



# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

## **Organizational Careers: A forward theory**

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

## **Navigating the process of ethical approval: A methodological note**

*Eileen Carey, RNID, BSc. (hons), MSc.*

## **Institutional Review Boards: Perspectives from the United States**

*Alvita Nathaniel, Ph.D., FNP-BC, FAANP*

## **International Perspectives of Ethical Approval: The New Zealand scene**

*Antoinette M. McCallin, RN, Ph.D.*

## **A Swedish Perspective on Research Ethics Review**

*Hans Thulesius, M.D., G.P., Ph.D.*

## **Book Reviews:**

**Kaplan, S. (2008). Children in Genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation, London: International Psychoanalysis Library**

*Carol Roderick, M.Ed., Ph.D.*

**Theory buried under heavy description. *Children in Genocide: extreme traumatization and affect regulation*, International Psychoanalysis Library, 2008.**

*Vivian B. Martin Ph.D.*

**Comments on the reviews of Kaplan, S. (2008). *Children in genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation*. London: International Psychoanalytical Association**

*Suzanne Kaplan, Ph.D.*



# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

## Editor-in-Chief

Judith Holton, Ph.D.

Charlottetown, PE, CANADA

Email: [Judith@groundedtheoryreview.com](mailto:Judith@groundedtheoryreview.com)

## Publisher

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

## Sociology Press

P.O. Box 400

Mill Valley, CA, USA

94942

Tel: 415 388 8431

Fax: 415 381 2254

Email: [order@sociologypress.com](mailto:order@sociologypress.com)

ISSN 1556-1542 (print version)

ISSN 1556-1550 (electronic version)



## **Peer Review Editors**

**Tom Andrews, Ph.D.**

School of Nursing and Midwifery

University College Cork, IRL

Email: [t.andrews@ucc.ie](mailto:t.andrews@ucc.ie)

**Olavur Christiansen, Ph.D.**

University of the Faroe Islands

Email: [OlavurC@setur.fo](mailto:OlavurC@setur.fo)

**Helene Ekström, MD, Ph.D.**

Kronoberg County Research Centre

Department of Community Medicine

Vaxjo, SE

Email: [helene.ekstrom@ltkronoberg.se](mailto:helene.ekstrom@ltkronoberg.se)

**Walter Fernández, Ph.D.**

Co-Director, National Centre for Information Systems Research

School of Accounting and Business Information Systems

ANU College of Business and Economics

The Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 0200

Email: [walter.fernandez@anu.edu.au](mailto:walter.fernandez@anu.edu.au)

**Astrid Gynnild, Ph.D.**

Post Doctoral Research Associate

Department of Information Science and Media Studies

Bergen University, NO

Email: [agynnild@gmail.com](mailto:agynnild@gmail.com)

**Cheri Ann Hernandez, RN, Ph.D., CDE**

Associate Professor

Faculty of Nursing

University of Windsor, ON

Canada

Email: [cherih@uwindsor.ca](mailto:cherih@uwindsor.ca)

**Agnes Higgins, RN, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor Mental Health

School of Nursing and Midwifery

Trinity College Dublin, IRL

Email: [ahiggins@tcd.ie](mailto:ahiggins@tcd.ie)

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

### **Tina L. Johnston, Ph.D.**

Department of Science and Mathematics Education  
Oregon State University  
[tina@deadhat.com](mailto:tina@deadhat.com)

### **Graham Kenealy, Ph.D.**

Manchester Business School  
University of Manchester  
Manchester, UK.  
Email: [graham.kenealy@scsoffice.com](mailto:graham.kenealy@scsoffice.com)

### **Antoinette M. McCallin, Ph.D., RN**

Head of Research, Division of Health Care Practice  
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences  
AUT University  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Email: [amccalli@aut.ac.nz](mailto:amccalli@aut.ac.nz)

### **Alvita Nathaniel, Ph.D., APRN, BC**

Director, Nurse Practitioner Track  
School of Nursing  
West Virginia University  
Charleston, WV  
Email: [anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu)

### **Carol Roderick, Ph.D.**

Educational Development Associate  
St. Mary's University  
Halifax, NS  
**Canada**  
Email: [croderic@unb.ca](mailto:croderic@unb.ca)

### **Mark S. Rosenbaum, Ph.D.**

Northern Illinois University  
College of Business, Department of Marketing  
DeKalb, IL  
Email: [mrosenbaum@niu.edu](mailto:mrosenbaum@niu.edu)

### **Anna Sandgren, RN, MSc, Ph.D.**

School of Health Sciences and Social Work &  
Kronoberg County Research Centre  
Växjö University, Sweden  
Email: [Anna.Sandgren@telia.com](mailto:Anna.Sandgren@telia.com)

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

**Helen Scott, Ph.D.**

Managing Consultant  
Grounded Theory Online

**Email:** [helen.scott@groundedtheoryonline.com](mailto:helen.scott@groundedtheoryonline.com)

**Hans Thulesius, GP, Ph.D.**

Kronoberg County Research Centre  
Department of Community Medicine  
Vaxjo, SE

**Email:** [hans.thulesius@ltkronoberg.se](mailto:hans.thulesius@ltkronoberg.se)

## **Copy Editor**

**Carol Roderick, Ph.D.**

Educational Development Associate  
St. Mary's University  
Halifax, NS

**Canada**

**E-mail:** [carol.roderick@smu.ca](mailto:carol.roderick@smu.ca)





# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

## Contents

From the Editor.....	<i>i</i>
<b>Organizational Careers: A forward theory</b> .....	1
<i>Barney G. Glaser, Ph.D., Hon. Ph.D.</i>	
<b>Navigating the process of ethical approval: A methodological note</b> .....	19
<i>Eileen Carey, RNID, BSc. (hons), MSc.</i>	
<b>Institutional Review Boards: Perspectives from the United States</b> .....	33
<i>Alvita Nathaniel, Ph.D., FNP-BC, FAANP</i>	
<b>International Perspectives of Ethical Approval: The New Zealand scene</b> .....	43
<i>Antoinette M. McCallin, RN, Ph.D.</i>	
<b>A Swedish Perspective on Research Ethics Review</b> .....	51
<i>Hans Thulesius, M.D., G.P., Ph.D.</i>	
<b>Book Review: Kaplan, S. (2008). <i>Children in Genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation</i>, London: International Psychoanalysis Library</b> .....	57
<i>Carol Roderick, M.Ed., Ph.D.</i>	
<b>Theory buried under heavy description. <i>Children in Genocide: extreme traumatization and affect regulation</i>, International Psychoanalysis Library, 2008.</b> .....	63
<i>Vivian B. Martin Ph.D.</i>	
<b>Comments on the reviews of Kaplan, S. (2008). <i>Children in genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation</i>. London: International Psychoanalytical Association</b> .....	67
<i>Suzanne Kaplan, Ph.D.</i>	



# The Grounded Theory Review: An international journal

## From the Editor

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

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

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

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

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

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

- Judith A. Holton, Ph.D.

## Submissions

We welcome papers presenting substantive and formal classic grounded theories from a broad range of disciplines. All papers submitted are double blind peer reviewed and comments provided back to the authors. Papers accepted for publication will be good examples or practical applications of classic grounded theory methodology. Comments on papers published are also welcomed; these will be shared with the authors and may be published in subsequent issues of the Review. Manuscripts should be prepared as Word (.doc) files using single line spacing and New Century Schoolbook 11 pt typeface. Forward submissions as Word documents to Judith Holton at [judith@groundedtheoryreview.com](mailto:judith@groundedtheoryreview.com)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## **Organizational Careers: A forward theory<sup>1</sup>**

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

### **Introduction**

In general, organizations obtain work from people by offering them some kind of career within their structures. The operation of organizations, therefore, depends on people's assuming a career orientation toward them. To generate this orientation, organizations distribute rewards, working conditions, and prestige to their members according to career level; thus these benefits are properties of the organizational career. To advance in this career is to receive more or better of all or some of these benefits. Generally speaking, therefore, people work to advance their organizational careers. But also, generally speaking, people do not like to talk about their careers or to be asked about them in everyday conversations with many or unknown people. In this sense, a person's own organizational career is a sensitive or "taboo topic." Discussions with others about one's career occur only under the most private, discreet conditions. As a result, while people may talk abstractly and generally about careers, these discussions are typically based on a combination of the little they know of their own career and much speculation. They often have very little particular or general knowledge based on actual careers. These observations apply also to a large sector or the sociological community, as indicated by a brief perusal of the table of contents of sociological monographs and readers on organizations. The topic of careers is seldom discussed and almost never concertedly focused upon.

Several sociologists, however, have written on careers in general in their focus on problems of work and professionals. Many of their discussions, of course, clearly refer to organizational careers, though these sociologists are writing on the general topic of occupational careers. There is a difference between these two topics. An occupational career is a very general category referring to a patterned path of mobility

---

<sup>1</sup> The following paper is extracted from Glaser, B.G. (1968). *Organizational careers: A sourcebook for theory*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company. The full text is available through [www.sociologypress.com](http://www.sociologypress.com)



## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

wherever it may take people geographically, organizationally, and socially while following a certain type of work. An organizational career, in contrast, is a specific entity offered by an organization to people working in it, using its services, or buying its goods.

### **Purpose of This Reader**

Since so much of what we all do is linked with organizations, it is very important to consider an organizational career as a special entity and develop our understanding of it. We hope to achieve this purpose partially by bringing together many articles on careers that fit the category of organizational work careers. This act itself will initiate much general understanding.

We also wish to start the generation of a formal, grounded theory of organizational careers by initiating comparative analysis of these articles (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Part I). In its beginning operation, a comparative analysis for generating theory starts with the general understandings gained by reading about the same problem from the perspective of several different organizational careers. Pursuit of the comparative analysis brings out several other purposes of this reader.

For the interested reader, whether sociologist or non-sociologist, this book brings together a very rich body of comparative knowledge, experience, and thought on organizational careers. The general understandings, concepts, and strategies gained by merely reading it will aid the reader in “making it” in his own career. With little information on which to base our decisions, we are continually trying to decide and manage how to move through the organization to some advantage. The comparative analysis afforded by this book just naturally leads one to an applied sociological perspective.

For the sociologist, this reader may have several benefits. Teachers may use it simply as a body of information on work careers. But they may also use it for teaching students the techniques of comparative analysis and of generating theory from data.<sup>2</sup> Sociologists (students and teachers alike) will find the comparative materials a stimulant and guide to scholarship and research on organizational careers. The comparisons will lead the sociologist to develop relevant categories, hypotheses, and

---

<sup>2</sup> For the latter two purposes, we suggest that it be used in conjunction with Glaser and Strauss (1967).

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

problems and to discover important gaps in our knowledge of particular organizational careers and in our budding theories. The end result, we trust, will be the stimulation to develop more formal theory for various aspects of organizational careers.

Lastly, this reader will indicate how, in many instances, the analysis of organizations can be usefully accomplished through a theory of careers of its members. The properties of their organizational careers are prime determinants of the behaviour of the people who man the organization. This is, however, a neglected topic in most sociological analyses and descriptions of organizations. The focus of explanations of behaviour is typically upon goals and work expectations, authority and power structures, rational decision-making, efficiency demands, and working conditions. Organizational careers appear to be too sensitive or taboo a topic to acknowledge as a determinant of a man's behaviour, with its subsequent effect on the organization. Perhaps the self-interest it implies as motivation behind behaviour, which is presumably in the service of the organization, is not supposed to be acknowledged.

Furthermore, the articles published in this volume only describe, by and large, various aspects of a career. The concept of "organizational career" is itself seldom used in them as a way of describing the organization as a social structure or explaining organizational behaviours, problems, or facts. If employed in this way, a theory of organizational careers would itself be a very relevant tool by which to analyze organizations.<sup>3</sup>

### **PART I: Toward a Theory of Organizational Careers**

A general theory of organizational careers can be aided by initial formulations from the "classic" articles in this section on careers in general. These articles come from successive generations of sociologists who, because of their training and/or teachings at the University of Chicago, have been stimulated to take up the topic of careers in their research, scholarship, and thought. In these articles we find many basic dimensions and problems of careers which provide a general perspective helpful to guiding the comparative analyses necessary to generating and integrating the various aspects of a theory of organizational

---

<sup>3</sup> For an example of this type of organizational analysis, see Strauss, A., Schatzman, L., Bucher, R., Ehrlich, D., & Sabshin, M. (1964). *Psychiatric ideologies and institutions*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

careers. Further, they provide a general focus on careers of all kinds which show the context for our more delimited focus on “organizational careers.”

An organizational career is one type of status-passage (*see in this volume, Career and Office, Everett C. Hughes*). It is a passage from one status to another through the type of social structure frequently called by sociologists either an “organization,” a “formal organization,” a “complex organization,” or a “bureaucracy.” This career is linked with the organization either by a job in which the person receives the work of the organization or by a client position provided by the organization-patient, customer, consumer, and so on. In this reader, we consider only articles on job-related organizational careers; with one exception (*see in this volume, Internship Appointments of Medical Students, William A. Glaser*).

A formal theory of organizational careers should consider several interrelated central units of analysis: the person having the career, other people associated with the person, the career itself, the organization, and the society (or its sector) in which the organization exists. Consideration of these units in analyzing a particular career is always, of course, subject to their particular relevance. However, the formal theory must consider them in order to guide analyses that make any particular unit relevant.

