

## **The Power of Fiction: A Novel Approach to Presenting Research Findings**

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As a professional educator and a recent doctoral graduate, I am constantly trying to master the intricacies of qualitative research. This, I have come to believe, will take a lifetime. Case study, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, interpretivism—no one road leads to Rome, as is so clearly apparent in quantitative designs and analyses where I initially believed all the same rules and procedures of validity, reliability, control, generalization, prediction, etc. applied.

I took my first doctoral qualitative research course from Courtney Vaughn. One of her requirements was to decide which of at least forty some qualitative approaches best fit my research. At first she taught us to code and theme data. Then we explored more complex types of qualitative analysis and writing. I was intrigued by the fact that although the various traditions had their own suggested processes, the way of writing up the findings was similar and somewhat flat. Even with heuristic and narrative inquiry, I still felt a sense of detachment from the participants as they lived the phenomena under investigation. During one class, Courtney provided us with her co-authored, published phenomenological research study on adolescent drug addicts as an example of utilizing vignettes to intimately acquaint the reader with the various participants. By analyzing the vignettes, we learned that through a series of catastrophic life events the participants enter drug and alcohol treatment centers and strive for sobriety.<sup>1</sup> For example, one of the vignettes depicts Linda. One night, when Linda is fourteen, she goes out drinking with friends and takes a handful of pills someone

gives her. She soon becomes violent. As a result, her companions drive her home and dump her, semiconscious, on her neighbor's front lawn. That night Linda decides she can no longer continue using alcohol and drugs.<sup>2</sup> Despite the sporadically quoted material included in Linda's vignette, as a reader I hungered to hear more of Linda's voice, to see her vicious behavior and watch her so-called friends dump her on the lawn. I yearned to be "shown." Although the vignettes provide many details of the participants' lives, I still felt the absence of their voices and feelings as they lived through their experiences with drug and alcohol addiction.

I was especially attuned to this lack of voice and feeling in Courtney's and other scholars' qualitative articles because I had recently implemented an alternative approach to writing research in my high school English classes in an attempt to help my students "bring to life" their topics of research. I had tired of teaching high school students the expository research paper format (introduction with thesis statement, body paragraphs conveying main points about the topic of research, and conclusion restating thesis and main points) required by my district. Year after year I read voiceless and mundane research papers (no fault of the students) as students displayed more and more apathy and unconcern with a format they had grown accustomed to and that no longer inspired, motivated, or challenged them. What could I do?

An answer came one day while exploring possible topics for my master's thesis.<sup>3</sup> I discovered Tom Romano's concept of the multigenre research paper. In defining multigenre research Romano writes:

[It] arises from research, experience, and imagination. It is not uninterrupted, expository monolog nor a seamless narrative nor a collection of poems. A multigenre paper is composed on many genres and subgenres, each piece self-contained, making a point of its own, yet connected by theme or topic and sometimes by language, images, and content. In addition to many genres, a multigenre paper may also contain many voices, not just the author's.<sup>4</sup>

This does not change the way research is conducted, but the way in which the research findings are presented. Instead of representing research through only the expository essay, the multigenre research paper requires the utilization of a variety of forms, voices, and ideas. One may represent his or her research via poetry, prose, PowerPoint, visuals, or fiction, to name only a few. The choices are limitless.<sup>5</sup> For example, my student, Jim, chose to research the famous Yankee baseball player Mickey Mantle. During Jim's research, he discovered that several of Mantle's life events greatly influenced and shaped who he became. Jim conveyed each major event through a different genre. In writing about Mantle's 1951 World Series injury, Jim utilized a double-voice poem;

he wrote a short story to describe the day Mantle learned of his father's Hodgkin's disease and impending death and a fictional narrative from the viewpoint of Mantle, the addict, depicting the former baseball player's experience at the Betty Ford Clinic.

Moving Jim and my students away from the traditional research paper was more challenging than instructing them on how to write the expository research essay. Not only did I have students with myriad topics, but also numerous writing genres. Allowing them unlimited choice of genres also meant that they needed exposure to the various genres they could use. Some days I provided explicit instruction on various genres, giving them models to follow as they practiced writing their own. Other days, we brainstormed lists of optional approaches they could use without teacher instruction. Finally, I taught students to write a background piece for each genre explaining how their research inspired it. When I introduced this assignment for the first time, I did not know how their multigenre research papers would turn out. Although I was not able to provide a "direct-line" format for all students, they seemed engaged and happy, as I worked with them more individually than ever before.

I was quite pleased when I reviewed the first set of papers. Of the various genres they utilized, I was most captivated by their fictional narratives because "genres of narrative thinking require writers to be concrete and precise. They can't just tell in abstract language or be paradigmatic. They must show. They must make their topic palpable. They must penetrate."<sup>6</sup> Through the use of concrete language, Jim, my student mentioned previously, excavated Mantle's Betty Ford experience and brought it to life via a fictional narrative (See Appendix A). Not only is Jim's work compelling and engaging, but his background piece clearly demonstrates how his research inspired it. Had Jim written the traditional expository essay, I would never have been able to hear Mantle's voice, to feel his sense of sadness and despair. Through combining fact and fiction, Jim was able to "show" instead of "tell" about Mantle's struggles. This brought me, the reader, to an enlightened "experience" of the phenomenon—the pain of drug and alcohol addiction.

For obvious reasons, my experience as an English teacher bled into my reactions to Courtney's qualitative research course and the examples of her and Wesley Long's work. I could not help but wonder and was curious to know if qualitative researchers ever utilized fiction like my students in attempt to render experience or phenomenon.

