



[The Efficacy of Emotion](#) is an excerpt from *Minding the Body: What Student Athletes Know About Learning* by Julie Cheville.

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Chapter Three

The Efficacy of Emotion

After you've been playing with the same people for a while, you almost start to get on the same brain waves. . . . They understand what I'm thinking, and I understand what they're thinking. It's comfortable. I think that's what makes a team successful. If you know that person is going to be there without even having to look at them, you can always depend on them being there.

Jenny Noll

Once the players have mastered the system, a powerful group intelligence emerges that is greater than the coach's ideas or those of any individual on the team.

Phil Jackson and Hugh Delehanty,
Sacred Hoops (1995)

During the early months of the 1995–1996 season, relational knowing does not come easily for the Hawkeyes. While successive nonconference wins suggest players' conceptual understanding has cohered, fits and starts arise. Nadine, in particular, seems to struggle. With Karen and Stacy, a freshman reserve, slotted at point guard, Nadine continues to learn the positional knowledge required of her shift this season to the wing, where offensive objectives suddenly include three-point scoring, increased ball rotation to the lane, and new vectors of body movement. On defense, Nadine must acclimate to the activity required of zone and player-on-player formations and weak side defensive assignments. On occasion, Nadine compensates for her confusion with street

moves that do not coincide with what coaches and teammates expect from her position. When it occurs, her eruptive play earns a standard redress from Coach Lee, "Nadine, I don't think there's a day that goes by that you don't try to do things all by yourself." No option exists for Nadine but to learn offensive and defensive assignments, a process that will require enormous physical and conceptual sacrifice. To some extent, she must unlearn her history as point guard.

In late January, the Hawkeye women travel to Northwestern University for a Sunday afternoon match-up. Games in Evanston are never easy, but this trip will be particularly troublesome. The Wildcats are ranked #17 in the AP poll and threaten the Iowa women with a balanced shooting attack. On game day Welsh-Ryan Arena fills with more road-tripping Iowans than locals, proof that the Hawkeyes' accelerated race toward the Big Ten title has renewed fan support. Following an intense game and victory, the Iowa women are euphoric. Supporters in attendance continue celebrating well after the Wildcats have surrendered their floor, and a sportscaster taping postgame commentary for an eastern Iowa television station captures the sentiments of players immediately after the game. Relinquishing his microphone, the reporter remains out of view as players respond impromptu before the camera. The footage will appear the next evening in segments broadcast at 5:20, 6:20, and 10:20 PM. Each report begins with Tangela, who comments on the victory before passing the microphone to "my girl, Nadine."

With a shift of the lens, Malikah and Nadine enter the frame. Nadine's left hand grips the microphone as she slips into dialect to recount her own pregame saga, a loss of footwear that resulted in her entire game in a pair of borrowed, grossly-oversized Reeboks. The verbal play is Nadine "unplugged." Looking on in surprise, Malikah offers only silence when Nadine finally aims the microphone in her direction. To me, an evening later, the segment is delightful. I enjoy Nadine's spirit, realizing just how much the Northwestern victory has hinged upon her acculturation to a new position. I give no thought to the fact that she is appearing before a public who will understand her dialect and animation less in terms of its wit than its "appropriateness."

The next Tuesday morning, excitement is palpable among the players as they prepare for practice. They report to each other on weekend upsets among the top AP poll spots. The Hawkeyes continue to ascend, this week rising to #8 in the national poll. As team members stretch at center court, Coach Lee enters into an unusually formal register.

"As you're stretching, I want to say that I think we've reached a critical point that's worth discussing. Up to this point it's been a team effort. Each and every game someone's stepped up. That's what makes you great."

I try to anticipate where Lee is heading, particularly as she has rarely accorded past victories and greatness much attention.

"You've begun to make true believers of everyone. But if you start to believe the hype, you'll be in trouble."

As she speaks, Coach Lee roams the circle of players with her arms crossed tightly in front of her. Periodically, she stops to make eye contact with players who, lying on their backs, have no alternative but to look back. In a sudden transition, Lee shifts to the Channel 2 sports segment. She praises Tangela for her poise before shifting in exasperation to Nadine.

"Nadine, if someone puts a mike in front of your face, you better know what to do with it."

Nadine continues stretching. Across the circle, Coach Lee extols the importance of "control."

"Malikah," she adds, "you were right to stand back and watch Nadine."

As Nadine falls under fire, I feel guilty, an accomplice who just minutes before practice had shared my positive reaction. Now, I listen to Coach Lee as if she is talking to me directly. Broadcast to the regional public, the segment has reached the eyes and ears of predominantly white viewers, who by and large will have responded with confusion, perhaps even disapproval. Despite a top-ten ranking, Coach Lee can not afford to alienate fans. Implicitly, her message is clear. Successful athletic programs earn and maintain their fans through behavior that affirms the conventions of the status quo. By the coach's decree, the dialect and body language are limited to team members only.

Coach Lee's response emanates from her own embodied location in an institutional hierarchy dependent on the material support of the public. While Lee's own gregarious nature inclines her to acts of unleashed spontaneity during practices, she exhibits restraint in public appearances. From her players, she expects the same adjustments. Drawing attention to Nadine, Coach Lee seems both to instruct and to discipline. Concerning the latter, cultural critic John Fiske (1993) has noted that

Discipline always carries the apparently contradictory forces of submission and empowerment. A disciplined person is one who submits him- or herself to the power of a particular way of knowing/behaving in order to participate in that power, to become more effective in applying it and thus to gain the satisfaction and rewards that it offers. (64)

Unlike many head coaches who forbid younger student athletes from media contact, Lee enacts no such restrictions. Still, the creation of public personae is significant enough to be represented among the team's

five goals for this season, “Know what you say and how you say it.” The bottom line for players and coaches is that media representatives attend to those who reliably fulfill the performative expectations of the general public. For players who value visibility, media performances are centrally important. Straight commentary not creativity is the rule.

In the media opportunities that follow, Nadine assumes a stoical stance, providing just the facts to sportscasters who insert her cleanly into postgame footage. Within the institutional framework that has led to her discipline, Nadine grows more powerful. I wonder, though, to what extent this power whitens her world in ways that jeopardize her embodied history. Signithia Fordham (1993) suggests that “gender diversity” is difficult for women of color to maintain,

. . . like most other women of color, African-American women are compelled to consume the universalized images of white American women, including body image, linguistic patterns, styles of interacting, and so forth. Because womanhood or femaleness is norm referenced to one group—white middle-class Americans—women from social groups who do not share this racial, ethnic, or cultural legacy are compelled to silence or gender ‘passing.’ (8)

Restricting aspects of her bodily knowledge to the backstage, I wonder what it means that Nadine has been asked to reorient her identity in light of the desires of a predominantly white audience. Two years later, when I share this textualized moment with Nadine, she will express displeasure at my inscription, underscoring her belief that Coach Lee had responded appropriately. She wants readers to understand that the moment fostered her development as a team leader, “When I do go into the real world, it’s not going to be all African American. . . . Most of the time it’s predominantly white. So I have to learn to deal with something outside of what I’m used to.”

