

Black River United

how football frames the relationship
between younger and older men in a rural
Jamaican community

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*Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy*

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Abstract

Internationally, football is increasingly employed as a key development tool focussed on young men. ‘Sports-as-development’ initiatives have proliferated since the United Nation’s ‘Year of Sports’ in 2005 and the amateur football field offers a critique of such initiatives and points towards the need to situate them within specific historical, social, and sporting contexts. This thesis considers the implications for ‘sports-as-development’, suggesting that football provides avenues for both social mobility and also economic exploitation.

Black River is a small town on the south coast of Jamaica. Each weekday evening on a farmer’s field a team of educated, middle-aged men with well-respected careers plays football against a team of younger men with limited formal education and few employment prospects. The thesis examines the embodiment and enactment of wealth and age among football players. It explores the background to these matches, and looks at how they shape and affect the players away from the field. Also, I investigate the ramifications of support for the English Premier League in relation to men’s experiences of migration. In particular, I am concerned with the questions: ‘why do these two groups play football against one another?’; and ‘what happens when they do?’. Data collection methods included informal interviewing, long-term engagement on the football field, and participation in the lives of research participants and observation of their social interactions in bars and on street corners.

The thesis investigates the historical and social background to inequalities between older and younger competitors and the trajectories of these disparities across the town. Football in this context provides an informal

apprenticeship and mediation of inter-generational conflict whilst situating players more broadly within global hierarchies of wealth and potential.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“You see in life it’s about being happy, it’s not having a lot of money. I’ve seen a lot of friends of mine who, in Montego Bay [Jamaica’s second largest city] have a lot of money, and a lot of them if they’re not dead, they have to run away. So I realise that money isn’t all. It’s about being happy. It’s about sitting here talking to you about this beautiful game” (Interview with Cavin, 10/11/12)¹

Each evening in Jamaica, just as the sun begins to set, patches of ground throughout the country that appear derelict and forgotten during the day begin to reverberate with action. Slowly at first, and then more rapidly, people walk onto the open areas. Most are boys and men, but it is increasingly likely to see girls and women. They appear from offices, classrooms, homes and street corners, from a spectrum of different economic and social backgrounds. Most are neither playing for money nor for the hope of making it as a professional football player in the future. Goals appear at either end. These goals might be full sized and set into the ground but are more often ‘scrimmage’ or ‘pick-up’ goals which are only thigh high and a metre across. Other pitches make do with piles of rocks, bags, or clothing. Some wear football shirts and some have saved up for the newest pairs of boots, while others play barefoot and shirtless. Often there will be some of each on the field. A ball of some description appears, teams are hastily picked, and the game begins.

Introduction

In November 2011 I travelled to Black River, a small coastal town in

¹ Names and places have been changed in order to maintain anonymity. I have not changed the name of the town as it would be easily identified by its history.

Jamaica, to research 'sports-as-development' initiatives and to focus on how football was being used within development strategies. However, after two months of fieldwork my focus turned to an amateur football match that was regularly played on a farmer's field a little outside the town. Focussing on a single pitch enabled me to concentrate on how football worked within one particular group of men. From the perspective of my initial topic of development, it seemed necessary to question how the sport affected people in a specific context in order to understand how the introduction of football might impact on future recipients of 'sports-as-development.' While I attend to the particularities of the field in Black River, I have come to understand since that this field was comparable to others throughout the world where people (certainly not just men) participate in and enjoy sport. My work situates football within a particular historical, social, and economic context and examines its impact on those who regularly engage in the game. Through focussing on one football field, this thesis explains and analyses the role of the sport in producing and negotiating differences of class, age, and wealth in a Jamaican community.

I had never been passionate about football even though I had chosen it as a topic of study. I played almost every break-time at school from my earliest memories until the age of 16, but I never played for any of the top school teams or had any inclination to do so. In one comic moment when I was late to a lesson and as punishment was forced to play with the Under-18 'First-XI' at college, the first pass that came my way went straight through my legs. I spent the rest of the match being continually aware of my swiftly dwindling social status as I bungled around the field, unsure of where to stand or run and in perpetual anxiety that the ball might come my way. While I supported Arsenal football club, I had only ever seen one live match and rarely watched matches on

television. I followed England in World Cups and the European Championships (Euros), and remember my brother and I having tears in our eyes when they were knocked out of Euro 1996 by penalties, but I recognised that others of my friends had a far deeper attachment to their teams. I took for granted that I had been surrounded by football throughout my life in conversations among my peer group, wider social contexts, and in the media. It was perhaps due to my lackadaisical relationship with football that I was surprised by the surge of popularity that it was receiving within development agencies. For example, given that the sport was commonly associated with hooliganism (Armstrong 1998), why should football help to rehabilitate former child soldiers in UNICEF training centres, for example (www.unicef.org)?

I went to Jamaica with these questions in mind, and hoped to find 'sports-as-social development' initiatives in the Black River area and to find out how sports were used to further development aims, and why football was particularly salient. What I ended up researching appeared, at first, to be very different.

I had visited Black River twice before. My first visit had been in 2006 to help set up a computer lab in what the Jamaican government termed a 'failing' Primary School in a nearby community. I returned again in 2008 to conduct six weeks funded research for an Independent Study Project as part of my anthropology degree on the subject of sports and Jamaican masculinities. Black River particularly interested me as it was a rural community with a long colonial history (which I detail in Chapter Two). For reasons that I develop below, I decided to change the focus of my research from development initiatives to the relationship between older, wealthier players with younger, less wealthy men on

one amateur football field. After 10 days in the field, I began playing three to five matches every week and this continued for the duration of fieldwork (14 months). The men I played with varied in age from their mid-20s to their early 40s and while the numbers fluctuated from 6 to over 20 there was a core set of 8 who played nearly every evening from Monday to Friday. The men's 'love'² for football initially surprised me but, as I continued playing, I learned to love the game, and have continued to play every week since returning from the field.

I initially joined the amateur matches in order to get some exercise, to meet new people around Black River, and to combat boredom. I was also keen to gain a bodily understanding of the sport to complement my work with development agencies. Alongside the writings of C.L.R. James, I consistently referred back to the Loïc Wacquant's research on boxing and boxers in a Chicago ghetto (Wacquant 1995, 2009, 2014). In particular, I returned to his ideas around the "social and sensual logic" (2004: 7) of boxing which showed how adopting the body as both the subject and object of research could be ethnographically productive. I learned the craft of football through playing it frequently, and began to recognise how my body changed over the course of fieldwork. The other players taught me how to cope with nagging injuries and also how to conserve my energy during matches through 'reading' the game and recognising in advance patterns of play that emerged consistently. One of the most lasting personal realizations that emerged through fieldwork was that beneath the industry of football, an industry which included politically popular development initiatives as well as large media fortunes, there was a 'beautiful game' that many around the world continued to care passionately about, and

² I use single quotation marks to denote phrases that were commonly used or which I noted informally, and double quotation marks for transcribed quotations from interviews.

which impacted significantly on their daily lives and personal networks. As James (2005) emphasises, in order to understand the role of sport, it is necessary to understand and recognise its social contexts. With an introduction to the town of Black River (explored in greater detail in Chapter Two), I now detail the reasons for my change of focus from development initiatives to amateur football players.

How a goat-keeper taught me to love football

In anthropological fieldwork, a gatekeeper is a research participant who introduces the researcher to a hitherto inaccessible field. During my research I was fortunate to meet many different gatekeepers, however here I am interested in a 'goat-keeper' to whom I never spoke directly as he was the reason for changing the focus of my research. Before introducing the goat-keeper, it is necessary to contextualise our meeting.

I was required to give a residential address while staying on the island in order to enter Jamaica. I already knew the address I would give: Waterloo Guest House, Black River. At the time, I knew Waterloo Guest House as a comfortable place to stay, somewhere between a hostel and a hotel, and one of the only places one could rent a room near to the centre of Black River. During my previous visits, I had the pleasure of spending more than a few nights in the bar at the front of Waterloo talking with some of the regulars. Going to the bar the first evening on my arrival, I remembered many of the faces and, after looking at me quizzically for a couple of seconds, many of them recognised me. During the course of my fieldwork, I would come to know many of these men very well, and

they would become key participants in my research.

The next day, I spoke with Mrs Bennett, the proprietor of the bar. I asked whether she knew of anywhere I could rent a room to stay for six months or more. I had not had any joy in my faltering attempts to find somewhere to stay and was, needless to say, a little worried about not having set up long-term accommodation beforehand. Mrs Bennett said that she could rent a room in her house round the corner. The rent was reasonable, and included two meals a day made by a woman employed by the Bennetts to cook and to clean the house from Monday to Friday. I moved in the next day, and spent the majority of the following 14 months living with Mr and Mrs Bennett and their son, John.

The Bennetts were wealthier than most in Black River, and they had lived in the United States intermittently throughout their lives. My fieldwork in Black River was made richer and more enjoyable through speaking and living with them, and they also contributed to the research and shaped it in significant ways. As it transpired, the Bennett's two older sons were in the US on football (soccer) scholarships, and John, their youngest son, played for the Munro schoolboy team (introduced in greater depth in Chapter Three). Moreover, Mr Bennett played football most weekday evenings, and would be willing to take me with him.

The Bennetts' house, like the majority in the area, was a bungalow with 'burglar bars' around the porch area and over the windows. The Bennetts had suffered two serious experiences of burglars breaking into their house, and these bars offered some protection. There were always a number of stray dogs on the dirt road which were encouraged with food to congregate outside the neighbour's house to act as informal guard dogs. Although they could be quite unnerving when walking home at night, the intense Jamaican heat during the

day made them sleepy, and they would barely open their eyes as I passed.

Black River had a low level of crime compared to many other areas in Jamaica; however these levels were still high compared to the UK. The major source of crime around the town was praedial larceny (the stealing of livestock) which particularly happened around Christmas time, when the pressure to buy presents and to spruce up the house led some people to find alternative avenues to meet these demands. One of the Bennetts' next-door neighbours was a mechanic and operated out of his house and there were always a few people sitting about in his 'yaad'. He also kept goats and chickens which would attempt to out-do each other in terms of the noise they made. Goats were tied up along the lane during the day, before being taken in at night. It was common for Jamaicans to keep livestock as an informal 'insurance' against the vicissitudes of the financial markets and employment. Keeping goats, cows, or chickens could help when money was scarce as a person could sell an animal for immediate financial return. Even those such as the mechanic, whose business seemed to be doing well, kept livestock. Many of them were left by the side of the road to feed during the day and were termed 'feral' as they were not kept in a designated agricultural plot. Although some of the goats were tied up, many were left to wander and Danielle, the lady employed to cook and clean in the house where I rented a room, frequently had to shoo them out of Mrs Bennett's garden. It was common to see cattle grazing along the roadsides, and drivers had to be very careful when manoeuvring around them. Mr Bennett described having his car charged twice by feral cattle, causing more damage to the car than to the animal.

The town's two major industries were fishing and farming. Both fishermen and farmers were conspicuously absent from the Black River centre except on Fridays when they would sell their produce and some would spend a

portion of their earnings in one of the bars about town. In the region, poor attendance at primary schools (particularly by boys) was attributed to the demands for agricultural labour on Fridays, which encouraged parents to keep them at home that day to work rather than send them to school. I had learned about the boys' poor attendance while helping in a nearby primary school several years previously, and it had led me to research social development schemes aimed at encouraging school participation. After consulting the academic literature and more broadly, increasingly I found references to 'football-as-social development' initiatives which had been introduced in the region. When I first arrived in Black River, I felt well-prepared to research these otherwise elusive development strategies.

On my first day I presented myself at the Parish Development Council (PDC) armed with a notebook, suncream, and trousers far too hot for the Jamaican heat. Within a few days I gained an interview with Mr Howard, head of the PDC, and owner and manager of the most famous and most frequented hotel in the area. He was also a prominent proponent of 'sports-as-social development' initiatives and began a program linking social development with tourism. At the time I met him his organization had acquired a sports field and excellent facilities for football, cricket, netball, basketball, and tennis. These facilities had been built with the help of funding from the Jamaican government (through the PDC), from both domestic and international donors, and with money from his hotel business.

During my interview with Mr Howard, we spoke of the potential role that sports, and football in particular, could play in the development of the 'Greater Treasure Beach Area.' Treasure Beach was a few miles from Black River, but took far longer to reach than the distance implied due to the state of the roads,

and it was a more popular tourist destination than Black River due to its expanse of beach (rare on the South Coast of Jamaica) and Mr Howard's highly popular hotel and restaurant. Black River was included within one of the focuses of the 'Greater Treasure Beach Area' development project. In essence, Mr Howard's approach boiled down to offering football training to students (and he emphasised boys) who attended a certain percentage of their classes. It was these sorts of 'sports-as-social development' initiatives targeting young men that I had travelled to Black River to study, and I was therefore confident and excited to learn more about them.

The term 'social development' became part of the United Nations mission after the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen which took over the course of 6-12 March, 1995. The United Nations convened in order to "affirm that, in both economic and social terms, the most productive policies and investments are those that empower people to maximise their capacities, resources and opportunities" (Summit 1995:5). At the summit, a great emphasis was placed on the empowerment of women, the reduction of social inequality, and an understanding of the role of childhood within future development. Sports were specifically mentioned in the report as a means for "promoting equality and social integration" (Summit 1995:71) and the report noted their importance in encouraging wider social participation in development (ibid.:70). Social development, for the UN, entailed an agent-centred approach to development that aimed to reduce social inequality, and focused on breaking cycles of poverty and violence through initiatives aimed at young people.

Several authors attribute the beginning of large-scale social development policies to the Copenhagen Summit, in spite of the fact that the same processes had been popular since the 1980s (Midgley 2003). Fisher (2003) argues that the

focus on local participation in development strategies caused a change in the perspective of developmental agencies “beyond economic growth, towards social goals around poverty eradication, employment, equality, and human rights,” (Fisher 2003:816). The Copenhagen Summit in 1995 marked the beginning of an international focus on social development, entailing a change from state-centred to more local agent-centred development policies.

However, the definition of ‘social development’ adopted by the UN remains vague. Midgley argues that “social development is still poorly defined and there is widespread disagreement about what social development actually entails in programmatic terms” (2003:832). He suggests that the lack of definition given to the term ‘social development’ in the Copenhagen Summit has generated an eclectic mix of different development programmes rather than a coherent policy. Arce echoes this concern (2003) and argues that social development programmes have often focussed on institutions rather than individuals. Mosse (2001) has also shown how development initiatives that aim to incorporate “local people’s knowledge into programme planning” (Mosse 2001:385) often, in fact, prove “compatible with top-down planning systems, and have not necessarily heralded changes in prevailing institutional practices of development” (ibid.:385).

In spite of these criticisms, the UN’s definition of social development was the one used by the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), the Jamaican Football Federation (JFF) and the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Specifically in Jamaica, the GOAL project undertaken by FIFA aimed to “[help] the most underprivileged [football associations] to improve the football infrastructure and levels of participation” (FIFA online). Both FIFA and the JFF have allied the GOAL project in Jamaica

to the UN's social and human development schemes, and this definition of social development therefore provided an underlying rationality to investment in football in Jamaica. To summarise, the term social development entails an agent-centred development strategy that encourages greater participation of individuals and communities in development programmes, with a particular focus on social equality and youth initiatives.

Since the beginning of the focus on social development, the UN and UNICEF have constructed sports as a means by which to achieve greater social equality. These international organizations ascribe a universal meaning to sports that imbue them with a positive social force rather than focussing on the understandings of sports in different local contexts. In 2003, for example, the UN published a report entitled 'Sport for Development and Peace,' in which they outlined the "natural partnership" (2003:v) between the UN and sport; "sport...is a powerful and cost-effective way to support development and peace objectives," (2003:23) and further that the benefits of sport "are not only enjoyed by the individual, but felt throughout society" (2003:23). What the report failed to state, and it was this failing that I hoped to address in my research, was why this was the case. Why was there a 'natural partnership' between the UN and sport? In what ways did sport 'support development'? And how did the positive effects of sport grow outwards from the individual to the rest of society?

UNICEF's website outlining the link between sports and development suggested that sports, leisure, and play were key tools in teaching children about health and social welfare issues. Again, no clear reason was established for how sports achieved this. UNICEF argued that sports:

"are creating environments that are safe and promote stable relationships between

children and adults, and among children themselves. They are providing children of all ages with opportunities to express themselves, to contribute their voice, opinions and ideas, and to become agents for change. They are helping to build communities and are contributing to a more just and peaceful society” (UNICEF n.d.).

However, the ways that sports helped children to ‘become agents for change,’ and how sports created ‘environments that are safe and promote[d] stable relationships’ were not explained.³

Sports as social development initiatives might have become increasingly popular among international donors and aid agencies, but were amorphous and unspecified in their application. Jamaica, in particular, was singled out as “way ahead of the rest of the region with its development programme” (Daryll Warner, in Williams 2011) and I originally intended to research these sports as social development initiatives at the grass-roots level. My meeting with Mr Howard in many regards confirmed my hope that such initiatives were underway in the Black River area.

Following my meeting with Mr Howard I agreed provisionally to help with the ‘sports tourism strategy’. My role consisted of accompanying Ted, a part-time researcher and full-time promoter of a Rum company, in order to collect data on the potential for sports tourism in the area. The research was split into three sections: Sports Facilities, Accommodation, and Attractions. In brief, we needed to know how many teams could play and/or train simultaneously, where they could stay (how many beds, for how much money etc.), and what they could do in their free time.

Once we had collected all of the data, it was collated into a spreadsheet and our findings were written up. By this stage I was becoming uneasy with the

³ There is a more cynical reading of such development initiatives as giving an a-political facade to the spread of global capitalism, such as that given by Navarro (2007) and Frank (1997 [1986]). However, here I am taking the programmes at face value.

project. For reasons I did not understand at the time, many of the hotel owners did not seem particularly keen on the sports tourism strategy, and only with great reluctance gave us the information we required. One hotelier spoke scathingly of initiatives in the area that promoted the stretch of Treasure Beach where Mr Howard's hotel was located, which already enjoyed a greater income from tourism than the surrounding area, over others. Back in the van, Ted explained that the hotelier was simply 'jealous' of the success of 'others.' These concerns were not noted in our research, nor did they form part of the findings.

One of the sports facilities that Ted and I evaluated had been set up during a sports for social development initiative some years previously. The derelict club house and changing rooms building was emblazoned with company logos and 'SDF' (Social Development Fund). The sports field was in significant need of repair. The grass was bare in several places, there were rocks strewn about, and the ground was very uneven. Cattle were grazing, and it was evident that they had been for some time.

Through Ted's knowledge of state-run development initiatives and speaking with some men sitting near the field I gained an impression of why the facilities had been left to deteriorate. The sports facility had been set up by a PNP (People's National Party)⁴ government as part of a wider sports-for-development drive, but also in a specific attempt to contribute to social development through sport. Once the PNP was overthrown in a general election, and the JLP (Jamaica Labour Party) came to power, initiatives pioneered under the former were abandoned, and JLP initiatives took their place. Prior programs were simply neglected as nobody paid to keep up the sports facilities. Or, rather, they were abandoned by the sports and development administration and taken

⁴ The PNP and the JLP are Jamaica's two most popular political parties.

over by a farmer.

In many regards, the intention of the ‘Greater Treasure Beach Sports Tourism Strategy’ was to avoid falling into the trap of allying development initiatives with government funding by, instead, linking them with economic growth through tourism. Crucially, the ‘sports tourism strategy’ aimed to become self-funding through international donations and income from sports tourism packages sold to school sports teams from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Western Europe. Talking to Mr Howard about the dangers of merging development initiatives with politics, he claimed to have found a tactic that transcended political differences. This tactic involved three strategies. First, he told me, “you have to be careful how to position yourself,” and in particular not align your initiatives too directly with a particular politician. Sports development initiatives offered politicians beneficial media attention, and could help them to maintain electoral success. However, once the political party lost power, the development initiative lost its funding as the new incumbent began to generate their own initiatives. Mr Howard labelled his initiative as ‘sports tourism’ as the phrase removed his program from the politically-loaded term of ‘social development’.

The second tactic to navigate between political positions involved knowing when to use political patronage. As he put it, “you have to make them [the politicians] look good”; as long as the politicians in power felt that they were being made to ‘look good’ through the initiatives then they would grease the bureaucratic wheels of government. Third, he argued that his program “wouldn’t have been nowhere [sic.] near as successful without [his hotel]” as the hotel’s profit could contribute to the financial input required for the initiative to begin and to expand.

The story of another of the sports grounds that Ted and I visited struck me forcefully, and contrasted sharply with that described above. Arriving, I jumped out of the van and pulled open the gate to a large field. Ted drove in and parked the car. From the road, the field looked like many others in the area; patchy grass, dried out turf, and some seemingly random metal netting. However, drawing nearer I was amazed. The netting set out the pitch area of one of the most immaculate football fields I had seen (and was to see) in St Elizabeth. The grass was vivid green, luscious, and cut to a uniform height. The field was level and did not seem to have any rocks on it, and the white lines appeared to be newly painted.

Ted and I walked to the other side of the field to fill out questionnaires with some men who appeared to be overseeing its maintenance. They told us that they looked after the field occasionally, but that we really needed to talk to a man named Sabi who took charge of it. The men told us that one of Sabi's goats was giving birth at the time, so they did not know when he would return.

As we were making our way back to the van, a man with large dreadlocks and a well-worn polo shirt emerged from the bushes leading some goats. It was Sabi. He had just delivered the kid and was now making his way back to the football field. As we were pressed for time, and had collected the information we needed, Ted did not speak with him for long. However, Sabi played an important role in the lives of many of those with whom I later played football, and continued to be a source of inspiration and motivation for them. Freddie, one of the players, credited Sabi with encouraging him to take football seriously:

“WT: when did you start taking it a little more seriously, like the difference between kicking it in the street and playing for the parish?

F: Uh, coach, coach named Sabi

WT: That one that you were telling me about?

F: Yeah man, Rasta guy, a him, and di whole ... we used to play ball and he seh 'come go a Santa [Santa Cruz was a nearby town with higher level of football teams], go for one likkle try-out.' So me just leave go Santa because dem time deh a Santa, dem used to have the the the training sessions

WT: Ok

F: An mi go up deh and mek it, mek di team.

WT: Yeah

F: An mi seh alright, from deh so me just continue play football. Love"⁵

Freddie talked to me at greater length about Sabi, Sabi's football career, and his training methods:

"WT: Yeah [...] Yeah, so that's still Sabi who runs that?

F: Yeah man, Sabi and, dem have a new coach. Sabi and, Andy, because, but di both a dem used to coach me at, ehm, when D-cup [the Dacosta cup, the rural schoolboy football league] play. Cas when Sabi, Sabi did gi up di job, an di second year Andy did start i coaching. But both a dem a coach di di big team dem. Sabi and Andy.

WT: And he's really, it's really a love for him

F: Yeah man, im love di game man.

WT: I've no idea how he, he, how he finds the time to keep that field perfect and to do all that and he doesn't really get any money for it

F: Nah, im really, im nah get paid. [laughs] Mi nuh no how him do it.

WT: Yeah

F: But, ai love, as we seh, ai love fi it. Cos right now me nuh see nobody a Black River who love football like Sabi. And an, wha yu call it, him a di most winningest [sic.] coach in in in St Elizabeth, him a di most title in St Elizabeth as a coach.

WT: Yeah, even though he never had formal training

F: Yeah, hm. a just, look a'it, he was a footballer himself yuh no

⁵ "WT:when did you start taking it a little more seriously, like the difference between kicking it in the street and playing for the parish? F: Uh, coach, coach named Sabi WT: That one that you were telling me about? F: Yeah man, Rasta guy, it was him, and the whole ... we used to play ball and he would say 'go to Santa, for a try-out.' So I just left to go to Santa because in those time they used to have the training sessions WT: Ok F: And I went up there and made it, made the team WT: Yeah F: And I said, alright, from then I just continued to play football. Love."

WT: Right

F: Him used to play um, defence.

WT: Ok

F: Hard tackler yuh no [laughs] So im im im kinda no di game in a sense, but certain aspects, certain technical tings im kinda lacking to mi.

WT: Yeah. He doesn't really know how to do those aspects.

F: Yeah man, im, dat kinda lackin. But im love di game. An him know di, di wha yu call dat, physical training?

WT: Yeah, something like that

F: Yeah im know dem deh, im no dem deh

WT: Endurance or

F: Yeah, im no dem deh kinda trainin

WT: Yeah, so he gets you fit

F: Yeah. So when we a play D-cup, him use to bring we a di sand, dat a out by di beach, yeah man. So man haffi fit! During D-cup time, well fit man.

WT: Yeah, when you run on sand

F: Fit, every man pon we side kick i ball like dem put it inna cannon and shoot it out.

Kick it *hard!* [laughs].”⁶

Freddie was not the only one to talk so glowingly of Sabi but, from his description it was apparent that he occupied a privileged position within the

⁶ “WT: Yeah [...] Yeah, so that's still Sabi who runs that? F: Yeah man, Sabi and, they have a new coach. Sabi and, Andy, because but both of them used to coach me when I played D-cup. Because when Sabi gave up the job, and the second year Andy started coaching. But both of them coached the highest team. Sabi and Andy. WT: And he's really, it's really a love for him F: Yeah man, he loves the game. WT: I've no idea how he, he, how he finds the time to keep that field perfect and to do all that and he doesn't really get any money for it F: No, he does not get paid. I don't know how he does it. WT: Yeah F: But, it's love, as we say, it's the love for it. Because right now I don't see anybody in Black River who loves football like Sabi. And, what do you call it, he's the most successful coach in St Elizabeth as a coach WT: Yeah, even though he never had formal training F: Yeah, just think about it, he was a footballer himself you know WT: Right F: He used to play um, defence. WT: Ok F: Hard tackler you know [laughs] So he kind of knows the game in a sense, but certain aspects, to me he kind of lack certain technical things WT: Yeah. He doesn't really know how to do those aspects F: Yeah man, he, that's kind of lacking. But he loves the game. And he knows them, what do you call that, physical training? WT: Yeah, something like that F: Yeah he knows them, he knows them WT: Endurance or F: Yeah he knows that kind of training WT: Yeah, so he gets you fit F: Yeah. So when we played D-cup, he used to bring us to the sand, that's out by the beach. Everybody had to be fit! During D-cup time, really fit. WT: Yeah, when you run on sand F: Fit, every man on our side kicked the ball like they put it in a cannon and shot it out. We kicked it *hard!* [laughs].”

minds of many football enthusiasts around Black River. What emerged time and again talking of Sabi was his 'love' for the game. In spite of the fact that football was almost certainly the most popular sport in Black River, both to watch and to play, Sabi stood out among all others because, as Freddie puts it, "nobody a Black River ... love football like Sabi".

Sabi coached the local Black River football club – called 'Black River FC' or 'Black Star' depending on who one talked to – and tended the immaculate field which was their home ground. He received no formal remuneration for his services, and did this work because of a passionate love for the game. He had been a proficient player, although he never made a professional career from football. Most evenings he organised the training of the Black River side and, alongside the drills, encouraged other men in the community to come as well. These non-team players would form a 'Rebel' side, and Sabi would have them play against the Black River team for half of the practice. If a man played well for the 'Rebel' side there was the possibility of getting into the Black River squad. If a man played poorly he would be replaced by one of the other eager men waiting for their opportunity to play against the local team. Sabi was revered in the minds of many in Black River for his passion for football, and for his willingness to contribute a resource for the good of the community with little remuneration.

After meeting the goat-keeper, Sabi, and following on from the research I helped to collate for the Sports-Tourism Strategy, the PDC set up a meeting to discuss how the Strategy might be packaged for prospective investors. During a 'Strategy meeting' a plan was introduced for the first group of tourists, a cricket team from Canada, to stay in Mr Howard's hotel and train on his sports facilities. I asked how the increased revenue brought by the sports tourists

would be shared out between facilities as it was unclear whether any of the other accommodation, facilities, and attractions would benefit from an increased number of tourists staying in Mr Howard's hotel and using his facilities. The question that was foremost in my mind was: how would the strategy make sure that Sabi (and others like him) could benefit from sports-tourism? I was informed that Sabi would have to conduct a report about his facilities, garner support from local government (and, presumably, the PDC), and then submit an application for funding from domestic and international investors. From what I had seen, it would have been near impossible for Sabi to meet these requirements without the benefit of both a successful business which could contribute to his costs, such as a hotel, and the support of a government-funded body, such as the PDC. Overall it was not obvious how anybody, aside from those associated with Mr Howard and his facilities, would benefit from the sports-tourism strategy supposed to bring development through sports. It became clear that there was a significant conflict of interest between Mr Howard's position at the head of a tourist destination and sports park, and his position as the head of the PDC, particularly when a significant portion of the council's time was dedicated to increasing sports tourism. After the meeting, I declined to participate further with the initiative.

I left the exercise feeling dejected and a little lost as to what I was doing in Black River. The days were quite boring, although I tried to fill them with fieldwork as best I could, hoping to find a new lead or topic. I waited more and more impatiently for football each evening, hoping that Mr Bennett might return ten minutes early to get to football sooner. Once I began listening to what was happening around the amateur football pitch, however, I began to view informal football as a topic in its own right, in part because of the effect Sabi's

love for the game had on me, and also in grassroots football. Rather than merely a distraction from my fieldwork, it gradually became its focus. What was it that drew the men to football each evening? And, at the same time, what was it about football that could make a man like Sabi spend so much of his time maintaining a field? Over the course of my fieldwork, I learned to love football, and was told by many of my participants about their love for it, and how that love was fostered.

Although I could walk to the PDC through the bushes at the other end of the track, I had made a choice in my research to go the other way; to follow the ‘goat-keepers’ for whom football was not an opportunity for economic gain but a love or a passion. While I remained interested in sports development initiatives, I spent a greater portion of my time playing and watching football. I became particularly interested in how men learned to play football in ways that were specific to amateur fields which lacked referees, how these matches travelled outwards from the field into their social and economic lives, and also how engagement with football through playing and supporting English Premier League teams located the men in relation to global flows of people, goods, and capital. Significantly, I became interested in how football became embodied, and Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus (1992) became an important resource for how to think *with*, as well as *about*, the body.

The habitus

In *The Logic of Practice* (1992), Bourdieu refines an earlier attempt by Marcel Mauss to articulate how an individual’s body is structured by the society

in which they live. In *Techniques of the Body* (1973), Marcel Mauss analyses how people learn to use their bodies differently depending on the society they grow up in; “the ways in which from society to society men know how to use their bodies” (Mauss 1973:70). Bourdieu draws heavily on this article, as it was the first time that the term ‘habitus’ was used to refer to the internalization of an individual’s social context. Mauss says:

“Hence I have had this notion of the social nature of the ‘*habitus*’ for many years. Please note that I use the Latin word -- it should be understood in France – *habitus*. The word translates infinitely better than ‘*habitude*’ (habit or custom), the ‘*exis*’, the ‘acquired ability’ and ‘faculty’ of Aristotle (who was a psychologist). It does not designate those metaphysical *habitudes*, that mysterious ‘memory’, the subjects of volumes or short and famous theses. These ‘habits’ do not just vary with individuals and their imitations, they vary especially between societies, educations, proprieties and fashions, prestiges. In them we should see the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary way, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties” (Mauss 1973:73).

Therefore, for Mauss an understanding of the habitus involves the study of how people learn to use their bodies differently depending upon the society in which they have grown up and, as he argued in *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo* (1979[1950]), how they embody different habitus-es at different times. He goes on to give examples such as walking or swimming which “are specific to determinate societies; the Polynesians do not swim as we do, that my generation did not swim as the present generation does” (1973:70-71). He concludes by stating that “[i]t is thanks to society that there is the certainty of pre-prepared movements, domination of the conscious over emotion and unconsciousness” (ibid.:86). Mauss points out explicitly that the techniques of the body are a form of the embodiment of social relations, saying that “they [the techniques] are

assembled by and for social authority” (ibid.:85). For Mauss, the habitus was an assemblage of techniques that individuals acquired as they grew up within their particular social environment.

Bourdieu attempted to move the concept of habitus further from the term ‘habit’ as under Mauss’s definition the two remain practically, if not theoretically, very similar (Crossley 2013). Bourdieu defines the habitus as:

“systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them” (Bourdieu 1992:53)

Bourdieu’s conception of the habitus therefore focuses more closely on the ‘doing’ in contrast to Mauss who concentrates on the ‘done.’ Elsewhere, Bourdieu adopts the metaphor of a game to better explain the habitus, saying that it is the logic “of a socially constituted ‘sense of the game’” (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:120-1). Bourdieu’s use of this metaphor encouraged me to think about how such a ‘sense’ becomes embodied in the absence of a (supposedly) impartial referee, as on the amateur football field. Is there a ‘sense of the game’ that is shared by those who play it?

Wacquant addresses the issue of a “pugilistic habitus” (2004: 98) in his work on boxing. Loïc Wacquant was initially a student of Bourdieu and later worked alongside him. He describes the habitus as “the *mediating category*, straddling the divide between the objective and the subjective” (2004b:391 italics in original). He pays particular attention to the application of Bourdieu’s theoretical work to social science methodology and argues that *Body and Soul* (2004a), Wacquant’s exploration of boxing apprenticeship, was in large part an

exploration of “the fruitfulness of deploying habitus as both empirical object (*explanandum*) and method of inquiry (*modus cognitionis*)” (2014:4).

Methodologically, the habitus can be used as an empirical object of research contributing to both reflexivity and methods of engagement with other people and other habitus-es. Back notes that: “Bourdieu was committed all his life to a scientific project. He was scathing of the forms of textual reflexivity connected with anthropology criticism in the 1980s” (2009:481) such as Clifford and Marcus’s *Writing Culture* (1986) and Geertz’s *Works and Lives* (1988); works which focused on the researcher himself as well as the empirical data. Instead, deploying the habitus as a method of engagement involves undertaking a form of apprenticeship in order to more closely approach an understanding of the “social and sensual logic” (Wacquant 2004a:7) that informs and structures the everyday lives and actions of those the social scientist is researching. In this way, there are two sets of habitus under scrutiny; the habitus of the researcher as they undergo their apprenticeship, and the habitus-es of the research participants.

Listening and Movement

Consequently, while I am concerned with the voice of the academic in their data, my intention is not to talk over the literal and figurative voices of research participants. Les Back (2007) points to the tenuous line walked by the social scientist, arguing that concepts and theories should not make the voices of participants “become inaudible” (2007:21) but, instead, effective ethnographies should “theorize as they describe and describe as they theorize”

(ibid.:21); allowing room for the participants to breathe and speak within the text, while also avoiding “mere transcription” (ibid.:25). However, listening is not confined to words or transcription but instead should be taken as working “within and through a ‘democracy of the senses’” moving “between visual, aural and corporeal registers” (ibid.:25). In my attempt to write such an ethnography, I include direct fieldwork note extracts, interview transcripts with an aim of maintaining the distinctiveness of different participants’ voices, as well as more ‘traditional’ ethnographic writing entailing written-up fieldwork experiences and conversations.

C.L.R. James

One book that was particularly influential in leading me to focus on sport was C.L.R. James’s *Beyond a Boundary* (2005, orig.1963). This remains one of the most widely cited and influential texts on sport and society in the Caribbean. It is part autobiography, part narrative of a man’s love for cricket, and part political commentary on the struggle against colonialism in Trinidad during the twentieth century. The book was originally published in 1963, a year after both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago gained independence from the United Kingdom. It was also a time when the West Indies cricket team was flourishing, beating England in a Test series three games to one as part of a tour of England in 1963. James’s writing on cricket and society emerged at a time when newly independent Caribbean societies were competing with their former colonisers on the cricket field, and *beating* them.

Throughout *Beyond a Boundary* (2005), James looks at simultaneously

social and racial inequalities in Trinidad through the lens of cricket. In the chapter 'The Light and the Dark,' for example, he discusses his thought-processes behind deciding which cricket team to join. "The question was: which one?" James writes, continuing, "[t]his [question], apparently simple, plunged me into a social and moral crisis which had a profound effect on my whole future life" (2005: 65). The choice was between the Queen's Park who "were for the most part white and often wealthy" (ibid.:66), Shamrock, "the club of the old Catholic families [...] almost exclusively white" (ibid.:66), Constabulary, "the cricket detachment of the local police force" (ibid.:66), Stingo who "were plebeians" (ibid.66), Maple, "the club of the brown-skinned middle class [... who] had founded themselves on the principle that they didn't want any dark people in their club," (ibid.:66-7) and finally "Shannon, the club of the black lower-middle class" (ibid.:67). Before outlining which team James chose to play for, he addresses the reader directly:

"The reader is here invited to make up his [sic.] mind. If for him all this is 'not cricket', then he should take friendly warning and go in peace (or in wrath). These are no random reminiscences. This is the game as I have known it and this is the game I am going to write about. How could it be otherwise?" (James 2005:67-8).

James suggests that cricket was infused with boundaries of race and class in spite of popular conceptions of team choice relating only to the skill of the player. Here he therefore underpins how sport talks far beyond the sports field. Despite his cricket training, which James argues had a greater impact on his moral education than his school training (2005:33), the game was structured by class inequalities away from the field. James chose to play for Maple, the team who "didn't want any dark people in their club", although he acknowledges that "the principle on which the Maple Club was founded [.....] stuck in my throat"

(ibid.:70).

For James, what happened on the cricket field and within the teams and management extended beyond its sporting boundaries to racial inequalities, social hierarchies, and increasing clamours for independence. Fifty years after its publication in 1963, Selma James, C.L.R. James's wife, wrote an article for the Guardian on 'How Beyond a Boundary broke down the barriers of race, class and empire' (2013) and revealed that "originally the proposed title had been "Beyond the Boundary, which the publisher changed to 'a' for no reason we could agree with. 'The' challenges all boundaries, not just cricket's – a true description of the book" (2013). James was keen to emphasise sport's interconnectedness not only with race and class but also art and literature. Indeed, Selma James points out, "he understood the game, he believed, in ways most experts did and could not" (2013) as it emerged from a passion, or love, for cricket as well as a political language drawn from Marx and Hegel.

However, I chose to study football rather than cricket, as cricket's popularity in Jamaica waned while football's soared. As Mr Bennett put it:

"I think cricket and football were about equal among the kids, those days [1970s]. Nowadays, I think cricket has been replaced by things like basketball and that kinda thing but nobody, hardly, plays cricket anymore. But it used to be cricket and football alternating, sometimes both of them in the same day, you know morning for cricket, afternoon, you know?" (Interview 16/12/12)

None of the younger participants talked of playing cricket at school, and even when the West Indies cricket team were playing none of them discussed the matches.

Apprenticeship as a fieldwork method

Joining the amateur football matches entailed an apprenticeship into a group of players and the rules of their field. I was required to re-learn many of the techniques that I had known playing football at school, and was also forced to acquire new skills that the different context demanded. For many players, and the younger ones in particular, the football field offered informal training in how to become successful men, in spite of the fact that they understood that their future success would look very different from the older men's. My poor technical abilities positioned me as an apprentice to the younger and older sets of players while, at the same time, conducting fieldwork was an apprenticeship in anthropology. As Jean Lave (1993) emphasises, an ethnographic account of apprenticeship is also an account of “the theoretical unfolding of the project” (Lave 1993:2) as theory proceeds apace with the development of technique.

In work among masons in Yemen (2001), masons in Djenné (2009), and fine woodworkers in Britain (2010), Trevor Marchand has written of apprenticeship as a fieldwork device and as a conceptual tool for explaining social relationships between craftsmen and their apprentices. He views his work as: “tak[ing] a broad and encompassing perspective on what constitutes knowledge, one that crucially moves beyond propositional forms of knowledge expressed in text and the spoken word” (2009:8). Marchand describes in detail the everyday lives of both the craftsmen and apprentices on the building site in Djenné, and emphasises the non-verbal ways in which they learn their craft. He is also interested in how they learn to embody the “personal characteristics and other types of knowledge [that] constitute a qualified and recognized mason” (ibid.:6). Apprenticeship therefore entails both learning *to* and learning *about* a

skill.

In his article ‘Language, Anthropology and Cognitive Science,’ Bloch (1991) argues that language plays a limited role in the acquisition of knowledge. He demonstrates how acquiring expertise involves “the transformation of the propositions of the teacher into fundamentally non-linguistic knowledge” (1991: 187) using the examples of learning to drive and recognising “good swidden” (ibid.:187). He emphasises that knowledge is established prior to “linguistic confirmations” (ibid.:194) and, therefore, language is only a limited medium through which expertise is transmitted. He singles out participant-observation as a particularly useful method for understanding learning processes as it:

“makes us learn the procedures which these people have themselves learned and enables us to check up on whether we are learning properly by observing our improving ability to cope in the field with daily tasks, including social tasks, as fast as our informants” (Bloch 1991:194).

Bloch’s work draws further attention to the importance of engaged fieldwork for acquiring knowledge of a given skill.

Michael Coy’s (1989) edited volume also explores apprenticeship as both method and theory and draws on a range of different ethnographic contexts. In the introduction (1989a), Coy argues that:

“By using apprenticeship as a field method, anthropologists and others who use this technique are turning their object of study back upon itself; using what they know to behave in a way that will enable the acquisition of more information and better understanding” (1989a:xii)

In his chapter, ‘From Theory’ (1989b) he emphasises that “the education that apprentices receive has as much to do with how to behave as it has to do with mastering specific tasks” (1989b:3). Therefore, adopting apprenticeship as a research technique encouraged me to look beyond the field to how football

travelled outwards and also how it intersected with etiquette.

A focus on apprenticeship concerns more than the learning of a specific set of skills, and is also concerned with understanding how apprentices are expected to behave outside the learning context. It involves a focus on knowledge-making, taken in its widest sense, to incorporate a mental as well as a physical understanding. Mark Johnson's *The Body in the Mind* (1974) argues for a clearer understanding of the body's role in how an individual comes to understand the world. Knowledge, for Johnson, always entails "nonpropositional schematic structures that emerge from our bodily experience" (1974:5). Similarly in his work with George Lakoff (1980) they argue that "human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical" (1960:6, emphasis in original) and show the extent to which metaphor itself relies on an experiential, bodily basis.

Both Thomas Csordas (1990) and Michael Jackson (1983) have applied the conceptual work of Johnson (1974) and Johnson and Lakoff (1980) to anthropology. Csordas argues that "the body is not an *object* to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered as the *subject* of culture, or in other words as the existential ground of culture" (1990:5). Through an ethnographic analysis of glossolalia (talking in tongues), Csordas demonstrates that "on the level of perception it is not legitimate to distinguish mind and body" (ibid.:36). In Jackson's article on Kuranko initiation, he similarly shows how understanding is reached through bodily techniques (1983:337).

Approaching the football field as an apprentice also changed my position in relation to the other players. I was a young, white man from a (comparatively) wealthy background, and did not have to encounter the visa restrictions, lack of education, and economic hardships that some of the

younger players experienced. For the first months of fieldwork, though without my knowledge, I was given the nickname 'Scotland Yard' as I seemingly arrived for no good reason, kept talking about 'research' and 'interviews,' and was a white English man. However, after becoming involved in the football matches I was told that I had become 'one of them' through extended bodily engagement in their everyday lives. While playing football together could not bridge such significant social and economic differences, it offered a way to relate to one another and to communicate both verbally and non-verbally through a shared medium.

Nevertheless, adopting an apprenticeship methodology also raised difficulties. Most importantly, it foreclosed other avenues of research such as the home, among women, and many other settings. I attempted to mitigate some of these complications through complementing my work with football players with research among female higglers (market traders) in order to contextualise what happened on the field within broader perceptions in Black River. Choosing to study a small group of people also resulted in lacking a broader study of a greater number of people in the area. These drawbacks are not confined to an apprenticeship approach, but they are attenuated through the decision to study a small group of people in depth.

However, while my approach to fieldwork had drawbacks, it also brought significant benefits. It allowed me to view wider issues through a particular set of people. Broader studies of football, for example, are useful insofar as they can suggest how the sport is viewed generally, but focussing on one small group of people can point towards how football is integrated into their everyday lives and relates with other aspects such as class and age. Conducting long-term fieldwork with a small group also allowed for a greater level of intimacy between the

researcher and the participants that lead to more nuanced findings that might not have been possible otherwise. In my research, this approach allowed time for the players to change from viewing me as ‘Scotland Yard’ to seeing me as ‘one of them’ or, at least, somebody who was attempting to understand their relationship with football. It was only possible to reach the detailed understanding of the men’s concerns and their hopes for the future through concentrating my efforts on remaining committed to their lives.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two gives a history of Black River using the device of a ‘walking tour’ to draw attention to the partiality of any historical account. The ‘walk’ is illustrated with photographs. The chapter looks at how spatial relations are foundational to understandings of freedom, and concentrates on how the town of Black River has been inhabited differently over time. I approach freedom through looking at who was permitted to move around the town during slavery and how movement was significant from post-Emancipation onwards for recognising local understandings of freedom. I consider the town’s importance in the Baptist War of 1831 which contributed to Emancipation in 1838, and at other moments when it became a site for resistance. The town is perhaps best known for the slave massacre that happened just outside the port in 1781 and I show how the memorialisation of this event became a site for contemporary acts of resistance during fieldwork. The ‘walk’ also introduces the social and economic climate of the area during research.

In Chapter Three I look at the ‘Dacosta cup,’ the most popular domestic

league in Black River. I introduce the men I played football with and their experiences of 'schoolboy football.' I illustrate how many of the younger players were encouraged to concentrate on their football abilities rather than their educational qualifications, which later made it difficult for them to enter stable professions. By contrast, many of the older players had attended more prestigious schools which demanded educational attainment alongside sporting endeavour. I also show how football was linked with both formal and informal education among British colonial society before spreading outwards. In addition, this chapter looks at class differences in the Black River area and how these are justified and legitimated through 'education,' rather than with direct reference to class and wealth differences over time.

In Chapter Four I look at the amateur matches themselves. In this chapter I am interested in how players came to know and embody the rules of the informal football field. Importantly, without a referee, the players stressed that it was not enough to know the rules of the field, but these had to become embodied so that the player even 'thought' in the right way. The etiquette demanded by players on the field distinguished them from other sets of football players, and located them within hierarchies of class. At the same time, it had the effect of privileging the playing style of the older team over their younger opponents.

Chapter Five moves on to look at different football styles and skills. I look at how the appreciation of certain techniques related to the players' experiences at school, and was also linked to their position within age hierarchies. These differences were understood in terms of a 'general' as opposed to an 'individual' style of play, and while the older team favoured the 'pass', the younger team lent greater status to the 'salad,' or trick. Chapters Four and Five involve a discussion

of the production of a 'football habitus,' and show how the men's appreciation and playing style were not only a product of the football field itself, but also related to their economic and social status off the pitch.

Moving outwards from the football field, in Chapter Six I look at the socialising of the younger players. I focus on the 'bragging rights' that were often voiced in terms of education and social maturity. Caught in precarious employment, the young men engaged in fantasies of future migration and success, and readily identified with sports and music stars. However, they were also aware of their inability to achieve their ambitions due to the decline of industry in Black River and the reduction of opportunities in Jamaica. Football and bragging rights offered them a way to elevate their status within their peer group and alleviate some of the boredom they experienced.

In Chapter Seven I look at the socialising of the older men at the Waterloo bar. I pay attention to how the men bought drinks in 'rounds,' which served to demarcate those who were within the group from those who were excluded. Viewed as the wealthy elite of Black River, these men emphasised the importance of being seen not to 'segregate' themselves from the rest of the town. However, the bar that they chose to drink in, Waterloo, held particular class connotations and many men felt uncomfortable drinking there. I look at how this group attempted to maintain their physical and sexual 'strength' through an account of going to eat an aphrodisiacal stew. Waterloo became a space in which the men could share their experiences of marginalization during their times abroad (particularly in the US) and also their sense of feeling threatened by being perceived as targets of crime by younger, poorer men.

In Chapter Eight I look at the men's support for international football teams, and especially English Premier League (EPL) teams. I focus on a 'football

breakfast' in which one of the older players paid to give each of the younger ones a breakfast at Waterloo, and they would arrange to watch a 'big' football match. I locate their lives in Black River within their broader histories of movement outside of the region. I also look at how they watched football, and the ways in which they were affected by spectating together (following the work of Skeggs and Wood 2011, 2012). I look at how differences in viewing practices located the groups of men in relation to one other, and also how their interactions with the EPL situated them in relation to wider football networks. In this chapter I am interested in following both the men's lives and football as they intersected with wider geographies.

In each of the chapters I include the biographies of amateur players. I embed their views on football within their social networks away from the field and I have tried to use their own words to explain the importance and meaning of football and its techniques for them. Where possible, while transcribing I attempted to maintain the distinctiveness of their patois. In cases where the patois might make comprehension difficult, I have given an edited transcription in an accompanying footnote.

