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Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry

In this chapter, we begin our detailed exploration of narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies. For each approach, I pose a definition, briefly trace its history, explore types of studies, introduce procedures involved in conducting a study, and indicate potential challenges in using the approach. I also review some of the similarities and differences among the five approaches so that qualitative researchers can decide which approach is best to use for their particular study.

Questions for Discussion

- What are a narrative study, a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and a case study?
- What are the procedures and challenges to using each approach to qualitative research?
- What are some similarities and differences among the five approaches?

Narrative Research

Definition and Background

Narrative research has many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines (Daiute &

Lightfoot, 2004). "Narrative" might be the term assigned to any text or discourse, or, it might be text used within the context of a mode of inquiry in qualitative research (Chase, 2005), with a specific focus on the stories told by individuals (Polkinghorne, 1995). As Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) suggest, narrative can be both a method and ***the phenomenon*** of study. As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. Writers have provided ways for analyzing and understanding the stories lived and told. I will define it here as a specific type of qualitative design in which "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17). The procedures for implementing this research consist of focusing on studying one or two individuals, gathering data through the collection of their stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering (or using ***life course stages***) the meaning of those experiences.

Although narrative research originated from literature, history, anthropology, sociology, sociolinguistics, and education, different fields of study have adopted their own approaches (Chase, 2005). I find a postmodern, organizational orientation in Czarniawska (2004); a human developmental perspective in Daiute and Lightfoot (2004); a ***psychological approach*** in Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber (1998); sociological approaches in Cortazzi (1993) and Riessman (1993); and quantitative (e.g., statistical stories in event history modeling) and qualitative approaches in Elliott (2005). Interdisciplinary efforts at narrative research have also been encouraged by the *Narrative Study of Lives* annual series that began in 1993 (see, e.g., Josselson & Lieblich, 1993), and the journal *Narrative Inquiry*. With many recent books on narrative research, it is indeed a "field in the making" (Chase, 2005, p. 651). In the discussion of narrative procedures, I rely on an accessible book written for social scientists called *Narrative Inquiry* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) that addresses "what narrative researchers do" (p. 48).

Types of Narrative Studies

One approach to narrative research is to differentiate types of narrative research by the analytic strategies used by authors. Polkinghorne (1995) takes this approach and distinguishes between "analysis of narratives" (p. 12), using paradigm thinking to create descriptions of themes that hold across stories or taxonomies of types of stories, and "narrative analysis," in which researchers collect descriptions of events or happenings and then configure them into a story using a plot line. Polkinghorne (1995) goes on to

emphasize the second form in his writings. More recently, Chase (2005) presents an approach closely allied with Polkinghorne's "analysis of narratives." Chase suggests that researchers may use paradigmatic reasons for a narrative study, such as how individuals are enabled and constrained by social resources, socially situated in interactive performances, and how narrators develop interpretations.

A second approach is to emphasize the variety of forms found in narrative research practices (see, e.g., Casey, 1995/1996). A ***biographical study*** is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person's life. **Autobiography** is written and recorded by the individuals who are the subject of the study (Ellis, 2004). A ***life history*** portrays an individual's entire life, while a personal experience story is a narrative study of an individual's personal experience found in single or multiple episodes, private situations, or communal folklore (Denzin, 1989a). An ***oral history*** consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals (Plummer, 1983). Narrative studies may have a specific contextual focus, such as teachers or children in classrooms (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002), or the stories told about organizations (Czarniawska, 2004). Narratives may be guided by a theoretical lens or perspective. The lens may be used to advocate for Latin Americans through using *testimonios* (Beverly, 2005), or it may be a feminist lens used to report the stories of women (see, e.g., Personal Narratives Group, 1989), a lens that shows how women's voices are muted, multiple, and contradictory (Chase, 2005).

Procedures for Conducting Narrative Research

Using the approach taken by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) as a general procedural guide, the methods of conducting a narrative study do not follow a lock-step approach, but instead represent an informal collection of topics.

1. Determine if the research problem or question best fits narrative research. Narrative research is best for capturing the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals.

2. Select one or more individuals who have stories or life experiences to tell, and spend considerable time with them gathering their stories through multiples types of information. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to the stories as "field texts." Research participants may record their stories in a journal or diary, or the researcher might observe the individuals and record fieldnotes. Researchers may also collect letters sent by the individuals; assemble

stories about the individuals from family members; gather documents such as memos or official correspondence about the individual; or obtain photographs, memory boxes (collection of items that trigger memories), and other personal-family-social ***artifacts***. After examining these sources, the researcher records the individuals' life experiences.

3. Collect information about the context of these stories. Narrative researchers situate individual stories within participants' personal experiences (their jobs, their homes), their culture (racial or ethnic), and their historical contexts (time and place).

4. Analyze the participants' stories, and then "restory" them into a framework that makes sense. ***Restorying*** is the process of reorganizing the stories into some general type of framework. This framework may consist of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then rewriting the stories to place them within a chronological sequence (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2000). Often when individuals tell their stories, they do not present them in a chronological sequence. During the process of restorying, the researcher provides a causal link among ideas. Cortazzi (1993) suggests that the chronology of narrative research, with an emphasis on sequence, sets narrative apart from other genres of research. One aspect of the chronology is that the stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Similar to basic elements found in good novels, these aspects involve a predicament, conflict, or struggle; a protagonist, or main character; and a sequence with implied causality (i.e., a plot) during which the predicament is resolved in some fashion (Carter, 1993). A chronology further may consist of past, present, and future ideas (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), based on the assumption that time has a unilinear direction (Polkinghorne, 1995). In a more general sense, the story might include other elements typically found in novels, such as time, place, and scene (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The plot, or story line, may also include Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space: the personal and social (the interaction); the past, present, and future (continuity); and the place (situation). This story line may include information about the setting or context of the participants' experiences. Beyond the chronology, researchers might detail themes that arise from the story to provide a more detailed discussion of the meaning of the story (Huber & Whelan, 1999). Thus, the qualitative data analysis may be a description of both the story and themes that emerge from it. A postmodern narrative writer, such as Czarniawska (2004), would add another element to the analysis: a deconstruction of the stories, an unmaking of them by such analytic strategies as exposing dichotomies, examining silences, and attending to disruptions and contractions.

5. Collaborate with participants by actively involving them in the research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As researchers collect stories, they negotiate relationships, smooth transitions, and provide ways to be useful to the participants. In narrative research, a key theme has been the turn toward the relationship between the researcher and the researched in which both parties will learn and change in the encounter (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006). In this process, the parties negotiate the meaning of the stories, adding a validation check to the analysis (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Within the participant's story may also be an interwoven story of the researcher gaining insight into her or his own life (see Huber & Whelan, 1999). Also, within the story may be ***epiphanies*** or turning points in which the story line changes direction dramatically. In the end, the narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and ***historical context,*** and including the important themes in those lived experiences. "Narrative inquiry is stories lived and told," said Clandinin and Connolly (2000, p. 20).

Challenges

Given these procedures and the characteristics of narrative research, narrative research is a challenging approach to use. The researcher needs to collect extensive information about the participant, and needs to have a clear understanding of the context of the individual's life. It takes a keen eye to identify in the source material gathered the particular stories that capture the individual's experiences. As Edel (1984) comments, it is important to uncover the "figure under the carpet" that explains the multilayered context of a life. Active collaboration with the participant is necessary, and researchers need to discuss the participant's stories as well as be reflective about their own personal and political background, which shapes how they "restory" the account. Multiple issues arise in the collecting, analyzing, and telling of individual stories. Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) raise these important questions: Who owns the story? Who can tell it? Who can change it? Whose version is convincing? What happens when narratives compete? As a community, what do stories do among us?

Phenomenological Research

Definition and Background

Whereas a narrative study reports the life of a ***single individual,*** a ***phenomenological study*** describes the meaning for several individuals of their ***lived experiences*** of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on

describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a "grasp of the very nature of the thing," van Manen, 1990, p. 177). To this end, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon (an "object" of human experience; van Manen, 1990, p. 163). This human experience may be phenomena such as insomnia, being left out, anger, grief, or undergoing coronary artery bypass surgery (Moustakas, 1994). The inquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. This description consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

Beyond these procedures, phenomenology has a strong philosophical component to it. It draws heavily on the writings of the German mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and those who expanded on his views, such as Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Spiegelberg, 1982). Phenomenology is popular in the social and health sciences, especially in sociology (Borgatta & Borgatta, 1992; Swingewood, 1991), psychology (Giorgi, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1989), nursing and the health sciences (Nieswiadomy, 1993; Oiler, 1986), and education (Tesch, 1988; van Manen, 1990). Husserl's ideas are abstract, and, as late as 1945, Merleau-Ponty (1962) still raised the question, "What is phenomenology?" In fact, Husserl was known to call any project currently under way "phenomenology" (Natanson, 1973).

Writers following in the footsteps of Husserl also seem to point to different philosophical arguments for the use of phenomenology today (contrast, for example, the philosophical basis stated in Moutakas, 1994; in Stewart and Mickunas, 1990; and in van Manen, 1990). Looking across all of these perspectives, however, we see that the philosophical assumptions rest on some common grounds: the study of the lived experiences of persons, the view that these experiences are conscious ones (van Manen, 1990), and the development of descriptions of the essences of these experiences, not explanations or analyses (Moustakas, 1994). At a broader level, Stewart and Mickunas (1990) emphasize four ***philosophical perspectives*** in phenomenology:

- *A return to the traditional tasks of philosophy.* By the end of the 19th century, philosophy had become limited to exploring a world by empirical means, which was called "scientism." The return to the traditional tasks of philosophy that existed before philosophy became enamored with empirical science is a return to the Greek conception of philosophy as a search for wisdom.
- *A philosophy without presuppositions.* Phenomenology's approach is to suspend all judgments about what is real—the "natural attitude"—until they are

founded on a more certain basis. This suspension is called "epoche" by Husserl.

- *The intentionality of consciousness.* This idea is that consciousness is always directed toward an object. Reality of an object, then, is inextricably related to one's consciousness of it. Thus, reality, according to Husserl, is not divided into subjects and objects, but into the dual Cartesian nature of both subjects and objects as they appear in consciousness.
- *The refusal of the subject-object dichotomy.* This theme flows naturally from the intentionality of consciousness. The reality of an object is only perceived within the meaning of the experience of an individual.

An individual writing a phenomenology would be remiss to not include some discussion about the philosophical presuppositions of phenomenology along with the methods in this form of inquiry. Moustakas (1994) devotes over one hundred pages to the philosophical assumptions before he turns to the methods.

Types of Phenomenology

Two approaches to phenomenology are highlighted in this discussion: hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 1990) and empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Van Manen (1990) is widely cited in the health literature (Morse & Field, 1995). An educator, van Manen, has written an instructive book on ***hermeneutical phenomenology*** in which he describes research as oriented toward lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the "texts" of life (hermeneutics) (van Manen, 1990, p. 4). Although van Manen does not approach phenomenology with a set of rules or methods, he discusses phenomenology research as a dynamic interplay among six research activities. Researchers first turn to a phenomenon, an "abiding concern" (p. 31), which seriously interests them (e.g., reading, running, driving, mothering). In the process, they reflect on essential themes, what constitutes the nature of this lived experience. They write a description of the phenomenon, maintaining a strong relation to the topic of inquiry and balancing the parts of the writing to the whole. Phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also seen as an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation (i.e., the researcher "mediates" between different meanings; van Manen, 1990, p. 26) of the meaning of the lived experiences.

Moustakas's (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. In addition, Moustakas focuses on one of Husserl's concepts, ***epoche*** (or bracketing), in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the

phenomenon under examination. Hence, "transcendental" means "in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). Moustakas admits that this state is seldom perfectly achieved. However, I see researchers who embrace this idea when they begin a project by describing their own experiences with the phenomenon and bracketing out their views before proceeding with the experiences of others.

Besides bracketing, empirical, ***transcendental phenomenology*** draws on the *Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology* (e.g., Giorgi, 1985) and the data analysis procedures of Van Kaam (1966) and Colaizzi (1978). The procedures, illustrated by Moustakas (1994), consist of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher then analyzes the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. Following that, the researcher develops a ***textural description*** of the experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a ***structural description*** of their experiences (how they experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context), and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the experience.