Though Nadine and I considered the moment important to self-definition, we varied in our understanding of its qualitative effect. I continue to wonder if we might both be right. Politically speaking, performative adjustments on and off the court heightened Nadine’s status as a player, particularly during her junior year when yet another shift, a return to point guard, would earn her increased media attention. In Nadine’s mind, the act of volitional subordination in this instance served her broader objectives, which included acclimation to a predominantly white public. For Nadine, adjustments in verbal and bodily activity that Lee advocated were a means of consolidating power. From my location, inarguably one of racial and class privilege, subordination seemed as much about loss as gain. Aspects of racial and gender difference were dimensions of the body that players rarely volunteered to discuss. Only in private conversations did I learn that some student athletes worried

about the dissolution of difference. During her long recuperation, Simone and I had talked about her ongoing struggle to sustain her own identity in the context of team rituals that necessitated a relational way of knowing on and off the court. Bearing long dreadlocks, a Jamaican accent, and a powerful stature, Simone remarked to me, "I'm Jamaican. I talk different. I look different. I'm just different." The danger for a team is that the bodily activity that fosters a reflexive consciousness becomes counterproductive when it threatens to erase players' embodied histories, histories carved by difference. The perpetual dilemma for players and coaches is to recognize and sustain identities of difference in the midst of public pressures to be the same and conceptual pressures to think the same.

Things Fall Apart

Every time a basketball player takes a step, an entire new geometry of action is created around [her]. In ten seconds, with or without the ball, a good player may see perhaps a hundred alternatives and, from them, make half a dozen choices as [she] goes along. A great player will see even more alternatives and will make more choices, and this multiradial way of looking at things can carry over into [her] life.

Bill Bradley, qtd. in *A Sense of Where You Are* (McPhee 1999)

Though injuries, position reassignments, and illness have influenced learning during the nonconference season, practices rarely pass without moments of contagious improvisational humor. Nadine and Jenny take full advantage of the opportunities Coach Lee allows for comic relief, and those players like Tangela, who often appear weighted by the level of expectation fans reserve for them, relax. In mid-December during a practice when players seem generally tired and low, Coach Lee suddenly interrupts a drill in progress to initiate a game of half-court freeze tag. She announces that coaches, too, will play, that—in fact—they are "it." Assistants Myers and Peebles seem startled at the announcement but soon join in, working together to corral and tag players. Noise erupts as taller players succumb first to coaches. In the midst of immobilizing a player by touch, Coach Lee chastises Tiffany who leaps to life before her actual liberation. Tiffany jests, "You have to explain the rules prior to the start of play!" In just minutes, the players seem invigorated. From the frivolity of freeze tag, Coach Lee calls the players to the baseline for Olympic Shooting, a six-minute drill for which they will set a field goal record that stands the season.

In early February, the Hawkeyes rise to #6 in the AP poll before entering a series of conference games against ranked opponents. In

mid-February, the team begins the final stretch of the 1995–1996 season undefeated in Big Ten play. Having weathered preseason and early conference games, intercollegiate student athletes often begin to wear down at this point in the season. Regardless of its win or loss record, a team can enter into the February Funk, a period when players are often courted by complacency and lose sight of objectives that may have guided their individual and collective play all season.

During a practice on February 8, the day before a weekend road trip to Michigan State and Purdue, Coach Lee is frank with players, “Ladies, I’m not sleeping well. We’re not playing good post defense. We’re too content to allow ourselves to get pinned.”

On the Saturday between a Michigan State win and the Purdue contest, I visit the University Inn in West Lafayette, where the team harbors before its pivotal Sunday contest with the Purdue Boilermakers. Though I am staying with local friends during my visit, I have arranged to tutor players during this off day. Set apart from the university and the city of West Lafayette, the hotel occupies a lonely plot of land, fringed only by a distant Wal-Mart and fast food restaurant. The dank interior of its lobby leaves me uncomfortable, and I’m glad to spot Nadine and Tangela soon after I enter. Nadine offers me a handshake before Tangela escorts me to the remaining players. We pass the front desk, and I wave at Shannon Perry, who sits in the manager’s office typing a paper for her Interpretation of Literature class.

Tangela leads me to a first floor hallway filled with Hawkeye players in every manner of contortion. In their black and gold nylon sweat-suits, they use the corridor to talk and stretch, attempts to battle both boredom and exhaustion. Following a win at Michigan State last night, players, coaches, and managers braved blizzard conditions aboard a bus that eventually arrived in West Lafayette. Now, they are only just waking after fitful sleeps punctuated by muscle cramping. Confined in bus seats for hours, players’ bodies pay a price today. The malaise is palpable.

On Sunday afternoon, Mackey Arena will do little to counter players’ stagnation of spirit. The secret to winning in this arena depends upon several factors. First, visiting teams must adjust to its subterranean bench seats, which frustrate a coach’s ability to see the floor and to communicate with players. Second, visiting teams must calibrate their shots to the metal rims of both hoops, which are notoriously hard and often prompt players not simply to soften shots but to soften approaches to the basket, a deadly compensatory response. Third, Mackey Arena is a site of iconic overkill. Boilermaker Pete, a hypermasculine buffoon in muscle and hard hat, is joined at halftime by the strutting Golden Girl and her back-up Silver Twins, female dancers clad in one-piece metallic swimsuits who stir the home crowd in a seamy sideshow.

The disruptive influence of architecture and iconography will not be the only problems in this game. In January, during the first of two meetings, the Hawkeyes had used their defensive press to rattle the Boilermakers in Carver-Hawkeye Arena, prompting a come-from-behind victory that had left gregarious Purdue coach Linn Dunn uncharacteristically subdued. During that game, Tangela had poured in a career high 27 points and 13 rebounds; Tiffany Gooden had defied pain to supply 14 points of her own, and Stacy had stepped off the bench for a series of crucial free throws. The loss had been embarrassing to upperclass Purdue players, who would certainly vow a different outcome in this second game of the conference season.

From the tipoff, the Hawkeyes' play at Purdue is nightmarish. Iowa fans wait for a player, any player, to take initiative, but it seems the players themselves are waiting. Under the leadership of freshman point guard Stephanie White, the Purdue starters and reserves orchestrate a tenacious defense, immobilizing the Hawkeye women throughout the first half. Few anticipate that White and teammate Ukari Figgs will lead the Boilermakers to a national championship title in three years and that they will pass through three head coaches en route. For now, the Boilermakers attune themselves to the moment. Inside the lane, they collapse upon Tangela, who is pinned on the blocks by defenders who double-team her on the high and low sides. In the stands, I sit behind Tangela's family, who has traveled from Chicago. Stephanie, her mother, sits stiff and silent on the bleachers. Though I sense the onset of fear in Tangela's play and demeanor, I do not require confirmation. Stephanie's bearing reflects her worry. By late in the first half, the Purdue lead extends to double digits. During time-outs, Iowa players listen to coaches as if in isolation, hardly acknowledging their connections to each other. When play resumes, reserves who have relinquished their seats return to a passive sideline vigil, rarely warning teammates on court about screens and backdoor cuts. Not a single Iowa player or reserve escapes paralysis, and the Hawkeye women leave Mackey with their first conference defeat, an ugly twenty-point loss that SportsChannel has televised to the nation.

At 5:55 AM the next Tuesday morning, coaches and players gather in the women's basketball lounge for the first practice since the defeat. While players are expected to review game tape on their own time, sessions like this one allow Lee the chance to isolate key episodes for study. Players are aware that the team has fallen to #7 in the AP poll released Monday. Today they are somber. When Lee enters the team lounge, she takes a position before the expansive glass case of conference and tournament trophies. She is stern but patient as Rani, a senior manager, fidgets with the remote control to a videocassette recorder that

feeds a large-screen television. Players and coaches wait in awkward silence as Rani scrutinizes the game tape at fast forward. She struggles to locate the start of the second half, and Shannon attempts to help, "No, that's still the first half." Finally, Coach Lee interrupts, "That's good. We'll just start there." Lee accepts the remote control from Rani and turns to the players, "I want you to watch this film and tell me what it reminds you of."

