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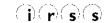**Subscriptions:** http://irs.sagepub.com/subscriptions

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What is This?

Languaculture and grassroots football: "Small goal" in Trinidad

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Abstract
This paper provides anthropological insights into "small goal football" on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and makes a contribution to the understanding of grassroots football on an international level. The content was collected via long-term, ethnographic research. Two short descriptions are offered: one on language-in-use on the small goal football field (racial/ethnic nicknames and others words) and one on conflict on the small goal football field (what are power relations like amongst these footballing men and why?). These two descriptions and their discussion help to conceive some qualities of small goal football in Trinidad as a phenomenon, "languaculture," and social institution, and explore what small goal can mean to those taking part in it in three distinct ways. 1) We learn about the uniqueness of Trinidad social-reality, and how the scars of colonial history, such as racial hierarchy and white supremacy, are remade through sport under the banner of continuity and change. 2) We learn about sport and masculinities, and how some everyday qualities of masculinities in Trinidad, such as authority, sexism, and conflict, are both reorganized and reinforced on the field of play. 3) We see sport through the eyes of local Caribbean men who engage in small goal football, providing insight into the social institution itself, and the cultural mirror this shines on what small goal means to some local men in a suburb of western Trinidad.

Keywords
anthropology, football, languaculture, picong, Trinidad

Korr and Close's (2010) work on the significance of football to political prisoners on Robben Island, South Africa, provides a useful definition for how the purposefulness of football in this paper and in general might be conceived. Football, Korr said in a lecture at the University of the West Indies in 2013, has many important characteristics, six of which he identified.[1] The six purposes identified were: 1) it includes lots of little things

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that add up to help build a community of human beings (rules, language, name, values, committees, authority, discipline, etc.); 2) it can be a useful distraction for players and onlookers, and take their mind off things; 3) It is a "safety valve" for excess energy (either as supporter or player), and this includes submerging political and social conflict; 4) it provides a window for persons to show off and be seen; 5) in terms of following both the rules of the game and the social rules of a community, football can provide a space for forms of fairness and justice, i.e. acceptance of the group's morality and a greater good than the individual; and 6) football provides human beings with an opportunity for expression and experiences of pride, anger, laughter, joy, disappointment, embarrassment, frustration, justice, and more.

Such a definition presents football as experiential and interpretivist. This makes it a prime site for anthropological research, and in particular the meanings individuals recruit in and around the sport. For any fieldwork in Trinidad there is also the post-colonial lens to consider. Writing about cricket in the Caribbean, Trinidadian CLR James described cricket as a reservoir of shared cultural knowledge across class, race, and colonialism (1963: 34). For him the colonial and early post-colonial matches between England and the West Indies were a central part of Caribbean social life. He said cricket was a sport that, on the field, allowed individuals to confront "structural violence" (Farmer, 2004; Rodney, 1981) without resorting to actual and regular physical violence. This article suggests the same might be said of some of Trinidad's small goal football spaces, and in particular how language and culture on the small goal field both reinforce and destabilize colonial legacies.

Small goal football is a locally adapted, culturally distinct manifestation of football (Bale and Cronin, 2003: 4). "Small goal," or "sweat" as it is known locally, can be best translated to a non-Caribbean audience as a variation of "pick-up football" (or "soccer" as some North Americans prefer). In small goal football the goals are no more than 3ft by 5ft, and the teams of 3 to 8 people per side. A definitive and distinct history of sweat in Trinidad, how it came to be adapted, by whom, and where, has not yet been written. Roy McCree (1995) has researched the "Professionalism and the development of club football in Trinidad;" however, the focus was not on small goal but instead charted the emergence of club football locally first via the British in the latter part of the 19th century, then the Roman Catholic Church in the 1930s and 1940s, and, most recently, by the Trinidad and Tobago Football Association since the mid-1960s (1995: 72).

The sweat described in this article has been renamed "Anfield" to provide anonymity for its participants and as a hat tip to my own favorite team. From what I learned, Anfield began in 1987, with some members suggesting 1989. Both versions of the story include a group of young, male, multi-hued, adults who got together in a middle-class suburb west of the capital, Port of Spain, to do two things after work: play football and laugh (or take part in "picong" as it was phrased to me originally).[2] Over time, this social gathering, or "lime,"[3] attracted others from the suburb and beyond, including those of various employments (as well as persons not working), classes, ethnicities, races, and sporting abilities—until a weekly routine and a form was established.

Background

As an island, Trinidad's population of 1.26 million people can be described as remarkably cosmopolitan and culturally mixed (the nation, Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), is 1.33

million people). The last census in 2011 divided the islands demographically into the ethnic groups: East Indian, African, Mixed (African and East Indian), Mixed (Other), Caucasian, Chinese, Indigenous, Portuguese, Syrian/Lebanese, Other Ethnic Group, and Not Stated (East Indian ancestry 35.4% and African Ancestry 34.2% are by far the largest responses).

The socio-cultural history of the island has produced many spaces where members of these various groups and their cultures can and do mix (Stoddard and Cornwell, 2001: 36–38). At the same time, the old ideas of pluralism made famous by Furnivall (1948) and MG Smith (1965) also continue to exist in some parts of Trinidad (Munasinghie, 2001). The Government of T&T uses the phrase "diversity and integration" when describing their multicultural islands and has recently set up a Ministry with that title, even if it might be suggested that the two terms are not comfortable together. The two terms used by the Ministry of Diversity and Integration do, however, suggest Trinidad as a place where ethnically distinct persons can integrate, while at the same maintaining diverse cultures, notions of purity, and difference (Crowley, 1957: 817–824; Khan, 1993: 182; Munasinghie, 2001).

