

POSTMODERNISM AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR
WRITING "VITAL" SPORTS TEXTS

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The challenges of postmodernism to traditional ways of "doing" research have been felt throughout the social sciences and humanities. In combination with feminism, cultural studies, constructivism, and other interpretive approaches, postmodernism has changed the way many researchers look at their work. However, it is only recently that researchers have begun to consider the implications of postmodernism for how they "write" their research. A number of scholars are, however, experimenting with new forms of writing that violate prescribed conventions and "transgress the boundaries" of traditional social science writing genres (Richardson, 1994, p. 520). Transgressions involve, among others, writing drama, poetry, performed dialogue, and short stories. Recognizing that all forms of writing constrain the kinds of knowledge that can be gained, postmodern writers see the possibilities for new insights in new ways of writing. This chapter discusses the theoretical issues that impact on new forms of writing, and outlines some of the work in sociology of sport that puts it into practice (e.g., Denison, 1994, 1996; Kohn & Slowikowski, 1993, 1994, 1998; Markula, 1993; Rinehart, 1992, 1993). In addition, it "shows" in practical fashion (through three experimental "stories") some of the writing possibilities offered by postmodernism.

First Things First

My Story: A Woman Sports Writer in the Locker Room

The first time I entered a men's locker room, I was 22, and terrified. My mother, a high school English teacher, had attended Catholic high school and Catholic college. My father, raised in the Netherlands, had no notion of what a sportswriter was. The idea that I would willingly walk into a room full of

naked men appalled them beyond belief. I remember having a near anxiety attack the first time I had to enter their sacred enclosure. I tried to memorize all the questions I needed to ask, lest I be in the position of glancing around while trying to collect my thoughts. I kept the notebook poised a myopic four inches from my face. And I stared straight into every player's eyes: never below them.¹

I acted as if I belonged, because I did, but nothing could prepare me for how I felt once I stepped inside. I felt very uncomfortable when I was in the locker room or near the shower.² The nakedness was just so thick. They were everywhere. My natural instinct was to look down but that's where you don't want to look! So I'm looking around at the top of the lockers.³ You know, with very few exceptions, nobody has to be naked in front of everybody if they don't want to be. I really think it's a choice they make and we have no choice. We have to go in as long as everybody else does.⁴ I've been in on a regular basis and I hate it every time. I take a deep breath and go in there—knowing, when I do go in, that there is the potential for anything to happen.⁵ I've heard the other stories. Will someone throw something? They'll throw their dirty socks around, throw wads of tape, whistle or make a comment or something that would distract me. I can let some of that ride off my shoulders but I don't want to be accosted, I don't want to be harassed in any real overt form.⁶

I mean, we're talking about professional sports, a field that unfortunately is still dominated by males who think a woman's place is to be a cheerleader, a wife or a mistress.⁷ I mean, the players and their wives both seem to think you're some kind of groupie who's been clever enough to get her hands on a press pass.⁸ I remember Donahue had one show where they had the wives of some of the players and they were saying, "Well, you know, we don't want women in there because they're looking at our husbands, trying to get our husbands," and stuff like that.⁹ And many think we go into locker rooms just to look at naked men.¹⁰ I guess they still feel we're the voyeurs.¹¹ But that's because men are doing the projecting. They know if they were sports writers in a woman's locker room, they would be looking at the naked women.¹² They're already looking at you as a woman, a sex object, which is all most football players think of women anyway.¹³ If you walk in in a sundress, you're gonna get ten "hey baby, pick you up at 10."¹⁴ So I need clothes that are attractive but not seductive; clothes that say, "I may be a girl but I ain't meat."¹⁵

One time, I went in and a normally loud locker room screeched to a halt and it became very quiet and you could hear a pin drop. You could hear people breathe. Then it started: they called me names, "Get the blank out of here," "What's that blank doing here? She doesn't have any right,"

