests of objectively defined accuracy, such as falsifiability.

It is not necessary to establish, via falsifiability, the surety or precision of a classic GT before practitioners can operationalise it as an effective way of improving their practice, and even if a classic GT had been falsified using the natural scientific approach, this would not negate the value of the theory. Classic GTs diverge from natural scientific theories in how they are developed and "tested" because they fundamentally have two different purposes—a classic GT is an interpretation of practice, intended to provide practitioner understanding, not a way of establishing objective practice or social "truths". Importantly, a classic GT, as a form of social scientific inquiry, is not claimed to operate in all observable circumstances; it is a set of probability statements, which represent social, not natural objects of inquiry, which are only ever claimed to operate most of the time, ceteris paribus (Glaser, 1998).

Practitioners can still use a classic GT that has been falsified (or where falsification has not been attempted) to make improvements to their practice by dealing with most, if not all, problematic elements of their practice. Experienced practitioners can assess the relevance and fit of a classic GT to their practice activities without the need for the objective confirmation of accuracy provided by formal scientific methods (Glaser, 1978); they "try it out" (logically or practically), and it either makes/or is likely to make improvements, or not. Stated another way, a classic GT is "tested" through a form of judgmental rationality (Bhaskar, 1979), not natural-scientific objectivism, because within a social science paradigm (where social events occur in an open, not a closed system), "practical adequacy" is the test being applied to establish the value of such a social theory (Sayer, 1984) i.e. does the theory produce knowledge that adequately explains or predicts social events?–classic GT fits with this "test" of the value of social

theory.

In the viva being examined in this paper, despite some of these arguments being made, there persisted disagreement about the "nature" of classic GT, which emerged from a lack of philosophical agreement or understanding between examiner and candidate. In this regard, it may be that some of the challenges of reconciling views between natural and social scientists on the nature of classic grounded theory might, in part, be explained by more fundamental problems of not understanding each other's specific vocabulary (which necessarily develops within disciplines). For example, a different lexical interpretation of the word "theory" appeared to be a point of contention: a problem arose with the term "grounded theory." The positivist examiner took this to mean "scientific" theory that is grounded in social research, rather than as perhaps Glaser intended, a complete system of methods for producing a plausible and operationalizable explanation for some, but not all, elements of social practice. This misalignment of vocabulary caused confusion. More fundamentally, there seemed to be a general lack of shared vocabulary between examiner and candidate affecting understanding of each other's positions, more broadly. I argue that this situation may have arisen unintentionally because of a lack of clarity around the research philosophical positioning of classic GT, which then made it challenging to present, as a rigorous way of doing social research.

Classic grounded theory and research philosophy

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), GT is a "stand-alone" research method, rather than being a research method combined with a specific research philosophy–a chameleon that can be adapted to a wide range of philosophical approaches. Glaser (2001) argued that GT is a general method and therefore should not be claimed/privileged as belonging to any epistemological perspective or approach. He went further by providing a spirited defence of the a-philosophical nature of classic GT; writing books that specifically argued against the philosophical appropriation of classic GT, including the dangers it represented for the remodelling of the method (e.g. Glaser, 2003). Specifically, Glaser appeared concerned that the proponents of different philosophical approaches might remodel the GT method to be more congruent with their perspective, and precipitate a dilution of the GT "recipe" through the removal of the unique elements of GT that make it rigorous (e.g. theoretical coding) (Glaser, 2005).

This position has been the subject of much debate in the years following the first coining of the term "grounded theory." The ostensible problem inherent with Glaser's "a-philosophical" position was summarised by Nathaniel (2011):

> [u]nfortunately, neither Glaser nor Strauss articulated a philosophical foundation for the method. So, through the years various authors have proposed piecemeal explanations of the method's ontological, epistemological, and methodological underpinnings, thus promoting erosion and remodelling of the grounded theory method and creating a variety of notions about the method's philosophical foundation [however], the first principles, assumptions and beliefs of a given philosophy contribute the ontology and epistemology to a methodology [emphasis in the original] and hold it together. (p. 187)

It seems that defending the integrity of the classic GT method may have unintentionally created a vacuum of philosophical reasoning, which was then naturally filled by other scholars as they

sought to define where GT was positioned concerning their perspectives. As such, Glaser's fears may have become self-fulfilling. Arguments about the philosophical basis of GT persist in a polarised and often polemic fashion (Kendall, 1999), which has led to different versions of GT being developed independently rather than collegiately–the remodelling that Glaser was probably hoping to avoid and a schism in the GT community. This problem has led to classic GT, as a method, being difficult to learn for a novice researcher because different texts on GT confuse and conflate classic GT concepts in a way that makes it necessary to understand the historical development of GT before one can make an informed choice about which approach to take (O'Connor, Carpenter and Coughlan, 2018).

More recently, authors have recognized the need to discuss the relationship between GT and research philosophy as part of a requirement of most research studies (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). By engaging with research philosophical debates regarding the nature of GT, it might be possible for classic GT researchers to more confidently position and defend their work and the GT method when trying to extend their research post-doctorate, such as when seeking to generate impact by implementing research findings within a practice context. This is especially important whenever their field of practice is closely associated with deeply entrenched political ideologies that are associated with particular ontological or epistemological schools of thought (DiCristina, 1994), for example, Evidence-Based Policing's close associations with positivism and its use as a "technology of power" (Lumsden & Goode, 2018).