Procedures for Conducting Phenomenological Research

I use the psychologist Moustakas's (1994) approach because it has systematic steps in the data analysis procedure and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. The conduct of psychological phenomenology has been addressed in a number of writings, including Dukes (1984), Tesch (1990), Giorgi (1985, 1994), Polkinghorne (1989), and, most recently, Moustakas (1994). The major procedural steps in the process would be as follows:

- The researcher determines if the research problem is best examined using a phenomenological approach. The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It would be important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon.

- A phenomenon of interest to study, such as anger, professionalism, what it means to be underweight, or what it means to be a wrestler, is identified. Moustakas (1994) provides numerous examples of phenomena that have been studied.

- The researcher recognizes and specifies the broad philosophical assumptions of phenomenology. For example, one could write about the combination of objective reality and individual experiences. These lived experiences are furthermore "conscious" and directed toward an object. To fully describe how participants view the phenomenon, researchers must bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences.

- Data are collected from the individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants. Polkinghorne (1989) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Other forms of data may also be collected, such as observations, journals, art, poetry, music, and other forms of art. Van Manen (1990) mentions taped conversations, formally written responses, accounts of vicarious experiences of drama, films, poetry, and novels.

- The participants are asked two broad, general questions (Moustakas, 1994): What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? Other open-ended questions may also be asked, but these two, especially, focus attention on gathering data that will lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences, and ultimately provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants.

- ***Phenomenological data analysis*** steps are generally similar for all psychological phenomenologists who discuss the methods (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Building on the data from the first and second research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlight "significant statements," sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step ***horizonalization***. Next, the researcher develops ***clusters of meaning*** from these significant statements into themes.

- These significant statements and themes are then used to write a description of what the participants experienced (***textural description***). They are also used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon, called ***imaginative variation*** or ***structural description***. Moustakas (1994) adds a further step: Researchers also write about their own experiences and the context and situations that have influenced their experiences. I like to shorten Moustakas's procedures, and reflect these personal statements at the beginning of the

phenomenology or include them in a methods discussion of the role of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

- From the structural and textural descriptions, the researcher then writes a composite description that presents the "essence" of the phenomenon, called the ***essential, invariant structure (or essence)***. Primarily this passage focuses on the common experiences of the participants. For example, it means that all experiences have an underlying ***structure*** (grief is the same whether the loved one is a puppy, a parakeet, or a child). It is a descriptive passage, a long paragraph or two, and the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

Challenges

A phenomenology provides a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Knowing some common experiences can be valuable for groups such as therapists, teachers, health personnel, and policymakers. Phenomenology can involve a streamlined form of data collection by including only single or multiple interviews with participants. Using the Moustakas (1994) approach for analyzing the data helps provide a structured approach for novice researchers. On the other hand, phenomenology requires at least some understanding of the broader philosophical assumptions, and these should be identified by the researcher. The participants in the study need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon in question, so that the researcher, in the end, can forge a common understanding. Bracketing personal experiences may be difficult for the researcher to implement. An interpretive approach to phenomenology would signal this as an impossibility (van Manen, 1990)—for the researcher to become separated from the text. Perhaps we need a new definition of epoche or bracketing, such as suspending our understandings in a reflective move that cultivates curiosity (LeVasseur, 2003). Thus, the researcher needs to decide how and in what way his or her personal understandings will be introduced into the study.

Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

Although a phenomenology emphasizes the meaning of an experience for a number of individuals, the intent of a ***grounded theory study*** is to move

beyond description and to ***generate or discover a theory***, an abstract analytical schema of a process (or action or interaction, Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Participants in the study would all have experienced the process, and the development of the theory might help explain practice or provide a framework for further research. A key idea is that this theory-development does not come "off the shelf," but rather is generated or "grounded" in data from participants who have experienced the process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Thus, grounded theory is a qualitative research design in which the inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of a process, action, or interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

This qualitative design was developed in sociology in 1967 by two researchers, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, who felt that theories used in research were often inappropriate and ill-suited for participants under study. They elaborated on their ideas through several books (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). In contrast to the a priori, theoretical orientations in sociology, grounded theorists held that theories should be "grounded" in data from the field, especially in the actions, interactions, and social processes of people. Thus, grounded theory provided for the generation of a theory (complete with a diagram and hypotheses) of actions, interactions, or processes through interrelating categories of information based on data collected from individuals.

Despite the initial collaboration of Glaser and Strauss that produced such works as *Awareness of Dying* (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) and *Time for Dying* (Glaser & Strauss, 1968), the two authors ultimately disagreed about the meaning and procedures of grounded theory. Glaser has criticized Strauss's approach to grounded theory as too prescribed and structured (Glaser, 1992). More recently, Charmaz (2006) has advocated for a ***constructivist grounded theory***, thus introducing yet another perspective into the conversation about procedures. Through these different interpretations, grounded theory has gained popularity in fields such as sociology, nursing, education, and psychology, as well as in other social science fields.

Another recent grounded theory perspective is that of Clarke (2005) who, along with Charmaz, seeks to reclaim grounded theory from its "positivist underpinnings" (p. xxiii). Clarke, however, goes further than Charmaz, suggesting that social "situations" should form our unit of analysis in grounded theory and that three sociological modes can be useful in analyzing these situations—situational, social world/arenas, and positional cartographic maps for collecting and analyzing qualitative data. She further expands grounded theory "after the postmodern turn" (p. xxiv) and relies on postmodern perspectives (i.e., the political nature of research and interpretation, reflexivity

on the part of researchers, a recognition of problems of representing information, questions of legitimacy and authority, and repositioning the researcher away from the "all knowing analyst" to the "acknowledged participant") (pp. xxvii, xxviii). Clarke frequently turns to the postmodern, poststructural writer Michael Foucault (1972) to help turn the grounded theory discourse.

Types of Grounded Theory Studies

The two popular approaches to grounded theory are the systematic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) and the constructivist approach of Charmaz (2005, 2006). In the more systematic, analytic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), the investigator seeks to systematically develop a theory that explains process, action, or interaction on a topic (e.g., the process of developing a curriculum, the therapeutic benefits of sharing psychological test results with clients). The researcher typically conducts 20 to 30 interviews based on several visits "to the field" to collect interview data to saturate the categories (or find information that continues to add to them until no more can be found). A ***category*** represents a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researcher also collects and analyzes observations and documents, but these data forms are often not used. While the researcher collects data, she or he begins analysis. My image for data collection in a grounded theory study is a "zigzag" process: out to the field to gather information, into the office to analyze the data, back to the field to gather more information, into the office, and so forth. The participants interviewed are theoretically chosen (called ***theoretical sampling***) to help the researcher best form the theory. How many passes one makes to the field depends on whether the categories of information become saturated and whether the theory is elaborated in all of its complexity. This process of taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories is called the ***constant comparative*** method of data analysis.

The researcher begins with ***open coding***, coding the data for its major categories of information. From this coding, axial coding emerges in which the researcher identifies one open coding category to focus on (called the "core" phenomenon), and then goes back to the data and create categories around this core phenomenon. Strauss and Corbin (1990) prescribe the types of categories identified around the core phenomenon. They consist of **causal conditions** (what factors caused the core phenomenon), ***strategies*** (actions taken in response to the core phenomenon), contextual and ***intervening conditions*** (broad and specific situational factors that influence the strategies), and

consequences (outcomes from using the strategies). These categories relate to and surround the core phenomenon in a visual model called the ***axial coding*** paradigm. The final step, then, is ***selective coding***, in which the researcher takes the model and develops ***propositions*** (or hypotheses) that interrelate the categories in the model or assembles a story that describes the interrelationship of categories in the model. This theory, developed by the researcher, is articulated toward the end of a study and can assume several forms, such as a narrative statement (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), a visual picture (Morrow & Smith, 1995), or a series of hypotheses or propositions (Creswell & Brown, 1992).

In their discussion of grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1998) take the model one step further to develop a ***conditional matrix***. They advance the conditional matrix as a coding device to help the researcher make connections between the macro and the micro conditions influencing the phenomenon. This matrix is a set of expanding concentric circles with labels that build outward from the individual, group, and organization to the community, region, nation, and global world. In my experience, this matrix is seldom used in grounded theory research, and researchers typically end their studies with a theory developed in selective coding, a theory that might be viewed as a substantive, low-level theory rather than an abstract, grand theory (e.g., see Creswell & Brown, 1992). Although making connections between the substantive theory and its larger implications for the community, nation, and world in the conditional matrix is important (e.g., a model of work flow in a hospital, the shortage of gloves, and the national guidelines on AIDS may all be connected; see this example provided by Strauss & Corbin, 1998), grounded theorists seldom have the data, time, or resources to employ the conditional matrix.

A second variant of grounded theory is found in the constructivist writing of Charmaz (see Charmaz, 2005, 2006). Instead of embracing the study of a single process or core category as in the Strauss and Corbin (1998) approach, Charmaz advocates for a social constructivist perspective that includes emphasizing diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions. Constructivist grounded theory, according to Charmaz (2006), lies squarely within the interpretive approach to qualitative research with flexible guidelines, a focus on theory developed that depends on the researcher's view, learning about the experience within embedded, hidden networks, situations, and relationships, and making visible hierarchies of power, communication, and opportunity. Charmaz places more emphasis on the views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, and ideologies of individuals than on the methods of research, although she does describe the practices of gathering rich data, coding the data, memoing, and

using theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006). She suggests that complex terms or jargon, diagrams, conceptual maps, and systematic approaches (such as Strauss & Corbin, 1990) detract from grounded theory and represent an attempt to gain power in their use. She advocates using active codes, such as gerund-based phrases like "recasting life." Moreover, for Charmaz, a grounded theory procedure does not minimize the role of the researcher in the process. The researcher makes decisions about the categories throughout the process, brings questions to the data, and advances personal values, experiences, and priorities. Any conclusions developed by grounded theorists are, according to Charmaz (2005), suggestive, incomplete, and inconclusive.

Procedures for Conducting Grounded Theory Research

Although Charmaz's interpretive approach has many attractive elements (e.g., reflexivity, being flexible in structure, as discussed in Chapter 2), I rely on Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) to illustrate grounded theory procedures because their systematic approach is helpful to individuals learning about and applying grounded theory research.

- The researcher needs to begin by determining if grounded theory is best suited to study his or her research problem. Grounded theory is a good design to use when a theory is not available to explain a process. The literature may have models available, but they were developed and tested on samples and populations other than those of interest to the qualitative researcher. Also, theories may be present, but they are incomplete because they do not address potentially valuable variables of interest to the researcher. On the practical side, a theory may be needed to explain how people are experiencing a phenomenon, and the grounded theory developed by the researcher will provide such a general framework.

- The research questions that the inquirer asks of participants will focus on understanding how individuals experience the process and identifying the steps in the process (What was the process? How did it unfold?). After initially exploring these issues, the researcher then returns to the participants and asks more detailed questions that help to shape the axial coding phase, questions such as: What was central to the process? (the core phenomenon); What influenced or caused this phenomenon to occur? (causal conditions); What strategies were employed during the process? (strategies); What effect occurred? (consequences).

- These questions are typically asked in interviews, although other forms of data may also be collected, such as observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. The point is to gather enough information to fully

develop (or *saturate*) the model. This may involve 20 to 30 interviews or 50 to 60 interviews.

- The analysis of the data proceeds in stages. In open coding, the researcher forms categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information. Within each category, the investigator finds several *properties*, or subcategories, and looks for data to dimensionalize, or show the extreme possibilities on a continuum of, the property.

- In axial coding, the investigator assembles the data in new ways after open coding. This is presented using a *coding paradigm or logic diagram* (i.e., a visual model) in which the researcher identifies a *central phenomenon* (i.e., a central category about the phenomenon), explores *causal conditions* (i.e., categories of conditions that influence the phenomenon), specifies strategies (i.e., the actions or interactions that result from the central phenomenon), identifies the *context* and *intervening conditions* (i.e., the narrow and broad conditions that influence the strategies), and delineates the consequences (i.e., the outcomes of the strategies) for this phenomenon.

- In selective coding, the researcher may write a "story line" that connects the categories. Alternatively, propositions or hypotheses may be specified that state predicted relationships.