With that, she pushes the play button. In less than a minute, Jenny remarks, "A lot of games."

"That's right, Jenny. A *lot* of games." Coach Lee speaks to the history of this team, to its slow starts and unpredictable cold spells. The University of Georgia, the team's single nonconference loss this season, and now the Purdue debacle make clear the vulnerability that will only become more consequential as the season continues. This year, both at home and away, the Iowa women have rarely established a commanding presence in the early minutes of games. Success has depended on one or two players, different each game, to establish leadership. Tangela, a leading point scorer and rebounder, experiences acute apprehension at the start of games and rarely warms up before the middle of the first period.

Coach Lee scans the players, who face her in two tiers of gray couches with mauve trim, "If you can't take criticism today, you better leave. Each and every one of you is going to receive it."

Restarting the game tape, Lee begins a terse commentary. Sitting farthest from the television monitor, Tiffany rests her head in both hands, glancing at the television from a sideways angle. Jenny slumps in the second row. I stand behind and to the side of the couches, where I can watch players' responses without intruding. Each pause, rewind, and play sequence prolongs the agony of an outcome that is already known. Midway through the tape, Stacy shifts from the back row to the carpet, where she stretches out stomach first. Karen moves as well. Despite the movement, players remain attentive and silent, heeding Coach Lee, who highlights lapses in individual technique and team play. Pausing and rewinding the tape, Lee identifies problems and recommends adjustments. As the tape reveals the final minutes of the game, Coach Lee points at the screen, "Look at that," she groans. "Look at that."

I look. What I see is an aggressive Purdue team huddled at the key during a momentary break in action. They form a tight circle. A few feet away, Iowa players wander lost in their own orbits. The images speak for themselves. As the game tape ends, players know without command to proceed to the parquet. In the walk to the tunnel, Coach Lee greets me.

"Good morning, Julie. Well, did we fall apart or what?"

Like her assistants, Lee wears a t-shirt today emblazoned on its front with the words "Never Fear. Never Quit" in bold, black letters. A bald eagle, talons spread for prey, consumes the back of each shirt. The motto says much about how these coaches understand themselves and their jobs. Except for Coach Myers, an assistant with Lee during the Stringer years, coaches Henrickson and Peebles are new hires who share scouting and recruiting responsibilities. Together, the group of four work in ways that seem at times collaborative and at times competitive. Without exception, they demand no more from players than they demand of themselves. Like the players, their work begins at 5:30 AM with practice and continues well into the evening when each coach studies opponents' game tapes. From this analysis, each produces the written scouting reports central to players' preparation.

This morning, as Coach Lee and I walk through the tunnel, she admits the Purdue loss is a blessing, a source of motivation unlike those that eliminate possibilities in tournament play. As she meditates upon the loss, I realize there is something symbolic about this moment of transit. From the team lounge, where players and coaches negotiate and affirm their intentions, the tunnel is a portal to play. In its concrete and conceptual effect, the tunnel directs players and coaches from past to present, from private to public, from objective to outcome. Each practice and game, the recurring ritual of procession allows a team the opportunity to begin anew or, at the least, to begin again.

As we enter the arena proper, Coach Lee walks to the center circle where players stretch.

"Know this," she announces, "we coaches love each and every one of you. Put the past behind you. We're going to win the Big Ten."

Games across the Big Ten during the coming weekend will likely determine the conference champion. It is already Tuesday. Friday evening the Hawkeyes host the 9th-ranked Penn State Nittany Lions, reigning and contending Big Ten champions. On Saturday, the team will travel by bus to Madison, Wisconsin, for a Sunday contest against the 11th-ranked Wisconsin Badgers. The next two games will demand more from players than any stretch of play this season.

Wednesday morning I enter Carver-Hawkeye to find players hastily assembling in the training room. They are behind schedule and know it. I learn that the freshman manager responsible for transporting players from Slater Dormitory has overslept for the fourth time this season. As I enter the arena, I move to a theater seat on the perimeter, steering clear of Rani, who is furious. Like the players, managers learn by apprenticeship. After four mishaps, Rani is no longer willing to assume responsibility for lapses in the performance of this novice. Set apart from all this, Karen occupies a fetal position at the base of a main basket. She is in the midst of a break-up with a boyfriend who has struggled all

season to accommodate her commitment to sport. Malikah sits a few feet away from Karen donning headphones connected to a CD player. She waves to me before turning her gaze to the far end of the floor, an empty space that harbors no one. For several days, Malikah's headphones have seemed a means of detachment from those in her midst. I know that she remains afraid of injury, that she thinks often of her infant stepbrother at home with her mother in Cleveland, and that she wishes for more from basketball. Other players seem distracted as well. Tangela has convinced herself she is in a slump. And Angie Hamblin, still struggling with her ankle injury, worries about her father's worsening heart condition.

Coach Lee enters the arena in silence. She spots the young manager, who sits alone at a distant temporary basket. Lee approaches the manager, and though her words are inaudible, the young woman's deepening slump hardly requires one to guess. On several occasions I have heard Coach Lee speak warily of the manager's tardiness to Coach Myers, who oversees support personnel. After several minutes, Lee rises and walks to center court. The manager, shedding tears, departs the arena. She has lost her job and will not return. Such is the level of expectation coaches, players, and managers reserve for each other.

Before joining her teammates at the center circle, Susan asks if we can reschedule a tutoring appointment. I admit that I, too, am behind. Reassuring me that she has started Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, she hurries to center court, promising to have the book finished when we meet. I admire her stamina. She struggles to shake perpetual bronchitis, to earn a starting position at the wing, and to complete the requirements for a major and teaching certificate in history. I think ahead to the spring semester of her senior year and wonder how she will manage student teaching just as her final season of Big Ten play heads into high gear.

Practice remains flat again today. During the Continuous Lay-up Drill, players botch passes and shots before Coach Lee halts the action, "Karen, what do you think of our performance this morning?"

Karen is succinct, "Pretty crappy."

"We're starting practice all over again," Lee orders. "Everybody to center court."

The players return to the stretching that initiates each practice while Lee provides the commentary.

"You're going to have a good practice. You're going to start all over again. We've got to be thick-skinned, ladies. I'm going to be on you because everyone else is going to be on you this weekend. Stay with me."

Players reenact the Continuous Lay-up Drill with slight improvements in shooting and passing. During this second round of the drill,

Coach Myers has inserted an audiotaped cassette of crowd noise into the public address system. A mind-numbing blare of mixed chants and bleacher pounding pours from enormous speakers suspended above the court, a tactic coaches hope will prepare players for the high-decible noise indigenous to Wisconsin Fieldhouse.

Only thirty minutes into practice, during the Double Down Drill, players pause and lean, resting their hands against their knees as they gasp for air. I'm not sure if this is a gesture of exhaustion or resistance, but I see Tangela eye Malikah with a hard gaze and recognize growing resentment between the two. During a transition drill, play deteriorates. At one point, pursuing a rebound, Malikah collides with Tangela, knocking her to the parquet where she remains until Shannon helps her to rise. Ignoring the incident, Malikah turns and walks to the sideline, a response that infuriates Coach Lee. The crowd noise continues, and I must rely on Lee's flying arms and stiff posture to know that she is as frustrated as I have seen her. Malikah listens with a blank stare.