From the point of view of the person, several basic aspects of organizational careers emerge in the articles of this section. Some organizational careers advance persons to different-usually more skilled-work; some merely advance the career while the work stays the same; and some make the work easier or less skilled while advancing the career. There is no necessarily direct relation between the career and the kind of work involved at each stage. It depends of the type of career offered by the type of organization. Organizational careers guide the person into kinds of interpretations, perspectives, or powers, rights, and privileges, and his identity, and they guide others’ appraisals of the person on these dimensions (*see Hughes*). Further, the organizational career structures, at each stage, the various people within and outside the organization that a person will work and associate with. At each stage of his career the person faces new organizational (and family) concerns which tend to vary his motivation for continuing the career and his loyalty and a turning point in his work life and identity, some being relatively

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

incidental and some being traumatic, requiring transitional periods and occasioning choices about leaving the organization or taking an alternative career direction within the organization.

The organizational career literally moves the person through the organizational structure or freezes him in one place. Thus several facets of organizational mobility must be considered for a theory of organizational careers (*see in this volume, Careers, Personality, and Adult Socialization, Becker & Strauss*). To what degree is the career clearly ordered, and stages and rates of advancement and promotions routinized? Sometimes the career must literally be created by the person having it as he goes along. Careers will vary in the clarity of definition of each stage or rank and how people are led to expect the next direction in their career - they may be moved up, down, sideways, or kept in place. These attributes of career vary in terms of the size of the organization, its general stability, whether and how it is changing, and whether it moves people along individually or by cohorts (all together) at one's particular stage or for one's group. We must discover theory for how people start their careers moving when blocked, stimulate promotions, prevent or refuse changes in their position, avoid undesirable positions or demotions when they cannot "keep up," gauge their career timetables (*see in this volume, The Study of Career Timetables, Julian A. Roth*) and compare them to other people's, handle the uncertainties of movement through the organizational career, become sponsored, give up the career, develop possessiveness or proprietary rights over positions which they must sometimes be talked or forced into vacating, switch careers on the wave of their movements, move between organizations, and so forth.

From the point of view of the organization, the following articles highlight several basic concerns linked with organizational careers. In order to keep itself manned, the organization must continually fill positions through recruitment and replacement. Recruitment usually refers to filling positions at the beginning of the career, but it can also refer to bringing in people from the outside to all levels. "Recruitment programs" refer to the beginning and highlight the continual need of the organizations for new, young people, ranging from those who are highly trained to severely unskilled. Replacement usually refers to the filling of vacated positions, which occurs for several reasons that relate to movements of people in their careers. The organizational problem is how to manage existing turnover, how

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

to plan, generate, and procedurally order succession between positions, and, once people are moved between positions, how to train and help them take over their new responsibilities. The organization must also establish procedures (however codified or surreptitious) for filling highly skilled positions, and for severing people from the organizational career- retiring or firing them. In resolving these problems in some fashion, the organization provides a broad shape and style of career for its people, several patterns of interdependence between careers, a context (often shifting) for these careers, and a ground for routinizing careers, for starting new careers, and for differentiating old careers into several new ones.

The organizational career has several relationships with society (*see in this volume, Careers, Lifestyles, and Social Integration, Harold L. Wilensky*). Many people in various sectors of society are untouched by organizational careers in their own work. Some people just find non-organizational work as their condition. Others vehemently look for these sectors of society and work in them exclusively. But since ours is a society whose principal institutions are run by complex organizations, these people must in their current, daily rounds deal of necessity with others in the midst of their own organizational career-a contingency strongly influencing many dealings.

The organizational career provides for people a stability in life plan, style and cycle, engendering their motivation to work. This stability is one of the sources of a stable organization and thus leads to stability in the organizational sectors of society. This stability is clearly seen in the continuity of employment, style, and plan of life in the governmental sectors of civil service and the military. It is also felt in the instability effects of society of transient and temporary work and of undesirable workers for which careers are non-existent. The educational institutions of our society are devoted to providing stable numbers of people to fill career positions of importance to organizations that firmly integrate society. Organizational careers also, however, force upon vast numbers of people a residential mobility that generates problems of stability for many facets of society, such as transportation, record-keeping, ownership, financial responsibility, community involvement, and so forth. Clearly the facets of organizational careers that relate to society are in need of much research and theory development. This reader does not provide much on this subject.

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

To move toward a formal theory of organizational careers we must generate many theories on the many aspects of organizational careers in relation to people, the organization, and society. As these are developed they become integrated, however tightly or loosely, and represent a general formal theory. The articles in this section merely open up pathways to research and theory development.

The remainder of the book presents articles on several of the current foci of studies of organizational careers: recruitment, motivation, loyalty, promotion, demotion, succession, moving between organizations, and career patterns. These articles provide the beginning grist for a comparative analysis designed to generate formal theory for these problems. However central these problems are, there are doubtless many more of high relevance upon which we have little to no research and theory. The articles in this book provide many leads to these other relevant areas or organizational careers by their text and, importantly, by their lack of generality of scope which indicate the neglected gaps in our knowledge of subjects relevant to the study and theory of organizational careers. The task remains for sociologists to start discovering grounded theories on aspects of organizational careers for integration into a formal theory.

### **PART II: Recruitment to Organizational Careers**

There are two points of view to consider in generating theory on the recruitment of people to an organizational career. One is the view of the person recruited - how he appraises the organization, its career and his prospects within it. The other is that of the organization - how it proceeds to screen and decide upon what people to hire or otherwise bring into the organization and under what conditions it might try them out.

Recruitment begins with the process by which the organization or the recruit reaches the other (*see in this volume, Recruitment of Industrial Scientists, Simon Marcson; Procedures of Academic Recruitment, Theodore Caplow & Reece J. McGee; Recruitment of Wall Street Lawyers, Erwin O. Smigel*). The organization might actively go out looking for recruits, usually with the image of the "right type" of man (social background, values, style, education, and so forth) for the job and the organization. They might tap the resources of third parties (people or organizations) that specialize in (as well as, perhaps, engage in for personal reasons- for example, a sponsor) mating

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

recruits and organizations. The organization may go to employment agencies, placement bureaus, referral systems, alumni organizations, or noted sponsors; ask influential clients; seek recruits through personal contacts; and so forth. These third parties put them in touch with the “right” potential recruits, thus providing initial screenings and narrowing their field of choice (*see in this volume, Recruiting Volunteers, David Sills*). The need of the organization for quantity and/or quality in recruits directs them to the various kinds of third parties. For example, sponsors put them in touch with the quality person, employment agencies with large numbers of lesser skilled people.

Organizations also develop their own programs for reaching recruits directly. They might advertise in journals and newspapers or other media. They may employ public relations firms to guide their advertising. They form hiring departments which start recruitment programs such as visiting college campuses or high schools, interviewing students, and inviting possible recruits with the appropriate social background to come to the organization for a talk (*Smigel*). They develop procedures for “baiting” recruits, at the right moment in their lives, with favourable images of the organizational career. They highlight its most socially favoured, if not its most general goal, and its “great” working conditions. They use current myths to reinforce the prestige of belonging to the organization. They offer the recruit potential association with favoured models- a general, a scientist, an outstanding executive, a famous lawyer- to encourage him with this form of subtle training for advancement. They may also offer him post-hiring education. They figure out limited ways of hiring the recruit, such as with one-year contracts, initial rotating assignments, options, clear temporary or try-out periods, or no commitments, in order to keep him in the recruiting process for a few years to see if he is really worth taking into the organization for a particular type of career. Thus the recruit may not just be hired, but brought into the organization gradually.

Recruitment is then a process going on for a period of time both inside and outside the boundaries of the organization. It is a process of screening, wooing, and eliminating before the career actually starts. It might vary from being a fairly simple process of solicitation and short test period to, as in the cases of academic organizations and law firms, a highly elaborated process, sometimes requiring time and effort seemingly far beyond what the particular requirements of the position and person would

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

seem to demand.

Elaborate procedures of recruitment, focused on “choosing the right man” or making sure that no one who gets as far as an interview on organizational premises is later refused a job, have other vital consequences. These procedures involve large numbers of others in the organization, whose careers will be interdependent with that of the recruit (*Caplow & McGee*). These others will know that they have been consulted, have had some say and commitment to a decision, and can protest if comparative discrepancies in the organizational career offered to the recruit might cause personal or general morale problems. Other organizations, such as the army, simply ignore the wishes and problems of other members who will have interdependent careers with the recruit. Fitness for these positions is arrived at on the basis of objective, technical criteria, not on subtle, personal, and organizationally sensitive ones embodied in elaborate procedures.

Another condition affecting recruitment procedures is how easy will it be to get rid of people who do not work out. This condition influences how important it is to screen and try out recruits. Some organizations can never fire or “lay off” a person once the career has started. Other organizations can simply ask the man to leave. Yet others must go through an extended “edging out” process.

Organizations must also contend with their position among other organizations in the competitive market for recruits. Sometimes their procedures must work very fast to win out in intense competition. Other times they have months to decide, even if the competition is stiff.

The organization must also screen people for its future as well as its current requirements and provide images of careers that entice recruits into a long-range or short-range view of possible commitment. Thus some recruits will plan on becoming executives in later years, and others will plan on a short stint for experience and their record before moving on to a more permanent career.

The recruit might actively go out and seek entrance to organizational careers by applying at personnel offices and going to placement agencies. He may also ask friends, make visits to strategic people, and drop the word that he is available into the “right” grapevine or referral systems. Of course, finding the latter



## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

two might be difficult, impossible, or a simple matter, depending on the type of career of the recruit and his current location in the organizational world. It is often hard to negotiate a rise from lower prestige organizations to higher ones.

Recruits from educational institutions might be routinely listed in placement bureaus. This source of third party might be the approved method for becoming recruited. It might also be a residual source of poorer careers, and hinder receiving the best chances if they come only through private, informal sponsorship channels. Depending on his previous educational institution, the recruit may or may not have to be active in seeking a start in an organization. Graduates from the best universities might have to be active and gracious in putting off too many offers from recruiters that come to campus; graduates from other educational institutions might simply go through placement bureau channels with no stigma attached; or they might be just cast free to find a job (for example, trade school graduates).

After contact with an organization the recruit may have to jockey for and then negotiate his offer, if the organization allows such space. This “offer space” is usually found in organizations with higher skilled careers that compete with other organizations. Workers’ careers usually start with a flat “take it or leave it” offer that the union has negotiated. The recruit may have to make a decision about his occupational career at the same time that he selects an organization, or his career status may automatically be fixed as a consequence of being hired for a job.

The decision to accept the organizational career will also include considering *anticipated consequences* for family life, ability to moonlight, kinds of colleagues and need for colleagues (stimulating, none, no chance for contact with them, etc. *(Riesman)*) and probable type of career (how routinized, how rapid advancement in position and salary can be). The recruit may anticipate consequences from the described working conditions, responsibilities, and kind of identity he will receive and feel; from juxtaposing organizational with personal goals; from the size, kind, and prestige of the organization; and so forth.

Many of these anticipations may be inaccurate because of lack of experience and knowledge both generally and specifically with the organization and because of the belief in the “baiting” recruitment rhetoric of the organization. But, however accurate or inaccurate the anticipations, the recruit will usually find -

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

some months after joining the organization - that because of the experience and knowledge he gains, the reasons for which he started the career are not the reasons he stays with the career.

Theory on recruitment processes of organizational careers may usefully begin being generated along the lines of these general categories and properties obtained from comparative analysis of the following articles. Surely we must also discover the relationship of these processes to societies that depend upon the organizational careers of large numbers of people for stability, growth and change.

### **PART III: Career Motivations within the Organization**

Career motivations never quite stand still. The shifting in direction and objects of motivations is accounted for by the changing conditions of organizational life and begins upon entering the organization. The career motivations that lead to recruitment may change once the person becomes involved in the organizational career. The major condition that changes the objects of career motivations is the person's stage of career with its associated problems and contingencies. He may be at the stage where many prospects for advancement stimulate him into working hard and striving for a better position. He may have arrived at "a" top or be levelled off before reaching this limit. This condition generates motivations to hold down a position until retirement, slow down work (if safe), or look elsewhere for a different career. When his performance is judged poor by others, he may lack advancement or be demoted, which is likely to undercut his motivation to work hard and continue pursuing the organizational career.

As the person advances, his motivations to achieve certain goals of the organization are continually being modified by current and changing associations with people in and outside the organization and by his increased knowledge about the organization's activities and rewards systems (*see in this volume, The Recruitment of Industrial Scientists, Simon Marcson*). He revises the "best" goals to pursue for a person at his stage. For example, while young his goals may focus on the basic work of the organization. Later they may (and typically do) become administrative goals and perhaps empire building. New goals of work and career may be literally forced on him, forcing a shift in motivations. Truly the person's motivations toward work, goals, and career levels and movements must keep up with his career as

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

it changes. If they do not, he will be out of line with where he is and what is expected of him. This condition makes him with where he is and which is expected of him. This condition makes him liable to the dissatisfactions that come with discrepancies, between what he expects and what he is supposed to expect and will, in fact, obtain among the alternative career directions and top levels available to him at this stage.

The diversity of kinds of specific careers and their associated work and goals varies with the size and kind of organization. The person's abilities, training, and sponsors condition how many of these career options he may be able to take. These factors, by providing opportunity, engender the motivation necessary to take them. The army, for example, has many diverse kinds of specific working careers for its members to pursue. These are distinctive, associated motivations, as admirably summarized by Kornhauser (*see in this volume, Professional Incentives in Industry, William Kornhauser*), which occur no matter what is entailed in the person's work and organization.