"She's in the way," just one after the other and it built and it built. And I was sort of frozen. I didn't know what to do because I've been given permission. I didn't think I was in there against anybody's rules. So finally, an assistant coach came up and grabbed me by the arm and he said, "Get outta here." And I am still frozen and I said, "I'm just doing my job. I'm just doing my job," and he said, "Well you can do it outside." I said, "Well I can't really do it outside because everybody's inside." He said, "You'll do it outside," and he grabbed me and he yanked me out of the locker room. So I'm standing outside all by myself and I could feel my cheeks flush and my stomach turning. I was an adult—I'd been through this before—yet I felt like a teenager again, out of control and really didn't know what to do. Then a couple of minutes later the coach came out and let me interview him and then I told him, "I need to talk to this particular player. He's my story," and he said, "We'll send him right out. Don't worry about it." Twenty-five minutes later and he had not come out. I was on deadline. So finally I decided I'd just open up the door. I open up the door and there were, like, two guys in there combing their hair. There was a back door and they all had left by the back door. By this time I was angry that they had done this to me so I went to the team bus and got on the team bus and found him and interviewed him, again to the derision of those around me but I had got the story and got out of there.¹⁶

That's something I never told anybody about because I figured that it happened to everybody else too¹⁷ and, on top of that, I have always been afraid of being labeled a complainer, a whiner, an oversensitive woman. That's why I kept my mouth shut eight years ago when a football lineman gyrated naked behind my back while a locker room full of people laughed. That's why I kept my mouth shut when another player told me during an interview that I'd look better with my blouse unbuttoned. That's why I kept quiet when an NFL coach told me to wear skirts to practice.¹⁸ I think you'll find with most people that they will tolerate quite a bit before they're actually going to stand up and say something because it puts you in a very bad position. I want to be able to walk into those places without it being like, "Oh there she goes. That's the one that caused the problem."¹⁹

I remember when that Lisa Olson incident happened, she was very public, she went on TV, she went on Entertainment Tonight, she was interviewed all over the place and I had a very visceral negative reaction to that.²⁰ I thought, "Nothing happened to her that hasn't happened to me and that hasn't happened to virtually every woman that I know in sports writing. Why is she talking? Why is she making such a big deal out of this?" I think that a lot of us, our knee-jerk reaction was, "Oh shut up. We've all been through this." And it wasn't until I heard her talk and listened to what had happened

to her that I honestly felt bad about my reaction and I thought, “you know, just because you never made a stink doesn’t mean that maybe you shouldn’t have.”²¹

Later, when I was covering the Anita Hill thing here in Washington and doing a story about what sexual harassment is and what is allowed and what isn’t, I said: “Oh God, you know I’ve been putting up with this for years when I really could’ve cried foul and never did.”²² But at the time, the only thing that any of us found incredible about the Anita Hill accusations was that there was such heated debate gripping the entire country over such trifling comments. That’s the way the Anita Hill stories seemed to those of us who have worked in sports for any length of time. Trifling.²³ We listened to Hill and then told ourselves, “Aw, that’s nothing!” and, “Listen to what happened to me!” and, “I guess I’ve been sexually harassed every ten minutes for the last ten years!”²⁴

I think society has sort of allowed us to [start seeing this] because there’s been an evolution in what is the ground-floor sort of things that women have to put up with. In 1982 there was no such thing in law—and even when Anita Hill was harassed, there was no such thing in law—and so to say that you’re gonna do the right thing and make the bold stand and confront people is fine but even within the small space of the locker room, you’re very aware that you are in a place where you cannot count on anybody to support you.²⁵

[In] the postmodern moment . . . calls for new forms of ethnography, polyvocal texts, multigenre narratives, impressionistic tales, cinematic reconstructions, lyrical sociology, and poetic anthropology are prominent. (Rose, 1990, p. 5)

The “story” above draws upon postmodern forms of textuality demonstrated by Denison (1994, 1996), Kohn and Slowikowski (1993, 1994, 1998), Krieger (1991), Mulkay (1985), Rinehart (1992, 1993) and Rose (1990), and argued for by Atkinson (1992), Denzin (1992), Lather (1991), and Richardson (1994). (Re)presented as a monologue, the story melds the voices of 22 women sports writers to illustrate some of the key features of locker room life for women who interview male professional or college athletes. The story is (re)constructed from personal interviews with women sports writers, newspaper and magazine articles, keynote speeches, a conference discussion session, and a novel.