I discovered some scholarly examples of fictional research writing in fields such as communications and anthropology and one excerpted work in education and learned that other scholars support the concept.<sup>7</sup> Just as Courtney and Wesley do, these authors base their research on

sound methodology, bracketing themselves from the data collection and making every effort to generate trustworthy information. But unlike my professors, they write rousing accounts of their findings that “show rather than tell” the stories evolving from their qualitative inquiries. Instead of reporting the research findings in themes or even vignettes, the writer invents a fictional account truthful to the findings but not necessarily to the original context of research. These colorful stories take on many forms including but not limited to poetry, prose, scripts, short stories, and visuals.<sup>8</sup>

For example, Christine Kiesinger’s fictional narrative based on her research of anorexic and bulimic women is a combination of poetry and prose.<sup>9</sup> One of the main findings of Kiesinger’s research is that anorexic and bulimic women are not necessarily driven to eating disorders due to obsession with food or physical appearance. Some become anorexic because of negative family relationships. This finding emerges in Kiesinger’s “evocative narrative” when the anorexic narrator, Liz, describes her feelings for her father:

I loved my father, but not as most daughters do. I suppose I loved him too much. I sacrificed so many things for him—my childhood, my thoughts, my joy, my laughter, my femininity. Dad’s eyes are a deep brown, almost black. I always felt that his eyes spoke to me. Whenever I looked at him, I did so quickly, so as not to drown in their dark sea. His eyes seemed to say things to me that his voice never did—things that would change me in significant ways. Once after dance class, when I was quite young, he looked at me as if to say, ‘I wish I had a son,’ or ‘I wish you were a boy.’ On that day, I gave up my girlish games and silly charm and I never placed my small feet into the worn, wrinkled-pink leather of my ballet slippers again. I gave up all hope. On that day, I became the family boy.<sup>10</sup>

Being the family boy meant  
baseball, basketball  
soiled, bruised knees,  
sweaty-T-shirts,  
loud, stocky coaches,  
who  
secretly made me cry.

Being the family boy meant  
relentless drills on  
muggy,  
late afternoons in spring and  
rigorous games—indoors, on  
icy nights  
in winter.

But, in my father's eyes,  
I saw eagerness,  
an interest,  
that I had not seen before.  
It was only when he looked at me  
with those eyes,  
that I felt  
important.<sup>11</sup>

Obviously, Liz, due to her desire to please her father and gain his approval, becomes someone she is not, and as the rest of the story unfolds, this is just the beginning of the issues driving her to anorexia.

Kiesinger argues that the “evocative narrative” enables her to write “vivid, detailed accounts of lived experience that aim to show how lives are lived, understood, and experienced”<sup>12</sup> and “move readers into the worlds of others, allowing readers to experience these worlds in emotional, even bodily ways.”<sup>13</sup> Kiesinger does admit though that because fictional devices make evocative narratives so suggestive, readers often feel “uncomfortable and at times concerned with their validity.”<sup>14</sup> Kiesinger, however, provides a “background” or “discussion” piece revealing the context and procedures of her original research. She claims that the literature on eating disorders fails to “focus on the concrete lives and language of anorexic and bulimic women: that is their own special ways of understanding and talking about their feelings, relationships, and experiences....The voices of anorexic and bulimic women are strikingly absent.”<sup>15</sup> Utilizing a technique called interactive interviewing, Kiesinger facilitates “a context in which four women (one anorexic and three bulimics) were able to construct detailed autobiographical accounts of their experiences.”<sup>16</sup> Relying on these interviews, field notes, observations, and recollections of each woman, Kiesinger writes to express the ways these women “experienced their conditions, understood their identities, and participated in close relationships.”<sup>17</sup> Clearly, Kiesinger shows that the above monologue and poem are fiction in that they do not represent her findings in the context, order, or manner they were witnessed and experienced in research, but they are factual in that they are based on actual findings and interactions as witnessed and experienced in her research.<sup>18</sup> Like Kiesinger, when researchers situate their fiction and provide a context for understanding it, readers can be more comfortable with the idea of fictional research writing.<sup>19</sup>

However, some scholars are still uncomfortable with the concept. Merlin Wittrock argues that because research is written fictionally does not always mean that it will be interesting to read or that the research findings will be easily accessible as its proponents suggest.<sup>20</sup> He

reveals how some readers found Donna Alvermann and George Hruby's experimental fictive work on graduate mentoring in literacy education uninteresting and difficult to interpret.<sup>21</sup> Fictional research writing then can be detrimental in that it may lose readers who cannot easily discover the intended message. Traditional research reports, Wittrock continues, are more accessible because they "effectively, accurately, and efficiently convey meaning."<sup>22</sup> Further, he contends that fictional research writing poses a threat to the "common language and common reporting style necessary to keep our research unified and our researchers communicating with one another."<sup>23</sup>

Other critics are deeply concerned with trustworthiness, fidelity, or validity. George Levine argues that using fictional devices to present research findings makes them less accurate and truthful than traditional research, because the psychology, social context, and personality of the researcher come to bear in fiction. The infiltration of these preconceptions obscures the findings' believability. In science the objective and rational are the ways to unearth "truth," whatever that may be; therefore, science can never be literature, and literature can never be science.<sup>24</sup> Gregory Cizek claims research questions must derive from theory, augment the knowledge base, and be bound to a particular setting. If research cannot do this, it is "self-centered social science metaphor making."<sup>25</sup> Finally, Norman Denzin, though not a critic, warns of the dangers of fictive approaches.<sup>26</sup>

After teaching and reading about fictional writing, I was at a crossroad. Do I proceed and approach Courtney about my interest? Would she think I am foolish, especially since had not even established a record of scholarship with the accepted research-writing format (problem, research question, literature review, design and method, data analysis and interpretation, and implications of the findings)? I decided it was still worth the effort. One night I asked her to meet me after class, with all my evidence in hand. Despite the naysayers, Courtney showed immediate interest. She told me, "In 2003, I attended an Oxford Roundtable where narrative analysis was performed in a play-like fashion and was highly regarded."<sup>27</sup> Her comment reminded me of Michelle Miller's work with dramatically scripted research performed for live audiences.<sup>28</sup> I shared with Courtney that, like me, Miller desires to "'show' an audience through action than to 'tell' them through authoritarian analysis and explanation."<sup>29</sup> I further explained that Miller weaves in evidence of her research process into the script. For instance, her Narrator character (re)presents "the voice of the actual researcher"<sup>30</sup> and "A selective review of literature may also be presented via a Greek chorus, by visual images projected on a screen,

or even through inclusion in audience programs distributed before the performance.”<sup>31</sup>

On hearing this, Courtney agreed that good fictional presentations of data could limit reductionism and enhance trustworthiness, or fidelity, bringing the reader or observer quite close to the phenomenon under investigation. “Regardless of the mode used to report research, there will always be doubters,” she said. “But, I believe the problems of misrepresentation have more to do with the integrity of the researcher than the form of the research report. Let’s get it out there and stimulate a debate. After all, good inquiry contributes to conversations among scholars and practitioners and can only further advance the field.” Together we decided to author a fictional narrative based on data from Wesley and her refereed journal articles and book chapters, attesting to the trustworthiness of their original data.<sup>32</sup> Our story preserves many of the participants’ actual words, while paraphrased quotes are always nested within the context from which they were derived.

