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A Personal Journey with Grounded Theory Methodology

Kathy Charmaz in Conversation With Reiner Keller

Key words: grounded theory methodology; qualitative research; interviews; symbolic interactionism; constructivism; health; medicine; sociology; education; evaluation

Abstract: Kathy CHARMAZ is one of the most important thinkers in grounded theory methodology today. Her trailblazing work on constructivist grounded theory continues to inspire research across many disciplines and around the world. In this interview, she reflects on the aura surrounding qualitative inquiry that existed in California in the late 1960s to early 1970s and the lessons she learned from her first forays into empirical research. She comments on the trajectory that grounded theory research has followed since then and gives an account of her own perspective on constructivist grounded theory. In doing so, she underlines the importance of the Chicago School and symbolic interactionist tradition for grounded theory research work today and shows where the latter is positioned in the current field of qualitative fieldwork.

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Biographical Note[1]

Kathy CHARMAZ is professor of sociology and Director of the Faculty Writing Program at Sonoma State University. In the latter position she leads seminars for faculty to help them complete their research and scholarly writing. She has written, co-authored, or co-edited fourteen books, with two winning awards: "Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis" (CHARMAZ, 2006) and "Good Days, Bad Days: The Self in Chronic Illness and Time" (CHARMAZ, 1991). The considerably expanded second edition of "Constructing Grounded Theory" appeared in 2014, as did a co-edited Sage Publications four-volume set, "Grounded Theory and Situational Analysis" with senior editor Adele CLARKE (CLARKE & CHARMAZ, 2014). Her co-edited volume with senior editor Antony BRYANT, "The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory," appeared in 2007 (BRYANT & CHARMAZ, 2007). CHARMAZ is a co-author of two multi-authored methodology books: "Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis: Phenomenological Psychology, Grounded Theory, Discourse Analysis, Narrative Research, and Intuitive Inquiry" (WERTZ et al., 2011), and "Developing Grounded Theory: The Second Generation" (MORSE et al., 2009). She has also

1 We would like to thank Tobias LEHMANN (Augsburg) for his editorial support.

published numerous articles and chapters on the experience of chronic illness, the social psychology of suffering, writing for publication, grounded theory methodology and qualitative research. CHARMAZ has served as President of the Pacific Sociological Association (1999-2000), President and Vice-President of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (2009-2010; 1984-1985, 1996-1997), Vice-President of Alpha Kappa Delta (2004-2006), the international honorary for sociology, editor of *Symbolic Interaction* (1999-2003), and Chair of the Medical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association (2004-2005). She received the 2001 Feminist Mentors Award and the 2006 George Herbert Mead Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. [1]

Recently, she gave master classes for doctoral students and faculty at the Bouverie Centre of La Trobe University in Melbourne, conducted intensive classes on grounded theory methodology for doctoral students at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, and was a featured presenter at the Universities of Bologna and Trento's Summer School for doctoral students, a workshop on grounded theory methodology at the Couch-Stone Symposium in St. Petersburg, and workshops on academic writing in Dublin. [2]

The interview took place on Friday 18 May 2013 over lunch at the 10th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. It has been revised via e-mail exchanges and received its final authorized version by Kathy CHARMAZ in October 2015. [3]

1. A Sociologist by Accident

Reiner KELLER: Some years ago you wrote that you became a sociologist by accident. You started as an occupational therapist and then you moved on to the academic world of sociology. So I would like to ask you first how that "accident" happened, what it changed and how your prior formation as occupational therapist was linked to your move towards sociology?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Ok, at the time, in the mid-sixties I was working as an occupational therapist in physical disabilities—it was my second job in that field. I had worked at the University of Washington in Seattle and had become engaged to someone who was moving to San Francisco. So I had to get a job there. It seemed that that particular position fit the sorts of things I was doing quite nicely. I took the job and the engagement dissolved soon afterwards, but the job did not. I guess I have always been brought up with a strong sense of responsibility and it was kind of understood in those years that if you had a reasonably professional-sounding job you owed them two years. And for a staff position at least one year. I had a nice title, I was Director of Occupational Therapy at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco, but it didn't mean much. It was a low-wage job and in those years even nurses were not well-paid. It did not allow me a lot of personal autonomy, that was for sure. [4]

I became interested in teaching occupational therapy students and one of my interests was—as I saw the students as being very open, but not really knowing much about ethnicity, race, income disparities—to tell them more about that. Not that I knew a lot, but I was sensitive to those issues and as an occupational therapy student I had what would be considered to be internships today at places as diverse as Parkland Hospital, an emergency hospital where President John KENNEDY died—which was a hospital that basically served the poor when I was there—or at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, and there they worked with a lot of people who were paraplegic and quadriplegic. In Dallas I worked with children for part of my internship. It was so sad—this little boy who had swallowed a caustic poison and had no voice. He happened to be African-American and had no mother, he attached himself to me and then I had to leave, so that was hard. [5]

Then I went to the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, and worked with patients who came from wealthy and sometimes nationally prominent families. One patient was the daughter of a famous movie producer who paid no attention to his children—so you see, I saw many different types of people and living conditions. I was very aware that the philosophy of rehabilitation didn't fit the lives of so many of the people that we treated. This was one of the main reasons I was going to go back to school. [6]

At that time, you could get a master's degree in anything, and teach occupational therapy, so I thought sociology sounded very open—in fact it wasn't. But it certainly gave me a broader view on social conditions and life. As an occupational therapy student, at both of the schools I attended, you were in a particular program (not a liberal arts major). I had five units of sociology and some more of psychology, because I always had in the back of my head the idea of maybe going into clinical psychology. Occupational therapy in those years was a Bachelor's degree, but it was a five year degree. So it was pretty demanding in certain ways. And since then, it has become almost exclusively a master's level program. [7]

But I went on in sociology at San Francisco State University just expecting to pick up a master's degree and then to go back and teach occupational therapy students. I was supported for two years by the Foundation for Occupational Therapy, which I greatly appreciated. Although living minimally, very minimally, it was really important to me. There was one occupational therapy school in the Bay Area and it would start and stop again, start and stop again. I became really interested in sociology and went on for the doctorate. I was interested in political sociology, and that was one of the areas in which I received a major fellowship at another university. I wasn't accepted at the University of California, San Francisco—I went to the only school that I wasn't accepted at! And as you know from one of my papers (CHARMAZ, 2012, p.58), my master's advisor told me I could get a degree, and a good one, but I might never get a job. There was a lot of prejudice against women during those times.[2] [8]

2 See CHARMAZ (2008a, 2008b) on women in the academic field.

Reiner KELLER: Yes I see. You just mentioned political sociology, which is a rather particular domain. But what kind of sociology was taught there in the sixties, positivist methodologies, Parsonian theory,[3] others?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, the department at San Francisco State University was filled with people who were really and strongly positivist. As a matter of fact, I flunked the master's exams the first time—which were two days of exams, six hours each day—, and then one of the faculty members, Arlene Kaplan DANIELS,[4] met with the graduate students (almost everyone failed the exams) and she said, referring to the exams, that one person critiqued Talcott PARSONS rudely. Oh! That must have been me because I was very critical of PARSONS in my theory exam. She said the faculty reacted very badly to that. Four years later, at major universities everybody was attacking PARSONS, but this was a little early. It was before the critical perspective hit sociology—that started in 1968/1969. [9]

What we had to do for our master's degree was more than what a lot of people have to do for a doctorate today. We had twelve hours of exams and then wrote a thesis. Mine ended up being 260 pages (CHARMAZ, 1969), so it was very substantial. I have always thought (and said) that it would have been a doctoral dissertation at a number of other universities. [10]

Reiner KELLER: Did it refer to medical sociology, political sociology, or some other field?