Some GT scholars have described GT as having flexible epistemological assumptions (Holton and Walsh, 2016), which is an entirely defensible position, but perhaps lacks the precision that is expected or needed by novice GT scholars when they are trying to understand the nature of classic GT. While the concept of epistemological flexibility when discussing GT's foundations is an advance on Glaser's position, it remains challenging for classic GT novices to use GT in a PhD study because they are still required to justify its basic methodological assumptions to a PhD committee (Lowe, 2017), a problem which Glaser also recognized to some extent (Glaser, 2015). Unfortunately, arguing for epistemological flexibility as a basis for GT does not necessarily provide the surety of philosophical foundations that are demanded within many research institutes. For example, with flexibility might come confusion for the novice researcher, PhD candidate and even PhD committee members who seek to clearly understand the ontological and epistemological position of examined work (Ahmed & Haag, 2016; O'Connor et al., 2018).

It was certainly the case in the viva under discussion in this paper, that there was a "dialogue of the deaf" (Johnston & Shearing, 2009, p. 415) taking place, where both candidate and examiner lacked the shared research philosophical vocabulary to argue or understand the differences between their positions. Perhaps it is time for a more developed debate to take place about the ontological and epistemological position of classic GT that draws together practitioners from all contemporary forms of "GT" in a collegiate exchange that advances knowledge of GT as a method of research inquiry.

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Grounded Leadership, Emergence Coaching, & Classic Grounded Theory:
An Action Research Study

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Abstract

This study describes the iterative development of a Grounded Leadership (GL) and Emergence Coaching (EC) model based on classic grounded theory (CGT), designed to foster the emergence and realization of human potential. It traces five cycles of action research to transform the leadership, coaching practices, and culture of a learning organization. The model describes a co-creative process of facilitating human emergence that includes phases of engaging, discovering, core concepting, visioning, and "so-whating," i.e. taking concrete steps toward realizing the vision. Emergence is the core concept that best explains the GL & EC process. This study extends the insight of an earlier study of GL to the domains of coaching and Being-Based Leadership (BBL). This includes development of a graduate level degree program and International Coaching Federation (ICF) accredited coach certification program designed within an EC framework. All five cycles demonstrate how CGT informs these leadership and coaching models, including the foundational processes of critical thinking, inferential reasoning, and the facilitation of human emergence.

Introduction

This action research study represents an ongoing exploration of the principles and methods of classic grounded theory (CGT) applied to the practices of leadership and coaching. In the first three study cycles we describe Grounded Leadership (GL) and our initial attempts to apply principles of CGT to existing leadership programs.

This study highlights the synergies between CGT and the process of non-directive leadership (Wright, R. J., 2008) and later Emergence Coaching (EC), all of which focus on the emergence of explanatory core concepts that characterize what is happening in the data field of practice. Our study focuses on how key principles of CGT research design, including discovery of core variables (i.e. core concepting) and emergence, inform new theories of GL and EC.

Our interest in the process of emergence related to leadership and coaching began long before we learned about CGT. The principal researcher for this study was trained in a broad spectrum of individual and group process methodologies, including psychodrama in the French school of Sauvage (Blatner, 2000), contemporary Adlerian group process focusing on challenging limiting beliefs (Mosak & Maniacci, 1999; Wright et al., 2021), and encounter group approaches (Rogers, 1970; Schutz, 1973). He viewed leadership, coaching, and learning through an Adlerian-existential-developmental lens as a process of facilitating the emergence of individuals' unique potential for becoming their best, most authentic selves (Carkhuff, 2000; Jackins, 1975; Rogers, 1977, 1996; Wright & Medlock, 1995; Wright & Wright, 2012; Wright & Wright, 2013). The role of the leader, coach, and educator was to draw out this unique potential in those they lead and coach.

As we were introduced to CGT in our doctoral studies, we were struck by how the principle of emergence was central to the research design. It was the first time that we had seen a pragmatic and user-friendly way to bridge the domains of inquiry relating to content/data, theory building, and the process of facilitating human emergence at the level of being and becoming. Phenomenology includes a methodology of bracketing preconceptions to heighten awareness of what is unique in each present experience (Giorgi, 2009), but it proved to involve methods that were too complex and esoteric for our students to incorporate into the domains of coaching and leadership. CGT offered a disciplined design that could more effectively bridge these domains, while also avoiding the complexities of detailed descriptive qualitative data analysis (QDA) that accompanied phenomenological and other QDA approaches (Glaser, 2013).

In our initial introduction to CGT, we noted the importance that Glaser assigned to the principle of emergence. In the controversy with Strauss about the nature of GT (Glaser, 1992), Glaser took a definitive stance about the meaning and priority of the principle of emergence. For Glaser, emergence was defined by the practices of openness to a field of inquiry, suspending our pre-conceptions about what is happening, being willing to not-know, and allowing ourselves to discover what is novel and often unexpected (Glaser, 1992, 2013). Emergence is the opposite of forcing a point of view on the data. Rather, it allows the data to inform us about what is happening. We were impressed by his demand that researchers—and by extension leaders and coaches—suspend their preconceptions, attend

to what is actually happening in the data field of their experience, and allow their interpretations and hypotheses to earn their way in, rather than relying on inferential leaps that were not clearly grounded in the data.

