

Final Thoughts on Exempling

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The humble purpose of this book is to help novice researchers doing dissertation research to do good GT by emphasizing the learning of GT by example. There is much to learn as GT methods become developed in the literature every year. This book has focused so far on exempling GT from its inception in 1965 to the reader *Methods of GT* in 1994. In this chapter I will discuss exempling GT to 2007 when I put out a reader with Judith Holton of very well formulated GT papers. It was called the *GT Seminar Reader*. Since this reader was published in 2007 to today both method and substantive GT papers have burgeoned following the style and procedure examples given in this reader.

One source of this perfecting of GT methodology was my grounded theory troubleshooting seminar started 14 years ago in Paris. Novices trying GT for a dissertation came from all over the world to get help in doing the PhD dissertation using GT. These seminars are given all over the world by my colleagues. I designed the seminar in 2002 expressly to tend to the myriad of problems that emerge when doing a GT for a dissertation. The rule of the seminar requires participants to be totally open to whatever they think. The participants are also allowed to interrupt at will, to the point of a free for all of emergent possible ideas. There is no such thing as a good question, just whatever emerges as questions leading to possible categories and to perfecting GT procedures. The goal was to get each novice one step further in his GT research and doing this step "right". The seminar unstuck each researcher presenting. Each presentation unstuck by examples of several typical problems that occur when tempting a GT research. Observers learned much as well as the participants. The open talk on troubles and problems was nonstop.

The seminar focuses on exactly where each participant is with the goal of moving him/her one step further in the research. Problem coverage is achieved by listening to the array of problems of eleven or twelve troubleshootees. And after listening engaging in free for all open discussion about the problems and related problems with procedures that will help the participant. I keep the discussion under control as best I can, keeping in mind the helpful benefit of free associations of participants.

The motivation to participate in these seminars besides the 'grab' of discovery is producing an acceptable dissertation that contributes to a field and is rewarded by a PhD. It must meet the high standards of the academia wherever it is being done. Candidates are committing themselves to this critical career junction at great personal cost of time and money. The value enhancement of going from student to doctor is tremendous. Committing themselves to doing a GT dissertation is a very fateful decision. It is a mystical passage to surrounding laymen, based on the awe-inspiring magic of the GT methodology. It is normal for a candidate to worry if GT research in his hands will pass muster, thus they are highly motivated to get help in doing GT and the GT troubleshooting seminar provides the help they need. They are highly motivated to get on with their lives based on the PhD career rewards. The candidates often go to two or three seminars as their research advances and different problems emerge.

The troubleshooting seminar offerings have proven very successful. Each seminar fills up quite quickly. Novices come from all over the world. They are given all over the world. Novices travel great distances for the promise of help. The seminars are usually given by my advanced students, in their country, but they travel to the USA too. The networking by internet telling of the learning experience and of the dissertation success generates a big demand for holding many seminars.

Many novices come from departments where GT methodology is completely unknown. Supervisors and committees must be convinced that GT research is academically legitimate with great merit. They learn in the seminar how to argue for using GT research for the PhD. The seminar participation has a certifying effect that hopefully gets it accepted at the home department. The anti-GT opinion of academic departments is still strong, but subsiding enough to accommodate many more novices doing dissertations.

The further purpose of the troubleshooting was to inspire all participants to doing GT by the conceptual grab of the concepts that occurred for each participant presenting. Also, to show GT's worldwide use in many disciplines by noting where the participants came from as well as their field in academics. I also noted where other troubleshooting seminars were being given. A major result of the seminar was a codification and clarifying of the GT perception during the few days it was held. Participants discovered in detail a method they had no idea existed. The papers in this GT seminar reader largely came from the seminars generating concepts by constant comparisons.

The troubleshooting seminar over the years has become an important learning tool for GT and thusly a firm feature in the growth of the GT perspective. Researchers network to share their papers through the internet for exempling to each other for comments. The network is largely based on meetings at the seminar. I know of no one who has not participated in at least one troubleshooting seminar as an observer or as a trouble shootee. Most colleagues have been to two or more troubleshooting seminars. The exempling learning is great.

The 24 papers in our reader *The GT Seminar Reader* will show to the reader of this chapter the dissertation successes of the troubleshooting seminar. The title to each paper

captures with grab the core problem and sometimes the core variable. They are excellent papers thus good examples, but the reader of this book can be his/her own judge of these papers using the autonomy afforded by GT methodology. It is my hope that these papers will inspire more GT research by novices, the experienced and senior academics. And I hope they will certify and legitimate by example the use of GT in doubtful academic departments of all disciplines. Many such doubtful departments still exist in spite of the spread of 'ok' for GT. This reader has a strong progressive part in the growth of the GT perspective. It plays a strong part in the history of GT. Since this publication a few more readers and scores of papers have been published which confirm the GT perspective and methodology

So dear reader, enjoy and bear in mind that the papers in this reader are rich in general implications; that they are not bound by the field in which they were researched. The implications can be applied to many areas of social behavior and can also be used to generate formal theory. Also, they were all published in journals, thus peer reviewed by independent researchers.

Bear in mind that the primary purpose of this reader was exempling. There are many benefits from exempling to those who study these papers taken from dissertations. I turn now to give the reader some comments written by Judith Holton my coeditor.