### **Background of the Original Research**

Before we began I immersed myself within phenomenology, Courtney and Wesley’s original research design. I listened and read intently as Courtney explained in class the history and variations in phenomenology. What some scholars call dialectical phenomenology dates back to the nineteenth century with G. W. F. Hegel who believed that absolute logic undergirds one’s initial recollections. Emerging early in the twentieth century, Edmund Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology holds that participants’ recollections could be themed but not necessarily result in a truth about phenomena. Soon thereafter Martin Heidegger advanced the notion that existential phenomenology (sometimes including hermeneutics) presumes no universal view of any kind.<sup>33</sup>

Relying more on transcendental and existential phenomenology, Courtney and Wesley chose participants who became clean and sober in their teens and had substantial amounts of sobriety, ranging from one and one-half to fifteen years. These were not only self-confessed testaments but were based on reports of longstanding Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Step<sup>34</sup> members and treatment center counselors (See Appendix B). Courtney and Wesley named the participants Jessica, John, Mick, Lisa, Jesse, Linda, Karlie, Tom, Noah, David, and Clint, all Euro-Americans; Melinda, a Native American; Ali, an Arab; and Anthony, an African American. Because rigorous honesty is crucial to Twelve Step programs, the recommenders believed the participants’ data would be trustworthy. Although any good investigator reads about a topic before,



during, and after a study, Courtney explained, neither Wesley nor she was concerned with adding puzzle pieces to existing theory, or confirming or disconfirming it. “Rather, by weaving in various studies into the analysis, they contributed to the ongoing conversation among scholars, practitioners, and laypeople about adolescent addiction and recovery,” she said.

Following a common transcendental phenomenological method, Courtney told our class, she and Wesley bracketed (*epoche*) their biases, attempting to remove all preconceived notions concerning adolescent addiction and reasoning. Throughout the investigation they often identified and discussed each other’s subjectivity. They then conducted open-ended conversational interviews with participants and in some cases the participants’ significant others. It was helpful that they were both privy to the interview data and were acquainted with each person. Another procedure practiced particularly by transcendental phenomenologists is horizontalization. Every important statement, Courtney explained, is listed and given equal weight. Ideally, clusters of meaning units evolve into thematic descriptions of the phenomenon.<sup>35</sup> Although the essence of their findings emerged, they also noted variations in each participant’s story that suggested an existential quality to the study. They subsequently each co-authored two articles, written totally or in part through vignettes.

I dove into phenomenology while Courtney read all of the articles I gave her on narrative analysis and fictional research writing. With Wesley’s permission, Courtney and I wrote the following fictional narrative that included various participants in Wesley’s and her work. We began with an intervention, when Linda, one recently sober teen, confronts Karlie, a polyuser, about the destructive consequences of her drug-infested life. Linda has just returned from an adolescent drug and alcohol treatment center, and convinces Karlie to do the same. The remainder of the narrative follows Karlie at Hope Center, revealing her observations and interactions with Clint, Jesse, David, Tom, Anthony, Lisa, Mick, and Cash (a counselor), who is a composite character appearing in several of the interviews. It is through Karlie’s interactions and observations that Courtney and Wesley’s research findings emerge. The emergence of their findings are meant to be “evocative” rather than “denotative,” meaning we attempt to “show” them instead of “tell” about them. In so doing, we leave it to our fictional narrative to engage “the reader as a participant and co-discoverer instead of passive recipient”<sup>36</sup> of what Courtney and Wesley learned from their research on adolescent drug addiction.



**Broken:  
Becoming Stronger in the Broken Places<sup>37</sup>**

*“Come out of there!!” Linda screams into Karlie’s parents’ front door.*

*“No. Screw you,” Karlie slurs.*

*Karlie is hammered and holding a loaded Colt 45, the nose of the barrel buried in her brown hair. At thirteen everything about her young world—her sexually abusive father and drunken mother—drags her to the ultimate alternative. She should have never told Linda some months ago that she intended to end it all.*

*Linda knew Karlie was home alone. When Karlie did not answer the phone, Linda dropped everything and ran next door. Determined to stop the long awaited suicide that Linda suspects had been put in motion, Linda frantically pleads, “Let me in Karlie, or I’ll break this door down!”*

*Peering out of the side glass pane, Karlie sees Linda clutching a fire extinguisher, rocking it back and forth, ready to thrust it into oak and glass.*

*Shocked, Karlie stumbles to the door and unlocks it. The Colt 45 slides from her hand as she drops to the floor. Her face feels cold on the marble tile as she peers down a groove leading into the kitchen. Sighing, she knows the blood flow stays within her body tonight. She props herself up with both arms and crosses her legs in front of her. Linda rushes in and kicks the gun into the kitchen. The place looks like what must have been Karlie’s mind at that moment. Clothes are strung over furniture; dishes lie on every surface; and the faint smell of cigarettes, alcohol, and sex hangs in the air. Linda creeps over to Karlie and sits beside her.*

*“This isn’t the way,” Linda pleads.*

*“I hate myself. I want to die. My mother has a gun, and I would put it to my head. I watched commercials on TV, and at the end of the commercial I would think that it could all be over in about thirty seconds.”<sup>38</sup>*

*“Thank God you didn’t.”*

*Lowering her head in shame, Karlie whimpers, “I can’t even get killing myself right.”*