List of Principal Research Participants

Doc – Doc was in his mid-30s, and was a medical doctor who split his time between working in the Black River Hospital and in his private clinic. He was married with two children and lived a little outside of Black River in a large house. He had not been allowed to participate in schoolboy football, but had subsequently played in the Jamaican Division One (one level below the Jamaican Premier League).

Cavin – Cavin was in his 50s, and operated a taxi between Black River and Savanna-La-Mar. He was in a long-term cohabiting partnership with a woman, although he did not indicate whether he had any children. He had attained a scholarship to a prestigious High School in Jamaica through playing football, and had later played in the Jamaican Premier League.

Freddy – Freddy was in his late-20s and was a librarian in the Black River public library. He neither told me of any long-term partner nor of any children, and shared a house with his brother (Teddy), Teddy's 'wife' (long-term, cohabiting girlfriend), and Teddy's son. Freddy had been a very popular schoolboy football player for Black River High School, and had subsequently played for the St Elizabeth parish team.

Mr Bennett – Mr Bennet was in his mid-40s and was an accountant in Black River who also owned and operated an Ice Factory until he was forced to close it due to rising costs of electricity. He was married with three sons. His eldest two sons had both migrated to the United States on football (soccer) scholarships, although one of them had decided to halt his studies and begin to work as a delivery man. His youngest son attended a prestigious High School and represented them in schoolboy football. Mr Bennett had played schoolboy football, and had also participated in his university team however, after continuing his studies in the United States he took a break from playing.

Mr Michaels – Mr Michaels was in his mid-40s and taught Sciences in Black River High School. He was married with a son and a daughter, both of whom attended prestigious High Schools and excelled in their studies. He had not

played schoolboy football but had organized teams and tournaments when he worked for a large company.

Peter – Peter was in his mid-20s and at the beginning of fieldwork was employed in Mr Bennet’s ice factory. However, when the factory closed he found himself unemployed and became reliant on piecework around the town and on support from his long-term girlfriend and network of friends and family. He had played schoolboy football for a well-respected High School although left with limited qualifications due to what he termed his rebellious “nature”.

Teddy – Teddy was in his early 30s and cohabited with his long-term partner and their son. He owned and operated a successful electronics repair shop in Black River, and travelled to the United States at least once a year to see his family living there, and to informally research new technologies (phones, computers, and software for example) appearing on the market. He had not played schoolboy football, and had only learned to enjoy the sport latterly after rain had prevented him from playing volleyball.

Chapter 2: The Black River Walking Tour

Mrs Allison Morris¹ is a teacher, historian, and vocal exponent of the heritage of Black River. Drawing on oral narratives passed down through her family, as well as her exploration of archives, she has collated a wealth of data about the history of the town. During the first months of my fieldwork I helped to promote the ‘Black River Heritage Tour,’ initially conceived by Mrs Morris. The tour aimed to encourage more tourists to experience the town beyond the crocodile tours along the river, and to raise awareness about the town’s past. Her tours incorporated both archive material and the narratives of her family in her tours around Black River. I was able to go on two such tours, and Mrs Morris made it clear that each walk and each set of people called forth different memories and strands of thought.

In what follows, I rely on discussions I had with Mrs Morris, as well as correspondence with her over different aspects of Black River’s past but I also provide material on my own ‘walking tour’ of Black River. I have adopted her form of imparting the knowledge by structuring this chapter as a ‘walking tour.’ This structure includes telling a history of the town while also engaging with its present. Ingold writes that “it is by *walking along* from place to place, and not by building up from local particulars, that we come to know what we do” (2010: S121-2 italics in original). A walking tour involves recognising that each person might take a different route, make different connections, and narrate different histories.

¹ With her permission, I have not anonymised Allison Morris and she has consented to my use of her historical research. Her ‘Black River Heritage’ tours are offered to the public and actively promoted in Black River.

On my last day in the field I went for a final walk around Black River. I brought my camera and tried to take photos that would later serve as an aide-memoire. In writing this chapter I opened these photographs again and journeyed once more through the town. The photographs were a reminder that history could not be abstracted from the time of writing or, indeed, the time of reading.

Black River is characterised in popular and political speech as a backwater, a town that once experienced an economic 'boom' brought by the sale of logwood from which an indigo dye could be extracted, but which suffered a significant decline with the introduction of synthetic dyes. In its very name, the town implies motion and the Black River flows 33 miles into Jamaica's interior. It sits at the mouth of the river between salt and freshwater, and the flow of the river into the sea allows the freshwater crocodiles to swim some way along the coast. Throughout its history the town was not only a port for people, goods, and services to move through, but also a place where people lived and died. Many were unable to move around the area during slavery and, since emancipation, others have been unable to move due to economic constraints. This lack of movement did not equate with passivity, as the area was also the site of resistance to colonial rule. This history of resistance is often missing in the popular narratives of the town but it is a reminder of Black River's creative, dynamic past.

Freedom, space, and movement

Concerns of movement and the production of space have been integral to understandings of freedom and the self throughout the Caribbean. As Arendt

argues, “of all the specific liberties which may come into our minds when we hear the word ‘freedom,’ freedom of movement is historically the oldest and also the most elementary” (Arendt 1968 [1959]: 9). In her *Citizenship from Below* (2012), Mimi Sheller “explores how freedom is exercised and enacted as a complex set of embodied relations in diverse contexts of activation” (2012:17). Her work interrogates the historical archive to seek out “silences” (ibid.:167), both of the voices of those who were enslaved, and the silencing of embodied knowledge. Sheller shows that movement and control of the body have been foundational to understandings of freedom in the Caribbean as, during slavery, colonial policing of how a person could use their body (particularly who could reproduce), who could move and where they could move differentiated free from enslaved. Her work also explores how spatial practices became sites of control and revolution. The importance of the body and movement in understandings of freedom is articulated in a phrase from post-independence Haiti: “Vous signé *nom* moi, mais vous pas signé *pieds* moi (You signed my name, but you haven’t signed my feet’ (Ardouin 1860: 10:23n1)” (quoted in Sheller, italics in original, 2012:166). The expression indicated that, although labourers in post-independence Haiti might be contractually responsible to their employers, they could also exercise freedom of movement if they were mistreated. The ability to voice protest with the feet distinguished labourers in post-independence Haiti from slaves some of whom would have, literally, been branded by their owners. Sheller showed that freedom could be analysed through a focus on embodied practice, a “corporeal politics” (ibid.:213), which emphasises aspects of movement, control, and the negotiation of space.

In her work, Jean Besson has focussed on the links between spatial and embodied practices and their relation to oral narratives of post-emancipation Jamaica. *Martha Brae's Two Histories* (2002) contrasts the history of Martha Brae according to colonial archives and the oral histories of the formerly enslaved. Besson's work "contextualizes, integrates, and develops Martha Brae's Euro-Caribbean 'plantation' history and uncovers its Afro-Caribbean cultural history" (ibid.:8). Focussing on the flight of formerly enslaved people from plantations, she argues that "customary rights to yard and ground, and the interrelationship of kinship and land, became important bases for the reconstruction of identity and community among slaves" (ibid.:87). She highlights the importance of the land ownership and its transmission to heirs for establishing kinship networks that had been severed by the transatlantic passage (ibid.:293). Elsewhere, she has argued that the Maroons' oral narratives "anchor [...] transnational fields of relations in sacred sites embedded in the landscape" (2005:35). In her work, Besson thus demonstrates the importance of space and place for culture-building among the formerly enslaved.

Writing history inevitably entails privileging one out of many possible histories, even though the ethnographer or historian might attempt to give a holistic account through the incorporation of marginalised voices. In his *Silencing the Past* (1995), Trouillot argues that "any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences" (ibid.:27), and it is important for those writing history to listen intently and make productive use of these while also being aware of the production of further silences. In *The Black Jacobins*, C.L.R. James gave one example of attending to previously quietened voices, arguing that his intentions were to:

“write a book in which Africans or people of African descent instead of constantly being the object of other peoples’ exploitation and ferocity would themselves be taking action on a grand scale and shaping other people to their own needs” (James 2001 [orig.1938]:xv)

In the history of Black River that I have written, I have tried to write against the portrayal of the town as one that lay dormant for much of its history, only becoming active during the logwood boom, and instead particularly highlight the town’s importance in resistance to colonial rule.

Early Black River histories

After putting on my sandals, I began my walk passing by the neighbour’s goats which were grazing between the two houses. I lifted my hand and smiled at the neighbours and they returned my greeting. A Jamaican who had spent the majority of his life living and working in Canada owned the house at the far end of the track. He had bought the house in Black River and returned yearly for a month at a time. I had a long chat with him during a party at the Bennets’ house about his migration and, more importantly for him, of returning each year to Jamaica. He was keen to point out a large copper pot in his garden. The pot had originally been used to boil pieces of logwood to extract the dye. These pots were frequently stolen due to the value of copper so he filled the pot with soil and planted a tree in it so that it was too heavy to move. In Black River, it was logwood (rather than sugar) that brought large amounts of wealth to the town’s traders and plantation owners.

As I walked further down the path, avoiding the many potholes, I stopped

at the road to check that there were no cars speeding past. Trucks and ‘route-taxis’

seemed to view this length of road as an invitation to pick up some speed before slowing back down as they reached the town centre 500m further along. Although it is prosaic and non-descript, the view from the end of the path was one of my favourites in Jamaica.



Image 1. The view at the end of the track

A notable feature of the photographs² is that many of them contain wires which are evidence of networks of communication that extend far beyond Black River. I did not notice these when I was taking the photos and, as I saw them, I realised that these links with wider geographies were a key theme to Black

² All photographs are taken by the author unless stated otherwise.

River's history, as well as an important element today.

Understanding the town's history of inhabitation begins with recognising the importance of the town's position at the mouth of Jamaica's longest navigable river. Although the Caribbean is popularly characterised by the transatlantic slave trade, European colonialism, and the "infrastructural development of chattel slavery as a specific category" (Shepherd 2002a:x), authors have also noted the vibrant social life that predated the arrival of Europeans (Curet 2011; Higman 2011; Sued-Badillo 2011). There is evidence that the area occupied by Black River town was inhabited by the Taínos and Arawaks, the first people known to have arrived in Jamaica, around AD 600, who would likely have sailed to the island from Hispaniola (Higman 2011:24). 'Taíno' actually means 'good' or 'noble' in the Arawakan language and might well have been a term to differentiate the group of imprisoned 'natives' from their captors (Curet 2011:54). According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1910), Jamaica's original inhabitants were "a gentle and inoffensive people," (1910:271) who "smoked tobacco and played a football game called *bato*, in which both men and women joined" (ibid.:271). That the Arawaks played a type of football is corroborated by the *Westminster Review* (1901), which goes into more detail:

"[the Arawaks] played ball as no European ever played it. The ball was made of roots and herbs interlarded together, light and elastic. Sides were formed, one village playing another. The ball was thrown by one and caught by another on the head, brow, shoulder, elbow, wrist, back, knees, foot, anywhere but in the hands, backwards and forwards from one to another, and kept up by the hour with scarcely a miss; this they called *bato*" (1901:317)

After Columbus arrived during April 1494, directed by the people inhabiting Hispaniola, (Higman 2011:63), the Spanish colonised Jamaica and enslaved the indigenous Arawaks. Although work is currently underway to prove the sexual

mixing of Arawaks with others in Jamaica, it is generally agreed that all of them died “as early as 1520” (Higman 2011: 77). The Spanish killed local chiefs as part of their plans for the enslavement of the Taínos (Sued-Badillo 2011:112), and in response many committed suicide, attempted to escape, and fought back against their captors (ibid.:112). Sued-Badillo contends that “[t]he first *cimarrones* [translated into English as ‘maroons’], a term generally associated with runaway blacks, were actually Taino escapees” (ibid.:113).

Following an increased interest in the Taíno and Arawak inhabitation of Jamaica, further artefacts are being discovered around Black River. During my fieldwork, there were frequent stories of people finding pottery and tools near the mouth of the Black River and along the coast. Alison Morris says of these early inhabitants:

“It seems certain that before the Spanish arrived in 1494, a Taino (Arawak) occupation site was in or near what is now the town. A Taino dump (midden) was located on the coast between the Black River Spa and the present Black River Hospital. Fragments of Taino pottery could be found on this site up to in the 1970’s. Further inland, in the Spring Park area, the head of a Taino axe was found by a family friend” (Morris 2014)

There have been repeated attempts though archaeological excavations and genetic research to establish the extent to which the Arawaks and Taínos mixed with Europeans and Africans, as well as attempts to find out whether any managed to survive colonization.

It is important for those studying the Caribbean to recognise the inhabitation of Jamaica prior to the arrival of Europeans in order to destabilise the impression of the region as somehow having been ‘discovered’ by Columbus in 1494, and only entering ‘history’ with European inhabitation. Similarly, in learning of a ball game very similar to football in Jamaica I argue that the sport

does not have a singular tradition, but rather multiple origins and has been made and remade in different spaces and different times.

After looking out to sea for a few moments, I turned left to walk towards the town centre. The sea wall had fallen in several places and I was cautious going along the road as there was no pavement. After a minute's walk the pavement began again and the next 'silence' was a shipwreck. Nobody I spoke to knew exactly where the boat had come from, though several theories were often traded informally among residents. Some maintained that it had been strewn upon the shallow rocks during one of the hurricanes in the 1980s. Others, far less numerous, suggested that it had been used to smuggle drugs but the occupants had fled after being chased by the police. For several residents it had become an unlikely symbol of Black River, and they might feel disappointed if it was removed. The boat had been almost entirely in-tact, albeit rusty, when I had first visited Black River in 2007. The council paid a company to remove it but they had simply salvaged scrap metal and left the ragged hull seen in the photograph below.

Black River's position along the coast brought with it known and unknown dangers and two in particular emerge when looking at the shipwreck. The first was the danger of hurricanes, as they often move northwards over the Atlantic, first making contact on Jamaica's south-west coast at or near to Black River. Many residents spoke about Hurricane Ivan, the most destructive in recent history, which damaged many properties and businesses around the town. Hurricane Sandy was predicted to hit Black River during my time in the field in October 2012, but the weather media at the time reported that it changed course at the last moment, and caused most damage in South-East Jamaica. The second danger brought by the sea was the 'drugs-for-guns' trade



Image 2. The Shipwreck

which, according to residents, ran from Kingston to the comparatively less well guarded areas of the coast around Black River. From there the drugs were traded for firearms and then transported to Haiti and overseas. While in the contemporary period it is the drug trade and the hurricane routes that make Black River's proximity to the sea perilous, during the seventeenth-century it was the threat of invasion by other colonial powers and the unprecedented movement of bodies in the transatlantic slave trade that characterised Black River's relationship to the sea.

Britain took Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655 and both nations used Black River as a port of entry. The first slaves were brought by the Spanish and Portuguese to Jamaica in 1513 (Senior 2003), and the importation of slaves

from West Africa continued once the British captured the island (Senior 2003). Black River appeared in the records in 1740, as Charles Leslie noted that there was a bridge built over the Black River, although he did not specify where the bridge was built; it could have been anywhere along the river's length. By 1750, Jamaica had the second largest population in the Caribbean (142,000), and was also one of the most densely populated (Higman 2011:131).

Among local residents and amateur historians, Black River is said to have



Image 3: The pavement and a stretch of the South Coast facing away from Black River, with scrap metal from shipwreck on the shore

been second in importance to Kingston at the beginning of the twentieth-century as a consequence of the trade in slaves and logwood. A focus on the

sugar industry has led to a paucity of records available and a general lack of academic interest in the logwood trade and other commodities and industries in the Caribbean during and immediately after slavery (Shepherd 2002b; Shepherd 2009).

While it certainly did not rival other ports in the island during the slave trade, a significant number of slaves were landed in Black River's port. According to data available through the 'Slave Trade Database', eight slave ships disembarked in Black River between 1781 and 1793. These ships principally picked up slaves from the Windward Coast and the Gold Coast, but also from the Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea Islands, and the Bight of Benin. These 8 ships disembarked 2,190 slaves. 2,469 slaves had embarked on these ships, meaning that 279 died during the voyage from Africa to Jamaica. While these numbers might seem large, put in the perspective of the 660,000 slaves received by Jamaica during the transatlantic slave trade (the second largest number of slaves of any individual colony in the Caribbean) they are comparatively small (Higman 2011:132).

Edward Long in *The History of Jamaica* (1774) characterised Black River in the 1740s as a mixture of different indigenous Amerindian groups and Spanish and English colonisers. He claimed that Black River had "been the rendezvous of several logwood-cutters for nearly fifty years past" (1774:325). Although the town was in the middle of a conflict taking place throughout the Caribbean between the Spanish and the English, "greater quantities of European goods were brought hither [i.e. to Black River] than the inhabitants had occasion for" (ibid.:325). For Long, Black River was an "asylum, where they [the logwood-cutters] might lead a lawless, abandoned life with impunity" (ibid.). 'Asylum' indicates that it was not only a place to 'lead a lawless,

abandoned life' but also a place that the residents were either unable or unwilling to leave and also a place where they could conduct their lives in safety.

According to the *Abridgement of the laws of Jamaica passed between the years 1680 and 1792* (1802) a law had been passed by 1792 for “a beam, pair of scales, and set of standard weights” to be kept in Black River (1802:21) and, also, that it was as much a “Felony” (ibid.:65) to “damage the ferry at Black-River, or take away any of the ropes, cranes, &c.” (ibid.:65) as it was “to kidnap Indians, with intent to sell them” (ibid.:65), or “carry off a slave without the owner’s or manager’s consent” (ibid.:65). Therefore, by 1792 Black River was a town of some importance for trade. These laws might also indicate that Arawaks, the ‘Indians’ referred to, were still living near to Black River in 1792, in spite of popular conceptions that they had been killed by the late seventeenth-century.

Black River was of military significance in the late eighteenth-century, as it was described in-depth in William Lemprière’s *Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Army in Jamaica* (1799). Lemprière noted that Black River was a particularly unhealthy place for a soldier to stay:

“the river from its situation, must often furnish unhealthy exhalations; while the heat of the town, the confined manner in which the houses are built, and the contiguity of the barracks by which it becomes difficult to prevent acts of intemperance among the soldiers, these contribute their share to render this an unhealthy situation for British troops” (1799:135).

He concluded that the town “therefore seems particularly unfavourable to such constitutions as are not assimilated to the climate” (ibid.:135). The statistics that he produced supported his conclusion, as out of the 13th Light Dragoons regiment stationed in “Black River, Savanna la Mar, and Maroon service,”

(ibid.:230), three of every ten soldiers died in their first year (ibid.:230), and three of every nine in their second (ibid.:231). During the eighteenth-century, therefore, Black River was defined by the movement of goods and bodies, as the British military maintained their control of the island while importing slaves and exporting commodities. However, the eighteenth-and nineteenth-centuries saw an economic 'boom' in the town that contributed to the building of ornate Georgian buildings.

Both politicians and others locally bemoaned the lack of beaches near Black River. The South Coast does not have the idealised pristine white beaches that tourists expect to find in Jamaica. There are sandy beaches along the coast,



Image 4. The pavement and the Black River bay

but nothing to rival the beaches on the North Coast. In *Image 4*, it is possible to make out some boats harboured in Black River. These are most likely fishing boats that have returned from, or are about to depart for, expeditions before selling their catch to wholesalers who meet them at the jetty. This area would have been the one that greeted the entirely unimpressed M.G.Lewis, who inherited a great amount of Jamaican plantation land, and would have been the route taken by Lady Nugent on her way to the Church in Black River in 1802 (see below). As the pavement moved away from the sea, I crossed the road, cut

through the post office car park, refusing the leaflets being handed out by Seventh Day Adventists, and came out by the side of the Anglican Church.

Rebellion and Resistance

In *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805*, Lady Nugent writes of a visit to Black River on April 18th, 1802. Her journal chronicled the period at the zenith of Jamaica's slave trade, when the island "became the world's largest exporter, shipping more than 100,000 tons of sugar in 1804, the product of about 700 plantations" (Higman 2011:166). She did not remark about the town itself, but only about the Anglican Church where she attended a service:

"At 10, go to Black River, about five miles off, to church. The building is shabby and much neglected. All the congregation, excepting our party and nine other persons, were either black or brown. I cannot help here remarking, that the clergyman's wife, Mrs. Warren, excused herself from attending, on account of the service being so long to-day. Her married daughter, too, who is the widow of the later Chief Justice, did the same. At the Communion, there were only one old white man and woman and one *brown* lady, besides ourselves, for the clergyman's two daughters, who came with us, left the church with the rest of the congregation; and yet they are certainly of an age to join in the service, being nearer to thirty than twenty years old." (Nugent 1966:93, italics in original)

Lady Nugent restricted herself to a mocking account of a service and Communion in Black River, during which her husband 'General N.' eventually grew exasperated with the clergyman conducting the service and "shook his head, saying 'Please to go on, Sir, I beg!'" (Nugent 1966:93). Lady Nugent did not remark upon the town, in spite of its prosperity and importance in the slave

trade, and implies that Black River was not a place to be visited *per se* but only passed through. This impression of the town as a stage in a journey, rather than as a destination, is also apparent in M.G.Lewis's account.

In his *Journal of a West-Indian Proprieter 1815-1817*, M.G.Lewis described his arrival in Black River, that “champagne bottle of a bay” (Lewis 1834:50) that can be seen in *Image 4*. Lewis's father had been born in Jamaica but had spent most of his life in England and M.G.Lewis himself only spent three years on the island. After describing the particular hazards of entering the port due to its shallow, rocky waters, he went on to give an impression of Black River and its environs:

“The north side of the island is said to be extremely beautiful and romantic; but the south, which we coasted to-day, is low, barren, and without any recommendation whatever. As yet I can only look at Jamaica as one does on a man who comes to pay money, and whom we are extremely well pleased to see, however little the fellow's appearance may be in his favour” (Lewis 1834: 51).

For William Lemprière, Lady Nugent, and M.G.Lewis, the town was an inhospitable one that was to be endured rather than enjoyed, and all three were keen to leave it (or recommend leaving it) as soon as one were able to do so. However, this desire to leave extended beyond Black River to Jamaica in general, as from 1770 “there were more absentee-owned properties than plantations on which planters lived” (Higman 2011:136) and “they [the absentee proprietors] simply enjoyed the profits transferred to their accounts” (ibid.:136). The ability to move away allowed proprietors the opportunity to collect high incomes without having to live in Jamaica. According to Matthew Parker:

“startlingly high mortality rates would remain one of the most remarkable – and influential – features of the sugar societies [such as Jamaica]. For the next 150 years [from 1650 to 1800, the most lucrative years of plantation slavery], something like a

third of all whites died within three years of arriving in the Caribbean” (Parker 2011:46)

The slave trade allowed wealthy people in Europe to own property in Jamaica which produced an (often lucrative) income stream while they were absent. By contrast, the slave labour that produced the profits was supplied through the forced movement of people across the Atlantic Ocean and onto the absentee-owned property. The importance of the contrast between the absent owners who received income from the plantations and the presence of the slaves who were denied any share of the produce of their labour became particularly acute at times of rebellion.

Allison Morris had a wealth of information about the Church as she attended regularly and played the organ for the services. Of the Church, she says:

“In the early to mid 18th century, the Church of England (the state church at the time) established a church in the town square. When the first Moravians arrived in Jamaica in 1754, they found a few people worshipping at this church. It was named the Parish Church of St. John the Evangelist, and initially served the wealthy planter class.”

(Morris 2014)

When they arrived in Jamaica, the Moravians kept records of the different experiences of Christianity of those they encountered and therefore furnished details such as those above. Morris argues that, “the Church of England in Jamaica almost totally rejected slaves throughout the 18th century” (Morris 2014), while Nonconformist churches such as Moravians, Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians gained popularity among the non-planter classes (*ibid.*). In Jamaica, the history of religion is especially important for its role in culture-building (Besson 2002).

St. John's Church had a somewhat convoluted past, but one that contributes to an understanding of the town and its relationship to wider geographies. In a pamphlet entitled 'St John's Parish Church, Black River – A National Monument,' the anonymous author suggested that the Church stood



Image 5. Church of St. John the Evangelist

on the site of a previous one, and had been in existence since at least 1774. However, the tower had been built later and “has a stone inscribed as having been laid in 1837” (Pamphlet n.d.). The pamphlet also indicated that the bricks used to build the Church were “London stock bricks and stone of first class workmanship” and that “the walls around the Churchyard have huge imported granite copings” (ibid.). The bell was cast in the same forgery as Big Ben before being shipped to Jamaica. Inside the Church there were a number of

monuments and tablets. Mrs Morris had indicated that one tablet was of particular historical importance. That tablet read:

“The Hon. DUNCAN ROBERTSON, Member of Her Majesty’s Privy Council in this island, Major General of Militia and Custos Rotulorum of this parish...having been 24 years Custos, 20 years Major General and 13 years Member of Council. As Custos, he was remarkable for firmness of purpose, decision of character and ready attention to parochial duties. As General of Militia the essential service he rendered his country in assisting to quell the rebellion of 1831 will long be remembered. As Member of the Privy Council he fearlessly and conscientiously discharged the duties of that office during a series of years when legislation was rendered peculiarly difficult and trying...d 9 May 1850, leaving a widow and five sons, aged 69 years 6 months. Erected by the inhabitants of the parish.” (transcription courtesy of Allison Morris).

The Hon. Robertson is known for the ‘essential service he rendered his country in assisting to quell the rebellion of 1831’. This rebellion referred to the uprising led by the Baptist preacher Sam Sharpe commonly called the Christmas Rebellion, Morant Bay Rebellion, or Baptist War.

In 1835, Bernard Martin Senior published a book entitled “Jamaica, as it was, as it is, and as it may be [...] The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” which gave an account of the Baptist war from the perspective of a “retired Military officer” (also in the title). He reported that the “scene of action, so far as relates to the Rebellion, lies principally between the maritime towns of Black River and Montego Bay” (Martin Senior 1835:14), and gave a rare impression of the town:

“The town of Black River is (like all others in Jamaica) almost entirely built of wood; the houses being in general two stories high, having shops, called ‘stores,’ and piazzas below, and the dwelling house above. To a stranger, the roofs appear uncommonly neat, being covered with cedar, bullet tree, or broad leaf shingles, all of which soon assume a blueish cast, from the operation of the sun and heavy rains; thereby resembling the

finest slates. For the jalousies and Venetian blinds, green is invariably adopted, which, contrasted with the yellow stone-colour the exterior of the house represents, has a most pleasing effect, giving a clean and lively appearance to the buildings, very striking to a new comer. Some, however, display great want of taste, in substituting red for stone-colour, because the expence [sic.] is less, but it soon becomes dingy and sombre.”

(Martin Senior 1835:21)

Martin Senior characterised the port as “too extensive and open to be denominated perfectly safe” (ibid.:21) and said that the sea “abounds with excellent fish” (ibid.). It was also in Black River where Martin Senior recounted meeting “a mulatto slave ... [who] had realized a considerable sum of money by his various occupations” (1835:44) whom he asked what the consequences would be “if freedom was granted to every slave indiscriminately[?]” (ibid.). William (the slave)’s response, according to Martin Senior, is worth recounting in full to give a flavour of the author’s approach to the topic of slavery and the Baptist War.

“Massa, de plain trute is, if every body make free, some niggah so vile, dat many of we, who hab a little property, would be murdered first, to get de money and de stock. Massa, as for me, I couldn’t dare to go over dat bridge [i.e. to a group of rebel slaves], because dem all know I make money by my trades. Next, massa, dem would break and burn buckra [the slave owner’s] house, and murder buckra man while him house burning. Den, massa, dem get plenty of rum, dem drink too much, and fight for buckra wife; de liquor too trong for dem head, so dem kill each oder, till only few left, and day run to de woods, because king of England would send him soldier to shoot all de rest. Massa, believe me, dat all true.” (Martin Senior 1835:45).

Although Martin Senior may well have been given such an answer from William, this response would have been predetermined by the vast differences in legal, economic, and social status between the slave and the white ‘retired Military Officer’. Moreover, it was in Martin Senior’s interests, writing on behalf of the

colonial authorities, to emphasise the negative impact of emancipation to the slaves themselves, who comprised the vast majority of Jamaica's population.

After the rebellion broke out, many women and children were put aboard merchant ships anchored in the Black River harbour (Martin Senior 1835:193), and King's troops were sent to Black River and Montego Bay, the two cities where the rebellion was felt most keenly (ibid.:194). Hume's *The Life of Edward John Eyre* (1867) corroborated the notion that Black River was one of the key sites of the Rebellion in 1831. Militia men were lodged in the Church after landing before marching into the interior the following day. St. John's Church therefore contributed to the causes of the uprising and in its suppression.

Once the rebellion had been quelled by the colonial authorities trials took place throughout Jamaica, and many took place in Black River's court house. Martin Senior gave an in-depth account of one man – a “stout able fellow” (1835:226) accused of involvement in the rebellion. The man gave an oral testimony of how he had been coerced into joining the rebellion on pain of death. The court listened to him “[w]ith considerable patience” (ibid.:228) although Martin Senior's account could not avoid the contradiction between the court's apparent ‘patience’ and its interruption of the man's account. The man was convicted of “the crime of arson in its general acceptance” (ibid.:230), and “on sentence of death being passed upon him, he totally lost his presence of mind, and was removed in that state” (ibid.:230). The author seemed shocked that a man might ‘los[e] his presence of mind’ after being handed a death sentence for the crime of arson. One of those charged with restoring order both to the surrounding areas and to the courtroom was “Colonel J.M----r” (ibid.:230) who both “commanded the St Elizabeth's regiment, and [was the] senior magistrate, next to the custos” (ibid.:230). He was commended on both

counts; “Colonel M.’s arrangements were highly approved of, and materially tended to afford protection and suppress rebellion.” (ibid.:230). Finally, Martin Senior summarised the impact of the rebellion on St Elizabeth:

“As the vile incendiaries received some severe checks before they penetrated far into the parish of St. Elizabeth’s, the principal losses sustained in that parish, besides the properties named as burnt, were in negroes taken during the rebellion, who were tried and executed; but there is no doubt this fine parish would have suffered to a great extent, if the career of devastation had not been thus timely arrested, as it was well known that every property was to share the same fate” (ibid.:288).

As Gad Heuman (1994) notes, in spite of its apparent failure the Baptist War made a considerable impact as it “had the effect of speeding up emancipation” (1994: 38) in 1838 and “the Act freeing the slaves was passed less than two years after the rebellion had begun” (ibid.: 38) in 1833.

Walking on from the Church, I noticed that there was still an outline of the island of Jamaica made with pieces of plastic threaded through metal fencing by the side of the street. This outline had been created by its anonymous artist on 1st August, 2012 to celebrate Emancipation Day. The understatement of the outline contrasted with the Church building opposite. While the church had once symbolised colonial oppression, the plastic outline offered an image of free Jamaica. While fencing might not seem to be the best medium for a symbol of freedom, the use of malleable plastic threaded between the metal offered an image of creativity being used within, through, and around boundaries in the same way that enslaved people manoeuvred within the rigidly controlled plantation system to resist oppression.



Image 6. 'Jamaica' and island outline threaded through metal

The market, the Zong massacre, and tourist buses

I next walked through the Black River market. About three times each week I would sit with Shana, a 'higgler' (market trader) who sold fruit and vegetables. These were opportunities to catch up on what was happening around the town, as well as to learn about the higglers' trade and the space of the market³. In Jamaica, higglers are most commonly women, and thus offered a contrast to the football field and the bar which were both dominated by men. Knowing that the meeting might well be my last with Shana, I had some

³ I have presented some of the material I gathered with the higglers elsewhere (Tantam 2013).

photographs of her, her mother (one of the most respected higglers in the market), and her son, Dwayne, printed for them.

“What’s up Shana, you good?”

“Not as good as you, Williams ... Nutt’n nuh guan fi wi”⁴



Image 7. The Black River market

The construction of a new covered market had begun a few months before I arrived in November 2011 and affected trade. There was greater instability while the building works were underway, as higglers were coerced into moving their stalls to different areas of the town. They had been moved off their previous site, and had decided to move onto the roadside in order to improve their visibility and their economic potential. The increased ease of transport had also impacted on the market as it meant that many customers

⁴ “Nothing’s going on for us”

chose to take a 30 minute route taxi ride to Santa Cruz (a larger town) to buy their produce. Many claimed that it was cheaper to buy their fruit and vegetables in 'Santa,' although Juliette vehemently denied any truth in the suggestion. Construction was still not complete on my departure in December 2012.

Tour buses would drive through the town to get to one of the Black River companies who took 'safaris' up the river to look at the wildlife, in particular the Jamaican crocodile. Often tourists would press their cameras to the tour bus window to take photos of the higglers, and would smile and wave to them as they passed. Most of the time, Shana was happy to smile and wave, or hold Dwayne and have him wave as well. At other times she would turn her back. "Dem call wi black gorillas," she explained, before suggesting that I might return to England with my photographs and insult them in the same way.

In Sheller's work on tourism in the Caribbean (2003, 2004, 2012) she argues that tourism might be "understood as a form of embodied encounter between foreign travellers and local people that involves corporeal relations of unequal power" (2012:210). In *Consuming the Caribbean* (2003) she interrogates the unequal power between Euro-American consumers and 'consumed' Caribbean bodies and argues that:

"the emotive and figurative moorings of the colonial relations that shaped economic, cultural, material, and human exchanges between the North Atlantic region and the Caribbean in previous centuries continue to inform that relation today" (2003:7)

The inequalities between North Atlantic consumers and Caribbean people have their roots in longer trajectories of colonial contact.

The tour buses made inequalities between the US and Jamaica clear, and supported Sheller's claim that "Northern consumers are able to experience their

proximity to Caribbean people as pleasurable even when it manifestly involves relations of subordination” (Sheller 2003:27). The cameras through the tinted tour bus windows made these issues very apparent to Shana. However, as Sheller argues, “gazing on another requires a certain degree of proximity, which puts the gazer at risk” (2012:212), as the gaze might be returned, deflected, and appropriated. The higglers could take advantage of these events to sell the tourists fruit or vegetables at inflated prices. One particular strategy that Shana utilised was to adopt a ‘Jamerican’ (Jamaican-American) accent as the tourists passed by, saying, “what’s up man? Can I sell sum’n to you today?”. While the spatial and corporeal practices of tourists highlighted global economic imbalances, the higglers adopted their own strategies to use the relationship established by the tourist gaze for their own gain. At the same time, Shana recognised that these moments also drew attention to the ambivalences of my position between a white tourist and local resident and she referred to those in the buses as my “colleagues”. I was also aware that occasionally the prices of the fruit and vegetables I bought from Shana were nearer to those charged to tourists than to residents but, at other times, I was given larger portions at lower prices than some residents.

After saying my farewells to Shana, Dwayne, and Julette, I left the market and continued down the road. On the left there was a small monument to the Zong massacre, which occurred outside Black River port in 1781. In the official records of the *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Royal Court of King’s Bench* (Roscoe 1831), on the date of Thursday 22nd May there was a summary of the ‘Gregson v. Gilbert (a)’ case. The record gave this sombre overview:

“Where the captain of a slave-ship mistook *Hispaniola* for *Jamaica*, whereby the voyage

being retarded, and the water falling short, several of the slaves died for want of water, and others were thrown overboard [...] some of the negroes died for want of sustenance, and others were thrown overboard for the preservation of the rest” (Roscoe 1831:232)

Walvin’s (2011) historical study of the Zong massacre stressed its contribution to the abolition of the slave trade. He drew on the testimony given by one of the ship’s crew, “James Kelsall,” which better described the acts as they unfolded.

“On 29 November, with the *Zong* still far to the west of Jamaica, the crew (now numbering only eleven men) were assembled and asked what they thought of the suggestion that, faced with the water crisis, ‘Part of the Slaves should be destroyed to save the rest and the remainder of the slaves and the crew put to short allowance.’ James Kelsall later claimed that he was shocked, and objected when he first heard the proposal. If that is true, his objections quickly subsided. The crew agreed to the proposal unanimously. No one on board objected to the suggestion that they kill some of the slaves. And they set about the murderous work immediately. At 8.p.m that same evening fifty-four women and children were pushed overboard, as Kelsall later described, ‘singly through the Cabin windows’. The timing was important: darkness was falling and the change in the ship’s watch allowed all hands to be available for the killings. Two days later, on 1 December, a group of forty-two men were thrown overboard from the quarterdeck. A third batch of thirty-eight Africans were killed some time later: ten Africans, realising what was about to happen, jumped overboard to their deaths. Somehow, one of the Africans managed to clamber back on board” (2011:97-8)

Of the 442 Africans who embarked on the *Zong* in São Tomé, 200 were advertised for sale in Black River. The captain of the *Zong*, Collingwood, was later tried in court over whether he could claim insurance on his loss of ‘cargo’. In 2007 the monument to those who perished was unveiled in Black River (below). The tablet reads:

‘The Zong Massacre. This Plaque is laid as a lasting and solemn tribute in honour of our 133 African ancestors who were massacred by drowning November 29-December 1, 1781 by Captain and crew of the slave ship *Zong* during its voyage to Jamaica. The ship

docked in Black River on December 22, 1781. At this site the enslaved were prepared for sale in 1st Black River Slave Market.’

During my fieldwork an international group called the ‘Lifeline Expedition’ visited Jamaica in order to apologise for the slave trade. One of the towns that they visited was Black River, where they were to walk in chains wearing shirts saying ‘SO SORRY’. In *The Gleaner*⁵ edition on 4th August, 2012 Paul Williams covered the walk in Black River. After they had completed the walk, the leader of the expedition gave a speech but was forced to stop as a Rastafarian on his bicycle “was not going to be silenced” (Williams 2012) and shouted over him: “Wi waan wi reparation money! [...] Sorry fah can’t help black people now A long time dem a talk bout sorry fah!”⁶ (ibid.). When Williams asked the “Rastaman” (ibid.) what he thought about the expedition, the man replied:

“This is nonsense, man, walking around apologising That a cartoon thing. That’s a joke. A mockery that If you nuh feel a thing, yuh can’t know it This is a mockery against black people. This is a reproach.”⁷ (ibid.)

While the Zong might seem to be a relic of a distant part of Jamaican history, the ‘Rastaman’ pointed towards inequalities that continue to the present. Indeed, during emancipation it was the slave-owners and not the enslaved who received repayments. The ‘lifeline expedition’ pointed towards the potential impact of ‘walking,’ bodies, and contested spaces. Moreover, it highlighted the enduring importance of sites such as the Zong monument in understandings of the legacies of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The slave trade in and around Black River was a silence during my

⁵ *The Gleaner* is one of Jamaica’s most widely read newspapers.

⁶ ‘We want our reparation money! [...] Sorry can’t help black people now... . A long time they’ve been talking about sorry!’

⁷ “This is nonsense, man, walking around apologising... . That’s a cartoon thing. That’s a joke. That’s a mockery. If you haven’t felt something you can’t know it. This is a mockery against black people. This is a reproach”

fieldwork that I had difficulty addressing. The topic of slavery was notable in its absence from discussions and chats around the football pitch, the bar, and the street corner. Over the course of fieldwork, I heard slavery discussed on only a handful of occasions. The ‘Lifeline Expedition’ offered me one opportunity to discuss slavery with some of the older players around the bar. I asked Mr Michaels how he felt about the apologies, and he questioned what they would achieve. Mr Bennett joined the discussion, and they began to argue about the legacy of slavery and colonialism. While Mr Michaels maintained that they continued to be a cause of Jamaica’s position in the world economic system and of the pervasive poverty on the island, Mr Bennett “ve-he-ment-ly” denied it, and laid the blame with a corrupt and inefficient political system. Another moment that slavery was invoked, although not directly addressed, was during my interview with Terry when I asked about contemporary racism.

“T: Alright, the problem, yuh see the ting with us? We’re not exposed to racism and stuff, so it it it don’t affect us, y’know, we cuss one another all the time, yuh no how it probably affects someone in England or whatever, nah it nuh really affect us, we’re not, m’ya seh sum’n mi nah [laughs]

WT: No, no you can say it

T: No, no we’re not slavery to the thought of, you know? Yeah, we nuh feel like we’re depressed, we have been depressed or, y’know?

WT: Yeah

T: Those things don’t affect us⁸ (Interview 11/12/12)

⁸ “T: Alright, the problem, you see the thing with us? We’re not exposed to racism and stuff, so it doesn’t affect us, you know, because we insult one another all the time, you know how it probably affects someone in England or whatever, it doesn’t really affect us, I’m going to say something that I don’t [laughs] WT: No, no you can say it T: No, no we’re not slavery to the thought of, you know? Yeah, we don’t feel like we’re depressed, we have been depressed or, y’know? WT: Yeah T: Those things don’t affect us.”

Terry invoked slavery as a term for being tied to a state of mind rather than to a period in Jamaica's history. I did not pursue the theme in our interview as Terry did not seem comfortable talking about it. While Terry and Mr Bennett viewed discussions of slavery and the colonial past as distractions from other explanations for contemporary issues, Mr Michaels viewed the period as having a significant impact on the present. The legacy of slavery and colonialism are interpreted differently and invoke strong responses and I do not wish to generalise one view over others. It seemed as though the divisiveness of people's opinions on these issues contributed to their conspicuous absence. It has also proven difficult to address the silence of slave voices in the historical records, and the majority of my source material is from planter and colonial documents. I have tried to use Mrs Morris's personal experiences in order to redress this imbalance.

The period between 1835 and 1910 was one of intense change in Jamaica, and for Black River specifically. The 'flight from the estates' following emancipation in 1838 has been a particularly productive period of study for anthropologists (Besson 2002; Davis-Palmer 2010; Mintz 1989; Mintz 2010) who highlighted the creative responses and modes of resistance employed by the enslaved both preceding and following emancipation. By 1870, the number of sugar plantations had dropped from a peak of around 1,000 in 1770 to 300 (Higman 2011:169), and sugar exports halved between 1838 and 1870 (ibid.:168). By contrast, some in Black River experienced prosperity at the end of the nineteenth-century due to the logwood boom. Alison Morris described the movement of logwood:

"Large quantities of the wood were floated down the river on boats called lighters. The logwood was weighed by large scales at what became known as Farquharson Wharf, and

then taken out into the bay to be loaded onto large ships for export to Europe. Sugar, pimento, coffee and cattle skins were also shipped from Black River.” (Morris 2014).

The *Laws of Jamaica* (1860) included an act requiring that “Black-River shall be a warehousing port for the warehousing of goods imported into the said island [Jamaica] by ships or other vessels” (1860:85). Black River was named in two further acts passed in 1860. The first involved the obligation to maintain the navigability of the river, which fell upon “the commissioners of highways and bridges for Saint Elizabeth” (ibid.:237), and the second encouraged the breeding of race horses (ibid.:370-1). The wealthiest people in the town were particularly concerned with its warehouses and race courses in the following years.

However, not everybody was prospering. In Sheller’s *Citizenship from Below* (2012), she gives an account of expressions of dissatisfaction in Black River:

“A custos reported one such incident [of protest] in which women participated: ‘On the first day of August a large body of Negroes from the neighborhood ... determined on proceeding to Black River accompanied by their wives and the women of the Neighborhood and that the purpose was that the women should take at the stores any thing they required ... The People allege that they have been informed that the Queen has sent out a large sum of money to be laid out in the purchase of lands to be divided among them and that the Custos has kept it for himself.’ Here, a popular sense of justice was asserted through the symbolic act of a procession through the streets on the 1 August, a holiday commemorating the anniversary of emancipation” (2012:81, Eyre to Cardwell, 7 August 1865, enclosing report of Custos John Salmon, PRO, CO 137/392).

In October 1865, two months after this incident, Paul Bogle led the Morant Bay rebellion in the area around Montego Bay which was motivated by the feeling that the lives of those coerced into working on the plantations after emancipation were no better than they had been during slavery. Given the historical links between public spaces around Black River and colonial

oppression, it seems fitting that the women adopted the ‘symbolic act of a procession’ as a means to express their ‘popular sense of justice.’

Black River Boom

Black River underwent an economic boom during the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century. Three brothers were at the forefront of the town’s development. John William Leyden came to Black River on the invitation of a Farquharson (a member of the family which the wharf in Black River is named after). Although three of his sons arrived from the UK, only two remained. One, Thomas Patrick Leyden, partnered with William Farquharson to run a prosperous shipping business. Reading adverts for goods and services available in Black River at the time in *The Gleaner* (one of Jamaica’s most popular newspapers) archives reveal that these two governed the shipping trade. The Leyden family became so wealthy that their house was the first in Jamaica (and ahead of New York) to have electricity, which they introduced in 1893 in order to keep their race horses cool. Both Thomas Leyden and William Farquharson were horse-racing enthusiasts, and the two lived together in Waterloo House (now Waterloo Guest House). The Leydens built Waterloo sometime towards the end of the nineteenth-century, yet “On New Year’s Day 1816, M.G.Lewis [an absent proprietor discussed earlier] witnessed a spirited contest at Black River, in which he thought ‘the Blue girls of Waterloo’ easy winners over the Red set” (Higman 1998:251). The significance of the site of the famous English victory over Napoleon in 1815 was because Lord Nelson (who defeated Napoleon in the Battle of Trafalgar) had defended Jamaica from the French during the late

eighteenth-and early nineteenth-centuries. During my walk the cannons that once defended Black River from attack by the French forces had been upended and had traffic ‘stop’ signs cemented into them.

A popular story in Black River was of Thomas Leyden choosing to swim his famous horse, Candlewood, ashore due to the dangers of docking in Black River harbour. According to Tony Gambrill, whose notes contributed to my history of the town, “the brothers were Jamaica’s leading breeders and owners between 1888 and 1910” (notes c/o Alison Morris, compiled for an unpublished historical work on Black River dated 1/12/12). Antony Maitland, who has conducted research into his family history through the narratives of his relatives



Image 8. The grave of John William Leyden, 1813-1889

and archival documents, characterises the Farquharsons and Leydens at the end of the nineteenth-century:

“The Farquharson and Leyden families, who had two beautiful Victorian mansions at Black River, Invercauld and Magdala, competed with each other to entertain in the grandest manner. Mrs. Leyden, who had once been an Opera singer in Paris, was the leading Society hostess of Black River during the Victorian era. Old St. Elizabeth families such as the Farquharsons, the Griffiths, the Dalys, the Robertsons, the Hendricks, the Levys, the Cuffs, the Earles, the Calders, the Muirheads, the Myers, the Brownes, the Muschetts and the Coopers, would have been frequent guests at her mansion, to listen to visiting Opera singers, Orchestras and Classical Pianists” (Maitland n.d.)

The prosperity that had come to some in Black River did not last long. Higman (2011) notes that “[l]ogwood, the major dyewood, had a brief period of importance in the 1870s and 1880s when it benefited by the decline of sugar” (2011:229), and higher profits became possible once factories for the extraction of dye were built in Jamaica, meaning that the logs did not have to be processed in other countries (ibid.:229). After the lucrative logwood industry became obsolete in the early 1900s, the boom was over. Although many argued that the town was extremely prosperous and occupied an important position in the economic vitality of Jamaica in the early 1900s, my research has indicated otherwise. In 1900 the Jamaica Gazette, an annual periodical focussing on economics and politics in Jamaica, printed the following “Remarks” from an anonymous journalist reporting on St Elizabeth:

“The low price of logwood has thrown a large number of labourers out of employment and it is believed that a large proportion has emigrated to other parishes and to Central America in search of employment. The main industry of the parish being logwood its failure affects all classes and causes great depression.” (Government Printing Office 1900:377)

As the demand for logwood continued to reduce, the “Remarks” in 1902 concluded that due to:

“The continued fall in the price of logwood and the diminished rainfall, especially in the southern districts of the parish, the smaller agriculturists have been reduced to great poverty. Stock rearing has become a precarious industry, and the outlook generally has been anything but satisfactory” (Government Printing Office 1902: 61)

By 1905 their ‘Remarks’ consisted of only eight words: “No change or improvement during the past year” (Government Printing Office 1905:640).

That said, Leader (1907) described it at the time as “a pretty little place” (1907:114). Alison Morris described the combination of factors that led to Black River’s sudden decline:

“In the early 1900’s a month long fire started when a warehouse filled with coffee and pimento exploded. Another fire in 1932 burnt down half of the town’s commercial section. These two later fires, combined with declining demand for logwood dye by the end of the 19th century, the difficulties in trading occasioned by World Wars I and II, and the increased use of trucks rather than boats to transfer goods, led to a slowing in the activities at the port.” (Morris 2014).

During my walk, it became clear that much of Black River town had been rebuilt with concrete, and there were few buildings with their original wooden structures.

Only just visible to the left of the lamp post in the photograph, it is possible to make out the uprights to an ageing building. This building was one of those constructed during the years of prosperity. Alison Morris had a personal connection as she notes:

“Most of the businesses lining Black River’s main street were constructed so that shops were on the bottom floor, while the owners lived on the top floor. My great grandfather [...] was one of these, running a goldsmith’s shop on what is now High Street. The buildings were wooden, and privacy was limited. Everyone knew everyone else’s

business!” (Morris 2014)

Passing by these buildings, I was assailed by the clamours of school children, route taxi vendors, higglers and the sound system across the road. I kept my eyes open for any friends or research participants, and was disappointed to find that the man who had offered to take me on a tour of the Black River, adopting a ‘Jamerican’ accent – “you lookin to take a tour today, *man*?” – gave me his patter once again, much as Shana had done to the tourists passing by. I



Image 9. Black River High Street

continued down the road.

