

Interpreting (the Work and the Talk of) Baseball: Perspectives on Ballpark Culture

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Baseball, as a cultural institution, is subject to many interpretations. This article reports the findings of one long-term ethnographic study of the communicative actions and interactions of employees who work at a major league baseball stadium and it reveals how these actions and interactions create and maintain three dominant interpretations of ballpark culture: the ballpark as a site of capitalist work, as a community for symbolic family members, and as a theatre for social drama. The article also discusses how romantics, functionalists, and critics, as students of the game, interpret the meaning of baseball in American culture.

The ballpark pretty much is the press box and it's basically my office. . . . That's why we take it so seriously. You know the old line, "No cheering in the press box." In some stadiums, fans wander in and we'll get some drunk guy come in and yell, "Hey, why don't you guys show some life in here." I always want to walk into his office the next day when he's in the middle of a big deal and say, "Hey, lighten up in here."

(Newspaper Sports Reporter)

To me, the ballpark is just like home. It's my second home, but I almost have to call it my first home. During the season, if my wife doesn't come out here, I see her at breakfast in the morning and that's about it.

(Clubhouse Manager)

I like to come here in the morning before anyone gets here and I just sit quietly in center field. The ballpark is a theatre for the soul.

(Usher)

BASEBALL HAS ATTRACTED MORE ATTENTION from scholars and popular writers than any other American sport. *Romantics*, epitomized by the late Renaissance scholar and baseball commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti, suggest that baseball represents something pure about American culture.¹ Some have celebrated the *pastoral* qualities of baseball, as George Grella did when he wrote that it reminds "us of our agricultural

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heritage, of the homely handicrafts of the past, when the land was the entire source for all the needed implements of the game."² Others have exalted the *timelessness* of the game. "Within the ballpark," wrote Roger Angell, "time moves differently, marked by no clock except the events of the game. This is the unique, unchangeable feature of baseball, and perhaps explains why this sport, for all the enormous changes it has undergone in the past decade or two, remains somehow rustic, unviolent, and introspective."³ These and other romantics suggest that baseball teaches us history and literary lessons about our simple rural past.

Functionalists, especially social scientists who study the sociology of sport, assert that baseball teaches us not about the virtues of an idealized past but about the values of a real present.⁴ Sociologists have argued that sport serves as a *socializing agent* that reinforces seemingly contradictory values such as achievement, tradition, individualism, teamwork, youth, experience, and others;⁵ one concluded that "in dramatically emphasizing these pervasive and opposing themes as part of an apparently coherent cultural system, sport enables its followers to understand and adjust to life in American society."⁶

Finally, *critics* focus on the negative aspects of sport in society, particularly on how sport engenders alienation, promotes commercialization and militarism, encourages sexism and racism, and is used by business and the state as a tool for control.⁷ Critics also charge that "the prevailing sports ethos in America has shifted from 'It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game,' to 'Winning isn't everything—it's the only thing.'"⁸ Media critic Sut Jhally concluded that in reproducing these and other aspects in sports coverage, the mass media "ritually celebrate the most alienating features of the capitalist labor process" by transforming "authority structures that are hierarchical and exploitative into ones that become identified by the personal and human."⁹

The institution of baseball and the context of the ballpark can be used to study many aspects of sport in society, of organizational life in a capitalist system, of American cultural values, and of communication and the mass media.¹⁰ This study focused on the meaning of baseball from the perspectives of the people who work at the ballpark including ushers, vendors, announcers, security guards, clubhouse personnel, cleanup crews, and many others. This article examines how the work and the talk of stadium employees reinforce certain meanings of baseball in society and it reveals how this work and talk create and maintain ballpark culture.

THE INTERPRETATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The idea that organizations are *cultures* has received considerable attention in the scholarly and popular literature.¹¹ However, although many scholars have argued that organizations can be studied as

cultures, they have adopted different approaches.¹² This study of ballpark culture was guided by an *interpretive* approach.

Interpretive Assumptions of Organizational Culture Research

Interpretive approaches focus on the *symbolic* aspects of human and organizational life, revealing how interactants use symbols to make sense of their everyday experiences.¹³ Advocates of interpretive approaches emphasize certain characteristics of social and organizational life, three of which had particular implications for this study of ballpark culture.

First, interpretive researchers emphasize the *subjectivity* of organizations and deemphasize their objectivity. They do not study how objects such as hierarchies and technologies impact members but rather focus on how members use communication to *interpret* the meaning of these objects. In this study I focused on the meaning of the ballpark to different workers and I examined how various objects such as tickets, promotion items, and the ballpark itself were interpreted by workers as they structured their organizational experience.

Second, interpretive researchers emphasize the *pluralism* of organizations and deemphasize their unity. Although those most critically inclined often look for an overarching meaning of power and ideology embedded in an organization's "deep structure," most interpretive researchers try to uncover *multiple* interpretations of culture. As Clifford Geertz suggested, culture is a "multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit."¹⁴ In this article, I discuss three perspectives for interpreting the ballpark, all of which reveal how franchise members experience different yet interrelated dimensions of ballpark culture.

Finally, interpretive researchers emphasize the *dynamism* of organizations and deemphasize their stability. "The interpretive paradigm," Morgan stated, "directly challenges the preoccupation with certainty . . . showing that order in the social world, however real in surface appearance, rests in precarious, socially constructed webs of symbolic relationships that are continuously negotiated, renegotiated, affirmed, or changed."¹⁵ This assumption led me to observe the *actions and interactions* of ballpark workers; it also led me to conduct a *long term* ethnographic study of this ballpark.

Ethnographic Methods for Organizational Culture Research

Ethnographic methods require researchers to immerse themselves in the field for an extended period of time in order to gain a detailed understanding of how members interpret their culture.¹⁶ The data presented in this study were collected using participant observation and interview methods and were gathered for a period of over two years (October, 1987 to July, 1990), covering over 500 hours of fieldwork.

Sports franchises are more sensitive to public relations than are most companies and so my request as a university professor in the city of the franchise to interview and observe ballpark work was granted quickly after a few telephone calls and after a round of initial interviews with franchise managers and ballpark supervisors. These initial interviews (most of which were conducted in the less busy off-season months) provided important insights about baseball work *in the words of franchise members* and established my identity and familiarity as a researcher.

Before the two seasons under study (1988 and 1989), I conducted observations at numerous off-season luncheons, banquets, autograph appearances, and speaking engagements. I also attended pre-season orientations for security guards, food vendors, Stadium Club waitresses, ushers, ticket-takers, and parking lot attendants to see how ballpark managers trained their employees.