- Finally, the researcher may develop and visually portray a conditional matrix that elucidates the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon. It is an optional step and one in which the qualitative inquirer thinks about the model from the smallest to the broadest perspective.

- The result of this process of data collection and analysis is a theory, a *substantive-level theory*, written by a researcher close to a specific problem or population of people. The theory emerges with help from the process of *memoing*, a process in which the researcher writes down ideas about the evolving theory throughout the process of open, axial, and selective coding. The substantive-level theory may be tested later for its empirical verification with quantitative data to determine if it can be generalized to a sample and population (see mixed methods design procedures, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Alternatively, the study may end at this point with the generation of a theory as the goal of the research.

Challenges

A grounded theory study challenges researchers for the following reasons. The investigator needs to set aside, as much as possible, theoretical ideas or

notions so that the analytic, substantive theory can emerge. Despite the evolving, inductive nature of this form of qualitative inquiry, the researcher must recognize that this is a systematic approach to research with specific steps in data analysis, if approached from the Strauss and Corbin (1990) perspective. The researcher faces the difficulty of determining when categories are saturated or when the theory is sufficiently detailed. One strategy that might be used to move toward saturation is to use ***discriminant sampling,*** in which the researchers gathered additional information from individuals similar to those people initially interviewed to determine if the theory holds true for these additional participants. The researcher needs to recognize that the primary outcome of this study is a theory with specific components: a central phenomenon, causal conditions, strategies, conditions and context, and consequences. These are prescribed categories of information in the theory, so the Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) approach may not have the flexibility desired by some qualitative researchers. In this case, the Charmaz (2006) approach, which is less structured and more adaptable, may be used.

Ethnographic Research

Definition and Background

Although a grounded theory researcher develops a theory from examining many individuals who share in the same process, action, or interaction, the study participants are not likely to be located in the same place or interacting on so frequent a basis that they develop shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and ***language***. An ethnographer is interested in examining these shared patterns, and the unit of analysis is larger than the 20 or so individuals involved in a grounded theory study. An ***ethnography*** focuses on an entire cultural group. Granted, sometimes this cultural group may be small (a few teachers, a few social workers), but typically it is large, involving many people who interact over time (teachers in an entire school, a community social work group). Ethnography is a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, ***behaviors***, beliefs, and language of a ***culture-sharing group*** (Harris, 1968). As both a process and an outcome of research (Agar, 1980), ethnography is a way of studying a culture-sharing group as well as the final, written product of that research. As a process, ethnography involves extended observations of the group, most often through ***participant observation***, in which the researcher is ***immersed*** in the day-to-day lives of the people and observes and interviews the group participants. Ethnographers study the meaning of

the behavior, the language, and the interaction among members of the culture-sharing group.

Ethnography had its beginning in the comparative cultural anthropology conducted by early 20th-century anthropologists, such as Boas, Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, and Mead. Although these researchers initially took the natural sciences as a model for research, they differed from those using traditional scientific approaches through the firsthand collection of data concerning existing "primitive" cultures (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). In the 1920s and 1930s, sociologists such as Park, Dewey, and Mead at the University of Chicago adapted anthropological field methods to the study of cultural groups in the United States (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Recently, scientific approaches to ethnography have expanded to include "schools" or subtypes of ethnography with different theoretical orientations and aims, such as structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, cultural and cognitive anthropology, feminism, Marxism, ethnomethodology, critical theory, cultural studies, and postmodernism (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). This has led to a lack of orthodoxy in ethnography and has resulted in pluralistic approaches. Many excellent books are available on ethnography, including Van Maanen (1988) on the many forms of ethnography; Wolcott (1999) on ways of "seeing" ethnography; LeCompte and Schensul (1999) on procedures of ethnography presented in a toolkit of short books; Atkinson, Coffey, and Delamont (2003) on the practices of ethnography; and Madison (2005) on critical ethnography.

Types of Ethnographies

There are many forms of ethnography, such as a confessional ethnography, life history, autoethnography, feminist ethnography, ethnographic novels, and the visual ethnography found in photography and video, and electronic media (Denzin, 1989a; LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992; Pink, 2001; Van Maanen, 1988). Two popular forms of ethnography will be emphasized here: the realist ethnography and the critical ethnography.

The ***realist ethnography*** is a traditional approach used by cultural anthropologists. Characterized by Van Maanen (1988), it reflects a particular stance taken by the researcher toward the individuals being studied. Realist ethnography is an objective account of the situation, typically written in the third-person point of view and reporting objectively on the information learned from participants at a site. In this ethnographic approach, the realist ethnographer narrates the study in a third-person dispassionate voice and reports on what is observed or heard from participants. The ethnographer remains in the

background as an omniscient reporter of the "facts." The realist also reports objective data in a measured style uncontaminated by personal bias, political goals, and judgment. The researcher may provide mundane details of everyday life among the people studied. The ethnographer also uses standard categories for cultural description (e.g., family life, communication networks, worklife, social networks, status systems). The ethnographer produces the participants' views through closely edited quotations and has the final word on how the culture is to be interpreted and presented.

For many researchers, ethnography today employs a "critical" approach (Carspecken & Apple, 1992; Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993) by including in the research an advocacy perspective. This approach is in response to current society, in which the systems of power, prestige, privilege, and authority serve to marginalize individuals who are from different classes, races, and genders. The ***critical ethnography*** is a type of ethnographic research in which the authors advocate for the emancipation of groups marginalized in society (Thomas, 1993). Critical researchers typically are politically minded individuals who seek, through their research, to speak out against inequality and domination (Carspecken & Apple, 1992). For example, critical ethnographers might study schools that provide privileges to certain types of students, or counseling practices that serve to overlook the needs of underrepresented groups. The major components of a critical ethnography include a value-laden orientation, empowering people by giving them more authority, challenging the status quo, and addressing concerns about power and control. A critical ethnographer will study issues of power, empowerment, inequality, inequity, dominance, repression, hegemony, and victimization.

Procedures for Conducting an Ethnography

As with all qualitative inquiry, there is no single way to conduct the research in an ethnography. Although current writings provide more guidance to this approach than ever (for example, see the excellent overview found in Wolcott, 1999), the approach taken here includes elements of both realist ethnography and critical approaches. The steps I would use to conduct an ethnography are as follows:

- Determine if ethnography is the most appropriate design to use to study the research problem. Ethnography is appropriate if the needs are to describe how a cultural group works and to explore the beliefs, language, behaviors, and issues such as power, resistance, and dominance. The literature may be deficient in actually knowing how the group works because the group is not in the mainstream, people may not be familiar with the group, or its ways are so different that readers may not identify with the group.

- Identify and locate a culture-sharing group to study. Typically, this group is one that has been together for an extended period of time, so that their shared language, patterns of behavior, and attitudes have merged into a discernable pattern. This may also be a group that has been marginalized by society. Because ethnographers spend time talking with and observing this group, access may require finding one or more individuals in the group who will allow the researcher in—a ***gatekeeper*** or ***key informants (or participants)***.

- Select cultural themes or issues to study about the group. This involves the ***analysis of the culture-sharing group.*** The themes may include such topics as enculturation, socialization, learning, cognition, domination, inequality, or child and adult development (LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992). As discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), Wolcott (1987, 1994b), and Fetterman (1998), the ethnographer begins the study by examining people in interaction in ordinary settings and by attempting to discern pervasive patterns such as life cycles, events, and cultural themes. ***Culture*** is an amorphous term, not something "lying about" (Wolcott, 1987, p. 41), but something researchers attribute to a group when looking for patterns of their social world. It is inferred from the words and actions of members of the group, and it is assigned to this group by the researcher. It consists of what people do (behaviors), what they say (language), the potential tension between what they do and ought to do, and what they make and use, such as artifacts (Spradley, 1980). Such themes are diverse, as illustrated in Winthrop's (1991) *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology.* Fetterman (1998) discusses how ethnographers describe a ***holistic*** perspective of the group's history, religion, politics, economy, and environment. Within this description, cultural concepts such as the social structure, kinship, the political structure, and the social relations or ***function*** among members of the group may be described.

- To study cultural concepts, determine which type of ethnography to use. Perhaps how the group works needs to be described, or the critical ethnography may need to expose issues such as power, hegemony, and to advocate for certain groups. A critical ethnographer, for example, might address an inequity in society or some part of it, use the research to advocate and call for changes, and specify an issue to explore, such as inequality, dominance, oppression, or empowerment.

- Gather information where the group works and lives. This is called ***fieldwork*** (Wolcott, 1999). Gathering the types of information typically needed in an ethnography involves going to the research site, respecting the daily lives of individuals at the site, and collecting a wide variety of

materials. Field issues of respect, ***reciprocity***, deciding who owns the data, and others are central to ethnography. Ethnographers bring a sensitivity to fieldwork issues (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995), such as attending to how they gain access, giving back or reciprocity with the participants, and being ethical in all aspects of the research, such as presenting themselves and the study. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) organize types of ethnographic data into observations, tests and measures, surveys, interviews, content analysis, interviews, elicitation methods, audiovisual methods, spatial mapping, and network research. From the many sources collected, the ethnographer analyzes the data for a ***description of the culture-sharing group***, themes that emerge from the group, and an overall interpretation (Wolcott, 1994b). The researcher begins by compiling a detailed description of the culture-sharing group, focusing on a single event, on several activities, or on the group over a prolonged period of time. The ethnographer moves into a theme analysis of patterns or topics that signifies how the cultural group works and lives.

- Forge a working set of rules or patterns as the final product of this analysis. The final product is a holistic ***cultural portrait*** of the group that incorporates the views of the participants (***emic***) as well as the views of the researcher (***etic***). It might also advocate for the needs of the group or suggest changes in society to address needs of the group. As a result, the reader learns about the culture-sharing group from both the participants and the interpretation of the researcher. Other products may be more performance based, such as theater productions, plays, or poems.

Challenges

Ethnography is challenging to use for the following reasons. The researcher needs to have a grounding in cultural anthropology and the meaning of a social-cultural system as well as the concepts typically explored by ethnographers. The time to collect data is extensive, involving prolonged time in the field. In many ethnographies, the narratives are written in a literary, almost storytelling approach, an approach that may limit the audience for the work and may be challenging for authors accustomed to traditional approaches to writing social and human science research. There is a possibility that the researcher will "go native" and be unable to complete the study or be compromised in the study. This is but one issue in the complex array of fieldwork issues facing ethnographers who venture into an unfamiliar cultural group or system. A sensitivity to the needs of individual studies is especially important, and the researcher needs to acknowledge his or her impact on the people and the places being studied.

Case Study Research

Definition and Background

The entire culture-sharing group in ethnography may be considered a case, but the intent in ethnography is to determine how the culture works rather than to understand an issue or problem using the case as a specific illustration. Thus, ***case study*** research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). Although Stake (2005) states that case study research is not a methodology but a choice of what is to be studied (i.e., a case within a ***bounded system***), others present it as a strategy of inquiry, a methodology, or a comprehensive research strategy (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). I choose to view it as a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, or an object of study, as well as a product of the inquiry. Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a ***case***) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving ***multiple sources of information*** (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case ***description*** and case-based themes. For example, several programs (a ***multi-site*** study) or a single program (a ***within-site*** study) may be selected for study.

The case study approach is familiar to social scientists because of its popularity in psychology (Freud), medicine (case analysis of a problem), law (case law), and political science (case reports). Case study research has a long, distinguished history across many disciplines. Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin (1993) trace the origin of modern social science case studies through anthropology and sociology. They cite anthropologist Malinowski's study of the Trobriand Islands, French sociologist LePlay's study of families, and the case studies of the University of Chicago Department of Sociology from the 1920s and 30s through the 1950s (e.g., Thomas and Znaniecki's 1958 study of Polish peasants in Europe and America) as antecedents of qualitative case study research. Today, the case study writer has a large array of texts and approaches from which to choose. Yin (2003), for example, espouses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to case study development and discusses explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive qualitative case studies. Merriam (1998) advocates a general approach to qualitative case studies in the field of education. Stake (1995) systematically establishes procedures for case study research and cites them extensively in his example of "Harper School." Stake's most recent book on multiple case study analysis presents a step-by-step approach and provides rich illustrations of multiple case studies in the Ukraine, Slovakia, and Romania (Stake, 2006).