The decline continued as the twentieth-century progressed. In addition to the collapse of the logwood trade and poor rainfall, two massive fires in the first half of the twentieth century destroyed up to a third of the commercial district. Alison Morris described the fire services’ responses as something of a

comedy of errors. First the fire engine had to drive for several hours from Montego Bay (on the north coast of the island), and brought the wrong hose which did not fit onto the hydrant. By the time a replacement hose arrived much of the water in the hydrant had run out. *The Daily Gleaner* on July 2nd, 1932 describes a “Big Fire in Town of Black River,” which began at 10.30pm and “wiped out” much of the town. After the discovery of large deposits of bauxite, used to manufacture aluminium, in the nearby Santa Cruz mountains in the 1950s, many of those in Black River moved to the commercial and employment hubs of Santa Cruz and Mandeville. Continued attempts to generate Heritage Development and Heritage Tourism met with little commercial success in spite of the Jamaican government’s establishment of Black River as a National Heritage site in 1999.

Once I had left the High Street, I began to walk through the car park of Waterloo, as there was a shortcut to the house where I was staying. There was a dilapidated sign on the edge of the car park telling the passer-by that Waterloo was the first building in Jamaica to have electricity. There was the building itself whose wood was rotting in the Caribbean climate and whose architecture was reminiscent of the Black River boom. The Lonely Planet guide managed to capture the feeling of the building as being in a “state of elegant rot” (Lonely Planet 2014).

I had walked a full circle. To my left and my right were two contrasting impressions of Black River. To the left was the wreck of the boat. On the opposite side of the road was Waterloo Guest House, the decaying building constructed by the Leydens during Black River’s years of prosperity (shown below).

For many in Black River, the shipwreck was a symbol of everything that

was wrong with the town; a lack of council planning linked to a more general lack of investment in Black River by the government. The other was the symbol of a period of prosperity that for some was all-too short lived, and was an image of what Black River might have been. It had become very expensive to keep the old Georgian buildings, and most had been replaced or were in great need of attention.



Image 10. Waterloo Guest House, seen from the back

Conclusions

Black River is popularly seen as a quiet coastal town that enjoyed a temporary economic boom, but which is now a backwater. However, this story silences the town's significant role in resistance and rebellion during plantation slavery, as well as the continued importance of geographical and social mobility in its history and its present. This resistance to unequal economic and social

relationships continues to inform the contemporary town as residents respond to the tourist gaze and challenge attempts to apologise for slavery. The dynamic responses of the historically oppressed in Black River highlight their agency within the very structures of oppression. As well as being a backwater, the town has been dynamic and constantly changing throughout its history, and from its first arrivals has been a town set within broader geographies of movement.

However, opportunities for successful migration and movement continue to be limited to a few in the town while many others grow up unable to access such avenues for social mobility. The decline of industry in Black River has contributed to these limitations. The logwood trade had supported those living in the area from the seventeenth-century and continued to do so until the late nineteenth-century. The logwood 'boom' also brought considerable wealth to a small minority in the town, and encouraged the growth of the Black River port and shipping industry. However, as the demand for logwood ceased and the town was beset by fires, employment opportunities also declined.

Taking over public spaces became symbolic acts of resistance that threatened colonial rule. Further, embodied acts and public space continue to be important sites in negotiations of hierarchy and subordination in contemporary Black River. Recognising the historical foundations for continuing inequalities between North-Atlantic consumers and Caribbean populations also emphasises the various modes of resistance to such unequal relationships.

Like all such places, Black River has been built and continues to thrive through widespread connections and its specific characteristics, which privilege links to the United States, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, and are embedded in the relationships established through trades, slavery, colonial and post-colonial developments. Stepping back to look at the wider image involves

recognising that a holistic account of Black River, as with Jamaica and the Caribbean more generally, can only be given with attention to global movements. This recognition further problematises the history of the town according to development institutions and local politicians, who emphasise the town's stagnation rather than its vibrancy.

Therefore, Black River has always been a point within global flows of movement, and in the town football is increasingly used as a way to engage in global flows through playing the sport and supporting international teams, and as a means for making sense of local residents' own positions within such geographies. In the following chapter I look at the particular history of football in Jamaica, and how 'schoolboy football' emerged as the most popular domestic league. Nearly all of the research participants had played for their schoolboy team and this had impacted on their educational experiences in different ways.

Chapter 3: “Playin fi a scholarship”: football, education and class

For a fraction of a second the 200-strong crowd went quiet. The football bounced out of the 6-yard box after a corner and was setting up perfectly for the Black River High midfielder. His team had already come back from 1-0 down to their Munro rivals and it dawned on me that the match might hinge on that moment. The boy was setting himself up to kick the ball on the half-volley¹. It was a difficult skill to strike a bouncing ball ‘sweet’; hit it off the top of the boot and it would fly high into the air, hit it off the bottom of the boot and it would bounce powerlessly along the ground. There were other factors that affected both the bounce of the ball and the player, including the quality of the pitch, previous tackles, and how much rain there had been. The player had to position himself to receive the bouncing ball, and to re-distribute his centre of gravity to allow his dominant leg to meet it in mid-air. As the box² was cluttered with players from both teams, the boy’s kick would also be affected by how the other players were standing – was there a clear path to goal? Finally, there was the talented Munro goalkeeper to beat. As most of the Munro defence and midfield were around him, the Black River High midfielder had no opportunity to control the ball. Score, and Black River High would be 2-1 ahead, and would have scored two goals without a response from Munro. Miss, and Munro would have the opportunity to regroup and try to re-assert their authority on the match.

¹ The ‘half volley’ is a skill where the player kicks a ball after it has bounced once.

² There are two rectangles marked in white paint around the goal on a football pitch. The smaller is called the ‘six yard box,’ the larger simply referred to as the ‘box’.

The moment his foot came into contact with the football, I knew that he had scored one of the most memorable goals of the tournament. He kicked the ball with such ferocity I could hear the ‘snap’ of his boot meeting the ball from the van-back on which we were standing, and saw the goal netting billow as the ball nearly tore it from its fixings. The home Black River High crowd erupted and I had to grab the side of the truck to stop myself from being jostled over the edge as the usually sullen Mr Michaels (a teacher at Black River High) exploded with released tension and excitement. I laughed and Mr Michaels’s eyes shone as he shouted “Yuh see it! Yuh see it!” To his left, Mr Bennett cut a tragic figure. Frowning, his posture dropped, and he looked down into his plastic cup of rum and ginger ale, swirling the ice around. Mr Bennett predicted that Munro would be overconfident and would be beaten by Black River, but felt no satisfaction when proven right.

As the supporters left the field, many Black River High fans aimed comments at Mr Bennett, who remained standing on the van-back, rum in hand. In retaliation, Mr Bennett shouted “come and see the match up on the hill! Come and see the match up on the hill! This is Black River’s World Cup!”. He then went on a semi-rum induced tirade against the Munro team, even as they were getting into the squad bus parked next to his van. He did not direct the speech towards them, but they were well within earshot. He talked scathingly of the managing staff, asking why you would change tactics for the final third of the match when you were losing. You should stick to your plan for the whole game - if you knew you were going to concede goals (as Munro did), then you should begin with tactics that meant you also *scored* a lot of goals. A jerky man standing nearby kept nodding in agreement with him, and saying

“yes!” and “exactly!” while trying to sell the last few chicken thighs at reduced prices to the leaving spectators.

Once most of the spectators had left, I got into Mr Bennett’s van and we drove a few minutes down the road to Waterloo, the bar where we drank in the evenings. The mood was subdued, and Mr Bennett was calling people on his mobile phone, complaining of Munro’s poor performance, and continuing to question the decisions of the coaching staff. Mrs Bennett ran the bar, and had arranged for the Munro team to eat their dinner in the attached restaurant. They walked sullenly through the bar and the coaching staff began to shout at them once they had sat down. Mr Bennett quietly told me that he felt football should be “left on the field,” and once the team departed from the pitch they should begin to concentrate on the next game. It was the Munro striker’s birthday, and Mr Bennett and I felt particularly bad that it should be spoilt by the football match and the lectures afterwards. However, schoolboy football elicited considerable emotion from spectators, and those watching were often keen to remind ‘their’ team that they were not only playing for themselves, but were also representing their school and those watching as well.

‘Schoolboy football’ was the most popular domestic league in Black River, and the annual Black River High-Munro match was the best attended in the town. Most of the older men I played football with had attended Munro or other ‘prestigious’ high schools, while the majority of the younger men had attended Black River High. While Mr Bennett and Mr Michaels stood up on the back of the van, Freddy, Doc, and Terry were standing by the cordon around the field. Many of the amateur players had attended the match to watch and, leading up to it, had begun to speculate about each team’s chances, at the same time

remembering their own “big games”. Eight out of the ten most regular players at Ashton (the amateur football field) had played in the schoolboy football league, and their experiences continued to play a large role in their “bragging” among each other.

For some players, the schoolboy league offered the opportunity to gain a scholarship to a more prestigious high school, one of the universities in Jamaica, or to universities in the United States. However, the majority of those who competed in the schoolboy league were not offered scholarships. Although most schools in Jamaica have now introduced mandatory grade requirements in order to be in the football squad, many of the younger men had been encouraged to focus on their football training rather than their school classes and left high school with few educational qualifications and without a scholarship. By contrast, more prestigious high schools such as Munro had demanded grade requirements for several decades, and their players left the school with high levels of qualification.

The match between Black River High and Munro came to symbolise a contest between two classes in the town. Black River High represented those who were from working class, less wealthy, and less highly educated backgrounds, while Munro was associated with those who were of the middle class, wealthier, and had higher educational qualifications. When I asked Allison Morris why there was such a rivalry between the two schools, she captured it well:

“Part of why so much importance is put on beating Munro is that Munro is what’s known as a ‘traditional’ school. Set up along English grammar school lines, been around forever, well respected, has educated more Rhodes Scholars than any school in Jamaica

(probably the Caribbean). Black River High is the new kid on the block, was not even named as a high school till in the 1980's or 90's, and still considered by many to be a second class citizen. Every triumph against Munro is seen as validation of BRH [Black River High]." (Allison Morris, personal correspondence, 2013, transcribed with permission)

Black River High playing against Munro was therefore associated with competition between the 'traditional' and the 'new kid on the block,' and between the 'well respected' and the 'second class citizen.'

Studying schoolboy football reveals the associations between education, wealth, and class in Black River, and also gives the early experiences of the research participants with whom I worked. In this chapter, I give a brief history of the link between football and education in Jamaica, and look at the class associations of Munro and Black River High before moving to the Dacosta cup, or 'D-cup,' experiences of my research participants. In order to understand both schoolboy football and the amateur matches, it is important to recognise the overlaps between class and education which became particularly apparent around the football field.

Football, Education, and Class

In Bourdieu's 'What makes a social class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups' (1987), he argues that class must be viewed as both "an analytical construct" (1987:6) and as:

"sets of agents who [...] are subject to similar conditions of existence and conditioning factors and, as a result, are endowed with similar dispositions which prompt them to develop similar practices" (1987:6)

Nevertheless, the margins between social classes were blurred and Bourdieu demonstrates that groups exist in a potential state of becoming until “the objectivised symbolization of the group” (1987:16) through an identification with “the signifier, the individual, the spokesperson, or with the bureau, the local, the committee, or the council which represent it” (ibid.:14). In the case of Black River, schoolboy football teams served as “a concrete incarnation” (ibid.:14) of the boundaries between social classes and the matches as moments for the reinforcing of difference.

Academics working on football have frequently noted its importance in the representation of social and economic inequalities. In the Caribbean, C.L.R. James used cricket to highlight issues of racial and class inequalities (2005). Similarly, Archetti (1997; 1999) suggested that national football matches in Argentina were interpreted as competitions between different conceptions of masculinity. He argued that on the football field, “the forged stereotype of the modern man was [...] challenged by the hybrids of Argentina” (Archetti 1999:72) and the pitch became a space for contesting dominant colonial models of masculinity. Archetti viewed the football field as a space where “a particular cultural construction of maleness is presented and publicly discussed” (1997:33-4). Leite Lopes, writing on football in Brazil, argued that a “‘black’ style of football” (ibid.:75) served to “inver[t] social and ‘racial’ stigmatization” (ibid.:75) and challenged racial stereotypes and positively contributed towards social mobility (1997). For these authors, sports have the potential to challenge perceived notions of superiority and subordination.

In contrast, others have emphasised the embeddedness of football within state-led projects. Will Rollason (2011) conducted a study of football in

Panapompom, Papua New Guinea, and found that through football the player became “bound up with the political project of development, and Panapompom people’s attempts to reproduce the ways in which white people organise their social relations” (Rollason 2011:215). In his work on football in Amazonian Peru, Walker (2013) argued that football was used “as a vehicle of strong moral sentiments and even wider forms of belonging, instrumental in the process of incorporation into the state and the nation” (ibid.:388). For these authors, football was a medium for the adoption of dominant masculine imagery, rather than for its resistance. From the literature, football matches emerge as opportunities for both contestation and further embedding of social and political structures.

In Black River, spectators understood the match not so much in terms of race or modernization, but in terms of class. There is a significant body of literature around colour-classes in Jamaica and the Caribbean, concerning the positive ascription of ‘white’ and the concomitant denigration of ‘black’ (for some examples, see: Smith 1965; Henriques 1968; Smith 1988). However, in Black River there was the perception that the town was relatively, though by no means totally, removed from these race-based inequalities. Some of those I spoke with suggested that this was because of the number of different communities that had grown up around Black River, including the poor white descendants of German agricultural labourers, which problematised the colour-class association. Furthermore, others pointed towards the lack of a wealthy white population in Black River, in contrast to the gated communities in Kingston, to explain the comparative differences in class distinctions. At the same time most of those I spoke with recognised the persistence of colour-class perceptions nationwide.

In Black River difference was understood and articulated most frequently with reference to education, and particularly by asking which school a person had attended. As Austin (1983:237) argued, in Jamaica (as elsewhere) education is an important indicator of social class, as well as a legitimating ideology for social inequalities. In *Learning to Labour* (2000), Willis argued that space in and around the school was significant in the reproduction of the working class in Britain, and showed how education produces and reproduces class across generations. The friendship groups of the men with whom I conducted research were constituted primarily from the friends they had when they had attended high school. Willis particularly points to sport as a space:

“where the staff are able to control a certain independence, with its roots in ‘the lads’ culture, by operating a paradigm containing elements both of conventional teaching and of the oppositional culture: principally toughness, masculinity and physical dexterity” (2000:87)

Within the education system, football therefore offered both the possibility for independent expression and creativity for schoolboys and the opportunity for control by teachers.

However, Bourdieu reminds us that social class is “always the product of a complex historical work of construction” (ibid.:8). The boundaries between classes and the classification of groups according to schooling were not fixed, and were also informed by individual factors such as age, gender, kinship and family relations, and religion (to recognise a few of the most obvious). In this thesis, I principally concentrate on the aspect of age. While Black River High supporters ranged from the very young to the very old, there was a generation of Munro supporters who were absent from the matches. There were very few Munro fans between the ages of 18 and 40 (and this was the case at all of their

schoolboy matches that I attended). Occasionally, groups of such fans would travel from Kingston or while on holiday in order to watch a match, although they were absent from the others. By contrast, there were a large number of Black River High supporters of such ages. This absence was indicative of the expectations and opportunities for Munro students who were expected to continue to University and/or to achieve professional qualifications in one of Jamaica's major cities or in Canada or the United States. Although encouraged to apply for scholarships, Black River High students were not expected to reach the same level of academic and vocational attainment, and further training without financial assistance would be prohibitively expensive.

While education appeared to offer possibilities for upwards mobility, it also reproduced social boundaries through the transmission of advantage. One aspect in understanding the popularity of schoolboy football in Jamaica and its relationship with education lies in the history of football on the island, which highlights the overlapping and intermingling of football within colonial narratives of strength.

A history of football in Jamaica

It has proved very difficult to establish the 'moment' at which association football moved beyond elite circles in Jamaica, and various authors have noted the link established by plantation owners between slave and emancipated black leisure time and physical recreation with fears of civil unrest (Beckles 2002; Higman 2011:187). Therefore football would have been played "mainly by local whites, civil servants, and army officers" (Higman 2011:246) and only very infrequently (if at all) by poor people who also "lacked the time and the equipment" (ibid.:247). The 1830s was a period of significant economic and

social change in Jamaica, and it was also a time during which categories such as ‘coloniser,’ ‘elite,’ and ‘Jamaican’ became problematic, as it was no longer clear where the boundaries between the colonisers and the colonised were located, and what these boundaries might look like. As Stoler argued in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (2002): “Colonialism is not a story [...] What did it mean to be ‘European’ for colonials who had never set foot in the Netherlands, England, or France?” (2002:12), instead Stoler encouraged the researcher to think of the distinction between the coloniser and the colonised “as a historically shifting pair of social categories” (ibid.:23).

To talk of an ‘introduction’ of football to Jamaica is a fallacy, as the Arawaks were known to play a form of football (as discussed in the previous chapter). Moreover, the ‘football’ introduced to Jamaica by Europeans more closely resembled ‘rugby’ today (and, indeed, in some instances ‘rugby’ and ‘football’ were used interchangeably), before a series of regulations beginning with the introduction of the Cambridge Rules in 1863 demarcated football from rugby, and football from ‘association football’ (Walvin 1975:42).

The earliest reference to football in *The Gleaner* archives³, which began in 1834, appears in 1876 and refers to the “Fatal Result of a Football Match” after “Joseph Henry Ison, sixteen years of age [...] was killed in a football match”. It went on to give the details of what had killed the young man, saying “he had sustained severe internal injuries during the game”. The jury in the trial following the death “returned a verdict of ‘Accidental death,’” and strongly recommended that the practices of ‘charging,’ ‘butting,’ ‘scrimmaging,’ and catching by the legs, as practiced in the game of football, should be abolished”

³ *The Gleaner* archives stretch back to 1834. Although not always available, where possible I have cited the date, author, and page number.

(March 21st 1876). Football at that time therefore differed markedly from what would currently be considered 'fair' play.

From an early stage, football was linked with education in Jamaica. On November 12th 1889 *The Gleaner* included an article arguing that "it would be well for the boys of Jamaica, if more attention were paid to the cultivation of bodily powers," and argues against the idea that "the abnormal development of muscle, is inimical to the growth of the 'grey matter' which gives or is supposed to give vigour to the purely mental faculties". In particular, the article pointed towards the merits to be had by the adoption of football by schools, and says that "it is rarely necessary to compel the average English school boy to cricket, foot ball or the labour of the oar. He takes to these things naturally as a duck takes to water". What the article pointed towards is a cultivation of 'power' among 'English' boys. Stoler wrote of the justification of European privilege in Indonesia being similarly based on a conception of 'character':

"This notion of 'character' did not derive from abstract or universal values. At its heart was a conception of being European that emphasized a bearing, a standard of living, and a set of cultural competencies and practices to which members of the European community were to subscribe and from which the majority of Asians were barred" (2002:27)

Football was seen as a means for maintaining 'Englishness' and therefore constituted an important part of education for the 'boys of Jamaica' who, by implication, were beginning to diverge from their counterparts in England.

Much of the archival material on football in Jamaica involved matches between military teams. The first report appeared on July 16th 1881 and gave an account of a match between "Kingston and Lieut. Brooker's team," which Kingston won. Four days later a very small 'General Gleanin[g]' appeared noting

that ‘A football match, under Association rules, will be played at Camp to day, at 5.30, between eleven married and eleven unmarried players of Kingston’ (*The Gleaner*). There is no further discussion of the reasoning behind the significance of ‘eleven married’ players and ‘eleven unmarried’ players. Such a match indicated a concern with competition between different styles of comportment, as well as an insight into leisure and entertainment in military units stationed in the Caribbean. Between 1870 and 1890, there was little coverage of football in *The Gleaner*, although there is evidence that matches were being played.

A decade later, an article titled ‘To Bind the Empire together’ included the opinions of Sir Astley Cooper who:

“believe[d] that the future relationship of the different portions of the empire rests chiefly with the young men of the Empire, and he [thought] that nothing could be more popular or more certain to attract attention than a contest” (*The Gleaner*, Dec. 11th 1891:7)

Although Sir Astley Cooper recommended running, rowing, and cricket, the anonymous journalist suggested “the return visits of English cricketers and football-players to the Colonies” (*The Gleaner* Dec.11th 1891:7). Sport remained implicated in colonial social and political projects, and young men were the principle agents within these contests.

During the early 1890s there was considerable interest in football and *The Gleaner* ran a ‘Football Gossip’ column written by ‘Young’Un’ in 1892 and 1893. In 1893 (the same year that the Leydens brought electricity to Black River) a man wrote to the Editor of *The Gleaner* to “correct an inaccurate statement” made with regards to the ‘beginning’ of rugby-football in the island (as the game was called at the time). The letter is worth quoting at length as it gives details of football among colonial and military society in Jamaica:

“It was not through the energy and determination of Mr.Clare [although it was actually Rev.Clare], as you state, that the Association Game has been established in the island. It is true that shortly after Mr.Clare arrived in Jamaica a few Rugby Games were played, but these were very few and far between indeed, and must not be attributed to Mr.Clare’s efforts alone, as there were many gentlemen on a visit to the island at the time of the Exhibition who showed great favour to, and skill in the game, and were most instrumental in getting up matches [...] From information I possess a club called the ‘Western Rovers’ existed in Kingston for some time until about 10 years ago, possessing a strong list of members, and since that time up to the present the game has been played at the York Castle High School. The commencement and first practices of the K.A.F.C. [Kingston Association Football Club] were held shortly after Mr.Clare’s arrival in the Island at the K.A.F.C. grounds, of which club Mr.Clare was not a member, the members at that time being some of the elder York Castle scholars (who had left school and come to Kingston to start in business) and several Kingston young men [...] After the club had been started and the playing materials ordered from England, the members of the Club obtained the use of General Canal’s Penn ‘Chetalah’ [a park near Kingston] and in order to commence practice at once we obtained the use of Mr Clare’s football (not possessing one of our own)” (*The Gleaner* October 25th 1893:6).

There was an effort during the early 1890s to establish football’s history in Jamaica and to solidify its popularity leading into the twentieth century. The letter is instructive as it shows the connection between football and relationships between England and Jamaica. It also indicates that football was being played in high schools as early as 1893.

During the late nineteenth-century, however, enthusiasm for football outweighed the players’ abilities. On September 28th, 1893 ‘Young’Un’ wrote “In the little world of Football the greatest energy is [...] being displayed”, but a month later (October 25th) wrote of the team playing in Spanish town whose ideas:

“on Football are [...] in a somewhat crude stage as yet, and the witnesses of a recent

match still recall with amusement the feat of the player who dribbled the ball up the field and kicked through his own goal in laudable but mistaken attempt to score for his side” (*The Gleaner* October 25th 1893:6)

Another notable article indicated that “the clown match has had (much to the disgust of the players) to be indefinitely [sic.] postponed. Rain and militiamen wait for no man, not even clowns” (*The Gleaner* November 23 1893:6). ‘Young’Un’ was an eccentric reporter and included players’ sporting biographies and hand-drawn portraits. For example, he gave the biography of Mr J.McDonald:

“Mac,’ of the Winchester Clubs as his chums call him, hails from the bleak north, where ‘braw, braw, lads,’ in the fooball line are not uncommon. He was born in the North of Scotland, was for some time resident in Glasgow, and is – as most Scotchmen are – a keen and enthusiastic footballer. Prior to his arrival in Jamaica some two years ago Mr.McDonald played in several important Scotch matches, and was always an enthusiastic devotee of the game. He played in several Jamaica matches but was not a member of any club until the formation of the Winchester. Since then he has been one of his clubs most active supporters, and has played in nearly all their matches. Mr.McDonald is a good half kick, a careful player and a safe man generally. His usual place is at half back, but in one or two recent matches he has acted as forward and with conspicuous success. He is also a keen athlete, is a boating enthusiast, and has won several rowing matches.” (*The Gleaner* November 29th 1893:6, language from original maintained).

The biographies he included show that many of the football players brought their athletic talents from Scotland or England to Jamaica. The main teams playing at the time were Kingston FC, Winchester FC, a team in Spanish Town, and a few military teams that came and went as they were posted in Jamaica. ‘Young’Un’”s column ‘Football Gossip’ seems to have been dropped between 1893 and 1894.

In 1894 a football match was played between the Royal Engineers “Europeans” (*The Gleaner* 23rd February 1894:6) and “a representative team of Kingston (without military)” (ibid.). According to the records, this would have been the first international match played between a Jamaican football team and a ‘European’ team although delineating the ‘European’ team from the ‘Kingston’ team would be superficial as many of the Kingston-ians would have been recent migrants to Jamaica, such as ‘Mac’ indicated above. In the same year, 1894, there were murmurings of discontent as it seemed that football might begin to out-shine cricket in terms of popularity, with one commentator noting:

“during the past two seasons the claims of football, the older game [i.e.cricket]’s younger and more energetic rival, have made a bold bid for a larger share of public attention, and its growing popularity seems to indicate that it will in the near future claim as high a status in our local athletic circles as cricket has done in the past” (*The Gleaner* January 25th 1894:6).

Commenting to *The Gleaner* on the state of football in 1895, Mr J.W.Toone, Captain of the Kingston football club, complained of some footballers being unable to play because of their involvement in the cricket season. Furthermore, he talked of the environment of the football field, saying that “one drawback here is that the ground is so hard [...] here you have to avoid falls as much as possible,” and said with typical understatement that “It would be very nice if we could get some private ground free from gravel and broken bottles” (*The Gleaner* 6th September 1895:6). When asked who composed the teams, he replied “Chiefly Britishers who have learned the game at home; some Jamaicans have taken up the game and showed promising form but they don’t stick to it sufficiently” (ibid.).

Apparently in spite of the lack of continued support for cricket, in 1895

two new teams were founded, Kensington CC (based at St George's School), and Wesleyan Boys Brigade. However, in the same year it seems that organization and procrastination crept into the football clubs around Kingston, as the writer noted a lack of games being played and very few practice sessions planned among the different teams.

The first Football League – the 'Challenge Shield' - was formed in Jamaica in 1898, and comprised of Kingston, Winchester, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, H.M.S.Urgent and the Leinster Regiment Clubs (5th October 1898:n/a). Although the league took place the following year, by October 1900 the reporter asked, "Are there to be no more League football contests? Up to now no fixtures have been made" (15th October 1900). Although the league waned in its early stages, it seems that there was popular support for the sport as matches continued to be played and reported from this time onwards. Schoolboy football emerged as the most consistently played league.

The first school match was recorded in 1900 between St George's College and Mr. Jones's School (26th February 1900), although there was evidence that some schools had been playing since 1893. By 1907 calls were being made to encourage more football in schools, one reporter arguing that "schools ought [...] to be given every encouragement to get up XI's. They will necessarily be weak at first but will soon become proficient at the game, as football is a game beloved by all boys" (1st October 1907). The language adopted in 1907 reinforces that used from the beginning of reporting of football in Jamaica which, similarly, talked of boys taking to football as 'naturally as a duck to water'. Football was something to be engaged in by both boys and men who, although they might be weak to begin with, would strengthen as they continued to play.

Alongside the strength to be produced from football, many of the articles

dealt with the moral qualities the writers believed could be cultivated through the game. One reporter argued that football's waning popularity was because of its lapses in moral quality, and stated plainly "[i]t is a cowardly act to deliberately kick the ball out of play merely because one is hard pressed" (26th November 1907) and that such acts should be outlawed from the game, or those who showed such cowardice should be punished within the game. As football became a vehicle for the maintenance of colonial masculine ideals, it was important to ensure that the sport inculcated the correct values within the boys' bodies.

Alfred Leader's *Through Jamaica with a Kodak* (1907) suggested that football was still confined to colonial society at the beginning of the twentieth-century, and had not yet spread beyond the colonisers. Leader gives an account of "outdoor games' on the island, saying, "the native is fond of outdoor games; and cricket [...] is much played by him [sic.]" (1907:154), but also that "there are three or four football clubs in Kingston, the game being played from December to March" (ibid.:154). Moreover, *The Handbook of Jamaica* in 1908 indicated that "Football [...] ha[d] not yet gained the popularity of tennis or cricket in Jamaica." (1908:511). *The Handbook* went on to suggest that "it might be thought that the climate was too warm for such strenuous exercise but experience has proved that it has a most beneficial physical effect" (ibid.:511). The authorities in charge of the football matches did, however, "limit the duration of the game to one hour instead of an hour and a half" (ibid.:511). In the same year (1907), Aspinall's *The Pocket Guide to the West Indies* stated that "Cricket is king in Jamaica" (1907:114) but also that "Football also has its votaries in the cooler months" (ibid.:114). Aspinall also suggests that football was not particularly popular in Jamaica, saying that "what is astonishing is that

football should be played in the tropics, as it is, both in British Guiana and in Trinidad where there are football clubs” (1912:154). In 1921, Lord Hamilton wrote of watching a young relative of his play football during which he “noticed an unusual adjunct to a football field” (1921:185) consisting of a “negro boy” (1921:186) standing with a pile of unripe coconuts, and chopping them open for the (white) schoolboys to drink as they played football. Lord Hamilton’s description of the appearance of a ‘negro boy’ as being ‘an unusual adjunct’ indicated football’s continuing association with colonial society, and separation from the colonised.

In spite of Lord Hamilton’s surprise, by the 1930s football was being played throughout the island. In 1931, Verrill wrote that:

“Football, or as we call it, ‘Soccer,’ is very popular in Jamaica, and the black and colored boys are seen playing the game everywhere. The real football season is from October until February. There are several organized clubs, both civilian and military, and the Jamaica Association Football Challenge Shield has been competed for each year since 1898. The Martinez Cup is for civilian teams only, while the Manning Cup is for secondary school teams of Kingston and the Olivier Shield is open to all secondary school teams. In Jamaica the time of play is forty minutes instead of sixty as in temperate climates” (1931:226).

From its position as a pastime enjoyed by the colonial society, through its ebbing and flowing popularity between 1880 and 1910, football spread to a much larger population comprised not only of white Europeans living in Jamaica, but also of those who had been born in Jamaica. Importantly, football had been introduced to many of the schools on the island, both as a vehicle through which boys might learn colonial moral integrity and as a way to build up their physical strength. Crucially for my research, it was through schoolboy football that many of my participants learned the sport and developed their

passion for it.

Throughout its history during the colonial period, football was involved in processes of classification. Sport was a means for expressing and maintaining European-ness while living or stationed in Jamaica and, later, was a way to inculcate European 'character' into the generation born in Jamaica. From the first newspaper report of a football match, the game has been particularly played by young men and increasingly by schoolboys. This preference for schoolboy football continues in contemporary Jamaica.

The class associations of Black River High and Munro

The hierarchies that were perceived within local football in Black River were those between different schools in the area, and these were realised in the rivalry between Black River High and Munro College. Munro College was originally called 'Potsdam College' after the village where it was built⁴. The village was created by German settlers in the region in the eighteenth-century, but the name was changed at the outbreak of the First World War due to an anti-German sentiment at the time. Munro was established in 1856 after a stipulation in the wills of Robert Hugh Munro and Caleb Dickinson (plantation owners in St Elizabeth) demanded that on their deaths their real estate should be sold, and the revenue generated be put towards education for disadvantaged children in the region. In 1856 a 'Free School' for 'Poor Boys' was built near Black River, before being moved to the current site of Potsdam in the Santa Cruz mountains in 1857. Although the wills stipulated that the school should be free,

⁴ Once more I am indebted to Allison Morris for providing details of the two schools.

it has always been fee-paying and modelled after British boarding schools. The 'Free School' for 'Poor Girls' (although, again, it has always been fee-paying), named Hampton, was first established in 1858 as part of the execution of the wills of Munro and Dickinson. The school resided in Mount Zion in 1874, then in 1885 moved to Malvern House, and next to Hampton where it remains. It is in the Malvern area of the Santa Cruz mountains.

Munro College has an illustrious history. Its alumni include former Prime Minister Donald Sangster, politicians, Bishops, and even the first Jamaican to play professional football in England— Lloyd Lindbergh 'Lindy' Delapenha. It was a boarding school but also had a minority of 'day boys.' Mr Bennett informed me that it taught boys from all over the world, and its international student body was expanding as demand for a high quality education without the large amounts demanded by similar schools in, for example, the United States and the United Kingdom. Munro's motto 'In Arce Sitam Quis Occultabit' (A City set Upon a Hill Cannot be Hidden) captured its conscious reference to an illustrious past, and its image in popular Jamaican consensus as being an elite educational experience well beyond the means and possibilities of the majority.

Black River High School had a very different history. The Jamaican government first built the school at the end of the 'High Street' although it is a mile or so from the town centre, in 1970, after the Anglican Church donated 12 acres of land, and this was augmented by a donation from the Francis family of 4 acres. In 1974 the school changed from a one-shift to a two-shift system. In the latter system there were two 'shifts' per day, with the first 'shift' of students coming for lessons between 8am to 12pm, and the second 'shift' coming from 1pm to 5pm. These 'shifts' effectively doubled the school's capacity, reflecting a growing concern in the 1960s and 70s with providing education for the first and

growing generation to be born after Jamaica's Independence from Britain in 1962. In contrast to the boys boarding at Munro who were supervised by school staff throughout the day, Black River High's students were on the school grounds for four hours each weekday (excluding additional activities).

Black River High School's flag and motto emphasised the struggle preceding the school's creation following Independence from English rule, but also the struggle that their pupils faced in both their schooldays and the lives they were to lead once they left school. The background was the flag of St David, associated with Welsh Anglicanism, although I am unsure as to its provenance for Black River High's adoption of this flag. In the foreground was the image of two men wrestling with a motto beneath; 'we create our own destiny.' The flag of St. David is a yellow cross on a black background, colours reminiscent of the Jamaican flag's black, gold/yellow, and green, and it had been argued that in the case of the Jamaican flag, yellow represented the sun, while black could potentially represent the suffering of the Jamaican slaves. A committee was appointed in 1996 to review national symbols such as the flag, and remarked:

"Discussion of the National Flag turned for the most part on the interpretation of the colours of the Jamaican flag. The present interpretation 'hardships there are, but the land is green and the sun shineth [sic.] – is the basis for the reservations expressed. While many conceded the archetypal connections of fertility, enrichment and civilization with the colours green and gold respectively, no one making submission was happy with the colour black symbolizing 'hardships.' There is a universal call for an interpretation depicting such values as 'resilience,' 'hope' or 'fortitude' and 'strength'" (Report on National Symbol and National Observances, 1996, Jamaica Information Service, Kingston, Jamaica, pp.13-15 quoted in Nettleford 2001:xxv)

That Black River High's flag borrowed the colours of independent Jamaica allied it with the attempts following independence to overturn the colonial oppression

of the past and commit to a process of nation building that made education more widely available. However, while free education was introduced for all children to the end of Primary School, all Secondary Schools were fee-paying, including Black River High.

According to local understandings in Black River, Munro's students could expect to leave the school with very high grades, an extremely strong and ubiquitous 'old-boys network,' and a nationally and internationally recognised education. In contrast, many students who attended Black River High would leave with more humble qualifications. Although Black River High was by no means an underachieving school (it regularly appeared in the top 100 schools in Jamaica), it was considered inferior to Munro. Also, while Munro was seen as an 'elite' school, charging comparatively high school fees and with a student body made up of the sons of wealthy, well-educated parents, Black River High cost less to attend, and its student body comprised young people from varied backgrounds. As Peter, one of my research participants, put it, "parents have a choice either sen dem [their children] to a good school, if they can afford it, or, dey go to the school in your parish"⁵. Munro was viewed as a 'good school' and Black River High as a 'parish' school.

Black River High and Munro emerged during different stages in Black River's history. Munro was built using capital accumulated through slavery and plantation commerce: both Hugh Munro and Caleb Dickenson (who bequeathed part of their estates to establishing the school) received repayments for slaves set free on the abolition of slavery. Hugh Munro claimed repayment for 107 slaves, and Caleb Dickenson (III)'s executors (as he had died) received

⁵ Parents have a choice, either send them [their children] to a good school, if they can afford it, or, they go to the school in your parish

repayments for 132 slaves (Transatlantic Slave Trade Database). In contrast, Black River High's construction was funded by the Jamaican government in a drive to bring education to every child in Jamaica, and was founded in the year following Jamaica's independence from England.

These schools had their own particular historical associations that embedded them within local understandings of class and wealth. As a consequence, the schoolboy match between Black River High and Munro took on an importance for the spectators of each school that represented wider class dynamics. To refer back to Allison Morris's words, a win for Black River High was a further 'validation' of both the school and also the students who came from less privileged backgrounds, while a win for Munro maintained and, to some extent, came to validate their higher status.

Players' experiences of schoolboy football

The men with whom I played matches had different experiences of schoolboy football. While the older, wealthier men had been required to achieve academically alongside their sporting lives the younger players concentrated on football and sacrificed their studies. Indeed, many of the older players' parents had not allowed them to play schoolboy football. By contrast, in some cases the younger men had been encouraged by those close to them to prioritise schoolboy football over schoolwork. The differences in experiences of schoolboy football correlated with those of wealth and class while these men were growing up, and also with their later class associations. In spite of popular conceptions about football as a means to upwards social mobility, the experiences of these

men draw attention to how education reproduces differences of wealth and class.

Few of the older, wealthier amateur players had played schoolboy football. Doc's parents had not allowed him to play, and they described players as "the persons who were not, y'know the best in terms of education and, y'know, there's a lot of weed smoking and so forth" (Interview 12/12/12). Without being able to watch over Doc at home, his parents were concerned that he would sacrifice his academic achievement and become friends with people who were not doing well academically, and engaged in 'weed smoking and so forth'. In our interview, Doc spoke at length about how many of the younger amateur players had left school under-qualified:

"D: You find a lot of the guys that even play on the field, the majority of them played D-cup at some point in time, but look at where they are now. The majority of them don't have a formal education, they're basically struggling to make ends meet, y'know, and so forth. And, and, I don't, I don't just blame them y'know, cos they were just children, I blame those that were in the system, the teachers, the trainers, and all of this, and probably the parents also, cos the parents have to take blame, some of the blame. Uhm, they should have encouraged them that, yes you can fulfil your D-cup dream, but you also need to fulfil that dream that will carry y'on further, y'know carry you through your life, y'know and I don't think many of them got that kind of encouragement them, y'know, it was just about playing football, playing football. Because, think about it, I'm sure you've heard several of those situations, there were several guys who were quite talented, who could've played for the more traditional, more recognized schools, and the trainers of their

WT: Like [another player] got some amazing offers

D: Right, but the trainers, some of the trainers for their specific high school tell them 'no, don't go yet, don't do dis, don't do dat,' right? And they actually discouraged them from taking up these offers.

WT: Oh, I didn't realise they were discouraged

D: Yeah, in many cases they were discouraged, so they end up being in that same school where basically they won't go nowhere. That school is not one of those schools that's recognized, so it's not one of those schools that would be offered scholarships, no Scouts will come in to see them or anything like that. And they basically end up with nothing at the end of the day. They didn't end up with a football career, and they didn't end up with an education or profession" (Interview 12/12/12)

Black River High was 'that school' that Doc referred to in the interview, as many of the amateur players had played D-cup for them. Therefore it was not only very difficult to win offers for a scholarship but some schools also discouraged students from accepting them as they did not want to lose the player from their team. Schoolboy matches became increasingly important as they were broadcasted on television, and the fates of the teams could help schools with their student intake. Doc drew attention to the contrasts between the "traditional, more recognised," and "that [...] school where basically they won't go nowhere." 'Tradition,' in this context indicated the possibility for mobility through scholarships and educational attainment, while the implicitly-invoked 'modern' schools lacked such opportunities.

Terry owned and managed an electronics and computer repair shop. Despite attending Black River High he had not played for them but had followed their matches. When we spoke about how the footballers were treated at school, he described the privileges they gained:

“T: They get privilege because when everybody at class, they’re outside looking girls and so

WT: What, they’re allowed to skip class?

T: Yeah, yeah, cos they train in the day

WT: Oh

T: They’re training, they stay on campus, they live on campus and then train in the day, so sometime when they have class they don’t go.

WT: Yeah

T: And they get girls easily, yep

WT: That’s what they told me, but

T: Yeah man, footballers get girls easily man. You don’t have to say nutt’n, you just [laughs] ‘I like you, come ere’ and you know, work, and dat work, dat work [we laugh]. So they get, they have certain privilege” (Interview 11/12/12)

Terry’s description of the players being allowed to ‘skip class’ was corroborated by many of the players. Whenever I asked the reason for ‘skipping class,’ I was always told that it was because the boys had been ‘looking girls’.

In his work on masculinities in Jamaica, Chevannes (2001) has highlighted how young men are socialised to direct their attention away from the formal education system, and how their peers expect them to engage in multiple sexually intimate relationships. Studying one community, which he named Grannitree, Chevannes argued that becoming a ‘man’ entailed two requirements:

“These two requirements, economic independence and sexual responsibility, have to be taken together. The first without the second begs questions about a young man’s sexual

orientation, the second without the first leaves him still dependent on his parents, and therefore still a child subject to parental disposition. Thus, becoming a man in Grannitree, in the final analysis, has less to do with one's age and more to do with one's activities. As long as one remains a student, one remains a boy. School and the activities associated with it keep a male a boy" (Chevannes 2001:58)

Schoolboy football offered the possibility for students to achieve both relative economic independence - as the school paid for their fees, arranged for them to live on campus, and provided them with food - and also gave them greater opportunities for meeting girls. Chevannes describes multiple 'visiting unions' (boyfriend and girlfriend, including sexual intimacy) as "typical of the young" (2006:184) and argues that they contribute to popular understandings of age and sexuality (ibid.:126; 184). In Black River, one man who had played schoolboy football told me how important it was for a proficient football player to be 'successful' with women. If a football player did not have multiple 'girlfriends,' then people thought that 'something was wrong' with him, and the boy would be seen as 'soft' (I explore the meanings of 'soft' and 'hard' at greater length in Chapter Four). The links between football, skipping class, and 'girlfriends' emerged consistently in accounts of schoolboy careers.

Peter was an amateur player in his early 30s, and was precariously employed in different jobs over the course of fieldwork. He had managed to get a scholarship to a recognised school named STETHS (St Elizabeth Technical High School) and played for them in D-cup. He said that in Jamaica a scholarship was called a "buy," which indicates that 'scholarships' might not be seen as offering mobility, but as a commodification of the schoolboy's body. As he had spent most of his life playing for Black River High alongside many of the boys in the D-cup team, and because he lived in the town, people began calling

him “Judas,” and he described how he “really feel alone you know, as every players weh a play fi STETHS dem waan beat Black River, and Black River di have dat team deh”⁶. While Peter spoke at length about his football success when he was younger, he also talked of disappointment about his education:

“P: Dat was a disappointing year because, dat was a disappointing year 90-, 2002 dat. A get repeat to do, to to to some subject back over and go play, and go play, fi go play di other year but coach, principal, who’s the present Principal right now, Windell Downswell. Im im im im gimme a fight, don’t want fi come back because I was one of those students weh, never gi trouble, but, never use to go class

WT: Oh, you skipped class

P: Yeah, because football find a easy a meet girls. Used to meet girls, William, when ... In ai morning, weh you popular, and by mid-day, girl and me a ha sex.

WT: That quick?

P: Yeah, ca yu popular.

WT: Yeah, so you meet in the morning, and midday you’re having sex.

P: Yeah. Because, dem kind of, dem kinda student dem no want back a school. No dat dem student de a school cas weh dem student deh, no tink bout school work dem a tink bout just playing D-cup. After D-cup dem no ha no interest in a football. I leave school now. Leave school when I was 18. Leave High School when I was 18.”⁷ (Interview 11/10/12)

⁶ “really feel alone, as every player who played or STETHS wanted to beat Black River, and Black River had that team”

⁷ “P: That was a disappointing year because, that was a disappointing year 90-, 2002. I had to repeat, some subjects back over and go play for, to play for the other year but the coach, principal, who’s the present Principal right now, Windell Downswell, he gave me a fight, didn’t want me to come back because I was one of those students who, never gave trouble, but, never used to go to class [WT] Yeah, because football made it easy to meet girls. Used to meet girls, William, when, in the morning, when you’re popular ,and by mid-day, girl and me were having sex [WT] Yeah, cos you’re popular [WT] Yeah. Because, they don’t want those kind of students back at school. They know that those students there at school, don’t think about school work

While it was football that allowed Peter to attend STETHS it was also D-cup and the opportunities to meet girls that forced him to leave school a year early. At the time of our interview, Peter had recently become unemployed, and was finding it difficult to get a job in Black River due to his lack of qualifications. Therefore, while we were talking he was acutely aware of the impact of his lack of ‘subjects’ (exam grades).

Freddy, who was in his early 30s and worked as a librarian, had played for Black River High School, and had similar experiences, saying:

“buay [in the team] dem rude [laughs] troublemakers dem yuh no [...] Yeah man, dat time play D-cup because ... a girl ting still yuh no [...] A girl ting man. Dey only play in D-cup, tend fi do dat di school girl dem kinda flock you”⁸ (Interview 30/11/12).

After leaving school, Freddy secured a job at the Black River library and had been working there for 13 years. Due to government cutbacks, libraries around Jamaica were being closed, and his job security was becoming increasingly uncertain.

Cavin, a taxi driver in his 50s and one of the older amateur players had represented a college that demanded minimum grade requirements before playing. As he put it, “their motto [was] learn or leave,” and if a boy was unable to maintain his grade requirements, he had to leave the school. However, he blamed his relationships with girls for his inability to become a professional football player. After schoolboy football he continued to play for a team in the highest Jamaican domestic league, but “when the guys them were training

they only think about playing D-cup. After D-cup they don’t have any interest in football. I leave school now. Leave school when I was 18. Leave High School when I was 18.

⁸ “Boys in the team were rude [...] troublemakers you know [...] Yeah man, at that time you played D-cup because... it’s still a girl thing. They only play in D-cup, it tends to happen that the school girls kind of flock you”

maybe I was with a girl, so, that was my downfall”. Cavin drove a ‘route taxi,’ a taxi that worked along a designated ‘route’ and was not permitted to do ‘private charters.’

In contrast, Mr Bennett, who was in his 40s, had represented Munro in D-cup. He summarised the benefits of being a schoolboy player:

“once you’d played Dacosta cup you were a star. People looked up to you, the kids, the young kids in school looked up to you and the girls would look across at you, that’s true. You really felt like a star out there” (Interview 16/12/12)

In our interview, he argued that one of the most important aspects of schoolboy football for the Munro students was that it gave them the opportunity to leave the campus.

“People look forward to representing the school cos that’s the only time you got out and got to travel. And you got to buy chicken in Mandeville. You know, so that was a real bonus. Yeah, because, those days you only had two outing Sundays for the term. And the mid-term. So, you know you go home only three times a term, and even some outing Sundays, most of the people whose parents lived far didn’t leave the school, some would get visits and most would not, so you had to be on a school team to get out of school” (Interview 16/12/12)

D-cup therefore offered Munro students the opportunity to travel around Jamaica.

schoolboy football allowed the players the ‘privilege’ of being able to ‘skip class’ and ‘look girls,’ as well as the opportunity to travel around the island. The benefits of D-cup were phrased in terms of an escape from the formal education system, allowing the students to subvert the rules that governed those who were

not in the team. In a region in which schoolboy football is so important for residents, the players were temporarily treated as local ‘stars.’

Two of Mr Bennets’ three sons had been offered football scholarships to attend American universities, and the third son was considering doing the same. Munro had the contacts with agents, and the reputation for academic achievement alongside sports abilities that gave them privileged access to potential scholarships. As Mr Bennett was on the board of governors for the school and was a passionate follower of the D-cup team, he was well-placed to help his sons to be taken on by programs. Football scholarhps therefore contributed to the reproduction of class difference through the privileged access to opportunities to study in America.

