

Introduction to Part IV

In Parts II and III we presented eight participant stories of individual journeys from the first touch of a footy to making the AFL or NRL and the first few years playing at this level. Guided by narrative inquiry methodology, we kept these stories in tact to give the participants voice and to help us understand the nature of their journeys. Although we presented only eight stories, the analysis of the study presented in Part IV (Chaps. 12, 13 and 14) was developed from all 16 stories told to us and written up. Following on from Bruner (1990), we see narrative as a powerful tool for the sharing of knowledge and communicating meaning, which is why we chose to use narrative inquiry as our prime means of data generation. We used the stories told to us, and the subsequent interviews, to provide insights into life experience and the meaning of footy in the participants' lives and to identify the main pedagogical factors contributing to their success as a process of learning and a way of sharing knowledge.

We avoided interfering with each of the participants' stories as we tell them in this book and leave reporting on the analysis until now in Part IV. Here we suggest what we can make of the 16 stories on both an individual and collective basis by outlining and discussing the themes and sub-themes that we arrived at through the combination of narrative inquiry and grounded theory. It reflects our focus on careful listening

encouraged by Indigenous *dadirri* methodology with the intent of understanding and letting the participants and the data speak instead of imposing pre-determined assumptions and forcing the data to fit with pre-determined theory and expected outcomes.

In Part IV we present the two major themes to emerge from the study. In Chap. 12 we focus on the first theme, which was how the culturally situated experiences of learning to play footy laid the foundations of expertise in their sport and promoted a distinctly Aboriginal approach to play. This chapter includes the four sub-themes of (1) learning through informal games and play, (2) playing a range of other sports within a culture that valued sport, (3) the influence of community and Aboriginal culture, and (4) the influence of mothers and other significant people.

Chapter 13 discusses the second major theme, which is how the participants had to adapt these Aboriginal approaches to play and learning had to be adapted to non-Aboriginal and professional ways of training and playing as a process of cultural transition from local Aboriginal culture to what can be seen as the culture of the global sport industry. This chapter includes the sub-themes of (1) the influence of mentors, and (2) drawing on learning from family and community. Chapter 14 draws on the analytic concepts of Bourdieu to locate the detailed individual experiences of the 16 participants within larger social, economic and cultural contexts and consider the influence of tensions between local and global sporting cultures. The book finishes with concluding thoughts about the study's finding and our suggestions about what the implications of our findings are for Indigenous sport and education, knowledge of the development of expertise and for the interaction between local and global cultures of sport.

References

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of meaning*. Boston: Harvard University Press.