During a half-court scrimmage, tension escalates. Coach Lee seems nearly unable to contain her anger with players who no longer seem to care for each other or for the game. At the end of the drill, she calls Roxann onto the court. Upset that Susan is still sick, Coach Lee wants her healthy. Moments later, approaching the assistant coaches who harbor quietly at the center circle, Lee speaks briefly before departing the arena in haste. Dazed by the crowd noise and the action, I have little insight to offer Amy who, sidelined with injury and seated at my side, suddenly looks up from her math textbook to ask me what's happened. I do not know.

Ten minutes later, Coach Lee returns. She bears no sign of frustration and anger, even in the unspoken language of her body. In the meantime, Coach Myers has extinguished the crowd noise, and players have paired up for free throw shooting at the main and temporary baskets. They shoot in absolute silence. At the hoop nearest me, Nadine and Tangela are partners. In the midst of Nadine's free throw sequence, Tangela suddenly walks off court, where she crouches and begins quietly to cry. I look hard to make sure I'm seeing right, for the response is one I've never seen. Because Nadine chooses not to intervene, I do the same. After several minutes, Tangela lifts her head from her knees and returns to the free throw line, where Nadine, standing pensive, waits for her. We are the only ones who have witnessed the moment.

Coach Lee calls the team to center court for one last drill. Her countenance remains upbeat. Referring to her written scouting report of Penn State, Lee asks, "One question. Are we too tired to run through this?" The players uniformly answer no, except for Tiffany who seems to hedge.

"Tiffany?" Lee asks.

Tiffany's response is so muffled I cannot discern it, but whatever the remark, it seems to register with Karen who retorts, "Come on, you're acting like you're tired. Let's go."

Things have indeed fallen apart for this squad. Karen struggles amidst personal difficulties to lead a team torn by dissension. Simone's rehabilitation has exiled her to training rooms in and beyond the arena. Malikah has grown tired of injury and resentful of those who play. Tangela wallows in a shooting slump and believes that players and coaches hold her accountable for too much of the team's success. Other players are distracted by family struggles, personal relationships, and the demands of school. And coaches have lost a sense for how to restore players' confidence in themselves and trust in each other.

The night before Friday's contest with Penn State, Coach Lee announces a mandatory team meeting at her home. I am not invited to the meeting and understand why. What allows players and coaches to coalesce in consciousness during moments of disintegration is the heightened intimacy that is achieved only by a sacred distinction between insider and outsider. While I have considerable access to players and coaches, I am not important enough to be recognized during liminal moments such as this. On the eve of a game that will do much to determine the Big Ten championship, this team turns in upon itself.

On Friday, the morning of the Penn State contest, I enter the arena to the rhythms of a snare drum, which Nadine has discovered in the pep band section. Malikah and Tiffany enact a lively improvisational dance, a source of comedy when Nadine shifts to cut-time. Other players gather near the home bench where, instead of sitting in isolation, they stand and chat. Shannon approaches me, noting that she has received a C+ on her Interpretive Literature paper, the one she completed on the road last weekend. She races back to the locker room to retrieve the essay so that I can review it during practice. We are both surprised at the grade, which is low for Shannon. After practice, I will try to help her interpret the instructor's comments. In the event she has received only a grade, the interpretive process will be more difficult.

Moments later, the coaches arrive and Lee greets me with a smile, "You're going on the bus tomorrow, right?"

As players stretch at center court, Lee fills me in on the team meeting, explaining that it arose from coaches' profound confusion at episodes and emotions emerging from the Purdue loss. To convey their bewilderment, the coaches had reenacted one of their postpractice coaching conferences, this time dramatizing for players their inability to interpret events of this week. After the role play, Coach Lee had asked players to respond to the drama. Now, prior to a light "walk-through"

practice Friday morning, Coach Lee admits that she is unsure that anything was accomplished.

The walk-through, a distinctive game-day practice, involves a thorough review of Penn State's offenses and defenses. Reserve players are instructed to perform the offensive and defensive sets of opponents, which allows starters to acclimate their visual, tactile, and aural senses to opponents' action. Lee's introduction to each offensive set begins with its name and respective hand signal, either of which the Penn State point guard will use to initiate half-court play. At this signal, Iowa defenders must instantaneously visualize the set and forestall its outcome. Unlike other Big Ten opponents that the Hawkeyes will play twice this season, Penn State and Iowa clash tonight for the first and only time. Players will rely heavily on today's scouting report, as well as game tapes they have viewed on their own time during the week.

Throughout the walk-through, players interrupt Coach Lee's narration to solicit specific information on opponents' shooting ranges, preferred shots, and trademark moves. As I watch, I notice that players' relationships with each other have changed. Malikah, embodying the moves of a Nittany Lion center, assists Tangela to acculturate at the low post.

Hours later, the Hawkeyes reconvene in Carver-Hawkeye Arena where they defeat the Nittany Lions 81–69. The victory is special given Penn State was the preseason pick to win the Big Ten title with Iowa slated for fourth place. Sealing this victory, the team has also succeeded in notching a payback for every loss of the 1994–1995 season. Among players, coaches, and managers, the Purdue loss had spawned a liminal week characterized by tension, fear, and confusion. What strikes me about this period is the extent to which players' emotions precipitated both disintegration and reintegration.

The Significance of Emotion and Feeling

Scholarship on embodiment is only just beginning to consider the manner in which emotion influences the interrelation of body and mind. From his work with patients who have experienced damage to the frontal lobe of the brain either by accident, tumor, or lesion, University of Iowa neurologist Antonio Damasio claims that the experience of affect is central to reason and consciousness. In his most recent book *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, Damasio offers compelling evidence that one's affective function has a biological constitution oriented toward regulation of the mind–body partnership. Damasio's theory of consciousness rests upon

a fundamental distinction between “emotion” and “feeling.” An “emotion,” according to Damasio, represents a complex and distinct neurochemical response to a particular “inducing situation,” or pattern of stimuli. He writes,

The biological function of emotion is twofold. The first function is the production of a specific reaction to the inducing situation. . . . The second biological function of emotion is the regulation of the internal state of the organism such that it can be prepared for the specific reaction. For example, providing increased blood flow to arteries in the legs so that muscles receive extra oxygen and glucose, in the case of a flight reaction. . . . (1999, 52)

Here, Damasio alters our conventional understanding of emotion by disputing the traditional view that it undermines reason and consciousness. Instead, Damasio suggests that emotion serves a primary role, that of sustaining the homeostatic function of brain and body. According to Damasio, the neurochemical effect of an emotion is manifest in particular reflexes or conditioned responses that may be observable to others when they involve musculoskeletal changes in posture, facial expression, or body comportment. But these observable changes in countenance are only the visible outcomes of more consequential changes in inner body state.

For Damasio, “feeling” represents another level of body-brain regulation and occurs when an individual *recognizes* her emotional response. According to Damasio, this capacity to feel, or know, one’s emotion is central to comprehension and rationality. When one possesses the “wordless knowledge” of her emotion, she is positioned to understand and make inferences about the images that enter her mind. Over time, recurring experiences of stimuli can elicit emotions for which she can feel much attachment (or not). And, over time, she grows sensitive to how the images she experiences induce the particular emotions she feels, a regulatory process that grounds subjective agency. According to Damasio,

The fabric of our minds and our behavior is woven around continuous cycles of emotions followed by feelings that become known and beget new emotions, a running polyphony that underscores and punctuates specific thoughts in our minds and actions in our behavior. (1999, 43)

What is striking about sufferers of frontal lobe damage is how their inability to feel leads to dramatic impairments in the ability to reason and to make inferences about the contexts in which they find themselves.