This study also clarifies the relationship between Grounded Leadership, the process of personal transformation, and later Emergence Coaching and Being-Based Leadership. This action research study was conducted contemporaneously with J. Wright's classical grounded theory of Evolating (Wright, 2021). While the two studies were conducted separately, it was also clear that CGT was proving to be a powerful research methodology for clarifying the nature of learning, leadership, and coaching in our various educational programs. The grounded theory of Evolating describes a process of ongoing personal evolution, with an intent to transform. The leadership and coaching models described in this article all focus on facilitating this process of personal transformation.

This study also suggests that CGT (as conceived by Glaser) is more than a research design. It is a tool to be used in any practical endeavor where inferences and conclusions from data are needed to make sound decisions. During our doctoral studies, Simmons indicated that Glaser used CGT as a tool when exploring any data field, from making financial investments to developing services for others. This rang true for us as we explored how CGT informed the process of grounded critical thinking and decision making in the practice domains of coaching and leadership.

It is also worth noting that Simmons explored how the principles and practices of CGT could be applied to the practice of psychotherapy, providing an alternative framework to the predominant medical model (Simmons, 1994). Our work builds on Simmons' insights, further exploring the application of CGT principles and practices to the fields of leadership and coaching.

Definitions of Leadership

We define leadership in this study as the ongoing capacity of people to influence the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others including intended or unintended communications or actions. In our view, we are all leading all the time.

This definition emerged from our work with process groups and our existential-developmental perspective on leadership (Wright & Medlock, 1995). It was also drawn from a literature review of skill-based leadership (Kouses & Posner, 2002), servant-based leadership (Greanleaf, 1997), transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Beck & Cowan, 1996), and feminine leadership (Due Billing & Alvesson, 2000).

Our definition evolved as we looked at diverse leadership theories to help students become more effective leaders. We sought to identify the common element that would allow these approaches to be conceptually integrated into the discipline and by our students. We found that leaders grew when noticing the gaps between what they wanted to have happen and what actually happened, and taking responsibility to close the gap. We also found this gap could best be resolved by better understanding themselves and those they lead and coach, and to establish a mutual alignment that would engage the yearnings of all. We

developed this understanding over the course of this study and the advancement of master and doctoral level leadership and coaching programs.

Viewed within the context of emergent processes and methodologies, we characterized Grounded Leadership (GL) and Emergence Coaching (EC) as a conscious, intentional process of facilitating self-directed action, learning, growth, and emergence of others toward mutually agreed upon goals and purposes, often with transformational intent (Wright, R. J., 2008). In this respect, GL, Being-Based Leadership (BBL), and Emergence Coaching (EC) all involve the same process: focusing on facilitating the emergence of human potential through interpersonal interaction. They differ in the context and complexity of the practices, purposes, and goals pursued and the nature of the contracts and agreements that are established among participants in each context. These differences are further discussed below.

The final two cycles of this study began after the models of GL and EC were applied for nine years to educational programs in transformational leadership and coaching at an accredited graduate university. The first three iterations of this study focused on GL, but the application to coaching was clear. The core concept of facilitating emergence applied to both contexts. We also described the coaching approach as Emergence Coaching (EC), as we identified the core concept of emergence in early stages of our research.

The university develops scholar practitioners through integrating theory and practice in all phases of programming. Emphasis is given to both academic content and the student's personal transformation and ability to facilitate the learning, growth, and transformation of those they lead and coach.

The curriculum covers fields of leadership and coaching, learning psychology, developmental and systems theory, neuroscience and related disciplines. It is grounded in practice-based research, including: an Adlerian, existential development model of human development (Wright & Wright, 2012); grounded theory research on personal transformation (Wright, J., 2008; Wright et al., 2021); and development of the grounded leadership model (Wright, R. J, 2008).

From 2008–2017 the curriculum focused on the GL Model described below, applying the principles of CGT to the fields of leadership and coaching. In 2017, we partnered with the International Coaching Federation (ICF) to offer an accredited coach training program (ACTP), integrated within our EC framework.

The fourth iteration of this study occurred as we focused more on the relationship dynamics of facilitating emergence in a coaching context. We introduced a Coach Observation and Reflection Process that directly applied CGT principles and methods to the coaching process. We also highlighted how the principle of emergence was implicit in the ICF competency framework, resulting in a clear synergy with the EC framework.

Finally, the fifth cycle involved the development of Being-Based Leadership (BBL), an integrated leadership and coaching program. BBL focuses on the micro-moments of facilitating human emergence, leveraging social-emotional intelligence and embodied knowing to discern the felt-sense of the what is emerging for participants in the present

moment (Gendlin, 1982; Rogers, 1996). This addresses the integration of the existential, affective, and cognitive dimensions of coaching and leadership as individuals and groups seek to find the words–and eventually the core concepts–to articulate their emergence.

Action Research Cycles 1-3

The Study of Grounded Leadership

Research Design

We used an action research design to conduct all five cycles of this study. We wanted to identify enhanced approaches to develop the quantity and quality of student leaders in our leadership development programs. We also wanted to introduce more non-directive approaches and skills to help leaders become better facilitators of student growth and learning.

The design was well-suited to address this challenge and allowed us to include our program participants as co-researchers in the process. This increased their sense of ownership and creativity as they actively engaged in the research.

The design was also well-suited to our learning organization since it encouraged an iterative process of plan-act-observe-reflect. We drew on the model of Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) and expanded upon it:

1. Develops a plan of action to improve what is already happening;

2. *Acts* to implement the plan;

3. *Observes* the effects of the action in the context in which it occurs;

4. *Reflects* on these effects as a basis for further planning and subsequent cycles of action (Wright, R. J., 2008, p. 18).