*Karlie just stares at a square of tile for a few seconds and then blurts out, “Why in the hell did you leave me?”*

*“I went to a drug and alcohol treatment center because I couldn’t go on the way I was. Karlie, I would go days in a black out, not remembering going to school or who I was with. You know how we do? Take pills all the time and drink every night after school. I got to feeling like I was 100 years old.”*

*“You mean you’re not using anything, Linda?”*

*“Nope—so far it’s been ninety days, but I’m kinda scared too because I spent thirty of it in a treatment center and sixty in a halfway house. Now I’ve got to go back to school and everything. It would really help me if we could try to do this together. I don’t know anyone who will even hang out with me now but the crazies.”*

*“God, Linda,” Karlie fearfully replies, “I’m scared to death. Dope is the only thing I can count on.”*

*“Yeah, and where did it get you? You were going to kill yourself, Karlie?”*

*Ignoring the obvious, Karlie nervously runs her long fingers through her dark hair, crying and blubbering, “But all the hell of my life will still be here. I hate it, and drugs are the only things that will make it go away. How’d you get up the nerve to quit?”*

*“It’s not about nerve, Karlie. It’s about surrender. I just didn’t have any fight in me anymore.”*

*“NO, what **exactly** happened,” Karlie presses.*

*Taking a deep breath, Linda prepares to tell the story that she would say over and over in the hundreds of Twelve Step support group meetings that all of her treatment center counselors urged her to attend for the remainder of her life. They were places that could keep her clean—teaching her to surrender her addiction to a god of her understanding, pray to that universal force, and get her a sponsor.*

*“The night before I went to treatment, my friends dumped me out in Mrs. Robert’s front lawn. You know her. She’s my next-door neighbor. Somehow, that night, I knew I just couldn’t do it anymore. I knew I needed some help. Mrs. Roberts and her daughter dragged me into her house and lay me on the floor. I could hear them, but I couldn’t see them. And Mrs. Roberts was the only person I would listen to, because I thought she was the greatest person in the world. Even though she had said that I wasn’t allowed in her house anymore. I felt like that was the best thing she could have done for her daughter, and I respected her for that, because I **knew** what I was.”<sup>39</sup>*

*“Karlle, you can’t keep letting your father into your room at night and take care of your mother during the day, and I can’t keep taking care of my schizoid mom and screwing every guy who buys me a six pack of beer. You—we—are just kids!!!!”*

*Something strikes home to befuddled and broken Karlle.*

*“Linda, maybe this is it. Will you help me?”*

*“I will, Karlle, but God is really who you must turn to first.”*

*Shaking her head while clutching Linda’s arm, Karlle sighs and moans, “That’s just going to have to come later. I’m just wiped out.”*

*With Linda’s help, Karlle rises to her feet and slowly wobbles out of*

*the house to a nearby gas station pay phone. Linda calls Lola, a counselor from a local crisis center whom she'd met in treatment. Lola soon picks them up. After a time, Lola gets in touch with Karlie's mother who, surprisingly, is willing to let her daughter go to Hope Place, a well known treatment center specializing in adolescent addiction. Karlie spends a few days in a local hospital 'detox' center, then Linda and Lola drive Karlie to the center. There, Karlie's long road back to the womb and a life she'd never had at all would begin.*

*Soon after walking through the doors of Karlie's new home, she meets an array of other kids who flatly refer to themselves as "junkies and drunks."*

*Taking one of her few phone calls that Karlie is allowed to make, she rings Linda, revealing to her, "It's like we're all at the bottom of the ocean, trying to swim to the surface before we drown. God I want to be one of the ones who can finally breathe."*

*The call saves Linda also, who that day is having thoughts of using. She's scared and longing for the security of treatment, but Karlie's metaphor calms her a bit, and she says, "Thanks for that Karlie. You're already starting to help me. Remember, we're in this together."*

*"OK, Linda. I love you so much. I can't even believe I **can** love, but I do."*

*The counselors observe numerous, similar conversations between Karlie and Linda. During their regularly held meetings to discuss various patients' progress, the counselors predict that Linda will be one of the "winners"—the ones who stay clean "one day at a time." But they strive to encourage all of them to reach that goal. Learning about the Twelve Step program and attending group therapy sessions, many of the young addicts ideally begin to wash the self-hatred from their souls, forgive their abusers, but worst of all, face that even as children they have become perpetrators—stealing, breaking into homes, fighting like gladiators, to name only a few violations. The statistics indicate that despite their efforts many of them wouldn't make it.<sup>40</sup>*

*One of the first hurdles for these kids to overcome is regaling each other with "drunkalogues," bragging about who has been the worst user. It's almost like gallows humor, how executioners get through the hell of taking lives. Some of these tales are seductively humorous. One day Karlie sits unnoticed, propped up against the back kitchen wall, smoking a cigarette, and observing Jesse, Tom, David, and Clint, sitting in a semicircle of lawn chairs, and swapping such tales. Clint is amusing the others.*

*"You know my dad was in the military," Clint begins. "He was a big drunk but managed to stay in and retire. Me, on the other hand, got thrown out of two European countries where my dad was stationed."*

*“Good God,” Noah smirks in disbelief. “What did you do?”*

*“Well, for starters I talked my girlfriend into having sex in a high school bathroom. When a teacher caught us I said, ‘you didn’t see what you saw.’”<sup>41</sup>*

*“God that was crazy!” Tom belts out, as all five men cackle uproariously.*

*“Well, I’ll tell you one that’s almost as crazy,” David chimes in. “My parents tried to dry me out by sending me to a military academy, and one thing everybody ought to know about military schools is everybody puts their troubled kids in them to straighten us all up together, and really what it does is give us a place to sit down and compare notes—how to be better deviants,” he laughs. “There were some seriously disturbed people there. I became an exceptional liar there, to get drugs and such. Finally, Mom came to the rescue by sending me grass in the mail.”<sup>42</sup>*

*They all laugh and shake their heads. Little do they know that Cash, one of the counselors, an addict himself with fourteen years of sobriety, stands outside the back kitchen door some yards from where Karlie is squatting? He is taking a breather from a tough group therapy session. Earlier, Karlie noticed him walk out, lean against the building, and listen to the guys. Cash has finally had enough. Karlie watches him buck forward and stride over to the boys.*