The person may be seeking an organizational career of *service* to people, organization, and/or country, whether he is a highly trained professional, an expert, or merely a willing worker. The service career may range from a missionary to fee-for-service career with consequent variation in motivations. The person may be a *careerist* (*see in this volume, Careerist Types, Harold L. Wilensky; Military Career Motivations, Morris Janowitz*), seeking only to reach the top of the hierarchy, as constituted, as fast as possible in order to have power and control and to better his general social condition and rank. He may be motivated principally toward a *professional* career among colleagues, wherever they may be found in the world, using the organization as only a base of operations. He may seek a *simple organizational* career of constant work with financial and job security, whether white or blue collar. This career is trimmed with modest aspirations, if any to lower or middle level supervisory positions, which motivations themselves can become easily cooled off by lack of promotion and opportunity (*see in this volume, The Chronology of Aspirations of Automobile Workers, Ely Chinoy*). In these careers, seniority and its security benefits provide movement and the motivated goals; unless seniority ends in loss of current position and salary in a particular organization (*see in this volume, Aspirations of Telephone Workers, Joel Seidman et al.*). The person may have *no career motivations* and simply

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

flounder around between jobs within and between organizations; oblivious to or ignorant of the career each job might offer him.

Motivation toward these various types of careers may be initially generated from boyhood ambitions, current social values, religion, geographical regions linked with rural and urban values, more recognized kinds of success, and goals of various professional, educational, and trade schools, before being modified by colleagues and arrangements within the organization. Therefore, the modification that occurs after joining the organization is a result of past motivations and present shiftings occurring within the organizational career.

Since career motivations are ever-shifting, it is apparent to organizations that motivations can be molded to suit their requirements of a proportionate distribution of people into various types of careers. Their tool is to develop incentive or reward systems to keep the motivations for particular careers at constant levels of intensity. By this maneuver they maintain the division of labor relatively intact even as it is changing. Organizations may also carefully recruit people from a sector of society or particular educational institutions with the right motivation for careers (the sons of officers get commissions readily in the army). They also may develop indoctrination programs of a great variety to instill a necessary kind of motivation in the person beginning a career. Some organizations regularly send their men back to schools (colleges or in-service schools) for re-indoctrination on the prime goals of the organization and their associated career potentials.

Sometimes, as a way of controlling its members' motivations to work hard and thereby move ahead in the career, organizations will develop elaborate hierarchies for advancement (*see in this volume, Prestige Grading: A form of control, Carl Dreyfuss*). These hierarchies can even be artificial in the sense of not corresponding to the division of work and its relative evaluations on skill and prestige. This excessive gradation keeps employees scrambling in the competition for advances and benefits of the organizational career instead of relaxing and grouping for confrontations with higher management on working conditions. If employees realize what is happening, it dampens their motivation to pursue a career that gets them nowhere.

Another way of controlling its members' motivations (at the other end of the gradation range) is to offer to most employees a

career at one organizational level with slight salary increases for seniority. Thus, from the start, their aspirations are cooled down and they learn to pursue the one goal of their job and hope they last long enough for salary increments.

In any event, whether careers are spoken of in general or specific types, motivations toward career and work are intimately linked. Sometimes they are discernibly different and alternatively boost each other, with incentive systems for work that hold out career movements as rewards and career rewards that set the person up for new work. Sometimes they are virtually the same - to work for one's career is to do what the organization wants (for example, basic research). A formal theory of careers must lead to describing, understanding, and accounting for these relations in career and work motivations.

### **PART IV: Loyalty and Commitment to the Organizational Career**

As we have seen in the last section, there is one type of organizational career motivation that has received considerable attention in research and theory development - the person's loyalty or commitment to the organization. This loyalty is profoundly affected by how he perceives the organization as a base for his career. The following articles present some of the research and theory development on this subject.

Several conditions affect the person's loyalty to his organization. One major condition is whether the person is an expert or professional who is motivated to have a career as such among colleagues, such as a career "in science" or "in law". The problem then becomes to what degree, if at all, he is devoted to his current organizational base and its career. Some expert or professionals may feel no loyalty or commitment to the organization, so devoted are they to a professional career which transcends the boundaries of all organizations. They are called "cosmopolitans," in distinction to "locals," who are devoted mostly to the organizational career (*see in this volume, Cosmopolitans and Locals, Alvin W. Gouldner*). The organization may need such experts and simply put up with their lack of commitment and turnover, knowing that as they get older, more of them will be likely to become involved in their particular organizational career.

Many structural conditions, however, engender a "local-

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

cosmopolitanism” among organizational and professional careers. One is how many alternatives they have for moving to other organizations. Only by having opportunities to move to other organizations of equal or higher caliber can an expert be oblivious in commitment to his current organizational career. Without these opportunities he cannot realistically transcend his organization’s boundaries in pursuing a career. Lack of alternatives elsewhere becomes a condition for developing loyalty to an organization and commitment to a career within it. This condition obtains even though groups of colleagues elsewhere are still used as reference groups on matters of profession. Two conditions restricting opportunities for other organizations are: (1) the fact that there are no better or more prestigious organizations to move to at the expert’s level of career; and (2) the fact that the expert’s performance would not allow a move to an equal or better organization with an advance in rank.

The former condition particularly applies to people in the top levels of their career in the “best” of the organizations available. Moving elsewhere becomes a moot question. Their local-cosmopolitanism is usually focused on empire building and running their current organization to suit their needs for compatible working conditions (*see in this volume, Career Concerns and Footholds in the Organization, B.G. Glaser; The Expansion Orientation of Supervisors of Research, B.G. Glaser*). These people have been rewarded for successful work at several stages of their careers by their current organization; and they have overcome several organizational obstacles to reaching the top of their career (*see in this volume, Career Mobility and Organizational Commitment, Oscar Grusky*). For these career rewards they have provided the organization with hard work and prestige by the expertise. The result is a “deepening involvement” process, by which a cosmopolitan becomes a committed local as he grows within the organizational career.

The latter condition-where performance does not warrant an advantageous move- arises for experts that are in the beginning or middle stages of their careers. For them to move may easily involve a loss in organizational prestige and perhaps a loss in career level. They must work hard to stay where they are and hold their own in competition for advancement. Thus their cosmopolitanism becomes readily infused with local commitment because this is how they have to “make it,” unless they change their type of work or go to a less prestigious organization.

Another condition making cosmopolitans into local-cosmopolitans is the normal acculturation process of learning to work in the organization (*see in this volume, Enculturation in Industrial Research, Robert W. Avery; Career Development of Scientists, Simon Marcson*). As the beginning expert tries to learn what is expected of him in practicing his expertise, he starts focusing on organizational goals and problems: he learns to do what will be locally rewarded; he learns how an expert in his field makes it in the organization; and he starts enjoying organizational career rewards. As a result of this continuing process of partially working on organizational goals, and consulting with others more devoted to the organization than he, he is brought around to organizational thinking without realizing it and becomes a local in this measure. If the organization's goals are divergent with the expert's professional goals, the expert is clearly developing a commitment to both a professional and an organizational career, with some ensuing built-on conflict. If the organization's goals are the same as the professional goals involved, then the expert's organizational career is "the" way of having a professional career. And though we may view him as a local-cosmopolitans, he may simply feel that he is only professionally oriented- a cosmopolitan- and that loyalty to the organization which provides a synonymous professional and organizational career is part of this professional orientation.

In the study of loyalty and commitment to organizations the sociologist should always be sensitive to what levels(s) of the organization the person is committed or loyal (*see in this volume, Career Concerns and Footholds in the Organization, B.G. Glaser; The Expansion Orientation of Supervisors of Research, B.G. Glaser; Reference Groups and Loyalties in the Out-Patient Department, Warren G. Bennis, N. Berkowitz, M. Affinito & M. Mabre*). To focus only on the total organization as the unit of loyalty is to neglect those who are loyal only to particular work groups, departments, wards, branches, institutes, or other units within the organization, while feeling no loyalty (or even antagonism) to the organization itself. From the point of view of the total organization, it might not matter to which and how many levels of its structure a person is loyal. Loyalty to one level may be enough to ensure hard work and striving for the appropriate organizational career. Further, these structural levels of focus for loyalty are bound to change as the person rises in his career.

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

The non-expert in an organization may appear after more research to be a somewhat simpler case of loyalty to the career. Not having any strong occupational reference groups outside the organization, he will probably be a devoted local working his way up in the organizational career. If not, he will be either oblivious to his possible career within the organization or looking for a change to another organization for personal preferences.

Also, an employee's career, if at the lower levels of the organization, may require little in the way of loyalty except responsible attendance and continued employment to prevent the organizational headache: "turnover." Then the less loyalty the better for the organization when it must, according to changing conditions, lay off, demote, or discard workers. Loyalty to lower and middle levels by non-expert employees seems to take a temporal form. The organization requires them to speak and work in the interests of the company against all possible intrusions merely while on the job-for example, the sales lady, clerk, or secretary.

Obviously the following articles indicate a narrow view of research to date on loyalty and its relation to organizational careers-narrow in the sense of problems posed and an over-focus on experts. We need a more general approach in research to generate a grounded theory of loyalty to the organizational career.



**References**

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine.

## **Navigating the Process of Ethical Approval: A methodological note**

*Eileen Carey, RNID, BSc. (hons), MSc.*

### **Abstract**

Classic grounded theory (CGT) methodology is a general methodology whereby the researcher aims to develop an emergent conceptual theory from empirical data collected by the researcher during the research study. Gaining ethical approval from relevant ethics committees to access such data is the starting point for processing a CGT study. The adoption of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (UNESCO, 2005) is an indication of global consensus on the importance of research ethics. There is, however, a wide variation of health research systems across countries and disciplines (Hearnshaw 2004). Institutional Research Boards (IRB) or Research Ethics Committees (REC) have been established in many countries to regulate ethical research ensuring that researchers agree to, and adhere to, specific ethical and methodological conditions prior to ethical approval being granted. Interestingly, both the processes and outcomes through which the methodological aspects pertinent to CGT studies are agreed between the researcher and ethics committee remain largely ambiguous and vague. Therefore, meeting the requirements for ethical approval from ethics committees, while enlisting the CGT methodology as a chosen research approach, can be daunting for novice researchers embarking upon their first CGT study.

This article has been written in response to the main challenges encountered by the author from an Irish perspective when seeking ethical approval to undertake a CGT research study with adults with intellectual disabilities. The emphasis on ethical specifications meant that the CGT author had to balance ethical principles and rules with issues of 'not knowing before one is in a position to know' and 'trusting in emergence'. Ethical prescription challenged the emergence inherent within CGT methodology. While acknowledging the need for ethical requirements, this paper is intended in particular to illuminate methodological challenges which may confront novice classic grounded theorists,

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

and offer some insight into the practicalities of balancing the requirements of ethics committees with the requirements of the CGT methodology. The author demonstrates that the meticulous nature of the CGT methodology must not be overshadowed when meeting the requirements of ethics committees. The author seeks to encourage novice classic grounded theorists to approach ethics committees with research proposals which reflect the fundamental principles of CGT methodology while challenging experienced classic grounded theorists researchers to stand firm on ethics committees supporting such proposals.

### **Introduction**

In Ireland in 2009, there were 26,066 people registered on the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD, 2010). Of the above figures 25, 556 people with intellectual disability are in receipt of services, 98% of the total population registered on the NIDD (NIDD, 2010). The current focus of Irish service delivery when working with and for this group of people is Person Centred Planning (PCP). The National Standards for Disability Services define a person centred service as one which is designed, organised and provided around what is important to the person from his or her perspective (NDA, 2004). CGT methodology fits closely with some of the principles of person centred planning in that it focuses on explaining what the main issue of concern for the person is and how he/she continually resolves this concern. Currently, in Ireland, there is a dearth of research representing what is actually happening in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. CGT methodology is particularly suited to looking at rarely explored phenomena where extant theory would not be appropriate. In such situations, a grounded theory building approach is anticipated to generate novel and accurate insights into the phenomenon under study (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

In Ireland, national and international policy and legislation such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) have driven the inclusive research agenda for people with intellectual disability from a human rights based perspective. However despite the innovative approaches, research seeking the views and experience of people with intellectual disabilities is still in its infancy. The need to include people with intellectual disabilities in research is important, however, the more vulnerable research participants are perceived to be, the greater the potential for exploitation and so, greater

research ethical regulations are required (Ramcharan, 2006). What is evident from the literature is that many researchers have acquired ethical approval for CGT studies; what is not clear is what the agreed processes and subsequent outcomes involved and as highlighted by Breckenridge and Jones (2009), without being able to refer to useful exemplars of CGT studies it is difficult for a novice CGT researcher to understand and prepare for the practicalities of carrying out one's own CGT research. The purpose of this article is thus to highlight the importance of research ethics and the value of CGT; to acknowledge possible methodological challenges and opportunities for a novice CGT researcher when submitting a research proposal; and, to provide some practical suggestions which may help the novice grounded theorist to meet the challenges and optimise the opportunities when navigating the process of ethical approval.

### **The Importance of Research Ethics**

The first international code of ethics, The Nuremberg Code in 1949, was established to protect the rights of people from research abuse. Examples of such abuse can be viewed in Beauchamp, Walters, Kahn, and Mastroianni (2008): The Tuskegee Syphilis Study (1930-1972), Nazi Experiments (1939-1945), Human Radiation Research (1944-1974), Deception Research, (most notably Stanley Milgram's studies of obedience in the early 1960s'), and the Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital (1963). The central declaration of The Nuremberg Code was that the voluntary consent of every human subject would be obtained (Beauchamp et al 2008). In 1964, The Declaration of Helsinki devised by the World Medical Association in response to the Nuremberg code advocated for independent committees to review research protocols prior to research being undertaken, as well as making explicit provision for participation in research by legally incompetent persons. In the United States research ethics policy focused on the risks rather than the benefits of research, and on preventing subjects from being exposed to unacceptable or exploitive levels of risk, not to enable autonomous choice about participation (Fadan and Beauchamp,1986). Later on, the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research in their Belmont Report (1978) outlined what they considered to be the three most important ethical principles (respect for persons, beneficence, and justice) that should govern the conduct of research with human beings. This paved the way for the research regulatory culture

that had emphasized protection from risk in the 1970s to shift towards principles of inclusion. Researchers were and are now required to include representative populations of women and minority groups such as people with intellectual disabilities in their protocols unless there is a specific rationale for exclusion.