Kathy CHARMAZ: My master's thesis was a qualitative study of a rehabilitation unit in a hospital based on a year of observations for three full days a week. I didn't take an exam in political sociology, I took my exams in theory, methods, medical and general sociology. By that time I was moving toward social psychology, but at that point I still considered political sociology more interesting to me. One exam was in general sociology, too. At San Francisco State University as a matter of fact because at that time it was common to read all the way across the discipline. Very soon afterwards people had greater specialization. But we really kept abreast in areas that you didn't work in at all, which by the seventies, people weren't doing anymore. There was a lot more specialization by then. I took an exam in medical sociology at San Francisco State University, and there was no course in medical sociology! [11]

3 Talcott PARSONS (1902-1979), sociologist, developed a comprehensive sociological theory of the "Social System" (e.g., PARSONS, 1951) which dominated sociological theory in the 1950s and 1960s.

4 Arlene Kaplan DANIELS (1931-2012), sociologist of occupations and women's work (e.g., DANIELS, 1987). She served as president of the American Sociological Association and as president of Sociologists for Women in Society.

2. Entering Grounded Theory Research

Reiner KELLER: I am wondering how questions of research were conceived at that time. You mentioned positivist perspectives, and PARSONS' theory, but if I remember correctly it was in the late 1950s and early 1960s, that the second Chicago school emerged, e.g., Anselm STRAUSS, [5] Howard BECKER[6] and many others started being really present in sociology. Did you hear about that too?

Kathy CHARMAZ: In some courses. Sherri CAVAN[7] was at San Francisco State, I took one course with her and a second one with my graduate advisor, a man very open to qualitative work although he was a University of California, Los Angeles graduate in quantitative methods. He taught the quantitative methods courses, and yet was my thesis' chair. His mind was just open. Shortly after I was finishing up, Marvin SCOTT[8] and John IRWIN[9] came to the San Francisco State program. They had both taught at Sonoma and SCOTT was chair of the department shortly before I came there myself. [12]

I was a doctoral student for five years. After getting the master's degree, I decided to go on. There really weren't jobs for teaching occupational therapy in the Bay Area and so I went on and I got into every program that I applied to, except University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). My two best male friends from my master's program were admitted long before I was. I was the very last admission and chosen because a man wanted to go to rabbinical school to escape the draft. That's how I finally got into UCSF. A friend had introduced me to Fred DAVIS[10] who argued for me. He was the only person on the faculty whom I had met beforehand. But I knew I didn't want to go to the University of California, DAVIS. It was a very fragmented program then. They had over 100 graduate students; most of them didn't finish. [13]

5 Anselm STRAUSS (1916-1996), sociologist, wrote with Barney GLASER the original grounded theory book published in 1967 (GLASER & STRAUSS, 1967; see also GLASER & STRAUSS, 1965).

6 Howard S. BECKER (born in 1928), sociologist, worked with STRAUSS and others from Chicago School background in the 1950s and early 1960s; his book "Outsiders" (BECKER, 1963) started the public success of the sociological "labeling approach."

7 Sherri CAVAN, sociologist, student of Erving GOFFMAN got her PhD at UC Berkeley in 1965. She worked with ethnographic methods e.g., on bar culture and the hippie movement (CAVAN, 1966, 1972).

8 Marvin B. SCOTT, sociologist and politician, PhD in 1966 at the University of California, Berkeley, co-authored among other writings a widely famous article in ethnomethodology, on "accounts" (SCOTT & LYMAN, 1968).

9 John K. IRWIN (1929-2010), sociologist and criminologist, worked on the American prison system (e.g., IRWIN, 2009).

10 Fred DAVIS (1925-1993), sociologist, graduated in sociology at the University of Chicago and received his PhD in 1958. Strongly influenced by BLUMER and HUGHES, he worked in sociology of medicine and occupations (e.g., DAVIS, 1991 [1963]).

Reiner KELLER: That seems really a big doctoral program.

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, indeed. Herbert BLUMER[11] who was at University of California, Berkeley, was getting older and I thought that it might be risky to work with him because of arbitrary mandatory retirement laws. And Erving GOFFMAN[12] was leaving Berkeley at that moment. They were the two major qualitative people at the time. I also knew that BLUMER was marginalized in the Berkeley department and that could make it very difficult to get a dissertation committee together. But I still think Herbert BLUMER and I would have gotten along famously. I interviewed him a couple of times and had some good feelings about him, although Anselm STRAUSS made me promise that I would never take a course with BLUMER. Ultimately I was a late admission at UCSF, but I became Anselm STRAUSS' student the first day of the meetings with our cohort and remained so ever since—and I learned grounded theory methodology, but from Barney GLASER.[13] [14]

Reiner KELLER: So he taught there too, at that moment?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Oh yes, I had something like six quarters with him. I had about six quarters of classical theory, which got me my job at Sonoma and we had six quarters of qualitative analysis. [15]

Reiner KELLER: Did they already called it "grounded theory" then?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, you know the book had come out in 1967 and we, the graduate students, were quite excited about it. Interestingly, my friend and colleague Lyn LOFLAND[14] was never enamored with it. I have some quotes from her in various places and I think it was there, in the 1984 edition of their book "Analyzing Social Settings" (LOFLAND, LOFLAND, SNOW & ANDERSON, 2006) that they said data came from anywhere in grounded theory methodology—there were some good reasons to critique it. Lyn read a lot of the things I wrote for many, many years and she would say stuff like "Your literature review isn't thorough enough!," and I always took up what she had to say. I learned a lot about the discipline through Lyn, rather than through Anselm STRAUSS, because she was up on so many different and interesting things and went to American Sociological Association (ASA) meetings. [16]

11 Herbert BLUMER (1900-1987), sociologist, coined the term "symbolic interactionism" and was one of the leading figures in the pragmatist and interpretive tradition in US sociology (e.g., BLUMER, 1991 [1969]).