During the two seasons under study, I attended a total of 67 home games (26 in 1988, 41 in 1989); I averaged about five hours of field research per game, including pre-game, game, and post-game activities. I attended 20 games (12 in 1988, eight in 1989) as a "fan," a true participant observer who watched unobtrusively as workers completed their tasks and interacted with fans and with each other. For the remaining 47 games, I attended either as an invited observer or as a "ballpark wanderer," to use Thomas Boswell's colloquial label.¹⁷ As an invited observer, I was granted permission to study areas in the ballpark not accessible to fans such as the press boxes, the security "Command Post," the "vault room" of the ticket office, and other areas; during these periods, I conducted "grand tour" (and "mini-tour") interviews and observations, as Spradley calls them, whereby the particular sponsor would describe the area under observation or literally would tour the ballpark, as when I followed the stadium manager when he toured the clubhouse, first aid stands, and security gates during his pregame ritual.¹⁸

Before the 1989 season, I received an employee pass from the stadium manager which gave me free access through any gate and to any section of the ballpark. With this increased access, I attended many games as a "ballpark wanderer" wherein I literally roamed the ballpark, observing and conducting brief interviews in many locales. I declined the opportunity to work as an usher, a security guard, a vendor, and in other roles because I believed that my sessions of "ballpark wandering" allowed me to gather far more data in multiple public and non-public areas in the ballpark.¹⁹

During these interview and observation sessions at the ballpark, I took extensive fieldnotes that reconstructed the verbatim communicative actions of workers. I adopted certain practices to capture more details and to reinforce the representativeness of my fieldnotes. First, I asked frequent questions of the ballpark subjects as I observed them that helped me to write and understand idiomatic expressions. Second, I elaborated my fieldnotes during "lulls" in ballpark action and soon

after my observational periods; I also dictated additional notes into a tape recorder as I drove home after the game and then elaborated those notes in writing when I arrived home, sometimes while watching the rebroadcast of the game (my "video fieldnotes"). Finally, I took notes *openly while I was observing*. As an invited observer, my note-taking behavior was expected, just like reporters' note-taking behaviors are expected; in fact, in the pre-game dugout and locker room, I "passed" as one of many reporters who also were taking notes. When I was a "fan," I carried my notebook in a program and took notes shortly after a vendor or usher had moved to another location; in these cases, my writing in a program resembled the actions of many fans who score the game.²⁰ These observational and note-taking activities complied with guidelines discussed by Agar, Fetterman, Spradley, and other ethnographers and were adopted to secure the accuracy of the actions and interactions inscribed and to capture more of the richness of the observed phenomena.²¹

The remainder of this article presents different perspectives for interpreting how workers experience baseball and ballpark culture. By combining the research from this study with writings from other "students of the game," I discuss three dominant interpretations of baseball and ballpark culture and I describe the communicative activities through which these interpretations are created and maintained. Although there are numerous perspectives for understanding ballpark culture, at the very least baseball can be interpreted as business, as community, and as drama.

BASEBALL AS BUSINESS: THE BALLPARK AS A SITE OF CAPITALIST LABOR

I thought it would be a lot more fun working here but it's just as bad as my job at McDonalds.

(Toll Plaza Attendant)

"In the guise of a game which is supposed to freely develop the strengths of the individual," wrote Jean-Marie Brohm, "sport in fact reproduces the world of work."²² The ballpark is a place where baseball gets defined as a particular type of work—as *capitalist labor*—through the actions and interactions of franchise members. This section examines how baseball employees are socialized as *workers* and it reveals how the ballpark is used to reproduce the ideology of American capitalism.

The Industrialization of the Ballpark

Critical scholars have argued that in its organization and mediation, sport is transformed from play into *industrialized labor*. John Hargreaves wrote that sport exhibits features of industrial production including "a high degree of specialization and standardization," "bureaucratized and hierarchical administration," and an "increased reliance on science and technology," among others.²³ Brohm summarized that "sport is basically a mechanization of the body, treated as an

automation, governed by the principle of maximizing output" and he went so far as to suggest that the industrialization of sport "requires the Taylorization of the body."²⁴

Franchise managers use the ballpark to reproduce this dimension of baseball as work and to define the stadium as a site of industrialized labor. Much formal communication at the ballpark is used to train workers to complete their tasks in a *standardized and mechanized* manner. Supervisors at pre-season orientations teach routinized procedures to toll booth operators and ticket takers about handling money, to food service workers about making nachos and pouring beer with a one-half inch head of foam, to security guards about talking in ten-dash codes, and to parking lot attendants about controlling traffic flow. The personnel director of food services also detailed the specifics of the dress code to her large and varied group of stand workers and even reminded them "to bathe and use deodorant." Toll plaza attendants were instructed to standardize their greeting to fans and to "smile, even if they call you names," invoking what Eric Fromm might have called "the commercialization of friendliness."²⁵ As one teenaged plaza attendant described her routinized greeting: "I don't have to strike up a conversation or anything. I just smile and say, 'Hi, three dollars, enjoy the game.' I do that about a thousand times a night. I guess that means I smile about eighty-one-thousand times a season." In these and other ways, employees learn organizational principles of mechanization first-hand as they experience the ballpark as a site of industrial labor.

The alienating features of ballpark work as industrialized labor are best illustrated by the cleanup crew. The crew itself is comprised of part-time, low-income, and mostly minority workers who stuff six-to-eight empty trash bags into their ragged, old, patched jeans and then literally crawl across the stands after the game, picking up the larger pieces of trash and dragging their filled bags to the aisles. Crew chiefs prod stragglers to quicken the pace to make way for other workers who wear air-blowers on their backs and guide peanut shells and other bits of slop toward the aisles. After one game, a black male in his early twenties whispered to a nearby black female, also in her early twenties but who complained of chronic back problems, "You better hurry up, here comes *the man*." "The man" was a crew chief, a black man in his early twenties who was at least six-foot-five and well over 200 pounds. "The man" walked by the female and said curtly, "Let's pick it up," referring to the pace as well as the trash.

The cleanup operation at night is a depressing backstage drama, performed for empty seats. During the game, the ballpark is alive with (relatively) fresh smells and a brightly lit stage for the graceful performances of (mostly) shapely ballplayers who receive musical accompaniment from the Diamond Vision crew and lively ovations from the audience. After the game, however, the ballpark shrouds a dark and dingy procession of shadowy caricatures who stoop awkwardly in the empty stands to the background wheezing of congested airblowers.

As one of the workers passed by the section where I was observing, I smiled and offered a ritualistic, though naive, greeting: "Hi, how's it going?" The worker, a disheveled white male about 50 years of age, ignored the relative insensitivity of my greeting and, smiling, offered a simple but eloquent answer: "I've been better." A few minutes later, he ate some peanuts from an abandoned bag that had been tossed on the ground about an hour earlier.