*“Mind if I join you guys?” Cash asks.*

*The atmosphere sobers up a bit, and the guys shake their heads slightly and rattle at different intervals, “Naw, sit down.”*

*“Here it comes,” Karlie smiles to herself.*

*“Let’s focus on some of the other shitty things you guys did that aren’t very funny. Jesse, why don’t you tell them what brought you here.”*

*Jesse is well over six feet tall, has a stock of long blond hair, is blanketed in tattoos, and has a look in his eyes that could stand off an army, but even from a distance, Karlie suddenly sees him in a different light. He is frowning and leaning his head to the side, looking more like a little kid than he had just a few minutes earlier. Almost whining he tells Cash, “I’ve told that story in group. I don’t want to go over it again.”*

*“Apparently, you’ve never really felt it, Jesse,” Cash shoots back.*

*Taking a deep breath, Jesse acquiesces.*

*“I was raped and beaten when I was a kid until I finally learned how to **kick ass** and knock the shit out of everyone else before they ever so much as looked at me the wrong way,” he sneers.*

*“Whose ass did you end up kicking Jesse, one of your abusers?” Cash presses.*

*Jesse lowers his head and places it in his hands. He finally shouts into the ground, “No.”*

*“Who was it then?” Noah asks.*

*“It was my best friend. He played a joke on me and hid my grass.”*

*Trying to regain the earlier funny ambience, Noah interjects, “What’d you do Jesse, give him a black eye?”*

*“No, I almost beat him,” he shouts. **“TO DEATH.”***

*Large tears run from Jesse’s eyes as he rubs his right arm over his cheeks a couple of times. All the other guys just slouch in their lawn chairs not saying a word. Tom is sitting next to Jesse and gingerly touches him on the back. Despite all the sexual escapades each of these guys have had, that is likely the first intimate physical contact among peers in Tom and Jesse’s young lives.*

*“That’s s a start, Jesse,” Cash concedes as he thanks him for his honesty. Cash turns away for a moment to cough. Two huge tears well in his eyes. Karlie is positioned at an angle behind Cash and can see him from her perch against the wall, but the boys miss that moment. Cash skillfully blinks the moisture away before he turns his head around. He’s been working at Hope Place for a long time.*

*After two weeks in the center, Karlie begins catching on. The lawn chair scene is one of several sessions she’d observed and **felt**. This is a big step, because she hasn’t let herself feel anything but love for Linda and a load of self-pity for a long time.*

*“Somehow it doesn’t seem as unfair as it used to that I’m here because of what other people have done to me,” she finds herself musing one day while walking to a group therapy session where, fortuitously, Jesse will also attend. “No, that’s not completely true,” she mentally confesses to no one. “I’ve hurt a lot of people too—kind of like Jesse. He’s so much like those guys I’ve partied with. Crying on the inside and laughing on the outside.”*

*Karlie and the kids in her group settle into a room in a building adjacent to the kitchen and lunchroom. Karlie notices Jesse. When his turn comes to talk, Jesse backslides from the earlier confrontation with Cash and starts blaming all of the people in his life for making him an addict. After he finishes speaking his mind, Karlie is overtaken by a feeling to say something. Looking at Jesse across the circle of seats, Karlie speaks in a way that seems rehearsed, but heartfelt. “It’s not your fault that you got molested, that your dad didn’t want any part of your life, that your brother beat you up.<sup>43</sup> I want so much for you to be free of that, because you’ll never quit living so mean, angry, and full of self-pity, if you don’t.” Karlie remembers staring into the cold tile that night two weeks before. Then, she would have never imagined feeling again the warmth of hope and life she now feels while gazing into Jesse’s green eyes.*

*Jesse leaves the meeting for the solitude of his room, falls to his*

knees, and tearfully prays, "Help!" And right at that moment, he later tells Karlie, "the crying stopped. I knew I was going to be OK. And at another group meeting I cried again—in front of a bunch of people."<sup>44</sup>

"I'm glad I could help, Jesse," Karlie says.

Jesse and Karlie would be two of the "winners," staying sober for several years after leaving Hope Place. But some of the other kids would never be able to get past the anger and rage that destroyed them and anyone else who got in their way. Anthony is one.

While eating in the lunchroom one day, Karlie has an opportunity to observe him. Part of the secret to Karlie's success is her ability to not merely listen, but to hear what some of the other kids are saying, and see the same things in herself. When it is a destructive quality, she focuses on praying it away, a habit recommended by Twelve Step programs. Sitting at the end of a long table, Karlie cannot help but overhear a conversation between Anthony and Tom who are sitting several seats away. She learns much about herself that day. Tom and Anthony are still "jonesing" a bit and are basically just playing with and staring into their plates of mashed potatoes, meatloaf, and peas.

Tom finally looks up at Anthony inquiring, "What's your story, man? Do you have any people? I haven't seen very many visit you."

"My mother and two brothers are addicts. They really don't want to come 'round here, even though I've supported them for years, by dealing. I got busted twice and got sentenced to this place. I guess it beats the hell out of jail. Before I came, I tried to stay straight sometimes and work some little ol' job, but when you're not even high White people think you are; when you're not stealing White people think you are; when you're looking for work White people think you ain't."<sup>45</sup> I heard your dad has his own business. You got a job when you get out of here. Shit, I doubt your parents would even have me in their house."

"We've got the same disease Anthony," says Tom.

"You gonna' be my sponsor when we get out of here? We gonna' hang out? We won't even go to the same meetings. You'll go to the ones where most of the rich White people go, the drunks the police take home a bunch of times before they even get a DUI."

"What about Lisa? She's White. Have you ever heard what she's been through?"

Lisa is sitting at a table behind Tom. He turns around and says, "Hey Lis, could you come over here for a minute?"

Tom has spent time with her and thinks Anthony might identify more with her circumstances than he does with Tom's. "I am one lucky son-of-a-bitch," Tom thinks to himself as he watches Lisa walk toward them.