12 Erving GOFFMAN (1922-1982), sociologist, one of the leading figures in sociology around the world, worked on the "Interaction order" (e.g., GOFFMAN, 1963, 1988).

13 Barney GLASER (born in 1930), sociologist, one of the co-founders of the grounded theory methodology (see GLASER & STRAUSS, 1967), was a student of Paul LAZARSFELD and Robert K. MERTON and received a PhD at Columbia University in 1961; he later developed a different version of grounded theory methodology from the Straussian one (see http://www.groundedtheory.com/, accessed: September 30, 2015; GLASER, 2004).

14 Lyn LOFLAND, American sociologist, received her PhD at the University of California, San Francisco, in 1971, with Anselm STRAUSS, Virginia OLESEN, and others. She was one of the founders of the "Chicago School Irregulars" group in San Francisco 1968-1970. She worked on community and urban sociology, social interaction, social psychology and qualitative methods (e.g., LOFLAND, 1998; LOFLAND et al., 2006)

Reiner KELLER: So Anselm STRAUSS was much more focusing his particular domain where he had his own way of proceeding?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, he stopped going to meetings because of his health. After every ASA meeting he would call me to find out what happened. That occurred until he died. [17]

Reiner KELLER: Were there differences in the teaching of grounded theory methodology between GLASER and STRAUSS at the time?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Probably profound differences. One time Anselm met with my friend Patrick BIERNACKI[15] and me and asked what Barney did in the seminars. I worked with both of Anselm and Barney all the way along except in writing my dissertation. I had gotten a lot of it written before giving anything to anybody because I wanted to do it myself. At that time I felt that Barney GLASER took over peoples' analyses. He was so good at it. You would show him a little bit of data and he would say "that's what it is," you know. That might be what that datum is, but perhaps not all of it. [18]

Reiner KELLER: So the teaching was very much about working with data, getting codes out of it, working in groups, or how did you proceed?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Barney usually wanted no more than ten students. They did try to recruit other people into grounded theory methodology, often students of Anselm's friends from UC Berkeley or some other place, e.g., Ethel RUYMAKER[16] who came from the Educational Foundations program at Berkeley and became a member of our cohort. Yes, and these were working seminars. Barney has very little patience for people who don't do the work. He also wanted a certain level of data. One time I brought in this transcription that was just juicy of a staff meeting, rehabilitation staff meeting reviewing patients. Lyn LOFLAND who had been in a social work position in Omaha before she went back to school thought it was just great data. And Barney, no, he didn't like it. It was too low-level for him and I thought that was very interesting. He wasn't interested—he was always interested in my memos. The memos were analytic elaborations of a code or category I had developed from the data. These memos gave him more ideas to work with. [19]

Reiner KELLER: Low-level means the data were too raw?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Too mundane, too raw, yeah. [20]

Reiner KELLER: And Anselm STRAUSS was different? He organized these kinds of seminars or workshops too? How did he proceed?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Anselm was much more flexible and looser, I think—that's my recollection. Very supportive of the students, absolutely brilliant. Anselm delighted in learning about our lives and what we were thinking. When we talked about our data, he grasped what was original and would encourage us to develop it. Barney

15 Patrick BIERNACKI, sociologist, worked on drug addiction (e.g., BIERNACKI, 1986).

16 At the time a student in the program.

was brilliant, too, in a different way. He had a remarkable way of conceptualizing data and putting ideas together. When he did the analytic work for students, I occasionally felt that he imposed an analytic scheme on their work. [21]

3. "Good Days, Bad Days"

Reiner KELLER: So let's now talk about your own work. When you did the writing on "Good Days, Bad Days" (CHARMAZ, 1991; see also CHARMAZ 2009) it was a reworking of your dissertation text. Would you please tell me about this study, how you did it and why you did it? How this grounded theory framework came into it or not?

Kathy CHARMAZ: It very much came into it—it was indeed a grounded theory study! It fit with what my background was—having been in this family with tons of chronic illness, and also my interest in physical rehabilitation which does influence how I see the world, I'm very sure of that. It was just a natural direction for me to go. It wasn't like it was forced on me because of being on one of Anselm's grants. I was supported by the Russell Sage Foundation grant that he had, which was an arthritis grant, but I was interviewing people with all sorts of chronic illnesses, which was, at that time, suspect. You don't have that control that you do when you only interview people with one diagnosis. After all, people had multiple diagnoses, and with some it was ebb and flow, but the one which is causing the most trouble wins. [22]

The dissertation topic fit me and my interests perfectly. It was an interview study. I had already done interview work before, in two studies. So I conducted 55 interviews for the dissertation and they were basically lousy, as far as interviewing technique is concerned. I was very aware that I missed a lot by not transcribing! [23]

Reiner KELLER: So, you had to take notes? That was the procedure?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, and that could be very rude, so I really never liked that aspect. I interviewed some people several times, even in that rather short duration of time. It was an awakening experience, I learned a great deal, but the difference between the data I had, and the theoretical analysis I proposed, was huge. My dissertation was very theoretical and dense and basically poorly written. In fact Anselm thought—he was of two minds about me—, on the one hand: "You can make it on your own, you don't need me," but then on the other hand: "She can't write, so she's got to get a teaching job." My writing was not the best. [24]

Reiner KELLER: Doing 55 interviews, that's a lot!

Kathy CHARMAZ: Consistent with Barney's approach—and insistence!—I took notes instead of recording the interviews, and given the kind of style I have, people can talk about whatever they want to talk about with me, so I wasn't good at bringing them back to the topic. As I implied, some moments were too intense to sit there and take notes, you just try to reconstruct as best as you can. But to

reconstruct dialog, I agree with Gary Alan FINE[17] (1993) that people generally don't do it that accurately. Barney GLASER maintains that you get the main points, which is what he is interested in—the main points. But I think some of them you get, and some of them you don't. You don't get the subtleties that you may hear in retrospect when you're transcribing. Or the emotion—when you have to concentrate on your pencil you may not be seeing the facial expressions. I think there are real limitations to that method. There are limitations, of course, to recording too. I guess the primary one is that people may feel reserved, but usually they open up once the recorder is on. Yeah, I am a great believer in recording—for the flow, the style of questions, the interaction. I definitely believe in the co-construction of the interview. That said, when people have a story that is pressing, and they have a face to give it to, some people are just going to give that story. No matter who is there. That's true, but not all behave like that. [25]

Reiner KELLER: Did you have the feeling that the people you were talking to, they were really telling what they experienced, it was about their chronic illnesses?