Damasio’s work is important for two reasons. First, he offers compelling evidence of a body–brain partnership. Second, he establishes

that the experience of emotion is central to the regulation of the body and mind. While those who theorize embodiment as a cultural phenomenon may worry about the potential for biological determinism here, Damasio does maintain that the biochemical experience of emotion is shaped by cultural influence. In *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, he writes,

I am not attempting to reduce social phenomena to biological phenomena, but rather to discuss the powerful connection between them. It should be clear that although culture and civilization arise from the behavior of biological individuals, the behavior was generated in collectives of individuals interacting in specific environments. Culture and civilization could not have arisen from single individuals and thus cannot be reduced to biological mechanisms and, even, less, can they be reduced to a subset of genetic specifications. Their comprehension demands not just general biology and neurobiology but the methodologies of the social sciences as well. (1994, 124)

For many in the social sciences, recent surges in genetic research are cause for worry. Will a mapped human genome revitalize eugenic thought? Will certain forms of being and knowing matter more than others? Damasio's theory of consciousness, in insisting upon the role of culture and the plasticity of the body-brain relationship, defies essentialization of the human gene. Promoting the interdependence of mind, body, and culture, Damasio's work is a direct threat to those who continue to invest in the longstanding argument that cognition operates apart from culture.

Following the Purdue loss, Iowa players clearly experienced affective patterns and shifts that influenced their learning. Whatever the emotions that the Purdue loss may have generated for team members, each seemed for much of the week not to "feel" it. What may be most significant about the rituals that shape learning for players and coaches, including the communal meeting on the eve of the Penn State contest, is that through ritual we are reacquainted with patterns of stimuli that engender the neurochemical response from which consciousness emerges. I suspect that rituals in any context become sacred when the images that create them induce conditioned emotions we recognize as feelings and subsequently rely upon to know, reason, and learn. In the same way, rituals in any context may become profane, triggering emotions that, whether we feel them or not, undermine teaching and learning.

As I've watched this week unfold, I am ever more convinced that emotion and feeling influence the relation of body and mind. In the twenty-four hour period preceding the Penn State victory, Iowa players experience a radical shift in affect, which results in perhaps their

most impressive victory yet. Against the Nittany Lions, four Iowa starters score in double figures, and Iowa's trademark defensive press limits Penn State to 28 percent shooting in a first half for which they muster just 22 points. On both ends of the floor, the Hawkeye women have revived systemic balance.

From Body to Mind: The Significance of Image Schemata

The morning after the Penn State win, I enter Carver-Hawkeye through the rear service entrance, where I find managers in command. Jeremy wheels a cart filled with potato chips, fruit, crackers, and soda to the bus while Nealie confirms that baggage and medical supplies are in order. The loading process is efficient and within 30 minutes, players, coaches, and support personnel have boarded. The coaches occupy seats at the front of the bus while players, one every two seats, recline with snacks. From Iowa City, the trip to Madison will last three and a half hours. After roll call, Coach Myers reads aloud the titles of videotapes housed in a small cardboard box at the front of the bus. Garnishing a slim majority vote, *Billy Madison* is the film of choice. Inserting the tape into a videocassette recorder located in an overhead cabin, Coach Myers calls for players' confirmation that, indeed, the various video monitors suspended from front to rear are in working order. Only Simone, who resides in the last row, calls out for volume. Coaches Lee and Peebles have already tuned out the noise, preferring instead to read. Once the movie is underway, Coach Myers returns to her seat and enters into sleep. The trip will offer her some reprieve from the orchestration of lodging, meals, and transportation. Hours from now and just miles from Madison, she will wake without cue to resume her duties.

During the drive, I enjoy the scenery. Conversations with players can wait; they are tired and pass quickly into sleep or study. Along Highway 151 to Dubuque, frozen fields, shorn of their soybeans and corn, slumber underneath islands of snow. Today, in bright sun, the land is a patchwork of color. Though dull in hue, the fields are impressive in scope, extending to a distant plain where earth becomes sky. For rural Iowans, the horizon means everything in winter. The danger in violent blizzards is the sudden discovery that the line has redrawn itself to the very tracks of one's feet. In winter, what seems peripheral on the upper middle plains is inevitably protean and often dangerous. I am reminded of Mari Sandoz's *Winter Thunder* and remain grateful that for passengers on this bus, at least, the trip is uneventful. As we cross the Mississippi River, I note that nearly all players and coaches are asleep,

except for Simone, who makes her way to the videocassette recorder. Removing *Billy Madison*, she inserts *Apollo 13*, a selection that seems appropriate.

In so many ways Simone's voyage across cultures has been profound, a journey that has unfolded largely without navigators and without notice. A native of Jamaica, Simone came to the University of Iowa from a junior college in Oklahoma, where at 6'4" she had been recruited from Kingston not to play but *to learn* the game. During the 1994–1995 season, she had suffered her first knee injury, for which the NCAA had granted her a "medical redshirt," an opportunity to rehabilitate the remainder of the season without losing her year of eligibility. In this her senior year, Simone had finally cracked the starting line-up. But long before she could savor success, injury catapulted her into purgatory once more. The beneficiary of a second consecutive medical redshirt, Simone endures a now-familiar regimen of exercise and therapy.

Shortly before dusk, our Tri-State Tours bus arrives at a Sheraton hotel removed from the University of Wisconsin campus. Nealie and Jeremy operate in sync, assisting the driver to whisk luggage and supplies from the undercarriage. The evening schedule will afford coaches, players, and managers little free time. Following dinner in the hotel, they will convene in Coach Lee's hotel room to study game tape. Bodies will occupy every patch of floor, chair, and bed space as they attend to Coach Lee's "pause and play" commentary. On this particular evening, I leave the hotel. My younger sister, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, will be my host, at least until I rejoin the Hawkeye women on Sunday morning. The game in Madison is cause for a family reunion as my brother, a women's basketball fan, has traveled from Rochester, Minnesota, to join us.

On Sunday, the Wisconsin Fieldhouse fills to what will be an over-capacity crowd. A classic basketball barn, the Fieldhouse is in its last year of intercollegiate service, awaiting the completion of the multi-million dollar Kohl Center. Public universities have little use these days for arenas that seat fewer than 15,000 fans, particularly when individual endowments and corporate sponsorships buy more space for sport. With an 11,500 person capacity, the Wisconsin Fieldhouse has survived longer than most.

In a tightly packed crowd at the southeast entrance, I clutch my younger sister, fearful at the prospect of separation but nostalgic at the opportunity to attend one of the final intercollegiate contests here. Fans dressed in cardinal and white Badger regalia surround us, and small clusters of Hawkeye visitors, layered in black and gold, advance slowly amidst inadvertent jostling. Often the butt of benign teasing

for their “bumble bee” attire, the Hawkeye fans in attendance today, mainly senior citizens, progress with a quiet dignity. Their Hawkeyes bring a 21–2 record to Madison and lead Wisconsin by one game in the chase for the Big Ten title.