This research design ensured the research would be a learning process for all. We view leadership development as essential to our programs, and this methodology provided the structure for optimizing learning while improving the program.

The iterative emergent process also fit well with our interest in GT methodology and our research questions. Stringer (2007) described the basic routine of action research as look, think, and act. The "look" phase involves observing *how* things are happening (not *what*), an important focus for GT research (Glaser, 1978). During the "think" stage, the researcher analyzes emerging data for insights and develops a working theory and possible interventions to guide action. In the "act" phase, the researcher plans and implements actions to resolve identified issues. Finally, the researcher evaluates action effectiveness and revisits what may be needed (Stinger, 2007; Wright, R. J., 2008).

Another key similarity between these approaches is that practitioners are cautioned against forcing a theory onto data and implementing changes to fit the theory rather than honoring what is emerging. Researcher Hans van Beinum wrote (1999):

One of the classical mistakes one can make is to come too quickly with the right interpretation. One has to fight one's tendency to reduce the Other to the Same, to reduce the situation to one's theory. . . . One moves from practice to practice, and perhaps from practice to "theory". In action research one starts in the middle and ends in the middle. (p. 19)

Glaser made a similar point. The researcher needs to be open to discovery, not-knowing, and allowing the theory to emerge (Glaser, 1992, 2013). Our sensitivity to the principle of emergence and the principles of CGT informed our work throughout.

Our study was reviewed and approved by an independent Institutional Review Board (IRB), which determined no anticipated risk of harm to participants in this study.

Using Action Research to Explore CGT as a Leadership Process

Simmons and Gregory (2003) formally conceptualized the synergistic relationship between GT and action research in Grounded Action (GA). In GA, an explanatory theory is created following CGT methods, then an action plan (operational theory) based on the explanatory theory is created, data are collected and analyzed to cyclically inform revisions to the action plan and theory as needed. The theory often identifies the participants' core problem and activities to successfully resolve it. Once the GT is defined, the action component is initiated to explore ways to facilitate optimal outcomes.

We discussed the idea of conducting a formal GA study with Gregory, our faculty mentor. However, as we began with an action research approach to enhancing our leadership approaches and methods using CGT, it became clear that we needed to pursue a straight action research design. In effect, the theory of Grounded Leadership emerged from the action research process, as we progressively sought to implement CGT as a leadership design. We had identified emergence as a defining principle of CGT, based on Glaser's critique of Strauss (1992), and proceeded to explore how the CGT methodology could inform a new process of leadership in our organization.

This translation of CGT to the domain of leadership practice posed a challenge in how to best apply a research design intended to generate social science theory to a dynamic interpersonal process. The purpose of Grounded Leadership was for leaders to identify the core variable in their interactions that would best explain what was emerging for the participants. This required a basic training in CGT principles and practices, with a focus on applying them in the leadership context. During the first two iterations of the process, student leaders learned about CGT, including open coding and how to identify potential core concepts. Data in this context focused on what was happening with participants as they engaged with leaders. The leaders learned to underline and reflect back concepts that had grab and explanatory power. They practiced remaining in a state of "not-knowing" to discover what was emerging for participants without imposing their own interpretations. This proved to be one of the most challenging aspects for students learning this leadership process.

Core concepting took on a different property in this context. Specifically, students learned to focus on what core concepts had grab for the participants as a focal point for

their emergence. Arriving at the core concept was an interactive experience as leaders and participants co-created the core concept through a process of mutual discovery.

Leaders were also being trained to see beyond the descriptive qualitative data in their interactions to discern the core variable that would best explain what was emerging for participants. In this respect the fundamental principles of CGT were being maintained (Glaser, 1992, 2013).

Yet, there was an important difference in purpose and perspective. CGT researchers are focused on theory generation. Grounded leaders are focused on helping others envision who they are becoming and generating actions to realize that vision. Once the core concept was determined, leaders and participants began articulating their visions and related actions. At this juncture, vision-in-action served as the analogue in Grounded Leadership of theory generation in GT research. As participants elaborated their vision and related actions, they discovered new facets of the core concept they had identified. Often the visioning process led to further clarification and refinement of the core concept, similar to the selective coding process in the research context. Theoretical coding did not become an explicit focus of the trainings, as it seemed to be a complexity that was unnecessary for these purposes. It did however become clear that different phases of GL were emerging with each iteration, indicating that a process framework was emerging as the best way to organize the emerging theory of Grounded Leadership (Glaser, 2013).

Research Process and Findings

This study involved five cycles. Each contributed insights that informed Grounded Leadership (GL), Emergence Coaching (EC), and Being-Based Leadership (BBL). Cycle one involved introducing this new leadership approach and testing it through a student-led event. Students found the CGT content difficult to learn and apply, as it was counter to the more directive forms of leadership with which they were familiar. They also identified that additional skills (i.e. project management and group facilitation) were needed to attain high quality results. We realized that further education in CGT would be necessary, and that it was also important have leaders clarify the new leadership contract more explicitly with their groups in the initial phase (Wright, R. J., 2008).