Kathy CHARMAZ: It was about chronic illness, but it was also about what chronic illness did to their personal relationships, their work situation, their children etc. I argue that we—grounded theorists—are not so concerned with absolute accuracy; theoretical plausibility is much more important in most areas. Some things you really want to be accurate about, depending on your topic, but grounded theorists, I think, are not as concerned about absolute accuracy as most qualitative researchers. [26]

4. Questions of Method

Reiner KELLER: There is the conflict between the people claiming, as David SILVERMAN[18] (2013) does, "interviewing is nothing," so you have to observe or you have to record the ongoing "natural interactions" via video or audio. I don't agree with them, but at that time in the 1970s, has there been discussion on that? You did ethnographic work before but then you decided to do interviewing work.

Kathy CHARMAZ: It has been definitely a decision, and I'm not sorry about that. One of the reasons is the fact, that the sort of things I pursued since then had been much more conducive to interview studies than to ethnography. And ethnography would be pretty impossible to do in my situation, given my engagement at Sonoma State University. To do sustained observation, to be in a continued presence in the field, this is all very tough with this kind of position. It's not that I'm a super advocate of interviewing, but I want to go through a whole bunch of the criticisms today against interviewing and present a fresh and solid grounded theory view of interviewing. [27]

17 Gary Alan FINE (born in 1950), sociologist, received his PhD in social psychology in Harvard in 1976. He works in social psychology, cultural sociology, qualitative methodology and science, knowledge/technology. FINE has published numerous ethnographical field studies (e.g., FINE, 1996).

18 David SILVERMAN, British sociologist, worked on decision making in the Personnel Department of the Greater London Council, pediatric outpatient clinics and HIV-test counseling. He has published several major books on qualitative research methodology (e.g., SILVERMAN, 2009).

Reiner KELLER: I am still wondering about the number of interviews you did because today there are very often PhD dissertations where people are working with only ten interviews, or even less.

Kathy CHARMAZ: But that is exactly what we required our undergraduates to do for our senior seminar projects for the major in sociology at Sonoma State University. I don't think that's enough for a solid and sound empirical research. It surely is enough to demonstrate that you can use a method, but not to undertake a whole PhD dissertation or other study on concrete phenomena you are interested in. It used to be that the dissertation was like a book whether or not it was published as a book. You had to do that kind of work. Today, dissertations are more and more just exercises, in so many fields. I've reviewed papers from narrative analysis and there were four authors for twelve interviews, and they claimed it was the depth and the scrutiny in which they gave these interviews that justified their study. But I did not see any greater depth of analysis than in a grounded theory paper that would have had many more interviews. You know, three interviews per author. Maybe they even had their graduate students do them. [28]

Reiner KELLER: Coming back to your book, you reworked the dissertation paper later on, using new interviews, further references, reflecting on other questions?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Primarily, with that stuff I did a lot more. A lot of checking, a lot of categorizing and I think that comes with having a much wider array of data to draw on. Apparently Barney GLASER and one of his current disciples, Vivian MARTIN[19] are saying that we don't need any more of these studies in medical sociology. All we need is a study of how to control the medical regimen. Regimen control is not central to most people with chronic conditions, it's just not. It's much more what happens to their lives. [29]

Reiner KELLER: So in the reworking of the book you gave another account?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yeah, I had been told I was a bad writer so many times. I had already written my first book and one of my friends, who had an English major, said: "You've got to do something about your writing!" And other people said: "You've got to do something about your writing!" Because I wrote like social scientists do, with passive verbs, prepositional phrases after prepositional phrases. One can improve on that, so I did. I also was a candidate to be laid off at Sonoma State University, and in those years, what we were allowed to do was to take a course in another department for professional development. So it was supposed to help us and it helped the enrollment in that department. I took one art course, because I had basically been an art major as an occupational therapy student, and then they made the rules about what professional development was quite tight, so I thought well, this is a good time to work on my writing. [30]

The first person I worked with—I gave him a paper of mine and knew it wasn't really good. But he said, "I don't see anything wrong with it." I finally worked with

19 Vivian MARTIN, media scholar, working in the Glaserian tradition of grounded theory methodology (see MARTIN & GYNNILD, 2011).

four people in the English department, and one of them was a novelist. I started working with this award-winning poet who held up my paper and said "ieeehhh—we are going to teach you to write like Erving GOFFMAN—not like this!" I made my big breakthrough with the novelist. This one man, a rhetorician, was there for a year and he was a revelation to me. I worked really well with him and I learned things and my writing was moving along and he started calling me "honey" and "dear" and then he was so embarrassed by it. I let him suffer with it for a little bit and then I finally told him. His wife taught occupational therapy students and I could tell I was like an older edition of the young women that went through their living room. He somehow picked up on that, because at Sonoma you never call a student "honey" or "dear." [31]

Reiner KELLER: Unfortunately, I don't think that "Good Days, Bad Days" is well known in the German sociological community, but maybe more in health departments. I always considered the earlier studies of GLASER and STRAUSS —"Awareness of Dying" (1965) and similar works—as belonging to two worlds at once: On the one hand there is the research side, inventing categories, advancing theoretical thinking and empirical knowledge about one of the most important dimensions of human life and interaction. On the other hand, there is this "practical touch," aiming at informing and reforming the practices and institutions of doing health care in the fields they are talking about. Was it the same for you at that moment?

Kathy CHARMAZ: To some extent yes. I think I really had some excellent recommendations for making treatment programs more social and sustained. I am a great believer in interaction. That is still the whole foundation of my current faculty writing program. One of the mistakes that we Americans make is that within the treatment of serious health issues there is so much rehabilitation that is imposed on you. You do it on your own time at home, alone. The response to rehabilitation is so much more successful, I believe, if it was made much more social. Bringing people together, I think that can be so important, especially with older people. And another thing which is really wrong with rehabilitation is that, until fairly recently, the basic philosophy was: You work with people until they achieve some sort of a "level," and then you discharge them at the maximum benefit you feel you can give them. But those people need more, just to maintain that level and this point was not acknowledged. In addition, there are policies and locations. Given my situation as a Sonoma State University faculty member with high teaching loads, I have not put myself forward as a voice for health policy, because for years I could not travel much during the school year at all. My job just took too much time and the then dean would never have signed off on what I'm doing today. I never would have gotten to be out of the classroom that much, to do the kind of travel abroad, during the semester, attend the kinds of conferences I go to now on a regular basis. So running off to Washington very often, or to Sacramento or wherever, was not within my purview. [32]

