

Glaserian Grounded Theory in Nursing Research

TRUSTING EMERGENCE

Barbara M. Artinian
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Glaserian Grounded Theory in Nursing Research

Dr. Barbara M. Artinian, PhD, RN is professor emeritus in the School of Nursing, Azusa Pacific University. She has taught courses in community health nursing, family theory, nursing theory, and qualitative research methodology. For about 7 years she conducted the Spiritual Care Research Institute that was held in collaboration with Azusa Pacific University and Nurses Christian Fellowship. Doctoral and master's level students attended the institute and through it Dr. Artinian became methodologist for three doctoral students who report their research in this book—Tove Giske, Pamela Cone, and Paula Vuckovich. Dr. Artinian has written a nursing model, the Intersystem Model, which is used internationally. The model was published by Sage Publications in 1997 in a book entitled *The Intersystem Model: Integrating Theory and Practice*. The model had been presented in many articles prior to the publication of the book. Dr. Artinian served on the doctoral committee of a student in Australia who used the Intersystem Model in his doctoral work (Taylor, 1977).

This book culminates the vision Dr. Artinian had in 1988 of what qualitative research could be when she wrote “Qualitative Modes of Inquiry” as published in the *Western Journal of Nursing Research*. It is very gratifying to see how the description of the modes presented in that article has been carried out in this book in a more sophisticated manner than was envisioned at that time.

Dr. Artinian grew up in Wisconsin and graduated from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. She attended Case Western Reserve University and earned a degree in nursing. She completed her graduate degree at the University of California at Los Angeles, earning an MSN degree. At the University of Southern California, she earned a PhD in sociology with a major emphasis in family theory. She had postdoctoral studies at the University of California at San Francisco in the area of chronic illness and studied with Strauss. She was introduced to the grounded theory method by reading and discussing the book *Theoretical Sensitivity* (Glaser, 1978) with the other postdoctoral students, Carole Chenitz and Janice Swanson. Her first use of the grounded theory method was with Mary Thompson (see chapter 11, “Nurturing Hope in Patients With Cancer”) and she has continued to use the method with all her students. She has served as thesis chairperson for 24 students at the master's level and as methodologist for 5 doctoral dissertations.

Dr. Tove Giske, PhD, RN is currently an associate professor at Haraldsplass Diakonale Høgskole (HDH), the university college where she has taught nursing for over a decade. She holds a joint position of nursing research at HDH and Haraldsplass Diakonale Hospital, a sister institution

of the nursing university college. Dr. Giske received her BSN from Betanien Diakonale Høgskole in Bergen, Norway, and both her MSN and PhD from the University of Bergen, where she conducted a Glaserian GT doctoral study with patients having diagnostic studies in a gastroenterology ward. Her dissertation, *Preparative Waiting*, examined the experiences of these patients as they tried to strategically balance their anxiety and hope during the long wait for a final diagnosis. Born and raised on the west coast of Norway, Dr. Giske has long been interested in spiritual caregiving. Currently the vice president of Nurses Christian Fellowship International, she has been an active member of KFSS, the Norwegian branch of NCF. She is also editor of the *Journal of Profession & Faith*, sponsored by KFSS. A vital part of the Spiritual Care Network of nurse scholars, she became a friend and colleague of both Dr. Artinian and Dr. Cone through the Spiritual Care Research Institute of 2001. Her continued interest in spiritual care research prompted her to join Dr. Cone as co-investigator on the spiritual care Fulbright research project in the fall of 2008. In addition, Dr. Giske is an active member of the Bergen, Norway, grounded theory (Bergen GT) group of research scholars.

Dr. Pamela H. Cone, PhD, RN, CNS received her BSN from Alderson-Broadus College in Philippi, West Virginia, and her MSN from Azusa Pacific University (APU). Currently an assistant professor, she has been teaching nursing at APU for 17 years. Born and raised in Haiti, Dr. Cone's interest in people and cultures around the world has enabled her to successfully promote international experiences for nursing students at APU. In 2006 Dr. Cone received her PhD from the University of California, San Francisco. Her doctoral dissertation was based on a Glaserian GT study with formerly homeless mothers in the Pacific Southwest of the United States, and she continues to have an interest in vulnerable populations such as the homeless and immigrants. Her interest in spiritual care research goes back to a master's program completed in 1994. Since then she participated in an ongoing study on spiritual care for 7 years and remains an active member of an international network of nursing scholars who conduct research in this domain. In August of 2008, Dr. Cone received a Fulbright Scholar award that enabled her to conduct a six-month study requested by Norwegian nursing educators on how well their programs are preparing nurses to provide spiritual care. Her collaboration with Dr. Artinian dates from a qualitative research class in 1992. Dr. Tove Giske became a friend and colleague through the Spiritual Care Research Institutes, and together they remain actively involved in spiritual care research and part of the Bergen GT group of researchers.