Alongside the perceived benefits of playing D-cup, the game also exposed the players to potentially negative experiences. The most shocking of these was the spectator violence that occasionally erupted around the sports field. The competition even had to be cancelled for several years due to the scale of violence. Mr Bennett is an avid follower of D-cup and gave some examples:

“MB: since [he played schoolboy football in early 1970s] there has been sporadic violence because every few years the competition in the late 80s, that’s like 7 years after I left school was again suspended over violence. I don’t remember which year it was. So, uhm, it was suspended in 72, in 73, and then suspended sometime again in the late 80s. If you look down on the listing, they will say like competition abandoned, and generally it’s violence. I think once, in maybe 88, was it Gilbert? But one hurricane, I think, uhm, wrecked, wrecked the competition. The rest of it was really violence when you see competition abandoned and, or no competition this year, it was the violence. But, uhm, uhm, I remember in 74 when I just went to school, uhm, 74, 75, or 77, one of those years actually a policeman, uhm, in Clarendon standing behind the STETHS goal, STETHS

were playing Clarendon college, mean reminding the STETHS goalkeeper that he had a gun, so the STETHS goalkeeper, of course, let the ball through. That's what used to happen

WT: My gosh

MB: But, uhm, it's not as bad now, because the, there're more schools playing. It's less like a life and death struggle now, people don't take it as seriously. Actually there was a time in the 60s when your license, you got license plate according to your parish, so if Munro was for example to go, go to Vere to play a game, in Clarendon, you could know who the Munro supporters likely were by their license. Then you'd, they'd cut their tyres and all that kinda stuff. But it's not as serious now" (Interview 16/12/12)

Freddy had been playing in a schoolboy match when an incident occurred following suspicious refereeing decisions:

"F: Match gainst STETHS. Referee poor [laughs]. Dem give STETHS tree penalty.

WT: Three?

F: Mm-hm. Which, linesman a seh, two a dem linesman a seh deh, a tell di referee seh 'no,' cos him call fi hands an den di linesman do so [motions with his hands]. A seh no to di [...] an deh, an di referee still award dem a penalty. So at di end a di game, big ting man, dey start stone referee and ... yes[...] Dat referee, he had his licensed firearm, so him draw it out and him fire it inna di air. An dem ban di field dat year a we haffi move our ground."⁹ (Interview 30/11/12)

There was a very real threat of violence around the schoolboy football field among the spectators. The players felt pressure from their friends, families, and people in their communities, but learned to block out this pressure while they

⁹ "Match against STETHS. Referee was poor [laughs]. They gave STETHS three penalties [...] F: Mm-hm. Which, the linesman saw two of them, and told the referee 'no,' because he called for a handball and then the linesman did this [motions with his hands]. And said no to the [penalty]. And then the referee still awarded the penalty. So at the end of the game, big thing man, they started to stone the referee and ... yes [...] That referee, he had his licensed firearm, so he drew it out and fired it into the air. They banned the field that year and we had to move our ground"

were playing, and learned to 'play their game' in spite of what people were shouting at them from the sidelines.

Conclusions

The use of football in schools was traced back to British colonial society, when it was used to maintain and express the 'Englishness' of boys in Jamaica. Indeed, colonial society established football as both a vehicle for 'character' and a medium for the representation of status. Boundaries of class find expression in schoolboy football matches in Black River and highlight the reproduction of social class through education. Focussing on the match between Black River High and Munro, I argue that schoolboy football plays an important role in the representation of difference. This difference is felt bodily by both the players and the spectators.

Many of the younger and the older players shared their experiences of schoolboy football. D-cup was a persistent reference point in the rivalry and the bragging among players, and also offered a shared vocabulary, which they used to describe football when they were spectating and also to define reflexively their own football on the amateur field. However, the educational attainment of the men differed significantly. While those who played with the 'older' team on the amateur field had successfully completed their High School education and left with high educational attainment, the majority of those who played with the younger team had left with few qualifications.

The possibility of achieving ‘scholarships,’ or ‘buys’ through football makes the sport highly economically and politically charged as more students are encouraged to focus their attention on the sport as a viable means towards social mobility. However, as I have demonstrated, while players at Black River High were discouraged from accepting scholarships, Munro boys pro-actively sought them out and were encouraged to take them.

The cohorts created by D-cup endured beyond the end of school, and many of those who played together remained friends. Indeed, one of the teams with whom I played football remained broadly structured around a schoolboy football team. In the following chapters, I look at these amateur football matches, and particularly focus on the acquisition of football skills.

Chapter 4: Shifting Boundaries: the rules of the field

One evening a football match was in full flow. I was playing with the older team and, while we mounted an attack, the younger side were doing their best to prevent us from scoring. It was beginning to get dark, and the match would soon be over as we would not be able to see the ball much longer. Dee, one of the newest and youngest players, attempted to distract and unnerve the older man running with the ball by lunging in while shouting “break yu foot!”. Immediately the game stopped, and a number of the players began to shout at him. Mr Michaels called out, “No, no NO! If you’re going to do that, better you stay home!”. Dee admitted that he “shouldn’t have said it” but defended himself saying that he had not meant it in seriousness. “You shouldn’t even think it!” Mr Michaels continued, “what would have happened if you *had* broken his foot?”. The match resumed; however afterwards both the older and younger players continued to talk about what had happened.

In what follows, I am interested in how players came to know and embody the rules of the football field. New players were never told explicitly how they were expected to act, and therefore had to learn through intuition and imitation. It was only at rare moments, such as that above, that the rules were vocalised. The men were not only expected to know the rules, but to have embodied them so that they did not only *act* in the correct way but also *thought* in the right way. For Mr Michaels, it was insufficient for Dee not to say ‘break yu foot,’ but he should ‘not even think it’. As much of a football match takes place before the players have the opportunity to reflect on how they will act, it is

important that they embodied the correct etiquette such that it became instinctive.

Paying close attention to the construction of rules and how they were transmitted to new players reveals the relationships between the younger and older men, and emphasises how each football field is configured in specific ways by those who constitute it. I begin by looking at the different statuses occupied by different sets of players away from the field to give some background to those they occupied on it. Then I show how both the older and the younger players understood the proscription of 'hard' tackles, and how such understandings differed between them and were the cause of disagreement. Arguments occurred over maintaining the competitiveness of the matches while reducing the likelihood of injury. Next, I show how these negotiated rules located the players and the matches within wider understandings of other fields and other players. Finally, I look at how a fight between two of the players had the effect of reinforcing the etiquette at Ashton and associated incorrect ways of acting with 'youth' and correct ways of acting with 'manhood.'

Etiquette and the relationship between competition and cooperation

The work of Norbert Elias on etiquette (2000 [1939]) discusses how the individual comes to embody correct ways of acting over time. In his study of court etiquette from the eighth to the twentieth century, he explains:

“Through the interdependence of larger groups of people and the exclusion of physical violence from them, a social apparatus is established in which the constraints between

people are lastingly transformed into self-constraints. These self-constraints, a function of the perpetual hindsight and foresight instilled in the individual from childhood in accordance with integration in extensive chains of action, have partly the form of conscious self-control and partly that of automatic habit” (Elias 2000:375)

In what follows, I view the rules on a football field as ‘a social apparatus’ and am interested in how these become embodied, but also how these control mechanisms differed on the pitch depending on those involved. Each match required the men to sensitively grasp how aggressively to play with their opponents. For example, a tackle that one might accept might not be accepted by another, or the same man might accept one type of challenge during one match but not in another. As Elias recognised, “these constraints [...] produce peculiar tensions and disturbances in the conduct and drive economy of the individual” (ibid.:375) and there were arguments on the pitch over what was deemed fair or unfair. The formal rules of football acted alongside informal rules to generate a code of etiquette that was specific to a particular place at a particular time.

Wacquant has written in-depth about how competitive sporting interactions are regulated by both formal and informal rules. These regulating processes are apparent in his discussion of sparring in *Body and Soul* (2004a). Sparring is when one boxer practices fighting with another in the ring, although the intention is not directly to beat the opponent (as in a competitive bout) but, instead, to hone the boxers’ skills. For Wacquant, sparring “demonstrates the *highly codified nature of pugilistic violence*,” (2004a:80, italics in original) and shows how a boxer’s behaviour during sparring is highly controlled. Here, Wacquant’s extrapolation of his analysis of sparring to speak more broadly about the changes in a novice boxer’s body is particularly useful:

“To learn how to box is to imperceptibly modify one’s bodily schema, one’s relation to one’s body and to the uses one usually puts it to, so as to internalize a set of dispositions that are inseparably mental and physical and that, in the long run, turn the body into a virtual punching machine, but an intelligent and creative machine capable of self-regulation while innovating within a fixed and relatively restricted panoply of moves as an instantaneous function of the actions of the opponent in time” (Wacquant 2004a:95)

Similarly, at Ashton the football player learned to regulate his behaviour according to the rules specific to that football field, while at the same time attempting to maintain his own personal creativity. While he might be well versed in the formal rules of competitive football, each field carried its own flavour, or style of play and, concomitantly, its own informal rules, much as each sparring partner for Wacquant came with his own expectations of levels of aggression and acceptable level of competition. The pedagogical relationships on the football field, and the hierarchies of age and status were made explicit at moments when the supposedly implicit rules of the football field were vocalised.

Edward Albert (1991) discusses the seemingly incongruous importance of cooperation in competitive bicycle racing, and in particular highlights the mistakes by novice riders who lack the skills “that emphasize the cooperative aspects of the sport rather than the purely competitive” (1991:351). More experienced riders understand the informal rules of cooperation that allow them to improve on their chances of succeeding in competitive bicycle races. The novice’s mistake, heightened through how the media report bicycle racing, lies in seeing bicycle racing only as a “zero-sum” (ibid.:359) competition in which the only concern is which rider is at the front. Albert concludes by pointing towards the novice competitor who is caught between the “cooperative social order maintained by informal rules” (ibid.:359) and “the exclusively competitive one fostered by the ideology of

sport and formal rules” (ibid.:359). Like Wacquant, Albert points towards the informal rules and methods of communication within a competitive setting, and the heightened importance for cooperation between those who have been initiated through formal and informal modes of apprenticeship.

Previous analysts have therefore highlighted the importance of sensitive imitation and intuition for sports practitioners as they judge the intensity required of them in different exchanges. The relationship between competition and cooperation in each of these examples shows in the following ethnography, where we shall see a concern for maintaining the competitiveness of football at Ashton while preventing injuries through restricting the ‘aggression’ allowed in tackles. Those who were the most vocal in maintaining the rules of the field were the older players.

Getting to the field

The class, education, and economic backgrounds of the players differed. In the previous chapter I noted the differences in their educational backgrounds, and here I briefly outline the men’s different statuses through looking at how they arrived at the football field. According to Ulysse (2007) “no other commodity holds greater importance in defining class status in Jamaica than the car” (2007:43) and transportation was a marker of social status among the men. Status, in turn, was associated with different codes of etiquette away from the field which I consider in further detail in chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Most evenings I would try to get a lift from Mr Bennett, as I was staying in his house, and I began to get changed for football around 5. Depending on the time of year, the men tried to arrive at Ashton as close to 5 as possible, or after 5.30; earlier when the sun set nearer 6 from July to September, later when it set nearer 7 from January to June. Mr Bennett aimed to have a nap beforehand as he frequently stayed in the bar run by his wife until the early hours of the morning, only to rise a few hours later to get to work. Often he did not have time for a sleep, and arrived back around 5, called out “You ready William?” and went into his room to change into his gear. After changing, he picked up his shin pads, plastic protectors for his glasses, and boots or “AP” (all purpose) shoes depending on how much rain there had been as boots – or, specifically, the “cleats” or studs – were uncomfortable and caused shin splints and other injuries. We got into his large, Chevrolet truck which always needed new parts to be sent from the US, and set off for Ashton. Mr Bennett reversed out of the driveway, and I jumped out of the van to lock the gates.

On the way, we picked up one or two players waiting by the side of the road. “A Rasta dat?”¹ Mr Bennett asked as we approached, slowing to pick up ‘Rasta,’ a young man with dreadlocks. “Yes Mr Bennett,” Rasta said as he jumped into the open area on the back of the truck. After driving for a couple more minutes down the road, we turned left onto a much smaller track, rolled over a cattle grid and drove up towards the pitch. The field was part of a large expanse of land, an ornate house, and Ashton Guest House (a small hotel). The properties and fields were owned by the Levys, a family which many around the town alleged owned a third of all the land in Black River. The Levys were a

¹ “Is that Rasta?”

cattle-farming family. As the Levys were friends with the older players, they allowed them to use one of their fields to play pick-up ball.

Mr Bennett drove past the gate to the field then shifted the van into reverse and swiftly spun the steering wheel to park directly opposite the gate. Mr Michaels, a High School teacher, was often there first and parked his minivan one space down from the gate. If he passed New Town before Mr Bennett, he carried those players standing by the side of the road. Mr Michaels locked his van and walked over, "Evenin, evenin." The two discussed Church matters as both were involved in the management of the Anglican church in Black River. Doc arrived next. He drove up quickly in his new, black, BMW 5 series. He smoked Matterhorns (menthol cigarettes), and was the only one in the group to smoke. He wore the most immaculate kit on the field, full Manchester United strips, an England shirt with his name and '9' on the back (the number of the striker). He pressed a button to unlock the boot of his car, and we compared the football he had brought with Mr Bennett's to see which was the better ball to play with, before taking it onto the pitch to warm up. As there was often cattle dung on the field we either collected a shovel from the farm warehouse round the corner, or found a piece of cardboard or plastic to pick up the dung and fling it into the bushes. At the very least, we covered each dung with some dry mud, thick grass, or some of the marl (sand-like building material) from the pile in the corner of the field.

The goals were welded metal frames around 3 feet high, with flaking yellow paint. They were left on the field in the evenings. The men left their phones and wallets next to the goal nearest to the gate. Those who drove either left their keys in this pile, or else rested them on top of the front wheel of their

car, hidden by the wheel arch. The freedom with which they left their belongings in such visibility was testimony to the trust between them. One of them once accidentally left his wallet by the side of the field and returned a week later to find it still lying there with the money still inside. In the Jamaican context, where phone and petty theft was rife, leaving a phone in the open, without keeping an eye on it was almost unheard of. The men used the experience as evidence of the trustworthiness of the group, and the relationships established by playing football together.

By this stage of the evening, there were around six or seven of us on the pitch. Before beginning the match we waited until the 'bus' arrived. The 'bus' was Terry's car, often packed with players from New Town. He always arrived late, and sped up the track from the main road, tyres skidding on the rocks, dust flying up around the vehicle. He 'carried' Freddy (Terry's brother), 'Likkle Peter' or 'Pablo' (Peter, a friend of theirs), Hammer, Lumper, Ballo, Coolie, and Kurt. He had to drive with his boot door open for two players to sit in. As the older players who owned vehicles would have to wait for the 'bus' to arrive before they could start playing, they complained to Terry and those he 'carried'. Sometimes the men became upset as they felt as though the older ones were telling them off for not being able to afford cars, and after one such argument some of the younger players considered stopping playing at Ashton as they were not being treated with enough respect.

After the 'bus' arrived, there was a commotion as people argued about which team to play on. The people who came most frequently were on the same side each time. Others were divided between the two teams to make the numbers equal. The team that needed extras could call for someone in

particular, ‘come nuh William!’, or else try to stop another ‘cross[ing]’ onto their team, ‘no, William a fi yu’ (William’s yours). People talked about teams in terms of ‘fi wi’ (mine or ours) or ‘yours’. ‘Cross[ing]’ occurred when one player changed teams for a number of games. This ‘cross[ing]’ happened when a man no longer wanted to play with, or against, another one, for example, when a younger player felt that he was not getting the ball enough on one team he “crossed over”.

The men viewed age as the main difference between the two teams but new players joined the team depending also on who they knew. If a man was friends with someone, he would go on his team. Although I was one of the youngest on the field, I played on the older side as I was brought by Mr Bennett. The men referred to these two teams as comprised of an ‘older set of guys’ and a ‘younger set of guys’. The distinction between older and younger players was reinforced through forms of address between them. Younger players addressed older players as “Mr -,” whereas younger referred to younger by first name or nickname. The older players referred to each other by their first names, and referred to the younger players by their first names or nicknames. Nicknames were not common among the older group. The distinction between forms of address was made explicit to me during an evening at a bar with Morley, a middle-aged dentist who I’d been on first name terms with from my arrival. “How old are you?” he asked, “25,” I replied, “25, shit! You should be calling me *Mr Davis!*”

To a large extent the football pitch was structured around differences in age and status. The older players all drove to Ashton in their own vehicles and formed one team, while many of the younger ones relied on lifts and formed the

other. However, while the terms ‘younger’ and ‘older’ suggests that the younger players might later look more like the older players, many of them would not achieve the success of the older ones due to their significantly different educational and economic backgrounds, outlined in the previous chapter. It was the older players who defined the rules of the field, and who were the most vocal in making sure that they were followed. In the rest of this chapter, I look at how rules structured the play at Ashton, how these rules were transmitted, and the ‘style’ of football that was produced by such regulations.

The boundaries

Structures of class and generation emerged on the field through who defined ‘correct’ ways of acting, and how these disciplinary rules were expressed. Paying attention to how the boundaries of the field were constituted is significant as they have constituted a key basis for previous analyses, and previous authors have used sports ‘boundaries’ as lenses onto other topics. Merleau-Ponty used the lines of the football field as a metaphor for the relationship between the individual and their “phenomenal field” (1983: 169), arguing that:

“the player becomes one with [the football field] and feels the direction of the ‘goal,’ for example, just as immediately as the vertical and the horizontal planes of his own body”
(1983:168)

In a different way, C.L.R. James employed the metaphor of the boundary of a cricket pitch to explain how what happened on the cricket pitch impacted on society outside of the sport, and also for racial boundaries in Trinidad and Britain. In some respects, the egalitarianism of the cricket pitch regulated by universal rules made manifest the racial inequalities away from it. As noted by

Merleau-Ponty and James, the of sports fields therefore constitute an important area of study.

Whereas in 'formal' football matches white lines were sprayed on the grass to delineate the playing area, at Ashton there was a different understanding of the borders. Along the left hand side of the field there was a steep bank that acted as one side. On the right side, however, the field continued for a kilometre or so. We never played with a boundary on the right side, and players could run as far in that direction as they wished. Nobody ran particularly far that way as either the person with the ball, or more frequently the person chasing them, would decide to pursue the issue no longer and would come back. The centre of the field drew players in as they had more passing options, and a desire to play the game rather than to break it up with too long a sojourn away from the others. The 'goal' lines at either end were lines established in the mind of each goalkeeper in line with their posts. If the ball crossed this imaginary line, the goalkeeper would shout 'It gone!'. Regardless of which side put the ball over the goal line, the ball would be given to the keeper for a goal kick. (We only played corners on the rare occasions when there were a very large number of players.) The boundaries were not fixed, and depended on the general agreement of the players and their interpretations.

The goalkeeper's role in defining the lines of the field was consistently a source of arguments. A particular attack would be mounting around the goal and the ball might go near the line, prompting one of the defenders to shout 'It gone!' while the attacker demanded that it was still in play. The goalkeeper would be asked whether or not it had gone out, and their opinion would trump one or the other's. Although it would be in the goalkeeper's interests to say that

it was 'gone,' from my experience it was just as likely that they would side with the attacker and say it was still in play. Keepers would often shout for play to continue even when the ball had crossed the envisioned boundary. In these moments, administering the rules fairly took precedence over the momentary advantage that might be gained by saying that the ball was 'gone'.

These decisions concerning the lines of the field were as much an embodied practice as a verbal one. If the ball remained in play, the men's bodies stayed tightened and alert. If the ball had 'gone,' they relaxed. When it was in play the men's bodies were aligned in certain ways according to their relationship to the game (attackers and defenders) and other bodies. When the ball was declared 'gone,' the attackers became defenders, and likewise the previous defenders would become attackers. The ball's crossing of the line represented a change in one's relationship to the ball (who possessed it and who did not), to the field, and to each other. During matches we moved and reacted in under pressure from the opposition and from those on our own team, however, when the ball went out of play, we could take the time to reflect on how best to maximise our positions.

The importance of negotiated understandings of the boundaries of the field between players rather than an independent adjudicator highlights the role of status within the rules of the pitch. When arguments occurred over a rule, it was the older players who acted as decision makers, and the younger players accepted their decisions even if they disagreed. The connection of rules and relationships in the case of the boundaries of the pitch did not produce significant sources of conflict. However, in the case of tackling this connection between authority and individual status became more controversial.

Aggressive tackles and ‘soft’ fouls

A tackle was when one player took the ball from an opponent. It was qualitatively different from an ‘interception,’ which was when one intercepted the pass of another. The tackle involved getting close to the opponent and actively trying to take the ball from him. The rules around tackling aimed to limit the danger and potential for injury. FIFA’s ‘Laws of the Game’ (2014) explicitly mention tackles twice. The first states that a free kick is awarded if a player tackles an opponent “in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force” (2014:36). The second mention states that “a tackle that endangers the safety of an opponent must be sanctioned as serious foul play” (ibid.:126). Importantly, it is the referee who decides on whether a tackle is legal or illegal and FIFA recognise the important of individual perspective.

In the absence of a referee these rules were changed in the context of Ashton. The players had to act as referee and it was the older ones who generally decided what was deemed to be legal. These decisions were the cause of disagreement among players as there was an underlying tension between maintaining the competitiveness of the matches while preventing people from getting injured. It was very easy to accidentally kick a player rather than the ball, especially when they were doing tricks, and there was some leeway given over smaller fouls. Some players were more accepting than others and I was more accepting than most, leading to several occasions when I would be shouted at to ‘call fi yu fouls Willie!’, to halt play by claiming there had been a foul. When players shouted at me to ‘call fi [my]

fouls,' they were explicitly teaching me what was, and was not, acceptable; the person had just broken the 'rules' of the field, and I had a right to a free kick. Players were therefore required to gain a sensual awareness of the limits of acceptable play in the same way that, according to Merleau Ponty(1983), they embodied the lines of the football field.

There were certain types of tackle which, while 'legal,' were not allowed at Ashton, while other tackles which were technically not legal were allowed. An example of a tackle that would often be allowed was when a man accidentally kicked the opponent rather than the ball, but not hard enough to hurt them. Those who tried to stop play for such minor infringements would be told that they were playing too 'soft' and that they should just 'mek it guan' (let it go). Examples of a legal tackles that were not allowed at Ashton were 'hard' tackles which introduced too much 'aggression' into the game. The older players proscribed tackles that they deemed too 'hard.' However, for some of the players, such as Peter, aggressive or 'tough' tackles were their style of play. While Peter did not have the passing ability of Freddy or the deft touch of Cavin, his particular skill was playing with an aggression that unnerved the opposition.

Peter

Peter was a young man in his late 20s who was the first of the younger players to talk with me and one of the first who agreed to be interviewed. He held various jobs during the course of fieldwork which included delivering goods, helping with manual labour and running errands. He had a 'wife'

(long-term girlfriend) but no children. Born in Kingston, Jamaica's capital, he moved to Black River after his brother died when Peter was 9. He felt that the move from Kingston to the "country" saved his life.

"P: Living in Kingston, but my brother died when I was 9, and ... I move from Kingston when I was 9, come to country, ca if I didn't change my life and come to country I, I know that for sure I'd be a dead guy.

WT: Why?

P: Ca di temper.

WT: Oh.

P: Mi have. Love fight. Stuff like that.

WT: But I've never seen you fight on the ball field? Like, seriously fight.

P: No, no, I'm not that type of guy. That when mi really much smaller. So that mi tell you when mi much smaller.² (Interview 11/10/12)

Peter considered that his passionate temperament had a negative impact on his later life, despite saying that he had only 'loved to fight' when he was 'really much smaller.' He began playing football when he moved to the 'country,' and represented his Primary school for several years "from about 1990" when "[his] Primary dominate primary league". After he excelled in the primary league, he received offers from a "whole heap" of secondary schools wanting to "buy" him. Peter had a vivid memory of many of the matches he played at the higher levels, and took me through match after

² "P: Living in Kingston, but my brother died when I was 9, and ... I move from Kingston when I was 9, come to country, because if I didn't change my life and come to country I, I know that for sure I'd be a dead guy. WT: Why? P: Because of the temper. WT: Oh. P: I have. Love fight. Stuff like that. WT: But I've never seen you fight on the ball field? Like, seriously fight. P: No, no, I'm not that type of guy. That was when I was much smaller. So that I told you when I was much smaller."

match; who scored which goal, when he was substituted, and his feelings on the pitch. Some of his team mates went on to play in the Jamaican national squad, and there was a part of him that felt that he might have been able to realise such an achievement had he not come from a poorer background and had such a passionate “nature.” He attributed leaving school before finishing the final year and gaining very few “grades” to his personality.

“P: M-hm. When when me leave school now, seh, seh me a go learn a trade. Me a aks, den me a ask ‘wha me up to?’ ... Just waan, me no really ready yet, ca, when me just leave school me did cane row mi hair. Mi a go a high school, dat’s why di principal never want me back, ca we used to leggo wi hair.

WT: Right

P: Leh grow we hair. Grow we hair. When we grow we hair. Blue khaki was in our pants. Was, mi was a good player, but di di rules and regulations a di school, cas I was, dere was a group of us, we just feel seh we were bigger dan di school. Ca you deh pon top now. When you tek, mi tek 3 subject tek, no. 4 subject mi tek, pass 3. Den mi a wonder wha me a go do ere now. Wid mi life... Grow mi hair, when mi leff school, from September to about December. When me grow me hair me eventually seh mi a go trim it. Trim it”³

Throughout the account Peter gave of his life, he said that he had difficulty following rules. Whether refusing to go to football training as he did not feel like going, or, in this case, rebelliously growing his hair against the

³ “P: M-hm. When when I left school, I said, said I’m going to learn a trade. I asked, then I asked, ‘what am I up to?’ ... I just want, I’m not really ready yet because, when I just left school I had cane-rowed my hair. I went to high school, that’s why the principal never wanted me bak, because we used to let our hair grow WT: Right P: Let our hair grow. Grow our hair. When we grew our hair. Our trousers were blue khaki. Was, I was a good player, but the rules and regulations of the school, because I was, there was a group of us, we just felt like we were bigger than the school. Because you’re on top now. When you take, I took three subjects, no, four subjects I took, passed three. Then I wondered what am I going to do now. Grew my hair, when I left school, from September to about December. When I grew my hair I eventually said I’m going to trim it. Trim it.”

WT: Yeah

P: y'unnestand? And mi mi tackle rough, y'unnestand?

WT: Yeah

P: An mean we cyan play deh so"⁴

His game was one of strength, tackles, and aggression in contrast to others who emphasised the importance of a good touch, and nifty passing skills. His style did not fit easily within the rules. Freddy, another of the younger players, noted the difference in Peter's demeanour at Ashton:

"F: [Peter's game] Tone down. He nuh use to dis here type a game we have, how we no haffi uh... Das why im call foul so much like when yuh a touch im a, beca yu no seh im can get fi play a fi him type a game, so him seh why yu a come tackle im an so

WT: Yeah

F: But if i ever decide fi start play hard, dat fi get a problem yuh no

WT: Yeah

F: Because Peter tackle *hard*. When im play di a play, ehm, when im did use i play D-cup, an im, im use i play fi STETHS yu now. An im tackle one yute an when im get him when 'hmmmmm' [Freddy makes a guttural exhalation through his nose] Yeah man, go like some gorilla, a so im use i guan, tackle an beat up im chest an dem ting deh. Dat's how Peter play ball, tackle hard! But a dat fi him natural game"⁵

⁴ 'P: But playing at Ashton, Barry said something the other day and I just laughed in my mind, because the game I play William, I can't play at Ashton. WT: Yeah, why? P: It's a more rougher game. You're not supposed to beat me. My Philosophy, you're not supposed to beat me. WT: Whatever it takes P: Whatever it takes you're not supposed to beat me. Ashton is some older set of players, it's some, it's some bigger men, it's not young boy players. And the game that Barry expects for, me to play, I can't play out there, I told him that WT: Yeah P: You understand? And I tackle rough, you understand? WT: Yeah P: And it means we can't play it out there'

⁵ 'F: Toned down. He's not use to this type of game we have, how we don't have uh... That's why he calls foul so much like when you touch him, it's because you know he doesn't get to

Freddy's description of Peter showed an attention to the aggression that accompanied his tackling on the field. He spoke of how Peter beat his chest "like some gorilla" and emphasised how he tackled "hard." These descriptive terms contrast with the skills described as 'delicate' and 'intelligent' in the following chapter, and point towards a different set of practices.

Although Peter's tackles were not illegal in that they did not break the formal 'Laws' (FIFA 2014) of football, these types of tackle were outlawed on the field. Other players also recognised the restrictions on tackling, and Mr Michaels said that the footballers "understand the style of play that exists, because you don't have the hard tackles," and that "for the most part people tend to be careful in tackling". These restrictions made the field 'safe' for the older players; however, it had the concomitant effect of preventing Peter from playing his 'game'.

'Soft' and 'Hard' tackles

The terms 'soft' and 'hard' carried significance in the production of masculinities away from the field. 'Softness' among men was associated with being a child and/or being feminine. It also carried connotations of homosexuality which was negatively valued in a context in which homophobia was commonplace. As they aged, boys were expected to become

play his type of game, so he asks why you come and tackle him and such WT: Yeah F: But if he ever decides to start to play hard, that'll be a problem there now WT: Yeah F: Because Peter tackles hard. When he play, played, ehm, when he used to play D-cup, and he, he used to play for STETHS. And he tackled one young guy and when he got it went 'hmmmm'. Yeah man, like a gorilla, that's how he used to go on, tackle and beat his chest and those kind of things. That's how Peter play's ball, tackles hard! But that's his natural game"

'hard.' 'Hardness' could refer to having an athletic physique, or in appearing 'tough,' and also to boys and men who maintained multiple sexual relationships. Indeed, some of the men with whom I spoke explained that if a schoolboy did not have 'a lot of girlfriends,' by which they meant sexual partners, 'dem call you soft'. The term was also associated with ageing, and men would use the term 'he's gone soft' to talk of a man who had stopped having girlfriends and settled down with a 'wife' (whether married or cohabiting) or had lost some of his athletic abilities. Away from Ashton, the expressions were used by both the younger and the older men although they carried particular weight among the former. There was less emphasis placed on the terms once a man had fathered children and they were most frequently invoked to evaluate those who were transitioning from boys to men, and particularly schoolboys reaching the end of High School (around 18 years old).

When speaking about football, 'hard' carried a negative connotation of a man playing 'too aggressive,' while 'soft' carried the equally negative connotation of being non-competitive. The 'certain flavour' of Ashton lay somewhere in between and fluctuated depending on the day, people's temperaments and who was playing. In the same way that the ball was judged to be 'hard' and needed to have air let out of it, or 'soft' and needed air pumped into it, the accepted level of play needed to be felt rather than explained. The balance between 'hard' and 'soft' was similar to Wacquant's discussion of sparring for boxers, in which:

"the level of violence fluctuates in cycles according to a dialectic of challenge and response, within moving limits set by the sense of equity that founds the original

agreement between sparring partners [...] The task of the coach is to monitor this 'fistic conversation' to see that the less accomplished fighter is not being silenced, in which case he will instruct his opponent to diminish pressure accordingly [...] or that the two partners do not let the intensity of their exchanges drop too far below that of a fight, which would defeat the very purpose of the exercise" (Wacquant 2004a:83-84)

In the same way as boxers and their coaches had to gauge their 'level of violence,' the correct intensity during matches had to be understood bodily and shifted as the play continued and was a delicately balanced between 'hard' and 'soft'. Judging the optimum levels of matches was a continual source of discussion, as each player favoured different intensities, and those that seemed to have achieved the right equilibrium were described as 'sweet'.

Many of the players appreciated the proscription of 'hard' tackles at Ashton and positively associated it with a level of restraint. Terry said that "anyone of us can make a tackle like that [...] but we just don't do it because we no seh it nuh right"⁶ (Interview 11/12/12), and Mr Michaels that "a certain level of control, I think, internal control on everybody's part [...] has to be exercised" (Interview 15/5/12). They suggested that the lack of 'hard' tackles did not mean that they were not capable of playing 'hard,' but rather that they had a faculty for self-control that set them apart from others. Some of the players viewed 'softness' as evidence of a heightened ability rather than in negative terms.

Although they felt as though they could give and take 'hard' tackles, the young men agreed with their prohibition at Ashton. They related the

⁶ "Anyone of us can make a tackle like that [...] but we just don't do it because we know that it isn't right"

proscription of 'hard' tackles to the cost-benefit ratios of the games; as Freddy put it, hard tackling "nuh right [...] we're not playing for money, or trophy or anything like that" (interview 11/12/12). They talked of playing football for "fun" and this would be taken away if there were the possibility of physical harm. Nevertheless, they suggested that they would be willing to take the danger of 'hard' tackles if they were playing for money, or the pride of winning a trophy.

The older players understood 'hard' tackles explicitly in relation to age and employment. Doc said: "y'know as you can see most, a lot of the guys are working guys. And basically depend on their work for, y'know? Their livelihood, I mean, so none of us can really afford to get that kinda injury" (interview 12/12/12), framing the football within particular understandings of labour. Sitting at the bar in the evenings with some of the older players, we would talk about 'bad' tackles that jeopardised a man's working potential. There was also an undertone behind these discussions, suggesting that those who had respected jobs, wives and children could not 'afford' to get injured in the same way as those who did not. The decision not to engage in 'hard' tackles was phrased in positive terms as evidence of gainful employment. Most of the time the majority of players saw the absence of certain tackles to define positively the 'flavour' of the football at Ashton.

However, occasionally there was ambivalence as some felt the matches were becoming too 'soft' and therefore non-competitive. Peter began to describe it as "retirement ball," employing the language of labour or redundancy to suggest that the matches were for those who were no longer able to play competitively. Mr Michaels called it: "an old-man's game with a certain

flavour,” and Freddy said that the men played in order to “keep the blood, the blood flowing [...] keep [the] heart pumping [and to] keep fit” rather than for competition. In particular, Peter often spoke of the football becoming too ‘soft,’ which was understandable given his particular talent for ‘hard’ football. He contrasted fouls from what he felt were ‘soft’ fouls:

“P: Yeah. Alright, fi in football in Jamaica, cyan do dat because yu a blind a man. See if a don here, a feel don here so [points to his chest], don a yu waist, or don here so [points to his navel], don below, a no nutt’n, up here so is, fuh yu no reach up inna face an dat is a fouls dat

WT: Yeah, I don’t like that

P: An dem no, dem no no di basic, dem just a play football and just feel seh, if dem shield you, you no suppose-, dem supposed to no seh yo, dat a fouls, but you nah go call every soft fouls yu no

WT: Just let some go

P: Yeah. But by right, yu hand, di man’s hand lick inna mi face. I remember Cavin called one against Barrett, in a fi wi rule, dat a no fouls. Ca we no play so soft.

WT: Yeah, yeah. I guess they’re just trying to look after their, their things

P: Yeah, ca dem a older set a guys, come hard fi set.⁷ (11/10/12)

Peter consistently contrasted “fi wi rules” from “soft rules”. For him, ‘fi wi rules’ consisted of how he perceived ‘Jamaicans’ to play football in contrast to elsewhere. These rules allowed pushing or barging any part of the body below the neck. However, at Ashton some players “called” for these “soft fouls” and Peter recognised that the older men were concerned about injuries as their

⁷ “P: Yeah. Alright, in football in Jamaica, you can’t do that because you’ll blind a man. See if it’s down here [points to his chest], down at your waist, or down here [points to his navel], down below, it’s nothing, up here it is, because you shouldn’t reach up into a face and that’s a foul WT: Yeah, I don’t like that P: And they don’t, they don’t know the basic, they just play football and just feel like, if they shield you, you’re not supposed -, they’re supposed not to say ‘yo, that’s a foul,’ but you’re not going to call every soft fouls you know WT: Just let some go P: Yeah. But by right, your hand, the man’s hand hit my face. I remember a mand called one against another man, in our rules, that’s not a foul. Because we don’t play so soft. WT: Yeah, yeah. I guess they’re just trying to look after their, their things P: Yeah, because they’re an older set of guys, it becomes hard to set” (11/10/12)

bodies had become “hard fi set”. There was therefore an immanent tension in the matches and the style of play permissible.

While younger players understood the sensitivity of the older men to ‘hard’ tackles, they were highly critical of other younger players who ‘called for soft fouls’. In particular, they criticised those who had an aggressive style of play but who frequently complained about fouls. Freddy talked of one man who ‘called’ every time another player tackled him:

F: Well [he] play aggressive uh no so sometime mi wonder why him argue over how dem tackle

WT: Yeah, he starts a war!

F: Eh, mi always a wonder

WT: Every match he starts a war with someone

F: So mi always a wonder seh why, why i have a problem with how dem tackle. Cos a basically same him tackle yu no

WT: Yeah

F: Im love catch [a particular type of tackle], mi no dat. Sometime mi si down an mi seh yo, sometime dem a blame [another player] fi some tings wha deh really a do now”⁸

(Interview 30/12/12)

The aggressive player therefore had to be willing to receive ‘hard’ tackles. Freddy emphasised that different rules applied to different people on the field according to their style of play. Although there was a ‘certain flavour’ to Ashton, there was no single rule for tackling that applied to all of the men all of the time, and tackles were judged in terms of the relationship between

⁸ “FD: Well Hammer, but [he] plays aggressive you know so sometimes I wonder why he argues over how they tackle WT: Yeah, he starts a war! FD: Eh, I always wonder WT: Every match he starts a war with someone FD: So I always wonder why, why he has a problem with how they tackle. Because it’s basically the same way he tackles you know WT: Yeah FD: He loves to catch [a particular type of tackle], I know that. Sometimes I sit down and say yo, sometimes they blame [another player] for some things which they really do now”

those involved.

The rules regarding 'hard' tackles therefore involved configuring relationships between the Ashton players and also between 'their' field and others. Through the proscription of 'hard' tackles, Ashton men understood themselves as displaying a higher level of etiquette than other football players. Those involved in each tackle also defined their own style of play and their relationship between youth and maturity by deciding on what was 'hard' and what was 'soft' for them. While these negotiations were often grasped intuitively, at times they were discussed and contested. The moments that players talked most about the rules of the field were on the rare occasions that fights erupted.

Fights

Fights threatened to overturn the restraint of the field and to undermine the relationships between players. Here, I concentrate on one particular fight and how it was explicitly understood in terms of age. Fights on the field were very uncommon. On average, we played 4-5 times a week, every week, for the whole year of my fieldwork. In that time, there were only three moments that might be called 'fights'; at least, they were serious enough for play to stop. On two of the three occasions, these involved shouting insults and verbal exchanges that were of enough gravitas to bring an end to play. On one occasion blows were exchanged. I suggest that the major effect of fighting was to revitalise the etiquette of the field, and to make explicit a collective agreement to abide by these rules. In general, there

was a tacit understanding among those who came to play that arguments could arise, but would be resolved through playing the match rather than through conflict. The men would say that players should ‘let the ball do all of the talking’ rather than arguing between themselves. As Max Gluckman (1958, orig.1940) showed in his study of ‘The Bridge,’ a focus on fights and their resolution can reveal the social relationships underlying apparently distinct groups. Similarly, in what follows, it becomes apparent that the fight formed the basis for a novice to learn the football field, and strengthened the “sensual logic” (Wacquant 2004:7) of Ashton.

There was one new player who seemed to incite conflict with nearly everybody on the pitch in the weeks leading up to the fight. ‘Dee,’ nicknamed ‘Blindman’ or ‘Ray Charles’ as he wore thick glasses. He was one of the youngest players on the field, around 17 years old, was quite stocky, and a person who played very aggressively, and was either unable or unwilling to restrain this aggression. In one almost comic match, he ran into two players on his own team, leaving one of them injured for weeks. He was a ‘trash-talker’ who often tried to undermine the opposition’s confidence through shouting at them when they had the ball. Both younger and older players confided to me that they were afraid of being injured by him and did not enjoy matches when he was on the field. It had been Dee who had shouted “Break yu foot!”, which happened a few weeks before the fight detailed below. A common discussion after matches concerned whether he played ‘maliciously’ and with an intention to hurt the opposition, or whether he was ‘clumsy’ and committed fouls by mistake. If they decided that he played ‘maliciously’ then they would ask him to stop coming to the field; however if

he was 'clumsy' then they would tell him to be more careful in future matches. The fight offered an insight into the apprenticeship of a younger player into a specific code of etiquette.

Before the fight happened, the match was in full flow. I was playing well, and my team were up 1-0 after a neat pass took out the goalkeeper, leaving our midfielder the simple task of tapping the ball into the empty goal. Everybody seemed in good spirits. The other team were making an attack at our goal when, to my right, Dinga (a player in his late-20s) grabbed Dee by the scruff of his neck, and said, "don't do that again, pussyclaat," and threw him over his leg. Both of them were on the opposing, younger team. I thought that the two were just play-fighting, as Dinga was smiling, but suddenly Dee sprang up and punched Dinga in the face. Dinga immediately responded with fists flying, and the two of them clinched. Theo, Dee's cousin, ran over and tried to separate them, before others went over to hold the two pugilists apart. Once they were parted, both appeared relaxed but equally eager to rekindle the battle, looking over the heads of the men holding them apart to catch each other's gaze. Neither was badly hurt, despite both landing punches.

Aside from a few guys who stayed to calm them down, the rest of us abandoned the match, walked off the field, and began our analysis of what had happened. Nobody knew exactly what had caused the fight, but Dinga told them that he had asked Dee to pass to him. Instead, Dee tried an overly ambitious long pass across to the other side of the pitch and, inevitably, the ball flew hopelessly wide of its mark. Dinga then said something to Dee, as it was not the first such pass Dee had made and, while running past him, Dee

elbowed him in the face. It was after this insult that Dinga had thrown Dee down. All the guys standing round agreed that Dee should not be allowed to play again, as he was continually causing arguments and now had proven himself not only clumsily aggressive, but ‘malicious.’ The players also talked of how the fight might have continued if Theo had decided to take Dee’s side and had begun to hit Dinga. Many of the men were relatives or close friends of Dinga’s, so the fight would have escalated to include many of those on the field. Fortunately, Theo had decided to pull the two apart.

Once the men decided not to let Dee play again, the tension was relieved by turning to the nightly banter over the match’s result. One of those on Dee and Dinga’s team claimed that it should be ruled a ‘no contest’ as the match had been abandoned, prompting players from my team to joke that he had orchestrated the whole fight as he knew his team could not have won the match. As we were talking, another man mimicked a player who had tried to do some skill but had shuffled his feet, tripped over his own legs, and then called for a foul despite the closest opponent being several metres away. He maintained that he had been fouled, but only half-seriously and increasingly quietly.

A few minutes later, Dee walked over to us. We became quiet as he approached. He addressed the group, saying “gentlemen, I’m the youngest player on the field, and I did something stupid,” and he went on to apologise. Once he had finished, Doc said that his speech was a “big man ting,” and suggested that he be allowed to play again. Dee then left the field. After a few moments of silence, we agreed that he would be allowed to play in the future as he had made an effort to apologise, and recognised that he had ‘done

wrong'. Over the course of the following days and weeks, Dee began playing again, at first in goal and, when outfield, he played with less aggression than he had before. In interviews during the following days, I talked to Doc about the fight. He offered an interesting analysis:

“D: I think that is just because of, just because of personalities. To be honest I don't think it would ever escalate to any real, real ... I mean what happened yesterday was just like two young boys fighting. You realise that none of them were even hurt, y'undestand?”

WT: Yeah

D: I don't think it would ever escalate to that, well hopefully it would never escalate to that, I don't see why it should

WT: Yeah

D: Y'know because there are nuff guys, nuff sensitive persons out there who would try and stop that from happening. And that is one of the reasons why I actually love playing there”

For Doc, the fight happened between “boys” but, when Dee apologised, he acted as a “man”. Dee had referred to the other players as “gentlemen,” describing himself as the “youngest player,” and his actions as “stupid.” Doc also showed that the restraint shown by the players, who he referred to as “sensitive persons”, was one of the main reasons he “loved playing out there.”

Conclusions

The embodiment of correct etiquette was expressed in terms of manhood; while 'boys' acted in ways that jeopardised the wellbeing of players and acted aggressively and 'maliciously,' 'men' demonstrated an awareness of the needs of others and showed an ability to limit their aggression even during a challenging match. Studying the etiquette at Ashton indicates how age and authority articulate on the field. Older players interpreted and enforced the rules while the younger had to modify their style of play to these regulations. Rules were explicitly understood in terms of age and processes of maturation, with transgressions described in the language of 'boyhood' and adherence in that of 'manhood.' The construction of the field in these terms implied a necessary apprenticeship in etiquette for new members, who learned how to act in a manner appropriate to a given context through intuition and imitation, and to embody the sensitive qualities necessary to understand when to modify one's behaviour. The examples at the beginning and the end of this chapter both involved teaching the youngest player on the pitch how to act like a 'man' rather than a 'boy.' Similarly, Peter had learned to change from his 'natural' football style in order to prevent injuries to other players.

The rules at Ashton over what were considered 'hard' and 'soft' tackles located it within the geographies of other fields. Ashton was considered to be a 'softer' game than others in Black River, and younger players joked that it had become 'retirement ball' and too soft. By contrast, others argued that the restraint and 'sensitivity' shown on the field indicated a higher level of etiquette and talent than elsewhere, as the players all knew how to tackle 'hard' but chose not to. Significantly, these decisions were informed by understandings of labour and the importance of being able to work without

becoming injured. Status and age therefore emerged in the identification of the field and its players.

While the language employed by the men when articulating the rules stressed the importance of age, this emphasis disguised the role of class in constructions of etiquette. Through talking of the particular set of rules at Ashton, they implicitly contrasted their game with other games around Black River where the men did not demonstrate such restraint. Also, the rules were entwined with ideas of labour and employment. Both the rules and the styles of play at Ashton, which I concentrate on in the following chapter, demonstrate the extent to which age and class play a role in processes of embodiment.

Chapter 5: Skills and Styles: touches, passes, and ‘salads’

In general, during the matches the younger team would try to push their way down the centre of the pitch. They would verbally challenge their older opponents, saying ‘alright, come tek it’ before trying to trick their way past them. Often, a younger player would then make a wild shot that flew wide and off-target. By comparison, the older team would begin almost tortuously slowly. Players would pass the ball around the back (even to the goalkeeper) to give everybody the chance to ‘take a touch’ and get a ‘feel’ of the ball. They shouted phrases to each other such as ‘draw them out’ and ‘pressure bursts pipes’ and communicated over which passes to make. They would also shout ‘too many’ if one of their team-mates held the ball for too long. Eventually one would make a more ambitious pass forward and the younger team would steal the ball. The matches continued back and forth and the older team tended to score more goals than the younger, and would remind them about their winning record before and after each match. In contrast, the younger players managed to trick their way past their opponents more often, and could brag about the ‘salads’¹ they had given.

During the opening minutes of a match I would be able to tell whether I would have a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ game. Some days my touch would be perfect, as though controlling a ball were easy. Confident, I could concentrate on the subsequent run or pass. These days seemed infrequent but occurred more often as fieldwork continued. On other days, the ball bounced off my foot

¹ A ‘salad’ is a trick to get past another player. It is similar to the English ‘nutmeg,’ although it doesn’t necessarily mean that the ball goes through the players’ legs.

uncontrollably and I could not have hit a barn door, let alone pass to a player or take a shot. My panacea, and my attempt to make up to the team for my errors, was to run. I spent whole matches running, always trying to chase the ball I felt I had given away. Others began to joke that ‘im cyan tire’² and would challenge new players to try to keep up with me. I also built up a mantra I would repeat to myself to calm down, ‘control and pass, control and pass,’ and I would feel relieved of some of the stress that went alongside wanting to play well and not let my team down or make a fool of myself.

After several months of playing, I was still having difficulty controlling the ball as I became increasingly anxious about my poor skill. Sitting by the pitch after a particularly disheartening performance, I confided in Peter that I was getting bothered by my lack of ability. When we were warming up, I could control and pass the ball with ease. However, the stress of the matches made my body tense, and I played with jerky, inefficient movements, rather than with the relaxed fluidity of the more experienced players. He gave me some friendly and said, “that [the stress] is the system; you can’t let it get into your mind”. The football pitch, he went on to say, was like life away from the field insofar as you could not allow the stress of lack of money and stable employment to make you depressed.

In this chapter I explore the relationship between the ‘system’ and the ‘mind’. While the system referred to the pressures of how others thought that the ball should be used and the stress of knowing that the opposition was trying to block one’s movements, for Peter the mind indicated an individual style of play in which you ‘expressed’ and ‘enjoyed’ yourself. Paying close

² ‘He can’t get tired’

attention to how skills are embodied, I argue for a view of football that recognises differences in players' skills and intentions in particular spaces and at various times. I begin by discussing the concept of the habitus with particular reference to body techniques, and then look in detail at three football skills: the 'touch,' the 'pass,' and the 'salad.' Moving on from individual experiences of the acquisition of skills, I look at the more general 'styles' that characterised the older and younger teams, and also show how football skill requires knowing when to follow a general style and when to manipulate expectations through individual style. I argue that recognising the importance of simultaneously general and individual styles suggests that the football habitus is fluid and that adept football players recognise when to subvert these dispositional structures to gain a tactical edge over their opponents. While the playing styles of the teams were presented by the players as different, these distinctions served to reify group boundaries and to conceal their similarities and imitation.