Types of Case Studies

Types of qualitative case studies are distinguished by the size of the bounded case, such as whether the case involves one individual, several individuals, a group, an entire program, or an activity. They may also be distinguished in terms of the intent of the case analysis. Three variations exist in terms of intent: the single instrumental case study, the collective or multiple case study, and the ***intrinsic case study***. In a single ***instrumental case study*** (Stake, 1995), the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue. In a ***collective case study*** (or multiple case study), the one issue or concern is again selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue. The researcher might select for study several programs from several research sites or multiple programs within a single site. Often the inquirer purposefully selects multiple cases to show different perspectives on the issue. Yin (2003) suggests that the multiple case study design uses the logic of replication, in which the inquirer replicates the procedures for each case. As a general rule, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another because the contexts of cases differ. To best generalize, however, the inquirer needs to select representative cases for inclusion in the qualitative study. The final type of case study design is an intrinsic case study in which the focus is on the case itself (e.g., evaluating a program, or studying a student having difficulty—see Stake, 1995) because the case presents an unusual or unique situation. This resembles the focus of narrative research, but the case study analytic procedures of a detailed description of the case, set within its context or surroundings, still hold true.

Procedures for Conducting a Case Study

Several procedures are available for conducting case studies (see Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). This discussion will rely primarily on Stake's (1995) approach to conducting a case study.

- First, researchers determine if a case study approach is appropriate to the research problem. A case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases.

- Researchers next need to identify their case or cases. These cases may involve an individual, several individuals, a program, an event, or an activity. In conducting case study research, I recommend that investigators first consider what type of case study is most promising and useful. The case can be single or collective, multi-sited or within-site, focused on a case or on an issue

(intrinsic, instrumental) (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In choosing which case to study, an array of possibilities for ***purposeful sampling*** is available. I prefer to select cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process, or event I want to portray (called "purposeful maximal sampling,"; Creswell, 2005), but I also may select ordinary cases, accessible cases, or unusual cases.

- The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials. For example, Yin (2003) recommends six types of information to collect: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts.

- The type of analysis of these data can be a ***holistic analysis*** of the entire case or an ***embedded analysis*** of a specific aspect of the case (Yin, 2003). Through this data collection, a detailed description of the case (Stake, 1995) emerges in which the researcher details such aspects as the history of the case, the chronology of events, or a day-by-day rendering of the activities of the case. (The gunman case study in Appendix F involved tracing the campus response to a gunman for 2 weeks immediately following the near-tragedy on campus.) After this description ("relatively uncontested data"; Stake, 1995, p. 123), the researcher might focus on a few key issues (or ***analysis of themes***), not for generalizing beyond the case, but for understanding the complexity of the case. One analytic strategy would be to identify issues within each case and then look for common themes that transcend the cases (Yin, 2003). This analysis is rich in the ***context of the case*** or setting in which the case presents itself (Merriam, 1988). When multiple cases are chosen, a typical format is to first provide a detailed description of each case and themes within the case, called a ***within-case analysis,*** followed by a thematic analysis across the cases, called a ***cross-case analysis***, as well as ***assertions*** or an interpretation of the meaning of the case.

- In the final interpretive phase, the researcher reports the meaning of the case, whether that meaning comes from learning about the issue of the case (an instrumental case) or learning about an unusual situation (an intrinsic case). As Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention, this phase constitutes the "lessons learned" from the case.

Challenges

One of the challenges inherent in qualitative case study development is that the researcher must identify his or her case. I can pose no clear solution to this challenge. The case study researcher must decide which bounded system to study, recognizing that several might be possible candidates for

this selection and realizing that either the case itself or an issue, which a case or cases are selected to illustrate, is worthy of study. The researcher must consider whether to study a single case or multiple cases. The study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; the more cases an individual studies, the less the depth in any single case. When a researcher chooses multiple cases, the issue becomes, "How many cases?" There is not a set number of cases. Typically, however, the researcher chooses no more than four or five cases. What motivates the researcher to consider a large number of cases is the idea of "generalizability," a term that holds little meaning for most qualitative researchers (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Selecting the case requires that the researcher establish a rationale for his or her purposeful sampling strategy for selecting the case and for gathering information about the case. Having enough information to present an in-depth picture of the case limits the value of some case studies. In planning a case study, I have individuals develop a data collection matrix in which they specify the amount of information they are likely to collect about the case. Deciding the "boundaries" of a case—how it might be constrained in terms of time, events, and processes—may be challenging. Some case studies may not have clean beginning and ending points, and the researcher will need to set boundaries that adequately surround the case.

The Five Approaches Compared

All five approaches have in common the general process of research that begins with a research problem and proceeds to the questions, the data, the data analysis, and the research report. They also employ similar data collection processes, including, in varying degrees, interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. Also, a couple of potential similarities among the designs should be noted. Narrative research, ethnography, and case study research may seem similar when the unit of analysis is a single individual. True, one may approach the study of a single individual from any of these three approaches; however, the types of data one would collect and analyze would differ considerably. In ***narrative research***, the inquirer focuses on the stories told from the individual and arranges these stories in chronological order. In ethnography, the focus is on setting the individuals' stories within the context of their culture and culture-sharing group; in case study research, the single case is typically selected to illustrate an issue, and the researcher compiles a detailed description of the setting for the case. As Yin (2003) comments, "You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study" (p. 13). My approach is to

recommend, if the researcher wants to study a single individual, the narrative approach or a single case study because ethnography is a much broader picture of the culture. Then when comparing a narrative study and a single case to study a single individual, I feel that the narrative approach is seen as more scholarly because narrative studies *tend* to focus on single individual; whereas, case studies often involve more than one case.

From these sketches of the five approaches, I can identify fundamental differences among these types of qualitative research. As shown in Table 4.1, I present several dimensions for distinguishing among the five approaches. At a most fundamental level, the five differ in what they are trying to accomplish—their foci or the primary objectives of the studies. Exploring a life is different from generating a theory or describing the behavior of a cultural group. Moreover, although overlaps exist in discipline origin, some approaches have single-disciplinary traditions (e.g., grounded theory originating in sociology, ethnography founded in anthropology or sociology) and others have broad interdisciplinary backgrounds (e.g., narrative, case study). The data collection varies in terms of emphasis (e.g., more observations in ethnography, more interviews in grounded theory) and extent of data collection (e.g., only interviews in phenomenology, multiple forms in case study research to provide the in-depth case picture). At the data analysis stage, the differences are most pronounced. Not only is the distinction one of specificity of the analysis phase (e.g., grounded theory most specific, narrative research less defined), but the number of steps to be undertaken also varies (e.g., extensive steps in phenomenology, few steps in ethnography). The result of each approach, the written report, takes shape from all the processes before it. A narrative about an individual's life forms narrative research. A description of the essence of the experience of the phenomenon becomes a phenomenology. A theory, often portrayed in a visual model, emerges in grounded theory and a holistic view of how a culture-sharing group works results in an ethnography. An in-depth study of a bounded system or a case (or several cases) becomes a case study.

Relating the dimensions of Table 4.1 to research design within the five approaches will be the focus of chapters to follow. Qualitative researchers have found it helpful to see at this point a general sketch of the overall structure of each of the five approaches. Let's examine in Table 4.2 the structure of each approach.

The outlines in Table 4.2 may be used in designing a journal-article-length study; however, because of the numerous steps in each, they also have applicability as chapters of a dissertation or a book-length work. I introduce them here because the reader, with an introductory knowledge of each approach, now can sketch the general "architecture" of a study. Certainly, this architecture will emerge and be shaped differently by the conclusion of

Table 4.1 Contrasting Characteristics of Five Qualitative Approaches

Characteristics	*Narrative Research*	*Phenomenology*	*Grounded Theory*	*Ethnography*	*Case Study*
Focus	Exploring the life of an individual	Understanding the essence of the experience	Developing a theory grounded in data from the field	Describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group	Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases
Type of Problem Best Suited for Design	Needing to tell stories of individual experiences	Needing to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon	Grounding a theory in the views of participants	Describing and interpreting the shared patterns of culture of a group	Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases
Discipline Background	Drawing from the humanities including anthropology, literature, history, psychology, and sociology	Drawing from philosophy, psychology, and education	Drawing from sociology	Drawing from anthropology and sociology	Drawing from psychology, law, political science, medicine
Unit of Analysis	Studying one or more individuals	Studying several individuals that have shared the experience	Studying a process, action, or interaction involving many individuals	Studying a group that shares the same culture	Studying an event, a program, an activity, more than one individual

Characteristics	*Narrative Research*	*Phenomenology*	*Grounded Theory*	*Ethnography*	*Case Study*
Data Collection Forms	Using primarily interviews and documents	Using primarily interviews with individuals, although documents, observations, and art may also be considered	Using primarily interviews with 20–60 individuals	Using primarily observations and interviews, but perhaps collecting other sources during extended time in field	Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, artifacts
Data Analysis Strategies	Analyzing data for stories, "restorying" stories, developing themes, often using a chronology	Analyzing data for significant statements, meaning units, textural and structural description, description of the "essence"	Analyzing data through open coding, axial coding, selective coding	Analyzing data through description of the culture-sharing group; themes about the group	Analyzing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes
Written Report	Developing a narrative about the stories of an individual's life	Describing the "essence" of the experience	Generating a theory illustrated in a figure	Describing how a culture-sharing group works	Developing a detailed analysis of one or more cases

Table 4.2 Reporting Structures for Each Approach

Reporting Approaches	*Narrative*	*Phenomenology*	*Grounded Theory*	*Ethnography*	*Case Study*
General Structure of Study	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (a narrative, significance of individual, data collection, analysis outcomes) • Report of stories • Individuals theorize about their lives • Narrative segments identified • Patterns of meaning identified (events, processes, epiphanies, themes) • Summary (Adapted from Denzin, 1989a, 1989b)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (a phenomenology and philosophical assumptions, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Significant statements • Meanings of statements • Themes of meanings • Exhaustive description of phenomenon (Adapted from Moustakas, 1994)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (grounded theory, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Open coding • Axial coding • Selective coding and theoretical propositions and models • Discussion of theory and contrasts with extant literature (Adapted from Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (ethnography, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Description of culture • Analysis of cultural themes • Interpretation, lessons learned, questions raised (Adapted from Wolcott, 1994b)	• Entry vignette • Introduction (problem, questions, case study, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Description of the case/cases and its/their context • Development of issues • Detail about selected issues • Assertions • Closing vignette (Adapted from Stake, 1995)

the study, but it provides a framework for the design issue to follow. I recommend these outlines as general templates at this time. In Chapter 5, we will examine five published journal articles, with each study illustrating one of the five approaches, and explore the writing structure of each.

Summary

In this chapter, I described each of the five approaches to qualitative research—narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. I provided a definition, some history of the development of the approach, and the major forms it has assumed, and I detailed the major procedures for conducting a qualitative study. I also discussed some of the major challenges in conducting each approach. To highlight some of the differences among the approaches, I provided an overview table that contrasts the characteristics of focus, the type of research problem addressed, the discipline background, the unit of analysis, the forms of data collection, data analysis strategies, and the nature of the final, written report. I also presented outlines of the structure of each approach that might be useful in designing a study within each of the five types. In the next chapter, we will examine five studies that illustrate each approach and look more closely at the compositional structure of each type of approach.

Additional Readings

Several readings extend this brief overview of each of the five approaches of inquiry. In Chapter 1, I presented the major books that will be used to craft discussions about each approach. Here I provide a more expanded list of references that also includes the major works.

In narrative research, I will rely on Denzin (1989a, 1989b), Czarniawska (2004), and especially Clandinin and Connelly (2000). I add to this list books on life history (Angrosino, 1989a), humanistic methods (Plummer, 1983), and a comprehensive handbook on narrative research (Clandinin, 2006).

Angrosino, M. V. (1989a). *Documents of interaction: Biography, autobiography, and life history in social science perspective.* Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2006). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research.* London: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1989a). *Interpretive biography.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1989b). *Interpretive interactionism.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Elliot, J. (2005). *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* London: Sage.
Plummer, K. (1983). *Documents of life: An introduction to the problems and literature of a humanistic method.* London: George Allen & Unwin.