In sum, ballpark workers come to understand that the baseball stadium is an industrial site, not unlike other production contexts. For some, this realization is a disheartening one which decreases their enjoyment of the game of baseball. As another teenaged toll plaza attendant put it: "I've only gone to three games in two years. I used to like baseball more before I started workin' here. I reckon' it's like if you work at a fast food place, you don't want to eat the burgers."

The Commodification of the Ballpark

Critical scholars argue that American sport also is *commodified*.²⁶ This commodification of the ballpark is experienced by workers in at least two ways. First, the ballpark itself is interpreted as a commodity for generating revenues. Despite the monies obtained from broadcast contracts, the ballpark still is understood as a key source of revenue for each franchise. "You can look at how the bottom-line is going by looking at the stands," argued the franchise controller. "The national TV contracts and our local TV and radio contracts are fixed until their terms are up. Our advertising is not going to vary much year-to-year. The only real variable that makes or breaks the bottom line is game-related income in tickets, parking, concessions, and novelties."

Accordingly, much formal (and some informal) communication is focused on how to increase and/or handle revenue. And it is through such income-oriented interaction that baseball becomes enculturated as a *capitalist enterprise*. All employees are informed about the policy on complimentary tickets which stresses that all tickets, complimentary or paid, are treated as *money*, a lesson signified by the use of the term "vault room" to describe the place where tickets are printed.²⁷ Food and drink supervisors tell stand workers how to account for all food "spoilage" on "product discrepancy/spoilage" forms. In these and other messages, stadium employees experience how the ballpark as commodity is quantified.

Second, ballpark workers also understand that they themselves are commodified. Most full-time employees experience a unique identification about working in "the national pastime," yet they realize that this identification can be exploited by franchise executives. "A whole lot of people want to get involved in baseball," admitted the stadium manager, "and they'll do anything and work for anything to get involved"; he concluded that "upper management knows this so they will always

have the upper hand." Part-time workers know their low value in the ballpark hierarchy because they understand that their jobs are dependent on attendance and that attendance is dependent upon a winning record.

Most franchise employees also know how the game of player salaries is played on the corporate field, so they understand that there always will be a huge disparity between their own salaries and players' salaries.²⁸ The team's controller described how money itself is interpreted by franchise members who work in player personnel compared to those who work in other departments:

I may have to really go through a long drawn out process to justify the acquisition of a \$1,500 personal computer for accounting. But while \$1,500 is important to accounting or media relations, if people on the baseball side want an extra \$20,000 to sign a player, that's *nothing*. That's *justified* because the organization is baseball-oriented and the players are the game. Keeping players happy means a lot more than having an extra PC to work with.

Yet, as the stadium manager admitted, "The hardest thing to grasp in this business is that my job is judged by how those players down there do. . . . It sometimes is a little frustrating when those guys out there get X amount of dollars no matter how they do, but if they don't do their jobs, then at budget time, you're not going to get your raise or the budget that you want."

The inevitable, though understandable, frustrations created by these salary disparities are rationalized, or perhaps justified, by part-time workers as well, as was revealed when two ticket sellers sat in the empty stands a few hours before a game and opened their paychecks. One ticket taker, a white male in his early 20s, turned to his colleague and asked, "So how much did you get?"

The other ticket seller, an older white man in his 60s who had worked at the ballpark for five years longer than his younger counterpart, answered quickly, "Same as you, 125 bucks."

"You're making the same as me?" He peeked at his colleague's check. "But you been working here for, what, about five more years?"

"Yep."

The younger ticket seller shook his head disparagingly. "That ain't right. You should get more for your *experience*."

The older worker laughed loudly then explained the system to his younger colleague. "Hey, this is a business. There ain't a lot of pro ball-players out there so they got to pay them millions. But anybody can do this job. If I quit tonight there'd be twenty guys standing in line for the job tomorrow. Hell, I wouldn't pay me more if I was [the owner]." He paused and looked at his younger friend. "Would you?" The young man shrugged his shoulders. "I dunno'. Prob'ly not." He looked up at his older colleague and mumbled, "But it still ain't right."

This exchange between two part-time employees vividly reveals how they participate in their own commodification as workers and, in this

case, how they devalue their own worth as commodities. The older worker used a simple supply-and-demand ideology to explain the disparity between players and themselves and he used that same ideology to dismiss the younger man's claim that the "experience" of selling tickets was worth more money. Then, somewhat remarkably, both workers accepted the legitimacy of the ideology when they admitted that they would do the same thing if they were owners, though the younger worker did so with some reluctance. This episode reveals how the process of hegemony—of symbolic domination by one group over another group—works in the ballpark. As Dennis Mumby, citing Gramsci, argued, "The process of hegemony works most effectively when the world-view articulated by the ruling elite is actively taken up and pursued by subordinate groups."²⁹ In this way, the ballpark is not just a site of capitalist work; it also is a site of capitalist struggle. However, the struggle in this episode, as in many others, is fairly insignificant because most part-timers and full-timers believe they are lucky to be working at the ballpark in the first place.

Romantics often ignore or dismiss the business aspects of baseball, especially when they are presented in the sports pages. However, if sport reflects American society, then it also reflects the ideology of capitalism which underlies our American enterprise. And just as American business dominates American culture, so, too, the business of baseball dominates ballpark culture.

BALLPARK COMMUNITAS AT HOME (PLATE)

To me, the ballpark is a home away from home. It's a place where I know I can go to see a lot of familiar faces, a lot of people I work with who are like a family to me.

(Director of Promotions)

"Baseball is a country all to itself," wrote poet Donald Hall.³⁰ "It is an old country," Hall described, where "steam locomotives puff across trestles and through tunnels"; where "citizens wear baggy pinstripes, knickers, and caps"; where "magistrates are austere and plain-spoken"; where "days are always the same"; and where "time is the air we breathe, and the wind swirls us backward and forward, until we seem so reckoned in time and seasons that all time and seasons become the same."³¹

If baseball is such a country, then ballparks are its cities and towns. In some ways, baseball stadia are like American communities in a literal sense. Each ballpark is a self-contained environment which can accommodate thousands of regular residents (season ticket holders) and one-time visitors. Each has food and drink to keep citizens nourished, medical facilities to treat the injured, security forces to keep the peace, retail stores to provide clothing (with the home team logo), media facilities to inform people about community members, events, and entertainment for residents and guests.