Gradually, my sister, brother, and I find our seat, a crude bleacher several rows behind the Hawkeyes’ bench. Parents, support staff, and former players have already arrived. To make room for us, they must squeeze together, which they do without hesitation. Aside from this group, the only other pocket of Iowa fans resides in the far corner of the rectangular upper balcony, where their effect on crowd noise will certainly be negligible. Minutes before the tip-off, the noise in the Wisconsin Fieldhouse begins a crescendo that will not peak until the final seconds. Perhaps the audiotaped crowd noise that has accompanied practices this week will have prepared Iowa players. Or perhaps playing on the road for the first time since Purdue will rekindle insecurities. Whatever the outcome, Karen’s performance will be crucial. As a senior, she has had three years to acclimate to time, space, and situation. As a point guard, she initiates and sustains ball movement during offensive sets. Beside knowing the plays, Karen must know her players. She must know how they post, jump, pass, screen, and move in order to facilitate the most rapid and secure rotation of the ball. Most importantly, Karen must be prepared to adjust her understanding when players depart, by injury or volition, from bodily activity she expects. While each player understands their activity and thought as contingent upon others, Karen initiates the plays that will take fullest advantage of what her teammates know and can do each game.

The Cultivation of Image Schemata

To understand how Karen “knows” one must accept that what she knows is inarguably a condition of how and where she learns. Herein lies a problem. While understanding the relationship of cognitive structures to bodily place is central to this analysis of learning as embodied, documenting their interrelationship poses methodological problems. According to Damasio, so little is known about the interrelation of body and brain that researchers must rely “on a natural human ability, that of theorizing constantly about the state of mind of others from observations of behaviors, reports of mental states, and counterchecking of their correspondences, given one’s own comparable experiences” (1999, 83–84). Though the triangulation of theory, observation, and personal anecdote may invoke criticism from many in the hard sciences, Damasio acknowledges its merit.

Today, against Wisconsin, Karen’s bodily activity will facilitate the successful progression of the ball from player to player and from player

to basket. As a senior point guard and starter for two seasons, she is a master of what Johnson terms the *path schema*, a cognitive structure that orients her to the progressive rotation of the ball across court space. Karen's reliance upon the path schema has temporal limits attuned both to the 30 second shot clock and the game clock. At one point in the season, I had watched Karen dribble the ball upcourt during a scrimmage. By mistake, a manager had activated the shot clock several seconds before the start of action, leaving Karen with fewer seconds than her regulation 30. At the sound of the buzzer, a full three seconds early, Karen turned to the manager's table with an emphatic "the clock was off." Indeed, it was. And Karen seemed to have "felt" so. Later, she explained her response,

Part of my responsibility that's been driven into my head over the years, among other things, is how much time I have on the clock. I think after you run a certain number of plays and you run them as many times as we do, knowing you have to be aware of time, I think you know. If a ball has swung around two or three times, then your time has to be running short. You know if it goes off early. There's no way that's right.

As Karen described it, the path schema involves a full-court awareness for the ball's orientation to players and to the basket, all within strict dimensions of time. Karen must keep the ball rotating through the various positions on the court until an open shot is available. In effect, all players, not just Karen, are responsible for rotating the ball to a position on the floor from which the highest percentage shot can be attempted. For systemic balance to occur, each player must be prepared to take the shot when it becomes available. From the equilibrium of the ball itself, to the stable distribution of a player's body weight, to the homeostatic nature of offensive and defensive sets, balance is primary. Karen's job is to initiate and regulate play so that the pursuit of balance is possible.

In addition to Karen, the remaining Iowa starters—Tangela, Nadine, Tiffany, and Shannon—will also rely upon the containment schema. Concretely, participants are aware of boundaries to the court as a whole. To step "out of bounds" is to simultaneously lose possession of the ball and the chance to score. A comprehensive sense of court space is considered so fundamental to the game that players have little excuse for a violation as basic to court sense as "stepping on the line." More specifically, though, players refine containment schema in accordance with their designated positions on the floor. In this way, containment means different things at different positions.

For post players, the containment schema is primary. Amy, Jenny, Malikah, Simone, and Tangela occupy the lane, a rectangular space that surrounds the hoop. As defenders, the task of these players is to

deny the ball from entering this space, where the shooting percentages of opponents are often highest. Containment is achieved when defensive post players orient toward the axial condition "out" by filling passing lanes and interrupting the possibility that opposing players on the perimeter can pass the ball to teammates in the lane. Containing the ball to the perimeter, or keeping it "out," also involves various schemata for force. Posts rely upon a wide stance, low hips, and solid shoulder blocks as they front, play behind or three-quarter their offensive opponents. Such defensive stances allow post defenders to exert the force necessary to forestall opponents' rolls, cuts, pins, and screens, all maneuvers designed for offensive players to get open. When they shift to offense, and must position themselves to score, Iowa posts will reorient their axial understanding of containment to privilege body and ball movement that progress "in." They must anticipate and counter the containment and force schemata used against them in an effort to create passing lanes that will allow the ball entrance to the lane.

For most basketball players, the containment schema is activated even before play begins. Pregame rituals that may appear merely ceremonial to spectators actually hold abstract significance, engendering as they do the image schemata that will be required on court. What makes the huddle such a symbolic ritual in team sport is that the experience of space is nearly identical for each participant. Oriented equidistant from a center point, each member's axial experience of space and other is the same. No player occupies a space with more frontal vision than another, and each is included in the frontal vision of those in her midst. Aside from being the most egalitarian and relational of rituals, the enclosure also sharpens the distinction between insider and outsider. The geometry of the huddle is universally significant in sport because it encourages players to affirm the abstract orientation necessary for team play. Players see, feel, and constitute a relational unit for which no single player is supreme. Whether or not the huddle triggers this orientation depends, of course, upon one's investment not just in the ritual but in her teammates and coaches.

Of those Iowa players starting the game, I cannot guess who will assume leadership today. I will not have to wait long to discover that Tangela's start will again be slow. Within eleven minutes of the opening jump and with just two points, Tangela commits her third foul. She is called to the bench, where she will remain the rest of the half. On the sidelines, Tangela joins freshman reserve players Amy and Stacy. Typical of freshman, these players are still acculturating to the schemata expected of them on court. As individuals, each must learn not only the host of schemata central to her position but, as a player in relation to others, she must also internalize the schemata required at the other

four positions. Only in this way can a team synchronize its actions offensively and defensively. In short, learning requires not just isolated knowledge of all play options at one's own position but a comprehensive sense for the full potentiality of play.

At several points during the season, I have observed the developmental spurts of Amy and Stacy, freshman players at the post and point guard positions, respectively. During one practice, Coach Lee repositioned players to test their knowledge of the offense. With Tangela, a post, looming at the point guard position and Amy, also a post, shifted out to the wing, Coach Lee had ordered Stacy, a point guard, to the post position near the hoop. Within seconds of the first offensive play, Stacy and Amy were lost. Coach Lee made her point, "Stacy and Amy, you two are a treat! It's obvious you only know your own little world. I mean I've got Tangela up here running the gamut." Later, Tangela spoke about the significance of Coach Lee's drill.

In a sense, everybody has to know what everybody else does. That's why when Stacy and I were on the court, and Stacy was going through the plays in her head like she does before every game, and I said, "Okay, what does the post do in this play?," she said, "I don't know what the post player does!" Karen and I were like, ". . . You're supposed to know what everybody does." I said, "I know what the guards do when we do the plays, so you gotta know what the posts do." She's like, "Okay. Okay." So I asked her, "Where does the post go in such and such a play?" And she was like, "I don't know!" She didn't even know.