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Trusting Emergence

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We dedicate this book to Dr. Barney Glaser, who provided direction for our research through his many books. We also dedicate this book to Dr. Rose M. Liegler, former dean of the Azusa Pacific University School of Nursing, during whose tenure most of the research reported in this book was done. Her support and encouragement made the research possible.

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Foreword

Grounded theory, a research method used internationally and by myriad disciplines, was developed by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967 (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) while they were studying patients dying in California hospitals (Glaser & Strauss, 1965). According to Morse (2009), grounded theory (GT) is likely the most widely used qualitative method of research. From the beginning, the method found favor with the nursing community, both because Glaser and Strauss held positions at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Nursing and because they mentored students in the then new doctoral program in nursing. The first graduate of the program, Jean Quint (later Benoliel), published the findings from her grounded theory study as the widely read book *The Nurse and the Dying Patient* (Quint, 1967), thereby giving further credence to the method for nurses. When the sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967) wrote their first methodology book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, it was natural that they used the jargon of their discipline; while nurses appreciated the findings from GT studies as true and meaningful to their work, they didn't have the sociology vocabulary to understand how it was done. It was only after Glaser wrote his follow-up book *Theoretical Sensitivity* (1978), and when students of Glaser and Strauss began writing clarifying articles that nurses were able to use the method (Stern, 1980).

Barbara Artinian was among the early interpreters of the method in her 1988 article "Qualitative Modes of Inquiry." The present book is an expansion and illustration of the ideas put forth in that article, where Artinian examined the range of GT and the possible levels of abstraction. During her 21 years as professor at Azusa Pacific University (APU), Artinian mentored masters and doctoral students through their thesis studies, teaching them the Glaserian version of GT (as opposed to the later Straussian adaptation [Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Stern, 1995]). In other ways Artinian followed the pattern set by Barney Glaser by publishing

the work of her protégés in this book, as Glaser has done in his collections of studies (Glaser, 1993, 1994, 1996; Glaser & Holton, 2007).

I find the figures that illustrate the GTs developed by the authors (which they call conceptual maps) to be clear and helpful to the reader's understanding. As a rule, I admit that I tend to be dismissive of figures because beginning researchers spend so much effort depicting *everything* they found in the figure that the text suffers from a lack of explanation. Perhaps *conceptual map* is a better term than figure, as for the visual learner, tracing the work as a drawing helps the GT researcher understand what is going on in the social scene.

The focus of this book is particularly clinical, to the extent that the final chapters deal with nursing interventions. In their work, Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that the final level of abstraction would lead to formal theory. For nurses, intervention may be more useful than formal theory, even if the more professorial of us might be attracted to work that impacts the world as opposed to easing the discomfort of our charges.

During her tenure at APU from 1984 to 2005, Barbara Artinian conducted a series of Spiritual Care Research Institutes sponsored by APU and The Nurses Christian Fellowship. Azusa Pacific University was originally founded in 1899 as a Bible college, and today lists its purpose as continuing "to prepare young men and women to serve Christ throughout the world" ("Our History," 2009). It was as a result of these institutes that the authors of chapters in the present book looked to Artinian for mentorship in their research work. Therefore, it is no surprise that these authors seem particularly sensitive to the spiritual needs of patients.

Artinian's institutes attracted nurses from as far away as Norway, where one of her coeditors, Tove Giske, is an associate professor of nursing in Bergen (gateway to the fjords). Dr. Giske defended her dissertation at the University of Bergen in March 2008. Such is the popularity of her decade of teaching and leadership in the community that a whole contingent of friends and colleagues attended her graduation party. Dr. Giske has a long history of teaching nursing students about the importance of spiritual care in both clinical and didactic settings.

The second coeditor, Pamela Cone, assistant professor at APU, gained her PhD in 2006 from the University of California, San Francisco. She has long been a proponent of spiritual care and based her master's thesis in its provision. She received a Fulbright Scholarship in 2008 to respond to Norwegian nurse educators' request for a review of their programs in regard to spiritual care. She and Dr. Giske became colleagues as a result of the Spiritual Care Research Institutes; thus the

institute brought scholars together, providing another avenue beside research meetings for colleagues to exchange ideas.

Barbara Artinian stands out as a mentor and colleague. With this book she provides a model for the retired academic's second career, spreading the grounded theory and spiritual care message in meaningful ways.