More importantly, the ballpark is experienced as community in a *symbolic* sense, as a home where extended families come together to work, to play, and to share in community celebrations. In his study of religious pilgrimages, anthropologist Victor Turner developed the notion of "communitas" to describe a particularly rich sense of community that I believe can be found in the ballpark. As Turner explained, communitas is community as "anti-structure" which transcends ethnic, gender, class, and religious lines to reveal a "homogeneous, unstructured, and free community."³² Pilgrims who visit sacred places such as Mecca, Lourdes, and Jerusalem come from all walks of life and experience a foundational bonding with their fellow pilgrims that cannot be matched in most social settings. "Communitas," Turner concluded, "is spontaneous, immediate, concrete—it is not shaped by norms, it is not institutionalized, it is not abstract."³³

In one (perhaps limited) way, sport creates this sense of communitas. Giamatti wrote about the experience that fans of the home team share during key moments of a well-played contest: "Very soon the crowd is no crowd at all but a community, a small town of people sharing . . . the common experience of being released to enjoy the moment, even those moments made better, after all, precisely because our fan is part of a large family of those similarly affected, part of a city of grievers."³⁴ The ballpark itself is a meeting place for families and friends who gather to celebrate together on dates, outings, and picnics in the park. As one pair of sport sociologists wrote: "Sport stadiums, arenas, and even parking lots frequently become meeting places for social interactions which provide involvement in a community event. . . . Some season ticket holders to sports events feel that an important side benefit is getting to know the people in adjoining seats."³⁵ Not surprisingly, then, the director of stadium administration talked about his own meetings with season ticket holders: "During a ballgame, I'll pick out four or five different sets of season ticket customers and go down and meet them. I'd love to get to the point where we can greet them at the gate by name."

The experience of the ballpark as community may be most pronounced for people who work there each summer. "We operate under the philosophy that this job has to be fun," explained the stadium manager, "especially for the part-time workers who are definitely not going to get rich out here. We try to have extracurricular activities like softball games and barbeques and form a family bond with these people."

This "family bond" is enacted in several ways. Workers share everyday pleasantries as they greet each other with their "What's Betty up to?" and "How's Jimmy doin' in Little League?" There are informal rituals such as softball games, barbeques, and drinks after the game at a nearby bar. Ballpark workers also engage in various forms of joking, many of which are related to their particular work group. For example, beat writers in the press box engage in sarcastic game-related repartee with their peers, security guards tell stories about fights and

incidents in the stands, and teenagers in toll plazas, parking lots, and food stands engage in more adolescent humor in the form of ice-throwing and "mustarding" (dabbing mustard on the back of co-workers' uniforms). As Gary Fine concluded about joking at work, "Fun is part of the successful completion of tasks and is necessary for the creation and maintenance of a sense of satisfaction."³⁶ Fun is a necessary part of ballpark culture.

Perhaps most importantly, the ballpark community results in the development of interpersonal relationships and workers rekindle these relationships at yearly "family reunions," known officially as employee orientations. Many co-workers who meet at the ballpark develop lasting friendships; some even get married, as a few couples did in previous off-seasons *at home plate*. In their best-selling book *In Search of Excellence*, Peters and Waterman reported that people in "excellent" companies use the family metaphor to characterize their organizations;³⁷ but how many employees at IBM or Hewlett-Packard actually get married in their offices? In short, relationships are developed and celebrated differently in our ballparks than in most other organizational contexts. As one part-time volunteer, a widow, explained the importance of her ballpark relationships: "I have met so many people since I started working out here after my husband died. I don't make any money out here but the ballpark has paid me back with friendships. Most people don't know how much this place has meant to me."

THE BALLPARK AS THEATRE: STAGING "THE SHOW"

You know, they call the major leagues "the show."

(Stadium Police Officer)

As the television commentator for live cable coverage readied himself for the camera in preparation for his pre-game talk show before a game in July of 1989, the owner of the franchise stuck his head in the well air-conditioned booth for a quick hello. The owner greeted the commentator warmly then joked, "You know you're running up a huge electricity bill in here with that air conditioning cranked up so high." The commentator smiled and said, "Yeah, we are, but there's nothing worse than sweat on TV."

Although casual and good-natured, this episode reveals three distinct interpretations of ballpark culture. The episode is a representative display of the sociality that is characteristic of the ballpark community as just described. The owner's remarks reveal the business interpretation discussed earlier, although he, no doubt, is less concerned about the electricity bill from the air-conditioned booth and more concerned with "break even" points and *per capita* figures. Finally, the TV commentator's response reveals his concern with his on-air presence and appearance and it suggests that his booth is a stage for a television program and that the ballpark itself is a theatre for presenting "the show."

Baseball is a "show" in several ways, two of which are examined here: baseball as entertainment and baseball as social drama.

The Entertainmentization of the Ballpark

In his analysis of the sports industry, Staudohar argued that "professional sport is clearly within the ambit of the organized entertainment industry" because of "the emergence of formalized union-management relations in sport, geographic expansion of the business, and heavy exposure of sporting events on television."³⁸ Moreover, each game is produced, packaged, and promoted as entertainment in different ways depending on the particular medium of production and on the targeted audiences of consumption. Each game is staged and produced as entertainment for at least two audiences: the broadcast (radio and television) audience and the stadium audience.³⁹

Radio and TV personnel see the ballpark as an outdoor studio as they broadcast each game as an individual episode of entertainment programming with an eye on the dramatic details of the action on the field.⁴⁰ Broadcasting announcers narrate each and every action orally, offering commentary as the drama of the game develops, while production crews frame the action visually, presenting continuous and replayed images of the drama. However, although announcers and production crews share a focus on the dramatic details of the game's action, they experience the drama of their own work in different ways. Announcers experience the action in the booth in complete conversational turns of varying degrees of excitement depending on the particular play while the director and crew experience the action in the production truck in abbreviated conversational fragments and ever-changing visual images as the director coordinates the show with messages such as: "Ready five-take five-CHYRON in-wipe it-ready four-take four-clean-two-three-ready A-slide in A-freeze it-dissolve. Beautiful, people!" Despite their differences in experience, though, announcers and production crews unite together to broadcast, as the producer described it, "a good show: one with great camera shots, great replays, and great announcing"; even so, he cautioned that "For the production to be a great show, it has to be a great game."

Of course, romantics complain that televised baseball can never be "a great show." Roger Angell wrote that the medium of television is not suited to the game because it is "irrevocably two-dimensional."⁴¹ Others have charged that television has contaminated the game with colorful uniforms (for better visual appeal), night play (for higher audience ratings during "prime time"), and live balls, lowered mounds, and smaller strike zones (for more action) to make baseball more attractive to viewers and, more tellingly, to advertisers.⁴² One sportswriter at the ballpark complained that television even has altered the work of sportwriting: "When there was no great influence from television, baseball was

easier to cover. . . . Some of the Damon Runyons who waxed poetic also didn't write about games that started at 7:35 p.m., to be in prime time. The nightly deadlines have taken a lot of the joy out of writing." As one romantic summarized the essence of these critiques: "Baseball is a game that was designed to be played on a sunny afternoon in Wrigley Field in the 1920s, not on a 21-inch screen."⁴³ Despite these and other critiques, it is clear that television's influence on baseball as an entertainment program is here to stay, much to the dismay of those who prefer to sit in old ballparks with natural grass and see pitchers in drab flannel uniforms hit for themselves on sunny afternoons.