For phenomenology, the books on phenomenological research methods by Moustakas (1994) and the hermeneutical approach by van Manen (1990) will provide a foundation for chapters to follow. Other procedural guides to examine include Giorgi (1985), Polkinghorne (1989), Van Kaam (1966), Colaizzi (1978), Spiegelberg (1982), Dukes (1984), Oiler (1986), and Tesch (1990). For basic differences between hermeneutic and empirical or transcendental phenomenology, see Lopez and Willis (2004) and for a discussion about the problems of bracketing, see LeVasseur (2003). In addition, a solid grounding in the philosophical assumptions is essential, and one might examine Husserl (1931, 1970), Merleau-Ponty (1962), Natanson (1973), and Stewart and Mickunas (1990) for this background.

Colaizzi, P. F. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. Vaile & M. King (Eds.), *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48–71). New York: Oxford University Press.
Dukes, S. (1984). Phenomenological methodology in the human sciences. *Journal of Religion and Health, 23,* 197–203.
Giorgi, A. (Ed.). (1985). *Phenomenology and psychological research.* Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology* (D. Carr, Trans). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology* (D. Carr, Trans). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
LeVasseur, J. J. (2003). The problem with bracketing in phenomenology. *Qualitative Health Research, 31*(2), 408–420.
Lopez, K. A., & Willis, D. G. (2004). Descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology: Their contributions to nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research, 14*(5), 726–735.
Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of perception* (C. Smith, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Natanson, M. (Ed.). (1973). *Phenomenology and the social sciences.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
Oiler, C. J. (1986). Phenomenology: The method. In P. L. Munhall & C. J. Oiler (Eds.), *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective* (pp. 69–82). Norwalk, CT: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1989). Phenomenological research methods. In R. S. Valle & S. Halling (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology* (pp. 41–60). New York: Plenum.

Spiegelberg, H. (1982). *The phenomenological movement* (3rd ed.). The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff.

Stewart, D., & Mickunas, A. (1990). *Exploring phenomenology: A guide to the field and its literature* (2nd ed.). Athens: Ohio University Press.

Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools.* Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.

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On grounded theory research, consult the most recent and highly readable book, Strauss and Corbin (1990), before reviewing earlier works such as Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978), Strauss (1987), Glaser (1992), or the latest edition of Strauss and Corbin (1998). The 1990 Strauss and Corbin book provides, I believe, a better procedural guide than their 1998 book. For brief methodological overviews of grounded theory, examine Charmaz (1983), Strauss and Corbin (1994), and Chenitz and Swanson (1986). Especially helpful are Charmaz's (2006) book on grounded theory research from a constructionist's perspective and Clarke's (2005) postmodern perspective.

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Several recent books on ethnography will provide the foundation for the chapters to follow: Atkinson, Coffey, and Delamont (2003); the first volume in the Ethnographer's Toolkit series, *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research,* as well as the other six volumes in the series by LeCompte and Schensul (1999); and Wolcott (1994b, 1999). Other resources about ethnography include Spradley (1979, 1980), Fetterman (1998), and Madison (2005).

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Wolcott, H. F. (1994b). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wolcott, H. F. (1999). *Ethnography: A way of seeing.* Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.

Finally, for case study research, consult Stake (1995) or earlier books such as Lincoln and Guba (1985), Merriam (1988), and Yin (2003).

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Merriam, S. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and method* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Exercises

1. Select one of the five approaches for a proposed study. Write a brief description of the approach, including a definition, the history, and the procedures associated with the approach. Include references to the literature.
2. Take a proposed qualitative study that you would like to conduct. Begin with presenting it as a narrative study, then shape it into a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and finally a case study. Discuss for each type of study the focus of the study, the types of data collection and analysis, and the final written report.

Appendix D

A Grounded Theory Study

Constructions of Survival and Coping by Women Who Have Survived Childhood Sexual Abuse

Susan L. Morrow
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This qualitative study investigated personal constructs of survival and coping by 11 women who have survived childhood sexual abuse. In-depth interviews, a 10-week focus group, documentary evidence, and follow-up participant checks and collaborative

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SOURCE: The material in this appendix is reprinted from Morrow, S. L., & Smith, M. L. (1995). Constructions of survival and coping by women who have survived childhood sexual abuse. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 42*, 24–33.

analysis were used. Over 160 individual strategies were coded and analyzed, and a theoretical model was developed describing (a) causal conditions that underlie the development of survival and coping strategies, (b) phenomena that arose from those causal conditions, (c) context that influenced strategy development, (d) intervening conditions that influenced strategy development, (e) actual survival and coping strategies, and (f) consequences of those strategies. Subcategories of each component of the theoretical model were identified and are illustrated by narrative data. Implications for counseling psychology research and practice are addressed.

Appendix D: Grounded Theory Study

The sexual abuse of children appears to exist at epidemic levels, with estimates that 20%–45% of women and 10%–18% of men in the United States and Canada have been sexually abused as children; experts agree that these figures are underestimates (Geffner, 1992; Wyatt & Newcomb, 1990). Approximately one third of students seeking counseling in one university counseling center reported having been sexually abused as children (Stinson & Hendrick, 1992). Because of the breadth and severity of psychological and physical symptoms consequent to childhood sexual abuse, the confusion surrounding treatment methods, and the large number of "normal" individuals seeking counseling who display severe psychological symptoms (Courtois, 1988; Geffner, 1992; Lundberg-Love, Marmion, Ford, Geffner, & Peacock, 1992; Russell, 1986), a theoretical framework is needed to better understand the consequences of childhood sexual abuse.

Two primary modes of understanding and responding to consequences of childhood sexual abuse are symptom and construct approaches (Briere, 1989). Researchers and practitioners alike have adopted a symptom-oriented approach to childhood sexual abuse. It is characteristic of both academic and lay literatures to portray consequences of sexual abuse in lengthy lists of symptoms (Courtois, 1988; Russell, 1986). Briere (1989), however, encouraged a broader perspective, advocating the identification of overarching constructs and core effects—as opposed to symptoms—of sexual victimization.

Mahoney (1991) explicated core ordering processes—tacit, deep-structural processes of valence, reality, identity, and power—that underlie personal meanings or constructions of reality. He emphasized the importance of understanding tacit theories of self and world that guide the development of patterns of affect, thinking, and behavior. A construct-oriented approach to the study of survival and coping offers the possibility of developing a conceptual framework that will bring order into the chaos of symptomatology that currently characterizes the field, as well as relating those symptoms to core ordering processes.

A number of authors (Johnson & Kenkel, 1991; Long & Jackson, 1993; Roth & Cohen, 1986) have related coping theories (Horowitz, 1979; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) to sexual-abuse trauma. However, traditional coping theories have tended to problematize emotion-focused and avoidant coping styles commonly used by women and abuse survivors (Banyard & Graham-Bermann, 1993). Strickland (1978) stressed the importance of practitioners accurately assessing [an] individual's life situations in determining the efficacy of certain coping strategies. Banyard and Graham-Bermann (1993) emphasized the need to examine power as a mediator in the coping process. The child who is a victim of sexual abuse is inherently powerless; therefore, particular attention must be paid to a reexamination of coping strategies with this population.

The purpose of the present research was to understand the lived experiences of women who had been sexually abused as children and to generate a theoretical model for the ways in which they survived and coped with their abuse. As Hoshmand (1989) noted, qualitative research strategies are particularly appropriate to address meanings and perspectives of participants. In addition, she suggested that naturalistic methods offer the researcher access to deep-structural processes.

Considerable attention has been given to the truthfulness of claims of childhood sexual abuse, particularly when alleged victims have forgotten or repressed all or part of their abuse experiences. Loftus (1993) outlined the difficulties inherent in determining the veridicality of retrieved memories, urging caution on the part of psychologists working in the area of sexual abuse and calling for ongoing research into the nature of true repressed memories. While acknowledging the importance of Loftus's concerns, a constructivist approach orients toward "assessing the viability (utility) as opposed to the validity (truth) of an individual's unique worldview" (Neimeyer & Neimeyer, 1993, p. 2). In accordance with this view, each volunteer's self-identification as an abuse survivor was the criterion for inclusion in the present investigation and her definition of survival and coping the starting point for the investigation. We accepted the stories of participants at face value as their phenomenological realities.

The primary method of investigating those realities was grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), a qualitative research method designed to aid in the systematic collection and analysis of data and the construction of a theoretical model. The data analysis was based on transcriptions of semistructured, in-depth interviews; videotapes of a 10-week group that focused on what survival and coping meant to the research participants; documentary evidence, including participants' journals and other relevant writings; and Susan L. Morrow's field notes and journals.

Method

Qualitative research methods are particularly suited to uncovering meanings people assign to their experiences (Hoshmand, 1989; Polkinghorne, 1991). Chosen to clarify participants' understandings of their abuse experiences, the methods used involved (a) developing codes, categories, and themes inductively rather than imposing predetermined classifications on the data (Glaser, 1978), (b) generating working hypotheses or assertions (Erickson, 1986) from the data, and (c) analyzing narratives of participants' experiences of abuse, survival, and coping.

Participants

Research participants were 11 women, with ages ranging from 25 to 72, who had been sexually abused as children. One woman was African American, 1 was West Indian, and the remainder were Caucasian. Three were lesbians, 1 was bisexual, and 7 were heterosexual. Three women were physically disabled. Participants' educational levels ranged from completion of the Graduate Equivalency Degree to having a master's degree. Abuse experiences varied from a single incident of molestation by a family friend to 18 years of ongoing sadistic abuse by multiple perpetrators. Age of initial abuse ranged from infancy to 12 years of age; abuse continued as late as age 19. All participants had been in counseling or recovery processes lasting from one 12-step meeting to years of psychotherapy.

Procedure

Entry into the field. Research participants were recruited in a large southwestern metropolitan area through therapists known for expertise in their work with the survivors of sexual abuse. Each therapist was sent a letter describing the study in detail; a similar letter was enclosed to give to clients who might benefit from or be interested in participating in the study. Interested clients, in turn, called Susan L. Morrow, the investigator. Of the 12 respondents, 11 became research participants. The 12th declined to participate for personal reasons.

When prospective participants contacted Morrow, the purpose and scope of the study were reviewed and an appointment was made for an initial interview. Informed consent was discussed in detail at the beginning of the interview, with an emphasis on confidentiality and the potential emotional consequences of participation. After a participant signed the consent, audio- or videotaping commenced. Each participant chose her own pseudonym for the

research and was promised the opportunity to review quotes and other information about her before publication.

Data sources. Each of the 11 survivors of sexual abuse participated in a 60- to 90-min in-depth, open-ended interview, during which two questions were asked: "Tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what happened to you when you were sexually abused," and "What are the primary ways in which you survived?" Morrow's responses included active listening, empathic reflection, and minimal encouragers.

After the initial interviews, 7 of the 11 interviewees became focus-group participants. Four were excluded from the group: 2 who were interviewed after the group had started and 2 who had other commitments. The group provided an interactive environment (Morgan, 1988) that focused on survival and coping. In the initial meeting, participants brainstormed about the words *victim*, *survivor*, and *coping*. Subsequent group sessions built on the first, with participants exploring emerging categories from the data analysis and their own research questions, which had been invited by Morrow. Morrow took a participant-observer role, moving from less active involvement in the beginning to a more fully participatory role toward the end (Adler & Adler, 1987).

A central feature of the analysis was Morrow's self-reflectivity (Peshkin, 1988; Strauss, 1987). Morrow's own subjective experiences were logged, examined for tacit biases and assumptions, and subsequently analyzed.

Documentary evidence completed the data set. These data consisted of participants' journals, kept both in conjunction with and independent of the project, artistic productions, and personal writings from earlier periods of participants' lives.

Data collection, analysis, and writing. A central concern for rigor in qualitative research is evidentiary adequacy—that is, sufficient time in the field and extensiveness of the body of evidence used as data (Erickson, 1986). The data consisted of over 220 hours of audio- and videotapes, which documented more than 165 hours of interviews, 24 hours of group sessions, and 25 hours of follow-up interactions with participants over a period of more than 16 months. All of the audiotapes and a portion of the videotapes were transcribed verbatim by Morrow. In addition, there were over 16 hours of audiotaped field notes and reflections. The data corpus consisted of over 2,000 pages of transcriptions, field notes, and documents shared by participants.