Cycle two evolved from lessons learned during the first. It involved a deeper exploration of GT methodology and its application to leadership. This cycle included an in-depth, experiential, one-day GT training for 40 student leaders who were introduced to CGT principles and used the GT approach to generate a theory to better explain GL. Data showed how challenging it was for leaders to bracket their assumptions and interpretations and just observe what was emerging from groups. They were also learning how to use CGT to generate a theory of grounded leadership. Student leaders proposed core variables that included Emergence and Ownership, both of which had grab for participants.

The first two cycles of this study were largely educational. In cycle three, we trained student leaders to facilitate participant learning. This cycle yielded a refined theory of GL, building on insights from earlier cycles and our initial hypotheses. In cycle three we identified a replicable process for leaders to facilitate the emergence of positive potential

among those they led and coached. This theory was effective in realizing the goals of our study and continues to inform our work.

Cycle 3: Leadership Training for Facilitating Personal Emergence

During cycle three we encountered a new dilemma. We had developed an introductory seminar that focused on the central themes of our personal growth programs (Wright, 2005). The seminar condensed a five-year transformation curriculum into a single weekend. While an exciting step, producing sizable, public training events posed a significant challenge.

We found that participant success largely depended on small group discussion and analysis activities. These activities helped them integrate the content for themselves. A pair of trained leaders facilitated exercises for each group, of which there were 20 or more at each 3-day event. This necessitated more trained staff than we had available.

Creating a transformative experience for participants required leaders identify a key unifying theme for the participant, generate a powerful vision, and choose a course of future action to apply their insights. Under earlier models, the skills necessary to facilitate this could demand four to six years of postgraduate training before leaders could operate at the level required.

We needed to train leaders quickly. We did so by leveraging the knowledge and generativity of participants from the first two cycles of this study: Those who had already learned how to apply the principles of CGT.

Grounded Leadership

Subsequently, we matched our emerging GL training program with our demand for trained seminar leaders. We grew momentum to generate a framework, definitions, and training approach that is captured in a five-step process we still use.

Working with students who participated in the initial program, we cooperatively developed a GL training curriculum for seminar leadership. This continues to evolve. The course is now "owned" and taught by student leaders who are engaged in seminars and other activities.

The GL training series includes six, 2-hour sessions and a 20-hour weekend seminar. During the seminar, trained GL leaders guide small groups in integrating and applying their learning. Participants receive coaching, supervision, and leadership development. Following the second day of the training, group leaders identify core concepts and an "empowering vision" for each participant that is shared on the final morning. This provides a focus for each participant and helps them discern the programs to best support their transformation.

Results

The success of the GL approach was immediately apparent to our student leaders and participants. Student leaders reported its positive impact on their leadership and their

lives. Empirical evidence is also illustrated by our conversion rate. Among attendees of the free public event, 15-30% have progressed into our tuition-based programs.

A Theory of Grounded Leadership: Facilitating Emergence

Consequently, our GL design has evolved into a five-step leadership process for facilitating personal growth and learning. The core concept that best explains the process is Emergence—a multi-phased, social process whereby participants discover and actualize a fuller sense of themselves and their potential (Glaser, 1978). It includes five phases: Engaging, discovering, core concepting, visioning, and so-whating (designing and acting to realize their vision) (Wright, R. J., 2008).

Phases of Grounded Leadership

Engaging

Engaging begins with initial contact and contracting between the leader and the participant(s). The leader shares the process, establishes rapport, solicits agreement to help define the program or goal, and invites participants to utilize support. Participants agree to engage in full, truthful dialogue with intent to discover and fulfill whatever open or specific outcome is defined. Engaging continues throughout the GL relationship.

To yield transformation, the quality of contact must be strong. However, roles may be defined or left open. The range of engagement varies by purpose and the personalities involved. The leader must remain sensitive to diverse subjects of inquiry and establish rapport with flexibility and individualization.

For participants, engaging requires committing to an inquiry, taking risks, and disclosing. For leaders, it requires a focused inquiry and suspension of knowing to facilitate the discovery process. This state is central to CGT (Glaser, 1992, 2013). It can be demanding for a leader to suspend knowing while staying attuned to emerging truths.

Discovering

This phase is often the longest and the most demanding. In discovering, the leader is required to sustain their suspension of knowing, listen and formulate broad, open-ended questions based on the participant's problem or desired outcome.

Throughout discovering the leader engages in constant, comparative observation to understand the emerging essence. They listen and identify core concepts that are emerging into the field of inquiry. The leader asks open-ended questions that promote deeper inquiry, underlines concepts and situations and observes participant responses. This process is similar to open coding in GT (Glaser, 1978).

In underlining, the leader identifies potential elements that may be core concepts. They may note strong affective elements or repeating themes and remind participants of content flow. The leader can share observations—remembering inquiry is a key to the process. Silence by participants during this phase must be respected and honored.

This phase is like a dance between the leader and participants. As the leader underlines, the group responds and the leader tends closely to new data, underlining new themes and variations, while closely observing reactions.

There is often a period of extreme uncertainty in the discovery process that seems essential to emergence. Confusion and doubt can herald new discoveries.

Glaser (1992, 2013) emphasized the importance of allowing this period to unfold without the researcher (or leader) rushing to resolve it. This is arguably the core concept of CGT.

Throughout the discovering phase, the leader must be vigilant to avoid forcing directions and results. They must monitor biases and emerging hypotheses, occasionally verbalizing them to see if they have grab or stimulate a more focused inquiry.