While baseball games are broadcast as entertainment programs for television viewers, they also are packaged as entertaining experiences for audiences in the ballpark stands. The team's promotion director explained it this way: "It's not just a baseball game, it's an entertainment experience. You can't just put a sign that says 'Game Tonight, 7:30.' From a marketing perspective, you have to make it an experience that the fans will enjoy when they're in your venue, watching your product."

From this perspective, the baseball stadium is an amusement park. Physical boundaries such as high outfield walls, toll booths, and turnstiles define the ballpark as a separate territory in a community. The inside of the park is always clean, though patrons never see the sullied group of workers who do the cleaning. Workers who will be seen are selected on the basis of their fit with the image of the ballpark and they are instructed to keep a cleancut appearance, provided with (relatively) colorful uniforms, and trained to greet and help customers—who are called "fans"—in a courteous manner. Promotion items are offered free of charge which display the team's insignia and create the appearance of a united fandom in the "friendly confines." Ballpark music, whether performed live by an organist or played in prerecorded form over the loudspeakers by ballpark "disk jockeys," keeps fans entertained during lulls in the action; as the team's announcer put it, "You try to play that good Sunday afternoon driving music so people will have a great time at the park, listen to good music, and hopefully see a good game."

In many ways, the ballpark is an amusement park structured not to represent everyday reality but to present an idealized and sanitized escape from reality. The ballpark is, as Sonja Foss and Ann Gill wrote about Disneyland, "a powerful discursive system that succeeds at making people accept as normal what they generally would not, enjoy what they ordinarily would not, repress aspects of themselves that they generally would not, and not question what they generally would."⁴⁴

Baseball as Social Drama

Baseball can be understood in a richer theatrical sense as social drama. From a dramaturgical perspective, some workers are "frontstage" employees who dramatize their work performances in visible ways for

appreciative audiences.⁴⁵ For example, the personnel director suggested that roving vendors in the stands "need to be outgoing and assertive" and "need to be a bit of a ham and a standup comic"; appropriately, one drink vendor received a standing ovation from almost everyone in a no-alcohol section of the ballpark during one game when he yelled: "No beer here! No beer here!" Other employees, like TV production crews or cleanup crews, are "backstage" performers who work behind the scenes or after the game, invisible to broadcast or ballpark audiences. Still others vary their visibility, like security guards who usually keep a low profile as they walk their ballpark beats; however, if there is a fight in the stands, the head of security mobilizes the guards and officers with a curt "code red" announcement over the radio and they respond by dramatizing their presence in the troubled section of the ballpark. "In general," the head of security boasted, "I like our people to be seen but not noticed"; however, he added that "we can make them seem invisible or make it look like there are thousands of them out there, depending on the circumstances."⁴⁶

More importantly, baseball can be interpreted as social drama because it has elements of "agon" or *ritual contest* and "mimesis" or *symbolic representation*. At a surface level, the rules of baseball create a contest with an ongoing series of one-on-one confrontations between pitchers and hitters and with the ultimate victory of one team, no matter how many innings it takes. The deeper structure of the baseball agon, however, reveals "the contest between the virtuous and the villainous, the suspense of the contest, the triumph of justice and the intervention of fortune, anxiety as the game proceeds, heroic deeds and untimely errors, dramatic climaxes, and the euphoria of the victors along with the gloom of the vanquished."⁴⁷

Spectators at this ritual contest, including ballpark workers, are *participants* in the baseball *agon* who may experience profound enjoyment during the ceremony. "When some well-conceived contest," wrote George Santayana, "displays the dramatic essence of physical conflict, we watch it with an interest which no gymnastic feat, no vulgar tricks of the circus or of legerdemain, can ever arouse. The whole soul is stirred by a spectacle that represents the basis of its life."⁴⁸ As the franchise director of stadium administration stated while gazing at the stands during a sellout: "There isn't a better sight in life than to be sitting in a packed ballpark with 40,000 fans, watching an exciting baseball game. There is nothing more exciting to me. That's one of the reasons I'm working in sports: that excitement of an arena full of people watching a contest."

Interpreted in this way, the ballpark is not an amusement park into which fans escape from reality but rather it is a cultural arena through which fans, players, and workers unite in ritual and tradition and, thereby, share a common sense of reality. From this perspective, spectators are not couch (or bleacher) potatoes who merely react to the entertainment on the field or on the television screen; instead, they are

participants in the drama. "Ceremony requires witnesses," Christopher Lasch wrote, who are "enthusiastic spectators conversant with the rules of performance and its underlying meaning."⁴⁹ This feature of baseball as drama helps to explain why ballpark workers return to the ballpark each year, in some cases for decades, despite earning pitifully low wages. It also helps to explain why fans attend games even when their team is losing and why "hard core" fans remain in the ballpark for hours during rain delays.

Finally, baseball is social drama as *mimesis*, as the symbolic representation of reality. Kenneth Burke has argued that life itself is drama because humans do not merely engage in physical motions to react to their biological worlds but because we perform *symbolic actions* that create and maintain our social worlds.⁵⁰ But what type of social world does baseball as social drama represent? As a *symbolic* representation, no empirical test can be designed to assess the "true" meanings of baseball. Thus, the significance of baseball as social drama—and of baseball as a cultural institution—is dependent on the individuals making the claims and on the individuals assessing the arguments. Accordingly, I return, perhaps redundantly, to *perspective*, and I conclude with a re-examination of the views of romantics, functionalists, and critics in the context of the three interpretations of ballpark culture.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: COMMODITAS AND COMMUNITAS IN BASEBALL'S SOCIAL DRAMA

As a symbolic representation of society, the "reality" of baseball means different things to different people. As a symbolic process in society, communication is the vehicle through which these different meanings are enacted, maintained, and shared with others. By studying the formal and informal communication processes of stadium workers, I believe that there are at least three senses of baseball reality: the ideology of baseball as business, the sociality of the baseball community, and the artistry of baseball as drama. These interpretations of baseball represent the deep structures through which ballpark workers and fans alike assign meaning to our national pastime. However, by studying the writings of scholars and students of the game, I realize that these meanings of baseball have different connotations depending on the world-views of those doing the interpreting.