Reiner KELLER: When we talked about GLASER and STRAUSS, you mentioned Fred DAVIS and several other colleagues —indeed it seems that almost everybody from the "Chicago tradition" gang has been around in the late 1960s

early 1970s in the Bay Area—, but have there been other major influences on your thinking in sociology or social science?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes definitely. Probably the most profound thinking was the course I had at San Francisco State University. At that time they had an epistemology course of the social sciences that every social science major had to take. Most people never finished, that was the point at which they dropped out of their programs. The requirements were overly arduous for a three unit course—you had three twenty page papers with annotated bibliographies. Not surprisingly, most people didn't finish. By the 1970s they had shortened it to three seven-page papers. I don't know if the bibliographies were annotated at that point or not, but most people never finished in the earlier years. Some people, like a couple of my colleagues, finished late. We were reading what a lot of people weren't in the spring of 1966; we were reading Thomas KUHN (2012 [1962]) and I was also reading theorists of chemistry and physics. It really has affected my thinking about subjectivity, objectivity, and the relationship of the viewer to the viewed. Today's notions of co-construction are still consistent with what I learned back in 1966. That's almost 50 years ago. [33]

4. Towards Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology

Reiner KELLER: So this fitted very well to the other references. Then you followed the development of grounded theory methodology, there was the original GLASER and STRAUSS work, then GLASER's books (e.g., 1992) and there was STRAUSS and later on STRAUSS and CORBIN (e.g., 1998 [1990]). Anselm STRAUSS, in his "Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists" (1987), took up many pages from GLASER—he is acknowledging at the beginning that among the following chapters two or three are taken from Barney GLASER.

Kathy CHARMAZ: Maybe Barney was so caught up in his own life and his own situations that he didn't protest, to my knowledge, about the 1987 book. And it certainly had seeds for what appeared in the STRAUSS and CORBIN (1998 [1990]) book. [34]

Reiner KELLER: Later on you made the decision to develop your own thinking about it or to give grounded theory methodology a new interpretation or orientation?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Actually I started much earlier. In the very early 1970s I wrote a grounded theory paper in death research. When I went to Sonoma I sort of decided: Well, I will be a teacher, you know, I won't be someone who publishes. And this young man whom I very much liked—was a very up and coming qualitative researcher. He had been back East at a prestigious university for a few years and decided he didn't like those people so he came to the West Coast and was teaching at our department. One day he asked to talk with me about grounded theory methodology because he was going to include it in a co-authored book. So I gave him the paper and I said: "All I want is the citation that the ideas came from me." [35]

I never got a copy of the book and wondered why and then a couple of years later I got the book and they had some pages on grounded theory methodology, but no citation of me. So I inquired and it was not a welcome inquiry. They literally lifted central ideas and kind of poked fun at them. Then it became an ASA issue. I've had that kind of thing happen to me several times, one way or another. So then what happened was they printed an apology in the *Footnotes*, the American Sociological Association newsletter, and I thought: "Well that was my work!" Later, one time Lyn LOFLAND was on this panel in the early, very early 1980s with Robert EMERSON[20] and he asked her at the very end—I came in at the end of the session, because I had another session, so I was standing in the back and heard this conversation—if she would explain more about what grounded theory methodology is, and she said: "Well Bob, it never took with me, but Kathy CHARMAZ is standing there in the back. She can explain it to you." I was a nervous assistant professor, but I gave about a five minute exegesis on grounded theory methodology and afterwards he came up and said: "I really need a chapter on grounded theory methodology, but my book is going to press in three weeks, can you do it?" But you know my teaching load at Sonoma, so I thought, how could I do it at Sonoma? But then I decided, well I will revise that paper on grounded theory methodology in death research even though, you know, kernels of it have been published under someone else's name, but it was really mine. So I said: "So be it, that's what I'll do." [36]

And then it was a chapter a lot of people used. Uta GERHARDT,[21] whom you probably know, wanted me to write a book with a French sociologist and herself. The book would definitely have an audience now, but I didn't think it would have had an audience then. She wanted to analyze chronic illness from three different forms of analysis: French structuralism, German narrative analysis and American grounded theory methodology. She tried to get me to do all the negotiation with the publishers. Well, the publishers really weren't interested. At the time I thought it was too narrow, but now there would be an audience for it. It could even be a great contribution, because the field is so expanded. But she had me do a *Social Sciences & Medicine* paper on grounded theory methodology in 1990 that you might have seen (CHARMAZ, 1990). That was the second one that I did, and then, for the Sage book, "Constructing Grounded Theory" (CHARMAZ, 2006), I was kind of recruited. That was after I had written the chapter on objectivist and constructivist grounded theory methodology (CHARMAZ, 2000) for the second edition of the Norman DENZIN and Yvonna LINCOLN "Handbook of Qualitative Research" (2000). David SILVERMAN put out an announcement on the symbolic interactionist listserv that he would be interested in adding a grounded theory methodology book to his methods series with Sage, London, and would anyone like to write it. I read his announcement and said I would consider it, and he answered "I was hoping you would" and so that's how it started. [37]

20 Robert EMERSON, sociologist, ethnographer received his PhD at Brandeis University in 1968 (sociology) with a dissertation on "The Juvenile Court: Labelling and Institutional Careers." He has extensively published on issues of fieldwork and ethnography (e.g., EMERSON, FRETZ & SHAW, 2011).

21 Uta GERHARDT (born in 1938), is a German sociologist who worked in sociology of health and illness, e.g., on "Patientenkarrieren" [patients' careers] (GERHARDT, 1986, 1990) and methods of research.

Reiner KELLER: Was there a feeling that you did not agree with the direction grounded theory methodology was taking at the time? Why did you feel there should be a new interpretation of grounded theory methodology and starting the first edition on constructivist grounded theory methodology? What is the main difference to STRAUSS/CORBIN or GLASER?

Kathy CHARMAZ: My new interpretation was first articulated in the chapter on objectivist and constructivist grounded theory methodology (CHARMAZ, 2000). Grounded theory methodology had been under attack. The postmodern critique of qualitative research had weakened its legitimacy and narrative analysts criticized grounded theory methodology for fragmenting participants' stories. Hence, grounded theory methodology was beginning to be seen as a dated methodology and some researchers advocated abandoning it. I agreed with much of the epistemological critique of the early versions of grounded theory methodology by people like Kenneth GERGEN[22] (see CISNEROS-PUEBLA, 2007). However, I had long thought that the strategies of grounded theory methodology, including coding, memo writing, and theoretical sampling were excellent methodological tools. I saw no reason to discard these tools and every reason to shift the epistemological grounds on which researchers used them. [38]

I was disappointed with the STRAUSS and CORBIN book (1998 [1990]), I wasn't that keen on the 1987 manuscript. Often people think I ignore them when I don't get critiques done. For example I didn't get Uta GERHARDT's critique of her 700 page manuscript done and I didn't get my critique of Anselm's 1987 book done before he published it because I always have to put Sonoma State work first. I just can't make a lot of other people's deadlines. But Susan Leigh STAR[23] helped a lot with that 1987 book, so it was considerably better by the time it went to press, but all in all I was disappointed. I thought that the STRAUSS and CORBIN book was much too procedural, much too rigid and it didn't really reflect Anselm's position. One thing to know about Anselm is that he did like catchy categories, and axial coding sounds like a catchy category. He had a little bit on it in the 1987 book, but not much. [39]

Reiner KELLER: Me too, I prefer the earlier book by STRAUSS (1987). I'm using it in my courses in order to give an idea of how one can work with the things one has at hand. To my impression, a lot of STRAUSS and CORBIN's book has produced a kind of reception of grounded theory methodology which is often very close to content analysis. I don't know if you feel it that way, but very often I see texts where people say: "I'm doing grounded theory," and as a matter of fact it's a kind of coding and looking for how often the code reappears, and what has been said there and there and there and it's due to counting tools too. So it ends up being considered as grounded theory methodology if you do a kind of content analysis. This is not an argument against content analysis, but I think one should be aware of what one does exactly. I don't know if this happens here too.