Insights offered by the participants are a key property of emerging and should be underlined. Insights are eureka moments that mark the uniting of elements and may illuminate problems or new ways of thinking (Wright & Wright, 2013; Wright, R. J., 2008).

Core Concepting

Core concepting provides an organizing principle, strategy, or focus for the emerging vision and course of action. Core concepts emerge from the data and provide a conceptual focus for explaining what is emerging for participants. Concepts must meet all the criteria defined by Glaser, including grab, fit, relevance, and workability (Glaser, 1978).

In this phase, the leader switches to a process of winnowing: Seeking the core idea with the most grab and greatest explanatory power. This is a powerful focal point that can determine the success of the exercise. It provides a stimulus for participants to define their vision of their emerging potential.

Visioning

In visioning, the leader and participants add properties and elements that have grab to the core concept in a coherent way. This effort compels the action or leads to the "so-whating" phase.

This is a critical step. Elements that emerged in the discovering phase are included in the vision or abandoned. These elements are fragile until related to a core concept, where they take on a powerful form. The goal of visioning for participants is to generate an empowering, sensory-grounded conceptualization that compels them toward a desirable outcome. Insufficiently envisioned, emergent discoveries will sink back into the unconscious and participants are untransformed.

For participants, engaging with the vision is often a peak experience. However, it will be unsustainable unless they continue to work. The leader enables them to experience what it would be like to live the vision. If not taken to the next phase, the vision will fade away.

So-Whating

The "so-whating" phase can appear simple. This is where many visions recede into the unconscious. Insight and vision are easily mistaken for realization—the making real of a concept.

During this phase, the leader works with participants to identify necessary action steps. The leader may also facilitate the group's realization of their vision. Implications of this model for coaching are discussed in later sections.

Required actions can seem obvious and this is a significant hazard. The unconscious resistance of participants to their emerging potential can lead to overly ambitious plans. The leader must consciously, artfully facilitate and nurture the vision into being.

In so-whating, the leader helps the participants articulate what it will take to implement the vision, without overlooking the core variable. The emergent vision can only be actualized by setting specific goals, along with timetables, support, and other resources.

The leader may need to recapitulate the process many times as the participant's emergent potential is freed from old definitions. Re-visioning and adjusting the so-what can be done using the model's five-step process.

Cycles 4 & 5 – Emergence Coaching & Being-Based Leadership

During the nine years following generation of the GL theory, we applied the theory to our practices of Grounded Leadership (GL) and Emergence Coaching (EC) at our graduate university. These programs were foundational to our degree and certificate programs in Transformational Coaching and Leadership.

The basic tenets of GL and EC remain unchanged. These following two iterations represent refinements of the theories, most significantly providing a deeper focus on the relationship dynamics of the emergence process and the development of a Coaching Observation and Reflection process to more directly apply the principles of CGT to the domains of coaching and leadership. These iterations also identify the ways CGT provides a model for critical thinking and reflective practice in coaching and leadership contexts.

Cycle 4 – International Coaching Federation (ICF) & Emergence Coaching (EC)

Cycle four of this study began as we introduced an ICF accredited coach training program (ACTP) to our graduate program. The research cycle covered a four-year period between 2017 and 2021, with the first year focused on developing the ICF-ACTP program and the following years focused on program implementation. Twenty students participated in this program during three years of this study. While this cycle includes a discussion of the ICF competency framework and training, the primary focus of the discussion is how this program helped us clarify and refine how we educated and trained students in the Emergence Coaching Process.

We engaged a consultant with experience in transformational coaching and the ICF competencies and training approach to help us design our ACTP program. She described transformational coaching as "a form of action research in that clients do research and thinking, apply what they learn through practice, and then refine their thinking and action based on that experience" (Rao, 2013, p. 6).

We then engaged a second consultant, Francine Campone, with extensive background and expertise in coaching and leadership and experience with the ICF competency and training framework (Hildebrandt et al., 2020).

The educational approach and training integrated the ICF competencies within the context of the EC framework. The elements included:

- Content related to GCT and how it informed the EC process

- A coaching observation and reflection process that enabled students to apply CGT principles to the coaching process

- Group mentoring sessions to demonstrate and practice ICF competencies

- Individual mentoring sessions that included review and feedback on session recordings and transcripts

- Review and analysis of MCC level coaching sessions

- Practice sessions with classmates in triads (coach, client, observer)

- Weekly coaching supervision sessions focused on use of self as a vehicle for facilitating client emergence and identifying subjective factors / projections that affected the coaching process

- Personal Emergence Process (PEP) trainings in contextual listening and intentional speaking to facilitate emergence.

Students reported an inherent tension between the behavioral/skill focus of the ICF approach and the contextual being-based approach of EC. This created some early confusion, partially due to the use of an older ICF competency framework that focused more on demonstrating techniques than on coach presence. This tension was largely resolved as greater emphasis was given to how EC creates a context within which the coaching competencies are demonstrated. Updates to the ICF competency model in 2019 also improved the situation, as competencies were modified to be more congruent with the EC context, including Embodies a Coaching Mindset, Evokes Awareness and Facilitates Client Growth. These last two competencies replaced competencies 9-11 of the previous competency model that focused more narrowly on goal-focused coaching techniques and practices (see https://coachingfederation.org/core-competencies).

A key enhancement of the EC approach during this research cycle was the development of a coaching observation and reflection process. Developed through the partnership of Wright and Campone, the process helped clarify how principles and practices of CGT could be applied directly to coach training. It also helped clarify how the EC focus on emotions and quality of being were essential elements of the reflective process of coaching and coach education.