Romantics interpret baseball in an ideal, even idyllic, way. Not surprisingly, they ignore the *business* interpretation of baseball. As Michael Novak argued predictably in his book *The Joy of Sports*: "When I read the sports page, I'm not interested in big business, wheeling and dealing, money; all that is part of the mundane world of everyday and belongs on the other boring pages of the paper, to be read from a sense of duty. On the sports page, I seek clear images of what happened; or, in advance, what is likely to happen in athletic contests."⁵¹ Romantics

celebrate the *community* interpretation of the game. Perhaps Giamatti put it best:

In baseball, even opponents gather at the same curious, unique place called home plate. Catcher and batter, siblings who may see the world separately but share the same sight lines, are backed up and yet ruled by the parent figure, the umpire. . . . This tense family clusters at home, facing the world together. . . .⁵²

And romantics interpret the *drama* of baseball with an appreciative eye on the artistry of the game. "Like the greatest works of art," Grella concluded, "the game suggests to man his godlike potential: it reveals to him in form and metaphor the transcendent capabilities within his life, his sparks of divinity."⁵³

Functionalists, on the other hand, use sport to teach us about the realities of mainstream American culture and to demonstrate how sport helps us adapt to those realities. Functionalists endorse the ideology of the baseball *business* to remind us that performance in professional sports, like in other businesses in American capitalism, is judged ultimately by a measurable bottom line, and that the American Dream can be achieved only by "putting up the numbers." Functionalists use the *community* interpretation to demonstrate how sport integrates us into society. As Janet Lever argued in her analysis of soccer in Brazil: "sports promotes community: it involves people jointly; it provides them with common symbols, a collective identity, and a reason for solidarity."⁵⁴ And functionalists use the *drama* interpretation to reveal how our cultural and political values are enacted. As Nimmo and Combs put it: "The dramaturgy of the pregame patriotic ritual. . . invokes a sense of communal unity and deference to the political values symbolized by the game."⁵⁵

Finally, critics argue that sport is one resource through which dominant groups in America promote hegemony. Critics argue that the *business* of sports reaffirms the ideology of American capitalism; thus, as Hargreaves asserted, sports have "come to serve as exemplifications of the bourgeois ideal of the individualistic, competitive, 'meritocratic' society."⁵⁶ Critics write that this "commoditas" of sport has led to the decline (and commodification) of the ballpark *community* because it has transformed fans from active enlightened participants in the ritual contest into passive pleasure-seeking consumers at an amusement park or into aggressive, often inebriated, hooligans in search of "subcultures of violence."⁵⁷ And critics interpret the *drama* of sports as "America's right-wing theatre, affirming the status quo by making those processes which emasculate man palatable as 'play'."⁵⁸

The ultimate goal of this interpretive study—like all ethnographic research—is to reveal multiple plausible interpretations which can enrich our understanding of our organizations, our cultures, and ourselves. Yet some critics charge that interpretive research is "limited and theoretically naive" because it "adequately describes sense-making at a surface level" but "does little to explicate the *deep structure*" (i.e., power

and ideology) of organizations.⁵⁹ Although some interpretive researchers—especially those who study stories, rituals, and other symbolic forms without identifying the senses of reality these forms create—are guilty of this charge, some critics are guilty of a narrow-minded preoccupation with explicating a single dimension of organizational reality related to power and ideology. After all, the true promise of interpretive research in organizations is to explicate multiple senses of reality (including power and ideology) and to reveal the multiple (not just managerial) voices which assign meaning to these senses of reality.

Toward this end, I believe that every ethnographer—indeed, every researcher—should interpret their data from the world-views of the romantic, the functionalist, and the critic. The *romantic* in me focused on the rich identification and pure joy that many players, workers, and fans experience at the ballpark. Ushers, ticket sellers, security guards, and others spend years, and sometimes decades, working at the ballpark for very little money because they are inspired by the artistry of baseball and are fulfilled by the sense of community experienced in the friendly confines of the ballpark. “To shun or denigrate sport because it more often fails to reengage its highest praise,” reminded Giamatti, “is to undervalue the power of that promise. To say sport rarely if ever achieves the garden ideal ought in no way presume to deny the ideal’s existence.”⁶⁰

The *functionalist* in me realizes that the ballpark does reinforce important values that must be learned in order to be a working (and playing) member of American society. Members of our culture need to learn about success and failure, individualism and teamwork, rationality and emotionality, and tradition and change, to name but a few; the ballpark is one of many venues where these lessons find fruition. If hard work, dedication, tradition, and love of family are mainstream values that constrain members of society, then part of me prefers to be so constrained.

Finally, the *critic* in me recognizes that the ballpark does reflect and reinforce many problems of American capitalist culture. Like society, the ballpark commodifies people as products and stratifies them along gender, racial, and socioeconomic lines. Rich businessmen eat in fancy stadium restaurants served by beautiful waitresses while season ticket holders in the stands are served by roving vendors; other fans stand in lines to get concessions served by workers who are reminded to bathe and use deodorant while the bluest-collar families sit in cheap outfield seats and bring their own food to the game. Athletes in bright baseball uniforms play with musical accompaniment and make guaranteed millions for often mediocre performances while part-time workers in plain red coats or stained blue shirts punch in time clocks and hope for extra innings to get overtime pay; lowest class minorities in tattered clothes are trucked in after hours to clean the park, for minimum wage. In the end, the ballpark community winds up being commodified by franchise managers; even so, the business of baseball is contested (perhaps

"communitized") by co-workers and fans. In these and other ways, ballpark culture reflects what is good *and* bad about American culture.

In short, the ballpark reveals the polysemy of "play ball" and it is as many things as can be imagined by "the green fields of the mind."⁶¹ As *communication* scholars, we may have unique access to these interpretations because they are enacted and revealed in the communicative actions and interactions of people. Our challenge is to study these actions and interactions in richer detail so that we can understand these and other interpretations of ballpark, organizational, and American culture and, in so doing, become more enlightened students of the game, of our discipline, and of our society.