Habitus and style

I am concerned with the production of a football habitus through paying close attention to the ways that people (including myself) played and appreciated the game. In this Chapter, I am interested in individual variation within the football habitus; as members of a team, the men had both a general and an individual style of play. As noted by Bar-On Cohen (2006), Monaghan (1999), Spencer (2009), and Wacquant (1995; 2004a; 2009; 2014), there is

considerable variation within a sporting habitus. As I show with reference to the amateur footballers, these differences are caused by the players' longer football biographies and by responses to opportunities in the present.

Crossley (2005) has criticised theorists who have adopted the habitus as a "one size fits all" (ibid.:15) model that overlooked diversity within groups. Returning to Marcel Mauss's definition of the "techniques of the body" (1973: 70) as "the ways in which from society to society men know how to use their bodies" (ibid.: 70), Crossley (2004) researched the production of the "circuit trainer's habitus" (ibid.) and demonstrated that those who attended circuit training oriented themselves differently to the sessions. He indicated individual variation within a general habitus by showing how some in the circuit training class attempted to 'bodybuild' while others tried to 'body tone' (2004:51) despite performing the same exercises.

At Ashton, difference in how the men played was discussed in terms of styles. In his essay 'The Problem of Style,' (Simmel (1991 [1908])) argued that it might be understood as "a principle of generality which either mixes with the principle of individuality, displaces it or represents it" (1991:65). On the football field the principle of generality *both* mixed with the principle of individuality *and* displaced it at different points during the matches. Simmel also argued that "by virtue of style, the particularity of the individual work is subjugated to a general law of form that also applies to other works; it is, so to speak, relieved of its absolute autonomy" (1991:64), and concluded:

"style is the aesthetic attempt to solve the great problem of life: an individual work or behaviour, which is closed, a whole, can simultaneously belong to something higher, a unifying encompassing context" (Simmel 1991:70)

As Simmel shows, style has the combined effect of subsuming the unique beneath the general and, at the same time, raising the individual to ‘a unifying encompassing context.’

On the amateur field, there was a tension between playing as an individual and as part of a team which was phrased in terms of ‘your game’ and ‘the system.’ Men from both sides spoke of the style of the older team as the ‘passing game,’ as ‘letting the football do the talking,’ and also referred to it as a ‘system’. By contrast, they did not view the younger side as having a coherent ‘system,’ and most spoke of it in terms of a lack of group play with a concomitant emphasis on individual skill. Such a focus on playing as individuals became a general style in itself, and younger men who were forced to ‘cross’ to the older side would complain when they were instructed to change their play to suit that of the older team.

There was no single football habitus on the field but there were dispositions and themes that made it coherent. In what follows I give oral histories from three of the regular amateur football players focusing on the basic skills required to play football, and their different approaches to these techniques. I reflect on the production of my own football habitus to help to think through how skills become embodied.

Mr Bennett

Mr Bennett began to play football when his father bought him a ball at the age of 5. He recounted his first match:

“I was about age 10. I remember we got into a van back and went to Lacovia and played a practice game, well, a friendly game against Lacovia Primary. Those days. We were all in the back of a pick-up truck, you know? I remember clearly, yuh no” (interview 16/12/12).

Later, he played Dacosta cup football but was only eligible to play for one year. His coach put him at right back (a defender on the right side of the field) and he learned to enjoy the position. However, he described his first match in this position as “a nightmare,” saying, “you know the ball kept finding the holes through, and a hole it was.” As a child, he described playing “every...single...day!” and said that “wild horses couldn’t drag [him] away” from the football field. He later played for his hall at the University of the West Indies; then, following a 4 year hiatus in New York, played “over-35” football (although he was in his 20s) with “some Spanish guys, some South American guys [who] were living there as well” while he was staying in Florida. “This is what’s interesting,” he went on to say, “I must have gone, I’m saying that it was 10 years, it might have been 8, but I went a serious amount of time without touching a football. I can’t believe [it].” It was after this break that he established the game at Ashton along with some of the other regulars.

Mr Bennett liked to play at right back (right defence), often standing out wide and picking long passes up-field. He ran with his head up and, although he seemed to move sluggishly, a player who moved on him too quickly was sold a dummy (Mr Bennett feigned to go one way but went the other) and beaten. It was evident that Mr Bennett had a keen football mind heightened through years of playing in defence at schoolboy level, and many more years watching and analyzing schoolboy and professional matches. He

was an ideal defender, making options when attacking by moving wide, and limiting the opposition's opportunities by defending tightly. He would also make attacking runs up the flank, and was capable of kicking mean, shin-high crosses across the mouth of the opposition's goal.

Mr Bennett's status on the pitch was secured because he was a strong player, and this status was further heightened by his job as a prominent chartered accountant in the town. He drove to the field and often provided the ball, and it was his relationship with the family who owned the land that enabled us to play there. Although he rarely criticised people directly, other players would listen when he spoke. If our team was playing badly, he would shout "oh, come ON!" and was never more vociferous than when chastising himself. He was a team player, and concentrated 'his' game on keeping play simple and making sure he was in the right position on the field at the right moment. He emphasised the importance of basic skills over and above more intricate strategies and tricks. He was convinced that in football, at any level, the team that played with the best fundamentals would prevail over the team which relied on individual flair. The most basic skill in football is the touch.

The touch

Touch referred to any moment that the ball came into contact with a person. It could be when a player received the ball and 'took a touch' to control it before passing, and it could also be used to talk about a man 'getting a touch' and subtly changing the ball's direction. The touch was

related to the ability to control a ball, meaning to change the movement of the football so that the player could use it more easily. When receiving a pass, it was necessary to 'bring the ball under control'. One could talk of a given player's touch to indicate their ability to control the ball. Most of the men, particularly those who played schoolboy or high-level football, had fantastic touches.

I had not played football to any accomplished level when I was younger and had to build up my touch during the matches. Every match offered hundreds of opportunities to hone my basic skills. As a pass came my way I would gauge its pace, the ground in front of me, whether any other players were near, and how my body was set. At first I found it best to turn to face the ball as it came, orienting my body towards the ball but turning my foot at a 90° angle to control and 'cushion' it. If I set my foot too hard, or at slightly the wrong angle, the ball would bounce off. Too soft and the ball stuck too close to my feet and I would have to reset my feet awkwardly round it.

My experiences of the football field called to mind Wacquant's description of learning to box:

"to learn how to box is to imperceptibly modify one's boxily schema, one's relation to one's body and to the uses one usually puts it to, so as to internalize a set of dispositions that are inseparably mental and physical and that, in the long run, turn the body into a virtual punching machine, but *an intelligent and creative machine capable of self-regulation* while innovating within a fixed and relatively restricted panoply of moves as an instantaneous function of the actions of the opponent in time" (Wacquant 2004a: 95)

What most interests me in the following section on the ‘touch’ was the extent to which it was as much a mental as a physical skill, and the necessity of ‘internalising’ the touch through hours of practice. Further, Wacquant points to the importance of intention and innovation in the success of a sportsman’s skills.

The more I concentrated on my touch the worse it became. Weeks went by and I felt as though I had not made any progress. The worse my touch became the more my body tensed and my touch became progressively worse. I watched closely as other players controlled effortlessly and tried fruitlessly to copy their movements. I watched training videos on the Internet, videos of players such as Zidane and others who have raised the touch to an art form. I even memorised sections of instruction manuals for coaches to teach new players how to control. However, the more research I did the worse my control became.

I spoke to Terry who, like me, had not played football to an accomplished level when he was younger. He recounted the first time he went out to Ashton:

“T: Not good at all [laughs] 10 minutes and mi flat out man

WT: Yeah?

T: 10 minutes. Not good at all.

WT: They must have cussed you out as well

T: Wha?! [laughs] Yuh control di ball an di ball run under your foot cos, you know, even though you probably could, you can do it, during a game you kinda, your concentration an yu fi

WT: Yeah

T: Yuh get mess up

WT: And the stress as well

T: Mmhm, cos you get people cuss you yuh no. Yuh need fi do di right thing, all di time” (Interview 11/12/12)

We also talked about the first times I had been out onto the field, and I admitted that I felt lucky I was not able to understand the jeers at my poor performance. Terry laughed, and acknowledged that I was certainly lucky not to have understood them.

As I began to talk with others about my difficulty relaxing on the field, I was told to push everything out of my mind. ‘You just have to play *your* game,’ or, ‘I just play my game,’ were oft-repeated phrases that contained more advice than I originally realised. My anxiety was not helped by those on the opposing team who, seeing my difficulty, played on it by screaming ‘Nuh lick im!’³ as if an opponent were about to lunge in with an aggressive tackle each time the ball came my way.

An effective touch had to be instinctive, and allowed a good footballer time to decide how to use the ball. As noted with reference to Spencer (2009), sportspersons build their skills through repetition when they are learning the techniques and through putting them to use in competition. The touch was learned and improved in response to bodily capacity and sensitive observation. Faster players learned to use the touch to maximise their speed, and slower players to minimise tackling opportunities. Environmental factors also

³ ‘don’t hit him!’

impacted on how to perform techniques. Cavin was seen to have one of the best touches of all those who played at Ashton.

Cavin

Cavin operated a 'route taxi' between Whitehouse and Black River; a taxi that ran along a specific route and picked people up and dropped them off along the way. He was in his late 40s and played for the older team. As he was a taxi operator he did not have the same level of income as others on the older side, and did not regularly socialise with them away from the field. Although he lived in Whitehouse, over half an hour's drive away, he came to Ashton everyday he could. I asked Cavin about his first experience with football:

"C: Well, ah, at school. Yeah, when I I I saw my friends dem kicking dis, and I decide dat I'm going to try it

WT: Yeah

C: Yeah, and I was decide that ... But the first time I tried I like, sprained my two big toes

WT: The first time you tried?

C: The first time I tried, was like [we both laugh] And I said to myself, no, this is, this is not good, but, after I said I'm not going to play it again because the pain

WT: Yeah

C: But then a few days after and I start to feel a little better I went out back there so I realise that there's naturally a love for it" (Interview 10/11/12)

After this unfortunate beginning, Cavin's "love" for the game grew, and he developed his skills further. He received a scholarship to attend the prestigious Cornwall College and play for them in the Dacosta cup when he was 16 and 17. After he left school, he played for a team in Division One and then for Seba (Montego Bay United Football Club) for five seasons in the Jamaican Premier League (the highest-ranking football league in Jamaica). Many others in Seba later represented Jamaica at the national level, but Cavin did not take the "straight path", explaining, "when the guys dem were training maybe I was with a girl, so, that was my downfall." Also, even at Premier League level few players earned enough money to subsist, and Cavin had to juggle his training alongside holding a full-time job.

Cavin explained his style saying, "that for me, that's football. When you can play those precise pass through those pocket of space". He credited his refined touch and swift passing ability to the bustling streets of Montego Bay:

"C: Because when we play in the evenings, sometimes, what we used to do we used to play in the street. So you play against cars, you play against people walking, and you play against your opponent [laughs] so you have to have close skills

WT: Yeah

C: so even sometimes you play you have to move over here, cars coming and you, stop it [I laugh] you know, so, yeah yeah, you're you're, you have a lot of things to play against, so we're used to that

WT: Yeah

C: Yeah, so, you develop that that close skill being being on the street because remember the street is just a few feet away, you know, you have to play, play against

people walking, play against dis an, you have to control kicking it because you might break somebody window, you have to look out for the cars coming, and they're not the cars that are are are slow, they're driving at at at speed

WT: Yeah, they don't go slow

C: So, you know, learn from there is like, when you go on the field, you get that. So maybe that is why I like to pass the ball so much, because knowing that fact that you're playing on that little, you have to, you know, learn to pass the ball. So naturally it just come naturally" (Interview 10/11/12)

Playing on the road forced him to learn to control the ball and pass it quickly, while remaining acutely aware of what was happening around him. At the same time that his style was changed by the street, football made him interact with those streets in a different way; the fast cars and people passing became obstacles to play "against".

Cavin's love for the "passing game" and his adept touch made him an ideal midfielder, and he always assumed that position on the field. Unfortunately an injury to his back made it increasingly difficult for him to play. In our interview, he vividly described his injury: "it was like hell ... when I, like like sit down by the house and see the guys go out to the field, it's like 'why me? Why me, Lord, why me?'" Even when he came out after he began to heal, his fragility impacted on his game. However, if one passed Cavin any ball at any pace, he would control it with his first touch. Even with younger, faster, stronger players marking him, he would manage to beat them barely a moment after the ball had reached him. If a defender marked him closely he would immediately play the ball 'first time' (with his first touch of the ball) to another player. If the defender crowded his back, he

would pivot around with his first touch before picking out his pass. Finally, if a player gave him too much space he often chose to turn and give the player a 'salad'.

Cavin used the word 'naturally' to explain both his love for the game and his particular football style. When explaining his first experiences (in the interview extract above), he said that, in spite of breaking both of his big toes, he realised that there was "naturally a love" for the game within him. Also, when talking of his ability to pass the ball, he said that his passing skills had "just come naturally" from playing on streets in Montego Bay. His description of both his love and his skill as 'natural' carries several meanings. It suggests a reluctance to explain the variation of ability among different players through practice. Also, it offers an explanation for why he received a scholarship over others while bypassing aspects of upbringing. It portrays both love and ability as being innate, and they can neither be learned nor taught.

Alongside Cavin's skill on the field, he spoke excitedly about his dedication to the sport. He referred to it as a religion, saying that in Jamaica "You have the Rastafarian, you have the Christian, you have the footballian." Elsewhere, he used it to illustrate the enjoyment he took from life, explaining one motivation for moving from the bustling city with its 24-hour vibrancy to the comparatively quiet town of Black River:

"C: You see in life it's about being happy, it's not, it's not having a lot of money. I've seen a lot of friends of mine who, in Montego Bay have a lot of money, and a lot of them if they're not dead, they have to run away

WT:

OK

C: So I realise that money isn't all. It's about being happy, it's about sitting here talking to you about this beautiful game" (Interview 10/11/12).

Football was therefore much more than a hobby or an interest and his attachment to it could only be explained with reference to nature and religion.

Training the touch

While Cavin described his skills as arising 'naturally,' players at Ashton had also spent hours building up their touch so that it became instinctive. A common technique employed by school coaches to improve the touch was 'juggling,' that is, keeping the ball off the ground with the feet, which many described drilling. Freddy told of a drill his team used in their training for schoolboy matches:

"in training most time when we done a school like so, im use i tek i ball an just go out on i field and juggle it from one end to di other an so, just a juggle up an down".⁴

(Interview 30/11/12)

Peer talked of a drill they used to do after training, in which "coach have one shorts fi gi yu, or one shirt fi gi yu, sum'n, a you a go get bag juice over shop deh so, man who can juggle go oh a half fly on a di ball an come back up"⁵.

Mr Bennett described how a coach at another school had an innovative idea to help his players improve their touch:

⁴ "In training most of the time when we were done at school, he used to take the ball and just go out on the field and juggle it from one end to the other, just juggle it up and down"

⁵ 'coach has a pair of shorts to give you, or a shirt to give you or something, and you can go and get a bag juice over at the shop, for the man who can keep the ball up until the half way line and come back again'

“he really revolutionised the way we thought about football. For example, he gave everybody on the Dacosta cup squad their own football, which was totally unheard of. You used to have to go and sign out a football from the staff room and then, 10 of you or 15 of you play with that ball. He, everybody had their own ball, some people used to sleep with their ball beside them, y’wha I mean, seriously, I mean literally. And you’d see them when nothing going on, out on the field juggling the football. Because he said, you know, you need to do that, develop your personal skills and your touch, so that was revolutionary” (Interview 16/12/12).

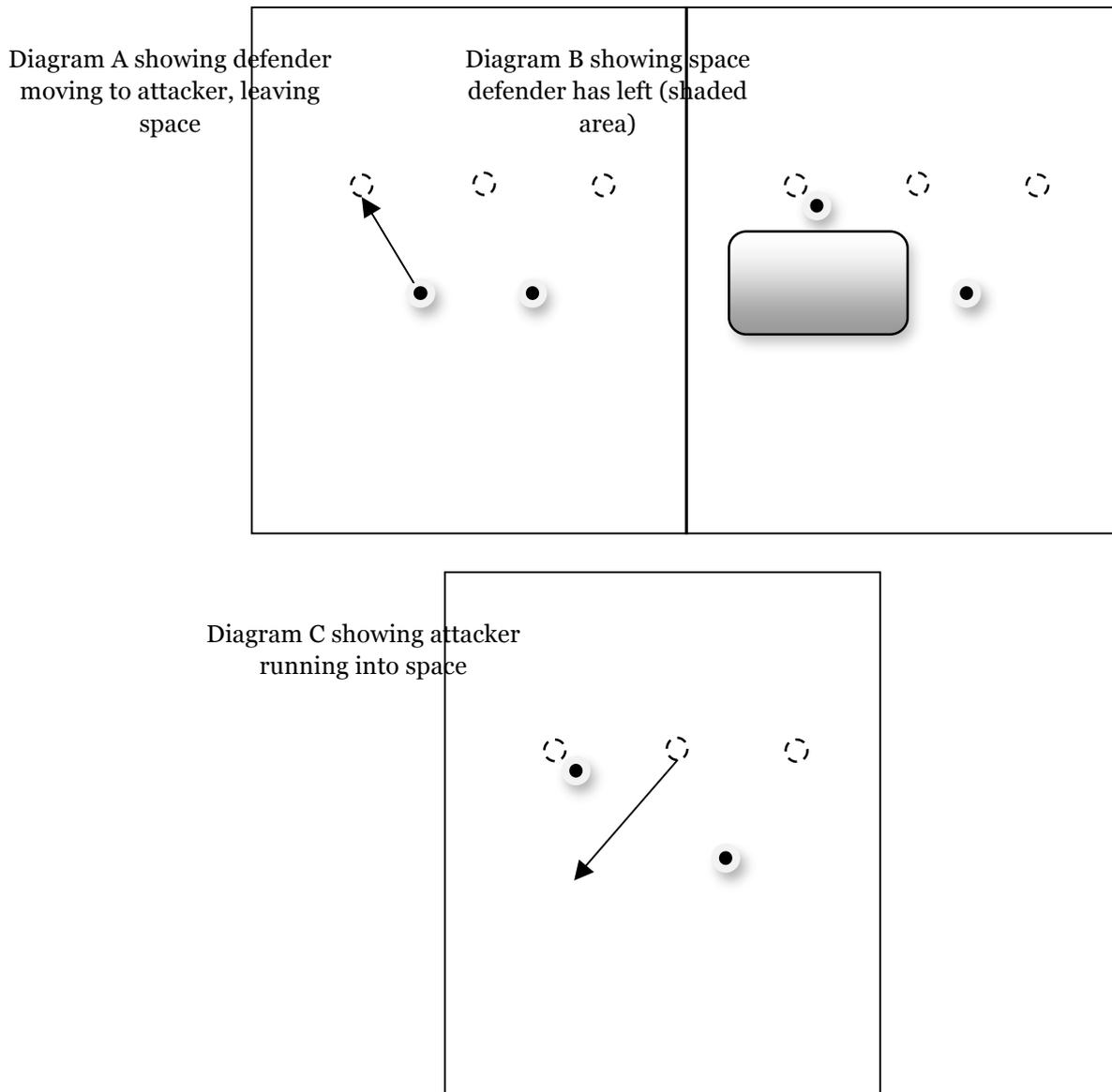
Thus a player’s touch was honed through tireless practice that modified their bodily habitus.

Focussing on the touch shows how it became automatic and emphasised the diversity of bodily techniques within a single group. The touch, the most basic skill of the football field, emphasises a dynamic fluidity to bodily techniques within groups over time. The skill emerged from prior football experiences, learning the game, playing at school, and from each subsequent match, and was produced in the margin between constraint and opportunity. In order to maximise these opportunities created through an effective touch I was also required to recognise what Cavin, and others, termed the ‘pockets of space’ that opened during play.

Space and Zone

Space was one of the definitive terms within football. Players ‘ran into space,’ or ‘left space,’ or ‘made space’ by running in specific trajectories. These spaces were also referred to as ‘gaps’. Below, diagrams (Diagram A and B) give an example of a defender leaving space (a fundamental error, albeit

occasionally unavoidable), and in the same scenario an attacker 'running into space' (Diagram C).



In Diagram C, the defender who moved to the attacker on the left is in difficulty; should he pick up the attacker who ran into the empty area, but in so doing leave a gap on the left side instead? Or should he continue to stay with the attacker, leaving the shaded space free? The defender's decision and the choices made by the attackers in this moment revolve around bodily

negotiations, the experience of similar scenarios, and individual technique.

Football concerns the negotiation between 'space' and 'zone'. A 'zone' is distinctly self-contained and controlled, hence the concept of 'zonal marking' that has become popular in football teams which is a defensive tactic of marking space rather than the opposition. On the field, 'space' is also a 'gap' that contains possibilities. Football teams work to limit the space they give the opposition by controlling the zones, while also trying to make space in the opposition's zones. Rollason (2007) discusses space on the football field and explains that:

“In footballing terms, the question of space is of paramount importance: it represents the efforts of an attacker to elude a marking defender in order to have the space clear for a shot on goal; it represents the defender's attempts to close his man down, to stop him seeing, turning or linking up with his team mates, and ultimately to regain possession” (2007:71).

The negotiation, making and giving up of space on the football pitch echoes Doreen Massey's critique of understandings of time and place. In *For Space* (2005), Massey posits three propositions: first, that the relations between individuals and the spaces between them are “co-constitutive” (2005: 10). Second, that we should “imagin[e] space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity” (ibid.:10). And third, that we should “imagin[e] space as always in process” (ibid.:11). On the pitch, space is a negotiation between attackers, defenders, and the relationship between them. Ashton was constituted by both players and, during the day, by the farmers who grazed their cows and bulls. Also, there was the possibility for alternative multiplicities; the ball was in motion, the players could change position, or

the farmer's bulls might walk across the playing area. Finally, space was always processual as the game ebbed and flowed, players and the ball moved through and over the pitch, and spaces expanded and contracted, emerged and were filled. Football skills required that I gain a bodily appreciation for the "multiplicity of trajectories" (Massey 2005: 5) existent in space.

On the pitch, 'space' was discussed in terms of individual players. I could 'give' or 'be given' space to/by the opposition. Knowing when to give a player space required observation and learning of the men's habits. For example, I would give a player space when I thought that he liked to take shots that went wide of the goalposts. Alternatively, if I knew that the player was right footed, but lacked ability with his left foot, I gave him space on his left side. If I knew the player was good at shooting, I might 'crowd' him. Negotiations of space required techniques through which the players could maximise their own opportunities while minimising those of their opponents. Passing the ball was a way to make use of 'pockets' of space, and Freddy was an adept at picking out such passes.

Freddy

Freddy, one of the younger players, described his style as a "passing game." He first played football when he was "about 5," in contrast to many of the others who began around the age of ten. He represented St Elizabeth parish at under-12 level, then his school at under-15 and -16, played Dacosta cup until 18, and in the Major League (two divisions below the Jamaican Premier League). During my time in Black River, he "just play ball fi di

exercise, not inna play for no team, nor anything like dat. A just exercise, a evening time a just bounce some ball, take weh stress from world, and stress of life”.⁶ He played a cerebral game, saying that he preferred to “read di play and watch it” rather than “haffi go on an den slide tackle or none a dem sum’n”.⁷ He was a midfield player, and made passes that split defences, creating space between opposition players. He used to be known for his ability to trick past players and had a signature move the “Freddy body rock.” A coach encouraged him to adopt the ‘passing game.’ He explained:

“Yeah, me did just stop dribbling altogether, just just passin, so people who used to like dat nice pon di sideline seh ‘Freddy, gi dem sum’n!’ Watcha! Give up dat now, in a sense, play mi passing game. Passing game mek wi beat Maggoty. We accept dat, mi remember dat well. B.B.Coke, ehm, passing game again. Mi mek a pure pass an we hit dem, mi bredren score dat goal. Dat passing game mi did love, yuh no?”⁸
(Interview 30/12/12).

“Pure pass” was a common expression that could either suggest ‘a lot of passes’ or ‘an exceptional pass.’ Like Cavin, he liked to play in the middle of the field although he was slightly more defence minded. He described his tactics towards other teams as to “kill dem off wi passes”. He was adept at quick one-twos where the player immediately passed the ball back, or to calmly move the ball around to draw opposition players out of position. His

⁶ ‘just plays football for the exercise, not to play for any team, or anything like that. It’s just exercise, in the evening just play some football, take away the stresses of the world, and the stress of life’

⁷ ‘having to go and then slide tackle or anything like that’

⁸ ‘Yeah, I just stopped dribbling altogether, just passing, so people who used to like that nice [trickery] on the sidelines said “Freddy, give them something! Watch out!” I’d given it up, in a sense, played my passing game. Passing game made us beat Maggoty [a school rival]. We accepted that, I remember that well. B.B.Coke [another rival], ehm, passing game again [made his team beat them]. I made a great pass and we hit them, my friend scored that goal. I loved the passing game, you know?’

quick passing was effective, as I learned to my detriment when playing against him. His touch was also one of the best on the field, and Peter claimed that Freddy could “give you all one, two hundred” kick-ups. This mastery of the touch also made him adept at tricks, and no sooner did I think I had blocked out his pass than there would be a sudden movement one way, then the other, and Freddy would be the other side of me, open field before him with all the other players jeering and laughing; the ‘Freddy body rock’ had been dusted off and used at my expense.

In order to prove the effectiveness of the ‘passing game,’ Freddy invoked Barcelona and the Arsenal side of 2003-4, during which Arsenal were unbeaten. For Freddy, Lionel Messi, an Argentinian who plays for Barcelona, arguably one of the best ever football players, proved how dangerous a good passer of the ball could be. Messi was a constant topic of conversation in post-match talks, and a source of inspiration for the players. Freddy’s comments on him demonstrate his admiration for the Argentinian’s skills:

F: An, but yu no, Messi a mi baller

WT: Yeah, man he’s actually fantastic

F: i unfair fi rest a di game [I laugh] Yeah man, i unfair [he laughs] It kinda unfair

WT: He makes it look so easy as well

F: Yeah, he, as mi tell yu seh unfair man. You nuh sponse fi have one baller weh can just decide seh alright, alright mi a go score it now.

WT: Yeah. Yeah it is just like he decides half way through a match, he’s like ‘right’

F: Eh, time fi go score a goal man

WT: Beat three people and then put it in the back of the net

F: Yeah man, i unfair.

WT: And his assists are even, even better

F: Even better.

WT: Better than his goals

F: A so mi tell dem seh between him and Ronaldo [another world class player], dat a di difference, him a score an hi have million and one assists. Ronaldo will score like a whole heap a goals but den him assist like one 10 or 5 fi season

WT: Yeah, he's kind of a selfish player

F: Y'understand? So Messi a, Messi a, boss. Messi a really big man"

(Interview 30/11/12)

“Boss” was used to describe a particularly skilled player as well as men away from the field who were deemed to be successful in other ways. As I discussed in the previous Chapter, ‘man’ and, more emphatically, ‘big’ and ‘really big man’ were also positive evaluations. What distinguished Messi from other great football players was his “assists,” that is, the passes he made which allowed another player to score. For Freddy, the pass was the skill that most set him, and Messi, apart from others.

The pass

Passing signified a relationship between players and established a line of play between two men that could be used again during the match. Passing relationships were often established along ‘channels’ down the sides of the

pitch, and from left defender to central defender(s) to right defender. These horizontal and vertical lines were also bisected by passes going to and from the central midfielder(s) who, being in the middle of the pitch, linked up attack with defence and left flank to right flank. Alongside these passing lines were the options to play more dangerous passes such as a left defender passing straight to a right midfield. More difficult passes involved skipping out the central players and making long passes, such as left midfield to right midfield, or from defender to attacker. Passing a long ball from defence to attack could form the basis of a team's tactics, and became associated with English football teams (Kuper 1996). The long ball game was considered crude as it was neither as visually pleasing nor as effective as Spain's 'tiki taka' football, which Mintjens calls "poetry on a green background" (2012:1), or the flair of South American teams which Archetti likens to a "mythical tradition" (1997:49).

Passing could also constitute a diplomatic act and serve to cool tensions, just as refusing to pass to a player could incite arguments and cause fights (as on p.136). A pass to a new player was an expression of acceptance and an encouragement to play. Often a first pass would be given with the words 'take a touch,' inviting him to join the match and the group of players. Passing was a skill that was firmly embedded in relationships on the field and passing ability was a product of bodily techniques and favoured styles.

The sociality of passing became apparent when an ex-employee played with his former employer. Mr Bennett had been forced to close his Ice Factory as it had become costly and unprofitable due to the rising costs of electricity. One morning when Peter arrived for work, he was told that Mr

Bennet would no longer be employing him. Peter felt that he had been mistreated, “im nuh treat wi right,” as he felt that he should have been given more warning so that he could have planned alternative work. Both men regularly played football at Ashton, but Peter refused to play for two weeks in protest over his perceived mistreatment. When he returned to the field he was careful to play on Mr Bennet’s team and went out of his way to pass to him, and vociferously apologised when these occasionally over-ambitious passes went awry. Passing was a way for the two men to rebuild their relationship following a falling out and demonstrated how football could be used to construct connections away from Ashton.

In contrast to the pass, the ‘salad’ was an individual skill that increased the reputation of the player ‘giving’ the salad, and was embarrassing for the man it was ‘given’ to. New players, in particular, were the targets of salads as they had not had the opportunity to learn each man’s typical style of play.

Salads

‘Salads’ referred to individual skills that a player used to trick his way past an opponent. They were frequently, although not always, moves that pushed the ball between the opponent’s legs, as with the ‘nutmeg’ in English football speech. A salad’s success lay in recognising the movements of another player, and introducing something unexpected. A common salad was performed by jerking one way, feigning as though to run in that direction, but pushing the ball the other way. The opponent would shift their weight in

the direction of the initial movement, and then be unable to self-correct. Rollason (2011) argues that in football:

“trickery plays with intention and motivation, fooling by proposing one intent – going one way – as a cover for another, which becomes possible only through an opponent’s willingness to enter into a relationship on those false terms” (Rollason 2011: 175)

Therefore, while the pass constituted a relation of understanding, the salad subverted such a relation. The skill to ‘give a salad’ required judgement of one’s own ability and another’s, and an aptitude for recognising and responding to momentary reactions. While both the older and the younger team at Ashton used salads and passes, through emphasising one over another the two skills came to characterise different football ‘styles’.

The efficacy of the salad relied on understandings of intention and expectation. If a man played too mechanically, it was easier for the opposition to predict his actions. An effective trick relied on knowing when to follow the expected course, when to change direction, or whether to double bluff. The ‘rhythm’ required to be a good football player shared similarities with the “rhythmic patterning of embodiment” (Henriques 2014:80) among dancehall ‘bashment gals’. While meter is “mechanical” (ibid.:96), “rhythmic inflection is the twist, the flick, the spin – that special touch of novelty that makes a style distinctive” (ibid.:96). While rhythm follows meter, it also plays around it, opening up avenues of possibility and movement. In *Rasta and the Ball* (dir. Janssen and Alessandrini 1980), a documentary on football and Rastafarianism in Jamaica, one of the interviewees argues that there is a relationship between music and football,

saying:

“music go along very well with football in that, as the Bible said, singers and players of instrument shall be there. Meaning that the ball is also an instrument ... the football now, 11 players harmonize their potential so as to play good and clean football so as to enlighten the spectators so they may feel good in their spirit” (dir. Janssen and Alessandrini 19080)

Incorporating an idea of “rhythmic embodiment” (Henriques 2014) into body techniques contributes to formulating the relation between disposition and enactment in a methodologically useful conception of the habitus. The habitus is not metrical, in the sense that it does not arise consistently, but is rhythmic and emerges from individuals in unique ways.

Different Football Styles

The men understood the younger and the older team to play different styles of football, and this difference was phrased in terms of a contrast between the salad and the pass which, while particular skills, were raised to the level of general styles. The older team was viewed as favouring the pass, while the younger team was seen to prefer the salad. The distinction was also phrased as ‘playing as a team’ compared to ‘playing your game.’

To ‘play your game’ was to use the ball the way you wanted to use it. Additionally, it implied choosing to try to salad an opponent rather than to pass the ball. It meant ignoring other people’s visions of how the ball should be used. One man described playing ‘your’ game as “y’have tek it [the ball] an do y’own ting, have some fun fi yourself man,⁹” even if ‘fun’ meant risking giving the ball away. ‘Playing your game’ had the benefit of unpredictability

⁹ ‘you have to take it and do your own thing, have some fun for yourself man’

but, as an opponent, this style made it considerably easier to defend against the team as one could 'shepherd' (a technique where one guided the opposition, rather than attempted to tackle them) the player on the ball out to the side of the field. Younger men said that it gave them a greater release than using the ball in the way their team members expected, though they recognised that it was not as effective for winning matches.

By contrast, most of the older team preferred to play a 'passing game,' where you 'make the ball do the work'. The younger team was forced to follow the ball while the older team would not need to run as much. This style had the additional benefit that each person on the team knew what they were supposed to do with the ball, and where they were expected to be on the field. These two points were consistently reinforced during games, with shouts between the older players about where team-mates should run and how they should use the ball. Mr Michaels contrasted the two different styles:

“MM: So, yes in a number of ways there is a sort of seniority against, against uhm youth, that occurs there in terms of the two teams, and I guess in terms of how the, how the senior people play now because of the introduction of the younger people, you know, aahm.

WT: And what was the kind of senior way of playing?

MM: Aahm ... I think basically the ball does more of the work. That is, that is almost a physical necessity, aahm, so we will pass a lot. The other thing is that we try to keep things as simple as possible, and stay out of trouble as much as we can. Aahm. For me, and I assume for the other people, I think we also try to use our brains to play the football more than the younger men appear to do.” (Interview 15/5/12)

In general terms, the older style of play at Ashton was consistently viewed as the more effective of the two ‘systems.’ The men kept a tally of how many games were won by either side each week, and the older team had a greater number of ‘wins’. In the interview, I asked Mr Michaels about the efficacy of the older team’s play:

“MM: when we play how we normally play we’re usually more successful, you know. Which adds to the fun, which adds to the fun of it, I mean it’s, it’s only a certain amount of bragging rights maybe, but that adds to the whole fun of the game.

WT: And over, overall your team’s been successful, pretty much, on balance

MM: I, I think so, the results

WT: At least since I’ve been at Ashton

MM: Yeah, the results, the results would say that, ahm. We don’t lose very often, we draw, and we’ve tended to win more often than not, you know, so

WT: and is it a bit of a match between, kind of, seniors and juniors.

MM: It has tended to be. [...] I still think that even with the introduction of, of younger people, the, the formula that is successful, or has been successful, should for the most part be, be the one that is employed.” (Interview 15/5/12)

Cavin also noted that his team (the older) won more often:

“So when we beat them now, when the game finish now, they used to like laugh at them and say, so, I say alright I’m gonna do some work tomorrow but I’m not gonna do it again I’m gonna come to beat you tomorrow. And each time they come they get beaten they wanna come the next day” (Interview 10/11/12)

Terry, a younger player, concurred and described the two teams not in terms of age, as most did, but in terms of a ‘Premier’ side and a ‘Rebel’ side. These corresponded with older and younger respectively, and referred to a training

technique of a local community team – Black Star – who invited men from the community to form a ‘rebel’ side to play against the regular team as a practice match.

“WT: Yeah. But it also seemed to me to be an older and younger thing as well

T: Yes, yes. But still Premier because, you don’t mess with the formation. Because your coach, you never realise that your coach

WT: Which one?

T: Mr Bennett’s side. Dem will coach yuh no.

WT: Yea

T: You’re being coached all di time. Mr Michaels make sure dat you don’t fall out of formation [I laugh] You’re being coached , serious you know!

[...]

T: Alright. When you’re on the rebel side, you can do anything you wanna do, and you nah get, you nuh get too much uhm

M: Cussing

T: Cussing or whatever. You just play your game, however you can play it, you know? They probably tell you seh no fi come back [we laugh] But Mr Michaels a go tell yuh how is it, right dere on di spot” (Interview 11/12/12)

The older men’s style of play was associated with positive results, a high number of passes, but also with having senior players shouting instructions. For some, these orders were stifling and they felt unable to enjoy ‘their’ game, but others enjoyed the direction. By contrast, players on the younger side focussed on salads and individual flair. While the younger team was also concerned to win matches, they placed much greater emphasis on ‘playing

your game' and 'blocking out' how other people told you to play.

Although the players phrased the difference between the teams in terms of a younger group who played as individuals, and an older one that played as a collective, such a distinction glosses over the nuances of interactions on the pitch. Alongside his writing on style, Simmel's work on fashion (1971 [1904]) is useful for thinking about the difference between the teams as it embeds an analysis of bodily practice within time and broader social relations. Simmel suggests that fashion entails both "the element of imitation" and "the element of demarcation" (ibid.:299). Throughout their conversations the men contrasted the two teams' styles and, in so doing, reified the difference between them; they defined 'their' group from those who were outside. Simultaneously, the expression of inter-group difference implied an intra-group sameness that elided variation.

The concept of imitation aids in understanding how players learned football skills through observation and repetition, and also in thinking through the relationship between the two teams. Simmel argues that: "whenever we imitate, we transfer not only the demand for creative activity, but also the responsibility for the action from ourselves to another" (1971:295). However, more recent work by Taussig (1993) and Lempert (2014) suggest that "mimicries expre[ss] cultural resistance" (Lempert 2014:387). Imitation offers a way "to get hold of something by means of its likeness" (Taussig 1993:21). From this perspective, the differentiation of two different football styles is an expression of alterity and proximity and the emphasis on the stylistic difference between the two teams disguises the intimate bodily understandings of all of the players on the pitch.

Conclusions

The histories of individual players highlighted the different statuses and experiences that impacted upon their relationship to the field and their individual styles of play. The examples of the touch, the pass, and the salad showed how individual orientations to the matches affected how the men played and understood the games. Significantly, skills were adopted and modified as matches changed over time, and the group were mutually involved in the daily production and changes in one another's habitus.

A focus on styles and skills reveals the relationship between processes of embodiment and generation. Through focussing on a single football field and a three of the most basic skills, I have shown how the men's football techniques were related to their socioeconomic lives away from the field and, further, how skills (such as the pass and the salad) could change their relationships to one another. I have also demonstrated how generation impacts on bodily techniques, and suggested how these might relate to contexts of constraint and opportunity. These constraints, which Peter termed the 'system,' were both mental and physical; an individual's anxiety on the field, their speed, and their age (to name but some examples) contributed to the production of their skill-sets.

The style adopted by each team was successful in its own way. For the younger team, their emphasis on salads generated a greater amount of bragging rights (explored in further detail in the following chapter) than a stress on the result would have achieved. For the older team, the passing game allowed them to remain competitive with the younger side in spite of ageing and also, through

moving the ball quickly, limited the opportunity for injury. What initially appeared as styles of football aimed towards gaining an upper-hand on the pitch, when viewed from modifying the perspective from one of zero-sum competition to “tacit norms of cooperation” (Wacquant 2004a:86) actually appear as an effective means for extending the matches beyond the field and outwards to the men’s social lives. Equally, there was a complementary move through which the men’s lives emerged in styles and skills due to their deep imbrications with aspects of age and class (through the importance of football in their school days). In the following chapter, I show how football offered one way for the younger men to mitigate some of the boredom in their lives, and the importance of bragging rights among the group.

Chapter 6: Competitive Bragging: precarious employment and social status

After 'game done' the players would amble off the field and talked about different moments in the match. Those playing shirtless reclaimed their shirts; people picked up their wallets, keys, and mobile phones left on the grass next to the goal and someone prodded the ball in front of them as they made their way off the field. Car boots and doors opened and the men changed out of their boots into everyday shoes or 'slippas' (sandals). Doc would light a cigarette and Mr Bennett would take off the plastic goggles he wore to protect his glasses. Men would settle for a while either leaning on a car or sitting on a small grass bank. Mosquitoes bit in droves so, as the men talked, there was an intermittent 'slap-slapping' as they batted them away.

Most evenings, the older men left soon after the match had finished. They changed their shoes, took a few lungfuls of air, and asked one another whether they would be 'stopping' for a drink on their way home. They did not engage in personal jibes or the banter that would begin among younger players, although Mr Bennett occasionally responded to the banter of the younger team. A loud "ha-ha-oooyyyy" was all he would need to dismiss any excuses, threats of how his team would be beaten, or of how the match might have turned out differently if this-that-or-the-other had taken place. If I had been given a lift to the field with Mr Bennett, he would call 'Coming, William?' as he got into the car, the light ping-ing sound indicating the door was ajar. 'Gentlemen, tomorrow!' he would call out of the window, 'yes Mr Bennett,' some would shout back. If Rasta (one of the players) needed a lift, he would jump into the back of

the truck and Mr Bennett would start down the road.

As the Chevrolet engine came to life, the light in the van would switch off and the headlights turn on. As there was a slight hill leading down to the area of the pitch, the darkness gave an impression of a wall created between the road and the field and illuminated the gate and barbed wire that kept the livestock in during the day. Closing the car door silenced the voices outside in favour of the intimate, quieter sounds of Mr Bennett rummaging for his mobile phone, or me putting my keys back in my pocket. ‘Y’alright?’ Mr Bennett would say as he pushed the automatic into drive and the car began to bounce heavily down the road.

When Mr Bennett was not able to play football, I could ‘get a drive’ with Doc instead. After the match, he preferred to stay and chat with the younger guys rather than leave quickly. On leaving the field he would walk to his car, change from his boots into ‘slippas’ and light the first of several cigarettes. Often he would smoke his first while sitting aslant in the driver seat of his BMW, feet outside the car. Doc had not always stayed to chat with the younger guys, but decided one day to stop going to the bar with the older men, and to stay chatting with the younger ones instead. This involved a conscious recalibration of the way Doc experienced and talked about the game. He explained his decision to change:

“D: Yeah, before, remember we used to go siddown by Waterloo

WT: Yeah, yeah

D: Y’know, and it would be all the intelligent guys together and all the educated guys together, y’know they would be talking, nobody wanted to talk real crap, it just more about, I, as the end of the football, at the end of football I don’t want to be sitting down and talking about politics

WT: No, no

D: You know, not at that, y'know, I want to be talking about rubbish, y'undestand? I don't want to be, because you see the de-stressing then you're gonna go back to talking serious stuff after football, that just kinda, your levels a stress are, I don't want to deal with that. I just love the whole, the whole situation when after football you just sit down and talk rubbish, whatever it is, y'know. I enjoy that a lot" [Interview 12/12/12]

In what follows I look at what the younger players talked about – the ‘rubbish’ – and think about how they were located as young, precariously employed men.

Banter and bragging formed a large part of the young men's conversations and drew attention to their insecurities; neither boys nor successful men, not wanting to stay in Black River but lacking the means to escape, and caught between a desire for social and economic progress and a lack of opportunity. Much of the bragging played with the terms of ‘boy’ and ‘man,’ and, in interviews and informal conversations, the men spoke with me about their ambitions along with their frustration at feeling unable to achieve them.

The status concerns of the younger men were entwined with issues of class and generation. The men were in their late-20s and had left education over a decade previously. As I showed in greater detail in Chapter Three, they had represented their High Schools in the D-cup and had left with few ‘subjects’. Now, approaching 30, they found themselves unable to access stable jobs as they lacked the required qualifications. They were by no means from the poorest section of Jamaica's population, and none of them considered agriculture or fishing as careers. However, these industries, which have been the largest employers in the region, have been hit hard by the importation of cheaper produce from America, as the documentary *Life and Debt* (dir. Black, S. 2001) captures. At the beginning of fieldwork, three out of six of them were employed by Mr Bennett at his ice factory. When he was forced to close the business, they

found piecework around town with other older men. Another was employed to run small errands for a businessman, and one worked for the local library. The instability of these men in Black River was similar to that documented among young people elsewhere (Archambault 2013; Comaroff and Comaroff 2000; Mains 2007; Weiss 2002, 2009).

The sons of some of the older men were the same age as these younger players. These sons had continued their education beyond college and high school to university in Kingston or the US. Following completion of their studies, they were either continuing further professional qualifications, or establishing businesses. Aside from a couple of weeks each year when they returned to visit their family, these men lived outside of Black River. There was an expectation that they would return to Jamaica once they could afford a lifestyle similar to that of their parents, and to buy or build a property in one of the more desirable parts of Black River. However, their return was by no means assured, and their parents were uncertain whether they would come back. Moreover, as I was unable to speak with them directly, I could only draw conclusions from what their parents told me, and it was unclear whether they aspired to return.

Boredom and fantasies of progress

One day I went to visit Peter at Terry's shop. After greeting me, Terry excused himself and I sat talking with Peter for the next couple of hours. When I asked how Peter was, he replied "fuckin bored." As very few customers came to the shop, Peter had hip-hop and dancehall music blaring out from one of the

computers behind the counter as we talked. He searched through YouTube to find songs he liked, and it gave us a good medium through which to discuss our interests, likes, and dislikes. He especially liked a song called 'Hold me Back' by the US hip-hop artist Rick Ross, saying "a my song dis" (this is my song). In the track, Rick Ross repeats the phrase 'These niggas won't hold me back, these niggas won't hold me back,' and Peter replayed it several times. After listening to a few more songs, or half-songs as we kept clicking to the next one before the previous had finished, we began to watch videos of Usain Bolt, Jamaica's sprinter who held the world record for 100m and 200m sprints. Peter most admired Bolt for having an innate skill to be the world's fastest sprinter, which allowed him to have time to concentrate on partying, playing around, and having fun. I suggested that the media might just present Bolt in such a way, but Peter insisted that Bolt did not need to train as hard as other sprinters as he was simply "naturally" faster than them.

Peter readily identified with the images of success offered by both Rick Ross and Usain Bolt. Watching Bolt joke with his friends in a video, Peter and I laughed along with them and, for some moments, had the sensation that we were in the company of the sprinter. In the following silence, we spoke about how wealthy Bolt must be, and Peter reflected on his age, the same as Bolt, and his slim chances of any comparable success. Peter had also been a competitive sprinter when he was younger. Brad Weiss discusses the impact of media images of music and sports stars on young men in Tanzania, and argues that these "[f]antasies are *real* and they are poised [...] at precisely that intersection of global possibility and local limitation" (2002:119). Watching Bolt and Rick Ross on YouTube with Peter, it became apparent that the lives of young men were saturated with images of wealth and status in the global economy, and yet

the realities of life in Black River made them aware of the limitations that would prevent them from achieving their own ambitions.

Whatever their employment, younger players had a large amount of time during the day with very little to do. A popular way to pass the time was to talk about and, if possible, to watch football and so to escape from uneventful days that followed one from the other. The fluctuations of the English Premier League, the Spanish 'La Liga,' and occasionally the Italian and German leagues, not to mention international football matches as well as basketball and the occasional American football match, gave the men something to talk about and helped to pass the time. They would also talk of friends, girlfriends, 'wives' (long-term girlfriends), and news from Black River, Jamaica, and the world. As Osella and Osella found among young men in Kerala, "in the absence of external structures or validation for their passage towards manhood, the boys [men in Jamaica] turn inwards to the peer group" (1998: 191).

While the jobs of the young men varied to some degree, they all experienced a great deal of boredom. Boredom has emerged as a theme in the study of youth in diverse regions of the world, from Ethiopia (Mains 2007) to Georgia (Frederiksen 2013). In post-communist Bucharest, O'Neill found that it was "a persistent form of social suffering made possible by a crisis-generated shift in the global economy" (2014:11). Similarly, in Uttar Pradesh, Jeffrey (2010) suggested that it arose from "the temporal and spatial insecurities of young people marginalized by process of neoliberal economic change" (2010:477). Mains (2007) argued that it resulted from "the combination of unstructured time and an unfulfilled desire for a self that is constructed through social relationships" (ibid.: 667) and links boredom to a concept of 'progress,' "in which the future is expected to be different and better than the past"

(ibid.:667). In each of these analyses, boredom emerged as a response to economic changes that left young people stranded between ambition and attainment.

Boredom was compounded by the lack of entertainment in Black River which was known locally as a town for the ‘newly-wed and the newly-dead’. This phrase was intended to signify how peaceful the town was, as the saying appealed to those beginning a family, turning away from what was known as the ‘party life,’ and ‘settling down’ and to those who were nearing the end of their lives and wished for some undisturbed peace and quiet. Many young people complained that Black River did not even have a cinema or, for that matter, a KFC! This complaint corroborates O’Neill’s analysis of Budapest, where boredom “increasingly unfolds through practices of consumption” (O’Neill 2014: 9).