A coaching observation and reflection form was used in all coach training sessions. It included three columns: (a) recording observable behavior, including "codes" of what was

happening in the session; (b) formulating hypotheses and inferences about what was emerging for the client; and (c) identifying the coach's subjective reactions, including emotional charges and projections that could affect their ability to be fully present and accurately see and assess what was emerging. This form mirrored the CGT practices of observing data, creating codes, generating memos about emerging concepts, and journaling to address unconscious bias. Glaser's (2014) discussion of free style memoing was particularly helpful in setting a context for coding and memoing on the fly that is required in a coaching or leadership context. This form enabled students to easily apply CGT principles to coaching and to develop the critical thinking and reflective practices essential to effective coaching.

EC also emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence to critical thinking and reflective-action. Identifying emotions and the capacity to be fully present is an exercise in critical thinking and reflective action. Coaches learn to distinguish what is happening at an emotional and cognitive level, as they learn to see more accurately what is happening with the client. They also learn to draw on their emotional and cognitive experience as they generate hypotheses about what is emerging for the client. The core concept in this context is not a cognitive abstraction, but rather a guiding concept or metaphor. It is then expressed as a vision of who the client is becoming and the reflective actions they can take to realize that vision.

The issue of the relative importance of emotion and emotional intelligence in coaching practice continues to be a focus of debate in the coaching research literature. In a recent study presented at ICF's Converge21 conference, researchers found that one of the most significant predictors of coaching effectiveness was how clients viewed the moments of deep emotional connection and expression in the session (Gavin et al., 2021). Clients typically identified this as the single most important factor in achieving their desired outcomes and overall success. This study suggests integrating an emotional dimension into the coaching process is powerful and worthy of further investigation.

Students in the EC education program learn the power of presence and "being with themselves" as they coach. These are core EC practices and capabilities that augment the ICF competencies. As ICF training focuses on active listening and asking empowering questions, EC trainings enable coaching students to hold their clients as whole and complete and to listen contextually for the underlying intention in sharing. The Coaching Observation and Reflection process helps the coach sense the focus of the client's emergence and the developing vision and actions that will enable the client to fulfill their deeper intention.

Students described these benefits from engaging in the integrated EC / ACTP program:

- More faith in myself, the process and skills of presence and being

- Becoming aware of my anxiety and taking care to be more fully present with clients

- Structuring coaching sessions to identify and meet a client's desired outcomes

- Letting go of agendas and letting the client drive the session

- Liberating myself from the expectation that I need to solve, fix, and take responsibility for the client.

- Developing more patience to trust emergence to happen in sessions

- The concept of mutuality and how we co-create the coaching experience

- Increasing my listening skills, my presence, attunement, ability to ask open ended questions and to determine what is emerging in my client as they step into new ways of being.

- Learning about research behind the approaches we use.

Suggested areas for improvement of the training included:

- Greater clarity about how ICF fits within the EC framework

- Learning more about other coaching programs and approaches

- Options for sharing information that can evoke awareness.

Cycle 5 - Being-Based Leadership

As our need for student leaders has grown, we've found many to be over eager and forcing interaction and outcomes rather than facilitating emergence. This problem led to cycle five: Development and introduction of a refined leadership model or Being-Based Leadership (BBL). BBL helps develop small group leaders and production teams of student leaders in our signature training and enrollment activity. This represented another iteration of the leadership training that was the focus of cycle three of this action research study (see Cycle 3).

In this iteration, we refined the GL model. We define leadership as the omnipresent capacity of an individual in any interaction to influence the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. As such, we are leading all of the time. The discipline of leadership is to understand and enhance our capacity to consciously exercise this influence in the service of facilitating human emergence. Coaching in this context represents a central aspect of leadership.

Being-Based Leadership focuses on the micro-moments of interaction and interruption that allow or facilitate emergent, and otherwise inhibited, thoughts, feelings and actions. It is particularly relevant in learning contexts.

In feedback sessions with students, it became clear that the heart of the BBL training involved modeling the facilitation of emergence. It involves a way of being and a way of seeing what is happening in interactions that we have with ourselves and others.

A number of factors emerged from discussion with students. First, it was clear that the coach delighted in noticing when a person was becoming more themselves or closing the door on their becoming (when the coach typically intervened). This was marked by a comment, expression, or emphatic observation of what they saw happening, followed by a challenge for the student to stop and take notice themselves. This was a co-creative

yearning to exist--A yearning to see a person becoming their authentic self. It can involve the coach existing in the presence of the person, particularly when the pattern is "freight-training" (i.e., the person is charging forth unaware of themselves in the interaction).

This is clearly more than a technical skill. The primary author conveyed his delight and described seeing the person's whole life journey unfold in these micro-moments. He described a moment many years earlier when he seemed to sense what was going on with another person and coached them toward a more successful realization of their intent. It wasn't clear how this ability was developed or how he learned it. But he had a deep hunger to facilitate his own emergence and to become more fully his genuine self. That yearning expressed itself in a heightened sensitivity to choice points when one chooses to step into the unknown or close the door. The willingness to sense those moments and choose to keep the door open is at the heart of BBL.

This ability cannot be taught in a traditional sense. We believe the next step in the iteration of the training will be to design a rubric to enable students to track their own progression.