22 Kenneth GERGEN (born in 1938), psychologist, has extensively written on the self and social construction in psychology (e.g., GERGEN, 2001).

23 Susan Leigh STAR (1954-2010), sociologist, worked in science and technology studies in the interactionist tradition (see STAR & GRIESEMER, 1989).

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, I think with all the computer programs it happens. That's one of the real limitations of these programs. I'm not very adept with computers, some colleagues say they would really love it if I used MAXQDA. For a while Ray MAIETTA[24] was willing just to give me a copy of ATLAS.ti. I haven't had time to learn them. I just don't have much time, so I do things by hand and I do think there's something about that body and mind involvement of moving that adds to your creativity. Whether the same thing occurs with a keyboard—I'm not sure, I don't know. [40]

Reiner KELLER: "Coding" seems to mean a lot of different things all over grounded theory perspectives. And you are making specific claims or giving advice for coding procedures. Could you resume that?

Kathy CHARMAZ: For me, coding is a heuristic device for engaging with the data and beginning to take them apart analytically. I emphasize coding in gerunds, when they fit and doing line by line coding with early data, particularly with data from interviews and such texts as personal accounts. These practices help the researcher to take a fresh look at the data and to move it forward analytically. They are simply strategies that help researchers begin to see processes in their data. These strategies foster taking an active stance towards the data, which ultimately expedites analytic work. [41]

Reiner KELLER: The second edition of "Constructing Grounded Theory" (CHARMAZ, 2014) has a different organization and some additional chapters (e.g., on symbolic interactionism). Can you explain why you re-arranged it and what the underlined reference to symbolic interactionism indicates to?

Kathy CHARMAZ: The organization of the book is similar to the first edition except I have added two separate chapters on interviewing and added a chapter on symbolic interactionism. The whole book is greatly expanded, hence, I now have two chapters on coding rather than one, and have expanded all the topics I covered in the first edition. I wrote the additional chapters on interviewing because that is the most commonly adopted qualitative method of gathering data. I also wanted to articulate how a researcher could focus his or her study and develop his or her emerging concepts in an interview study. I wrote the chapter on symbolic interactionism because I wanted to show how it complemented a grounded theory approach. I also thought it was important for someone who was involved with symbolic interactionism to articulate the connections between this perspective, and grounded theory methodology. Much of the commentary about symbolic interactionism and grounded theory methodology has been superficial or simply erroneous. [42]

Reiner KELLER: Would you say that there are research questions that fit better to your perspective in grounded theory methodology than others or is it something one can use for different projects?

24 PhD sociologist Raymond C. MAIETTA, president of the qualitative research consulting company ResearchTalk Inc. (Bohemia, New York and Cary, North Carolina) which provides project consultation and co-analysis services on qualitative analysis to university, government, not-for-profit and corporate researchers (see http://researchtalk.com/, accessed November 2, 2015).

Kathy CHARMAZ: I think one can use it in a variety of contexts. There are very practical kinds of issues, as well as more theoretical, so I think it's diverse in that sense. I happen to be more interested in the more conceptual kinds of questions. That's my bias, but I can certainly see grounded theory methodology being used for nursing practice. [43]

Reiner KELLER: Just to follow up; would you say it's very suitable to research on interaction, on processes or on experiences, or all of that?

Kathy CHARMAZ: I would say all of that. Anselm was basically a theorist of action, not of individuals. Adele CLARKE[25] and I were really kind of upset with the fact that the individual appeared in the center in the second edition of their book (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1998 [1990]). For Anselm it was action. I'm pretty sure Adele would agree with me. But I do think experience, actions, individual subjectivity, all those things can be explored and conceptualized with grounded theory methodology. [44]

Reiner KELLER: You choose the term "constructivist" in order to express the kind of co-constitution?

Kathy CHARMAZ: It goes back to my 1966 experience with epistemology where I concluded then, that much of objectivity is by inter-subjectivity, by consensus. If a group of scientists agree that a concept fits certain types of observations, there is subjectivity involved here that gets wiped out often. At the time social constructionists, in the 1980s, were looking at the social construction of everything by other people, but not their own constructions of their analyses in a self-critical way. That's the point when I chose constructivist, but I don't subscribe to radical subjectivism, there is always that social context in who we are, so in that sense my constructivism is much more like Yvonna LINCOLN[26] and Kenneth GERGEN and some of the psychologists. That's interesting because psychologists do adopt me from time to time, even though I'm different and that's how that project "Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis" (WERTZ et al., 2011) came into being. I think the book probably would be very interesting to some of your German colleagues because there's so much interest in phenomenology over there and narrative analysis, as well as grounded theory methodology. And there are chapters on each. Everybody else was a psychologist for that book, except me. Frederick WERTZ[27] said he thought of me as a psychologist. He's a phenomenologist. In the late 60s Anselm said to me: "You're more phenomenological than I am," so he saw that in me, and I agree. I didn't identify myself with symbolic interactionism until well into the 70s. I thought I was more eclectic. You know, I have influences from Karl MARX, from Alfred SCHÜTZ in

25 Adele CLARKE, sociologist, has worked extensively on sociology of science, health and medicine, feminist issues and qualitative research. Her own extension of grounded theory research has been published as "Situational Analysis" (CLARKE, 2005; see also CLARKE & KELLER, 2014).

26 Yvonna LINCOLN, American educational researcher, co-editor of the "Handbook of Qualitative Research" (DENZIN & LINCOLN, 2011), works on research methodology and constructivism (see LINCOLN & GUBA, 2013).

27 Frederick WERTZ, psychologist, works on methodology of qualitative research.

phenomenology and sociology and a variety of people. I think that shows up somehow in my work. [45]

Reiner KELLER: I always struggle with the difference between constructionist and constructivist.