The analytic process was based on immersion in the data and repeated sortings, codings, and comparisons that characterize the grounded theory approach. Analysis began with open coding, which is the examination of

minute sections of text made up of individual words, phrases, and sentences. Strauss and Corbin (1990) described open coding as that which "fractures the data and allows one to identify some categories, their properties and dimensional locations" (p. 97). The language of the participants guided the development of code and category labels, which were identified with short descriptors, known as *in vivo codes*, for survival and coping strategies. These codes and categories were systematically compared and contrasted, yielding increasingly complex and inclusive categories.

Morrow also wrote analytic and self-reflective memos to document and enrich the analytic process, to make implicit thoughts explicit, and to expand the data corpus. Analytic memos consisted of questions, musings, and speculations about the data and emerging theory. Self-reflective memos documented Morrow's personal reactions to participants' narratives. Both types of memos were included in the data corpus for analysis. Analytic memos were compiled and an analytic journal was kept for cross-referencing codes and emerging categories. Large poster boards with movable tags were used to facilitate the arranging and rearranging of codes within categories.

Open coding was followed by axial coding, which puts data "back together in new ways by *making connections between a category and its subcategories*" (italics in original, Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 97). From this process, categories emerged and were assigned in vivo category labels. Finally, selective coding ensued. Selective coding was the integrative process of "selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships [by searching for confirming and disconfirming examples], and filling in categories that need[ed] further refinement and development" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116).

Codes and categories were sorted, compared, and contrasted until saturated—that is, until analysis produced no new codes or categories and when all of the data were accounted for in the core categories of the grounded theory paradigm model. Criteria for core status were (a) a category's centrality in relation to other categories, (b) frequency of a category's occurrence in the data, (c) its inclusiveness and the ease with which it related to other categories, (d) clarity of its implications for a more general theory, (e) its movement toward theoretical power as details of the category were worked out, and (f) its allowance for maximum variation in terms of dimensions, properties, conditions, consequences, and strategies (Strauss, 1987).

In keeping with Fine's (1992) recommendations that researchers move beyond the stances of ventriloquists or mere vehicles for the voices of those being researched, we sought to engage the participants as critical members of the research team. Consequently, after completion of the group, the 7 group members were invited to become coanalysts of data from the focus group. Four elected to do so. Not choosing to extend their original commitment,

2 terminated their participation at that point; a 3rd declined because of physical problems. The 4 coanalysts (termed *participant-coresearchers*) continued to meet with Morrow for more than a year. They acted as the primary source of participant verification, analyzing videotapes of the group sessions in which they had participated, suggesting categories, and revising the emerging theory and model. Participant-coresearchers used their natural intuitive analytic skills as well as grounded theory principles and procedures that had been taught to them by Morrow to collaborate in the data analysis.

Morrow met weekly with an interdisciplinary qualitative research collective throughout the data gathering, analysis, and writing of the research account. The group provided peer examination of the analysis and writing, as recommended by LeCompte and Goetz (1982), thereby enhancing researcher and theoretical sensitivity, overcoming selective inattention, and enhancing receptiveness to the setting (Glaser, 1978; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Accountability was achieved through ongoing consultations with participants and colleagues and by maintaining an audit trail that outlined the research process and the evolution of codes, categories, and theory (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The audit trail consisted of chronological narrative entries of research activities, including pre-entry conceptualizations, entry into the field, interviews, group activities, transcription, initial coding efforts, analytic activities, and the evolution of the survival and coping theoretical model. The audit trail also included a complete list of the 166 in vivo codes that formed the basis for the analysis.

Because of the human cognitive bias toward confirmation (Mahoney, 1991), an active search for disconfirming evidence was essential to achieving rigor (Erickson, 1986). Data were combed to disconfirm various assertions made as a result of the analysis. Discrepant case analysis, also advised by Erickson (1986), was conducted, and participants were consulted to determine reasons for discrepancies.

Results

The grounded theory model for surviving and coping with childhood sexual abuse, evolving from Strauss and Corbin's (1990) framework and developed from the present investigation, is present in Figure 1.

Causal Conditions of Phenomena Related to Sexual Abuse

Two types of causal conditions emerged from the data, which ultimately led to certain phenomenological experiences related to sexual abuse. These causal conditions were (a) cultural norms and (b) forms of sexual abuse.

Cultural norms of dominance and submission, violence, maltreatment of women, denial of abuse, and powerlessness of children formed the bedrock on which sexual abuse was perpetrated. Paula's (all names used are pseudonyms) experiences reflected a number of these norms: Her father enforced his dominance by physically and sexually abusing Paula's mother and calling Paula and her mother "cunt," "whore," and "fat pig." He was an avid reader of pornography and regularly invited Paula into the bathroom, where he showed her pictures from his magazines. He took photographs of her in the bathtub or sunbathing by the pool. She stated that most of his abuse of her was ". . . real, real physical. [He] beat the shit out of us." His sexual abuse of her was "covert." Audre commented the following after disclosing that her sexual abuser had beaten her "only" once: "You know, he never whipped me like that again. Never again. And he never had to. . . . Whenever I would resist him at any point, he'd just look at me." Dominance, violence, and the powerlessness of children converged in Audre's life to set the stage for her abuse, as did the denial of abuse or the potential for abuse by significant people in her life and in the lives of other victims. After being sexually abused by an elderly neighbor, Liz brought home a picture he had taken to show her parents. Liz reported, "My mother got right down in my face and said, 'He didn't do anything to you, did he?'" Frightened, Liz replied, "No, he didn't do anything to me."

The second causal condition consisted of the various forms of sexual abuse that had been perpetrated. Abuses ranged from innuendos and violations of privacy to rape and vaginal penetration with loaded guns. These forms of abuse were classified through the data analysis into five categories: (a) nonphysical sexual abuses, (b) physical molestation, (c) being forced to perform sexual acts, (d) penetration, and (e) sexual torture. Nonphysical sexual abuses, perpetrated on all of the victims, consisted of perpetrators engaging in sexual talk, photographing the child in sexual poses or nude, exposing the genitals to the child, engaging in sexual teasing and jokes, performing sexual activities in front of the child, and inviting the child to participate in sexual activity. Physical molestation, also experienced by all of the participants, included sexual touching, pinching, poking, tickling, and stroking the child with objects; removing the child's covers or clothes; holding the child in such a way that sexual contact was made; masturbating the child; washing and examining the child's genitals in excess of actions necessary for health and cleanliness; and performing cunnilingus on the child. Of the participants, 7 had been forced to perform sexual acts, such as masturbation, fellatio, or cunnilingus. At least 5 of the victims had been penetrated vaginally, orally, or anally with fingers, hands, penises, guns, knives, or other implements; four others were uncertain about penetration because of

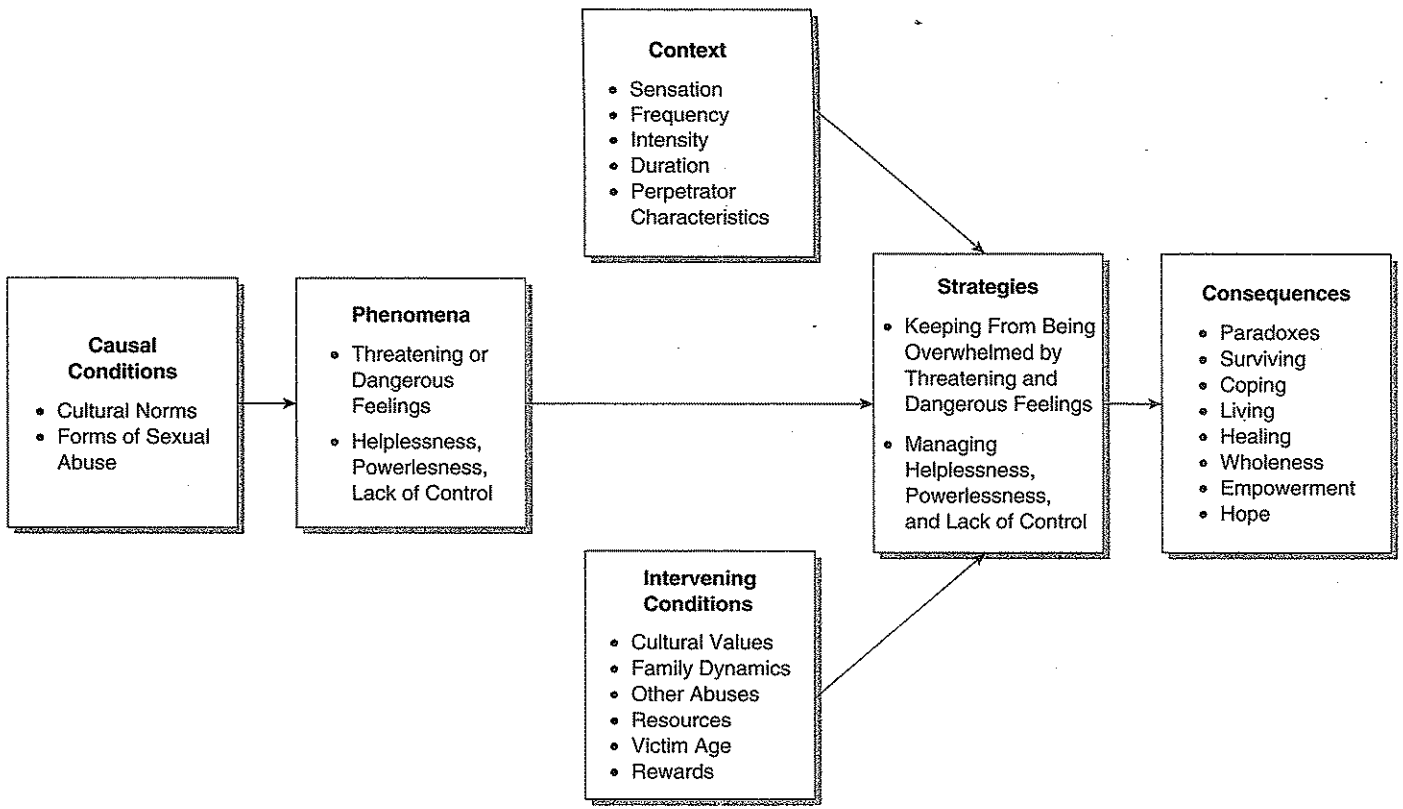

Figure 1 Theoretical Model for Surviving and Coping With Childhood Sexual Abuse

amnesic episodes. Six remembered being subjected to sexual tortures of a sadistic nature beyond those already described.

Phenomena Resulting From Cultural Norms and Forms of Sexual Abuse

Causal conditions—cultural norms and the forms of sexual abuse to which victims were subjected—resulted in two core categories of subjective phenomena as reported by participants: (a) being overwhelmed by feelings victims experienced as threatening or dangerous and (b) experiencing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. These categories support and extend Herman's (1992) description of traumatic reactions, in which she found that "the salient characteristic of the traumatic event is its power to inspire helplessness and terror" (p. 34). This research indicates that terror is but one of the overwhelming emotions characteristic of trauma experienced by survivors of sexual abuse. Most, but not all, of the survivors in the study experienced terror; all experienced overwhelming emotions of fear, pain, or rage.

Meghan foreshadowed one of these phenomena the first night of the group, when she said, "To keep from feeling my feelings, I have become a very skilled helper of other people." Throughout the data, others echoed her words. The analytic moment in which this category emerged is illustrated in the following analytic memo written by Morrow (in vivo codes are in italics):

> I'm reaching a higher level of abstraction. Is the overarching category *protection from feelings*? Many categories are subsumed under it: One *talks* to get out the *stories*; the *feelings* are less intense. Fake orgasm (*sex*) because you don't have any physical *feelings*. *Art* was used to deal with *feelings*, express *anger, release* the pressure of the *feelings*, use *chemicals* to deal with *feelings* (and a whole complex interaction here). . .

Existing and emergent codes and categories were compared and contrasted with this category; the category was modified to accommodate the data, producing the phenomenon that was labeled *being overwhelmed by threatening or dangerous feelings*—feelings that participants described as subjectively threatening or dangerous.