The research agenda in Ireland has been led by the international developments on research ethics, by the magnitude and pace of recent technological advancement, by changes in the Irish culture from a mono culture society to a multicultural society as well as other influencing factors relevant to the ethics of human relationships such as moral issues, limits of confidentiality and truth telling. The Irish Council for Bioethics was set up by the Government in 2002. In 2004 they published guidelines for Research Ethics Committees (REC) (TICB, 2004). The current standards of research ethics in Irish society are driven by such widespread social phenomena as the increasing demand, modelled on the civil rights movement, for patients' rights to information and healthcare; the growing distrust of professional privilege; women's critiques of male dominance within medicine; and the assimilation of medicine to our consumerist and entrepreneurial culture. Research ethics specifically pertaining to people with intellectual disabilities are embedded in human rights issues.

### **Research Ethics Pertaining to People with Intellectual Disabilities**

National and international policy and legislation have driven the research agenda for people with disabilities including people with intellectual disability. The International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) produced ethical guidelines for conducting research with people with intellectual disabilities. Currently in Ireland, there is no central office for research ethics committees governing research for people with intellectual disabilities. Therefore each university institution and each service for people with intellectual disability regulates its own ethics committee. The National Disability Authority (NDA) (2005) provides guidelines for research practice and believes that quality research and ethical research are synonymous, so that adhering to ethical good practice is a quality assurance issue. In 2005 promoting the inclusion in research of people with intellectual disability the NDA (2005) declared ethics to be "a set of standards by which a particular group or

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

community decides to regulate its behaviour – to distinguish what is legitimate or acceptable in pursuit of their aims from what is not”(Flew, 1979:112)

The following are core values of ethical research as stipulated by NDA (2009):

- Promote the wellbeing of those participating, involved in or affected by the research process
- Respect the dignity, autonomy, equality and diversity of all those involved in the research process (p.19)

As the field of disability research in Ireland expands, it is vital that the above ethical values be ensured. In addition the author believes that quality research methodology and CGT are synonymous so adhering to the rigorous nature of the CGT methodology is a quality assurance mechanism. Adhering to these general core ethical values, however, presents some specific challenges for the classic grounded theorist undertaking research in the field of intellectual disability. The following section provides an overview of the importance of CGT as a general methodology.

### **The Importance of Grounded Theory as a General Methodology**

Since its inception in 1964 with identification of the importance of the *constant comparative method* (Glaser, 1964) CGT has opened the floodgates for the legitimacy and acceptance of naturalistic research methods as scientific methods of inquiry (Glaser 1964, Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In 1965, it was the disenchantment of Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss with logico-deductive emphasis on theory verification, inherent in social science research which promoted their development of the CGT methodology as an alternative to the verificational research tradition (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). While promoting naturalistic research as a scientific method of inquiry it is important to recognise CGT as a methodology which is distinctly different from other qualitative research approaches. Many qualitative and quantitative approaches to research have different philosophical perspectives. CGT is a general methodology, which can accommodate any of these perspectives (Holton, 2008). CGT relies on abstract conceptualizations and conceptual relationships while avoiding contextual descriptions and descriptive

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

interpretations of the empirical data, whereas, other qualitative research approaches focus on in-depth descriptions. Interestingly, it is those very qualitative descriptive approaches that have presented the greatest challenges to the authenticity of the CGT methodology today, by eroding the very nature of the initial general methodology which provided them with legitimacy to exist (Glaser, 2009). Therefore it is now more important than ever, for CGT researchers and ethic committee forums to work together to find ways to address challenges and promote opportunities for researchers to undertake rigorous CGT studies.

### **The Challenges and Opportunities for Novice CGT Researchers**

From the experience of the author the CGT methodology in its own right did not present as an issue for the ethics committees; rather the concerns raised by the ethics committees focused on the protection of the participants. Thus, the main subject of concern was of an ethical nature rather than a methodological one, however, the ethical concerns affected the author's ability to employ CGT methodology in its truest sense. Universities overseeing research and organisations providing services to people with intellectual disabilities are accountable for the protection of research participants. Having had the experience of being a clinician in practice, the author could well understand the conditions required by service ethics committees so that managers or administrators: a) fulfil their responsibilities in an organisation providing a service for people with intellectual disabilities, b) facilitate the running of the normal day to day activities of the service and c) oversee the role of gatekeeper for the research purpose by communicating with people with intellectual disabilities and their families about the procedures associated with the research. The challenges lie in addressing the expectations of ethics committees to know all that the researcher intends to have happen during the study; managers are expected to know all that is going on in their organisation whereas the CGT researcher is expected not to know what is going on until it emerges from empirical data collected during the course of the study.

#### **Being expected to know before one is in a position to know**

The core principles of the CGT methodology ensure that the theory developed is both grounded in and guided by the data. Thus in CGT a definite plan relating to the research design,

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

process and number of groups to be examined is challenging to present at the outset of the research study (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Glaser (2001) proposes that the CGT proposal should be simple and compiled into two pages. All that is needed is an area of interest of some relevance and a site or population where it can be studied (Glaser 2001 pg 111). The methodological aspects of the CGT approach indicate that the researcher should not declare that they know before they are in a position to know. Christiansen (2008) advises the CGT researcher to abstain from making any pre-framings or pre-conceptions, as this indicates that the researcher is stating he/she “*knows*” before he/she is in a position to “*know*”.

In contrast, the requirements as stipulated by the research ethics committees encountered by the author meant the completion of a detailed seventy-one page proposal incorporating appendices (interview schedules, briefing sheets, questionnaires, consent forms, time schedules, etc.) relevant to the study. In order to promote the well-being and ensure the protection of research participants, ethics committees require to know exactly what a researcher intends to do in a field prior to providing ethical approval. While it was possible for the author to present an overview of the proposed study, presentation of exact details of what the study would involve was challenging. While meeting the requirements of the ethics committee, the author was challenged to create opportunities which would allow for the development of conceptual theory through theoretical sampling and constant comparison.

### **Having to declare rather than trusting in emergence**

Ethical requirements stipulated that the author declare the aim and objectives of the proposed study. In order to protect research participants, ethics committees seek specific information in relation to exactly what the researcher aims to do and how the researcher aims to do it. The author developed a research proposal to ensure a broad area of interest was a starting point for the research and committed to entering the research site without any preconceived ideas but instead with the ‘abstract wonderment’ of what is going on with the aim of developing a conceptual theory explaining the main issue of concern for adults with intellectual disabilities.



### Observation and interview schedules

The ethics committee required observation, interview and questionnaire guides to be submitted with the research application form. As further protection of research participants, the committees also required information as to the intended primary locations of research, the questions to be asked, and what was to be observed. Furthermore, they wanted to ensure that each participant would be afforded the opportunity to read a transcript of the interview. The challenge for the author was to formulate the necessary forms to provide the required descriptive information while remaining free from preconceived ideas and loyal to the CGT approach. Glaser (2009) contends that qualitative data analysis requirements that focus on collecting data by interview guides with specific populations, audio-taping interviews and returning the transcripts to the participants for verification to increase accuracy in the study result in the researcher becoming overwhelmed with descriptive data which does nothing to aid the generation of theory. According to Glaser (2009), the collection of descriptive data is jargonized as grounded theory which it is not.

On the observation guide, the author first declared her intentions as classical grounded theorist observer indicating that she intended to write analytical notes of her own thoughts and feelings about what was happening in the research setting. This would include notes of first impressions of her observations of each incident, also the general feel of the group/individuals doing the activity and observed relationships between people. In addition, she declared intent to record additional data in order to maintain the observational record as events happen. Glaser (1978, p.74) has advised to elaborate on the six C's (causes, contexts, contingencies, consequences, covariances and conditions) when a researcher is required to preconceive data. Therefore, the author incorporated the six C's and declared her intentions to observe for the occurrence of particular phenomena and occurrence of specific behaviours to reflect the phenomena. The observation guide also included requirements and these were accounted for by Spradley (1986) who focuses on qualitative descriptive accounts such as people, places and things, all of which Glaser would say are transcended in CGT but yet this was a requirement for the ethics committee.

Likewise, the interview guide held a similar classic grounded

theorist declaration that in keeping with a CGT approach, the interview topic guide would be kept general and open as interviews would rely on the emergent data to stimulate and generate discussion on the topic as relevant and important to participant. Reflecting the initial broad area of interest, the interview guide incorporated questions on the topic and asked questions in relation to how this might happen in the lives of adults with intellectual disabilities. The interview would be completed with provision for obtaining permission from the participant to return for another interview, if required.

It was agreed with the ethics committee that access to documentation and photography would be guided by theoretical sampling. The PhotoVoice Manual (Dahan, Dick, Moll, Salwach, Sherman, Vengris, & Selman, 2009) provided ethical guidelines to incorporate the use of photography with marginalised groups of people; interestingly, its questioning fits with the principles of CGT: *What is really happening here?*

### **Recruitment and theoretical sampling**

Recruitment is a crucial and fundamental part of research and one that poses various degrees of difficulty (Chiang, Keatinge, Williams, 2001). This is particularly so when the area of research is one that is either highly sensitive, or that involves participants who are deemed to be particularly vulnerable such as adults with intellectual disabilities. Fortunately, a basic tenet of CGT is that “all is data” (Glaser, 1998, p. 8). In alignment with this tenet, and acknowledging the need to optimise opportunities for data collection and theoretical sampling within a customised research proposal, the author proposed that data would be collected from adults with intellectual disabilities through observations, meetings and informal discussions, in various locations and at various activities. The author also optimised opportunities for the participants to discuss their main issue of concern by proposing to request access to documentation and to use photography which would be guided by theoretical sampling. Any requirements for further theoretical sampling would be negotiated with the gatekeeper.

Maltby, Williams, McGarry, and Day (2010) state that research using grounded theory does not start with a predefined sample. The challenge for the author was that a population and sample size was required by the ethics committee. In CGT, specific identification of the number of people to be invited to

participate in the research is challenging, as the theoretical sampling that is intrinsic to CGT is unknown at the beginning. Glaser (1978) suggests that initial data should be gathered from the individuals who are the best informants in that area. Routine qualitative data analysis requirements are contrary to the flexibility that theoretical sampling requires (Glaser, 2001). In order to gather data from the best informants and to meet the criteria as required by the research ethics committee, the author proposed that the research study would commence with a purposeful sample of participants. Taking into account the nature of the constant comparative method and the need for the researcher to optimise opportunities to avail of theoretical sampling, the author proposed to avail of comparison groups in different services where each of the services catered for individuals with different needs. It was proposed that a purposeful sample would initially be selected and it was agreed with the ethics committee that further theoretical sampling would be negotiated with the gatekeeper.

### **Consent: informed and voluntary**

Informed and voluntary consent has been a foremost requirement from ethics committees to grant approval to a researcher who can subsequently gain access to people with intellectual disabilities. Siminoff (2003) argues that conceptually, a standard bioethics principal-based framework does not provide guidance as to how the process of informed consent should be operationalised. Often consent from people with intellectual disabilities means more than a single act of giving consent. It may mean an on-going negotiated process through the various stages of the research project. Glaser (2001) acknowledges the constraint which the human subjects' requirement for informed consent places on theoretical sampling. The challenge to the classic grounded theorist is balancing the need to provide accessible and specific information to the person about what would be expected of him/her in the study with the requirement for a classic grounded theorist to stay open and to be guided from what is emerging from the data. As the core principles of CGT, which focus on explaining the main issue of concern for participants, are closely linked with the principles of person centred planning which identifies what is most important for the person, it was easy to submit templates to the ethics committee of how the author would provide accessible information to the participants informing them that they would be able to focus on

their main issue of concern. What was more challenging was providing specific descriptive details of how and when and where this would be done and what exactly the focus would be or the exact time the person would be involved in the study. Glaser (2009) directs the CGT researcher to collect and simultaneously analyze data from the outset of the research study with the emerging theory dictating to the researcher where to look next for data. The author presented samples to the research ethics committees of locations where observations and interviews might take place declaring that these were not definitive but rather would be led by theoretical sampling.

### **Conclusion**

CGT has the power to generate a conceptual theory explaining the main issue of concern for the participants and how they resolve this main issue of concern. This is closely linked to the current paradigm of person centred planning service provision for people with intellectual disabilities. While, in Ireland, research in the field of intellectual disabilities is novel, and requirements stringent from ethics committees, CGT researchers need to continually optimise opportunities to creatively find ways to open avenues for theoretical sampling, conceptualisation, and constant comparisons when writing research proposals. For CGT methodology, a theory is abstract of time, place and people; to focus on these very aspects countermands the value of the methodology and its' conceptual ability to generate theory. Yet it is these very aspects which are crucial for the ethics committee governance in ensuring that research participants are protected. Ethics committees appear to be oblivious to the constraints being placed on CGT researchers (Glaser 2009). Breckenridge and Jones (2009) encourage novice classic grounded theorists to be mindful that the methodology should not be subject to generic 'qualitative' guidelines. The author advocates that more classic grounded theorists need to stand firm on ethics committees and recommends the creation of discussion forums to address the ethical and methodological concerns pertinent to CGT researchers undertaking research with people with intellectual disabilities.