Kathy CHARMAZ: It's blurred, I think. And maybe Yvonna LINCOLN and Egon GUBA's new book will clarify all that (2013). Apparently, I don't know if you know the interview César A. CISNEROS-PUEBLA[28] (2007) did with Kenneth GERGEN in *FQS*. César was interested in GERGEN's view of contemporary grounded theory methodology, because César is a grounded theorist, and a symbolic interactionist. Very smart man, very good with computers, too. He solved a lot of problems for me in the past. During the interview, Kenneth GERGEN was saying grounded theory methodology was revolutionary in 1967, but said that it's an old thing now. César asked him about the radical critique that had come out of grounded theory methodology but GERGEN referred back to the early works, not to the new revisions. Kenneth GERGEN was a major speaker at a conference I went to in England and I was giving the first talk. Apparently, he and Mary GERGEN[29] (see GERGEN & GERGEN, 2003), his wife, were passing notes about: "This is social constructionism, this isn't grounded theory, this is social constructionism!" Since then he's been very supportive, telling me to keep on doing what I'm doing. [46]

A lot of the critiques of grounded theory methodology go back to 1967. Their authors have never looked at Adele's work (CLARKE, 2005), they have never looked at mine. Less so now, than, say, even three years ago. It really is tiresome when people make the same old criticism. Like one of Barney's followers did a critique of symbolic interactionism that repeated the textbook criticisms of 1973 (that were incorrect then) as if they were the ruling ideas (NEWMAN, 2008). Not a single reference to the journal *Symbolic Interaction* in the whole article, not a single reference to contemporary symbolic interaction—it is really just kind of irritating. [47]

Reiner KELLER: Was this the text of Stefan TIMMERMANS? Adele CLARKE sent me one text, a critique of grounded theory methodology which was published, I think, late last year.

Kathy CHARMAZ: No, it was a nurse researcher in another journal. Stefan TIMMERMANS is not a follower of Barney GLASER. In his co-authored article with Iddo TAVORY, they minimize the role of abduction already in grounded theory methodology and argue for starting with abduction (TIMMERMANS & TAVORY, 2012). They imply that their stance is one of theoretical agnosticism but Karen HENWOOD and Nick PIDGEON (2003) have long advocated this

28 César CISNEROS-PUEBLA, sociologist, works on qualitative analysis software tools, grounded theory methodology and many other fields of qualitative methodology (see FIELDING & CISNEROS-PUEBLA, 2009).

29 Mary GERGEN (born in 1938), social psychologist, works in feminist and women's studies and social constructionism (e.g., GERGEN, 2001).

stance and coined the term as an integral part of grounded theory methodology. I agree with HENWOOD and PIDGEON and cite their contribution repeatedly. [48]

5. On Legacies: Grounded Theory Methodology and Symbolic Interactionism

Reiner KELLER: The very idea of abduction refers back to the pragmatists, Chicago tradition and symbolic interactionism. How would you conceive of the legacies?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Grounded theory methodology was an abductive method in Anselm's view from the get-go. I clearly remember him saying at the seminar, he said it to me personally and in fact I have a cute story of Anselm in the second edition of my book about his proclamation of grounded theory methodology being abductive. I knew he was going to say it, because I knew what his position was, I knew that he was influenced by Charles S. PEIRCE and he acknowledged that John DEWEY and PEIRCE were important influences as well as Robert PARK, George Herbert MEAD and Max WEBER. I consider Anselm real Chicago School (CHARMAZ, 2008c). [49]

Reiner KELLER: He turned back to that in his later writings (STRAUSS, 1993).

Kathy CHARMAZ: But he was always there, and that's why Lyn LOFLAND objected to grounded theory methodology, because she felt that the good ethnographers were doing the sorts of things GLASER and STRAUSS claimed were new. I don't think she is right on that, because 1. nobody conceptualized them and 2. Chicago was an elite environment in which field research was taught through an oral tradition, so the ethnographers learned whatever they learned through this oral tradition. So that wasn't a way of really building what GLASER and STRAUSS did—they democratized theorizing. People like my colleague Robert THORNBERG (2012a, 2012b),[30] who's much too young to even have met Anselm, and probably he will never meet Barney, can do really good work in grounded theory methodology. [50]

Reiner KELLER: If I got it right, you are insisting a lot on the relationship between grounded theory and symbolic interactionism (CHARMAZ, 2008c).

Kathy CHARMAZ: I see both fitting together as one theory-methods package. I think there can be others. Feminist theory, critical theory and now there are some people doing some nice connections between critical realism and grounded theory methodology. I think if you're not a very rigid Marxist you can connect it with Marxist economic and psychological theories, so yeah, I see symbolic interaction and grounded theory methodology as going together but not the only package at all (CHARMAZ, 2014, pp.261-284). [51]

30 Robert THORNBERG, professor of educational research at the Department of Behavioural Sciences, Linköping University (Sweden), works on bullying and peer harassment among children and adolescents in school settings, and values, rules and moral practices in everyday school life.

6. Evaluating Qualitative Research?

Reiner KELLER: So, symbolic interaction, or symbolic interactionism is not the kind of master package, where you have the others in it, but it's one with close affinities. And regarding the field of the qualitative approaches in the social sciences in the States, how would you consider its impact? I know there have been struggles around "positivist" or more evidence based kinds of qualitative research, about hard criteria for sound qualitative research which in a report of the US National Science Foundation (LAMONT & WHITE, 2009) have been placed on the agenda, and Howard S. BECKER (2009) intervened at the moment against this. I don't know how you see this and where you would situate grounded theory methodology in this arena?

Kathy CHARMAZ: I was very disturbed by the report. I thought it was arbitrary and certainly dismissive of inductive qualitative research in general and grounded theory methodology in particular. Roberta SPALTER-ROTH[31] actually reported that

> "there was strong agreement that because NSF [National Science Foundation] funds theoretically driven, rigorous research, qualitative proposals should not be submitted at an early stage before anything is known about the topic, and, if possible, reliance on 'grounded theory' should be avoided" (2005, n.p.).[32] [52]

That is a blanket judgment. A grounded theory proposal that begins broadly with sensitizing concepts differs from one invoking grounded theory methodology as a way of legitimizing a weak proposal. Yes, the report favored deductive reasoning in qualitative research, as if applied theoretical ideas were better than those that are developed or extended from inductive data. Do you also mean the institutional review boards? It's tough. I teach students here and in other places to build in things into their methods that allow them to go back and refine their research design. Sometimes they're not allowed to go back, then they have to build in questions towards the end that will address the insights that they developed. You can't have those insights, before you know what is happening in the empirical world and have begun to conceptualize it. Grounded theory methodology is an exploration/discovery process. It's inductive in that sense and it becomes abductive when you do have these interesting ideas, but you don't have enough data to support them. [53]

Reiner KELLER: So there's a dominance of big data? As I understood this morning in some conference presentations[33] there has been a strong return to neo-positivism or thinking in the 1990s and 2000s?

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31 Roberta SPALTER-ROTH, American sociologist, works on the structure and process of higher education, work/family issues in higher education, cross-race networks and the uses of research in the policy process.