Many of the issues concerning the men also emerge in anthropological work on youth and young men elsewhere (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000; Jaffe 2012; Jeffrey 2010; Mains 2007; Masquelier 2005; Osella and Osella 1998; Weiss 2009). This body of work highlights young men’s preoccupations with status and an increasing awareness of the growing lack of opportunity due to regional economic and employment constraints. Comaroff and Comaroff have suggested that there are in fact “startling similarities in the current situation of youth the world over” (2000:307) to experiences of stagnation. Mains worked with young men in urban Ethiopia (2007) who felt “unable to actualize their expectations of progress” (2007:667) due to the contraction of particular employment sectors. These difficulties contributed to prolonged feelings of shame and protracted periods of unemployment. Likewise Brad Weiss in his ethnography of ‘Hip Hop Barbershops’ in Arusha, Tanzania, argued that

increasing awareness of “unprecedented and exhilarating possibilities” (2009:9) open to Tanzanian youth, through the consumption of American hip-hop music, and the ability to view ‘American life’ through the internet, “made it possible for a broad swath of people to desire the signs and styles of a global order while finding ever narrower means by which to satisfy them” (ibid.:9) when local employment opportunities significantly decreased.

Other work has studied on how groups of men have responded to such local limitations. Masquelier (2005) studied the status anxieties produced by the inability of young Mawri men in Niger to marry and reach social maturity due to their “struggle to satisfy contradictory sets of moral and financial requirements” (2005:59). The work of Osella and Osella (1998) and Jeffrey (2010) both illustrate ‘timepass’ among friendship groups of young men in India to illustrate “widespread feelings among young men of having surplus time, of being detached from education, and of being left behind” (Jeffrey 2010:466). In the context of urban Jamaica, Rivke Jaffe (2012) has argued that similar neoliberal structural adjustments combined with an increased awareness of social and economic possibilities available elsewhere in the world have contributed to a ‘popular culture of illegality’ which has solidified the role of the ‘don’ in urban neighbourhoods. The literature on youth and young manhood therefore calls attention to insecurities in the status of young men who are unable to achieve the necessary social requirements to be viewed as ‘men’.

Out of the eight regular younger players, four were irregularly employed, two were employed in careers that were under direct threat due to governmental reform, and the final two owned and operated their own businesses that appeared not to be suffering from the recession. The two men who owned

businesses were both involved in electronics repairs and consultancy. Four of the men had children. None were married, although most had ‘wives’ (long-term girlfriends). Freddy was one of the two men whose job at the Black River library was under threat. He began working there when he left school, 13 years previously. As my fieldwork came to an end, parish libraries in Jamaica were being closed in response to the financial crisis.

Mr Bennett, an accountant, suggested that around a third of Jamaica’s employment was in the public sector and that once the true extent of the recession was felt there would be mass unemployment. He argued that the government was trying to fool the Jamaican population into thinking that there were adequate opportunities on the island through supporting a failing system by employing large amounts of people at the expense of massive international debt. Many thought that the government employed too many people in order to reduce unemployment statistics, but public sector costs put a massive financial strain on the government.

The lack of professional development and vocational qualifications made older players worry about the prospects of younger players as the 2008 global recession hit Jamaica. Doc talked about the difficulties facing some of the younger men:

“you find that they get so comfortable in the situation that they are in. Like, he works in the library, so library are rah rah rah, I don’t think he has any, maybe he has some formal training in in in being a librarian, maybe I dunno, but, y’know he basically is is he works and he lives from pay to pay basically.”

Although the older players would be relatively immune to cutbacks due to the continued demand for workers in accountancy, medicine, and teaching, many

younger players would be directly affected and, to compound their problems, they did not have enough savings to help them get through lean times. While their families and 'wives' could offer support during times of unemployment men viewed such support negatively and hoped to become economically independent.

Peter did not have a stable source of employment during my fieldwork. When I arrived, one of the older players employed him to run errands for his ice factory but, due to increasing financial losses, the business was closed and Peter was left unemployed (see above p.157). Afterwards, despite his lack of electronics expertise, he was employed by Terry to perform small jobs around the repair shop. It was difficult for Terry to make enough to support Peter, and there was an understanding that this was only a short-term solution to Peter's difficulties.

One source of employment was through the older players on the football field.

As well as Mr Bennett's factory, there were other examples of the younger men being employed to work for the older ones. When Doc began to set up his own medical practice, he paid some of the younger men to help transport medical equipment. He also began to employ one of them to work for him when the practice opened. On the field, the two teams were therefore also separated between employers and employees well as differences of age and class.

Banter, gossip, and 'bragging rights'

Banter and bragging offered the young men one way to pass the time and

stave off boredom. Like football techniques, the men developed a set of skills through which to compete with their bragging opponents. In Wilson's *Crab Antics* (1995 [1973]) he discusses the "constellation of skills" (1995:152) through which a man establishes his reputation "especially in his early manhood years" (ibid.:151). Wilson notes that bragging ability is among the most important techniques. While it was difficult for most of the men to improve their position within class hierarchies, banter offered an opportunity for mobility within the peer group. Although it did not change their employment prospects, it was a response to their experiences of boredom and a way for them to raise their status within the peer group.

After the evening match, talk would begin and players reflected on the game and their teams. They took to discussing particular players; how one was too selfish, and how another "cyan tire" and "never buss" ('can't get tired' and is 'never empty' [i.e. of fuel]). Doc said that he had "beaten" another player called Hammer. Hammer took it very badly and began shouting that he had to play "soft" with Doc as Doc would call for a foul, to which Doc replied that Hammer was one of the worst for calling fouls. Freddy talked about not using his arms to hold off defenders. He used to do it instinctively playing competitive football, making sure that the referee could not see, but as we refereed ourselves he did not do it at Ashton. The fieldwork extract below indicates a typical evening of football and discussion after the game:

"After the match there was a lot of banter about the result. Cavin said that he'd heard Peter talk under his breath after the second goal that their team was no good, and they were going to lose heavily. Peter was screaming at Teeny for not stepping to Jack on the second goal, allowing him to square the ball to me. Instead, Peter insisted, Teeny should have stepped up on Jack, at least putting pressure on him. He said that the best thing Teeny did all match was handball one of Terry's shots. Teeny eventually responded to

the barrage of insults “bombaclaat.” Peter immediately retorted “Pussyclaat! Teeny better you stay home”. Dinga said that he shouldn’t insult him so much, as there should have been more people back in defence. Peter complained that Kev should have stood in goal; when he plays at Independence Park “him na even see di field!” [he never ventures out of goal], but when he plays at Ashton he barely even runs back. He also complained about David, who rarely ran back, and who only had ‘one left foot’. Peter said he wouldn’t be able to sleep that night because he’d only be thinking about the “five love” [5-0]” (Fieldwork notes 6/12/12)

The result gave the winning team ‘bragging rights’ over the losing team. Frequently, threats and boasts were made before the matches. Peter, for example, once claimed that he and one other could beat five opponents in a two vs five match. On another occasion, Terry bet Doc J\$10,000 (around £80 at the time of fieldwork) that he would not be able to score a goal the following evening. Bragging rights constituted pointed rejoinders to taunts and competitive posturing. In the extract cited above, Cavin continually teased Peter, Teeny and Dinga for losing, claiming his ‘bragging rights’ over them. Equally, Peter was upset about losing, and thus not having bragging rights, going so far as to say that he would not be able to sleep that night as he would not be able to stop thinking of the score. Peter prevented significant loss to his social status through laying the blame on other players, who responded to the assault by verbally abusing him. Each evening presented a complex interweaving of matches, schoolboy football careers, and salads that were discussed and contested, as the younger men sought to improve their status in the eyes of the group.

Conversations after matches located the players in particular relations of age, wealth and class. Their conversations contrasted with those of the older

players (explored in the next chapter), just as their style of play contrasted with that of the older team. As the players walked off the football field they moved from one sphere or field into another. In the game they ‘let i football do all a di talkin.’ Off the field, the ball was replaced by stories traded between them, each taking turns to outdo the other. In particular the stories focussed on individual virtuosity, and revolved around the symbols of the ‘salad,’ the ‘kill,’ and the binary of boy/man. Much of the banter and bragging concerned the elevation of some and a diminution of others. On the football field, the player who ‘killed’ the opposition gained status, while the one ‘killed’ suffered a loss to his status. In this context, football performed the same function as bowling in Whyte’s study of an Italian-American slum, in which “it became the main vehicle whereby the individual could maintain, gain, or lose prestige” (1969 [1943]:23).

A large part of the conversation at the field and on the street corner consisted of reminiscences about football careers at school and the players talking at length about their experiences of schoolboy football and D-cup. They spoke of the different opponents that they had competed against and the ones who had impressed them the most. Freddy complained about the perceived prejudice against Black River High, whose players were never picked for the all-island or even for the St Elizabeth team, despite (in Freddy’s and other’s views) their skills. Even Coolie, one of the best players in the D-cup at the time, was not picked. They also talked about the lack of food given to Black River players. By contrast, Peter, who played for STETHS (one of Black River High’s rival schools), said that he had been given “Lasco” (a fortified milk drink) for breakfast, as Lasco sponsored his schoolboy team, and “big fish” for lunch. Peter also remembered going to KFC after winning an important game, when each of the players was told that they could take a “tree piece” (three piece chicken

meal). I was not always able to follow who they were talking about, given the numbers of individuals playing in different years who featured in these very animated conversations. One phrase the group kept repeating was “buay deh have skill my yute!”. A couple of the men lived in houses backing onto Black River High’s football field, and complained about the poor preparation of the team for the upcoming D-cup.

After sitting by the field for an hour or so, the men would get into the various remaining cars. A couple would drive home, but at least five would go to New Town to continue talking while leaning against a breeze-block wall outside Terry’s ‘yaad’ (the area in front of his house). One evening, I got a lift with Doc. Peter sat in the passenger seat, and I sat in the back. Others followed in Terry’s car - the ‘bus’. We stopped at a petrol station half way back to town, and between us Doc and I bought drinks for the group. We sat on some tables outside the shop, lit up by bright lamps overlooking the forecourt. A heated discussion erupted when a player named Barry suggested that he was better than Peter. Peter challenged Barry to tell the group which his “highest team” had been. In retaliation, Barry told Peter to name the best players he had played against. Doc said that this argument was setting the stage well for a match, and each of them should play for opposing teams. Cars kept dropping into the garage, and people got out to greet the guys. Doc told them his highest level had been D1 – Division 1 – just below Jamaica’s Premier League. They then turned to arguing about the world cup matches, when Maradona’s last game had been, and which professional players had won the most world cups for their country. Discussions regularly involved challenges between different men, such as the claim that one man would not be able to score a goal or another would be given a salad, and these challenges would become the focus of future games for the

two players involved.

These stories would not only concern the match just played, but the man's whole football 'career' or 'history.' They included reference to all the different opponents beaten by the narrator. The speaker would begin "mi memba one time, when mi did play fi..." and would build up the story of the opponent before revealing the way he (or his team) eventually beat them, or were undone by a particularly cruel stroke of fate.

Both younger and older players cited bragging rights as one of their main sources of enjoyment, as Freddy indicated,

"we play fi bragging rights [...] Yeah man, braggin rights. A di end a day, man seh 'dem beat up your side.' An as yuh did seh before, we love salad, and 'Buay yuh see two salad wha mi just gi yu,' [laughs] yeah man we play fi braggin rights. We wanna be man weh a di end a di day fi brag seh 'yu do dis and a yu do dat' [...] Y'unnestand. So a di end a di day yuh can brag and seh yo, see't again i beat oonoo. Teach yu do so football.¹"

(Interview 30/12/12)

Bragging rights gave a player the opportunity to criticise the opposition without allowing them the opportunity to retaliate. If they chose to respond, as they often did, with reference to their own previous glories, then the team with 'bragging rights' could immediately trump them by mentioning the most recent score.

As with football skills, the men's bragging techniques had their roots in experiences at school. Peter explained bragging rights with reference to the matches he played for his school team, telling me, "when you come home, someone a seh 'buay, dem beat up dat likkle boy dem side,'" and "they beat we

¹ "we play fi bragging rights [...] Yeah man, braggin rights. At the end of the day, people say 'they beat up your side.' And as you said before, we love [to] salad,' and 'boy you see the two salads I just gave you' [laughs] yeah man we play for bragging rights. We want to be the man who at the end of the day you can brag and say 'see it again, we beat you. Teach you how to play football"

up they, up there, disgraced us, our play ground”². Banter frequently made use of generational and pedagogical terms. As both Freddy and Peter indicate in the extracts cited above, the winning team could claim to be ‘teach[ing]’ the losing team and a player on the winning team was the ‘man weh a di end a di day fi brag’. In contrast, both the players described the losing side in terms of ‘likkle boy,’ or the even more derogatory term, ‘buay.’

The use of the terms ‘boy’/‘buay’ and ‘man’ in bragging rights had more complex associations. A person could be a ‘man’ in one situation and a ‘boy’ in another, or a very wealthy man might be a ‘big man’ in the world of business but, when he stepped onto the football field was a ‘likkle boy’. Similarly, a ‘big man’ on the football field might be a ‘boy’ to his employer. Parents see their sons as ‘boys’ and children see their fathers as ‘men’ regardless of their employment or sporting prowess. When talking of or to young people, players used the term ‘boy’ or ‘buay’ endearingly and not as a term of offence. They might also use ‘buay’ inclusively at the beginning of a phrase with others of the same age as them. Boy also overlaps with the term ‘youth’ (pronounced ‘yute’) which is a positive reference to a young person, and indicates a shared sociality, so players would talk about another saying ‘Buay deh have skill my yute!’ as a compliment. None of the men ever used the terms ‘girl’ or ‘woman’ in the bragging rights. It was this malleability and precariousness of the young players’ statuses and the amount of flux in the terms ‘man’ and ‘boy’ that made the bragging rights so potent.

Peter recounted one story during an interview that shows the interweaving of generational terminology with schoolboy football. The incident concerned how his school team had been knocked out of the tournament due to

² “when you come home, someone would say ‘boy, they beat up that little boy side’”

overconfidence. Peter's team, STETHS, needed to draw their game with Lacovia to go through. At the same time, they had a 14 goal advantage over their rivals, Black River High so, even if STETHS were to lose, Black River High would have to score 15 goals in their match against Maggotty. The games were played simultaneously.

"P: True we tell Lacovia, we a send trets to dem seh we a go beat dem.

WT: Mm

P: We a send tr- tr, trets to dem seh we a go beat dem because we did beat dem already, so we a send trets seh "y'are baby side we a go beat you". But member seh Lacovia make Black River go tru over we. When mi go so now, beat Lacov- Lacovia beat we in go so bam now. Wait pon di score ca Black River game did play. Start out later, true rainy day

WT: Yeah

P: Black River start off deh. Man get a shot. Goal weh Lacovia get fi score dem, kick from, from 30 yard, bout 30 yards out, fi wi keeper did offa di line. Goina di goal, an when it goina di goal, man gi wi five minute. Cos true di man [the referee] wan wi go tru. Di di di referee gi wi five minute. Fi equalise.

WT: To equalise?

P: Mm-hm. We lick bar, we do everyting, when we done now we wait pon di score, see Black River have dem 12 love. 3 more goal, in about 10 minutes. Man dem have to score. 'Boom!' man dem score 'boom!' score again. Gone true over we.

WT: They got fifteen love?

P: Yeah. Everybody steh pon di field a cry. Because di coach, Windell, hear wha Windell Downswell do, as a coach, an dat day, im underestimate Lacovia team.

WT: Yeah

P: Seh Lacovia cyan beat us. Let's think about Clarendon college who a come here Sat'day. We a go play dem at Black River. Dat we a tink bout." (Interview 11/10/12)³

³ "P: True we told [the other school], we sent threats to them saying we were going to beat them
WT: Mm P: We sent threats to them saying we were going to beat them because we had already beaten them, so we sent threats saying 'you're a baby side and we're going to beat you'. But remember that Lacovia made Black River go through over us. When it came about now, [the other school] beat us and that's how it went. Waited on the score because Black River were still playing. Started later because it was a rainy day
WT: Yeah P: Black River started there. Every

Peter's story incorporated dominant motifs that emerged in talking about football. The threats he remembered sending to the rival school, saying that they were a "baby side," work on the negative association of 'boy' with the positive valence of 'man.' Similarly, it was fairly common to refer to an apparently poor team as a 'baby' side. 'Baby' is a doubly negative insult as it is gender-neutral; it specifies neither male nor female. Men referred to other football teams as 'likkle boy' sides, schoolboys derogatively referred to other schoolboy sides as 'baby' sides.

'Salads' and 'Killing'

'Salads' and 'killing' were common topics of conversation after matches and away from the field. 'Salads', as described in chapter 5, were tricks used to get around the opposition, bringing praise to the skilful and embarrassment to the tricked. Men would talk of how a player 'gi him a salad,' or 'kill 'im'. To 'kill' was to trick your way past another, leaving him behind. In England players or spectators might use similar references such as 'leaving a player for dead'. Younger men would also talk of 'killing' a woman to refer to a sexual conquest. To 'kill' a woman also carried the additional connotation of tricking her into

man got a shot. The goal that Lacovia got to score, kicked from 30 yards, about 30 yards out, because our keeper was off the line. Went in the goal, and when it went in the goal, the man gave use five minutes. Because in truth the man [the referee] wanted us to go through. The referee gave us five minutes. To equalize WT: To equalize? P: Mm-hm. We hit the bar, we did everything, when we're done now we waited on the score, saw that Black River were beating them 12-0. 3 more goals, in about 10 minutes. The men have to score. 'Boom!' the men score, 'boom!' score again. Went through above us. WT: They got 15-0? P: Yeah. Everybody stayed on the field and cried. Because the coach, Windell, hear what Windell Downswell did, as a coach, on that day, he underestimated the Lacovia team WT: Yeah P: Said Lacovia couldn't beat us. Let's think about [the next team] who come here on Saturday. We're going to play them at Black River. That's what we were thinking about." (Interview 11/10/12)³

thinking that the man wanted a serious relationship. Each use of the term 'kill' implied a manipulating of intention; of an opponent in a match who is led to step in the wrong direction, and of a woman who is encouraged to think that she is entering a different form of relationship. After the matches, players talked about both forms of 'killing' and traded successful and unsuccessful techniques.

One day I sat with Peter as he helped a painter on Mr Bennett's house. He asked about my relationship with my girlfriend and, seemingly more important for him, whether I had slept with a Jamaican woman or at least made plans to do so. He proceeded to tell me about his "wife" – his main girlfriend – who gave him certain advantages such as money from her salary, a mobile phone and credit, and a place to sleep at night. He punctuated our discussion flicking through photos on his mobile phone, stopping at explicit ones of women he was sleeping with at the same time as his wife. He handed me the phone with the photos up saying "mi fuk dat one deh," before taking it back and scrolling through more pictures. The photos had been taken by the women themselves with their phone cameras, and sent to Peter through a picture message. The rest of the images were party photographs; Peter with his friends posing with stern faces and cups full of drink, and photos of cars. There was also the corpse of a man killed in a car crash the previous evening. Peter explained that he would delete this last image because "it kinda mek mi feel a weh."⁴

These images involved the projection of a certain status and, as Archambault (2013) argues, "phones are just as much about disguise as they are about display" (2013:88). Peter used the photos to present a particular image of him and his life in Black River while hiding another with more difficult issues he faced. Archambault discusses women in Mozambique who use mobile phones as

⁴ "It kind of makes me feel a certain way"

a medium through which to manage networks and exchange material gain for (at least the suggestion of) sexual favours. She argues that “crucial to the phone’s enthusiastic uptake [...] is the part it plays in young people’s desire to maintain appearances through visibility and invisibility” (2013:88). On Peter’s phone, posters magnified the parties held in Black River to a scale entirely separate from their reality, and placed Peter within an international setting of wealth. The posters included images of expensive alcoholic drinks, an assortment of photos of glamour and adult entertainment stars from Jamaica and the US, expensive cars, and the list of DJs who would be playing. The photos of Peter and his friends posing with drinks at parties and standing by expensive cars equally projected a fantasy; most of the young men, including Peter, rarely drank, and certainly could not afford to buy many drinks at parties. Instead, they would drink alcohol before going out, and then buy one drink at the party to last the night. In the photographs they held out bottles of liquor with their labels facing the camera. Peter did not have the money to buy even a modest car, let alone the expensive cars in his photos. The images constructed the appearance of the life that he wished to lead while disguising his lack of economic stability and the death of one of his acquaintances.

Peter also used his mobile phone to prove his ability to maintain several sexual relationships at once, and gave me unsolicited advice on how to successfully ‘kill’ women.

He said you had to have several – ‘whole heap’ – of girls at once, as if your ‘wife’ left you, you had to have a back-up. Danielle [the woman employed to cook and clean in the Bennett house] told him to stop troubling me, he said he wasn’t, and that I should enjoy myself. He couldn’t go one week without sex, and couldn’t even imagine a whole year.

He explained that to get a girl, you had to buy her drinks at the club, take her out a couple of times, then 'you can kill her,' but you shouldn't show too much affection or she'll tell her friends she has you in a 'headlock,' and you will give her anything she asks for. As well as these 'pickney' girls (though he says he doesn't go for girls less than 18), there are 'big' girls who 'give you what you want' (Fieldwork notes 28/2/12)

Danielle (the cleaner and cook at the Bennetts) intervened and told Peter again to "stop troubling him," and Mrs Bennett also came into the room and told Peter to leave me alone as I was a "good boy". "Peter is a real Jamaican man," Danielle explained later, "mi really did laugh when me hear him a trouble you."

In this conversation, Peter used much the same language as the players did when discussing 'kills' on the football field. He explicitly stated that he was only interested in women older than 18 and used the term "pickney" (child) to refer to women who were "killed" after being led to believe that the man wanted a serious relationship, rather than to 'young girls'. In contrast, "big" girls were those who saw through the trick. The infantilization of women sexually 'killed' further highlighted the positive evaluation of adults and the negative evaluation of a protracted status as a child. Moreover, Peter was keen to point out that a man should not show too much affection or else the woman would have you in a 'headlock.' Being in a 'headlock' meant that a woman would frequently call a man asking for money or favours, as Archambault's study (2013) explored from the woman's perspective. 'Killing' in both the football and the sexual sense connoted a danger that the one attempting the 'kill' would expose themselves to being outmanoeuvred. As Osella and Osella argue, "dominance, control and relative status remain fluid, as power continually oscillates, and neither roles nor hierarchy can be fixed or maintained" (1998:201). Any attempt to 'kill' required that the man gamble a portion of their reputation and the more the

'kill' might improve their reputation, the more they risked.

When Danielle and Mrs Bennett intervened, they contrasted their impression of me as a "good boy" with that of Peter as a "real Jamaican man". Being a 'boy' was linked to being 'soft' and the unsuccessful performance of manhood. The man who was perceived as a "good boy" and did not or was unable to successfully 'kill' women became the brunt of banter and, similarly, the player or team who is/are unable to 'kill' the opposition were likewise teased for being 'soft' or 'likkle'. Similarly, the man who was perceived as being able to 'kill' women could boast of his sexual successes, and would joke about how he had tricked different women, or the close calls that he had experienced in moving between different bedrooms just as the successful player could boast of his 'kills' and salads on the field.

I never heard anybody talk of "killing" their "wife," or a member of another man's family, but only of a woman unattached to any of the men present. This material echoes that of Osella and Osella (1998)'s study of flirting in Kerala, in which such actions and subsequent discussions,

"stake out arenas in which young men compete, are judged by their peers and form themselves into hierarchies around masculine performance" (ibid.:200-201)

Among the group of players, as men aged there was an expectation (although with a significant degree of variation) that they would choose a 'wife,' either to marry or in long-term cohabitation, and become more discreet in their extra-union activities. Among the younger men those who had fathered children were careful not to embarrass their 'baby-mothers' through indiscretion, regardless of whether they were still in a committed relationship with them. Although such indiscretions did not happen among members of the group during fieldwork, they occurred among others, and these became talking points for the players

around how men should show greater 'respect' for their 'baby-mothers'. As a father and owner of a successful business, Terry found himself caught between the younger and the older cohort.

Terry

For many, economic independence was an unrealistic aspiration. Terry, the most economically successful of the younger players, owned and ran an electronics repair business. I spent a couple of afternoons in his shop while waiting for our interview. It was on the first floor of a two-storey concrete 'plaza' in the centre of Black River. To get there, you had to go up a stairwell off the main road of Black River High Street, walk past a shop owned by one of the most popular mobile phone brands in the Caribbean, and then turn just beyond an 'internet cafe'. The space itself was roughly 10m² with a dulled glass exterior looking onto the next plaza. Terry and anybody helping him that day would be behind a display cabinet made of wood and glass. Inside the cabinet were various computer parts and accessories. In front of the display cabinet were a few white plastic chairs and some pencil drawings of women's faces and children on the walls. Behind the display cabinet was a computer and a couple of swivel chairs and in the rear there were some closed-off rooms. The shop, in general, was very quiet although customers came and went. A person would walk in, hand a phone or laptop to Terry to look over, and was quietly told whether he could fix it, how long the person would need to leave it there, or were asked whether they were willing to pay a little extra to have it fixed there and then. Most customers, at least while I was in the shop, came in with mobile

phones needing repairs. Terry could take the phone apart and put it back together in a matter of minutes. When customers were not in the shop, Terry and others would check their phones, browse the internet, chat, or do all three at the same time.

Terry was in his early-30s, and a little older than the other younger players on his team. He had a young son and lived with his baby-mother. He lived in a house in New Town which he was slowly expanding with the profits from his repair shop. He had neither played football for his school nor for any organised team, and was therefore reluctant to talk to me about football as he did not feel as though he could tell me anything interesting. We arranged two separate interviews, but each time “something came up” for him just at the time we were supposed to talk. I got the impression that he was embarrassed but, after insisting that I was not solely interested in ‘football players’ but, rather, in the informal football matches, we eventually conducted an interview.

Terry only began playing football regularly a year before I arrived in Black River. He said that during school his “first love was volleyball,” and that although he always enjoyed watching football and supporting his local team and Black River High’s team, he “never wan fi play”. He continued volleyball after he left school but then “rain fall”⁵, making it impossible, and some of the others began playing football instead so Terry thought he would “try a likkle transformation and see how it work out”. When I asked what he thought of football, he replied, “mi love it man! If them a seh dem a play football right now in ai day mi lock up di shop and gone and play ball!”⁶ Other players also recognised Terry’s passion for football, and Cavin used him as an example for

⁵ “the weather became rainy”

⁶ “I love it [football] man! If they say they’re going to play football right now in the day I’ll lock up my shop and go and play football!”

the amateur players' enthusiasm:

"I'm gonna give you an example. Look at Terry. Sometime when Terry come to the football field, that late, he's driving his car that fast, so loaded with people, and he like ran over stones, and, maybe two days after that he spend some money on it, but at there and then it doesn't matter to him, he just want to get to the field, play some football"
(Interview 10/11/12)

While attending Black River High, living in New Town, and being brothers with Freddy meant that he was part of their younger team on the field, his economic success set him apart. During my interview with Terry I asked him why he thought he had been successful in comparison to his peers:

T: Uhm, uhm [kisses his teeth], alright, unlike dem, I I I went to work, I went to work fi library yuh no, in my earlier years I went to work fi library. I went to work fi courthouse, parish council, an dey all seem to restrict me. Like a when I get my pay, the next day finished, yuh no, mi just couldn't deal wi dat. Mi couldn deal with that, yuh no? An mi decided seh I wanted to go into business on my own, and yu no? Paid off better. Much much better

WT: Yeah. But then lots of people want to go into business for themselves, but there are only very few that can make it work, and you've definitely made it work. Do you think there's something different about you compared to

T: to others? Not really. Mi nuh see nutt'n special about me. I just, mi jus, I know a lot of people I guess, when when anyting go wrong, mi a di first name on dere lips, a 'o Terry can help you'. Yeah, so, mi nuh no

WT: Good reputation

T: Yeah, so. An mi a bad reputation. An even do a bad, people still come [we both laugh]. Because when I'm supposed to do somebody's work, I'm gone, I'm gone play football [we laugh] Yeah. I no mi kinda lazy too, yuh no [...]The thing is, when I was younger, like, when I was doing this younger, I used to have more energy cos I would stay at work, like, later, and when I closed I would come back, I'd finish off the work for tomorrow. But now, when I tell somebody seh 'come back Friday,' when i come Friday, that's when I start [we laugh]" (Interview 11/12/12)

Terry was reluctant to compare himself to others, and thought that it was his determination to do well that had helped him to succeed. However, more important than his drive to make money for himself was his awareness of the importance of networks. As he said, “when anyting go wrong, mi a di first name on dere lips, a ‘o Terry can help you.” Before the interview began, he, Mrs Bennett and I talked for a few minutes, and she reminisced about the business ventures he had begun when he was younger, emphasising the extent to which Terry had been determined to make money at the same time as expanding his commercial base. She remembered that when he was very young he burned pirate DVDs and sold them to people around Black River. He had been so successful that he managed to provide his clients with new films from around the world (particularly from the US) before they were in Jamaican cinemas! “A true,” he laughed.

On the football field, it was obvious that Terry had not played as much as the others, since both his touch and his feel for the game were not as keen. However, as he grew in confidence and his touch became defter he became a valuable player, particularly when he took charge in defence. Some of the men joked that he would win ‘Most Improved Player’ over the year. He was quiet while playing, although ready with a smile and a joke when the opportunity arose, and particularly liked to banter with Doc. He did not deliver orders to other players. He would occasionally join in the banter and bragging around the field, but not as much as the others, and during our interview, he told me “anyting I do on di field I don’ talk about [...] I might rub [a win] in your face, but dat’s it. Mi nuh brag”. He had originally come to the field with Freddy, his younger brother.

Terry was caught between the younger and the older in terms of age and

wealth. Older and more prosperous than the younger players, he nonetheless lived in New Town (rather than Black River) with the younger men to whom he was socially linked. Mid-way through my fieldwork, Terry decided to 'switch' (change teams). Once we began speaking about changing from one team to another, Terry talked a little about his decision to begin playing with the other side:

"T: I would never switch

WT: No, but you did!

T: Yeah, beca alright, the problem, the problem with that yuh know. Every evenin yuh come, alright, I didn't want, I didn't wanna play wid wid wid, uh, alright, every evenin somebody come, it's our side dem come on. Nuh care, nuh care if dem cyan play, nuh care if dem come exercise, nuh care if dem have no skill. Di rebel side is di side weh yu gonna go pon

WT: Yeah

T: An mi couldn deal with that. Mi just wan have one structure, mi wan have, mi wan have fi no seh, William is always out dere, an an an, yuh no?"

In switching from the younger to the older side, Terry drew a contrast between the individualism of the "rebel" side with the "one structure" of the older side.

Terry switched sides at the same time as he began to employ Peter in his electronics shop. Although this timing may have been coincidental, it might suggest that Terry's change on the football field correlated with a change at work. Becoming an employer of a younger player re-aligned Terry's relationship with the others. He was no longer a 'rebel', but an 'older' player and an employer of the younger men.

At the time of the interview Terry was also going through significant relationship decisions. He was torn between the mother of his children and

another woman who he had been seeing. He tried to reason over which was more “domestic,” and talked of which could “cook” better and “keep the house”. These considerations contrasted markedly from discussions of “killing” and indicated a changing attitude to relationships that included parental responsibilities. Terry was caught between being one of the younger men vying for status and stability, and an older man with steady employment and a stable domestic life. Although he would never become one of the older men, nor would he necessarily want to, he was also separated from his peer group.

Conclusions

I have addressed the lives of the younger football players in order to describe how they were caught between their aspirations and limited means to achieve them. The economic decline of the town, combined with the decline of opportunities in Jamaica more generally, meant that many were unable to progress. Their experiences were similar to those of young people elsewhere, explored by Mains (2007), Masquelier (2005), and Weiss (2009) among others, who have pointed towards an increasing awareness among young people of the opportunities open to youth elsewhere in the world. Age and class are fundamental to understanding the men’s experiences, as other men of the same age but brought up in higher class households were continuing their studies or establishing businesses abroad. Through seeing the success of other cohorts of the same age, the younger men came to understand their limited potential for advancement while they remained in Black River.

The football field offered younger players one opportunity through which

to pass time. Within their peer group, men could solidify or improve their reputation through demonstrating their bragging techniques and by being seen as a good football player. However, an ability to banter did not improve their opportunities in Black River. Talking about football was a way to counteract the boredom and frustration they felt, which was caused by their awareness of the opportunities and lives of sports and music stars alongside the recognition of their own limited possibilities for economic mobility. These issues were exacerbated through the internet in recent years, and also to the long history of migration between the Caribbean and the rest of the world.

As I go on to discuss in the following chapter, in contrast to the younger men, many older players had spent considerable time abroad, particularly in the US, and some chose to return to live in Black River. In contrast to the younger players, for whom the United States represented the possibility for realising their fantasies of economic success, older men compared their heightened status in Black River with their anonymity with their poor treatment while living abroad.

Chapter 7: Waterloo Bar's Rules: middle-class drinking and etiquette

After Mr Bennett dropped off anybody needing a lift from the football field, he drove back to Black River. More often than not, we parked at a bar called Waterloo rather than going home. 'You stopping?' he asked, really asking whether I was going into the bar to have a drink. 'Yeah.' When I asked him whether he was going to stop for a drink he replied, 'It would be rude of me to refuse.' He left his boots in the car, and we shuffled into the bar, legs beginning to stiffen. Although soaking wet with sweat, Black River was still hot at night so it was not uncomfortable sitting in the bar with a sea breeze coming in through all of the open doors. Waterloo bar was owned by Mrs Bennett, Mr Bennett's wife, who took over running it from her mother. It sat a little outside Black River and it was removed from the daytime bustle of the town. Although the main gate was always open, the fact that there was a gate, and that the bar was set away from the road, produced a sense of aloofness that was not lost on those who chose (or chose not) to go there.

The men's employment, wealth, and education located them as middle class in an area where the majority were working class. The older group of players drank at Waterloo where they were joined by other businessmen, doctors, lawyers and men from similarly prestigious professions. They stopped there almost every day for a drink before heading home after work and after football. They bought rounds of drinks for each other and abided by a code of etiquette that defined them as 'society people' in contrast to other groups of drinkers around town. At the same time, as middle-aged men they were

concerned with maintaining their physical and sexual ‘strength’ which they achieved through consuming a potent aphrodisiacal stew. The life story of Mr Michaels, a regular football player and drinker at Waterloo, completes my biographies of the core footballers. I pay attention to the men’s migratory practices and their sense of being targets of crime for younger, less wealthy men in Jamaica.

‘Waterloo Bar’s Rules: Don’t drink and drive, you might spill your drink!’

If you walked into the bar from the door facing the sea, you looked directly at an ornamental array of alcoholic drinks. Shelves rose up in a triangular shape towards the ceiling, and each held different beverages. At the top was a large bottle of champagne. Beneath was Hennessy which was de rigeur among young men and dancehall artists; the ‘hot’ Guinness and Heineken were also on this level, hot meaning that they were drunk at room temperature rather than chilled. The lowest shelf held in the region of 20 bottles of ‘red’ rums, ‘white rums,’ gin, vodka, flavoured rums, whisky, ginger wine, and more ‘hot’ beers. Posters for parties adorned the walls surrounding the drinks, and peanuts, phone cards, and condoms were pinned to the shelves. Hung up around the bar were comic signs detailing ‘Waterloo Bar’s Rules’, including one which read “Don’t drink and drive, you might spill your drink!”. The men often drove after drinking in the bar, however they were never stopped by the police. As I discuss later, how they were treated by the police was one of the features which distinguished their group from others.

Each day, bar staff wrote the food available on a whiteboard to the left of the shelves. Fried chicken and chips, the most popular order, was always available and given in plentiful portions. Below this sign was a cooler box filled with large chunks of ice, supplied by Mr Bennett. To the far left was the till, and a large mirror. The walls of the bar and the floor were painted dark red. The windows had shutters which were open until closing, as were the doors. In front of the windows were 'burglar bars,' steel rods welded together criss-cross, which were locked in place on the inside of the windows at closing time.

The five people who worked behind the bar were all women and four of them were under 25. Most of the time Mrs Bennett was also behind the bar supervising, although the staff frequently 'opened' or 'locked up' the bar themselves. It opened at 7 and nominally closed at 11, however in reality it remained open until the last patron left. In contrast to the bar, the chefs working in the kitchen were young men in their 20s. Four of the women working at the bar and all of the chefs had left school when they were 16 or younger, and many said that they were trying to save money to pay for further studies, or to support children.

Mrs Bennett went to school at the illustrious Hampton School for Girls which was linked geographically and socially with Munro, the all-boys school. She met Mr Bennett at a dance organised between the two schools. Initially she was a boarder but, when she burst into tears in front of her father, he was unable to take her back and, after Hampton, she spent several years in the US before returning to Black River. During my fieldwork she became increasingly eager to go back to the States, where two of her three sons were living and working. Her mother owned Waterloo but allowed her daughter to run the bar.

My relationship to the bar and those who drank there began during my

previous visits to Black River. The majority of the tourists who chose to spend a night in the town stayed in the ‘Waterloo Guest House’ which had rooms in the same building as the bar and in an adjoining building. There was a partially dilapidated swimming pool, and another annexe in which the matriarch of Waterloo, Miss [Mrs] Aldwych, lived and held counsel in her capacity as Justice of the Peace. I first came to the bar to while away the hours while staying in the Guest House during a brief visit to help set up a computer room in a Primary School in a nearby community in 2008. In 2010 I returned to Black River, and Waterloo Guest House, to conduct a short six-week ‘fieldwork’ for my undergraduate dissertation (as noted in Chapter 1). I spent the evenings of those weeks in the bar. Other bars in Black River were cheaper, but I enjoyed the convivial atmosphere of Waterloo, and it was only a couple of minutes walk from where I was staying.

Waterloo changed from being a place to escape from fieldwork into one of the loci of the fieldwork itself. Some of the bar regulars were among the most avid footballers at Ashton, and I also came to know younger men who worked for them (but who did not drink at Waterloo), and was quickly made to feel included at the bar. Also, I rented a room in the Bennetts’ house, and therefore spent a great deal of time with both Mr and Mrs Bennett.

After several months, I began to realise that Waterloo was distinct from other bars around Black River in the minds of those who drank there and those who chose to drink elsewhere. Mr Bennett described the relationship between Waterloo and other bars during our interview:

“MB: One of the reasons, you know, that you will generally, unless there’s an event, you will only see me at Waterloo bar doesn’t have anything to do with my connection to the owner [his wife], right, it’s somewhere I feel comfortable, right,

because people will tell you, I remember one work superintendent who was here, was to tell you that Waterloo is the only place in Black River where you can go and people will actually buy you a drink. The other places you go, there are people harassing you and begging you to buy them drinks, and that's one of the reasons why I stay away. Oh yeah. I went one place once and a man actually accosted me, I thought he was going to, he wanted to assault me, if I wasn't going to buy him a drink. Apparently I owed him a drink. I don't know. But that's one of the reasons I sorta stick there. I'm comfortable with the crowd and that sorta thing, but they suffer at Waterloo because a lot of people don't go there because of the perception that it's something for society people. Oh that happens a lot

WT: Right, yeah

MB: You will see, uhm, you weren't at the New Year's Party?

WT: No

MB: You'll notice that when you have party, well you wouldn't notice, but we have New Year's Party at Waterloo, and y'have a bunch of people who are across in the parking lot, and will never see the bar

WT: Yeah

MB: You get me? They're out there, but they don't feel comfortable coming into the bar, believe it or not. Some of them will buy sum'n from the outside bar, and some will buy off the street, but they don't feel comfortable coming into the bar, believe it or not

WT: Oh, well what do they imagine would happen?

MB: No, not that sum'n would happen but they just don't, they just have like some sort of complex, y'no wha I mean, they just don't feel comfortable

WT: Mm, that people would look down on them or something

MB: Yeah, yeah. What helps is that is that it's one of the only late night restaurants anyway, so people have to come there, but you know? You know you get that, have people who feel that it's not their kinda thing. But I'll tell you something, if you've been to other bars and seen the behaviour there, you'll understand. For example, you don't get a lot of people just cussing bad words at the top of their voice at Waterloo. You go elsewhere you'll get that.

WT: Yeah

MB: Oh you'll get some really, and there's some people, believe it or not, who like to go to a bar and be drunk and disorderly, and pretty raucous, believe it or not and they wouldn't feel comfortable doing that at Waterloo, so they don't come there, so and a lot of people think it's expensive. Some people think it's expensive, although I think it's pretty darn cheap, but they think it's expensive, you know you'd be surprised how much difference sometimes \$10 makes

WT: Yeah

MB: Believe or actually Mrs Bennett can tell you that there's a big difference between selling chicken for 320 and 330 dollars, there's a big difference and people make a big deal out of 10 bucks¹." (Interview 16/12/12)

Mr Bennett distinguished Waterloo by its prices and by a code of etiquette. At Waterloo, a small group of middle-aged, middle-class older men bought each other drinks and behaved in a particular way. By contrast, other bars were unruly places where middle class man could be accosted, nigh on attacked, hear "cuss words", and see "drunk and disorderly" behaviour. Waterloo was understood to be more expensive than other bars and, at the time of my fieldwork, a beer in an average bar in town would cost J\$150 (around £1.10), whereas in Waterloo the same bottle was J\$200 (around £1.50). However, these prices were not as significant as the perceived differences in etiquette. Some around Black River referred to those at Waterloo as 'society people'. The term 'society people' was popularly used in Jamaican newspapers and in everyday conversations to describe those who attended expensive social events, from the openings of haute-cuisine restaurants to literary festivals.

The implicit class and status connotations of Waterloo were historically informed. As I outlined in Chapter 2, Waterloo was built in the late nineteenth-

¹ J\$10 was around 8p at the time of fieldwork.

century by the Leyden brothers, the wealthiest men in Jamaica at the time. It was also the site of the first school in Black River. Later, it became the most popular hotel in the area. Walking through the Waterloo buildings and grounds, you were confronted with a patchwork quilt representing Jamaica's history. When Mrs Morris gave her 'Black River Heritage Tours,' they began and ended there in acknowledgement of its importance. The breadfruit trees which were scattered around the grounds descended from the years of slavery as the fruit was introduced to Jamaica after an ill-fated mission by Captain Bligh in order to meet the food requirements of the slave population. The main building was testament to the wealth of the nineteenth-century colonists, as was its title as the first building in Jamaica to have electricity (in 1893, ahead of New York). The gravestone of one of the Leyden brothers, and an accompanying grave for his dog marked the end of colonial prosperity. The construction of the hotel rooms and swimming pool in the 1980s and 90s spoke of Black River's relative prosperity during the bauxite boom in Jamaica, and the country's increasing reliance on tourism post-independence. Finally, the overall distressed impression of the whole: the building's rotting woodwork, the hotel rooms in need of attention, and the signs dilapidated and askew, told of Black River's faded glory since its eclipse by Santa Cruz and Mandeville. The goats which roamed the grounds also reminded the viewer of the economic difficulties faced by many in the town, who were increasingly keeping 'feral' livestock as a type of insurance against economic hardship.

The dominant themes in this history emerged in a moment one morning outside the bar, according to various versions of an event recounted by the bar staff. The breadfruit, electricity, and the town's current economic difficulties were drawn into an assemblage when a man shimmied up one of the breadfruit

trees on Waterloo land to steal the fruit. Accidentally touching one of the power cables running through the tree, he received a large electric shock and fell to the ground. Those working in the bar heard a loud ‘bang,’ saw him fall, and then he quite calmly picked himself up and walked to the hospital down the road. Later that day, and to the bar staff’s surprise, he returned to collect his bag of stolen breadfruit.

This story bore a remarkable resemblance to another about a man falling out of a tree recounted by Huon Wardle in his article ‘You know how to fly, boy?’ (2004). Wardle points to the idiom of flight in the imaginary of Jamaicans, referencing Alexander Bedward’s attempt to fly back to Africa after shimmying up a lamp post. Bedward was later locked up by the Jamaican police and then sectioned into an asylum supposedly because he was insane, but perhaps also because he was stirring up too much trouble for the 1920s colonial authorities. Bedward attributed the Afro-Caribbean population’s inability to fly back to Africa to their salt consumption, which weighed down their bodies. In contrast to this story, however, the man had climbed up to steal breadfruit rather than to fly away. As migration becomes more difficult for many in Jamaica (as I explore in Chapter Eight), further emphasis is put on improving one’s life while in Jamaica. While I do not wish to overly stretch the metaphor, while in the past Bedward climbed the lamp post to attempt to return to Africa for spiritual enrichment, in contemporary Black River a man climbed a tree to find nourishment in Jamaica. Extending too far, the electric wires that ran through the leaves of the tree became a stark reminder of the perils of trespassing on private land. Indeed, many plots of land have painted signs threatening any who enter with being hit with a club, machete, or even being shot. That the man returned after such an ordeal to pick up his bag of breadfruit was viewed by the

drinkers at Waterloo as evidence of economic hardship, Caribbean resilience, and also as of an outsider's perspective of Waterloo as a wealthy enclave and target for petty crime.

Waterloo emerged in both popular opinion and in historical memory as a site of privilege. Those who drank there felt uncomfortable drinking in other bars unless they were designated 'parties,' and similarly others felt uncomfortable going to drink in Waterloo. These lines of inclusion and exclusion marked boundaries of class which were most clearly articulated in discussions of etiquette. Previous analyses of social hierarchies in Jamaica show how education legitimates social inequalities (Austin 1983). In Austin's contrast between the middle-class district of 'Vermont' and the working class district of 'Selton Town,' she discusses the ways in which the language of education operates within definitions of class:

"A superior class position is legitimated in terms of education and challenged in terms of (inherited) wealth. Yet this concept of education, particularly as it is elaborated by the middle class, has dual connotations. Education can mean not only qualifications, but also enculturation. To maintain that a person is 'educated' means that the person is a superior type of human being. To say that a person is 'uneducated' is to assert that he is unintelligent, in other words, inferior. The vocabulary of education has come to carry the same connotations once carried by colour terminology" (Austin 1979: 503)

Other authors have shown how social hierarchies have been challenged by those who are not part of the middle class. Wilson's (1995 [orig.1973]) study of social inequalities argued that "all levels of the structure are explicable as products of reputation, respectability, and the dialectical relation between them" (1995:9), and these categories were informed by economic aspects but determined, in the

final instance, by behavioural patterns. While the middle class emphasised 'respectability,' those from the working class could challenge their subordination through notions of 'reputation.' Yelvington (1996) showed that women's flirting defied their economic subordination in the factory, and Rebecca Prentice (2012) has updated this analysis to show how suggestions of kidnapping destabilised the relationship between Indo-Trinidadian, male employers and Afro-Trinidadian, female employees. Research emerging from the Caribbean highlighted how class boundaries became expressed through education, but also the instability of the relations between and within classes.

In terms of schooling, four of the five most regular drinkers at Waterloo had attended Munro. Three had lived in the US for a significant period of time, and another had worked in South East Asia. They had all completed University education with postgraduate qualifications. Their jobs included accountancy, dentistry, secondary school teaching, and business. They were all married and had children whose ages ranged from 5 to 29, and some also had children from previous or extra-marital relationships. Their own parents had enjoyed prestigious careers, spent time living overseas with their families, and in some cases had attended Munro. In spite of their comparative stability they were concerned by the financial crash and especially about paying for their children's education to University level. The men attended Anglican services, and two were involved in the daily running of the Anglican Church in Black River. These backgrounds defined the group as part of the middle class in Jamaican terms (Wilson 1995) and set them apart from the majority in Black River who had not completed secondary school and were employed in manual occupations.

Some of the men's children were the same age as the younger football players, or even a few years older, although in contrast to the footballers, they

enjoyed the economic and social capital that enabled them to study in one of the major Jamaican cities, or to travel to the US for their university education. Mr Bennett's three sons, for example, studied in the United States on football (soccer) scholarships gained through playing for the Munro schoolboy team. Playing for the Munro schoolboy team had given them the opportunity to perform in front of a number of football agents. Moreover, Mr Bennett's knowledge of football and his position on the Munro board of governors allowed him to help his sons to gain access to avenues for University scholarships. The encouragement and knowledge given to Munro players to apply for scholarships differentiated them from the Black River High schoolboy players explored in Chapter Three who lacked similar support networks. The older men at Waterloo had almost all spent time in the US achieving further qualifications beyond University, or else joining mid-level companies and enterprises to gain invaluable years of experience that they could use in Jamaica when they came back to establish their own businesses, and they expected their children to do the same.

One further feature that distinguished the regular drinkers at Waterloo from others in the town was that nearly all of them had attended Munro College where the majority had been in the same year group. As Munro was a boarding school, they had spent much time away from their families, and the relationships established with other boys in their school year endured. Many continued to donate money to the college and would visit regularly to follow the sports teams and developments on the campus. Mr Bennett was treasurer on the Munro board of directors, and frequently exhorted his former classmates to donate money to the school or to contribute in other ways. The men often talked about the school and reminisced about their time there, and they had

established a bond at Munro that set them apart from others and drew the group closer together. Through Waterloo's kitchen, Mrs Bennett often supplied the Munro football team with food and Waterloo would host them for dinner when they played in Black River. The majority of the town supported Black River High School but Waterloo supported Munro. Education was therefore a significant component of the group's identification, just as the bragging among the younger men established enduring relationships among their cohort.