After she sits down Tom asks, "Lis, will you tell Anthony why you're here?"

"Which part?"

"About your folks, maybe, if that's OK."

"Well, we don't have shit for money. I'll have to go to a halfway house when I get out of here if this place can find one for me. Dad is in prison and Mom is still fighting her heroine addiction. Sometimes I hate my dad so much I feel like I'll explode."

A male family breadwinner himself, Anthony's interest is peaked. He hopes the remainder of his family doesn't feel that way about him—the male household head.

"Why do you hate him more than your mom?" he inquires.

"Well, before he got locked up he beat my mother all the time, and one night she just takes off. I didn't really blame her 'cause I don't think she thought he'd hurt me. But, in a way he did, big time."

Lisa takes a deep breath and starts to quiver a bit inside. She's debating whether she wants to go on. She's still blaming herself and filled with shame.

The guys pick up on her fear and Anthony says, "Hey, just leave it alone. Tom, the Great White Hope is just trying to reform me. You don't have to help him out."

Lisa smiles a bit. Anthony has touched her inside in a good way. "That's OK, I'm ready to go on.... That night after Mom left, this friend of my dad came over and they shot up together. After my dad passed out his friend came into my room and raped me. I didn't even know what that was. Couldn't even give it a name when it was happening. When he finished, he threw forty bucks on my bed and left. I guess I could have fought harder, but something in me just let it happen, just to get it over with or something stupid like that."<sup>46</sup>

"Man," Anthony murmurs, "That's just fucked up. You don't have anything to feel bad about, and now I see why you hate your dad. I'd like to think I'd jack someone who tried to do that to my daughter, if I had one. But what I'm trying to explain to Tom ain't the same for a Black man. I know being low class is hard, but Lisa, are you going to get back into high school after you get out of here?"

"Yeah," Lisa answers.

"Even though you been busted before by the cops?" Anthony demands.

"Yeah."

"Well, they don't want any part of my Black ass. You got awful messed up Lisa; my heart goes out to you, but when the tracks clear up, you just another pretty White girl with a lot of shit inside, but to the world I **look**



like shit.” Anthony shoves his tray in front of him. He scoops up all the anger he released during the conversation and shoves his hands down deep into his pockets. Standing, he catches Karlie staring at him. Usually, he would have mouthed some hostile remark like, “White girl, you want some of me?” Peering into her eyes, Anthony instead senses that she gets it. Karlie’s head drops but not out of fear or despair. Anthony leaves her alone, suspecting she is thanking God for being able to pass for “normal.” Anthony is angry, but not cold-hearted. Karlie has come there broken, and that day, he would not let her hope of winning die with him.

### Reflections

“Broken” is based on sound methodological research. It is not “myth-making,” and, to me, the findings are easily accessible. However, those suspicious of storytelling and narrative inquiry may still ask, “How, in the use of stories and narratives, are such problems of self-deception, false claims, and distorted perceptions confronted and resolved?”<sup>47</sup> Like some authors before, we practiced methodological reflexivity. Margery Wolf illustrates this technique in her *A Thrice Told Tale* in which she utilizes a short story, a scholarly article, and her anthropological field notes in recording the same set of events.<sup>48</sup> Donna Alvermann points out that “this type of writing in multiple forms forces one to turn a critical eye to one’s own prejudices and distortions.”<sup>49</sup> Most importantly, the scholarly article “can be read against and within the short story as a way of locating the author’s subjective involvement and the attention she paid it.”<sup>50</sup> For instance, in the beginning of *Broken*, Linda tells Karlie that “God is really the one you must turn to first.” This turning to God as the key to surrender is a prevalent theme throughout *Broken*. Because it is not subtle, one may see this as the author(s)’ elevating religion.

However, by reading Courtney and Wesley’s scholarly article against *Broken*, it is clearly apparent that the participants themselves elevate God in their lives as they convey their experiences with drug addiction. Hence, we remained truthful to this finding as we wrote *Broken* and were not attempting to promote a religious agenda. Writing research in another genre such as a fictional narrative increases rather than diminishes the integrity of the inquiry process and makes it even more rigorous. This is true especially in the case of writing *Broken*, where we moved beyond mere reporting and interpretation into the realm of aesthetically describing the human condition.

Through this process, I realized too that Courtney and Wesley’s scholarly article was a necessary organizer aiding in the writing of *Broken*. When writing a traditional research article, the author conveys what

s/he learned from research. When writing a fictional research narrative, the writer not only deals with aspects of research, but also deals with a storyline. I can't imagine having to deal with both aspects simultaneously. It may be in the fictional research writer's best interest, therefore, to organize the research in the more traditional science writing form first, so as to have the cognitive breathing space to effectively concentrate on developing character, plot, and setting. Clearly, we are not calling for an end to the traditional science writing form. We promote it as the necessary precursor to fictional research writing. In any event, there really isn't a "good reason for educational researchers to attempt to legitimate an alternative paradigm so that it might peacefully coexist with positivism."<sup>51</sup> However, as Elliot Eisner claims, "Those of us who think we need new forms of data representation need to be able to explain why."<sup>52</sup>

Though Merlin Wittrock cautions the research community about the use of fictional research writing, he does point out, "One form of writing does not work best for all readers."<sup>53</sup> I am an example of that. As an English teacher and pre-service teacher mentor, I have an aptitude for fiction writing and narrative thinking. I would not have become an English teacher if I didn't. I am drawn and engaged by writing that asks "readers to live the page" and "penetrates experience, taking readers inside a present moment."<sup>54</sup> The scholarly voice of Courtney and Wesley's article I initially read did not render experience and engage me as their fictional voices do in *Broken*. In the future, my audience will continue to be pre-service and practicing English teachers or any other literacy educator for that matter possessing the same dispositions and aptitudes. Shouldn't I consider this, my audience, when I think about how I might present research to them? If I want them to engage in and think deeply about research findings, wouldn't it be wise to do so according to their learning dispositions? In my education courses I was encouraged to adjust instruction to meet the learning dispositions of my own high school students and I did. Shouldn't I do the same as a university professor? Creating a space for alternative forms such as the fictional narrative is a step toward "exploit[ing] individual aptitudes and activat[ing] wider varieties of human intelligence."<sup>55</sup>

The fictional research narrative is also not a detour but an extension to illuminate the human conditions of our research that get lost in the traditional science-writing format. This is critical as we work with pre-service and practicing teachers. We need to engage them through story as well as traditional science writing to reveal theory and research. Story will better help them to feel sensitively and to empathize with the students they encounter in classrooms. To truly understand others and their life struggles requires human recognition and empathy, and

“facts described literally are unlikely to have the power to evoke in the reader what the reader needs to experience to know the person someone portrays.”<sup>56</sup> Wesley and Courtney agreed *Broken* indeed breathes life into the participants introduced in their other articles and book chapters. While writing the story, Courtney felt as though she were actually interviewing those young people all over again. She viscerally experienced their voices in the story she created.