### **Author:**

Eileen Carey, RNID, BSc. (hons), MSc.

University of Limerick,

Email: [Eileen.Carey@ul.ie](mailto:Eileen.Carey@ul.ie)

**References**

- Beauchamp, T.L., Walters, Le. R., Kahn J.P., and Mastroianni, A.C. (2008). *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Wadsworth: Thompson.
- Belmont Report (1978). Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. National Institutes of Health (NIH). Maryland: Office of Human Subjects Research (OHSR).
- Breckenridge, J. and Jones, D. (2009). Demystifying Theoretical Sampling in Grounded Theory Research. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 8(2), 113-126.
- Chiang, V.C., Keating, D., & Williams, A.K. (2001). Challenges of recruiting a vulnerable population in a grounded theory study. *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 3, 205-211.
- Christiansen, O. (2008). The Rationale for the Use of Classic GT, *The Grounded Theory Review*, 7(2), 19-38.
- Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, (1996). A Strategy for Equality: Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Dahan, R., Dick, R., Moll, S., Salwach, E., Sherman, D., Vengris, J. and Selman, K. (2007). *Photovoice Hamilton Manual and Resource Kit*. Hamilton Community Foundation. Ontario. Accessible Online: <http://www.photovoice.ca/manual.pdf> accessed: 9/11/09.
- Dalton, A.J. and McVilly, K.R. (2004). Ethics Guidelines for International, Multicenter Research Involving People with Intellectual Disabilities *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, 1(2), 57-70
- Faden, R.R. and Beauchamp, T.L. (1986). *A History and Theory of Informed Consent*. USA: Oxford University Press.
- Flew, A. (1979). *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. London: Pan.
- Glaser, B. G. (2009). *Jargonizing Using the Grounded Theory Vocabulary*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (2001). *The Grounded Theory Perspective: Conceptualization Contrasted with Description*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

- Glaser, B. G. (1998). *Doing Grounded Theory: Issues and discussions*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity: advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1964). *Organizational Scientists: Their Professional Careers*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.
- Glaser, B. G. (1965). The constant comparative Method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems*, 12, 436-445.
- Glaser, B. G., and Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Hallberg, L.R.M. (2006). The “core category” of grounded theory: Making constant comparisons, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 1, 141-148.
- Hearnshaw, H. (2004) Comparison of requirements of research ethics committees in 11 European countries for a non-invasive interventional study. *British Medical Journal*, 328 (17), 140-141.
- Holton, J. (2008). Grounded theory as a General Research Methodology, *The Grounded Theory Review*, 7(2), 67-93.
- Maltby, J., Williams, G., McGarry, J. Day, L. (2010). *Research Methods for Nursing and Healthcare*, United Kingdom: Pearson.
- Manson, N.C. and O'Neill, O. (2007). *Rethinking informed consent in Bioethics*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- National Disability Authority (2005). *Ethics in Disability Research*. Dublin: National Disability Authority Stationary Press Office.
- National Disability Authority (2004). *Guidelines on Person Centred Planning*. Dublin: National Disability Authority Stationary Press Office.
- National Disability Authority (2009). *Disability Research Series 13 Ethical Guidance for Research with People with*

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

*Disabilities*. Dublin: National Disability Authority  
Stationary Press Office.

National Intellectual Disability Database (2010). *Annual Report of the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee 2009*. Kelly, C., Craig, S., Kelly, F. Disability Database Unit, Health Research Board: Dublin.

Siminoff, L.A. (2003). Towards Improving the Infomred Consent Process in Research with Humans. *Irish Research Board Ethics and Human Research*, 25(5), 11-19.

Spradley, J.P. (1986) *Participant Observation*. USA: Wadsworth.

The Irish Council for Bioethics (2004) Operational Procedures for Research Ethics Committees: The Irish Council for Bioethics: Dublin.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)

United Nations. Retrieved March 28, 2010, from  
<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2005) Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. Retrieved May 26, 2010 from  
<http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics>

## **Institutional Review Boards: Perspectives from the United States**

*Alvita Nathaniel, Ph.D., FNP-BC, FAANP*

### **Introduction**

In the U.S., all research must be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that evaluates research protocols for the purpose of protecting human subjects. This paper includes a brief history of the development of public policy that guides institutional review boards in the U.S. and commentary on the responsibilities of a grounded theory researcher interested in applying for approval for a research study.

An institutional review board (IRB) is a formally constituted committee that approves and monitors biomedical and behavioural research with the purpose of protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. An IRB performs scientific, ethical, and regulatory oversight functions. In the U.S., it is common for grounded theorists to experience frustration with the IRB protocol submission process. Facets of the application process may seem rigid, redundant, and non-applicable. Review board members may not seem to understand or appreciate qualitative methods and delays are common. In addition, a conglomeration of disparate policies and procedures coupled with a variety of types of review boards creates a system that defies description. Nevertheless, a researcher who understands public policy and the responsibilities of institutional review boards can learn to develop research applications that are quickly approved.

Created to protect the rights of human subjects, institutional review boards' policies and procedures flow from ethical principles and two critical 20<sup>th</sup> century documents. The ethical considerations of harm versus benefit, privacy, confidentiality, respect for persons, truthfulness, and autonomy undergird the protection of human research participants. These principles began to be codified during the Nuremberg trials in response to atrocities committed by Nazi era German physicians in the name of medical research (October 1946 - April 1949). Developed by the panel of international judges overseeing the



## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

Nuremberg Military Tribunals and with the assistance of physician consultants (Shuster, 1997), the code served as a set of principles against which the experiments in the concentration camps could be judged (Burkhardt & Nathaniel, 2008). Subsequently, the Nuremberg Code became a blueprint for the *Declaration of Helsinki*. Addressed primarily to physicians in 1964, the World Medical Assembly developed this declaration as a “statement of ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects....” (World Medical Association, 1964). In the years that followed, governments began to develop regulations based upon ethical principles, the Nuremberg Code, and the Declaration of Helsinki.

In 1962, the Kefauver-Harris Bill expanded the principles from the Nuremberg Code by ensuring greater drug safety in the United States. Enacted after thalidomide was found to have caused severe birth defects, the Kefauver-Harris Bill 1) empowered the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ban drug experiments on humans until safety tests have been completed on animals, 2) required drug manufacturers and researchers to submit adverse reaction reports to the FDA, 3) required drug advertising to include complete information about risks and benefits, and 4) required informed consent from clinical study participants (First Clinical Research, 2010).

In 1966, the U.S. Surgeon General issued a policy statement entitled Clinical Research and Investigation Involving Human Beings in the form of a memorandum to the heads of the institutions conducting research with public health service grants (Sparks, 2002). The policy, which stipulated that all human subject research must be preceded by independent review, was the origin of IRBs in the U.S. (Sparks, 2002). Other public policies followed the Surgeon General’s memorandum.

An important longitudinal study began before the Surgeon General’s policy statement and continued for many years afterwards. Every country has profound stories about violations of human rights during research studies. In the U. S. the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male is one of the most “horrendous” examples of research that disregards basic ethical principles of research conduct. The study started in 1932 when the U.S. Public Health Service and the Tuskegee Institute began recording the natural progression of untreated syphilis. Conducted without informed consent, the study initially involved

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

600 Black men: 399 with syphilis and a disease-free control group (U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). The men were told that they were being treated for "bad blood," a colloquial phrase used to describe obscure ailments and fatigue. Led to believe they were being treated, the men were never given adequate treatment. Even after penicillin was found to cure syphilis in the 1940s, researchers decided to forego treatment so they could continue to study the progress of untreated syphilis. The men were never given a choice to withdraw from the study. In exchange for participating, they received free medical exams, free meals, and burial insurance. The research continued for 40 years until 1972 when a public outcry condemned the study (Jones, 1981). The public outcry surrounding the Tuskegee study influenced subsequent policies designed to protect human subjects (Tuskegee University).

When it was signed into law in 1974, the National Research Act created the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979). Under the direction of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Commission issued the highly acclaimed Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research. The Belmont Report serves as a basis for subsequent laws, rules, and regulations and consists of three basic elements: 1) a discussion of the boundaries between practice and research; 2) a discussion of the three basic ethics principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, that undergird all other considerations; and 3) a discussion of specific applications of the ethical principles in regard to informed consent, assessment of risks and benefits, and selection of research participants (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). The U.S. government codified the Belmont Report in the form of Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 (45 CFR 46). Regulations stipulated in this policy apply to all research involving human subjects (Protection of Human Subjects rev. 2009).

Another sweeping set of regulations affecting research arose from health care legislation. In 1996 the U.S. Congress enacted the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This act directed the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop comprehensive standards to protect the privacy and security of individually identifiable personal health

information (Health insurance reform: Security standards, 2002; Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information: Final rule 2002). Evolving at a time when an unprecedented number of Americans were unable to obtain health care and health insurance, the main purpose of the legislation was to improve portability and continuity of health insurance coverage, to combat waste and fraud in health care delivery, and to simplify the administration of health insurance. HIPAA was designed to protect individually identifiable health information and set standards for the security of electronic protected health information. The HIPAA Privacy Rule requires health care providers and health insurers to obtain additional documentation from researchers before disclosing personal health information for research and to scrutinize researchers' requests for access to health information more closely. The HIPAA Security Rule provides standards for the security of electronic health information. Privacy and security regulations are stringent and have far-reaching implications that spill into research policy. Although, some research organizations are not officially regulated by HIPAA, most IRBs require all investigators to complete HIPAA training and to follow HIPAA regulations, even if health insurance is not involved, research participants are not patients, and health information is not gathered.

In addition to the milestone documents and policies above, U.S. government agencies continue to refine policies for research involving human subjects. Each agency, such as the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Defence, specify rules and regulations for research within their domain. All institutional review boards are bound to each of these sets of regulations and thus must follow a complex myriad of policies. For example, the policy manual for one academic health center IRB specifies that its procedures comply with the following regulations: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) IRB Guidelines; Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46); the FDA Cosmetic Act; the Medical Device Amendments of 1976; the Safe Medical Devices Act of 1990; the Medicare Manual; the FDA Investigational Device Exemptions Manual; the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists, Inc. Guidelines for the Use of Investigational Drugs in Organized Health Care Settings (21 CFR 50); FDA IRB Review and Approval (21 CFR 56); the Health

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations standards (JCAHO). Whew!

In addition to a complex mix of very specific policies and procedures, the various types of IRBs themselves are confusing and similarities among them are haphazard since there is no umbrella organization that encourages standardization. Some IRBs evaluate the scientific merit of applications and others defer scientific recommendations to institutional scientific review boards or research experts in individual departments. Some IRBs are part of large academic health center hospital and university collaborations and some are restricted to small, private educational institutions. In addition, with the advent of very large multi-center clinical trials, Central IRBs, which are not affiliated with individual institutions, have emerged. Because each academic institution is responsible for assuring the safety of research participants, multi-center clinical trial research protocols approved by central IRBs, continue to be reviewed to some degree by the local institutional review boards.

Institutional review board membership is highly regulated. According to Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations (21 CFR 56), each IRB must have at least five members with varying backgrounds who are sufficiently qualified through the experience and expertise. The composition must include diversity of members including consideration of race, gender, cultural backgrounds, and sensitivity to cultural issues. Each must possess the competence to ascertain the acceptability of proposed research activities and to understand applicable law, standards of professional conduct and standards of practice. Each IRB must include at least one member whose primary concerns are scientific and at least one whose primary concerns are nonscientific. Each IRB must include at least one member who is not affiliated with the institution (Food and Drug Administration, 2010). Inasmuch as protecting the rights of research participants has emerged primarily from medical research, most regulatory bodies and many IRBs are dominated by physicians and other health care related professionals.

One might wonder why busy professionals agree to serve on institutional review boards. In addition to understanding very fine distinctions of ethics and complex research policy, IRB members must be able to read lengthy research protocols and

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

make critical decisions about very specialized scientific research. At any given meeting, an IRB member might review protocol applications for previously untested surgical procedures, clinical drug trials, medical devices, survey research, use of large databases, quantitative and qualitative behavioral studies, and other types of research. Members must be knowledgeable about potential harms and benefits of various research interventions and procedures, well versed in policy, knowledgeable about literacy, and sensitive to the ethical implications of every facet of the research process.

Stringently controlled by laws and regulations, IRBs deal more often with scientific studies of a quantitative nature in which attention to objective detail is imperative and management of every tiny bit of data must be controlled. With all of this in mind, it is easy to understand why an IRB might stumble on a research proposal for a grounded theory study. It is no wonder that questions on research protocol applications may seem inapplicable to grounded theory studies or that IRB members have questions about the grounded theory method. Grounded theory is based upon emergence and induction rather than deduction and hypothesis testing. It flows from a paradigm that is alien to most IRB members. Accustomed to focusing impeccable attention on every detail of studies, institutional review boards want to know what the researcher is testing, how it will be measured, what interview questions will be asked, where the research will take place, how many “subjects” will be needed, and on and on.... These questions help IRBs to understand quantitative studies, but are frustrating for grounded theorists who enter scholarly inquire with open minds, seeking to understand processes and structures from the perspective of their research participants.