Conversations around the bar concerned the economy, international and domestic politics, and sports. When it was time for the evening news, the television's volume was turned up and the men turned to watch and discuss current affairs. They frequently talked about a general lack of industriousness in Jamaica. The men would talk of poor service they had received and compare it negatively to their experiences abroad. As I have mentioned previously (p.166), Doc described the group as "all the intelligent guys together and all the educated guys together [...] nobody wanted to talk real crap [...] talking about politics". Indeed, unless it impacted on a business in which they were interested, they generally did not engage in gossip or bragging. The guys brought 'girlfriends' to the bar fairly openly, although sexual relationships were never discussed explicitly and were certainly not the topic of boasting as among the younger men. No one mentioned the fact, and the lady in question would be treated cordially in the same way that the man's wife would have been. Men did not gossip about these liaisons. The rules of propriety dictated that these were not to be talked of and, if I brought the subject up, men remained silent before changing the subject.

‘Waterloo Bar’s Rules: If you’re still standing, you’re not drunk enough!’

Most nights, men began to arrive at the bar between 6 and 8 o’clock. As they entered, they would greet the others with ‘Evening,’ and each would reply ‘Night,’ or ‘alright?’ The drinking began casually, almost as though choosing what to have to drink required an immense effort. In our minds would be which of us had bought the last drink, and the order of buyers. If it was not a person’s round, they would wait to be offered one. If there were only two or three of us, the person whose round it was would ask in turn what each man was drinking. If three or more, the man buying the drinks would say to the woman working at the bar ‘serve a drink for me, please,’ and she would go around the group taking the orders, noting them down in her book. If a man entered when a new round had recently been ordered, he would be offered one on the previous man’s bill. If the round had been ordered a little time before, he would either wait until the next person bought a round, or would ask for one to be served for him.

The observations of the men who drank there and my experiences in other bars demonstrated that the ‘rounds’ system distinguished Waterloo from other bars. First one man bought drinks for the group, then the second man, the third man and so forth. Each set of drinks was called a ‘round’. Those who did not, or could not afford to, buy a round when it was their turn would be left out of later rounds. It felt like a big step in my fieldwork when I was first included in a round.

There was an exacting etiquette involved in buying rounds. First, one had to know who to include. Often, I would divert the question to the woman at the bar, asking her ‘please could you serve a round for me?’, hoping that she would

know whether to include one man or another or, indeed, exclude a certain person. If she replied 'For who?' it could be very difficult deciding on the composition of the drinking group. Accidentally leaving a man out could be a source of tension and embarrassment, although it was easily solved by the man asking for a drink to be served 'on William's tab'. The cost of each round made such choices more acute. If there were 5 people, each round would cost a minimum of J\$1000 (approximately £7.50 at the time of my fieldwork), but rounds of J\$1500, or even J\$2000 were not uncommon. In theory, buying a big round meant that you did not have to buy any more drinks for the rest of the night, assuming that no one drank too much.

As noted by those working on male sociality, the bar, coffee house, and street-corner are important spaces in the production of male sociality. For each of these authors, these spaces are thought to counter-balance socioeconomic hierarchies outside. In the Caribbean, Abrahams (1983) showed how adolescent peer-groups socialising on the street corner in Tobago used jokes and rhyming in songs to challenge generational splits. In Paramaribo, the capital of Suriname, Gary Brana-Shute (1979) argued that work hierarchies experienced by men were replaced in the bar by an informal ranking according to the ability to "argue, tell stories, drink and perform real or imagined feats of spiritual and physical strength"(1979:60). Beyond the Caribbean, those working on male sociality have also noted the disruption of everyday structures among men's friendship groups. Papataxiarchis (1991) argued that friendship among men "is an aspect of the antistructure" (1991:156) and is a "haven of egalitarianism" (ibid.:158). Similarly, Stewart (1997), studying Gypsies in Hungary, emphasised "the submission of each individual to the collective will [and] the integration of his acts to the rhythm of the group" (1997:188) when Rom men drank together,

and he too draws attention to the notions of equality that pervaded these drinking sessions. Casey High has pointed towards egalitarian male bonding with “the expectations of urban mestizo masculinity [that] tend to emphasize sexuality, gender hierarchy, and solidarity between men through the collective consumption of alcohol” (2010:765). Anthropologists have long recognised the importance of alcohol in the expression of group sociality and Wilson (2005) argues that:

“Drinking practices are active elements in individual and group identifications, and sites where drinking takes place, the locales of regular and celebrated drinking, are places where meanings are made, shared, disputed and reproduced, where identities take shape, flourish and change” (Wilson 2005:10)

Moreover, Douglas (2003) argues that alcohol, as with the Black River rounds, vigorously enforces lines of group inclusion and exclusion.

These analyses of male sociality in bars and on street corners point towards the widespread use of alcohol to define and to delimit group dynamics. A research participant speaking to Huon Wardle (2006) in Kingston, Jamaica, poetically expressed the power of alcohol to bring people together:

“as Mouse put it mysteriously, lighting a little pool of alcohol on the bar with his cigarette lighter to reveal a blue flame, rum was ‘holy spirit’. Clearly the wine at Cana had been white rum: how else could water have been confused with alcohol [white rum is clear]?: rum was ‘holy spirit’ because it had the power to bring people together” (2006:148)

Infrequently, farmers, fishermen, or low-level traders around town would come to Waterloo for an evening and sit drinking at the end of the bar. If one of the men knew him they would offer to buy him a drink, but would not include him in the rounds. Exclusion from Waterloo rounds was never described in terms of types of people but always in terms of certain ways of acting.

Perhaps the most important rule concerning behaviour in the rounds system involved not raising an argument or even showing that you had noticed what anybody else ordered. The most expensive drinks involved a spirit and a chaser; for example, a man could buy a 'half flask' of VX rum, for example, which would be J\$400 and then a chaser of sugary fruit juice costing J\$150. I never witnessed anybody complain about having to pay, nor even question the fairness of the expense in comparison to a beer costing J\$200. Indeed, on many occasions, I was encouraged to drink more spirits when these were ordered! Spirits were either ordered in 'drinks' (measures) for one person or in 'flasks' for two or more men to share. When drinking from flasks, the men served themselves and each other, and encouraged those they were sharing with to drink more. The man who had ordered the flask, even if he chose beer, would encourage those drinking spirits to drink faster and 'keep up' with the beer drinkers.

Another issue of etiquette involved knowing when it was your turn to buy a round. Although entirely unspoken, one had to pay attention to who bought each round and keep an eye on how quickly people were drinking. If you waited too long, men would begin to think that you were not going to buy a round. When it was your turn, you had to judge when to buy it; you did not want to make people rush their drinks, but neither did you want to keep them waiting. Buying in rounds set the pace, or the "rhythm" (Stewart 1997: 188), for drinking. Men could refuse drinks or ask for them to be put under their name in the book for later consumption but overall they tried to drink at the same speed.

The etiquette surrounding drinking in Waterloo required men to buy a round, accept the next, and reciprocate hours or days later. While the rounds established a form of egalitarianism among the group of drinkers, the examples

below demonstrate that this was established through ‘agonistic exchange’ (Biedelman 1989). Agonistic exchange refers to a form of reciprocity based on a competition and reckoning between the individuals involved. The demand to reciprocate generates struggles which “determine whether a protagonist’s estimation of himself, of his respect, is commensurate with that held by others” (Biedelman 1989:248). In order to remain part of the rounds, one had to demonstrate to others that one could afford rounds, and in turn others were required to do the same.

Very few women drank in the bar. Occasionally, Mrs Bennett would meet friends at Waterloo and they would set up a round among themselves, separate from the men. On other occasions when a man brought his wife or girlfriend, they were both included in the rounds but the woman did not buy one and her partner did not buy two rounds. The exclusion of these women from the group of drinks-buyers was a mark of respect and etiquette but, also, a demonstration that the women’s participation in the communal drinking did not form reciprocal bonds.

Other aspects of etiquette were also important. A man at Waterloo was told to ‘take that somewhere else’ when he began to use ‘foul’ language. The group engaged in what one might call ‘gentlemanly’ conduct when women were present, in particular buying them drinks and speaking more politely than usual. However, women working at the bar were frequently addressed in a manner that would be inappropriate when addressing a non-worker. For example, a man gestured towards a bar worker and said ‘look at dem titty,’ and the comment was met with laughs rather than rebukes. Such talk served to underscore the difference between women on one side of the bar being bought drinks, and those on the other side of the bar serving them. The women also had

a repertoire of responses, which included telling the man that, due to their age, they would not be able to 'handle' them as well as their younger, more sexually vigorous, boyfriend. Thus, when one man told a girl that she 'needed to be spanked,' she replied that she looked forward to her boyfriend doing so during her time off.

Two events illustrated the importance of reciprocal drinks-buying by indicating what happened when errors in the rounds occurred. The first example concerned a party away from the bar. Arriving, it was my round but, since leaving Waterloo and arriving at the party, our group had increased dramatically. As I was concerned with my own finances during fieldwork, I surreptitiously bought drinks only for the three men with whom I had been drinking. When I brought them over, Mr Bennett set about rectifying my error by taking orders from the whole group for me to buy. I was convinced that he also added a few extra drinks as payment for the lesson he was teaching me. Even after this, I was not free from reproach, as one of my woman friends was upset with me for the rest of the night: I had neglected to offer her a drink, even though I had bought the group 10 or so. Mr Bennett gave me a stern lesson in proper conduct; you could not buy drinks selectively for certain members of the group, it was buy none or buy all. As well as a breach of etiquette, there was a danger that I seemed not to be reciprocating in the exchange relationships established by previous rounds. Mr Bennett therefore saved my relations through the forced demonstration of my respect for the others.

The second example took place while drinking one evening in Waterloo. It was late, and the drinks had been flowing freely, as had a steady succession of

crab based meals on this particular ‘Crab night’.² One man who had arrived late and therefore not had as much to drink as the rest of us thought that he had been left out of the rounds because fewer drinks were served to him. He asked Mr Bennett to turn the music off (Mr Bennett often moonlighted as the Waterloo DJ), and stood dramatically on the footrest of his chair to raise himself up. He turned to address the bar, ‘which one of my friends won’t buy me a drink?’ There was a silence. ‘I can buy my own you know,’ he said, before sitting down. Before the music resumed, one man said to him angrily that he should not ‘call mi name’ and turn off the music. To ‘call [someone’s] name’ is to blame someone for something and also carries connotations of telling tales. One drinker murmured to a woman at the bar to serve the man a drink, while the rest sat in angry and awkward silence. Another man angrily repeated that it was wrong to ‘call people’s names out’, and others in the bar agreed that turning the music off and making such a commotion was not the right way to act. Although there was a “commensal solidarity” (Papataxiarchis 1991: 156) among the men at the bar, such examples demonstrated how easily rounds could go awry, and also their power in distinguishing who were ‘friends.’

There was an etiquette to consumption and the Waterloo practices were particular to their context. In his work on a friendship group in Bangalore, Nisbett argues that “practices of consumption and narratives of middle-class morality appear not as mutually exclusive but [...] as increasingly overlapping” (2007:948). Similarly, drinking together entailed acting as ‘educated’ men together. ‘Education’ did not relate only to schooling although, as indicated,

² ‘Crab nights’ take place at many restaurants and bars around May, as this is the season when ‘land crabs’ are at their largest and most plentiful. The meat is far cheaper than ‘sea crab,’ and can be had for free if you are willing to pick up one of the many you stumble over during this period in Black River.

many of the men had attended Munro, but also “enculturation” (Austin 1979:507), that is, the process of being “socialised to an acceptable cultural and moral code” (ibid.:507). Drinking practices were an expression of class positions and served to draw the men together through reciprocal round exchanges while also demarcating them more clearly from those at other bars who acted in different ways. Although Mr Michaels had not attended Munro, he had a clear idea of appropriate conduct both in the bar and on the football field.

Mr Michaels

Mr Michaels drank at Waterloo and was also a regular player at Ashton. He was a teacher in Black River High School, but had held a variety of different jobs. Over the course of my fieldwork, I frequently confided in him the difficulties I was having, and he would offer a friendly ear as well as a supportive push. His temperament was somewhat taciturn although, when something captured his attention, he talked animatedly. As proof of his support and interest in the subject of my research, he allowed me to interview him 6 months before anybody else. He was married and had two children. He was also involved in the daily management of the Anglican Church in Black River. His father was one of Jamaica’s foremost poets and a Professor Emeritus at the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Unlike the other players, Mr Michaels did not grow up in Black River or even in the parish of St Elizabeth but in Kingston at the UWI campus, where his father worked. He played his first competitive football when he went to the UWI; he “had ambitions during high school [...] but [he] wasn’t good enough at

the time". He played for the university football team "then later on for the workers, business house football team at UWI". Alongside his passion for football, he was an enthusiastic student and attained an MPhil in Zoology specialising in aquaculture, but he did not study towards a PhD as he was given the opportunity to work for the largest aquaculture company in Jamaica which "was ideal" for him. Mr Michaels continued to play a considerable amount of football alongside his job, in contrast to many older players who had played competitively in their late teens but then stopped for several years due to work commitments. As well as playing football, he took on some of the organizational responsibilities, as:

"each team had to organize their own self, so we ended up organising amongst the footballers within the company, erm ... myself and this other guy sort of organized to transport people, get kit and and stuff" (Interview 15/5/12)

This responsibility extended to acting as referee during competitions, and Mr Michaels said that, "between myself and the other guy who was organising it from aquaculture, and other members of the other teams, we would officiate for matches" although, due to their amateur status as referees, "it was sort of left to people's conscience."

He helped to oversee two farms belonging to the Jamaica Broilers Association, one in Clarendon and one in St Elizabeth. "Some years after", he moved to St Elizabeth, and became more involved in a chicken processing plant. The business group that owned the plant made efforts to foster "community spirit and community outreach" through sports and other activities for workers and non-workers alike. But the ethos around the company began to change in the late 1990s, and "workers weren't really being encouraged to play football during their lunchtime". After he left that company, he began playing with

people around Black River. At the same time, he became a teacher at Black River High School.

Mr Michaels had clear ideas of football and was vociferous in trying to foster a style of play at Ashton. The most important component of the matches was making sure that the “older people” could continue to play for as long as possible. Speaking of the beginnings of the informal matches, he said:

“we couldn’t really take the knocks that we used to take, and everybody has to go to work the next day so we can’t, can’t really afford injuries. Urm, so the style of play was centred around these things, these older people moving a little slower in conjunction with some younger people, aahm, and ... the game was pretty much centred around that group, of older people” (Interview 15/5/12)

Later, he described the matches as “an old man’s game with a certain flavour,” and felt that “the senior people [had] to be the voice of reason”. During games he was insistent on maintaining the rules, particularly with regards to free kicks, and would stop play to make sure that the rules were maintained. Although he knew that this frustrated others, particularly some of the younger players, he was adamant that consistently implementing the rules was necessary. As he put it:

“If we decide, as we have, that we don’t accept, ermm, bad tackling, or or rough play, then this is the sort of thing that everybody needs to understand and, again maybe the senior people have to at least, at least in the beginning be the voice of, of reason and, and try to guide the thing in as, in some sort of sustainable way. Aahm, I think that if we’re dissatisfied, and the same goes for any sort of system whether it’s run by old people or not, aahm, if you’re dissatisfied and you divorce yourself from the system then you, have to just accept anything that comes thereafter” (Interview 15/5/12)

Making football “sustainable” for the older players was important because, “I want to keep playing as long as I possibly can. Aahm, I think that the more time I spend at it, because I don’t really enjoy other forms of exercise [the better]”.

Football was the only form of exercise he enjoyed and he recognised the importance of staying fit as he aged. Maintaining the safety of older players was implicated with maintaining fitness and, also, boundaries of age and class.

Mr Michaels's views on football indicate that there was a link between longevity on the football field and long-term health. While some younger players felt caught between youth and adulthood, Mr Michaels and others indicated that they too were caught between life transitions: there was an underlying sense from such conversations about growing old and the need to maintain their health.

While older players talked about the importance of maintaining their health, they also went to the Waterloo bar most evenings to drink. They understood the implications of drinking alcohol regularly but considered it more important to 'enjoy life'. Football mitigated some of the effects of the bar and so the two sites achieved a certain balance.

I was given the impression that football was played to maintain fitness so as to compete with younger men, and also to retain some of the sporting prowess that they had when they were younger. In Coy's discussion of apprenticeship, he points out that "one of the most paradoxical aspects of apprenticeship, is the fact that it is a means by which skilled individuals create their own competitors" (1989b:9). On the football field, the older players were consistently being challenged by the younger men who they were teaching to play effectively. Through labelling the teams in terms of age, older players were overtly seen as the experts, and the younger players as apprentices. This organisation also meant that the older men were training their replacements. The most that they could aim for was to remain competitive with the younger players for as long as possible.

Away from the football field, older men at the bar also felt that they were somehow losing their strength, and particularly strength related to perceived sexual abilities. As I noted previously, women working at the bar recognised and took advantage of these insecurities. Occasionally, the men consumed foods that were thought to give a man a ‘strong back,’ that is, heightened sexual prowess. The term ‘strong back’ suggests an association between physical and sexual ability. Mr Bennett, who refused extra-marital liaisons, was often teased for being a ‘one stove burner,’ a phrase connoting that he had limited capabilities. Even Mrs Bennett would tease him for his ‘good behaviour.’ The concern with enhancing sexual ability was entwined with maintaining bodily strength through middle age³. The most ubiquitous aphrodisiacal food was ‘Mannish Water,’ a soup made from goat parts including the head and brains as well as other organs. Other potent dishes included cow cod soup, and cow cod stew. As shown below, this dish was eaten as men told stories of their time away from Jamaica, and of when they were threatened by younger men.

Cow cod stew was the most sought-after dish that encouraged ‘hardness’ and gave a man ‘strength’. One evening, the men at the bar had planned that I join them the next day to eat some of the stew. Mrs Bennett told them that it was ‘cruel’ as I would have no ‘relief’. After a drink in Waterloo the next day, the group drove in a two car convoy out of Black River, and then down a road that was in a state of disrepair. I was with Mr Michaels and Mr Bennett. Even though Mr Bennett slowed the car, he could not avoid all of the potholes and we were bounced out of our seats every couple of minutes. We pulled up on a

³ As Marshall and Katz demonstrate in their study of the economy of erection-enhancing drugs, “anxieties about penile erection crystallize broader social anxieties about masculinity, sexuality and ageing” (2002: 56).

nondescript country road next to a very small roadside bar. There were some upturned logs serving as seats around a small wood fire. The man who had heard about the stew went inside the small hut to order meals and beers for those assembled outside. It was already dark and it was very quiet. The only woman present was the one selling the stew and she stayed in the wooden hut which doubled as a bar next to where we were eating. After a quarter of an hour, she brought the stew out on paper plates for each of us. The stew was chunks of bull's penis with small dumplings and a gelatinous sauce, served with plain rice. I tried to follow Mr Michaels's advice to 'forget what it is you're eating,' but prodded the meat around on the plate.

As we ate the stew, men began to share stories. One talked of the racism that he had experienced while living in New York. As he waited for a train an 'old white woman with a poodle' told him to 'Move aside nigger!' to which he replied, 'just because you didn't get fucked last night don't take it out on me!' and she moved away. He also told another story of trying to enter a clothing shop when a security guard had blocked the door and said 'there's nothing here for you.' Another involved a time when he was leaving the subway and a '13 year old' pulled out a small knife and told him to 'give up everything you have.' The man stuck his hands into his 'long brown leather trenchcoat' and, emphasising his Jamaican accent, said 'Pussy'ole! If you want it you haffi come tek it!' The boy ran away. The audience agreed that the exaggerated Jamaican accent had scared the boy.

Other men told stories of experiences in Jamaica. One concerned a group of young men carrying machetes who stood around a fallen tree blocking a road. It was unclear whether they had felled the tree but they were demanding

payment from drivers wanting to get through. Traffic was building down the road until one of the drivers fired a gun into the air, and the young men decided that 'it wasn't worth it' and pushed the tree out of the way. Another story featured a man who was dropping a female co-worker back to her home late at night 'in the bush,' deep in the countryside. Suddenly their car was surrounded by a group of intimidating young men carrying knives with covered faces. On recognising several, who apparently lived in her community, the woman got out of the car, saying some of their names aloud, and told the group to move away. As they knew her, they moved on and allowed the man to pass through. On reflection, he wondered what might have happened if they had surrounded the car after he had dropped her home.

These and other stories concerned the difficulties of being a middle-class, middle-aged Jamaican man. As black men, they encountered racism and prejudice in the US. However, they could also use the associations of Jamaica with organised crime to discourage would-be muggers. The usual nuances of age and class that set them apart in Black River were hidden beneath a generalised experience of being black in America. As the work of Karen Olwig (2007) has shown, many migrants to countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom:

“were not prepared for the discriminatory racial and ethnic regimes in the migration destinations, and this had an important impact on the ways in which they, and their descendants, perceived themselves as possible citizens in the receiving society and their Caribbean society of origin” (2007:30)

In Jamaica, by contrast, their age and class made them targets for crime as, simply put, they had more worth stealing such as nice cars, watches, and large amounts of cash. Notably, in their stories, they emphasised the youth of the

gangs of men who threatened them. The stories therefore spoke of the men's position in both local and global hierarchies of wealth, class, and masculinities, and emphasised their vulnerability both at home and abroad: at home because of their higher class and abroad because of their lower class (as, in the US, race and class overlap so extensively). After the stew, we drove back over the bumpy road in the dark.

As well as their own rules that defined them as a particular group of drinkers, these men were also treated as elite by other Jamaicans. When the group travelled to bars for parties, they would be able to order drinks on 'credit' despite others being denied and popular bar signs which read, 'If we don't give you credit, you vex [you are angry]. If we give you credit and you don't pay, we vex. Well, better you vex.' In a similar vein, Mr Bennett once spoke of being stopped by a new policeman in Black River as he had not been wearing a seat belt. After walking to Mr Bennett's car and informing him of the infraction, the policeman returned to his more experienced partner. Mr Bennett watched as the partner spoke angrily with the new policeman, who then returned to Mr Bennett's car and, while ripping up the ticket, shouted irritably to him, 'why didn't you tell me who you were?' Mr Bennett insisted that he should be given a ticket, but the policeman refused and told him to drive on. This story evoked similar experiences within the group of drinkers of the corruption of police in Jamaica.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have focussed on the older group of players and their social lives away from the football field. Their education, wealth, and migratory

practices (explored in greater detail in the following chapter) defined them as middle-class in a predominantly working-class town. The rounds of drinks that they bought at Waterloo defined the boundaries of who was within the group, excluding women and those who could not afford to buy drinks. These consumption practices therefore constituted both a demonstration of their elite status through the amount of money they spent drinking and the class-notations of Waterloo, and a legitimation of this elevated status through ideas of superior etiquette.

Complementarily, the group also shared insecurities. Some of them played football in order to try to maintain their 'strength' as they aged, and others exercised at home. They were also concerned with prolonging their sexual potency and consumed foods that were popularly believed to have aphrodisiacal properties. They traded stories of threatening groups of younger men who preyed on them as conspicuous targets of wealth, and were also concerned on the football field with limiting the aggression of younger men in order to prolong their own abilities on the pitch.

In Chapters Six and Seven, I have focussed on how football matches travel beyond the field, and how groups of men responded to their position within hierarchies of class and age. Focussing on a small group of football players allowed me to tease out nuances of generation and social class. Both the younger, working-class men and the older, middle-class ones developed group cohesion through competitive displays of bragging, on the one hand, and rounds-buying on the other. The younger group understood their diminished position within socioeconomic hierarchies through seeing their higher class contemporaries enhance their employment potential overseas. The older men,

who had returned from such migration trajectories, came to understand their elite status in contrast to their poorer contemporaries in other bars around town. Class and generation were, therefore, co-implicated.

However, while studying a small group enabled me to research the nuances of age and class, as I have noted (p.32) it also brought the drawback of being unable to explore other avenues, most notably through a comparable study of how these relations were also gendered. The groups of men both defined themselves through their relationships with women, and views on normative sexual practices. For the younger men, both 'killing' women and fathering children changed the man's status and reputation in different ways. For the older set, having extra-marital affairs and abiding by a specific code of etiquette in relation to classed and aged women in the bar, including their exclusion from rounds of drinks and the differential treatment of wives/girlfriends and bar staff, contributed to their code of behaviour.

Experiences and fantasies of migration were important for both sets of men in their group identification. In the following chapter, I specifically concentrate on how international football matches and the men's migration practices in order to show how seemingly 'local' dynamics are always globally informed and how 'global' issues are only visible through particular, 'local' perspectives.

Chapter 8: Football Breakfast: the English Premier League, Jamaican migration, and the global ‘system’

For most residents, Black River was one point in a much broader geography spanning Jamaica and cities in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Some had family members who had migrated overseas, some were in the process for applying, and others had spent time abroad before returning. Points within the Caribbean and elsewhere in the world were also relevant but these three countries were by far the most common destinations. According to residents, many of the houses in New Town were being built by migrants. Such half-finished buildings could be seen throughout the island. These represented the possibilities that became available through successful migration. However, others pointed to houses which would never be completed by their owners as they either chose to remain in their overseas homes, or passed away before construction was completed. All Ashton players had worked abroad; many had close relatives who lived overseas, and most of the younger players and some of the older ones planned to work abroad in the future.

Experiences in Black River were embedded within wider networks and the global “mediascape” (Appadurai 1990: 295). The players’ lives in Black River were not only affected by their direct experiences of migration but also by their everyday support for European football clubs. They had a vibrant and engaged relationship with the English Premier League (EPL), and would follow the daily machinations of their teams with a keen interest. The fates of these clubs energised social networks in Black River by contributing to the ‘bragging rights’ between groups of friends, and also by offering a language that transcended

boundaries of class and age.

The migratory practices of the older and younger players differed. As Olwig (1998) notes of Caribbean mobility, “if migration is defined as the act of moving ‘from one country, place or locale to another,’ the middle classes are among the most active migrants in the modern world” (1998:11). As I have shown in the previous chapter and go on to look at in greater detail, the older group (and their sons and daughters) migrated for further education, qualifications, or business experience. Overseas, they joined communities of Jamaicans who they knew through mutual friends or family members. Once they returned to Black River, they remained in contact with the Jamaican community abroad through phone calls and the internet. They also remained in contact with their family members overseas and Mr and Mrs Bennett spoke with their sons regularly through Skype, Facebook, or on the telephone. For Mr Bennett, the EPL and schoolboy matches were occasions to phone, text, or message his friends in the US regarding the results.

By contrast, the younger group travelled as seasonal, low-paid workers. Under the ‘H2B’ visa, given to seasonal, non-agricultural labourers, the duration of their stay in America could vary from two months (a ‘season’) up to a year. Most of the trips lasted for three to four months. While they formed their own communities of migrant Jamaicans, these did not endure beyond the work period in the same way as for the older migrants; while they remained ‘friends’ on Facebook, they did not regularly interact. This lack of enduring community was partially explained by the relatively short duration of their stay in America, but also because the following year they might work for a different employer and/or with different co-workers. Complementarily, the men could remain in close contact with peers and family members however these relations might

have to be suspended if the migrant decided to remain beyond the duration of their visa.

The international labour networks and the dissemination of the EPL that I go on to discuss are part of a much longer history of cultural contact in the Caribbean. Sidney Mintz argues that:

“As the first part of the non-Western world to endure an era of intensive Westernizing activity, the Caribbean *oikoumenê* became ‘modern’ in some ways even before Europe itself; while the history of the region has lent to it a coherence not so much cultural as sociological. Today’s scholars have begun to look to the Caribbean for concepts they can use in describing the globalization process” (Mintz 1996: 289)

According to Mintz, the Caribbean has a “modernity that predated the modern” (Mintz 1996: 305) as the region was the first site of capitalist expansion outside of Europe. Indeed, as I have demonstrated in terms of football, forms of the game have been played in Jamaica since the first inhabitants (p.43), and English matches have been reported through the media since the first newspapers were produced. Black River itself was built, prospered, and experienced a crash in response to changes in the international economy. Processes linked with ‘globalization’ are therefore not new in Jamaica, or in the Caribbean, but are part of a longer history of encounter.

The players’ wider networks of migration and their vibrant support for European football teams can be understood in relation to contemporary debates surrounding the “glocal” (Robertson 1992). Robertson adopts the use of the term ‘glocal’ to “recognize the directly ‘real world’ attempts to bring the global [...] into conjunction with the local” (1992:173). The term derives from Japanese marketing jargon to resolve “the general problem of the relationship between the universal and the particular” (ibid.: 173). It has subsequently been adopted

by Giulianotti along with Robertson to analyze football support and sports-as-development initiatives (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2007a). Football is both a sport and an industry, and as it spreads it highlights local particularities of style and interpretation while also drawing supporters and players into international flows.

In this chapter, I begin by giving an overview of the players' migration experiences. Next, I complete by biographies of the regular players by looking at Doc, and go on to introduce the 'football breakfasts' that he organised throughout the year. One of these breakfasts became a leaving party for one of the younger players who was about to migrate to the US for seasonal work. I pay attention to the attachment the men felt for 'their' EPL teams, and how they chose to support them. In this chapter I embed the mens' lives in Black River within a wider perspective through looking at their migratory practices and consumption of the EPL.

Chinese food and hotel groundsmen: Jamaican migrants in the US

Migration and international links contribute in significant ways to daily life in Jamaica. Although I did not collect data on remittances due to the sensitivity of the topic among the men, they have long been an important aspect of kinship and networks of support in Jamaica (Griffith 1985). In her ethnography of three families living abroad, Karen Olwig (2007) argues that migration has become a key site for what it means to be 'Caribbean.' Looking at the migration histories of each of the men reveals marked differences, and these contrasts illustrate the reproduction of advantage since middle-class men "had a

better social, economic and educational basis” (Olwig 1998:12) to realise enduring improvements to their social and economic situation through mobility. The younger men recognised that their experiences differed from those of the older ones when they were the same age. They also witnessed the children of the older players travelling to the US to complete vocational training or University education before continuing to live ‘over dere’. In the following histories of migration, I am interested in the relationship between mobility and class.

One of the ‘football breakfasts,’ such as the one I go on to discuss below, was also a leaving party for one of the younger men. While others played dominoes and chatted, I had the opportunity to talk with Kendrick, the man about to leave. He was in his early 30s and married with two daughters aged 10 and 5. I knew him as a tough but conscientious footballer, and although he did not play with flair during games, he was highly effective. He was a defensive-midfielder and, because of his athleticism, made his way all round the field. As with many of the younger Ashton players, Kendrick left school with few qualifications and was financially reliant on ‘H2B’ visas and seasonal migration to the US for work. Applicants had to be sponsored by a company who were required to prove that there were no suitable American candidates for the job before they could offer it to a migrant. Labourers had to pay for their flights and entry fee to the US themselves. Kendrick was to be employed as a handyman for a hotel in New York and he was not looking forward to going as he enjoyed being with his family in Jamaica. His older daughter was born with sickle cell disease, and his younger daughter had Down’s syndrome. Both therefore required medication and special treatment.

Other players, and many more young men around town, had been to the US on H2B visas, but their applications had since been turned down. These

experiences reflected the observation of others in Black River who recognised that it was becoming increasingly difficult to attain such visas. They understood the decreasing number of successful applications as a reflection of the global financial crisis which had enlarged the number of Americans looking for work and had reduced the number of staff that companies were willing to employ. Those relying on seasonal employment in the US were therefore concerned about their abilities to migrate in the future.

Doc grew up in London until the age of 9 when his family returned to Jamaica. After completing secondary school on the island, he went on to receive his medical training in Cuba. His wife had also qualified to become a doctor overseas before returning to Jamaica. During fieldwork, she was living in Glasgow with their two children studying for further medical qualifications. Doc was completing an advanced medical course over the internet which was accredited by a British-based University.

Mr Bennett had also achieved professional advancement as an accountant in the US, and Mrs Bennett was eager to return as she had spent a large part of her life living there. After gaining his university education in Kingston, Mr Bennett completed a Masters degree in New York. He lived in New York for several years, and then moved to Florida for a couple more years before returning to Jamaica. During this same period, he established a family with Mrs Bennett and they raised their three sons for the first few years of their life in the US. He remembers this as a difficult time, as he would spend weeks “on the road” in his job as an accountant, living out of hotels. At the weekends, he and Mrs Bennett would buy Chinese food and “rent enough films to last for the whole weekend.” On Monday the weekly cycle would begin again. He contrasted his life in the US with that in Jamaica where he felt much more satisfaction.

During fieldwork, his two elder sons were living in America.

Mr Michaels had a range of experiences from spending time in several different countries. When he was six he lived in Canterbury, England for a year and visited subsequently for six-week periods over the course of the 1960s and 70s as his father lived and worked there. He still had vivid memories of eating smoky bacon crisps and fruit pastilles, and I brought some back for him after a trip to England. Although he could not remember any racism in England, and his father never spoke of racism while he studied at Oxford in the 1950s, he drew attention to later experiences. As part of his job for an aquaculture company, he travelled to Taiwan to buy fish and a man stopped in front of him in the street and did a “monkey movement” and laughed. On another occasion, he accompanied a youth steel band that his wife conducted on a trip to Indiana in the US. One of the venues where they played was “acknowledged” to be racist, and he remembered feeling a palpable tension while the children were eating dinner after the show. After working in different parts of Jamaica, he settled in Black River and taught at Black River High School, as noted in Chapter Seven. Overall, the group of middle-class men (including others they drank with at Waterloo) had all lived abroad, whether for leisure or for professional advancement.

The younger players described very different experiences. Peter was in the process of applying for a visa to work in the US, and asked me to “pray” for it to be successful. He finally managed to “reach over dere” after my fieldwork and worked in a seafood restaurant before returning to Jamaica after several months. Six months into fieldwork, Kendrick and another younger player both departed for the States. While one returned at the expiration of his visa, Kendrick decided to remain illegally in the US. The lack of opportunities in

Jamaica and Kendrick's economic commitments to his family made returning difficult.

Terry described himself as being "a little more exposed than the others you know, cos I was travelling to America from when I was 14". Knowing that many other young men had applied to migrate unsuccessfully, I asked how he had managed to go to America from such a young age and with such apparent ease. He explained "[I] just went to the embassy, my mum took me to the embassy when I was 5th form, 4th form, an dem gave mi the visa so, I just went". Terry still had family living in the US, and occasionally travelled to see them. His experiences of visiting the US showed the importance of being able to prove that one was financially secure in Jamaica before being able to get a visa. He could travel to the US with relative ease as his electronics repair business in Black River acted as a guarantee for his return. Also, having family members already in the US meant that he had 'sponsors' for his visa application, who would be accountable if he overstayed. His ability to migrate further differentiated him from the other younger men and emphasised how mobility contributed to the reproduction of opportunity.

The older players and Teddy were able to travel relatively unhindered between Jamaica and the US due to their wealth and kinship networks which allowed them to successfully apply for 'B Visas,' which included both 'Visitors for Business' and 'Visitors for Pleasure'. For most of the younger men, however, the only opportunities for migration were in the form of the 'H2B' visa which prolonged their precarious employment status. A successful 'H2B' application one year was no guarantee that an application the following year would be successful.

The jobs that the two groups held while overseas reflected their

employment in Jamaica. The older group worked as accountants, doctors, or dentists, while the younger group worked as groundskeepers, domestic workers, restaurant dish cleaners, or similar low-wage, low-prestige jobs. The younger men by and large wanted to migrate to the US semi-permanently, and only return to Jamaica for holidays or when it came time to retire. There was a feeling that Black River did not hold any immediate prospects for them. By contrast, the older men had chosen to return to Black River from the US in their middle years. For these men, America was an avenue through which to make living in Black River possible. On one side, the younger men felt trapped in Black River and were eager to escape, and on the other side the older men had chosen to return to live and work there. Doc's biography completes those of the most regular Ashton players. During our interview he was keen to discuss his views on how to improve the opportunities for the younger men, and the 'football breakfasts' that he organised were part of his vision.

Doc

Isaac or, as most of the players called him, Doc, had a high status both on and off the field. He was a prominent Doctor in the community (hence his nickname), and owned properties in other parts of the island as well as plots of land around Black River. He drove to the field in a black BMW and regularly gave lifts to other players, often going so far as to drive to New Town to pick them up. He also supplied footballs which he bought during a trip to Scotland where his wife was completing a Masters. Whenever a conflict erupted, the players involved would run to him to apologise. Often, they did not have far to go as he would have walked over to act as arbiter and

to cool tempers.

Doc was a player on the older team but ‘crossed’ mid-way through fieldwork to play with the younger side. In contrast to Freddy and Cavin, he played more selfish football. The moment the game began, he would jog to the opposition goal mouth and stand there for the rest of the match. He would seldom run back to defend and would only harry the opposition under duress. Once he received the ball he would rarely pass and preferred to try and trick his way past defenders. In interviews, others said that “all im wan do is cut tru an ting”,¹ and that “sometimes im fi pass i ball”.² I was not the only one to become occasionally infuriated with his play as it quickly destroyed the momentum of attacks. However, Doc could score goals. On the days he played well, he could score three or four. He knew where to stand to be a nuisance to defenders and could whip around and lash the ball knee-high towards the goal before others had time to react. He was quiet throughout matches except for sudden shouts of ‘blouse and skirt!’ when he fired a shot wide.

When Doc was younger, his parents did not allow him to represent his school as they felt that football was only for “those who didn’t do so well at school and raise up poor”, and also because the team had to stay in a “cottage” for the duration of the season with “a lot of, the persons who were not, y’know the best in terms of education and, y’know, there’s a lot of weed smoking and so forth” (as I explored in Chapter Three). However, after leaving school he played full-time division 1 football, one below the Jamaican

¹ ‘All he wants to do is cut through [get passed the defenders] and things’

² ‘Sometimes he should pass the ball’

Premier League.

Some of the younger players approached him for advice and for temporary loans. He recognised that it was difficult for them to repay the money he lent, and was happy to help those he felt were in need without expecting repayment. He also encouraged those who had left school without qualifications to attend a vocational training college, and offered to help support them or give inducements such as a job opportunity subsequent to completing their studies. When a young man in his mid-teens came to play with us for several weeks, Doc bought him a pair of boots. In our interview, he spoke at length about his attempts to encourage the younger men to pursue further qualifications:

“D: Look, my my, the the, the thing about it is that, these guys [the younger men], most of them are good guys, y’understand, very sociable, very nice guys, y’know very willing and so forth, y’know and bad situations that are probably put them in or bad choices in life probably put them where they are, y’know and not because of who they are and who I am I’m gonna say look, I’m gonna segregate myself from them, y’know I, whatever I can do to help I will. But, despite, despite, y’find that despite encouragement, maybe it’s maybe it’s not as persistent as they should be, cos remember these a grown men. That’s the diff-, that’s the problem, that these are grown men, they’re not children, and not many grown men, as much as they will sit down and may listen to you, will accept that, look, nothing’s happening in my life I need to do something, right? So, y’find that despite having spoken to them, having advised them, having even offered to help them, it’s, they’re still, most don’t take up this offer, y’know, so. Y’know, and, yeah, I mean it’s it’s it’s, y’don’t know what more to do, y’know, more to do just go and enjoy the football and hopefully... I mean, look at, there are several guys, I mean look at even Freddy. Freddy’s a fairly educated guy, I don’t know how far he took his education, but he seems to be a fairly educated guy in terms of, at least, I mean he obviously completed secondary school and so forth, and he must have something

WT: He's an intelligent guy

D: But someone like him needs to go and do his degree, or [...] something more. But you find that, and it maybe because of all the social determinants and so forth, but you find that they get so comfortable in the situation that they are in. Like, he works in the library, so library are rah rah rah, I don't think he has any, maybe he has some formal training in in in being a librarian, maybe I dunno, but, y'know he basically is is is he works and he lives from pay to pay basically. He's not suffering, he's not hungry or nutt'n like that, but y'don't see where he wants, or he's trying to move forward

WT: Yeah. In five years he could be in the same place

D: Right, he could be in the same place. And, with the, with the, all this this this the global economy and the recession and so forth, you don't know what will happen. People might get laid off, y'know, job cuts and so forth and people like those, in those kinda sectors are usually the ones that get hit first, cos they're not essential services. Y'undestand, right, it's always safe to be a doctor, you won't get laid off at least [he laughs] y'know, but y'know it is a, you know there are several guys there that you look at them and you see the potential, you see what they could have been, if they had only, chosen the right path, right? Y'know it's not like they're into drugs or into drugs, none of those guys as far as I know are into drugs, like take drugs, you notice none of them don't even smoke

WT: No no. You never see people rubbing their palms [a motion linked with smoking marijuana]

D: They don't smoke, y'know they're not into drug trafficking or anything like that, you know that is one of the, probably one of the even most unique groups of guys that you'll see. Because in most other, most most areas that you'll go, those that play football you're gonna find one or two of them who are drug traffickers who are this or that or that, right, or smoke or something like that. And look at those guys, not one of them. So it's a very unique group y'know, it's a very unique group, y'know as I say, it's a fairly, the guys are fairly, it's a fairly intelligent group. Y'know and everyone has their little, uhm, attribute, y'know, [another player] is a good chef, but then [he] needs to go and

formalise his thing. Y'undestand, y'know formalise, like get someone to say look, I am a sous-chef or whatever they call that. Y'undestand, y'know things like that, y'know? He needs to do things like that. Y'know, I mean, Peter, Peter is fai-, Peter is probably one of the youngest ones out there, and I've been encouraging Peter to look, go out, he likes electrical. He says he likes electricals, doing the, like electrician stuff, and I said I mean, look, y'have a school there

WT: The HEART one³?

D: Right, where, which offers this, go and take it up. You fi do it! I even say to him, look, you're gonna, I'll give you a job, but my my condition is that you have to start this thing. I'm not taking you to work here and you're just gonna be there and be comfortable with the little money he gets and, y'know? And you you you'd think that, that one one's example would be their example to follow, y'undestand? You'd expect that, alright, us blending with them, they'd look at themselves and say, alright, y'know, alright look William is there doing his PhD, Dr Issac is there, he has done, and even now I'm doing a Masters, y'know? And it's not so hard to do. These things are not so hard to do and as I said these opportunities are there. Y'know. This HEART school is an amazing school y'know, this HEART is actually an amazing ting y'know. This has come from nothing, y'know, to be very very recognised, well recognised, right, y'know in the hotelling industry, in many many things, y'know, many persons get scholarships to go abroad to do degrees and PhDs and stuff like that

WT: And cookery there's supposed to be very good

D: Y'undestand? Yeah, y'know a so, maybe sometimes look at it and say, boy, go into HEART. But no, I don't think they're actually seeing the products of the HEART academy, y'know, and it's right there, it's walking distance from yuh yard, put it that way. So there's no reason why you can't go. Y'undestand? But, as I said, they get too comfortable. I don't know, it's probably laziness too y'know, it's just laziness too, y'know. But they need, y'know, you only can advise, y'only can assist, but yu really cyan

³ The HEART academy provided vocational training and work schemes.

obligate or force anything, y'know. You can show some example, or set an example, y'know" (Interview 12/12/12)

Doc felt a responsibility to help the younger men, although at the same time could not escape feelings that they were 'just lazy.' He emphasised education as the best way for the men to improve their situation. It is, again, interesting to note the association of 'grown men' with an expectation of progress that, for some of the younger men, have not been met; at some stage they have made "bad choices in life" which prevented them from successfully achieving adulthood. Implicit within Doc's analysis were class differences that found expression in "laziness" but also in the under-explored "social determinants" and "segregation" to which he refers. He hoped that through the "example" he set and through "blending" with middle-class men the younger ones would become motivated to realise their "potential."

However, as I have demonstrated throughout the thesis, the younger players were encouraged to miss classes and found school to be alienating and left them under-qualified. Moreover, he underestimated the impact of class on notions of progress. Peter viewed becoming an electrician as unambitious compared to the opportunities offered through migration. Furthermore, for Freddy, becoming a medical doctor or completing university studies was unfeasible and working in the library allowed him a level of stability that was denied to his peers as he had a job with regular income. In addition, Doc replicated the association of the Jamaican working class with involvement in drugs, as his parents had done in their justification for not allowing him to play in the D-cup. Although recognising that the group of young men at Ashton were not involved, they constituted the

“unique” exception rather than the rule. The above demonstrates how education and etiquette were used to legitimate social hierarchies while eliding issues of class. Moreover, his discussion left out migration as a contributing factor to the employment stability and economic success of the middle-class men.

Nevertheless, Doc wanted to help the younger men succeed and enjoyed socialising with them. He regularly put on parties to which all of the players were invited, and also arranged football ‘breakfasts’ at Waterloo. The notional focus of these breakfasts was a particularly important football match, such as the final of the Champions League, or a ‘big’ Premier League match such as Manchester United vs. Chelsea. He would pay for cooked breakfasts and a few drinks afterwards for the younger players. He told me that a football breakfast cost him around J\$10,000 (around £85 during fieldwork), but he did not mind paying as he enjoyed them. All of the amateur players supported English Premier League (EPL) teams, and some also followed teams in the Spanish and Italian leagues. There was no better way to spend a morning than with a good breakfast, some beers, conversation, and laughs around a game. After the matches finished, men would stay at the bar and play dominoes, or just shoot the breeze. As at Ashton, women did not join the group watching football aside from bar staff.

Football breakfast

Waterloo bar was not equipped to show football matches to a crowd of

people. Although it had a television mounted in one corner, the screen was small and did not have the channels needed to watch the biggest matches of the season. Therefore Mr and Mrs Bennett would transport a much larger screen from their home to the bar, and Doc would bring his 'box' which provided many more channels. These new pieces of equipment could take a little time to set up and, if their providers were running late, it would be a tense few minutes as wires were turned round, wiggled, replaced, and the whole set-up fiddled with until the match came up on screen. Following the work of Skeggs and Wood (2011, 2012) on how audiences respond and react to reality television, I am interested in how televised football matches were interpreted by the men. Here, I concentrate on the Champions League final between Chelsea and Bayern Munich in May 2012, but I do not give a blow-by-blow account of the match, and instead concentrate on how the men watched football together.

Leading up to the match there was a discussion about the relative merits of each of the sides. In spite of Doc's attempts to encourage mingling between the older and younger group, while most of the younger men from Ashton came to watch, of the older set only Doc attended. Although they called it a 'football breakfast,' and ordered morning meals, the match kicked off on a Saturday at 1.45pm Jamaican time. The group compared the strengths and weaknesses of the two teams' players and managers, related past matches, and gave their predictions for the game ahead. Aside from a younger man named Hammer and me, most would be supporting Chelsea. Others were surprised that I favoured the German side over an English team but, as I pointed out, I supported Arsenal and Chelsea were our historical rivals. They insisted that they preferred English to German teams. In the conversations beforehand, those supporting Chelsea either bragged about how they would 'beat up' Bayern, or would distance

themselves by voicing their concerns about the match ahead. Before the first half began, we ordered coffees, teas, and beers.

While the group of younger men watched the match in the bar, the older, middle-class men were either at work or at home. All of these men owned televisions and computers which allowed them to watch football. They preferred to view the matches alone at home, while messaging other men who were doing the same elsewhere. Mr Bennett, for example, messaged friends around Black River, but also people who lived elsewhere in Jamaica and overseas. Watching from home also allowed them to spend time with their family as all of the older men were married with children.

The difference between how the two groups consumed EPL matches uncovers aspects of age. Marriage and parenthood both impacted on the men's choices of where to watch football. When there were no 'football breakfasts,' the younger group organised to watch the matches together. These collective viewings most frequently happened at Teddy's house, as he had a 'dish' and also lived with his baby-mother and child. The younger men avoided watching football on their own and Teddy told me that he was sorry to hear that I had been watching matches on my own. Also, many of the younger men owned neither a 'dish,' nor a laptop. Further, these viewing habits reveal differences of employment, as some of the older men worked on Saturdays. Therefore, while Doc thought of the 'football breakfast' as a time for socialising between the groups of players away from Ashton, instead they were events when the class and age differences manifested most acutely. Differences of wealth were further instantiated through Doc's ability to buy drinks and breakfasts for all of the younger men, while many of them were unable to afford drinks and meals at Waterloo.

Skeggs and Wood (2012) focus on reality television and “detail what television does as it intervenes in people’s lives” (2012:17). They note the importance of affects, “pre-linguistic bodily experiences that are produced through the social encounter: they only have the potential for emotion, they are feelings that are yet to be coded” (ibid.:149). They demonstrate how “affect not only influences how and where bodies can move, but it also materialises on bodies as they move through space” (ibid.:136). Those watching football at Waterloo experienced affect in a different but comparable way to those watching reality television. As I indicate in the account below, watching the match was an embodied experience that was heightened through the men’s investment of bragging rights into the teams. Watching together allowed the men to discuss different tactics and skills used by professional footballers and reflect on their own football habitus.