Introduction to Reader by Judith Holton

"As Barney has suggested the primary purpose of the *GT Seminar Reader* is exempling. There are many dimensions to exempling that will benefit those who study the papers in this reader. For the novice, of course, exempling shows the way, inspires their effort to achieve a GT thesis and motivates them to persist through the learning process and applying the GT methodology. For the more experienced grounded theorists exempling offers the delight of reading grounded theories from a diverse range of disciplines and discovering new concepts that capture with imagery and spin with general application beyond the paper at hand. In an earlier Reader (Glaser 1994), Barney spoke of this conceptual power of GT not simply for theorists but for practitioners and participants. I think that this is a primary reason that many of us are drawn to GT. "We are motivated to generate theory that really matters, theory that is vital, relevant and yields high impact main concerns."

Learning GT is an experiential process. Exempling is an important part of the learning process, like the earlier Reader, and serves as a companion to Barney's methodological works and building of a GT perspective. This reader shows how others have used the GT methodology with a high level of ingenuity and grasp, and we see how sensitive they were to the conceptual power of the GT perspective.

The Reader's exempling illustrates the power and scope of classic GT by the ranges of substantive areas under study using GT, the global reach of the GT method and the various levels of methodological maturity of the authors. Here we have the opportunity to study how various grounded theorists have approached their research

projects, how they have applied and experienced the methodology, and how they have integrated and modeled their emergent theories to present them to their readers. Regardless of the reader's level of experience with GT, studying the conceptualization and theoretical construction of this wide range of substantive theories is an important way of experiencing GT methodology. For the novice, such reading guides and supports a high enough level of confidence in taking on a research for a GT dissertation. For the more experienced researchers among us it offers by example important GT method "ah ha's" that clarify, confirm and advance our understanding of GT.

In exemplifying, this reader provides a rich range of theories that have emerged that have resulted largely from novice efforts at applying GT method procedures. This is an important point to remember. The theories presented here are not intended to indicate an ideal in terms of methodological rendering. They are instead the honest efforts of individuals who have been engaged in learning and using classic GT procedures; they demonstrate clearly that while a novice's effort may not represent perfection it can yield rich GT theory that fits with relevance and works and can be readily modified to accommodate any new data. The theories in this Reader are good examples from which each of us can learn.

We learn by studying these papers for their strengths and areas for further improvement. In approaching each paper begin by skipping and dipping to get an overview of the theory being presented: what is the main concern, how does the core category explain the resolution of this concern, what are the subcategories related to the core process and how has the researcher theoretically sampled in generating the theory, what theoretical code was used to integrate the theory, what are general implications of the core, etc., etc. as a study guide to learning GT methodology.

While the number of academic departments offering training of GT research methodology is limited and widely dispersed there are many individuals who are making the effort to learn and do GT research on their own. We trust that this Reader will prove to be an excellent sourcebook for pursuing study and minus mentor researchers. Those planning to attend a GT troubleshooting seminar will find that studying this Reader in advance is excellent preparation for the analytic exchange that forms the basis of the seminar. It will help overcome the descriptive vs concept struggle. It will help going conceptual. So enjoy your study and memo your thoughts on conceptualizing examples.

I turn now to giving the reader the table of contents of the "*GT Seminar Reader*"

1. Moral Reckoning, by Alvita K Nathaniel
2. Visualizing Worsening Progressions, by Tom Andrews, Heather Waterman
3. Pluralistic Dialoguing, a Theory of Interdisciplinary Team Working, by Antoinette McCallin
4. Keeping My Ways of Being: Middleaged Women Dealing with Passage Through Menopause, by Helen Ekstrom, et al
5. Solutioning, by Maria De Hoyoa
6. Developing a Science of One: The Ongoing Process of Integration, by Cheri Ann Hernandez

7. Rehumanising Knowledge Work through Fluxuating Support Networks, by Judith Holton
8. Stabilising of Life: Families Living with Cancer, by Aino-Liisa Jussila
9. The Temporal Integration of Connected Study into a Stabilized Life, by Helen Scott
10. Beyond the Physical Realm: A Proposed Theory Regarding Consumer's Place Experience, by Mark Rosenbaum
11. Purposive Attending: How People Get the News from the News, by Vivian B Martin
12. Mutual Intacting: A GT of Clinical Judgment in Advanced Nursing, by Naomi Elliot
13. Opportunizing, by Olavur Christiansen
14. Sugar Snacking: Parental Policing Strategies to Regular Between Meal Snacking, by Ruth Freeman, et al.
15. Striving for Emotional Survival in Palliative Cancer Nursing, by Anna Sandgren
16. The Miso Model: A Synthesis and Application of Domestic Violence to Leadership and Organizational Theory, by Jaclyn Gisburne
17. Between Comfort and Cure: Basic Balancing Strategies in Cancer Cure, by Hans Thulesius, et al
18. Veiling Sexuality: A GT in Sexuality and Psychiatry Mental Health Nursing, by Agnes Higgins
19. De-shaming for Believability, by Toke Barford
20. Change Enabling in a Salugenic Place, by Susan Williams
21. Creative Cycling of News Professionals, by Astrid Gynnild
22. Protecting Professional Cool in Multicultural Nursing, by Pernilla Pergert, et al
23. A Simpler Understanding of Classic GT: A Fundementally Different Methodology, by Olavar Christiansen
24. The transition from QDA to Grounded Theory, by Astrid Gynnild