Regarding the current structure and content of the training and how it can be improved, students commented:

- The training is about learning to be with yourself as you are being with others, and to notice what's going on with you that either enables you to accurately see the other person or not.

- It's about focusing on how you are being rather than what you are doing.

- It is grounded in your embodied experience of what is going on as you engage with others–and what you notice about their experience.

- It's about focusing on the micro-moments of interaction to see the myriad of possibilities for choices that emerge for you and for those you are engaging with.

- It's about learning to contain your reactions and being conscious of what's going on in the moment, rather than doing what you historically might have done.

- Two main assignments involve (a) not doing what you typically would and noticing how else you might be, and (b) playing ping-pong in your interactions with others, noticing how you "hit the ball" and how they "return the shot" and then how your return that shot, etc. Catching the patterns and seeing what's happening.

- Noticing the moments of interactions as the "atoms" of human interaction–the building blocks of what is happening all the time;

- Settling into your body and cultivating the capacity for presence and compassion for myself and others;

- Calming the chatter in our minds to really be with another human being – and with ourselves;

- Learning to listen better with greater empathy; and,

- Building capacity to be with myself and choosing how I want to be.

A central goal of the training from an action-research perspective is to develop the capacity of BBL among leaders to more effectively lead and coach others in all our programs, including our signature training program. Each participant in the training agrees to serve as a team lead in various program components as their training "tuition." Students also described the increased skills they were developing to facilitate participant growth and learning. Similar benefits were described in the context of leadership opportunities.

Key suggestion for improvement of the BBL training included:

- creating more structure between sessions (every three weeks) to build momentum and retain learning;

- learning the sequence of BBL skills (This observation led to the discussion of the process, described previously.);

- more structure in what to orient to between sessions; and,

- a rubric for students to assess where they are on the continuum toward competence and mastery of BLL.

Conclusion

Grounded Leadership, Emergence Coaching, and Being-Based Leadership represent practices based on an integrated classic GT framework with important applications in the fields of transformational learning, coaching, and leadership. Specifically, each practice sheds light on the process of facilitating the emergence of positive potentials in these various contexts and within any system.

Synergies between GL, EC, BBL, and Evolating Theory

While this study and the grounded theory study of personal transformation (i.e. evolating) were conducted independently, there are important synergies between the two. Evolating theory identifies six phases focused on consciously engaging in one's own evolution with the intent to transform: Yearning, engaging, revelating, liberating, rematrixing, and dedicating (Wright et al., 2021). Engaging is understood in this context as yearning-based engagement, where learners access their yearning as the driver of the evolating process. Yearning is recognized as a vague dissatisfaction or desire expressed by engaging in activities and interactions in order to drive an ongoing process of self-discovery (revelating), which in turn finds expression in liberating action. Rematrixing and dedicating represent the phases of personal transformation during which learners strategically plan and implement the vision of their own becoming in a process of lifelong learning.

The phases of GL and EC include engaging, discovering, core concepting, visioning, and "so-whating." Through the lens of evolating, EC facilitates yearning, engaging, revelating (core concepting) and liberating (so-whating). While these phases are defined differently in this study, there are obvious synergies between them. As leaders and coaches collaboratively engage with those they support, they follow their yearnings to contribute to a worthy goal and support the learning, development and transformation of others. The first three phases of this study—the student event, the GT training, and facilitated learning in the seminar—involved facilitating personal transformation. Likewise, the processes of EC and BBL are designed to facilitate transformation. This yearning to engage in transformative learning and become our best, most authentic selves is the core of all of our graduate programs (Wright & Wright, 2013).

The Core Curriculum of Transformational Coaching & Leadership

This study stops short of developing implications for an integrated graduate-level curriculum in transformational coaching and leadership. To do so would require clarification of the core academic disciplines that inform the curriculum including developmental, Adlerian, and existential-humanistic, psychology; educational theory and practice; systems theory; and relevant neuroscience and related research. It also would require a consideration of the cultural context of leadership and a holistic approach to problem solving and transformational change.

By applying the practices of GL, EC, and BBL to the development of an integrative graduate program, we have found that classic GT methodology and related principles inform all of our approaches to critical thinking, research, and practice. The principles of suspending preconceptions, openness to discovery, grounding abstractions in experiential data, and allowing insights to emerge are foundational to our educational, coaching and leadership research, and practice.

The application of critical thinking and reflective learning in the practices of GL, EC, and BBL also suggest a rethinking of predominant models of experiential and transformative learning that tend to emphasize the abstraction of thought from the emotional immediacy of experience and reflective action (Cox, 2013; Kolb, 1984). As we saw in the dynamics of EC and BBL, the micro-moments of presence between persons creates a liminal space for grounded critical thinking and liberating action. As we continue to apply these insights to our graduate programs, we are discovering new models that can inform these fields.

Toward a Grounded Formal Theory of Human Emergence

As Glaser (1978) indicated, a substantive GT related to a specific practice area and context can often be the foundation for a theory with broader applications. This is the power of CGT methodology, which focuses on generalizable processes rather than specific properties of the participants or contexts. A formal theory of human emergence would address human ways of being, knowing, doing, including practices of coaching, leading, learning, and personal transformation (among others). This article and the related article on evolating represent initial steps toward such a theory. It represents an important area for continuing research and experimentation to further clarify the broader implications of CGT to the fields of learning psychology and transformational coaching and leadership.

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