In this chapter, I attempt to “show” and talk about some of the possibilities of postmodernism in terms of writing social science research, particularly in sociology of sport.²⁶ In the 1990s, questions of writing and

representation are most prominent in forms of research that are often categorized as "qualitative" or "interpretive" such as those influenced by hermeneutics, constructivism, critical theory, feminism, and cultural studies (Denzin, 1994).

The challenge to traditional writing styles reflects the broader postmodernism questioning and undermining of the fundamental assumptions upon which social science is based (Lather, 1990). It should be noted that postmodernism is not the only historically subordinate approach raising such challenges to the ontology, epistemology, and methods of social science. Others such as feminism, hermeneutics, and cultural studies form part of the growing challenge to traditional ways of "doing" social science, especially in the sociology of sport realm (Bruce & Greendorfer, 1994). For Lather, "those choosing to encourage rather than resist this movement are using it to stretch the boundaries that currently define what we do in the name of science" (p. 315).

Particularly under the influence of postmodernism, critiques of traditional qualitative social science writing have seen a growing trend towards "experimental representations" (Richardson, 1994, p. 520) or "radical experimentations" (Denzin, 1991, p. 27) which blur and jumble different writing genres. For Richardson (1994), "one practice these experiments have in common . . . is the violation of prescribed conventions; they transgress the boundaries of social science writing genres" (p. 520). Transgressions involve researchers writing drama (Mulkay, 1985), poetry, (Richardson, 1992), multiple takes on the same experience (Rinehart, 1992, 1993), performed dialogue (Kohn & Slowikowski, 1993, 1994, 1998), and short stories (Denison, 1994, 1996) as alternative ways of theorizing about, interpreting or representing their work. For Atkinson (1992), this means that:

the taken-for-granted distinction between "serious" and "playful" writing is dissolved. . . . The fragmentation of the textual surface is achieved by a mixing of styles and genres within the same text, or within the same corpus. There is a deliberate transgression of literary boundaries; a promiscuous mingling of modes. (pp. 44-45)

Recognizing that all forms of writing constrain the kinds of knowledge that can be gained (Atkinson, 1992; Cole, 1991), researchers influenced by postmodernism consider that writing in different ways offers the possibility of new insights (Cole, 1991; Rabinow, 1986; Richardson, 1994). In addition, rather than merely being seen as a "mopping-up activity" taking place at the end of a research project, writing is now conceptualized as a

way of "knowing," a way of discovering and analyzing work in new ways (Richardson, 1994, p. 516).

In the past, a belief in the transparency of language and representation meant that writing was "reduced to method: keeping good field notes . . . 'writing up' results" (Clifford, 1986, p. 2). As researchers/writers worked through the questions raised by poststructuralism and then postmodernism about language, however, the door opened to more overtly recognizing the "fictional" aspects of all social science writing, including the ways in which researchers write reality, and people's understandings of it (Clifford, 1986; Clough, 1992; Krieger, 1991; Rabinow, 1986).

Fiction, in this sense, is not opposed to truth; rather, it means fabricated or fashioned (Clifford, 1986; Rabinow, 1986). It suggests that reality is always partial and constructed (Clifford, 1986) and that there is no reality outside of human understanding to which researchers can refer for final validation (Carey, 1989). Rather, different and competing explanations, understandings, and interpretations of reality exist, none of which comprise the one-and-only "Truth" (Cole, 1991; Stanley & Wise, 1983). Geertz (1973) captured the essence of this issue: "What we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (p. 9). Thus, as "writers" of research, we are always constructing partial truths; truths that inherently reflect our location and our subjects' locations in specific discourses of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and culture (Denzin, 1994).

In addition, researchers from all paradigms draw heavily upon narrative forms to understand reality and (re)present it in their writing (Richardson, 1990). People understand the world narratively, through the stories they tell themselves and others about their experiences, and the cultural stories that are told about them (Atkinson, 1992; Denzin, 1994; Hall, 1984; Richardson, 1990). Recognizing the power and importance of narrative, and drawing upon literary rather than scientific models, newer forms of writing tend to emphasize narratives and storytelling. This move may, in part, be a response to growing critiques of traditional social science writing as "boring" (Denzin, 1994, p. 504; Richardson, 1994, p. 517), "tedious," and "losing its power to convince" (Rose, 1989, p. 5). From the field of sociology, Richardson (1994) claims that:

For 30 years, I have yawned my way through numerous supposedly exemplary qualitative studies. Countless numbers of texts have I abandoned, half-read, half-scanned. I'll order a new book with great anticipation . . . only to find the text boring. . . . Undergraduates are disappointed that sociology is not more interesting; graduate students

confess that they do not finish reading what's been assigned because it's boring. (pp. 516–517)

Researchers stimulated by this problem have sought ways to present vital texts that are "good reads" (Richardson, 1994, p. 517). For Denzin (1994), a vital text is the opposite of boring. "It grips the reader (and the writer). A vital text invites readers to engage with the author's subject matter" (Denzin, 1994, p. 504). Vital texts are (re)presented in the "voices" of those whose experience is being written. Such texts attempt to stay close to the everyday language of the world rather than relying upon more abstract concepts or theories (Denzin, 1989).

The "story" which opened this chapter is one such attempt. It stays close to the voices of women sports writers and avoids changing their experiences into abstract concepts. Theoretical explanation is absent. Instead you—the reader—are left to engage with a narrative that takes a different form from "normal" science writing. Based on hundreds of pages of interview transcripts, newspaper and magazine articles, and three novels, the story is one "take" on how women sports writers experience the locker room. However, the influence of feminism, cultural studies, poststructuralism and postmodernism forces a recognition that the "truth" told in the story is ultimately an author's truth. While the voices in the story are those of women writers, the vision or narrative is mine. The "self" of the writer is never absent from writing (see Krieger, 1991; Richardson, 1994). For Krieger (1991):

I think it is important to try to grasp experiences that are not one's own. However, such attempts should not be masqueraded as other than what they are: they are attempts, they grasp only small pieces of experience, and they are impositions of an authorial perspective. (p. 54)

The author's perspective is inherently partial and subjective. Accepting that what we write is always influenced by who we are, means that we cannot help but tell our own story in some way through other people's stories (Krieger, 1991). For example, Myra (in Krieger, 1991) suggests:

I am not telling other people's stories. I am telling my take on their stories. I am not changing their stories actively. . . . However, I fully believe that the stories that people tell me, and that I seek out and gather, are absolutely dependent on my own sets of issues and interests . . . (p. 193)

However, this does not mean that no truth can be told. Such stories succeed if they create verisimilitude (Denzin, 1989), that is, the conditions for “deep emotional understanding” where readers live their way into the experiences, emotions, and interpretations represented (Denzin, 1994, p. 506). Postmodernism has, however, forced a more self-conscious approach to constructing the experiences of others. Thus, in the opening story, the superscript numbers work against the presentation of a seamless monologue by emphasizing the constructed nature of the text. In addition, the first note at the end of the chapter states that “Some tenses, subjects (e.g., I or you), and transitions have been changed for consistency and flow” and this reinforces the understanding that transcriptions are always created (Atkinson, 1992). Direct quotations are always selected, edited and represented in ways to make them more comprehensible and readable (Atkinson, 1992). It is impossible to capture exactly what people say (Atkinson, 1992; Higgins, 1990) and, even if it were possible, the results would be virtually unreadable. Higgins (1990) elaborates:

Transcripts make excruciating reading. . . . Whether the speakers talk in relaxed but misguided belief that their words are not being overheard, or deliver their utterances in the uncomfortable awareness that everything they say is not only being taken down but may be used in evidence against them, they stammer, elide words, leave out prepositions, omit transition sentences, dangle participles, leave infinitives not only split but drawn and quartered on the highway, and generally trample upon all the rules of syntax. (p. 110)

One influence of the recent focus on writing and representation is the exploration of what possibilities are opened up by the recognition that transcriptions are already reconstructions. Some researchers have more consciously experimented with the constructed nature of dialogue and speech. For example, Mulkay (1985) works primary materials such as interviews into different formats such as a one-act play and fictional speeches. While more radically experimenting with the creative use of interview transcripts than many researchers, Mulkay’s inventions are not arbitrary. Rather, as Atkinson (1992) points out:

The fictional versions are put together out of fragments of “real” utterances and exchanges. As with all “analyses,” the texts are arranged and constructed by the author out of shards of evidence. The difference between conventional ethnographic accounts and Mulkay’s literary inventions is not a hard-and-fast separation between the factual and the fictional. Mulkay’s are notable because the analyst explicitly claims the right to fashion the materials into new arrangements and to mould them into a range of different formats. (p. 46)