ENDNOTES

1. A. Bartlett Giamatti, *Take Time for Paradise: Americans and Their Games* (New York: Summit Books, 1989).
2. George Grella, "Baseball and the American Dream," *Sport: Inside Out*, eds. David L. Vanderwerken and Spencer K. Wertz (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1985) 272.
3. Roger Angell, "The Interior Stadium," *Sport: Inside Out*, eds. David L. Vanderwerken and Spencer K. Wertz (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian U. Press, 1985) 156.
4. For a discussion of functionalism as it relates to the study of sport, see Jay J. Coakley, "Sport in Society: An Inspiration or an Opiate?" *Sport in Contemporary Society: An Anthology*, 3rd ed., ed. D. Stanley Eitzen (New York: St. Martin's, 1989) 24-40.
5. See John W. Loy, Barry D. McPherson, and Gerald S. Kenyon, *Sport and Social Systems* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978) and George H. Sage, "Sport and the Social Sciences," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 445 (1979): 1-14. For a discussion of how values are reproduced in sportswriting, see Nick Trujillo and Leah R. Ekdorn, "Sportswriting and American Cultural Values: The 1984 Chicago Cubs," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2 (1985): 262-81.
6. Howard L. Nixon, *Sport and the American Dream* (New York: Leisure Press, 1984) 246.
7. For a review of critical approaches to sport, see Coakley.
8. William M. Leonard, II, *A Sociological Perspective of Sport* (Minneapolis: Burgess, 1980) 244. For a discussion of how values of success are reproduced in sportswriting, see Leah R. Vande Berg and Nick Trujillo, "The Rhetoric of Winning and Losing: The American Dream and America's Team," *Media, Sports, and Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989) 204-24.
9. Sut Jhally, "Cultural Studies and the Sports/Media Production Complex," *Media, Sports, and Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989) 86.
10. For examples of sports related research in communication, see Jennings Bryant, Paul Comisky, and Dolf Zillmann, "The Appeal of Rough-and-Tumble Play in Televised Professional Football," *Communication Quarterly* 29 (1981): 256-262; Jennings Bryant, Paul Comisky, and Dolf Zillmann, "Drama in Sports Commentary," *Journal of Communication* 27 (1977): 140-149; Margaret C. Duncan and Barry Brummett, "The Mediation of Spectator Sports," *Television Criticism: Approaches and Applications*, eds. Leah R. Vande Berg and Lawrence A. Wenner (New York: Longman, 1991) 367-387; Michael E. Roloff and Denise H. Solomon, "Sex Typing, Sports Interests, and Relational Harmony," *Media, Sports, and Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989) 290-311; Eric W. Rothenbuhler, "The Living Room Celebration of the Olympic Games," *Journal of Communication* 38 (1988): 61-81; Nick Trujillo, "Hegemonic Masculinity on the Mound: Media Representations of Nolan Ryan and American Sports Culture," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 8 (1991): 290-308; Lawrence A. Wenner, "Therapeutic Engagement in Mediated Sports," *Talking to Strangers: Mediated Therapeutic Communication*, eds. Gary Gumpert and Sandra L. Fish (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1989) 221-42.
11. See, for example, Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1982); Peter J. Frost, Larry F. Moore, Meryl Reis Louis, Craig C. Lundberg, and Joanne Martin, eds.,

Organizational Culture (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985) and *Reframing Organizational Culture* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991); Michael E. Pacanowsky and Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo, "Organizational Communication as Cultural Performance," *Communication Monographs* 50 (1983): 126-47; and Andrew M. Pettigrew, "On Studying Organizational Cultures," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (1979): 570-81.

12. Linda Smircich reviewed different approaches to studying organizational culture in her article "Concepts of Culture and Organizational Analysis," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28 (1983): 339-58.

13. The interpretive paradigm actually is an umbrella label that covers a wide variety of academic traditions including symbolic interactionism, dramaturgy, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, and others. See Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Element of the Sociology of Corporate Life* (London: Heinemann, 1979). For examples of organizational communication research from an interpretive perspective, see Mary Helen Brown, "That Reminds Me of a Story: Speech Action in Organizational Socialization," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 49 (1985): 27-42; Donal Carbaugh, "Cultural Terms and Tensions at a Television Station," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 52 (1988): 216-37; H. Lloyd Goodall, *Casing a Promised Land: The Autobiography of an Organizational Detective as Cultural Ethnographer* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989); Jan Wallace Kelly, "Storytelling in High Tech Organizations: A Medium for Sharing Culture," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 13 (1985): 45-58; Linda L. Putnam and Michael E. Pacanowsky, eds., *Communication and Organizations: An Interpretive Approach* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983); and Nick Trujillo, "Implications of Interpretive Approaches for Organizational Communication Research and Practice," *Organization-Communication: Emerging Perspectives II*, ed. Lee Thayer (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1986) 46-63.

14. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973) 10.

15. Gareth Morgan, "Paradigms, Metaphors, and Puzzle Solving in Organization Theory," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 25 (1980): 609.

16. See Michael H. Agar, *Speaking of Ethnography* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1986); David M. Fetterman, *Ethnography: Step by Step* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989); and James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979) and *Participant Observation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980).

17. Thomas Boswell, *Why Time Begins on Opening Day* (Penguin, 1984) 1.

18. Spradley, *Participant Observation* 77-83.

19. The prospect of working in various ballpark roles for a game or two was quite tempting and I must confess that I have some regrets for not doing so. But I decided that the data-gathering potential as a guard or usher where I would interact with many fans but with few workers was far less appealing than as a ballpark wanderer where I could interview and observe literally dozens of fans and workers on a given night. I also believed that one or two nights as a guard or an usher would not provide particularly rich insights about guarding or ushering for an entire season; instead, I felt that my work in those positions on a given night would be more of a novelty or curiosity which would yield less information about ballpark culture than more systematic observations and interviews. In addition, although I recognize that every ethnographic study reveals how a researcher comes to understand how members of a culture interpret their culture, I prefer that the focus of an ethnographic account be on the members of the culture and not on the researcher doing the studying. I wanted to maintain my focus on other ballpark workers so I avoided the admitted temptation to work at the ballpark and write about myself as a ballpark worker.

20. Only in one situation did my notebook create a problem in the field and that was during the 1989 season when I tried to interview one particular ticket "scalper" who refused to talk to me because he thought I was a "reporter" and he thought such an interview would give away his cover as a scalper and he subsequently would be arrested. After his refusal, I placed the notebook in my jacket for subsequent observations and interviews with other scalpers and took notes immediately after I left the scalper's area.

21. See Agar, Fetterman, and Spradley. It should be remembered that the field-note data in this study, as in all ethnographic studies, are *inscriptions*—first-level

interpretations—of events. As Paul Ricoeur has argued, there are at least four distinctions between “live” discourse and inscriptions of discourse: (1) discourse takes place in time whereas inscriptions are taken out of time; (2) discourse has a speaker who is self-referenced whereas inscriptions have a “life” of their own and their own meaning; (3) discourse is about a particular world whereas inscriptions are taken out of a situation; and (4) discourse has a particular listener whereas inscriptions are addressed to anyone who can read. Consequently, fieldnote inscriptions are important because they constitute data at two levels: first, they *recreate* a time-bound, self-referenced, context-dependent, and listener-directed record by which the field researcher analyzes the understandings of specific members from a particular culture under study; and second, they *create* a timeless, other-referenced, context-free, and audience-centered text through which the field researcher and all other readers can interpret the understandings of general members from the broader culture. Paul Ricoeur, “The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text,” *Social Research* 38 (1971): 529-62.