In addition to being overwhelmed by feelings, participants experienced what was termed *helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control.* Lauren provided an exemplar of the second category, illustrating the pervasiveness of her perpetrator's power:

> He stands there. A silhouette at first and then his face and body come into view. He is small, but the backlighting intensifies his figure and he seems huge,

> like a prison guard. He is not always there but it feels like he might as well be. When he's not there, I search the distance for him and he appears. He seems to be standing there for hours. As if he's saying, you are weak, I am in control.

Not only did Lauren experience powerlessness during her abuse, but her lack of control invaded her dreams and her moments alone.

Context in Which Survival and Coping Strategies Developed

Strategies for survival and coping were developed in response to being overwhelmed by threatening or dangerous feelings and experiencing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. These strategies were influenced by particular contextual markers related to both the causal conditions—particularly the forms of sexual abuse—and the resultant phenomena. These contextual markers included (a) sensations, (b) frequency, (c) intensity, (d) duration, and (e) perpetrator characteristics.

Sensations experienced by victims during sexual abuse ranged from arousal to pain, varying from mild to severe intensity. The frequency and duration of sexual abuse ranged from a single instance to years of ongoing sexual abuse, which occurred as often as daily or as infrequently as once every summer. Perpetrator characteristics varied from one to multiple perpetrators of both genders, who were always older and larger than their victims and ranged in relationship from blood relatives to strangers. The phenomena—being overwhelmed by threatening or dangerous feelings and experiencing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control—also varied as to types of physical and emotional sensations; ranged in intensity, frequency, and duration; and frequently continued for years after the original abuse had ended.

Intervening Conditions Influencing Survival and Coping Strategies

In addition to context, there were also intervening conditions, which were broad, general conditions that influenced participants' choices of survival and coping strategies. Intervening conditions included (a) cultural values, (b) family attitudes, values, beliefs, and dynamics, (c) other abuses present, (d) age of the victim, (e) rewards that accompanied the abuse, and (f) outside resources. Cultural values that were particularly influential were those of a religious nature related to sex and sexual abuse: "Guilt, I believe, is the driving force in Catholicism. . . . I felt guilt after I was molested. . . . I see the Catholic stuff as running in tandem with the issues of being a sexual-abuse survivor." One woman uncovered a family norm that condoned incest when

her uncle bragged, "We were one big fuckin' family. . . . Everybody screwed everybody." Alcohol and alcoholic dynamics were part of almost every family, and it was rare that emotional or physical abuse was not an accompaniment of sexual violation. When perpetrators provided rewards or favors to their victims, victims were more likely to cooperate but expressed more confusion than did those who were not rewarded.

The ages at which participants had been abused ranged from infancy through 19 years of age. The data analysis revealed only one pattern related to the age of the victim when she was abused. In keeping with the literature on dissociation (Kluft, 1985), all of the participants who had developed severe dissociative patterns had been sexually abused in infancy or early childhood.

Only one participant experienced outside intervention in her abuse, although all had since turned to and found emotional support from friends, partners, or therapists. As in Liz's case ("He didn't do anything to you, did he?"), potential helpers were unwilling or unable to see that abuse was happening. However, in one case, a grandmother—who knew of and was powerless to stop the abuse—provided the support that the survivor now believes saved her life and sanity.

Strategies for Surviving and Coping With Childhood Sexual Abuse

In the presence of the context and intervening conditions described above, two overarching phenomena led to the development of two parallel core strategies for survival and coping: (a) keeping from being overwhelmed by threatening or dangerous feelings and (b) managing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. Because so few resources were available for help, most of the strategies described by participants were internally oriented and emotion focused. The strategies within each core category are illustrated in Figure 2.

Keeping from being overwhelmed by threatening or dangerous feelings. Being sexually abused produced confusing and intense emotions in the child victims. Lacking the cognitive skills to process overwhelming feelings of grief, pain, and rage, these children developed strategies to keep from being overwhelmed. These strategies were (a) reducing the intensity of troubling feelings, (b) avoiding or escaping feelings, (c) exchanging the overwhelming feelings for other, less threatening ones, (d) discharging or releasing feelings, (e) not knowing or remembering experiences that generated threatening feelings, and (f) dividing overwhelming feelings into manageable parts.

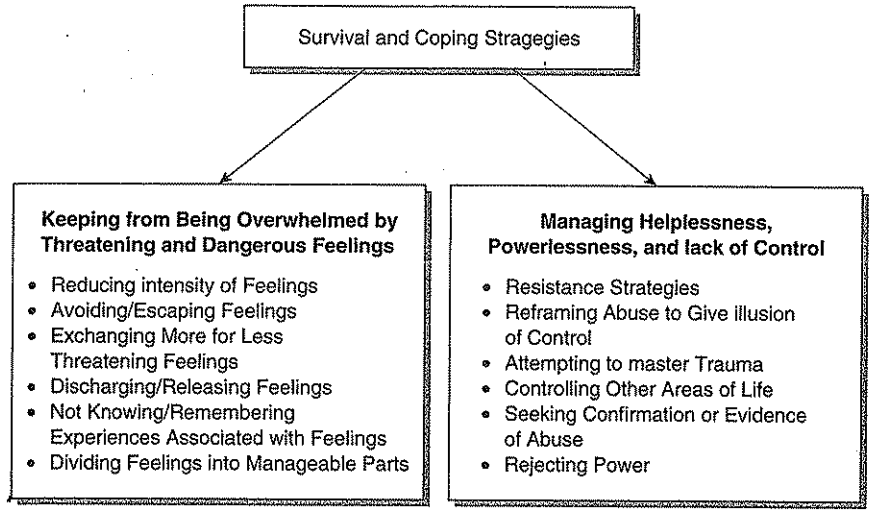

Figure 2 Survival and Coping Strategies of Women Who Have Survived Childhood Sexual Abuse

The first strategy used by participants in this research was reducing the intensity of the feelings. Participants used various methods to reframe their abuse so that their resultant feelings were less intense; to dull, numb, or not experience negative feelings that emerged or threatened to emerge; or to comfort themselves. By mentally or verbally reframing their abuse, victims found ways to excuse their perpetrators or to minimize the importance of the trauma. Lisa reported, "I never, never blamed him. . . . He was just a boy. . . . He didn't know any better." To modify the intense feelings that arose, participants dulled and numbed those feelings with substances such as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, and food and by sleeping or becoming depressed. Liz became depressed to tone down the rage she did not allow herself to feel. Participants kept feelings from emerging in a number of ways. Paula commented," The feelings are in the words"; thus, one strategy for not feeling was not to talk. Meghan analyzed her experiences instead: "I lived in my head." As these emotions emerged, participants "stuffed" or consciously repressed them. Liz said, "I didn't mind how much it bothered me, I learned to repress the emotions," while Lisa swallowed her feelings with cinnamon rolls. Participants used a variety of ways to find comfort. Amaya found comfort outside herself: "The grandmother, she was a very spiritual woman. . . . She used to rock and sing to us." Others, unable to find comfort from outside, nurtured themselves with animals or dolls. "I used to play with paper dolls. . . . They were my friends. They could never hurt me."

Participants used a variety of means to meet unmet emotional needs: "I used sex for validation 'cause that makes me pretty and that means you love me." Meghan became "mother hen" from the time she was little, receiving approval, attention, and appreciation from her family. Participants coped spiritually in a number of ways, some finding spiritual solace or relief by praying to or raging against God, while others rejected religious systems that they saw as being supportive of their abuse. Some sought alternative spiritual paths. Kitty believed that God would not give her any more than she could handle.

The second strategy for keeping from being overwhelmed was avoiding or escaping the threatening or dangerous feelings. In many instances, similar substrategies (e.g., drugs or alcohol) facilitated different processes. In a previous example, alcohol was used to dull and numb feelings as one way to reduce the intensity of those feelings. In some of the examples that follow, alcohol was used to escape. Strategies for escaping and leaving took both problem- and emotion-focused directions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, 1985) and included attempts to physically avoid or escape abuse, ignore the abuse, escape its reality, or leave mentally or emotionally. In their attempts to physically escape abuse, participants went to their rooms, ran away, moved out, married young, or separated themselves from others: "I isolated forever." When physical escape seemed impossible, some victims thought of dying or actually attempted suicide when they were children to adolescents in an effort to escape their abuse. To prevent either sexual abuse or related physical abuse, participants attempted to distract their perpetrators, tried talking them out of abusing them, or told them to stop. Velvia remembered, "I kept wanting it to be like it was and I kept asking him, 'Let's just read.'. . ." They also reported having developed heightened intuition about danger or having lied to others about their abuse to avoid being punished or further abused. Participants attempted to escape their abuse by hiding, both literally and figuratively. Ananda found refuge in a canyon, while Meghan strove for invisibility by being very, very good. Danu's conflict revealed itself in her poetry: "I didn't want to be/ 'miss smarty pants.'/ I tried to be quieter/ more secret and private./ I knew it would be safer/ if no one noticed me." Lauren and Kitty hid their bodies with oversized clothes. To ignore or escape the reality of their abuse, participants wished, fantasized, denied, avoided, and minimized: "I avoid things . . . the other side of denial. I won't look at it." Lauren "left the story behind," and the abuse gradually became less and less real in her mind until it was forgotten. Sometimes victims simply left mentally or emotionally. Kitty said, "Mind, take me outa there!" and it did. Some experienced tunnel vision, floating, "spacing out," or separating from their bodies or other people. Ananda described "a kind of spiritual leaving this planet."

Another way that the research participants avoided being overwhelmed was to exchange threatening or dangerous feelings for other, less distressing ones. Overwhelming feelings could be exchanged by overriding the feelings with other, more intense feelings; replacing them with less threatening, substitute feelings; or distracting themselves with activities that produced innocuous feelings. Participants overrode dirty feelings by physically scrubbing them away. Some used self-induced physical pain, such as self-mutilation, to override emotional pain. Kitty commented, "Physical pain keeps me from feeling my feelings. That's where my anorexia came from. . . . The physical pain of not eating. I can't feel things when I'm in pain." The women who experienced feelings of pain and grief as dangerous developed an ability to switch immediately to anger or rage, substituting the latter emotions for the pain that threatened to overwhelm them. Others bypassed the more threatening feelings of anger or rape, switching to tears. "I have [anger] for about two seconds, then I cry; it turns into sadness." Participants also distracted themselves from their feelings by turning to activities that produced innocuous or pleasant feelings: "The crunching kind of distracts me from the pain inside"; "I looked at other things."

The fourth strategy for keeping from being overwhelmed was discharging or releasing feelings. Verbal activities included writing in journals or talking to "get the feelings out." The use of humor was especially effective. Mimicking her usual 12-step meeting greeting ("My name is Paula, and I'm an alcoholic"), one participant declared, "Hello, I'm Paula, and I'm sorry!" They also shouted or screamed to release tension. Paula, a highly competitive athlete, used physical strategies that ranged from athletics to self-harm. She cut crosses in her skin and vomited to release her feelings: "I'll go purge and, uh, I'll feel elated, and better, and I also got rid of some of the feelings as a way of letting go." Artistic endeavors also facilitated release: "To this day, if I get those feelings, I can draw, and not necessarily feel better, but less pressure."

Not knowing or remembering experiences associated with threatening or dangerous feelings was the fifth strategy—a complex category involving head memories, head knowledge, clues or evidence, bodily sensations, intuition, and feelings or emotions. Head memories were one of the most haunting and difficult aspects of having been sexually abused. Virtually every participant had experienced some degree of memory loss surrounding her abuse, as illustrated by Velvia's comments: "There are some things that I remember, but only up to a certain point, and I don't know what happened next. . . . [T]he place where it stops sticks in my head. . . ." Some participants depended on head knowledge to know that they had been sexually abused. Audre disclosed, "The only reason I know about [the abuse] is

because my abuser called me about a year ago to tell me." Detective work was rampant in survivors' searches for outside evidence or clues of their abuse. Some sought verification from siblings or nonoffending parents. Others depended on feelings about places or photographs to cue them about when their abuse had occurred: "We moved to a big huge house when I was 11. And that's when I think that it started, 'cause I don't remember anything in the old house." Survivors experienced "body memories," or physical sensations, frequently in the absence of head memories or knowledge. Kitty suffered intense pelvic pain whenever she talked about abuse: "Somebody'd be talking about being attacked, and I would experience all this pain in my stomach and in my female part of me." Others experienced nausea, trembling, and abreactions as a result of talking about sexual abuse. Intuition also contributed to a survivor's knowledge that she had been abused. Participants reported that intuition—in the form of a sudden awareness or hunch—was a powerful source of knowing at the moment of insight but that it could quickly fade to disbelief. Feelings or emotions were experienced as the least trustworthy of all evidence, particularly if unaccompanied by other forms of knowing. Despite the intensity of feelings of terror, deep sadness, and shame, women in the study were far more likely to believe they were "crazy" than to trust their feelings or emotions as evidence of sexual abuse: "I'm having all these feelings and all these symptoms . . . but maybe it has to with my mother dropped me on my head or she dressed me funny. . . ."