In the sociology of sport field, Denison (1994) wrote a his-story or "a narrative of the self" (Richardson, 1994, p. 521) about retirement from elite athletics. Presented in short story form, Denison integrated his own experiences with "stories" gathered from other athletes during intensive field research and from cultural texts such as movies and novels. More recently, Denison (1996) presented the experiences of retired elite New Zealand athletes in the form of three short stories. By drawing upon the techniques of fiction, Denison's texts are based upon criteria unlike those of traditional science:

Accuracy is not the issue; rather, narratives of the self seek to meet literary criteria of coherence, verisimilitude, and interest. Because narratives of the self are staged as imaginative renderings, they allow the field worker to exaggerate, swagger, entertain, make a point without tedious documentation, relive the experience and say what might be unsayable in other circumstances. (Richardson, 1994, p. 521)

Kohn and Slowikowski's (1993) "performance" demonstrated a post-modern vital text that engaged audiences' emotions. Accepting the postmodern contention that knowledge and writing are always partial and local, Kohn and Slowikowski based their two-way dialogue upon personal stories. The theoretical arguments and support for their personal dialogue were contained in written footnotes and were not part of the performed/presented work. Kohn and Slowikowski (1994, p. 1) further developed this approach in the form of a one-hour e-mail exchange "about, around, through and with Norman K. Denzin." As Kohn and Slowikowski explore "Denzin," the reader/listener gains a perspective or understanding of Denzin that "feels" markedly different from, say, a biography.

Markula (1993) interweaves four personal vignettes with scholarly writing to bring alive the theoretical debates around nostalgia. Markula's writing embeds the theoretical discourse in concrete events which embody the experiences of postmodern subjects seeking authenticity in dance.

Rinehart's (1992) multivocal text presents a series of "takes" on the same experience: Super Bowl XXVI. His multiple interpretations of Super Bowl XXVI engaged with and came at the event in different ways from each other. Each successive chapter of Rinehart's (1993) dissertation demonstrated his transition from traditional social scientific writing towards more personal, radical, postmodern forms.

The works of Rinehart, Kohn and Slowikowski, Markula, and Mulkay, explore experiences from a variety of perspectives. Incompatible and inconsistent positions are juxtaposed and there is a distinct lack of closure and certainty, all of which reflect elements of postmodern writing (Rosenau, 1992). Rather than striving for coherent narratives, "contradictions, inconsistencies, and

disruptions" (Cole, 1991, p. 41) are sought out and represented. Presenting such inconsistencies can create texts whose surfaces are more faithful "to the presumed complexity and fragmentation of the social world" (Rose, 1990, p. 15). In addition, new forms of writing are premised upon the assumption that there is no correct story to be told (Denzin, 1994). Rather, "there are only always different versions of different, not the same, stories, even when the same site is studied" (p. 506). Meanings must then be "constructed by the reader, rather than being constructed for the reader" (Atkinson, 1992, p. 44).

In this chapter, the introductory "story" may be seen as a hesitant first step in the direction of postmodern experimental representations. While violating prescribed social science writing by combining and "changing" quotes to create one woman's narrative, the story still reflects elements of modernism. For example, it is a linear monologue in which contradictions and alternate viewpoints are avoided in the interests of a coherent text.

However, the postmodern world is fragmented and contradictory. Therefore, the "story" fragments that follow offer other forms of (re)presenting women sports writers' experiences which attempt to more closely reflect contradictions and incoherencies. Atkinson (1992) suggests:

If culture itself is seen as fragmentary and incoherent, then the texts of its representation may appropriately be likewise. The [researcher] can no longer subordinate all of his or her "data" to unifying themes and models. The work of the texts is more overtly recognized as an act of bricolage: the fragments of "data" (which are themselves crafted rather than found) are thus juxtaposed. The textual arrangement therefore becomes a kind of "collage." (p. 41)

Rather than attempting to construct a coherent, linear narrative, the form of the following story fragments reflect the contradictions and inconsistencies in women sports writers' explanations for problematic locker room encounters. Again, the dialogue is (re)constructed from the voices of 12 women writers recorded in various formats (see notes). Yet, unlike the opening story, quotes stand isolated and without context. They jostle with and against each other, challenging the reader to make sense of them. The partial subjectivity of "truth" is uncomfortably overt. As they clash, coincide, or move, the women's explanations for problematic locker room encounters offer up multiple world views or takes on reality.