This is not to suggest that IRB members in the U.S. are opposed to grounded theory research. IRB members are highly qualified scientists with dedication to research and the capacity to learn about unfamiliar research methods. So, it is up to the researcher to take responsibility and help the institutional review board understand the grounded theory proposal. The researcher should anticipate questions and concerns and provide scientific rational (based upon the classic grounded theory literature) for each element of the research. For example, when asked to provide a list of interview questions, the theorist should explain that grounded theory seeks to understand a problem and its solution

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

from the participants' perspectives and that providing a list of preconceived questions will block emergence and thus distort the "findings". In fact, at the beginning of the research process, the researcher may not even know what the problem is. The researcher should offer scholarly resources to support these assertions and provide an interview question intended to induce "spill". Having furnished rationale for the grounded theory research process, the researcher will find that an IRB is more likely to quickly approve the research protocol.

In conclusion, the IRB process in the U.S. is highly regulated and complex. Geared toward protecting research participants, institutional review boards must review many types of research. The grounded theory researcher who anticipates questions and concerns and addresses them in the initial research protocol application is much more likely to be successful.

### **Author:**

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD, FNP-BC, FAANP

West Virginia University

Email: [anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:anathaniel@hsc.wvu.edu)

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

### References

- Burkhardt, M., & Nathaniel, A. K. (2008). *Ethics & issues in contemporary nursing* (3rd ed.). Clifton Park, NY: Delmar.
- First Clinical Research. (2010). Clinical Research Milestones Retrieved 9-24-2010, 2010, from <http://firstclinical.com/milestones/?page=9&date=All&anchor=word>
- Institutional Review Boards of 2010, 21 U.S.C § 56.
- Jones, J. (1981). *Bad blood: The Tuskegee syphilis experiment: A tragedy of race and medicine*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (1979). *The Belmont Report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research*.
- Nuremberg Code. (October 1946 - April 1949) *Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals* (Vol. 2, pp. 181-182): U. S. Government Printing Office.
- Shuster, E. (1997). Fifty years later: The significance of the Nuremberg Code. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 337(20), 1436-1440.
- Sparks, J. (2002). *Timeline of laws related to the protection of human subjects*. Bethesda, MD: Retrieved from [http://history.nih.gov/about/timelines\\_laws\\_human.html#1966](http://history.nih.gov/about/timelines_laws_human.html#1966).
- Tuskegee University. Research ethics: The Tuskegee syphilis study Retrieved October 18, 2010, from <http://www.tuskegee.edu/global/story.asp?s=1207598>
- U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009). U.S. Public Health Service Syphilis Study at Tuskegee Retrieved October 18, 2010, from <http://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm>
- Health insurance reform: Security standards of 2002, 45 U.S.C. § 160, 162, 164, Federal Register 68(34).

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

- Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information: Final rule of 2002, 45 U.S.C § 160 and 164, Federal Register 67(157)
- Protection of Human Subjects rev. 2009, 45 U.S.C. § 46 (Government Printing Office 2009).
- World Medical Association. (1964). Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects.
- Glaser, B.G. (1992). *Emergence vs. forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (Ed.). (1995). *Grounded theory, 1984-1994 (Vols. 1-2)*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (2008). *Doing quantitative grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (2009). *Jargonizing: Using the grounded theory vocabulary*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine.





## **International Perspectives of Ethical Approval: The New Zealand scene**

*Antoinette McCallin Ph.D.*

### **Introduction**

The paper "Navigating the process of ethical approval" (Carey, 2010) raises many issues about the influence Institutional Ethics Committees have on research methodology and what can or cannot take place in research. Carey draws attention to the ethical challenges classic grounded theory researchers face when an ethical proposal that follows the principles of the methodology is presented to an Ethics Committee, whose main responsibility is the protection of participants. Ethics committees not only guide researchers on acceptable ethical practice, but are charged with monitoring ethical standards and ensuring researchers act in accordance with professional expectations for researchers within the jurisdiction. These committees aim to ensure consistency of ethical practice in research. While there is generally some flexibility in the review process researchers often find ethical requirements constraining, as guidelines are primarily prescriptive and are designed to ensure consistency in the application of universal ethical principles in research. In New Zealand, consistency includes paying attention to broader socio-cultural responsibilities to society that includes promoting awareness of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights 1996, the Health Information Privacy Code 1994, and promoting ethical practices which involve Maori (the local indigenous people) in research proposals as much as possible (Ministry of Health, 2006). So while researchers in training assume that their prime interest concerns the management of a research topic and methodology, they quickly find out that ethical guidelines influence research design. Even though there is an international code of ethics (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 2005) that defines ethical standards for researchers around the world, each country has its own specific requirements depending on the context. In this paper, ethical drivers in the New Zealand context are outlined and considered in relation to Irish issues. This is followed by a consideration of methodological rules and managing the practical realities that emerge when

working with a specialist methodology such as grounded theory.

### **Ethical drivers: New Zealand and Ireland**

There are two major drivers that have influenced ethics and research in New Zealand. The first was a public inquiry into medical research conducted on women who had major cervical abnormalities (Cartwright Report, 1988). The Cartwright Inquiry found that women with cervical abnormality were entered into a randomised control trial without informed consent. Some were treated while others were not. Many subjects developed cervical cancer. Some women died. This inquiry, which was known as "the unfortunate experiment," raised critical issues about consumer rights and informed consent in research. The Cartwright Report recommended the establishment of the Office of the Health and Disability Commissioner that developed the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights (1996) and established the Health Information Privacy Code (1994) mentioned previously. Cartwright also recommended that Ethics Committees improve their systems and review processes. Much progress has been made since in that Ethics Committees operate independently from researchers. There is though some tension in balancing individual rights and safety with the increasing pressure for research development in New Zealand (Women's Health Action Trust, 2010). The Women's Health Action Trust for example, questions researcher compliance in relation to consumer protection. Nonetheless, the primary purpose of Ethics Committees in New Zealand is to protect and safeguard research participants, and to respect the dignity of persons (Ministry of Health, 2006).

The second critical factor influencing research in New Zealand is the Treaty of Waitangi, a document determining the relationship between the indigenous people (Maori) and the Crown. The central focus of this Treaty is the individual rights of Maori and their ownership of land. The Treaty is enshrined in New Zealand legislation and compensation for past land grievances is negotiated and settled. By law, all New Zealanders are expected to honour the Treaty principles of partnership, participation and protection. These principles affect health researchers, who are expected to include them in all health research proposals (Health Research Council of New Zealand, 2005). Partnership is about working together with Maori communities in order to achieve health gain. Participation

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

requires researchers to involve Maori in research design, governance, management, and analysis, in order to reduce health inequalities. Protection requires researchers to safeguard cultural rights to promote health gain (Ministry of Health, 2006). Thus, the Treaty is a fundamental component of research ethics in New Zealand and health researchers expect to design research proposals in ways that go beyond topic and methodology. Not surprisingly, novice researchers find the ethics emphasis on cultural issues challenging.

By comparison, the Irish context for ethical approval sounds simpler. Fortunately, Ireland has not had to contend with an "unfortunate experiment" or managing the rights of the indigenous people, hence the lack of a central office for ethics committee management. The Irish National Disability Authority's guidelines for research practice likely reflect internationally accepted criteria to protect vulnerable people in research. There are some similarities between Ireland and New Zealand in that the person-centred emphasis in the Irish National Standards for Disability emphasise what is important for the person. This is in keeping with the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights and the Treaty principles. Both countries focus on a fundamental respect for persons. The assumption is made, in New Zealand at least, that people have rights and if there is a lack of respect for these rights, "benefits to some do not justify burdens to others" (Wilkinson, 2001, p. 15). This notion challenges researchers who are keen to generate new knowledge. Although research may generate knowledge for a community (scientific or cultural) it may burden participants because privacy is invaded and participation is inconvenient. In the area of intellectual disabilities in New Zealand, Ethics Committees are responsible for ensuring that research enhances the interests and well-being of the researched:

- Research must be well designed and focus on an issue of significant importance to people with intellectual disabilities;
- Research must respect the rights of people with intellectual disabilities to make their own choices and give informed consent; and
- Research must protect people with intellectual disabilities from undue risks, exploitation and abuse (Ministry of Health, 2006, p. 56).

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

Therefore, researchers expect an Ethics Committee to review methodology (Gauld, 2001). Typical questions asked are 'Will methods induce harm or poor results?'; 'Would an alternative methodological design eradicate the problem?'; 'Is the method ethically questionable, or will it generate dubious results?' (Gauld, 2001, p. 115).

When these questions are situated under a general philosophy whereby researchers work "with" participants, rather than "on" participants, there are differences in the Irish and New Zealand approaches to research. However, if a specific methodology like grounded theory is introduced into the mix, it is argued that the two countries move closer together because this methodology tends to emphasise "working for" participants.

### **Methodology: Integrating rules and realities**

Clearly, New Zealand researcher responsibilities go beyond methodology. Observation suggests that many health researchers begin a project wanting to research in a way that they know is "right" for participants. A sample is proposed, a context selected, methods are clarified. In the case of grounded theory, the researcher has an initial idea of how to proceed which must also meet ethical guidelines. Long-standing involvement with numerous ethics applications plus membership of a university ethics committee suggests that there are some basic rules that ensure an ethics application will be passed at the first meeting. The rules are: read the guidelines; seek advice from a committee member who will advise about requirements; and, above all, do what is required. A researcher is always free to challenge or to be non-responsive to ethical questions, but the research will not be signed off until a full ethical clearance is given.

This does not mean that there is no room for movement, because while an Ethics Committee is responsible for maintaining consistency, there is always some degree of flexibility, as long as participants are protected. For example, in a grounded theory study researchers do not know how many participants they will interview. The rule of thumb is that poorly articulated sampling strategies will always raise questions for a committee charged with ensuring the issues of privacy, consent and harm are addressed. The reality for grounded theory researchers is that the researcher does not yet know who needs to be interviewed. Not knowing may well be intrinsic to grounded theory methodology, but the Ethics Committee still cannot give

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

an open mandate to proceed wherever for a student researcher who is learning methodology and the research process. If a researcher states that study numbers are unknown and does not offer any explanation of the reasons why, the Ethics Committee will seek further clarification. Does the researcher intend to interview 10 people or 50 people? Where will they come from? Who will be included? Who will be excluded? Is there discrimination in recruitment and selection? The questions are not unreasonable. In contrast, the grounded theory researcher who states that anticipated numbers will be 20-30 seldom has a problem. Even if a researcher wants to go beyond the original number, an email stating the situation and the number of extra interviews required (usually three or four at most) gets an immediate clearance as a minor amendment.

All the same, there is some tension between ethical rules and the reality of theoretical sampling. Because consent may not be individual, and some individuals may need to consult with their community, the ethics committee will require detail of intention. People with disability are part of a community for instance. Depending on the disability, members of the group may be vulnerable in terms of their capability for understanding what the research is about and what will be required of them. The onus is on the researcher to explain clearly and in simple language what is required. An immediate sample is proposed, and alternatives are put forward. For example, research into nursing practice in end-of-life care is designed to begin with interviews of nurses in hospices and rest homes. In order to give the researcher room to move for theoretical sampling the researcher anticipates where else participants might be found e.g. acute care adults and/or paediatric care, or in a community service. While the latter choices are pre-emptive selective sampling that is contrary to emergent theoretical explanation, access request to multiple areas is not problematic for an Ethics Committee in New Zealand. If, on the other hand theoretical development moved into a very different context (such as an intensive care unit) that had not been identified previously, a minor ethical amendment would be required. The issue for the committee is that a researcher's need to talk to a new group of people in a different area, to develop theoretical explanation, may put potential participants at risk. As long as the issues of privacy (anonymity and confidentiality), consent (information provision), and harm (physical, social or psychological) have been addressed problems

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

would not be anticipated. To date such a challenge remains hypothetical, as the nature of student research projects is such that most grounded theory researchers in training stay in their area of interest and are reluctant to move across disciplines or into completely different contexts. The one message the researcher needs to convey to an Ethics Committee is that he or she shows a clear respect for the rights of participants and that participants will be safeguarded at all times. These underpinning values are conveyed to a committee by the attitude inherent in the writing of the proposal, the language used and the consideration shown towards others.

### **Conclusion**

So, while we do not know the full story behind some of the difficulties encountered by Carey, her firm stance on methodology raises tensions for a researcher learning a new methodology. Part of the problem for new researchers is that they are learning the research process, and learning how to manage an Ethics Committee is one aspect of the process. Appreciating that an Ethics Committee is not there to defend methodology but rather defend potential participants, goes some way to alerting an enthusiastic methodologist of probable ethical priorities. The challenge for a grounded theory researcher is to maintain methodological rigour as well as protecting participants at one and the same time. This also draws attention to the fact that research seldom occurs in isolation and methodological ideals and the aims of knowledge generation need to be considered in relation to the broader socio-cultural context.