22. Jean-Marie Brohm, *Sport: A Prison of Measured Time*, trans. Ian Fraser (London: Inks Links, 1978) 55-56.

23. John Hargreaves, “Sport, Culture, and Ideology,” *Sport, Culture, and Ideology*, ed. Jennifer Hargreaves (London: Kegan Paul, 1982) 30-61.

24. Brohm 55, 57. The reference to “Taylorization” refers to Frederick Taylor’s organizational principles of “scientific management” which put a premium on the maximum productivity determined by the efficient design of work and organizational structure.

25. Eric Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Rinehart, 1941) 243n.

26. See Brohm; Bero Rigaeur, *Sport and Work*, trans. Allen Guttman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981); and Eldon E. Snyder and Elmer Spreitzer, *Social Aspects of Sport* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978) 139-340.

27. The franchise policy about complimentary tickets is consistent with other franchises: players and coaches receive four reserved seats for their immediate families and two daily reserved seats; full-time employees and their immediate families receive tickets to all home games and get guest tickets on an availability basis; full-time seasonal and ticket sales personnel receive tickets for immediate family members on an availability basis; and other day-of-game personnel are allowed to watch the games from general admission areas on an availability basis after they complete their work.

28. Players in particular are valuable commodities for franchise owners who enjoy unique tax advantages because, as Staudohar pointed out, “only sports businesses are allowed to depreciate their human assets.” See Paul D. Staudohar, *The Sports Industry and Collective Bargaining* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, Cornell University, 1986) 18. As Staudohar elaborated: “The franchise, or right of ownership, itself is a nondepreciable asset. It therefore makes sense to assign a low value to the franchise for tax purposes and a high value to the players’ contracts so that depreciation can be maximized” (p. 18). See also Gerald W. Scully, *The Business of Major League Baseball* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) 151. See also Jesse W. Markham and Paul V. Teplitz, *Baseball Economics and Public Policy* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Company, 1981).

29. Dennis K. Mumby, “The Political Function of Narrative in Organizations,” *Communication Monographs* 54 (1987): 113.

30. Donald Hall, *Fathers Playing Catch with Sons* (New York: Dell, 1985) 67.

31. Hall 67-68, 72, 74.

32. Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974) 169.

33. Turner 274.

34. Giamatti 32.

35. Dean F. Anderson and Gregory P. Stone, “Sport: A Search for Community,” *Sociology of Sport: Diverse Perspectives*, eds. Susan L. Greedorfer and Andrew Yiannakis (West Point, NY: Leisure Press, 1981) 169.

36. Gary Alan Fine, “Letting Off Steam? Redefining a Restaurant’s Work Environment,” *Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimensions*, eds. Michael Owen Jones, Michael Dane Moore, and Richard Christopher Snyder (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988) 119. See also Donald F. Roy, “‘Banana Time’: Job Satisfaction and Informal Interaction,”

Human Organization 18 (1959): 158-68 and Richard J. Boland and Raymond Hoffman, "Humor in a Machine Shop: An Interpretation of Symbolic Action," *Organizational Symbolism*, eds. Louis R. Pondy, Peter J. Frost, Gareth Morgan, and Thomas C. Dandridge (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1983) 187-98.

37. Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, *In Search of Excellence* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

38. Staudohar 6. In fact, Staudohar likened sports unions to the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

39. The stadium audience, too, is a "broadcast" audience since most ballpark fans and workers have access to mass-mediated replays on the in-house "Diamond Vision" screen; in addition, fans in luxury boxes and various workers in booths have access to regular television monitors and see the game via the direct cable feeds (minus commercials). Although I focus here on baseball as entertainment program for broadcast and stadium audiences, baseball is also dramatized as entertainment in writing (both newspaper and fiction/nonfiction books), in live theatre, in film, and in art.

40. One report estimates that in the late 1980s, sports in general accounted for over 1800 hours of network television, about 5,000 hours of cable television, and countless thousands of hours on radio and local television; baseball in particular has enjoyed broadcast coverage of most of the 2200 pre-season, season, and post-season games each year on radio and network, cable, and local television. See Susan Tyler Eastman and Timothy P. Meyer, "Sports Programming: Scheduling, Costs, and Competition," *Media, Sports, and Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989) 97-119.

41. Angell 150.

42. Benjamin G. Rader, *In Its Own Image: How Television Has Transformed Sports* (New York: Free Press, 1984) 138-55.

43. William O. Johnson, *Super Spectators and the Electric Lilliputians* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971) 103.

44. Sonja Foss and Ann Gill, "Michel Foucault's Theory of Rhetoric as Epistemic," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 51 (1987): 397.

45. For a review of dramaturgical approaches to communication, see Bruce E. Gronbeck, "Dramaturgical Theory and Criticism: A State of the Art (or Science?)," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 44 (1980): 315-30.

46. As Erving Goffman argued about the management of impressions at work, "If the individual's activity is to become significant to others, he must mobilize his activity so that it will express during the interaction what he wishes to convey. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Doubleday, 1959) 30.

47. Dan Nimmo and James E. Combs, *Mediated Political Realities* (New York: Longman, 1983) 126. Nimmo and Combs also argued that the mediated dramatization of sport has added "soap opera elements" as well, such as "the rivalries of players, petty quarrels, salary disputes, and team jumping, fights and fines, romances and deaths" (p. 226).

48. George Santayana, "Philosophy in the Bleachers," *Sport and the Body: A Philosophical Symposium*, 2nd ed., eds. Ellen W. Gerber and W. J. Morgan (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1979) p. 230.

49. Christopher Lasch, "The Corruption of Sports," *American Sport Culture: The Humanistic Dimensions*, ed. Wiley Lee Umphlett (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1985) 53.

50. See, for example, Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) and Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

51. Michael Novak, *The Joy of Sports: End Zones, Bases, Baskets, Balls, and the Consecration of the American Spirit* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton, 1967) 261; emphasis deleted.

52. Giamatti 87-88.

53. Grella 279.

54. Janet Lever, *Soccer Madness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 14.

55. Nimmo and Combs 134.

56. John Hargreaves, "Sport and Hegemony: Some Theoretical Problems," *Sport, Culture and the Modern State*, ed. Hart Cantelon and Richard Gruneau (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) 129.

57. Steven F. Messner, "Football and Homicide: Searching for the Subculture of Violence," *Sociology of Sport: Diverse Perspectives* 53-60.

58. John Lahr, "The Theatre of Sports," *Sport in the Socio-Cultural Process*, ed. M. Marie Hart (Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown, 1972) 106.

59. Mumby 113.

60. Giamatti 48.

61. A. Bartlett Giamatti, "The Green Fields of the Mind," *The Armchair Book of Baseball*, ed. John Thorn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985) 141-43.

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