Grounded theory in nursing research: Part I – Methodology

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The epistemological underpinnings of grounded theory make it valuable in the study of nursing, which is premised on an interpersonal process between nurses and clients. Further, it is a useful style of research when there is little prior information about a topic. In this article (Part 1), Terence McCann and Eileen Clark outline the key features of this methodology. In the follow-up article (Part 2, McCann and Clark 2003a), a critique is provided of grounded theory and the two main approaches to this methodology. In the final article in the series (Part 3, McCann and Clark 2003b), the authors illustrate how grounded theory can be applied to nursing research with examples from McCann’s Australian study (McCann and Baker 2001) of how community mental health nurses promote wellness with clients who are experiencing an early episode of psychotic illness

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Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria. Juliet Corbin 1 and Anselm Strauss. Using grounded theory as an example, this paper examines three methodological questions that are generally applicable to all qualitative methods. Presumably, researchers who aim at such different goals will use at least somewhat different procedures. If so, we should not judge the results of their research by the same criteria. We will try to illuminate these methodological issues by demonstrating how we have redefined the evaluation criteria in light of the procedures of grounded theory methodology. To do this we have first to explicate some of the procedural steps of grounded theory. Ultimately researchers have to be pragmatic. Justification for the methodology and rationale for studying the chosen phenomenon requires some form of literature review. The decision to adopt grounded theory is based on the amount of knowledge known about the phenomenon. Sample size may, however, be larger. Fifty-five first-time mothers took part in a study by Rogan et al. (1997) that explored the experiences of becoming a mother. Grounded theory is now a very popular approach to doing qualitative research.