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Preface

The purpose of this book is to illustrate the development of the Grounded Theory (GT) method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and further described by Glaser in *Theoretical Sensitivity* (1978) and his recent publications. By staying true to the original description of the method, the researchers presenting their studies in this book have discovered grounded theories of various types and levels of abstraction. Dr. Barbara M. Artinian has either trained all of the authors, or has served as methodologist or consultant for their research projects in master's or doctoral studies. Her persistent efforts have enabled these scholars to maintain consistent use of a purist Glaserian GT method as we understand it.

This work is divided into four sections. Part I, "Theoretical Considerations," includes an overview of the GT method followed by a discussion of various experiences in developing grounded theories. It discusses the use of conceptual mapping as an assist to the analytical process, and explains how clearly medical personnel must understand the intent of Glaser's directives in order to use his method while satisfying research committee requirements. The final chapters of this section describe the process of a scholar moving from a novice state to that of an experienced researcher in the Glaserian GT method.

Part II, "Studies Using Early Modes of Grounded Theory," presents six examples of research using the early modes of Glaserian GT. The main modes are the descriptive, the gerund, and the emergent fit. The descriptive mode is the most detailed and least abstract of the GT modes. Two GT studies are presented in the descriptive mode. The gerund mode with its basic social process (BSP) is one of the most commonly reported of the GT modes, and two studies are presented in the gerund mode. Finally, part II presents two examples of the emergent fit mode. This mode starts with a theory or with variables thought to be relevant for the area under study, with the intent of clarifying or expanding the existing theory, or of clarifying the relationships among the variables.

Part III, “Studies with Emergent Theoretical Codes: Theoretical Code Mode,” presents research from which a theoretical code emerged. This mode is more abstract than the modes discussed above and is more difficult to use because it requires the researcher to discover the overall organizing principle that relates the substantive codes into an integrated theory. These theoretical codes, which emerge from the data, describe in a more abstract way than in the other two modes how the main concern of the subjects is resolved. Glaser has identified many theoretical codes in his books. Ten studies depicting five specific codes are presented in this section. This level of abstraction is not often seen in GT work and is a unique focus of this book.

Part IV, “The Intervention Mode,” is the final section, and it presents four research studies. In this mode, findings from fully integrated studies are used to conduct a research study in a clinical area, after which outcomes are further analyzed to improve nursing practice and to refine and extend the theories involved. These examples are presented to provide direction to other researchers who might use the intervention mode to test and extend their theories in their own practice settings.

A digital adjunct for this book, developed by Katharine S. West and Barbara M. Artinian, is available through Springer Publishing and includes the following content:

- The tables and conceptual maps presented in the book, converted into formats that can be used for PowerPoint presentations
- The watercolor paintings from which emerged the name of the theory “Preparative Waiting” (see chapter 5)
- Definitions of the modes of Grounded Theory
- Definitions of the types of theories emerging from Grounded Theory research
- An outline of how the use of the literature review as required by research committees evolved
- The Intersystem Model, which is the nursing model that uses the methodology of GT. A diagram of the model is also provided, and is illustrated by care plans based on data from studies reported in this book.

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We cannot thank Katharine West enough. She was the graphic designer and is also a GT researcher. Without her knowledge of nursing, GT methodology, and graphic design, we would not have been able to prepare all the conceptual maps, figures, and tables presented in this work. We also thank Kathie Speck, who prepared the first version of this manuscript, and Katharine West, who integrated all the edited changes into the final manuscript.

Last, but not least, we wish to express our appreciation to God and to all our families and friends who helped us in countless ways, great and small, to accomplish this project.

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Theoretical Considerations

INTRODUCTION: BARBARA M. ARTINIAN

PART I

The purpose of Part I is to give an introduction to the Glaserian Grounded Theory method and to discuss and give examples of learning and working with classical Grounded Theory (GT). In chapter 1, Artinian gives an overview of the GT method and discusses its historical development. The strengths and weaknesses of GT design as well as types of nursing problems for which the method is suitable are described. Issues in theory development such as sample size, data collection methods, levels of data analysis, reliability and validity, and human subject issues are presented. Practical issues such as proposal development and critiquing a GT study are also addressed.

In the 1990s, the controversy between adherents of a classic Glaserian approach and the axial coding method developed by Strauss and Corbin was the subject of many nursing journal articles. In chapter 2, Artinian discusses the relative usefulness of the two methods. Examples of theories developed using a classic Glaserian approach are contrasted with the descriptive data produced by the axial coding method.

Conceptual mapping is a strategy for graphically mapping the relationships between and among the variables in a research study. It serves as a tool to help the researcher clarify the probabilistic relationships emerging from the data. Principles for constructing conceptual maps are discussed by Artinian and West in chapter 3, and references are made to conceptual maps found in parts II and III.