### **Author:**

Antoinette M. McCallin, Ph.D., RN  
Head of Research, Division of Health Care Practice  
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences  
AUT University  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Email: [amccalli@aut.ac.nz](mailto:amccalli@aut.ac.nz)

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

### References

- Carey, E. (2010). Navigating the process of ethical approval: A methodological note. *Grounded Theory Review*, 10(3), 19-33.
- Cartwright, S (1988). The Report of the Cervical Cancer Inquiry. Available at: <http://www.nsu.govt.nz/Current-NSU-Programmes/3233.asp>
- Gauld, R. (2001). Health Ethics Committees: Methodological review and qualitative research. In Tolich, M. (Ed.). *Research ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, practice and critique* (pp. 113-126). Auckland, New Zealand: Reason Education.
- Health Research Council of New Zealand (2005). *Guidelines on Ethics in Health Research*. Available at: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz>.
- Ministry of Health (2006). *Operational Standards for Ethics Committees*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health.
- Universal Declaration on Human Rights (2005). Adopted by acclamation on 19 October 2005 by the 33<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Conference of UNESCO.
- Wilkinson, T. M. (2001). The core ideas of research ethics. In Tolich, M. (Ed). *Research ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, practice and critique* (pp. 13-24). Auckland, New Zealand: Reason Education.
- Women's Health Action Trust (2010). *Cartwright Comes of Age Seminar Report: Maintaining momentum towards a New Zealand health care system with the principles of the Cartwright Report as its foundation*. Available at: <http://www.womens-health.org.nz/index>





## **A Swedish perspective on research ethics review**

*Hans Thulesius, M.D., G.P., Ph.D.*

I have participated in writing ethical approval applications for research projects in Sweden a dozen times. I am also since some years a member of the local ethics advisory board in a mostly rural area serving 180.000 people. From that position I advise on what types of local project applications will have to be sent further to the regional ethics committee, REPN in Sweden. With that background I will try to give a brief Swedish perspective on research ethics reviews in general and regarding CGT (classic grounded theory) studies using qualitative data in particular.

The most famous Swedish example of unethical research is the 1947-1951 Vipeholm sugar trial (Krasse, 2001). Several hundred intellectually and mentally challenged persons at the Vipeholm institution were for years given an excess amount of sugar, mostly in the shape of candy. This resulted in caries that totally ruined the teeth of 50 persons. Of course participants did not give informed consent. Yet, at the time the research was not considered unethical. At least there was no debate about it.

In Sweden there are 6 REPNs each with a population base of around 1.5 million people. Above the REPN is a central research ethics committee – CEPN – to which one can appeal the decisions of the REPNs (<http://www.epn.se/start/startpage.aspx>). The REPN consists of one judge as a chairman, 5 scientifically competent persons and 5 laymen, all ordained by the Swedish government. In order to get the REPN to even look at an application there is a fee of 5000 SEK (700 USD) to be paid by the applicant; 16000 SEK for collaborative projects involving more than one Swedish region. Yet, student projects below the Ph.D. level are not requested to apply for REPN approval although they can get advisory statements from the REPN that also require a fee. As a consequence local ethics advisory boards have sprung up to supply the need for research ethics advice in a context where the respect for personal autonomy becomes more and more important and research ethics increasingly politically correct.

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

The EPNs are guided by research ethics principles that can be formulated in a number of rules. These research ethics rules deal with four different requirements: information, consent, confidentiality, and use. In brief: 1. The person potentially being researched should receive adequate information from the researcher about the aims, risks, advantages and costs of the research project as well as conditions for participating. 2. The person has the right to self decide about participation or non-participation at any time even after the project has begun. 3. The person should be guaranteed anonymity and that research data is kept safe and secret. 4. The data from the research may not be used outside of the research project.

Ethical review boards, both regional and local, deal with research methodology apart from looking at the direct ethical integrity aspects of research. It is often emphasized that research projects with a questionable methodology are unethical since they will eventually fail to produce useful results and thus they represent a waste of, mostly public, resources. This part of the research review can actually be very useful to the researcher in order to refine the study protocol that may prove valuable when applying for grants and for publishing the study.

There was a time in Sweden when projects that could be defined as societal/behavioral from a research ethics perspective were treated differently, read less critically, than projects with a more biomedical approach. This has changed since a few years so all research involving humans exposed to approaches where their integrity could be challenged in any way have to pass some sort of ethical scrutiny. To apply for ethics approval is for many researchers a red tape issue, something you try to avoid as much as possible. Yet, it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so in Sweden. A review of Swedish nursing dissertations from 1987 to 2007 show that while the early Ph.D. students avoided ethical discussions 63 out of 64 theses in 2007 had a section on research ethics. And 39 dissertations discussed ethical issues concerning methodology (Kjellström & Fridlund, 2010).

Since the experience of research methods that derail from the mainstream is still limited for the ethical review boards it is evident that CGT studies are difficult to assess from an ethical perspective. However, it is probably useful to load the ethics application with CGT jargon and to give a short explanation to it. Also, one may have to make up an interview protocol and to give

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

an exact number of interviewees for a CGT study in order to please the committee. Another possible strategy is in my view a more ethical (!) way to have a CGT study pass the scrutiny: Do a couple of pilot interviews, present results of a preliminary analysis and how the interviews were conducted, and eventually discuss the reaction of the respondents. This reaction is normally very positive since most people like to talk about what concerns them, ie the CGT goal of successful interview data.

What is most important for an ethics research application to get through is to write the information to the participants according to a preformed default standard. By doing that the project has tackled the fundamental challenge of satisfying the committee members' urge for a mainstream application. Something they recognize as right. So it is very useful to borrow information from projects that have passed the scrutiny before. What is difficult sometimes is to figure out when an interview study does not require an REPN approval. In Sweden, this is normally the case with research that does not impose something on someone, and research that does not try to influence another person, or does not deal with sensitive issues such as that person's health.

In a CGT study of detabooing/ tabooing I have been working on for some years, I analyze what healthy people think of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Secondary analysis of data from a postal survey that did not require REPN approval in Sweden is a vital part of the study (Helgesson, Lindblad, Thulesius & Lynöe, 2009). However, since many scientific journals (but not all) require a study to be ethically reviewed and approved to get published, the study protocol was given an CEPN advisory endorsement. As for the part of the study where data is my talks to healthy people, including participants at CGT seminars (!) and internet forum postings, we have not asked for ethical approval. Consequently, me and my two coworkers in the study, a medical ethics professor and a professor of practical philosophy, are discussing if it is OK to publish an article without having EPN approval for all the data. Funny enough one sentence in our paper goes, "To question informed consent procedures has become difficult – another indication of a new taboo under development." We will eventually submit the manuscript to a suitable journal, read a journal that normally accepts manuscripts without formal ethics approval, and see what the reviewers think. Wish us luck!

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

### **Author:**

Hans Thulesius, GP, Ph.D.  
Kronoberg County Research Centre  
Department of Community Medicine  
Vaxjo, SE  
Email: [hans.thulesius@ltkronoberg.se](mailto:hans.thulesius@ltkronoberg.se)

**References**

- Helgesson, G., Lindblad, A. B., Thulesius, H., Lynöe, N. (2009). Reasoning about physician-assisted suicide: analysis of comments by physicians and the Swedish general public. *Clinical Ethics, 4*, 19-25.
- Kjellström, S., Fridlund, B. (2010). Literature review: status and trends of research ethics in Swedish nurses' dissertations. *Nursing Ethics, 17*, 383-392
- Krasse, B. (2001). The Vipeholm dental caries study: recollections and reflections 50 years later. *Journal of Dental Research, 80*, 1785-1788.



Book Review: Kaplan, S. (2008). *Children in Genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation*, London: International Psychoanalysis Library

Carol Roderick, M.Ed., Ph.D.

In *Children in Genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation* (2008), Suzanne Kaplan explores the affects and memories of individuals who have survived extreme traumatization during their childhood, specifically Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and teenagers who survived the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. In the introduction, Kaplan explains that she has aimed to “write a text that can, to the greatest extent possible, convey a fraction of the feeling of what it meant to be a child during a genocide” (Kaplan, 2008, p.1). The majority of the book is devoted to presenting an analysis of the oral life histories of the survivors interviewed. The experiences are organized into three themes: 1) *perforating*, how the psychic shield is has been perforated by intense trauma; 2) *space creating*, the inner psychic processes through which the persecuted create mental space helps to survive the psychological damage and trauma; and 3) *age distorting*, a twisting of time that results in participants not feeling their actual chronological age. Age distorting is presented as containing aspects of perforating and space creating, and is linked to reproductive patterns of the survivors. A chronology of genocide events is used to organize these themes, through which the life histories of participants are presented in rich descriptive detail. Kaplan focuses both on the content of the interviews conducted as well as how the memories of the atrocities survived were recounted (the affects). The text provides readers with a glimpse into lived experience of these horrors in a manner that can only be achieved through narrative.

The analysis of the life histories is presented as a theory in the final chapter, *From conceptual models to a theory*. Here, concepts previously presented as life histories are reorganized into a table and then into a diagram. The diagram represents Kaplan’s theory, the *affect propellor*. The affect propeller is offered as an analytic tool for the affect regulating of extremely traumatized individuals. *Trauma linking*, an inner psychological



## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

consequence of perforating, is contrasted with *generational linking*, the result of successful space creating. These four concepts are associated with levels of affect regulation, from low to high integration. These levels include *affect invading*, *affect isolating*, *affect activating*, and *affect symbolizing*. Each level of affect regulation is assigned one blade of the affect propeller diagram. Each blade is subdivided into three levels of linking processes two levels of trauma linking (destructive) and one of generational linking (constructive). The blades rotate around the center of affect regulating.

Kaplan claims to have used grounded theory methodology for this research. Grounded theory is a complete package from collection, coding, analyzing, memoing, theoretical sampling, sorting, writing, and using the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1998). The result is a set of carefully grounded, well integrated hypotheses organized around a core category. The theory helps to explain as much of the behavior within the substantive area as possible with as few concepts as possible (Glaser, 1978).

Kaplan's theory falls short of a classic grounded theory in a variety of ways, three of which I will address here. The goal of grounded theory is to uncover a main concern of individuals and how these individuals attempt to resolve or process this concern (Glaser, 1998). This contrasts with qualitative research methods where the goal is description. The author states that the aim of her research was to present the life histories of individuals who have survived genocide and to communicate what it means to be a child during genocide. This aim aligns with the goal of qualitative research rather than the goal of grounded theory.

Data collection within the current study reflects qualitative research methods rather than those of grounded theory. Interviews followed an in-depth open ended format: "For the majority it seemed to be the first time that they found themselves in an interview situation in which they were asked to talk about their whole life from the beginning to the present day, in the absence, generally speaking, of any time limit" (Kaplan, 2008, p.21). This contrasts with grounded theory data collection in which the research aims to move quickly away from descriptive details to abstract concepts and patterns within the data (Glaser, 1992). While initial interviews within grounded theory are unstructured, data collection becomes increasingly focused over

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

time. Participants are sought out for theoretical sampling purposes so that the researcher can test out hypotheses as they emerge, and constantly compare incidents in incoming data with existing incidents, codes, categories and relationships between concepts in the emerging theory (Glaser 1978). Theoretical sampling focuses and delimits data collection. Theoretical sampling allows the researcher to move her research to higher conceptual levels and eventually recognize the emerging theory. Proceeding to collect data through open ended descriptive interviews limits the ability of the research to theoretically sample, take the study to a conceptual level, or to test out and develop hypotheses relevant to the core concern and its resolution.

A grounded theory study is delimited to a core concern of the participants and how the participants attempt to resolve or process this concern (Glaser, 1978). In contrast to qualitative research, a grounded theory does not aim for full coverage of participants' experiences. Kaplan acknowledges that she did not delimit her research, "I have tried to bring out as many ideas concerning phenomena as possible in order to arrive at broad picture of interviewee's memories... I have not have not stopped at the high-frequency responses which, as I see it, would not give a complete elucidation of the interviewees' life histories since the study is not based on a random sample. Moreover, information can be lost with such an approach" (Kaplan, 2008, p.55). Rather than full coverage or focusing on high frequency responses, the grounded theory researcher samples, codes, and employs constant comparison to until he finds that incidents in the data are interchangeable, they keep indicating the same concepts, and saturation is achieved (Glaser, 1998). The unwillingness to focus on a main concern can lead to the development of many interesting concepts, but is very difficult, if not impossible, for the relationships between these concepts to be explored and developed into a well integrated grounded theory.

A feature that distinguishes grounded theory from qualitative research is theoretical codes. Theoretical codes explain how the substantive codes relate to each other. Theoretical codes clarify the logic of the theory, remove non relevant variables, and integrate the theory (Glaser, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It may be argued that the propeller is the theoretical code of this study. The propeller, however, while serving as a diagrammatic aid, does not explain well the

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

relationships between the various concepts in the study. The relationships between concepts are described as associations: “I perceive associative connections between perforating, space creating, and age distorting, which have led to a conceptual model” (Kaplan, 2008, p.57). These are not clear or well-established, suggesting that they have not been checked thoroughly using the constant comparative method. The result is a lack of integration and coherence.

Since Kaplan did not fully use the grounded theory package to conduct her research, the outcome is not a classic grounded theory. As Glaser warns, “grounded theory being laced with QDA procedures and descriptive capture lads to multiple blocks on conceptual grounded theory” (p.4, Glaser, 2003). Kaplan’s research, while not a grounded theory, is well-worth reading. The research contributes new concepts and understanding of the lived experiences of individuals who were children during the Holocaust and during the Rwanda genocide in 1994.

### **Author:**

Carol Roderick, M.Ed., Ph.D.

Centre for Academic and Instructional Development

Saint Mary’s University

Halifax, NS

E-mail: [carol.roderick@smu.ca](mailto:carol.roderick@smu.ca)

## **References**

- Glaser, B.G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs. forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (2003). *The grounded theory perspective II: Description's remodeling of grounded theory methodology*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (2005). *The grounded theory perspective III: Theoretical coding*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Adline Publishing Company.
- Kaplan, S. (2008). *Children in genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation*. London, UK: International Psychoanalytical Association.



## Theory buried under heavy description

Vivian B. Martin Ph.D.