32 SPALTER-ROTH refers to the 2004 report on qualitative research for the National Science Foundation, co-authored by Charles RAGIN of Northwestern University; Joane NAGEL of the University of Kansas (and former program officer rotator in NSF's Sociology Program); and Patricia WHITE, the then Program Officer in NSF's Sociology Program. The report can be accessed at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/start.htm [Accessed: October 5, 2015].

33 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, May 18, 2013.

Kathy CHARMAZ: Yes, there has been. The institutional review boards, the evidence-based research and everything really pushed that. [54]

Reiner KELLER: If you agree, I have some final questions. The first question is: If you consider constructivist grounded theory work, are there criteria for judging or arguing about good or bad versions?

Kathy CHARMAZ: Arguing for different versions! Both Adele CLARKE and I had real feelings about grounded theory methodology being attached to this positivist epistemology and one of the things I need to clarify here is that the strategies of grounded theory methodology are somewhat neutral, but the epistemology on which it has been built, is not. But it doesn't have to rest on that epistemology and I think that even Barney says that. That it could be reworked and extended. Some of his major disciples said that it could be used with any epistemology. To an extent it can be used with some epistemologies, but it doesn't have to be tied to neither subjectivist nor positivist stuff where you have the external observer. If you think about Barney's work, as an empirical researcher he did very little of the data gathering himself. I do think that makes a difference. Anselm did more. Not a whole lot of fieldwork, but more. [55]

Reiner KELLER: I had a discussion with a German colleague, a quantitative sociologist, trying to get something out of grounded theory methodology, so she argued that the person who is working with data in Germany should arrive at the same result as someone working with the same data in, let's say, Great Britain.

Kathy CHARMAZ: I don't think so. In fact, I'm trying to address that. I have a section in the book on international researchers responding to grounded theory methodology—I sent some questions to them and quote the answers in my text. And one of my arguments is that grounded theory methodology was born in a period, in the early 1960s, a period of unquestioned capitalism. Unquestioned, basically US domination, and it was only in the late 60s that those things began to be questioned. The basics or fundamentals of grounded theory methodology were established by the mid-sixties and the book came out in 1967, and so the last look at it was probably in 1966 as it took a whole year for production in those years. It has to be different now, it has to be different elsewhere. Like César CISNEROS-PUEBLA (quoted in CHARMAZ, 2014, p.330) says: In Mexico, interviewing is a very intrusive method, it is the main method that most qualitative researchers use these days. And definitely the main method most grounded theorists use, and he feels that being in a post-colonial society has real effects. I can't help but think about the cultures, the various cultures really affecting how you do grounded theory methodology, whether it's successful or not, whether you have access to data. I would really like to get more information on that, and I already inquired a little bit: Some time ago I did send a copy of these open-ended questions to a nurse in Brazil, but she didn't respond. I think the abstract level of the questions was probably a little bit daunting for people that don't come out of a program in which epistemological questions are considered. Massimiliano TAROZZI[34] responded (quoted in CHARMAZ, 2014, p.331). Let's see if there is

34 Massimiliano TAROZZI (PhD, University of Bologna, Italy), associate professor in education at the Department of Life Quality Studies, University of Bologna (see e.g., TAROZZI, 2013a, 2013b).

anybody else you might know? I don't know if you know Joanna CROSSMAN,[35] she's a senior lecturer at the School of Management, University of South Australia (quoted in CHARMAZ, 2014, pp. 331-332), and then two Japanese communications researchers, Kiyoko SUEDA[36] and Hisako KAKAI[37] responded, so I have a variety of responses (quoted in CHARMAZ, 2014, p.333). It can't be like a survey, or an objective piece of research because they're giving me their responses to using these methods. I do think that these are very interesting questions and I totally disagree with your colleague. I think it can be a very different experience in Germany than in Sweden or in England. [56]

Reiner KELLER: I assume even between Germans, different people get different things out of that. Without one having to judge "this is true, and this is not true," so I think there is some kind of evaluation of things which are more convincing than others. I think this rests. In a certain way, we are always dealing with this and I think it's not a bad thing to talk about it because we're trying to say something about something. So there are more convincing ways and less convincing ways, but it's not the criteria of this matching the complete thing. My last question is: How do you consider the state of qualitative research in the future, in the US?

Kathy CHARMAZ: I think it's blossoming. It is cutting across so many areas. I had a student from Forestry two years ago, I have had civil engineers, had an architect who wanted to put me on his committee, that was amazing. He was an Iranian architecture student from Japan, and he went to study architecture there without knowing Japanese; that's really brave and he's in the School of Architecture where no one knows about grounded theory methodology. He's the sort of student I would love to help, but my situation doesn't permit very many and I already, at that time, had a doctoral student. I can work with one to two at a time, that's it. [57]

Reiner KELLER: Would you like to indicate our readers some interesting ongoing work in grounded theory methodology?

Kathy CHARMAZ: It will be my pleasure! But please note, that this will be only a very small and somehow arbitrary sample—there is a lot of wonderful work being done around. I beg the pardon of those who are not quoted! So there is the highly interesting ethnographic work of David AGER on the software development industry (2011). Sinikka ELLIOTT (2014) has done some wonderful ethnographic work on neoliberal sex education in two high-schools. Elaine KEANE (2011, 2012) used constructivist grounded theory methodology to explore the social

35 Joanna CROSSMAN; works on intercultural communication, emotions and relationships in organizations and conflict in organizational contexts (see e.g., CROSSMAN, 2015; CROSSMAN, BORDIA & MILLS, 2011).

36 Kiyoko SUEDA, PhD, professor at School of International Politics, Economics and Business, Aoyama Gakuin University (Tokyo); works on cross-cultural communication (e.g., SUEDA, 2014).

37 Hisako KAKAI, PhD, professor of intercultural communication at the Department of International Communication, School of International Politics, Economics, and Communication at Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo. Research interests include culture and its influence on health-related communication and the role of critical thinking in health-related decision-making (e.g., KAKAI, 2015).

class-differentiated behaviors of students at an Irish university. Then there is Jennifer LOIS' (2010) work on "The Temporal Emotion Work of Motherhood: Homeschoolers' Strategies for Managing Time Shortage," which used fieldwork studies and in-depth interviews with homeschooling mothers in the Pacific Northwest. And finally I should mention Robert THORNBERG's multiple fieldwork on school children (e.g., THORNBERG, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010). [58]

Reiner KELLER: Do you think there are research agendas which are neglected? What makes you follow this path or that one?

Kathy CHARMAZ: For me or generally speaking? Yeah! There is no general answer to that—it depends on your situation. I do think there are always situations, whether or not we have environments that are conducive to work, all that sort of stuff. [59]

Reiner KELLER: Thank you very much!

Kathy CHARMAZ: I enjoyed talking with you. [60]

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