Having read the more traditionally presented works with the fictional narrative, I feel with this latter form as though I know these brave and troubled teens in a fuller way. I find myself thinking of them from time to time, praying that the remainder of their lives brings them a richly deserved peace. I am also reminded of my former high school students like Karlie, Clint, and Anthony. When they slept in class or did not turn in assignments, I became frustrated and chided them for their apathy and unconcern. I didn't know just how bad it could be—that they could have spent nights getting raped or taking care of schizoid mothers. And although I learn these things in Courtney's traditional essays, I do not experience through those readings the strong sense of “reaching out” that I do by reading *Broken*. In *Broken*, I hear their voices screaming and pleading and crying. I feel their pain. For example, Anthony's actions brought close to home the stark reality of African-American males trying to overcome addiction in a way that mere interview statements or statistical figures could never have achieved. We need more “reaching out” in our classrooms today more than ever before. As Tom Romano writes, “Facts and analysis are not enough. If our decisions are to be both sound and humane, we need to understand emotion and circumstance, as well as logic and outcome.”<sup>57</sup> Story will help us to do that and more, as *Broken* does for me. Story possesses the power to transport the audience into relationship with the participant, into human connection and care.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Courtney Vaughn and Wesley Long, “Surrender to Win: How Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Users Change Their Lives,” *Adolescence*, 34(133), (1999): 9-24.

<sup>2</sup> Vaughn and Long, “Surrender to Win,” pp. 11-13.

<sup>3</sup> Danny Wade, “The Viability of a Multigenre Approach to Research to Meet Traditional High School Requirements for the Research Paper,” Norman, OK: M.S. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Tom Romano, *Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000, p. xi.

<sup>5</sup> Romano, *Blending Genre*.

<sup>6</sup> Romano, *Blending Genre*, p. 22

<sup>7</sup> Donna Alvermann and George Hruby, “Fictive Representation: An Alterna-

tive Method for Reporting Research," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching the English Language*, eds. James Flood, Diane Lapp, James R. Squire, and Julie Jensen, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003, pp. 260-272; Anna Banks and Stephen Banks, *Fiction and Social Research: By Ice or Fire*, Walnut Creek, CA: Altimira, 1998; Sandra Coyle, "Dancing with the Chameleon," In *Fiction and Social Research*, Banks and Banks, Eds., 1998, pp., 147-164; Elliot W. Eisner, "The Promise and Perils of Alternative Forms of Data Representation," *Educational Researcher*, 26(6), (1997): 4-10; Robert L. Krizek, "Lessons: What the Hell Are We Teaching The Next Generation?" In *Fiction and Social Research*, ed. Banks and Banks, 1998, pp., 89-113; Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot and Jessica Hoffman Davis, *The Art and Science of Portraiture*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> Alvermann and Hruby, "Mentoring and Reporting Research: A Concern for Aesthetics," *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35(1), (2000): 46-63; Alvermann and Hruby, "Fictive Representation," In Flood, et Al., *Handbook of Research*, pp. 260-272; Banks and Banks, *Fiction and Social Research*; Christine Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," In Banks and Banks, Eds., *Fiction and Social Research*, pp. 115-136.

<sup>9</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>10</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," pp. 118-119.

<sup>11</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p.119.

<sup>12</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>13</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>14</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>15</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 128.

<sup>16</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>17</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," p. 129.

<sup>18</sup> Kiesinger, "Portrait of an Anorexic Life," pp. 115-136; Krizek, "Lessons," pp. 89-113.

<sup>19</sup> Alvermann and Hruby, 'Fictive Representation,' Flood et al., *Handbook of Research*, pp. 260-272.

<sup>20</sup> Merlin Wittrock, "Contemporary Methodological Issues and Future Directions in Research in the Teaching of English," In Flood, et. Al., *Handbook of Research*, pp. 273-281.

<sup>21</sup> Wittrock, "Contemporary Methodological Issues p. 279.

<sup>22</sup> Wittrock, "Contemporary Methodological Issues p. 279.

<sup>23</sup> Wittrock, "Contemporary Methodological Issues p. 280.

<sup>24</sup> George Levine, "Why Science Isn't Literature: The Importance of Differences," In A. Megill, Ed., *Rethinking Objectivity*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994, pp. 65-79.

<sup>25</sup> Gregory J. Cizek, "Crunchy Granola and the Hegemony of the Narrative," *Educational Researcher*, 24(2), (1995): 2.

<sup>26</sup> Norman K. Denzin, *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.

<sup>27</sup> Oxford Roundtable, St. Anthony's College, Oxford, England (Summer, 2003).

<sup>28</sup> Michelle Miller, "(Re)presenting Voices in Dramatically Scripted Research," In *Fiction and Social Research*, Banks and Banks, Eds., 1998, pp., 67-77.

<sup>29</sup> Miller, "(Re)presenting Voices in Dramatically Scripted Research," p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Miller, "(Re)presenting Voices in Dramatically Scripted Research," p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> Miller, "(Re)presenting Voices in Dramatically Scripted Research," p. 71.