Dividing overwhelming feelings into manageable parts was a complex process of partitioning emotions into different compartments or separating them from cognitions, sensations, behaviors, or intuitions. Dividing was one of the ways in which memories were lost and knowing was jeopardized. Participants exercised three forms of dividing: "disassociating," dividing up overwhelming emotions, and dividing up cognitive functions. Participants typically used the lay term *disassociate* rather than *dissociate* to explain the process of altering consciousness. Although disassociation was used to escape feelings, it also provided the gateway for dividing. Dividing up overwhelming emotions took place as overwhelming or disparate emotional states were compartmentalized in order to make them more manageable. On one end of a continuum were facades or masks that hid the more vulnerable aspects of self. Participants had also developed different parts of themselves. The more rigid divisions were characterized by some degree of amnesia or distortion of behavior, motor coordination, self-perception, or time characteristic of dissociative disorders (Braun, 1986):

> I'm not sure that I really thought that I did survive . . . going away and seeing myself laying there on the bed—I can see my face, I can see the little girl

> laying there with her head kind of turned, her eyes closed, sweat or something, you know. She's—her head's wet—me—I guess it must be me.

In addition to dividing emotional states, participants separated cognitive functions such as actions, emotions, thoughts, bodily sensations, and intuitions, congruent with Braun's (1988) BASK (behavior, affect, sensation, knowledge) model of dissociation. Kitty learned to crawl out of her body: "I could see me screaming, but I couldn't hear." She "was actually frozen and could do nothing. . . . I wondered at the time why couldn't I do something? Why couldn't I move?"

Managing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. In addition to developing strategies to keep from being overwhelmed by emotions, participants had developed strategies for managing powerlessness in the face of their abuse. Six categories of survival and coping strategies were used to manage helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control: (a) creating resistance strategies, (b) reframing abuse to create an illusion of control or power, (c) attempting to master the trauma, (d) attempting to control other areas of life besides the abuse, (e) seeking confirmation or evidence from others, and (f) rejecting power.

One way in which participants managed their lack of power was to resist or rebel. Meghan refused to eat. Kitty spoke of her resistance: "Those fuckers aren't gonna get me. I'm not gonna kill myself. . . . [T]hat's when they win." Some reframed the abuse to create an illusion of control or power. Meghan believed that she could control her abuse: "If somehow I could be good enough and do things right enough, she wouldn't be like that anymore." Survivors attempted to master the trauma, at times recapitulating their abuse: "If I can create pain that I can feel, and I'm in control, it's different. It's totally different." Others turned to helping abused people. Participants frequently tried to control other areas of life besides the abuse. Barbara became ". . . a savior. I ride a white horse, rescue." Meghan stated, "I couldn't manage the abuse, but I could manage the household." All of the participants sought confirmation or evidence from others in order to control their own perceived reality. Only Liz rejected power. "I don't want to be like her. . . . She was very powerful. . . . I'm afraid of power in myself, even."

Consequences of Strategies for Survival and Coping

The strategies used by participants were not without consequences. In every case, those strategies succeeded in keeping them from being overwhelmed by feelings or aided them in managing helplessness, powerlessness,

and lack of control. However, while their strategies for survival and coping were successful, that success was also costly.

Two women saw the creation of alter personalities—their primary survival and coping strategy—as a sane alternative to psychosis, or "going crazy." However, they both paid the price of living fragmented lives.

When asked what being overwhelmed by feelings meant to her, Meghan responded, "Screaming metal . . . pain and anguish that goes on and on and on and never stops." She has continued to spiral back through depression, pain, and anguish that, at times, feel as if they will never end. Paradoxically, her strategies worked to keep overwhelming feelings at bay until she actively began the therapy process. As she has faced the emotions she buried, she has been overwhelmed many times.

Participants had fears, wishes, or dreams of dying, yet all are alive today. But while all still live, they did not feel they survived intact; as Barbara disclosed, "I'm not sure I survived," and as Liz said, "Part of me died."

Another paradox arose during the examination of the consequences of the strategy to manage helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. Often, the very strategies adopted by participants to exercise power or control backfired, ultimately taking control of the survivors. One woman, whose childhood refusal to eat resulted in her doctor prescribing crackers and cream cheese for breakfast (the only food she would eat), found in adulthood that she turned repeatedly—and sometimes compulsively—to these same foods.

Many times, participants commented that they were barely surviving—that they were in pain, exhausted, or overwhelmed. However, surviving and coping [were] what participants did best. Liz declared, "My will to survive is strong, stronger than I realized." In a conversation among the participant-coresearchers, Meghan said angrily, "I don't want to be surviving. I want to be living. I want to have some fun. I want to be happy. And that's what's not happening right now." Liz responded, "First you have to survive. You have to survive it. And that's where I'm getting to, is the realization that I'm surviving this stuff again."

Each of the survivors echoed Meghan's feelings. Four had become drug- and alcohol-free in their efforts to move beyond mere survival to healing, wholeness, and empowerment. Paula disclosed, "I'm just startin' to realize that this is worth it. [My drawings are] more elaborate, they're bigger, I'm using more mediums, they're more detailed." Velvia used the word "empowerment" to describe a process that went beyond survival. Amaya wrote,

> Today I got in touch with *mi otro yo* [my other me]. . . .
>
> She is so powerful, so sure of herself, so strong, so real, so alive.

I did not die like I thought I would when I felt her.

Instead, I got in touch with the missing part of my inner power and wholeness.

The pain, grief, and terror that the survivors had experienced and continued to wrestle with are very real, and the healing process is long and arduous. However, throughout the research, participants expressed hope. Despite her terror and pain, Kitty reflected, "I have hope in my life. . . . There's just a little bit of sunlight coming in. There's a little bit of heaven up there that comes inside of my soul and heals."

Discussion

Although the counseling literature is rich with descriptions of specific outcomes of childhood sexual abuse, this study is distinctive in its systematic examination of the survival and coping strategies from the perspectives of women who were sexually abused as children. A theoretical model of the survival and coping strategies of 11 participants was constructed through qualitative data analysis, which included engaging participants in the analytic process in order to ensure that the model reflected their personal constructs. This model establishes, from a multitude of strategies and symptoms, a coherent, construct-focused framework for understanding the often-confusing constellation of behavior patterns of the survivors of abuse.

Cultural norms set the stage for sexual abuse. As Banyard and Graham-Bermann (1993) emphasized, it is important for researchers and practitioners to examine the social milieu in which particular stressors are experienced. In relation to childhood sexual abuse, an examination of social forces helps to shift the focus of coping from a purely individual analysis to an individual-in-context analysis, thereby normalizing the victim's experience and reducing self-blame.

The powerlessness of girls, which can be attributed to the societal positioning of women and children, to their physical size, and to undependable resources for intervention available to abuse victims, explains the overwhelming predominance of emotion-focused over problem-focused coping strategies used by the participants in this study. In addition, the context of denial and secrecy surrounding sexual abuse in the lives of girls and women may further exacerbate a preference for emotion-focused coping.

The present analysis is congruent with Long and Jackson's (1993) findings that victims of childhood sexual abuse attempted to have an impact on the actual abuse situation by using problem-focused strategies, while they managed their distress through emotion-focused coping. The two core

strategies—keeping from being overwhelmed by threatening and dangerous feelings and managing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control—parallel Long and Jackson's emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies. Long and Jackson found that few victims attempted problem-focused strategies and speculated that resources may not have been available, either in fact or in the cognitive appraisals of victims. The present research demonstrated that options for problem-focused coping were, in fact, not readily available. In addition, specific cultural and family norms served to convince children of the limited efficacy of problem-focused solutions.

Researchers and practitioners may need to think beyond the categories of emotion- and problem-focused coping strategies (Banyard & Graham-Bermann, 1993). L. Benishek proposed that certain so-called emotion-focused strategies, such as dissociation, may, in fact, be problem focused (personal communication, December 1, 1993). Indeed, according to Banyard and Graham-Bermann (1993), "There are times when emotion-focused strategies may be used as problem-focused solutions to a stressful dilemma" (p. 132). Additional qualitative research in this area may prove fruitful.

Mahoney (1991) described core ordering processes as deep-structure processes that "lie at the core of every person's lifelong efforts to organize and reorganize their experience" (p. 179). Of his four proposed core ordering processes (valence, reality, identity, and power), the present analysis yielded two: valence, which encompasses processes of motivation and emotion, and power, which is characterized by processes of control and ability. These two processes correspond, respectively, to the core strategies found in this research related to participants' keeping from being overwhelmed with feelings and managing helplessness, powerlessness, and lack of control. Because this research was pursued inductively without imposing preexisting categories on the data, the core ordering processes of identity and reality did not emerge. However, it would be appropriate to reanalyze the data with these categories in mind. The process of identity, for example, can be seen in Liz's statement about seeing herself lying on the bed during her abuse. "She . . . I guess it must be me." Although the present research did not address identity or reality, it provided a more detailed understanding of the processes of valence and power, particularly as they were experienced by the survivors of sexual abuse in this investigation.

The emergent theoretical model of survival and coping was, in effect, Morrow's interpretation of 11 participants' constructions of their survival and coping. As is frequently the case in qualitative research, the results of this analysis are unique to the particular investigator, participants, and context of this study. The transferability of this theoretical model for survival and coping takes place as the reader examines these results in the context of specific circumstances of interest.

Feminist researchers have expressed concern about the potential for the exploitation of women and other marginalized groups in academic research and have urged investigators to examine closely what participants receive in exchange for their contributions (Landrine, Klonoff, & Brown-Collins, 1992). Their recommendations have influenced the present investigation in two ways. First, the categories that emerged from this research made sense to and were useful, in a practical sense, to the participants themselves. When the developing model for survival and coping was presented to the participant-coresearchers, one woman took the information home to her husband, with whom she had experienced painful and confusing dynamics surrounding her abuse. Her response endorsed the applicability of this model in practice, not only for spouses or partners, but for families and the therapeutic relationship as well: ". . . [I]t felt like months and months . . . of stuff that just felt so 'hard . . . trudging through this sludge—it was like the clarity! It was just unbelievable . . . the closeness between us." It appears that presenting this model to clients and significant others has potential, as a psychoeducational tool, to ease the difficult and perilous journey that individuals must travel as they work through abuse trauma and its consequences.

In addition, the collaborative research process itself has implications for research with the survivors of sexual abuse. Participant-coresearchers described their experiences of collaborative meaning-making as "important" and "empowered." Coparticipatory data analysis therefore holds promise as an empowering model for researchers and participants alike.

Finally, from a standpoint of the "psychology of human effectiveness" (Gelso & Fassinger, 1992, p. 293), the resilience and resourcefulness of the participants in this investigation cannot be overstated. What appears at first glance to be a profusion of dysfunctional symptoms becomes, upon closer examination, rational and reasonable coping strategies given the extremity of the stressors to which these women, as children, were subjected. For example, dividing various aspects of the self into alter personalities enabled victims to disperse trauma among various parts of the self, thereby decreasing the potential for being overwhelmed. In addition, multiplicity provided for self-nurturing and furnished a cognitive structure in which valuable functions and personality characteristics were preserved until they could be safely reintegrated. This investigation focused on the strengths of the survivors of sexual abuse and encourages practitioners to view clients who have been sexually abused in light of those strengths, rather than from a perspective that emphasizes pathology (Adams & Betz, 1993; Hill, 1993; Howard, 1992). Given the prevalence of sexual abuse, adaptation to childhood trauma must be considered a part of the process of normal development for a large number of individuals. The present findings may facilitate a reevaluation of

that adaptation and offer clients and their therapists a conceptual framework to facilitate healing.

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Appendix D: Grounded Theory Study