In the opening minutes of the match the men became quiet and their eyes turned to the screen. The television volume was raised, but it was still difficult to make out the voices of the American commentators. The men agreed that English commentary was preferable, as they used language and idioms that were familiar to them. Doc said that he preferred English commentators because of the number of statistics that they could apparently call to mind which, in his view, was due to football’s historical association with the country.

As the game progressed, men slowly began to talk about what was happening. ‘Alright, see’t here now,’ Freddy said almost to himself, but just loud enough for others to hear. As the minutes passed, the bodies around the bar began to tighten. The early reckoning had finished, and the delicate balance of the two teams could be broken at any moment. ‘Wha? Wha!’ some shouted as a forward beat a defender. ‘Rah-ted’ others said as tackles and tricks were

displayed. They commented on the skills of different players, and suggested how the ball might have been used differently, saying such things as ‘no, im fi pass it!’ when a man chose to run with the ball.

Hammer was particularly animated while we were watching the match. He had invested a significant amount of bragging rights into Bayern in the lead-up to the match and therefore had a vested interest in them doing well. It became evident that Chelsea’s tactics were to allow Bayern to have the ball, but prevent them from getting near their goal. The German side were constantly teetering on the edge of their opponent’s box, and Hammer repeatedly stood up, hunched and tensed ready to celebrate a goal, only to slam the bar with his hand and shout ‘bomba!’ when the attack petered out. ‘Bloodcleet!’ others shouted. The first half finished 0-0, with Bayern dominating possession of the ball but, in spite of their attempts, unable to break down Chelsea’s well structured defence.

The volume of the television was turned down for the break, and the men ordered more drinks. Freddy, Doc, and a couple of others ordered breakfasts. Doc lit a cigarette and the men reflected on the first half. Neither team appeared to have the upper hand and the discussion revolved around the managers’ tactics; would the English side’s decision to concentrate on defending lead to disaster? Or, as they had proven in previous matches, would they be able to score a ‘breakaway’ goal when their opponents were tired from all of the attacking? Hammer engaged in a heated discussion about the first half, and was insistent that it was only a matter of time before Bayern scored. Men tapped him on the shoulder with the back of their hand, pointing out a statistic or a tactic that would change the game. Hammer kissed his teeth with annoyance and turned away, before looking back a moment later to patiently, but insistently, explain why they were wrong. In the background there were American

commercials for cars, fast food restaurants, and razor blades interspersed with highlights and analysis of the first half.

The match resumed, and the television volume was raised again for the second half. The men who had begun to talk around the television moved aside so that others could see, and arguments quietened. We ordered more alcoholic drinks, and the breakfast plates and cups were cleared away by the women working at the bar. After only a few minutes, Bayern appeared to have scored, and Hammer slammed his hand on the bar shouting 'Boom!'. It immediately transpired that the goal had been disallowed, and he sat back down, eyes fixed on the television to watch the replay. Doc, supporting Chelsea, claimed that it was 'clearly offside,' but Hammer and I remained unsure.

The second half continued much as the first had done, with Chelsea allowing Bayern to control the match but resisting their attempts to get into good scoring positions. A few minutes before the final whistle, however, Bayern scored and Hammer erupted from his seat. With only a small amount of the match remaining, they seemed to have won, and Hammer laughed and looked around animatedly at the faces of those supporting Chelsea. His joy was short-lived, however, as five minutes later, Didier Drogba (Teddy, and other's, favourite player) equalised. It was the turn of others to jump up from their seats while Hammer scowled at them. In all of the commotion, we missed a couple of minutes of the match, and turned to look back at the screen to find that Bayern had been awarded a penalty. The group went quiet but, when Chelsea's goalkeeper saved it there was a general exhalation of stored breath, and the match went into extra time.

After quite a slow game, the men were left reeling from the final few minutes and the conversations were excited and disjointed as they tried to

collect their thoughts. As there was no victor after the 30 minutes of extra time, the match went to penalties. In a shoot-out that began with Bayern in the lead after Chelsea's first striker's penalty was saved, Drogba was given the final penalty and won the match and the Champions League for the English side. As the match went to penalties, there were no clear 'winners' of the bragging rights. The men agreed that prior to the final 10 minutes and the ensuing penalties, the match was 'boring.' They decided that Chelsea's tactics were effective but did not make for an exciting game. The volume was turned down, although the television was left on so that those who wished could watch the squads receive their medals, and the Chelsea captain raise the cup, but most turned away and began to chat. We ordered more drinks, and I began to feel the alcohol lubricate our conversations. Some of the men went to sit outside. Doc and Hammer challenged each other to dominoes, and each found a partner and commenced to verbally threaten one another about the domino games ahead.

The men experienced the football match as a shared bodily experience. Communally watching the game produced embodied responses, translating what happened on the screen into an affective response in the space of the bar which, in turn, met with counter-response from others in the form of banter or critique, as indicated by Hammer's celebration of the disallowed goal while Doc claimed that it was 'clearly offside'. Alongside instinctive responses, the men also critically reflected on tactics and individual decisions. Following on from pre-linguistic reactions, they deconstructed patterns of play and inter-player rivalries. These analyses were further encouraged through the 'slow-motion replay' used in football broadcasting, which make suggestions for how people should view and appreciate matches by focussing on particular moments. As I have indicated in Chapter Five, however, rather than being generally agreed

there is considerable variation over which moments are considered the most important. At the conclusion of the match, the group discussed it as an overall product and, through their agreement that it was 'boring' until the final minutes, generated a memory of the match which emphasised their shared emotional and emotive experience.

While watching the match therefore brought introspection among the group over their shared appreciation and responses to football styles, it also encouraged an extrospection concerning the men's place within broader football geographies. Even those who were not Chelsea fans felt a greater affinity to them rather than Bayern Munich due to their support for other EPL sides. At the same time, in their preference for English commentators, they indicated that they associated England with a protracted football history and a close relationship with Jamaica which endured in spite of changing migrant trajectories and mediascapes.

Furthermore, while critiqueing players' choices made on the field, the men in Jamaica imagined themselves as being on the field in the Champions League final, and thought about how they would have reacted differently. This imagined translocation had the combined effect of drawing a comparison between the bodies of football players on the screen and those in the bar and, contemporaneously, defining more sharply *those* bodies on *that* field from *these* bodies on *this* one. Affect thus engendered feelings of proximity to fantasies of wealth and success, and intensified the distance from their realization. The responses to the Champions League football match can best be understood through looking at the mens' support for EPL teams.

Why Jamaicans do not watch the Jamaican Premier League

Almost all Ashton players supported Chelsea, Manchester United, or Arsenal. Some men around town also supported Liverpool, and a few supported Manchester City. ‘Which team a your team?’ was one of the first questions I was asked. Supporting Arsenal offered a shared language with many of the participants, and those who did not support Arsenal wanted to tell me the reasons for their poor performances, the weaknesses in their team, or the results of upcoming matches. During interviews I asked each of the players which team they supported and why as I was interested in finding out why they preferred one team over another and to learn about the attachment they felt.

All of those that I spoke to preferred to follow the EPL than the Jamaican Premier League (JPL), and in fact very few people followed the domestic Jamaican league at all. There were several reasons for this preference. First, most of the top Jamaican teams were based in the cities of Kingston and Montego Bay, and no team from St Elizabeth has ever qualified for the JPL. Therefore few living in Black River felt any attachment to the communities represented by the football teams in the JPL. Second, by comparison with the ease of access to live streams of EPL matches on a computer or television, it was comparatively cumbersome to travel to watch JPL matches. As Mr Bennett put it, “it [the EPL]’s easier to watch, you don’t have to leave your house.”

Support for the top English teams was a product of changes in the Jamaican domestic economy, including the shifting patterns of how football matches were consumed and marketed, and due to inclinations towards particular players. While the history of football in Jamaica is entwined with the history of football in England, men in Black River presented themselves as

global consumers who consciously chose to watch the EPL over other leagues because of its superior quality and competition. They repeatedly emphasised that they did not watch the EPL because it was English, but because of the quality of players and the competitiveness of the league. However, as I go on to show, how the EPL travels overseas prefigures support for the top teams through their wider coverage and more intensive marketing.

The men placed very little emphasis on the Premier League as being 'English.' Rather, the EPL stood for a league with a large number of teams that could viably compete for the title, in contrast to the Spanish and German leagues in which there were only realistically two teams vying for the top spot, and which enticed some (arguably most) of the best players from all over the world. While the Premier League is 'English,' it is also profoundly 'global' as the majority of 'minutes played' are accounted for by players of non-UK nationalities, according to a study conducted by the BBC (2014). It was this combination of high quality players from all around the world and its degree of competition that set the EPL above others.

All Ashton men supported the Jamaican national team in the qualification matches in 2011 for the 2014 World Cup. Although the Jamaican team was unsuccessful, there was a palpable hope beforehand that Jamaica might qualify for the World Cup once more, as they had done in 1998. It is worth noting that the 'Reggae Boyz' (the Jamaican national team's nickname) hold an international record that might be described as average at best, and are currently ranked 75th in the world by FIFA at the time of writing. One reason that the men in Black River gave for the poor performance of the national team was that many of the players represented clubs overseas and the Jamaican national squad therefore rarely trained together. Indeed, of the 23 players called

up for the recent 2014 Caribbean Cup, only six played for teams in Jamaica. Seven played in the US, six in England, three in Norway, and one in Canada. The Reggae Boyz' website has compiled a list of 'Jamaican footballers playing for clubs worldwide,' and shows that there are 30 footballers playing for English teams and 20 for teams in the US, as well as a handful of others playing elsewhere. These statistics would be even higher if they included players who opted to change their nationality in order to represent the national team of another country. The most famous Jamaican player to have changed nationality was Liverpool's Raheem Sterling who chose to represent England. The organizational difficulties for the national squad were understandable given the spread of their players throughout so many different clubs across the world. By contrast, the majority of men in the highest performing national teams play in their country's domestic league (for example England, Germany, Italy, and Spain although notably not Brazil). The Reggae Boyz did not take part in the 2014 world cup, and most of the men had second teams to follow: the most popular teams were Brazil, Spain, and Argentina. Others included Germany, Italy, Holland, and England.

Commentators on football spectating have focussed on the interplay between the global brand of football clubs and leagues and local dynamics of support. Giulianotti and Robertson (2004) place particular emphasis on the dual processes of the "universalization of particularism" and the "particularization of and an understanding of the relationship between the local/particular and the global/universal (ibid.:546). They argue that "the fulcrum of football's cultural dimensions is the relationship of the universal and the particular" (ibid.:547). Football at once transcends local particularities and is, at the same time, firmly embedded within them. Once again, these processes

are not new to the Caribbean but, as Mintz's (1996) work has demonstrated, continue centuries-old experiences of contact.

Work on football support has documented specific ways that spectators interact with football. In Gutmann's work *Sports Spectators* (1986), he notes that sport has an elusive "propensity for bringing people together" (1986:185). Indeed, according to FIFA's official website, the 2008 World Cup had viewing figures of around 715.1 million people. Back, Crabbe, and Solomos (2001) argued that support for the Jamaican national team in the 1998 World Cup was evidence of a "vital and animate Jamaican belonging in Europe" (2001:275). Other academics have explored how professional football from European leagues is consumed outside of Europe through various media. Richard Vokes (2004), for example, shows how EPL support in Bugamba, Uganda, "created new lines of power and influence in the village" (2010:14) as people began to show EPL matches on televisions and charged spectators an entry fee. Gary Armstrong has worked on football hooligans in England (1998), football supporters in Malta (with Jon Mitchell 2006) and among those involved in the sport in Ghana (2010 with James Rosbrook-Thompson) and Liberia (2007). In their work on Ghana, Armstrong and Rosbrook-Thompson argue that "the legacies of colonialism have proved impossible to overcome in the context of Ghanaian soccer" (2010:295) but, at the same time, the game still has an "ability – stated or assumed – to act as an instrument of unity and inclusion" (ibid.:310). In Armstrong's work on Liberia he argues that "the distant and the exotic have been enhanced in recent times by global football images" (2007:232), and he shows how George Weah (a player born in Liberia who went on to win African player of the year, European player of the year, and FIFA

world player of the year in 1995) attempted to translate a successful football career into a successful political career by drawing on football idioms.

Football is changed by the context in which it is consumed or practiced and, in turn, influences and changes that context. One point that emerges from the existing literature is an impression of the importance of locality in the consumption of international football matches. Although the same match might be watched in a crowded bar in Bugamba, an expensive hotel in Liberia, or an anthropologist's room in Black River, what spectators bring to their participation, the meanings they attach to what happens, and what they ultimately take from it are markedly different.

According to the typology of football supporters created by Giulianotti (2002), men in Jamaica showed a 'hot' sense of loyalty to their teams while their relationship to them was filtered through the international media. They showed a strong sense of attachment to their teams and many said that they would 'never switch' (change teams) in spite of the fact that their support was recognised as a product of media coverage. However, many of the men wondered how patterns of support might shift if one of the 'big sides' began to perform poorly and were superseded in both the league tables and in the media coverage by a different team.

Most men pointed towards an individual player to explain how they chose to support their EPL team. When I asked Terry what had made him choose Chelsea he said:

"TD: My'a tell yuh man, me ya tell yuh, mi love mi love. Alright, yuh see the ting is, Chelsea, when yuh talk bout Chelsea mi always tink bout Drogba. Cos, I mean, he was the one who, you know, bring mi attention to Chelsea.

WT: Yeah

TD: Mi rate Drogba yuh no

WT: Yeah

TD: Yeah man

WT: What was it about him more than others?

TD: Just prolific man, man just *bad*, man just bad, one word, bad.⁴(Interview 11/12/12)

Terry used the word ‘bad’ to refer to Drogba’s quality as a football player and Terry’s appreciation of the way that Drogba carried himself on the field. Terry found it difficult to explain his decision to support Chelsea without acknowledging his affiliation with Drogba. He said that the only time he had realised the continued racism among a minority of fans was when “some people trow banana” at the player while he was waiting for the ball. This incident was the “first time” that Terry had felt “like how [Drogba] probably felt”. Similarly, when I asked Freddy why he had chosen to support Arsenal, he immediately replied “‘98. Thierry Henri,” and said that it was almost solely down to that player. He also attributed his continued support to Arsenal’s style of football, saying “Arsenal my side, passing game. Passing game mi like”.

Individual players were significant but not the only factor producing fan loyalty in Black River and other men described their support for Premier League teams in terms of ‘attitude.’ Cavin remembered in vivid detail the match that made him decide to begin supporting Manchester United:

“C: It’s the never do die attitude about Man United I like. I remember I watched a game with Man U and Tot’nam, and Tot’nam was leading tree nil at half time, and Man U, the

⁴ “I tell you man, I tell you, I love I love. Alright, you see the thing is, Chelsea, when you talk about Chelsea I always think about Drogba. Cos, I mean, he was the one who, you know, brought my attention to Chelsea ... I rate Drogba you know ... Yeah man ... Just prolific man, man just *bad*, man just bad, one word, bad”

second half, Man U come and win 4-3

WT: Ok

C: Yeah, and, that struck me, there and then, that that team, because even you know when I'm, if you see when I'm playing out there, I don't, I doesn't [...] I doesn't like to lose. So I realise that that concept is built in my Man U, and so I just, I just, and from there I just decide that ok this is my team, because, a lot of people used to cheer for Liverpool because of John Barnes and ...

WT: Yeah

C: Right, or some of the guys then, but then I look at Jan Mølby [with Liverpool 1984-1996] and Ray Wilkins [with Man Utd from 1979-1984] and some of those guys that, you know? That they played for Man U and I realise that this team, so I decide that Man U's my team, and from there that is the only team I I cheer for. I will look at the rest of the teams, but

WT: Yeah

C: it's Man U. And some of the guys used to say to me 'why don't you cheer for Barcelona because Barcelona fit you, you're like

WT: It does, I mean I'm surprised, I thought you supported Barcelona

C: Right, because I like to pass

WT: Yeah

C: Yeah, but I said... That's, that's what I like about Man U, that's what captivate me, never do die attitude, they don't, they don't give up" (Interview 10/11/12)

Cavin attributed his support to the "never do [or] die attitude" rather than to the players in the team or the manager. Manchester United was not generally associated with a "never do [or] die attitude" in Black River and fans of other clubs would attribute their support to a similar 'attitude' associated with their own team.

EPL club support became entwined with fans' daily lives as Cavin shows:

“C: Alright, even this season we lost 1-0 to Everton, and I, I just don’t watch no TV, I just blank, blank out everything. If I’m watching TV and I see, I just turn it off, I I go on a different station. I just don’t want to see it.

[we both laugh]

WT: So you were telling me that you could deal with anything that any supporter said [while Cavin himself was playing football], because you’re from the ghetto

C: Anyting, anyting

WT: But if a team loses

C: No

WT: That gets to you

C: That’s the only ting that gets me mad, that that gets to me, that is when Man U lose [I laugh]

WT: See, that’s funny to me that a team from way over in

C: England can have so much effect, yeah! Yah! I just, it’s just that, I, it’s just that, alright ... I will schedule, no matter where I’m at I’ll schedule my time just to watch Man U game. No matter where, no matter what I’m doing. And as I say, if Man U lose, you can bet your bottom dollar I’m not gonna watch no preview, I’m not gonna watch no sport news, I’m not gonna watch no soccer, and if I, because sometimes when you watch the game, commentator talk about the game. I just don’t wanna hear it

WT: Yeah

C: You know what I like to, what I like?

WT: What?

C: I remember, even last season when we beat Arsenal 6-2 or 7-2, I would watch that game like over and over and over, I’s [laughs as he knew I supported Arsenal]

WT: Yeah, I can ...

C: Yeah, you know those tings make me happy

WT: Yeah

C: Yeah, but if they lose, sometimes it’s like I don’t even wanna eat.

[I look surprised]

C: Yah! I just, it’s just that, I just, it’s like no wonder, it’s like I’m realising the fact that you’re gonna have some losing games and you’re gonna have some winning, so now I’m

like taking it a little lightly. I'm not as much affected by it now, but a few seasons ago

WT: My gosh. But it's not the same, well, did it used to be the same when you played at Premier League? You used to get that same sense of ...

C: No, no no, if I, yeah because we lose some games and, I didn't even, it's like, no I don't, don't feel anyway.

WT: Just when Man United lose

C: When Man U lose I'm, not even my lady can talk to me

[I laugh, then he laughs]

C: Sometimes she'll say I'm taking it too seriously and I say, 'here you go again,' [...] As I tell some friends, I eat, sleep, talk, walk Man U" (Interview 10/11/12)

Cavin told me that his support for Manchester United was such that people had even begun calling him 'Man U.' This level of support certainly set him apart from others although many felt great attachment to their team. The EPL affected Cavin's livelihood as a taxi driver, as he would turn down jobs or 'charters' (private taxi runs) when they conflicted with a match. When Manchester United lost, he would argue with his "lady," and even refuse to speak to her.

Doc decided to support Manchester United while also appreciating Liverpool. He supported Manchester United "from in the 80s" although he "always loved Liverpool". He settled firmly on Manchester United "on seeing Man U in the, in the late 80s coming up, rising [...] and that was it". Having lived in England for the first 9 years of his life, he could "still remember passing by Wembley" when he was a child. He attributed his strength of attachment to his time in England and felt that football had become something "innate" and he could not "see life without football, ever." He described himself as "a football fanatic" and said, "if I was still in the UK, I'd probably be one of those, y'know?"

The season tickets, tickets, and, y'know tickets for every game and stuff like that". Although he had not always felt so strongly about Manchester United, he said that "I'll never give up [on the team], never, win or lose, win or lose." His support for Manchester United was not shared with clubs elsewhere, such as Spain or Italy, and he said that he was "not somebody who supports outside" his chosen team.

Mr Bennett had originally supported Liverpool although later began to support Manchester United. One of his earliest memories of international football was a "colouring book, with the world's greats" which his parents bought when he was "about 10". He could still remember many of the players that appeared in the book:

"MB: Pele and Franz Beckenbauer and Gert Muller, who you'd know from World Cups and that sort of thing, you'd know those people, Jimmy Johnston, Celtic, right? Alan Ball, Manchester City, uhm, ah, uhm, Jimmy Greaves [...] Never heard of him before, before then, uhm, ah, a lot a them, there were a couple from Celtic, you had uhm, well y'had international, you had Eusebio, who everybody knew but I never knew about this guy named Simoes, who also played for Benfica" (Interview 16/12/12)

The fact that Mr Bennett could remember so many of the players that appeared in his book was testimony to his passion for football even at a young age. Joking, he said that he knew the book must have come from England "because there was a whole lot a Englishmen in there". He described it as something that "just sort of enhance your love and appreciation for the sport, for football". Around the same time, he began to support Liverpool, and explained this decision saying that "we used to get an English soccer game on Sundays, not live you know, and I remember we got a lot of Liverpool, because Liverpool was playing in Europe".

He remembered two Manchester United players that led him to change his allegiance, Brian Robson and Paul McGrath. In particular McGrath, who Mr Bennett described as “this black guy who was playing for Ireland and played for Manchester United,” had left an enduring impression on him. Around this time, he said, “I probably was a supporter or an admirer of both clubs, but I think Man U stuck over the years ... Man U, I think, really maintained a standard, you know, through the years”. Alongside the two players that had caught his eye, he also thought that “Man U had a particular passion for football” and “were a very competitive team and there was a lot of pride there”. He also supported Barcelona in Spain, but that had begun far more recently “since Ronaldinho went there” in 2003.

Many fans supported a side in Spain and in Italy as well as an EPL team. Freddy followed Real Madrid in Spain, and AC Milan in Italy. Terry did not follow an Italian side, but supported Barcelona in Spain. As Terry’s two sides, Chelsea and Barcelona, met in an important match during my time in the field, I asked him which he had supported in the encounter:

“TD: Oh yeah, that was kinda confusing anna true? [we laugh] Yeah, but mi a, mi did gi Barcelona di edge, I mean intelligently you know that Barcelona would win, or should win but, you know, unfortunately they didn’t.” (Interview 11/12/12)

Terry’s response highlighted the ‘confusion’ among his affiliations to different clubs. His choice was motivated by reflecting “intelligently” on the encounter, and deciding to side with the team that “should win.” While Cavin and Doc evinced a ‘hot’ relationship to Manchester United, Terry showed a ‘cool’ detachment when he decided between Chelsea and Barcelona. Importantly, he

said that they were both “[his] two sides, so it don’t really matter” because whatever happened he could claim ‘bragging rights’.

‘It’s hard to develop a fascination with a club you’re not seeing’

According to research participants, the most important factor in understanding EPL support in Jamaica was increased access to football through television and the internet, which allowed supporters to watch matches as they happened, in ‘real time’ as opposed to seeing a replay of the match or its highlights. However, the older men related how previous generations had come to support their teams through comparable media, such as newspapers and radios. Mr Bennett spoke of the “origins of people’s support,” by which he meant how people came to choose one team over another. He presented football support as a cohort effect that occurred through changes in the ‘big sides.’

“MB: So, so I think, for the most part, the origins of people’s support can really be traced, y’no wha I mean? Sometimes when you’re sort of coming into a consciousness of football, right? Especially watching it on TV now and so, the dominant team at the time is probably going to become your team, because remember there was a time in the early, with Bergkamp and Henri, when Arsenal was really fairly dominant, so whoever was coming in, you know, into the consciousness at that time, it’s very likely that a lot of them would end up admiring Arsenal, and that is what I am saying now, if Manchester City were to become, like, dominant or in the top four for a few years, which I doubt, you’ll find that you’ll develop Man City fans, as the years go by, you’ll find that, you’ll find that the, you know, can find a Man City fan in Jamaica. I’m sure they have a few that they’ve gained in the past couple of years

WT: Yeah, I saw one kid wearing a Man City, uhm, shirt, think he was the first one and

the last one

MB: Well, I think he got it for free [I laugh] but anyway, uhm, so that's really what happened, you know you come into sort of a consciousness of football and whoever the dominant team is or whoever you admire at that time, it doesn't have to be you know, but in general, you know, that is where your support, uhm, comes from. I mean look at Barcelona

WT: Yeah, when did you start supporting them? More recently?

MB: Yeah, of course. Since Ronaldinho went there

WT: Oh, so not so

MB: I mean, even in the Cruyff days, you see what the thing is, you didn't get it on TV, so, unless you read about it, it's that the coverage of the get [sic.] considering what you get now are much more complete than what you used to get. You know the only time, so, you know, you wouldn't really get a lot of stuff on TV, except for once a week. It would be like a game of the week, so you'd see one English league game, right, so generally you saw Man U or Liverpool because they were like. I remember in those times you used to see a bit of Nottingham Forrest, remember those days when they were and then, even now back at the time wasn't doing badly, right? But, apart from the World Cup, you didn't see the other side of English football. The 1974 World Cup was the first World Cup televised in Jamaica you know, like live. Right, so from that time, so you had an appreciation for International teams, for example i Dutch, but you wouldn't have seen an Ajax. I mean maybe you read about Cruyff and you'd become an admirer [...] You only saw the World Cups. So a Barcelona, even a Real Madrid you wouldn't have seen, they are things you'd read about probably in books that kinda thing, but it's hard to sort a, develop a fascination with a club that you're not seeing. So really, really Barcelona now when they started showing, in Ronaldinho's time, when I used to come home on Saturday afternoons, there was a Spanish channel and they would show a lot of Barcelona games in Spanish, I used to be, I used to be, come home on Saturday afternoon, just to see Ronaldinho and Messi. Messi was just coming into his own, I used to watch the interchange, it was a joy to watch, so so, you know? And that is when I became a real Barcelona admirer, and that is really, and you might find quite a few people at that fairly recent, you know, fairly recent, and now you're seeing a lot of

Mr Bennett made quite clear that there was a direct correlation between the coverage of football in Jamaica, developments in the football industry and its marketing, and support for certain teams. If a team enjoyed success in the English Premier league and/or in major international tournaments then they received greater media attention and, concomitantly, more support. Most of the older players supported Manchester United, while the younger players were more likely to support Arsenal or Chelsea, and very young supporters were likely beginning to follow Manchester City.

Other football fans also recognised the importance of the media in generating support for particular EPL teams. Freddy focussed on the arrival of “cable,” a television service that gave a wider range of channels, as having the greatest impact on Premier League viewers:

“F: yuh see before 98, cable never really deh a Black River, pon Sundays dem use i have sum’n pon, a wha dem names, TVJ [Television Jamaica] dem time deh, or JB [Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation],⁵ whichever station. Den pon Sunday evenin wi used to get all one match, an dem would be fi different different sides, so wi never really watch, like siddung an watch a one team, or watch all a di English league” (interview 30/11/12)⁶

Terry suggested that the arrival of cable television in the late 1990s had a dramatic effect on support for the EPL in Jamaica, but he explained that his support had begun at a younger age because his family had a ‘dish’ which could

⁵ Both TVJ and JB[C] are domestic Jamaican television channels

⁶ “you see before 98, cable was never really in Black River, on Sunday they used to have something on, what are their names, TVJ at those times, or JB, whichever station. Then on Sunday evening we used to get only one match, and they would be different sides, so we never really watched, like sat down and watched one team, or watch all of the English league”

receive international television channels from America. While access to football reports was not new, the introduction of cable had been an important development in the way that his cohort identified with their team.

While cable television had a significant impact on football support in Jamaica, it was not the only medium through which fans engaged with their clubs. Increasingly, Jamaicans watched matches streamed live illegally on the internet, bypassing the prohibitively expensive costs of cable television. Also, mobile phones were used as both symbols of support through the individualization of the handset with football club insignia, and as mediums for discussion of matches, players, and rivalries (Horst and Miller 2006 give a more detailed analysis of the mobile phone in Jamaica). Key points in matches could be shared, discussed, or analysed by phone, and men could also brag about victories and/or tease others about losses. During football breakfasts, phones would be continuously vibrating with messages from others watching elsewhere. They used public facebook messages to ‘call out’ other teams and to brag about their own team’s success. They also used private facebook, ‘BBM’ (BlackBerry Messenger) and WhatsApp⁷ messages to target particular individuals for teasing. Much like the banter surrounding their own football matches, the men sent ‘threats’ to each other about upcoming EPL matches, and claimed ‘bragging rights’ for their team’s victories. Global images of EPL football were therefore consumed and interpreted within particular social networks in Black River.

⁷ Using Facebook, BBM, and WhatsApp messaging bypassed the cost of a text message

Conclusions

In this chapter I have followed football outwards from Black River to connect the men to groups of supporters throughout the world. Their support practices were familiar to me from my experiences in London, but also seem to be familiar to commentators elsewhere (Vokes 2004). However, this familiarity is illusory as it has the potential to disguise how football matches are consumed in contextually specific ways. The role of bragging, preferences for different football skills, and the shared bodily responses to the matches further highlighted how televised matches moved within groups of spectators in Black River.

Migration contributes to the reproduction of class through the greater access to mobility permitted to the children of middle-class families. Focussing on how football is consumed emphasises these differences, as the younger men use the EPL as a time to draw their peer-group together, while the older men use the matches to maintain links with communities of Jamaican migrants overseas. Furthermore, focussing on the different teams supported by men across time reveals the relationship between generation and support. This changing support indicates local responses to global market movements; it is at once globalising through drawing communities into wider markets, but localising insofar as these products are always consumed in particular, locally-specific ways.

Through following support for the EPL, I have demonstrated how

international mediascapes operate within a particular context. Experiences of migration and the Premier League watching further emphasise the role of transnational networks in everyday Jamaican life. I have also suggested how mobilities and global products are both constituted by, as well as constitutive of, aspects of class and generation.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

During my final week in Black River I arranged a leaving party to say goodbye to those with whom I had lived, worked, and spent time. I arranged to bring drinks to Ashton and have some following the football match. Next, I planned to travel with the group of footballers to Waterloo, where we would join others who did not play football. I hoped that the party would be an opportunity to let the group know how grateful I was for all that they had done for me and for allowing me to participate in their lives for a year, and to spend some time together. I borrowed a cooler box from Mrs Bennett, filled it with beers, spirits, and soft drinks, and poured ice over the drinks. Surprised by how heavy the cooler box was once it was filled, Mr Bennett and I lifted it onto the back of his van and drove to the field. After dropping me and the cooler box at Ashton, he left as he had a meeting that evening and could not play.

The match had a lazy, enjoyable feel as we relaxed and took pleasure from the game. The sides were quite small, five-a-side, and it felt as though none of the players wanted to be overly competitive. In moments snatched during the match I tried to take in the sounds, smells, and sensations of the field and the play. Although it was dusk and the sun had gone down, it was pleasantly warm and I noticed that my body had become relatively comfortable playing in the humid environment. I thought back to my first few matches, over a year before, when I had found the heat unbearable and the football at once exciting and nerve-wracking. By contrast, in the final match, I could easily slip into the relaxed tempo of the game. I received passes and controlled them before passing them on. I found myself calmly completing the basic skills although there remained much to be desired of my football abilities. My body, as much as my

fieldwork diaries, was the product of a year's immersion in the football pitch (and in the drinking at Waterloo).

The remaining light slowly dwindled, and the players called out 'game done' as it had become too dark to see the ball. We left the field and I began to hand out drinks. All the older players excused themselves and said that they would see me at Waterloo. Cavin and Doc remained with us and bottles of beer were passed around while I poured vodka for those who preferred. Peter said that he did not feel like drinking, and took a bottle of 'Malta,' a malt-flavoured soft drink. Doc suggested that the group should take it in turns to 'speak a few words.' Doc repeated that I should stay in touch, and hoped that I would 'not forget' the time that I had spent with them. After the speeches, we stood around talking about football before driving to New Town. We continued to empty the cooler box in Terry's 'yaad' and, after saying farewell, they asked me to leave the rest of the bottle of vodka. Doc dropped me back at the Bennetts' house and left to return to New Town.

After showering and changing, I went to Waterloo to meet the older group of men. I had invited other people who I had met during the year, and we had some drinks and a cake that Mrs Bennett bought. With this party atmosphere, somebody began to sing 'Happy Birthday' and the others joined in, even though my birthday was in August and it was then December. Although I had invited them, none of the younger football players came to the bar. The evening continued to a party at one of the nightclubs in town.

In spite of my attempt to bring the groups of older and younger players together for a party, they avoided each other; the older players left the field

before the drinks, and the younger ones did not come to Waterloo, corroborating the main themes of this thesis. It shows the entrenched boundaries of age and class, and how these are expressed in practice. It also emphasises that the football field was one of a limited number of places where these groups communicated and interacted with one another. Although they did not socialise together and maintained a distance between them that was reinforced through their occasional relationships as employer and employee, both groups were keen to play football with the other.

The histories of Black River and football

As I showed in Chapter Two, bodies, space, and bodies-in-space have been foundational to ideas of freedom in Black River since slavery. Through the literary device of a 'walking tour' I gave some historical context to the contemporary town and indicated how Black River's history had been 'silenced,' through neglect rather than design, as it was not one of the largest ports for the sugar trade. There was a lucrative period for some wealthy shipping merchants and landowners in Black River at the end of the nineteenth-century that is often referred to as a 'boom' in the town. The rise in the demand for logwood combined with the geography of the town as a natural harbour and at the mouth of Jamaica's longest navigable river combined to bring prosperity to those who were permitted to access it. For both slave plantation owners and the later logwood merchants, the ability to move within and outside of Jamaica symbolised their economic and social status.

By contrast, the historical record is comparatively silent on the enslaved and emancipated slave populations. However, the town's significance in the Baptist War in 1831 and its role in other times of rebellion highlighted the dynamic modes of resistance employed by enslaved and colonised peoples. In particular, following the work of Sheller (2012) who argued that "freedom is exercised and enacted as a complex set of embodied relations in diverse contexts of activation," (ibid.:17) I showed how the invasion of spaces that were deemed inaccessible to enslaved peoples emphasised how the body could operate as both a method of resistance and a symbol of freedom. As indicated by an anonymous Rastafarian on a bicycle who rejected apologies for a slave massacre, and by higglers who took advantage of the tourist gaze to assert their own agency, Black River remains a site for resistance. These modes of resistance highlighted the importance of the body and bodily proximity in the enactment of freedom.

Football has been viewed by many in Black River as a path towards greater social and economic freedom. For the colonial authorities, football was seen as a vehicle through which to maintain 'power' and 'character' among 'English' boys. Later, the sport spread throughout the rest of Jamaican society, and schoolboy football emerged as the most popular domestic league. The exploits of schoolboy teams were invested with particular connotations of class, and I showed the specific distinctions among Black River residents. Many on the older team with whom I played football had attended 'prestigious' schools, and Munro in particular. The younger players had attended Black River High, a less 'prestigious' school. Focussing on the experiences of research participants with schoolboy teams, I argued that football was partly responsible for poor formal educational attainment as those who went to less prestigious schools were

encouraged to 'skip class' and focus on their football training instead. While there were few opportunities for social mobility available to those born into poor families in Black River, football appeared to offer an avenue towards social mobility through 'playing fi a scholarship'. Yet for many it limited their future opportunities, as they were encouraged to sacrifice their educational qualifications.

The football 'habitus'

Next, I looked at the construction of a football 'habitus.' In particular, I was interested in understanding how a player builds up a bodily knowledge of a field and the other participants on it. Approaching the matches as a novice, and lacking the experience with other players and other matches in Jamaica, I was sensitive to the changes that I was forced to undergo in order to integrate into the games. While skills were important, it was also fundamental to recognise that the rules of football are different on each field and in each game. Even the formal rules, what might be termed the fundamental rules, were moulded to fit the context. After studying how the field was structured by relationships of age and education, I went on to show how the players' individual skills and football tastes were related to their class, wealth, and educational experiences. Indeed, the games at Ashton emerged as expressions of a heightened etiquette in comparison to other matches on other fields.

In Chapter Four I turned to look at amateur football matches and focussed on the embodiment and enactment of rules on the field. Using Wacquant's description of sparring (2004a: 80), I demonstrated how football relies on cooperation between competitors as players were required to limit

their levels of aggression. The acceptable level of 'hard'-ness was not fixed but was constantly being negotiated between different players. Significantly, whether a tackle was a 'foul' or not was dependent both on the opinion of the man being tackled, and on how he was perceived by other players. For example, one man who tackled very aggressively but then 'called for soft fouls' was upbraided and shouted at by others. Alongside the proscription of play deemed to be too 'hard,' there was a simultaneous emphasis placed on not playing too 'softly' as that would undermine the competitiveness of the matches. I established how 'hardness' and 'softness' were related to masculine notions of ageing over the life course, as boys were supposed to 'harden' as they became men, and then 'soften' once more as they grew old. The agreed level of aggression at Ashton meant that some had to significantly modify their playing style to accommodate others on the field. In particular Peter, who was known for his 'hard' style of play, had to operate self-constraint. The limits of acceptable play had the concomitant effect of privileging certain types of play that relied on neat footwork and skilful movement with the ball, over others who were effective due to their tackling prowess.

Adopting Elias's (2000 [1939]) notion of etiquette, I argued that the comportment of those at Ashton located them within geographies of other football games around Black River. The prohibition of 'hard' tackles was linked with notions of age and employment. Drawing an implicit contrast with other men at other fields, they described themselves as 'working guys' who could not 'afford' to get injured. At the same time, they were keen to prevent the matches from becoming non-competitive and, again adopting the language of labour, described such games as 'retirement ball.' The football field therefore became an

apprenticeship in etiquette for the players as they learned the acceptable levels of cooperation and competition and, importantly, were encouraged to embody these codes of conduct. Such a conclusion was corroborated through the use of the language of social maturity when discussing the actions of different players, as they described those who had breached the rules of etiquette as ‘liddle boys,’ while those who enacted them were described as ‘big men.’

After looking at the rules of the amateur field, in Chapter Five I focussed on the acquisition and appreciation of football skills and styles. Reflecting on the learning up of my (still basic) skills, I went on to discuss how other players had built up their ‘touch’ and their own skill-sets. I showed how the football field offers a re-imagining of the concept of space, following the work of Massey (2005). A focus on the ‘touch’ and the ‘pass,’ and the ‘salad’ revealed how the styles of each player was partly a product of their age and their educational background, as those on the older team favoured the passing game, in which the ball does ‘all of the talking,’ while the younger team played ‘their game,’ a more individualistic style.

I have found it helpful to take up Wacquant’s (2004a, 2014) use of the concept of the habitus for understanding the corporeal logic of the football field. While he studies the “pugilistic habitus” of boxers (2004a:98), I argue that the concept is also useful in constructing a ‘football habitus.’ While Bourdieu’s version of the habitus was criticised for being applied as a “one size fits all” model (Crossley 2005:15), Crossley’s introduction of “reflexive body techniques” (2004:37) recognised the diversity of different habitus-es within a given field. Focussing on the differences between broad styles and specific skills highlighted both the underlying structures through which these were established (and

particularly at school) and the room for personal expression and response to changing contexts. I suggested that football should be viewed in terms of rhythmic inflection, the “twist, the flick, the spin” (Henriques 2014:80) in order to highlight both the rule-bound and ordered structures of play as well as the possibility for creativity.

The habitus therefore emerges as methodologically useful in ethnographic research as it highlights the importance of recognising how rules and skills are embodied in different ways depending on the background of the individual. The thesis is situated within work related to Wacquant’s methodological interpretation of the habitus (2004a). The habitus can also be analytically useful for focussing attention on the importance of context to understanding sports and their relationship with wider contexts. However, in order to maintain the usefulness of the habitus it is important to resist the urge to speak of an undifferentiated habitus embodied by all of the individuals in a given field (Crossley 2005). While it is possible to identify a football habitus, that does not imply that each person’s football habitus has been embodied or will emerge in the same way. Thinking of football skills is instructive, as it demonstrates that players appreciate and embody the same skill in divergent ways.

Social Inequalities in Jamaica

As well as discussing the habitus and the role of the body, this thesis also contributes to the study of social inequalities in the Caribbean and to

discussions concerning the constitution of class. Previously, analysts such as Henriques (1968), Lowenthal (1972), M.G.Smith (1965), and R.T.Smith (1988) understood Jamaican society as being separated by colour-classes. Each of these authors argued that Caribbean societies were stratified by race, with those of African descent and Indian indentured labourers constituting the lowest class, and those of European descent the highest. Often the middle class comprised of those with mixed African, Indian, and European heritage, as C.L.R.James indicated (2005 [1963]).

By contrast, in Black River, class was expressed in terms of education rather than race and colour. Throughout my fieldwork I was told that Jamaica had undergone a change in the 50 years since Independence and in the contemporary period there was not as much evidence of discrimination on the basis of colour. However, many people consistently reminded me that Black River might not be representative of the rest of Jamaica due to its history of poor white and white indentured labour communities. It also lacked the gated communities such as those I saw in the major cities. Nevertheless, the conclusion that education emerged as both a justification and an explanation for class hierarchy corroborates the work of Austin (1983) in Kingston. In Chapters Six and Seven I focussed on how class and age hierarchies emerged away from the field and how entrenched such distinctions were in the everyday lives of both the younger and the older football players. Also, in these chapters I followed the matches away from the field and situated football within the men's wider lives.

In Chapter Six I concentrated on the lives of the younger group of players. The majority of the young men aspired to migrate to the US in order to

improve their social and economic situation. Although there was no single conception of 'progress,' they felt that they would better achieve it overseas. The men engaged in fantasies of migration and future success and for them, as for young men in Tanzania (Weis 2002), demonstrated the opportunities available elsewhere that were not available to them in Black River. Many were in precarious employment and were either at risk of losing their jobs as the recession caused cut-backs in Jamaica, or else were reliant on a diminishing number of opportunities to seasonally migrate to the US for work.

They placed a great emphasis on the "bragging rights" gained through football and traded stories of their sporting exploits at school and in the teams they had played for afterwards. They boasted of how they had given one of the others a salad or had outplayed them and also exchanged threats and challenges for future matches. The men could also improve their status through talking in similar ways, and with a similar language, of sexual relationships with women. They talked of 'killing' a player on the field by tricking their way past them as well as 'killing' a woman by manoeuvring their way through a relationship. Importantly, in both cases there was a risk that the intended victim of the 'kill' could be skilled themselves, and might be able to 'cut off' the trick or the relationship. Becoming 'caught in a headlock' could be an unintended consequence of attempting to 'kill' a woman. The would-be killer would suffer a diminution of social status in failed efforts, and could become the object of derision.

In contrast to the younger men who socialised on the street outside their houses, older players met in one particular bar in Black River. Waterloo has a colonial past, built and owned by logwood traders. It became associated with the

'higher class' people in the town who would also be negatively referred to as 'society people.' The group of men maintained a particular etiquette which excluded disorderly forms of behaviour, such as 'cussing bad words,' and conversations revolved around domestic and international politics, business, and contemporary issues. Many of the drinkers had attended school together at a prestigious high school, and some had been in the same year group. All of them had experience of training and working overseas although not as seasonal workers, as with the younger players, but in professions such as medicine, dentistry, and accounting. They had either augmented or completed their training in the United States, or had spent time working there.

For those who drank at Waterloo, the 'rounds' system of buying drinks was important for defining their group and, concomitantly, those who were outside it. Through the stories that they told of their experiences of migration and in Jamaica, Waterloo and the group of drinkers emerged as a space where they could share experiences of racism overseas and their fears of becoming targets for crime in Black River. While in the US they could draw on the popular associations of Jamaica with high levels of crime and organised crime in order to deter would-be attackers, in Black River their class and wealth made them conspicuous. On the other hand, in the US they experienced racist abuse and prejudice whereas in the Caribbean their race was embedded within other considerations. Alongside these insecurities, the older men also displayed anxieties over the loss of sexual ability and 'strength,' which they aimed to vitiate through the consumption of aphrodisiacal meals, of which I gave one example. Amateur football matches offered one way for the older, wealthier men to maintain ties with those who were younger and not as wealthy and, the older

men argued, to mitigate some of the negative effects of living in a society that was split economically and of social lives that took place around the bar.

The socialising of the younger and the older men highlighted issues of migration which I pursued in Chapter Eight. I focussed on a 'football breakfast' when the older and younger players met at Waterloo bar to watch an international football match, and one which doubled as a leaving party for two of the younger men who were temporarily leaving for the US. Both of the men were travelling on 'H2B' work permits which were for temporary, non-agricultural workers. Many others around town had also travelled on similar visas and subsequently had applications rejected. These experiences contributed to the employment insecurities that I explored in Chapter Six. By contrast, the older men had migrated overseas to complete training and professional qualifications. Such different trajectories underscored the importance of mobility in the production of class.

All of the men followed the English Premier League (EPL), and some also followed other teams in the Italian and Spanish Leagues. Their support was both a product of their generation and of changes in the media. They were likely to support the teams that were 'big' when they first became aware of football as these teams received greater media coverage. As I demonstrated through a description of a 'football breakfast,' the men felt strong senses of attachment to their teams. Their support also revealed further aspects to their class and age; while the younger men watched the matches together and engaged in group-making through their banter, while the older men watched the matches alone at home and used the matches as a way to remain in contact with peers who had migrated elsewhere.

Football therefore combined different flows among the set of players; the movement of migrants around the world, of people around Black River, and of bodies on the pitch. At the same time, it offered a framework for locating groups of players and spectators within a global perspective both from an anthropological viewpoint and from the point of view of the amateur players in Black River.

Disentangling Class and Generation

Throughout the thesis I have been interested in how differences of class and age emerge and are expressed among a group of men in rural Jamaica. The football field enabled me to research how class and generation co-constitute. The players came to understand their class through contrasting where where they stood in relation to others in their generation, such as when the younger men witnessed their middle-class contemporaries continue their studies and vocational training overseas. Also, class is an historical construction that changes over time; what it means to be working- and middle-class in contemporary Jamaica differ from what the terms conveyed in the past or their currency in the future, and particularly if the analysis is extended further to colonialism and plantation slavery. Both class and age are relative terms that arise subjectively through the recognition of variation. As Bourdieu says of class, “in the reality of the social world, there are no more clear-cut boundaries, no more absolute breaks, than there are in the physical world” (1987:13). Nevertheless, as I have demonstrated, they are useful categories for understanding how social and economic advantage reproduces over time.

In his work on *The Making of the English Working Class* (1971), E.P. Thompson argues that “class is a relationship, and not a thing [...] Class is defined by men as they live their own history, and, in the end, this is its only definition” (1971:11). Indeed, history plays an important role in perceiving current differences in class. Black River’s history demonstrates how job opportunities in the town have changed significantly over time, and these fluctuations are directly linked to transformations in the global economy. Plantation slavery and colonialism, and the trade of logwood in particular, established the location as a valuable port for the import and export of goods and people. Following the decline of logwood and the town, many left the area seeking employment elsewhere and farming and fishing emerged as the most important industries. Also, many became reliant on seasonal migration and remittances to support their everyday needs. Now, further changes are occurring as opportunities to travel overseas diminish due to the global financial crash and increasing visa restrictions. Each of these shifts, and those more subtle adjustments made everyday by individual residents, modifies understandings of an individual’s relation to labour and the economy.

Abstract categories such as generation and class mediate a range of different experiences. Within the group of eight men with whom I worked, Teddy’s position within taxonomies of class and generation problematised any clear distinction. Relative to the older players he was young, yet to the younger players he was older. Further, in comparison to the middle-class men he was working-class, and yet for his younger peers he resisted such categorization. Ashton offered a lens through which to view Teddy’s indeterminate position between boundaries of age and class as he managed his ‘crossing’ from the

younger to the older team. Using an apprenticeship methodology therefore enabled me to study categories such as age and class as they emerged. Furthermore, focussing on the group of football players allowed me to contextualize these boundaries within a longer history of inequalities in Jamaica and also between the country and elsewhere.

Future Work

While focussing on the football field allowed me to research how social categories emerged in practice, as it was a field of men I was unable to look at how both class and generation are also mediated by gender considerations. Stuart Hall noted that feminisms challenged analyses focussed on social boundaries, arguing that they “displaced forever any exclusive reference to class contradictions as the stable point of reference for cultural analysis” (Hall 1980: 38). It would therefore be interesting to study how class and age are also gendered.

My research also encourages further questions regarding experiences of migration and return. Olwig’s (1998, 2007) work has detailed the lives of families living overseas, and focuses on processes of “relatedness and place-making” (2007: 13). As I demonstrated in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, mobility was fundamental in the production and reproduction of class. The study of these different trajectories would help to understand these processes, and also to show how definitions of class in Jamaica travelled overseas. Furthermore, it would be interesting to study those travelling on an ‘H2B’ visa

and research how their experiences differ from those of migrants who remain overseas for longer periods.

Another approach to issues of precarity in regards to experiences of class and generation would be to contrast the experiences of those in Jamaica with those elsewhere. As Comaroff and Comaroff (2000) have demonstrated, the experience of youth is increasingly becoming associated with insecurities over the achievement of 'progress' as the opportunities available to previous generations are no longer accessible. It would be interesting to compare how different communities have responded to the vicissitudes of global markets in recreating notions of success as previous requirements for social mobility disappear.

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