In the first fragment (below) the physical placement on the page and juxtaposition of conflicting interpretations create a different response for readers: in Hulme's (1983) words, "a tiny, subconscious, unacknowledged but definite response" (Preface).²⁷ Following Kohn and Slowikowski (1993, p. 2), the hope is that in "collision," clarity may result.

Colliding Interpretations²⁸: Women Sports Writers' Struggles to Understand Problematic Locker Room Encounters

Voice 6: By and large, we're all going about our business just fine. At the professional level, I'd say the vast majority, even up to 90 per cent of the guys are professional and fine to deal with.

Voice 1: Well, there's one thing I know it's NOT about and that's nudity. Men certainly have a right to be modest and they are entitled to their privacy but it's the very people who claim, "You're just trying to see me naked," who drop their towels when women come in—so there's a little bit of a contradiction there.

Voice 6: It's funny. It's the organizations that are usually well run in other ways—the teams that win, the teams that are in Super Bowls are also the teams that have never really had a problem with the locker room. Don Shula in 1981 had equal access, has never had a problem, and I think he's seen a few Super Bowls. The Chicago Bears, never a problem—they're maniacs in other ways—they've been to Super Bowls.

Voice 11: It's critical journalism now. It's not friendly journalism. I think that's really the problem and it's not women. I think women are being used as the excuse but basically they want the locker room doors closed.

Voice 2: When you go into a strange locker room, it's kind of tense and they'll kind of play with you and test you. They're just trying to figure out what you're all about.

Voice 12: I don't think the problem is women. I think it's more about the growing adversarial relationship between writers and athletes and coaches.

Voice 1: I think what you usually find is that if there's a problem, it's always because of our gender. The men get very aggressive actions towards them because of something they wrote but not because they are men. And with us, in my experience, it's always, "Well, you're a woman and I have a problem with that," as opposed to something professionally about my business.

Voice 9: It's not about women. It's about power. There's a power play going on there that has nothing to do with us. It's about a coach declaring this is his territory and "not even Pete Rozelle and Paul Tagliabue is going to tell me what to do, damn it." It's not about anything other than that. And it's so obvious to us.

Voice 7: I think there's some correlation with losing teams and angry, petulant owners who won't let you do your job.

Voice 8: The whole thing is like the way men and women view each other. Like men (laughing) couldn't go into a place with naked women and not just go crazy, you know. And so, therefore, they can't relate to the fact that we could go into a situation like that and do our job. They can't relate to it because we look at each others' bodies differently, you know.

Voice 8: I've been in the business nine years, always in sports and I really don't have a locker room tale. I've covered a lot of college football and a few NFL games and I've had no problems there. It's been very easy for me.

Voice 10: Its just some players but you are always going to get those. They are jerks in general life too, not just in the locker room.

The second fragment (below) takes the form of a conversation between three writers. As the conversation flows and moves, various interpretations engage with each other on the way to potentially new understandings.

Voice 3: I always thought NBA players treated women the best and I always thought baseball players, generally speaking, treated women the worst, and football players were somewhere in between. And I decided it was college education—sort of the socialization process—because most baseball players go from high school straight to the minor leagues, never go to college.

Voice 4: Except hockey's the same way and I don't hear horror stories about hockey the way I do about baseball and football. And hockey players, very few of them have much of an education. Maybe it's because they're Canadian. Now we'll make a generalization that all Canadians are great (laughs).

Voice 3: There were probably women covering hockey before women covered anything else, certainly before baseball. I mean, baseball was also sort of the last thing for women to start covering at the major league level.

Voice 4: And the NBA as a league is ahead of every other league: on drugs, AIDS awareness, women in the locker room, all kinds of issues.

Voice 5: The other thing too though. It's 80 per cent black and I really think the guys are sensitized more to issues like discrimination.