The lesson of Coach Lee's drill was clear. For the Hawkeye women, no single player and no single schematic orientation is—in and of itself—"the world." In fact, to only know "your own little world" is to know nothing at all. Conceptually, one is never simply a forward or a guard. Bodily activity is not only referential to one's positional schemata, it is referential to a comprehensive network of schemata. Though learning involved the interpretation of positional knowledge as it is taught by coaches and elder players, the goal is intersubjectivity, that capacity to move beyond introspection to a reflexive understanding of oneself through the activity of others.

At the heart of the Wisconsin team are All-American candidates at the point guard and post positions. They take quick advantage of Tangela's absence by spreading play wide enough that passing lanes take on the look of autobahns. What I find striking about Tangela's play is her nearly singular reliance upon the containment schema. While force schemata require the resistance to or imposition of power upon another human being, the containment schema orients an individual not

toward another human being but to the boundary between ball and opponent. Using speed and agility, Tangela is often able to fill a passing lane without the need for force. Her foul trouble today is unusual and will pose a risk to Iowa's renowned full- and half-court press. Within range of becoming Iowa's all-time leader for blocked shots, Tangela's presence in the lane also imposes upon the vertical leap of opponents. In her absence, it is no surprise that Wisconsin posts reorient their activity in the lane.

As action intensifies, Arnedo and Tia, two players from the Final Four squad, lead our small Iowa contingent in a cheer so muted it barely reaches the Iowa bench. Still, the two stand and flail, joined by Susan's father, a kind-faced gentleman who responds less with zeal than with pure elation. From the team bench, Iowa coaches signal play sequences to Karen by the flash of a cue card, which she reads on her up court dribble and signals by hand to teammates. At the end of the first half, Tiffany and Shannon have managed to keep Iowa in the game, and Karen, though she has not scored a point, has sustained offensive rotations.

At halftime the score is tied. As Iowa players proceed to the locker room, coaches gather in a circle near the Iowa bench to confer. Briefly, they analyze stat sheets the managers have provided them. From this data, they compare individual and team statistics, considering the adjustments in activity that will be necessary in the coming half. From her assistants, Coach Lee confirms her own ideas and synthesizes comments she finds relevant. From this process of conferral will come her halftime presentation to players, for whom she will provide specific recommendations and solicit questions.

For Karen, the second half of this game will mean reassessing Tangela and Nadine. Will they recoup? Because neither Tangela nor Nadine responds to angry prompts, coaches and teammates will do everything possible to reassure the two at halftime. More than criticism, they need faith. If the attempts to engender it fail, the game will rest upon increased shots from Tiffany, Shannon, Karen, as well as those who substitute into the game. With that prospect, new questions arise. Will Tiffany's knee sustain the elevation she needs for her jump-shot throughout the remainder of the game? Will reserves sitting cold on the bench adjust quickly to action? Karen must consider all this during halftime. This season, injuries, position changes, and wavering levels of confidence have complicated assessment.

As the teams return to the court and engage in warm-up shooting, Tangela and Nadine focus their attention exclusively on the basket. They do not interact with teammates or with each other. During the first five minutes of the half, action is again frenetic. The multiple lead changes continue. This half, though, Nadine and Tangela are sinking

shots. With 11:58 remaining, Wisconsin center Barb Franke commits her fourth foul and is called to the bench. Her departure provides Iowa players an opportunity for which they must take advantage, but back-to-back three-point plays by Keisha Anderson frustrate the attempt.

At the ten-minute mark, Tangela finds a rhythm she will not relinquish. She is "in the zone," the term players use to note the onset of the highest level of consciousness. Feeding off each other's success, Nadine and Tangela liberate themselves of the self-consciousness that stifled their first-half play. They are no longer fixated upon carrying out the activity of their respective positions. They perform not as isolated selves but as part of a systemic whole. What Tangela does in the lane now compliments what Nadine performs on the perimeter and vice versa. While Tiffany, Karen, and Shannon may not match Tangela and Nadine in scoring, they sustain the ball rotation central to systemic balance. In the final minutes, each player thinks and moves with a reflexive understanding of what is possible across the entire court.

At the 2:37 mark, Nadine scores nine straight points. The score is 63–59 and while the Iowa players float across the court, opening themselves to a "multiradial" understanding of person and place, the Badgers progress by sheer mechanical will. They do not give up, but they do not seem to invent themselves either. The contrast in play is dramatic.

With 1:49 remaining, the score is tied at 63. Together, Tangela and Nadine account for all Iowa's second half points. They have oriented to court space in the Naismith tradition. From beyond the three-point scoring line, Nadine's perimeter shooting has expanded the Iowa offense, drawing Wisconsin players farther and farther from the basket. As opponents' reliance upon the containment schema weakens, Tangela has room to maneuver and score.

At the 50 seconds mark, Tangela scores off a feed from Karen to edge Iowa ahead by two. During the next offensive sequence for Wisconsin, a Badger player misfires from the wing, and the two small clusters of Iowa fans seem already to know that Nadine will snake through the lane to snare the rebound and feed it to Karen. Eyeing the clock, Karen knows that ball rotation and scoring must coincide with temporal limits. In the final seconds either Nadine or Tangela must have the ball. Every observer in the Fieldhouse is standing now.

The Iowa players continue to coordinate their movements of ball and body. With 18 seconds left, Karen receives the ball at the top of the key and rotates it inside to Tangela, who is fouled on the pass. Though she is not fouled in the act of shooting, Tangela has earned a one-and-one opportunity, a chance to increase the Iowa lead to four points. As players take their places around the lane, I worry that the delay may disrupt Tangela, who stands at the free throw line facing baseline

bleachers filled with jeering Wisconsin fans. Seconds later, her first shot bounces off the glass, rebounded by an opponent who quickly initiates an outlet pass to Keisha.

Just seconds are left now, and action unfolds as if in slow motion. Karen guards Keisha tightly, preempting a three-point attempt and forcing Keisha to pass the ball to the wing. In a hurried shot with six seconds remaining, the wing player elevates to shoot. At the same time, from several feet away, Tangela catapults her body into the trajectory of the ball. With her right arm extended, her 6'4" frame ascends until somehow she is able to bat the ball from space. In the process, Tangela retrieves the ball and is fouled.

Four seconds remain. Iowa leads 65–63. Again, play stops so that teams can assemble at the far free throw line. In the meantime, crowd noise reaches its crescendo. Wisconsin fans know Tangela has missed once, and they will do their most to distract her a second time. The combination of a rebound, four seconds, and Keisha Anderson make anything possible. Wisconsin requires two points to tie and three to win.

Again, Tangela must wait for players to assemble around the lane. At decibels that are almost painful, crowd noise reverberates off person and place. Tangela receives the ball from the referee and releases another one-and-one opportunity. I know from its arc that the shot is off. I want to close my eyes, but as the ball leaves the glass, I see that Jenny, whom coaches have substituted in for her height advantage, has not been blocked out by her defender. As the ball caroms off the rim and descends in her direction, Jenny remains open to the ball, the result of a defensive error so elementary I cannot believe what I see. But what I see is real. Wisconsin defenders have made the mistake of jumping toward a ball that will pass above and beyond their reach. At a point in space that spectators seem to anticipate, Jenny rises to the ball. Before she can be fouled, she pitches the ball outside the lane to Nadine. A high percentage free-throw shooter, Nadine will take the foul with a second remaining and sink the final two points of the game. Iowa defeats Wisconsin 67–63.