<sup>32</sup> Long and Vaughn, "'I've Had Too Much Done to My Heart:' The Dilemma of Addiction and Recovery As Seen Through Seven Youngsters' Lives," *Journal of Drug Education*, 29(4), (1999): 302-322; Vaughn and Long, "Adolescent Addiction and Recovery: A Study in Extremes," In Frank Columbus, Ed., *Advances In Psychology Research*, 2, Huntington, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2001, pp. 1-15; Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win;" Vaughn and Long, "Adolescent Addiction and Recovery: A Study in Extremes," In Thomas A. Prester, Ed., *Psychology of Adolescents*, Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2003, pp. 1-14.

<sup>33</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, Trans. J. B. Baillie, *Preface: The Phenomenology of Mind*, [www.class.uidaho.edu/mickelsen/texts/Hegel%20Phen/hegel\\_phen\\_preface.htm](http://www.class.uidaho.edu/mickelsen/texts/Hegel%20Phen/hegel_phen_preface.htm) - 133k (Downloaded April 2, 2007); Glen Alexander Magee, *Hegel and the Hermetic Tradition*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001; Edmond Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Trans. Joan Stambaugh, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996; Brian Elliott, *Phenomenology and Imagination in Husserl and Heidegger*, New York: Routledge and Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> H. M. Tiebout, "Therapeutic Mechanisms of Alcoholics Anonymous," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 100: 468-473; Tiebout, "Surrender Versus Compliance in Therapy with Special Reference to Alcoholism," *Quarterly Journal on Studies of Alcohol*, 14: 58-68; Tiebout, "The Ego Factors in Surrender in Alcoholism," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 15: 610-621; Denzin, *The Alcoholic Society: Addiction and Recovery of the Self*. New Brunswick, New York: Transaction Publishers, 1993.

<sup>35</sup> Carol S. Becker, *Living and Relating: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, London: Sage, 1992; Melanie A. Jasper, "Issues in Phenomenology for Researchers of Nursing," *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 19, (1994): 309-314; Anna Omery, "Phenomenology: A Method for Nursing Research," *Advances in Nursing Science*, 5(2), (1983): 49-53; Clarke Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

<sup>36</sup> Krizek, "Lessons: What the Hell Are We Teaching The Next Generation?," p. 93.

<sup>37</sup> The concept that the world breaks everyone, but survivors become stronger in the broken places derives from Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, New York: Scribner Paperback Fiction, 1957.

<sup>38</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," p. 19.

<sup>39</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Bob Milan, Interview with Vaughn (Feb. 1, 1996).

<sup>41</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," pp 17-18.

<sup>42</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Vaughn and Long, "Surrender to Win," p.14.

<sup>45</sup> Long and Vaughn, "'I've Had Too Much Done to My Heart.'" p. 318, partially paraphrased.

<sup>46</sup> Long and Vaughn, "'I've Had Too Much Done to My Heart,'" p. 316, par-

tially paraphrased.

<sup>47</sup> Gary Fenstermacher quoted in Donna Alvermann, "Narrative Approaches," In M. Kamil et. al, Eds., *Handbook of Reading Research: Volume III*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000, p. 129.

<sup>48</sup> Margaret Wolf, *A Thrice Told Tale*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992.

<sup>49</sup> Alvermann, "Narrative Approaches," p. 129.

<sup>50</sup> Alvermann, "Narrative Approaches," p. 129.

<sup>51</sup> Kenneth Howe and Margaret Eisenhart, "Standards for Qualitative (And Quantitative) Research: A Prolegomenon," *Educational Researcher*, 19(4), (May, 1990): 2-9.

<sup>52</sup> Eisner, "The Promise and Perils," p. 8.

<sup>53</sup> Wittrock, "Contemporary Methodological." p. 280.

<sup>54</sup> Romano, *Blending Genre*, p. 24

<sup>55</sup> Eisner, "The Promise and Perils," p. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Eisner, "The Promise and Perils," p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Romano, *Blending Genre*, p. 57.

## Appendix A

### *Mickey Mantle By Jim Student*

Betty Ford

Here I sit in room 202. I just checked myself into the Betty Ford Clinic. This is going to be really difficult. I've always been the one to try and avoid anything emotional and I know they're going to stick me in one of those group therapy sessions.

A knock on the door. "Mr. Mantle, it's time for you to go to group therapy."

I knew it. I hate this crap. Man this place looks like a hospital. Smells like one too. Hey, there are only ten others in this group. I can handle that.

"Why don't you sit down and tell us a little about yourself, Mickey?"

"Okay, here it goes." My name is Mickey. I'm from Commerce, Oklahoma. I played baseball for 18 years with the New York Yankees. I'm married and have four sons."

"Why did you come here?"

What kind of question is that? For the same reason everyone else is. "I checked myself in because I have a bad liver and I'm depressed."

"Okay. When did this 'bad liver' and 'depression' start?"

"I guess it started after my dad passed away. I was 19 and my dad was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. He died about seven months later."

"When did you decide to come here?"

"My son Danny came here last fall. I guess I realized I was the reason for that. I really wasn't much of a family man. I wasn't around much. I'd always get my sons to go out drinking with me when we were together. We never really went out and played catch in the backyard when they were younger. We never did anything. They could have been something. They were all terrific athletes but I never put forth the effort to help them."



Oh no, here come the waterworks. “I guess that’s what I regret most. I...I...I...” I can’t finish. My eyes are blurred. I look around and everyone is staring at me and all I can do is cry.

“It’s alright Mr. Mantle. You can finish next time.”

#### Background to Betty Ford

For my third piece I chose to use a personal narrative. I thought it would be interesting to try and write a story from Mickey’s point of view. The main source of information I used was from the article “Time in a Bottle” found in the April 18, 1994 issue of *Sports Illustrated*. For instance, I wrote, “I’ve always been the one to try and avoid anything emotional and I know they are going to stick me in one of those group therapy sessions.” This is based on what Mickey wrote in the article about how he didn’t like being emotional in front of people, which can be found on page 68 of that issue. I also wrote, “I can’t finish. My eyes are blurred. I look around and everyone is staring at me and all I can do is cry.” I based that on what Mickey said about how he couldn’t make it through his first few sessions without crying which can be found on the same page of *Sports Illustrated*.

## Appendix B

### *The Twelve Steps*

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.