Voice 3: I remember one convention we had some players come to talk to us and some of the black players were all saying that too. They said they felt that black players treated women sports writers better than white players and they felt was because, as one player said, "I know what it feels like to walk into a room and know that I'm not wanted or know that I'm an outsider and I know when women walk in, that they feel the way I—as a black man—have had to feel sometimes in my life." We all talked about it at the convention—sort of took a vote—and 90 per cent of the women said athletes in this country who are black generally treat them better than athletes who are white.

Voice 5: But when you look at the incidents that happen, the big ones that have gotten the most publicity, they've all been black players.

Voice 3: Then how much of that is because it's a black player and a white woman?

The examples of "writing" used in this text could have come in many other forms. In a postmodern world, no form of narrative has a lock on representing truth/s. There is no one right way to "write" postmodern texts, only myriad ways which may be explored. These explorations should, how-

ever, take place from a position informed by postmodern theorizing. I leave the final words to Richardson (1994) who suggests:

The greater freedom to experiment with textual form, however, does not guarantee a better product. The opportunity for writing worthy texts—books and articles that are “good reads”—are multiple, exciting, and demanding. But the work is harder. The guarantees are fewer. There is a lot more to think about. (p. 523)

Notes

My thanks to Stephen Hardy, Bob Rinehart, and Heather Barber whose discussions helped clarify my thinking and presentation.

1. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Lesley Visser (1991), p. 117. Note that for all quotes, some tenses, subjects (e.g., I or you), and transitions have been changed for consistency and flow.

2. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Joy Spencer (1994), p. 5.

3. Source of quote for “Story 1”: informal conversation at Association for Women in Sports Media (AWSM) convention in Minneapolis, MN (1993).

4. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Johnette Howard (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.

5. Source of quote for “Story 1”: locker room discussion at AWSM convention in San Francisco, CA (1994).

6. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Michele Himmelberg (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.

7. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Lisa Olson (1990), p. 74.

8. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Diane Shah, in Angell (1979), p. 68.

9. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Valerie Lister (1993), group interview in Alexandria, VA.

10. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Joan Ryan (1985), p. 8.

11. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Rachel Shuster, in McManamon (1985), p. 20.

12. Source of quote for “Story 1”: locker room discussion at AWSM (1994).

13. Source of quote for “Story 1”: locker room discussion at AWSM (1994).

14. Source of quote for “Story 1”: Johnette Howard (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.

15. Source of quote for "Story 1": A.B. Berkowitz, fictional writer (1990), p. 94.
16. Source of quote for "Story 1": Cathy Henkel (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.
17. Source of quote for "Story 1": Julie Ward (1993), group interview in Alexandria, VA.
18. Source of quote for "Story 1": Michelle Kaufman (1994), p. 4.
19. Source of quote for "Story 1": locker room discussion at AWSM (1994).
20. Source of quote for "Story 1": Kristen Huckshorn (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
21. Source of quote for "Story 1": Tracee Hamilton (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
22. Source of quote for "Story 1": Kristen Huckshorn (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
23. Source of quote for "Story 1": Tracy Dodds (1991), p. 2.
24. Source of quote for "Story 1": Susan Fornoff (1991), p. 3.
25. Source of quote for "Story 1": Johnette Howard (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
26. In-depth theoretical discussions of the contributions of postmodernism to social science are presented elsewhere in this book.
27. Although Hulme was talking about the "shape of words," I believe the response is similar to the form of presentation.
28. Sources of quotes for "Story 2" and "Story 3":
 - Voice 1. Julie Cart (1993), group interview in Minneapolis, MN.
 - Voice 2. Tracy Dodds (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.
 - Voice 3. Kristen Huckshorn (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
 - Voice 4. Tracee Hamilton (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
 - Voice 5. Johnette Howard (1993), group interview in Washington, D.C.
 - Voice 6. Christine Brennan (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.
 - Voice 7. Michelle Himmelberg (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.
 - Voice 8. Valerie Lister (1993), group interview in Alexandria, VA.
 - Voice 9. Claire Smith (1993), group interview in Minneapolis, MN.

Voice 10. Informal conversation at AWSM (1993).

Voice 11. Cathy Henkel (1993), individual interview in Minneapolis, MN.

Voice 12. Mary Garber (1993), keynote speech at AWSM.

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