At the buzzer, Iowa reserves and coaches break onto the floor. In their mad race to each other, they bypass opponents who must wait to offer ceremonial high fives. The oversight prompts Wisconsin fans to boo, but the Iowa team is already so lost in joy they do not notice either their *faux pas* or the response. Iowa players have gathered in a collective huddle at center court. Seconds later they turn outward to offer effusive waves and blown kisses to fans in the rafters. Defeating the Wisconsin Badgers amidst a record capacity of 11,522, the team has earned a share of the Big Ten title.

The celebration continues after players have showered and re-joined fans at a postgame party hosted by the I-Club affiliate in Wisconsin. As the team arrives in the Mendota Gridiron Room, located ad-

jaacent to Camp Randall Stadium, Coach Lee leaps onto a banquet table where she offers effusive credit to the Iowa “family,” a term reserved for those who play and those who follow. Suddenly, the clusters that seemed paltry jam the banquet room. In my claustrophobia, I pull my brother and sister to the door, where we listen to coaches and players take turns thanking fans. Nadine and Tangela join the celebration late, having spent extra time with a press corps that seized upon Nadine’s career-high 31 points, including five out of seven three-pointers, and Tangela’s 15 second-half points and five blocked shots, including three in the final minutes. To the reporter who posed a question about the Wisconsin fans, Tangela remarked, “I put it in my mind that they were cheering for us not against us.”

The Extension of Image Schemata into Metaphor

Tangela’s comment signals another means by which participants in this study made meaning. In addition to their reliance upon image schemata, players often activate a network of figurative meaning. In this instance, Tangela employed a strategy that is common in sport and involves the conceptual manipulation of person and place. Superimposing a sense for home onto her experience of this foreign site and audience, Tangela initiated a schematic shift. In effect, she remakes place by reimagining the experience of force. For participants in this study, metaphorical projections involving the concept of house, or home, were prevalent. Their frequency is not surprising given, as Gaston Bachelard (1969) notes, that “the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories, and dreams of mankind” (6). Not uncommonly, one hears basketball players allude to their “house” or “home,” a reference either to their positions on the court or to their native arenas. Earlier in the season, as Malikah was explaining her responsibilities as a post, she had noted,

My mindset is that that yellow paint right there is mine. You know, they say “my house.” Don’t let nobody in that you don’t want to be there. Treat it like it’s your house. If somebody’s in there scoring, you can’t let them do that. You got to get them out because they’re messing with your house, just tryin’ to run your house. I think it’s an authoritative attitude as far as a shot or as far as handling the ball. I think when you’re a post, you have an authoritative attitude toward certain areas on the court. . . . You can’t be a baby in there and every time somebody hits you, you get mad. You’ve got to enjoy contact. You’re in a space that’s about 12’ by 15’. And that’s where all the action is taking place.

Here, Malikah makes reference to the acts of force and containment central to her play in the lane. Her schema for containment seems to extend into an existing network of figurative meaning for which she

holds considerable affect. Over the several years that I watched Malikah and her teammates on court, I began to understand the significance of this recurring conceptual metaphor. Architects Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley (1995) have examined the act of “placemaking” and write,

The making of places—our homes, our neighborhoods, our places of work and play—not only changes and maintains the physical world of living; it also is a way we make our communities and connect with people. In other words, placemaking is not just about the relationship of people to their places, it also creates relationships among people in places. (1)

What strikes me about the extension of image schemata into existing metaphorical structures for “home” is that so long as a player feels that she contributes to the care and cultivation of place—that she helps, in effect, to define place—the metaphor of home facilitates the partnership of mind and body. As a former player, Coach Lee acknowledged, “We talk every game about how this is our house and this is a sacred place. It’s nice to be able to walk through that tunnel and see the black and gold and be able to feel the bright lights. That’s a warm feeling.”

During the months of January and February, as Malikah grew tired of practices that did not translate into game time, her metaphorical sense for “home” disengaged from the image schemata required of her play on court. Though language can only partially reveal the profundity of metaphor, Malikah’s obligatory connection to placemaking responsibilities for which she had formerly held deep regard suggested the metaphor was no longer transformative for her. At one point in February, she had remarked to me that she felt she did everything at Carver-Hawkeye Arena but sleep. Though we contemplated in jest how one might take permanent residence in the arena, I knew Malikah’s exasperation pointed to a shifting response to place, a sense that the court was less about personalizing a place than about laboring to produce. While this sentiment was not to fully take root until the next competitive season, I recognized its onset at a time when the team was experiencing extraordinary success. For Malikah, the figurative attachment to place no longer arose from metaphorical extension or cultural reinforcement.

Why They Play

For participants in this study, court learning was both a bodily and conceptual process that involved the collective codification of schematic orientations to person, place, and time. Embodied schematic structures emerged from bodily activity through two processes. By means of imag-

inative projection, players developed schematic orientations to containment, force, verticality, balance, and motion. When a particular schema extended into existing networks of figurative meaning, players' learning was enhanced by means of metaphorical projection. Both imaginative and metaphorical projection constituted pathways to embodied cognition. The emergence of mental structures from concrete bodily experience demanded considerable time, instruction, and practice and was facilitated by rituals that possessed affective significance for players. Given the central role of affect in moments of disintegration and reintegration, Damasio's (1994, 1999) claim that emotion plays a neurochemical role central to the regulation of mind and body warrants the ongoing attention of those scholars and practitioners who document embodied cognition.

For the Iowa Hawkeyes, the 1995–1996 conference season ended with victories against Michigan and Illinois. With a record of 15–1 in Big Ten play, Iowa earned sole possession of the conference title. During postseason NCAA tournament play, the University of Iowa hosted first and second round action, defeating Butler and DePaul to progress to the Mideast Regional bracket in Chicago, where the team faced #12 Vanderbilt. Against the Commodores, the Iowa women would repeat the habit of their season. Down at the half 34–16, they would not recover, despite perimeter shooting from Nadine and Tiffany. With a 74–63 loss, the Iowa women finished their season at 27–4 and received a #7 ranking in the final AP poll.

At the public banquet held in honor of players and coaches in April, the team continued the program's tradition of not identifying individual players for achievement. No most valuable or most improved players were announced. For those in attendance, this seemed appropriate. The 1995–1996 season seemed less about singular achievements than about the inexhaustible effort and desire of players and coaches to negotiate an identity at a time when few if any were predicting such an outcome. What struck me most about the everyday court learning of players was the degree to which they weathered challenges without relinquishing primary interest in their welfare as a collective whole. On no occasion when a player was ordered to run alone did I not find others joining voluntarily. As Jenny explained to me,

. . . that's just something that's understood. If one of your teammates has to run alone, somebody's going to run with them. . . . It's just understood that someone's going to join up with them after they catch their breath or whatever because we know it's hard to do that by yourself. To be out there having to make this time. And nobody's pushing you and you just feel like dying. And everybody's standing there getting water. I find that when I'm running a sprint that I don't have to run, it's fine. I don't care. I mean, I'll run it and no complaints because I didn't have to run it. It was under my control. Yeah, I think it's just

the support factor. They'd be there for me. They've been there for me, so I'm going to be there for them on this one.

The schematic structures that players relied upon in the concrete enactment of their bodily activity seemed to configure their abstract understanding of place and person. In quiet ways, on and off the court, players' activity reaffirmed the sentiment they often noted in words. With just four losses across nearly 30 games, the Iowa Hawkeyes had sustained systemic balance across nearly an entire season of play. To do so, they had relied upon levels of trust and mutual support rarely achieved in other contexts of learning.