*Children in Genocide: extreme traumatization and affect regulation*, International Psychoanalysis Library, 2008

In journalism when a reporter puts the main news or point of the story deep down in the text, we say she's buried the lead, the lead being the main point of the story and usually the first paragraph. In *Children in Genocide: extreme traumatization and affect regulation*, psychoanalyst Suzanne Kaplan buries her theory. Her study of the after effects of trauma among Holocaust survivors who were children during their persecution and survivors of atrocities during the Rwandan atrocities of the 1990s, is filled with highly descriptive material from the many interviews that serve as data. An interesting grounded theory is peeking out from under all the disciplinary discourse and historical background one must read through to get to what grounded theory readers will consider the juicy parts: concepts on affect regulation in trauma survivors.

Published by the International Psychoanalysis Library, it's clear that the author's work was necessarily grounded in psychoanalytic assumptions and theory for the main audience. Kaplan drew on psychoanalytic theory to help her understand what is going on in the interviews. But the procedures of classic grounded theory helped the author take the mounds of data and create theory. Kaplan did some of the grounded theory analysis as part of a dissertation, later extending the work. Kaplan makes reference to grounded theory's influence in just a few words on two pages in this book (pg. 13, 206), so grounded theory's impact is never explicated here. The presentation of her theory suffers for this. Nevertheless, the book provides an opportunity for some discussion of the role of theoretical sensitivity in grounded theory and the challenge of navigating the preconceptions of received theories and models.

The book deals with the memories of elderly Holocaust survivors who were children in hiding or concentration camps. Kaplan makes use of visual archival material as well as interviews she conducted. As a comparison group, she draws on

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

interviews people whose trauma is still relatively recent: survivors of the Rwandan crises. By comparing the immense childhood suffering of groups whose persecution is separated by time and culture, Kaplan was able to identify recurring patterns that led to her eventual theoretical model. She states that *generational collapse* as the “core process.” (As will be noted shortly, she also names other concepts as core processes, making aspects of her presentation unclear). Genocides wipe out families, leaving the survivors with broken links. Kaplan introduces the concept of *perforating* to describe the tearing away experience, which has many indicators and invades physical and psychic space. The realization that a number of the interviewees chose to forgo reproduction (“because I was a child myself” with the disruption occurred) alerted Kaplan to a continued pattern of generational collapse. The concept of *space creating* signifies the mental strategies for survival. She writes that space creating is an attempt to recapture a normal time: “Space creating refers to a psychic room that an individual, as a child, creates according to his or her needs” (p.56). The mental link may be to a hiding place or other space associated with a safer time. In much the same way that classic works such as Viktor Frankl’s *Man’s Search for Meaning* (1946) outlines the everyday mental strategies people used to survive life in concentration camps, Kaplan presents space creating as a survival strategy that helps people hold on to their humanity and spirit. Space creating is necessary to avoid falling back into perforating. *Age distorting*, another concept introduced with generational collapse, speaks to the distortions in time dimensions, the fragmentation of life, that is expressed in some decision not to reproduce. Kaplan describes perforating, space creating and age distorting as collective concepts, an attempt to identify these as historical experiences.

It would appear that Kaplan’s attempt is to identify the collective concepts as more macro level influences, as she also identifies another “core process.” She writes that “The core processes turned out to be affect regulating as an essential aspect of the generational collapse” (p. 13). Experienced grounded theorists know that we can identify a core process, have co varying cores, as well as identify a core and sub categories that drive it (and even treat those sub categories as core for different research papers!). But in a fully explicated classic grounded theory one should fully integrate them. It’s not completely clear how Kaplan is interpreting the relationship of core processes. She

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

writes that generational collapse is the result of two core processes, perforating and space creating. But she is also treating affect regulation as a core process. The structure of the book, with heavily descriptive and background chapters, makes no room for a good methods chapter or section that pulls it all together as one would hope for a grounded theory. Apart from a section where the affect regulation is diagrammed, there isn't a smooth integration of all the concepts introduced.

Kaplan gives special attention to her conception of an *affect propeller*, which she uses to describe the interplay of certain types of affect (invading, isolating, symbolizing, and activating), trauma responses, including revenge, and generational linking (her word for phenomena such as cries for help, creativity recapturing normal life, and controlling trauma). It's intriguing and plausible, and I suspect there is material here that psychoanalysts and others who work with trauma can use to intervene when working with survivors of extreme trauma. However, Kaplan falls into the trap, which Glaser often warns against, of relying on a diagram to do work that she should have explicated more completely in text.

Although not an ideal classic grounded theory, Kaplan's work provides useful methodological instruction. It is intriguing that the sole grounded theory book she cites is Glaser's *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Theoretical sensitivity demands much of a researcher throughout the process. She needs to be free of preconceived notions and open to what is going on in the data; yet theoretical sensitivity requires that the analyst be familiar with the ways variables are constructed and the ideas for which those variables are used. Glaser writes that "an analyst may imbue his theory in a multivariate fashion that touches many fields" (p. 3). Some of this acumen is on display in Kaplan's study, though I want to call some attention to the challenges of received professional theory, which one must be sensitive to and aware of but also must distance from during stages of theory generation.

The study is saturated in psychoanalytic theory. The work seems to begin and end with it. Kaplan tells the reader that she worked to remain open, but it is not clear what her strategies were for this. It would have been interesting to read memos, even if in the Appendix, on how Kaplan, a practicing psychoanalyst, suspended that mindset to give the emerging theory room. In some ways Kaplan's quite literal interpretation of staying close to



## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

the data features the worrisome accuracy that can slow conceptualizations. It's apparent she was doing some GT-like analysis at various points, but I don't get the sense it was a soup-to-nuts adherence of protocols for sorting and extensive memo-writing.

Readers do gain from Kaplan's psychoanalytic expertise. One particularly useful discussion, part of the presentation on the affect propeller, is headlined "What is said and how it is told: content and affects in the interview" (p.210). As her interviews progressed, Kaplan became more aware of the importance of emotional expressions (or lack of) as indicators of how the memory fragments were indicators of trauma affects. She was able to get a better handle on the perforating and space creating that is part of her theory. This section is a reminder that everything is data. Often, newcomers to grounded theory get stumped by phrases like "proper lining" or they feel they did not get any data because the interview went "party line" on them. Such responses and related affect are data to be coded and analyzed with the mix. What is said and how it is told is important.

From a grounded theory standpoint, Kaplan's lack of discussion of the method is frustrating. The need to speak to the target audience is understandable, though adjustments in the methodological and theoretical presentation might have made the book a better read for some psychoanalysts as well. A chapter treating the work as a grounded theory, if that is what she claims this to be, should have been included, even if just in the Appendix. But this might have been rejected for any number of reasons; the author says so little about her work's relationship to grounded theory that it's difficult for a reviewer to situate it. The book's not an exemplary example of classic grounded theory, but it wouldn't be a waste of time to read it.

### **Author:**

Vivian B. Martin, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Department of English  
Central Connecticut State University  
Email: [martinv@ccsu.edu](mailto:martinv@ccsu.edu)

Comments on the reviews of Kaplan, S. (2008).  
*Children in genocide: Extreme traumatization  
and affect regulation*. London: International  
Psychoanalytical Association

*Suzanne Kaplan, Ph.D.*

My choice of grounded theory as research approach has been made against the background of three factors. The *first and foremost* is that my research interest evolved when I carried out two interviews with survivors who were children themselves during the Holocaust, i.e. *from the data*. The information that I obtained gave me a strong sense of urgency, a motivation, to try to understand the major concerns for child survivors, based on their own perspective. I decided to start doctoral studies after many years in clinical practice. My interest thus emerged from the interviews and not from an existing theory. Grounded theory is a method that sticks closely to the empirical and that aims to create theoretical models based on the development of concepts, of relationships between concepts and of theories concerning social and psychological processes from a certain aspect tied to a special context (Glaser, 1978).

*Secondly*, only little research has been devoted to the area of child survivors of genocide. Even if psychodynamic theory was in the back of my head, grounded theory was of immense importance in keeping earlier professional experiences and ‘established’ theories away.

*Last but not least*, I have received many important impulses in connection with Glaser’s lectures and workshops at Stockholm University in 1999 and 2001, respectively. There are some ongoing discussions as to how strict a researcher must be in order to designate his or her research as grounded theory named as ‘classical’ or ‘ideal’. Also Glaser states (1998, p.16), “... partial doing grounded theory by stopping before the package is finished is better than no doing at all”.

The pilot study “Child survivors and child bearing” (Kaplan, 2008, Chapter 3) can be seen as a theoretical sketch to which I returned several times during the research process as this was

## The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3

the entry to a hypotheses that child survivors do not seem to experience themselves being in their chronological age. Thus the code 'age distorting' emerged. Starrin et al. (1991) stress the importance of theoretical sketches during the course of research work, since these purport to connect the data with the final analysis. Later, the dynamic between the psychological phenomena that I conceptualized as 'perforating' and 'space creating' respectively emerged as an explaining connection in the context of genocide. This is what I meant by "association" in the text, a concept that may be misunderstood. The pilot study, an extended doctoral study on Holocaust child survivors and a post doctoral study in Rwanda have formed the basis for my empirically grounded theory presented in the book *Children in Genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation*. Through the study in Rwanda I wished to find more data that could be relevant for the emerging theory. I got access to different kinds of data through the similar and different characters of the two contexts, and through the descriptions of old incidents and rather recent incidents. These were two different places and cultures, but maybe similar phenomena, thus also a widening and deepening of data.

My working through of the interview material started with an ambition to be open in the face of this material, with a minimum of preconceived notions, and a refusal to describe the psychological phenomena that came forth in terms of illness. "Pattern search is survey modeled as it aggregates incidents like surveys aggregate people. And then the task is to start relating these conceptual patterns to generate a theory using theoretical codes" (Glaser, 1998 p. 31). I was eager not to analyze my data according to appears post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) diagnostics following established practice. Instead, I intended to let the material lead me towards emerging concepts and a theoretical model that explains what happened in the minds of the survivors, and how it occupied their thoughts and feelings. Continuous memo writings and comparisons between incidents and later - emerging concepts - lead me eventually to a dynamic model that I call the 'affect propeller', that does not lock the individuals' acts into finished categories, but instead it shows the steadily ongoing fluctuation of affects in the individual and in relation to his environment. This could refer to social psychological processes – such as i.e. risks of revenge actions in Rwanda (Kaplan, 2008 p. 215). The 'affect propeller' is a model

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

about the theory to make it more comprehensible - one way to illustrate the concepts of the multivariate theory and by which you may develop relationships between concepts and characteristics of these. The theory is contained in the description of the affect propeller. Generational collapse is one core category and affect regulation is another one and the two are interrelated. The main concern in affect regulation is about the individual's psychic inner balance and thereby survival.

The conflict between telling what happened in practice – the dramatic empirical data – and the clarification of abstract patterns from the reality that has been studied is always a difficulty. Concerning the descriptions of the historical process for child survivors, my intention has been to show the development of social processes in the context they have been living in. There was a change in the preconditions for social life during different time periods of persecution and liberation, as described in the interviews. Similar incidents were compared and the codes were merged and thus enriched. Moreover, people cannot engage if a book only contains mainly abstract concepts – you need also actual examples. I want people with varied research – and professional backgrounds - to be able to read it. In retrospect, I can see that there would have been a value in having a section about methods in an appendix, but as Glaser says (1998, p.41): “Ideally, making grounded theory one's own in order to legitimate a research should be handled briefly with referral to the grounded theory books” and “Its (GT: s) merits emerges with the impact and relevance of the generated theory...otherwise all is talk.”

I would not have been able to reach this result without the hypotheses that were possible to formulate through the work of grounded theory method. The psychoanalytically coloured categories have not been the starting point, but turned out to be categories that got their place in the theory in an emerging way. However, I adapted the writing of the paper to a certain standard in order to meet, among others, an audience of psychoanalysts. Neither have I used the map of psychoanalytic concepts as a code family for the theoretical coding.

Moreover these categories got another meaning in this multihypothetical form than they have as conventional psychoanalytic concepts. They have other relationships and characteristics, thus another meaning. It is rather the case that

## **The Grounded Theory Review (2010), vol.9, no.3**

psychoanalysts seem to learn something new from these changed concepts. An article (Kaplan, 2006) about the emerging theory that is included in the book, chapter 8, has been awarded the 2007 Hayman Prize (International Psychoanalytic Association) for published work pertaining to traumatized children and adults – with the motivation, “A great contribution to psychoanalytic theory on the subject of the psychological damage...” (Ungar, chair of Prize committee 2007 cited in Kaplan, 2008). I am following how users of my theory are working in practice and how they evaluate it, so I can validate my theory through its "relevance, fit and work." I then pursue my work from there - and the emerging concepts and the theoretical model the 'affect propeller' has proven to be useful both for researchers and clinical practitioners working with traumatized children and adults within different fields of health care. Also, Glaser (1998) discusses in chapter 6 that the value of every single article is shown by how well it uses the techniques of GT and how well this is mirrored in the result, which often turn out to be important concepts of great value.

### **Author:**

Suzanne Kaplan, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Hugo Valentin Center/Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Uppsala University Sweden

Email: [kaplan.suzanne@gmail.com](mailto:kaplan.suzanne@gmail.com)

## **References**

- Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Kaplan, S. (2006) Children in genocide – extreme traumatization and the 'affect propeller', *Int J Psychoanal Vol 87* Part 3; pp 725-46
- Kaplan, S. (2008). *Children in genocide: Extreme traumatization and affect regulation*. London, UK: International Psychoanalytical Association and Karnac Books. In German (2010) *Wenn Kinder Völkermord überleben - Über extreme Traumatisierung und Affektregulierung* Giessen, Psychosozial Verlag