Many of the spaces of integration like Anfield are bottom-up sites of culture—and by this is meant such sites did not emerge through top-down legislation and direction, but rather emerged from the people, their various cultures, and their development on the island; and only latterly, in some cases, sought or were granted forms of assistance from the state. These sites of integration in difference include the annual Carnival, other festivals like Hosay, Christmas, and Diwali, music, language (Winer, 2009), humor (Carlin, 2005), foods, and sports (James, 1963). For example, small goal football games are regular social events with an established routine and social history unique to each field of play where people of diverse ethnic, racial, and economic identities and varying sporting abilities communicate, share, disagree, compete, and bond. At Anfield, a game will include a "lime," with its attendant "ole talk," "picong," and laughter, and have the same people playing or watching regularly with only small additions over time to those who play and watch. As such, in this paper evidence is provided to suggest that the games can be described as functioning socio-cultural institutions, "languacultures"[4] (Agar, 1994: 60; Risager, 2005: 2), and "communities of practice" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992),

This bottom-up reading is not meant to suggest small goal football, and the social behaviors around and enmeshed in it, are socially autonomous and organic, somehow apart from top-down structures and pressures. Rather, it is to observe that other readings of the socio-cultural institution are possible and they need not always foreground how the sport was adapted from top-down pressures or influences. It is also to acknowledge and describe through anthropological storytelling and the experience of participants how some scars of colonial history, such as racial hierarchy and white supremacy, can be remade through sport under a banner of continuity and change, and how some everyday qualities of masculinities in Trinidad are both reorganized and reinforced on the field of play.

Understood as a socio-cultural institution, such cultural spaces as small goal football can and do unite people across the island's historically patterned ethnic, racial, religious, and class differences—with all the social and economic baggage they bring—and provide cross-cultural socialization to participants. For example, on Anfield it is common to

find old-timers alongside more recent members. Some may have played regularly for a year or two, some regularly for 25 years or more. This suggests that some players and "limers" are brought up and educated in a general socio-cultural context—one of difference—that governs behavior, and in ways outsiders might not immediately understand (Risager, 2005: 190).

In more national and political terms, a cultural idea of a living or organic multiculturalism, an unlegislated political sentiment of "recognition" (Honneth and Fraser, 2004), what Wise and Velayutham (2009: 7–15) call "Everyday Multiculturalism," is enshrined in the national anthem of "Every creed and race finds an equal place," and on the national coat of arms "Together We Aspire, Together We Achieve." Such symbols and language do not erase the intercultural tensions that exist, but they suggest local forms of multicultural sentiment are possible to find and describe outside of legislation.

Yet, life in T&T is, of course, not always so simple. As much literature demonstrates, not every class and race has equal political, economic, and social power, or access to it (Best and Polanyi-Levitt, 2009; Fanon, 1967; Kamugisha, 2007). The reasons for this are historical. Power in the local society is related to the historical realities of transplanted populations and the racial and ethnic hierarchy of colonialism these diverse populations encountered on arrival in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Many researchers in the Global South call this the "coloniality of power" (Escobar, 2004; Kamugisha, 2007). Trinidad's various groups, the individuals they produced, and its many communities of practice developed out of such structural relations (Beckford, 1999; Craig, 1981; Sudama, 1980).

Methodology

The data for this paper were collected via long-term, ethnographic research at one particular field site in Trinidad, "Anfield." The fieldwork has been ongoing since 2005 (Kerrigan, 2012). This field was one of three central sites for my dissertation research into the relations between colonialism, post-colonialism, and neo-colonialism in Trinidad (Kerrigan, 2010).

In the main, the research is based on participant observation, interviews, and my fieldwork diary. It provides phenomenological information of the socio-cultural institution itself, some of its members, and insights into the languaculture (Agar, 1994) found there. The participant observation for this particular article took place between 2005 and 2010. Daily visits to Anfield took place over two separate three-month visits in 2005 and 2006. This was followed by almost daily attendance over a year from Aug 2007 to Aug 2008. Two further three-month visits to Trinidad and Anfield took place in 2009 and 2010.

It is customary to include a paragraph or two on researcher reflexivity not simply as ethnographic custom, but because I am a part of the processes, macro and micro, historical and social, I am writing about. I am both Trinidadian and British. I have both passports. I grew up in London for my first 22 years, and over the last 17 years have lived in Trinidad for 12. During my youth I visited Trinidad nearly every summer. My "race" and ethnicity is mixed, white-European father and brown-Caribbean mother. My life experience and bi-culturalness influence my approach to my fieldwork and, I would suggest, enhanced my access and social acceptance.

My long period of immersion in the field and my personal connections to Trinidad provided me with an insider's view on the group. My learned ability to "code switch," knowledge of the socio-cultural conventions of the group, and regular invitations into the members' lives outside the football space are evidence of a significant level of immersion achieved with the football space and its participants. To enhance the reliability and trustworthiness of the data collected, "member checks" of my observations, field notes, and coding for themes were presented to members of the football field to elicit their responses and eliminate misrepresentations or badly conceived interpretations. The triangulation of nearly 10 year's participant observation at Anfield, the collection of thick descriptions, and member checks in this paper is also meant to improve the trustworthiness and validity of the project.

In methodological terms, Denzin (2008) articulates a consideration worth highlighting for this project.

> In the social sciences today there is no longer a God's eye view which guarantees absolute methodological certainty. All inquiry reflects the standpoint of the inquirer. All observation is theory-laden. There is no possibility of theory - or value-free knowledge. The days of naive realism and naive positivism are over. In their place stand critical and historical realism, and various versions of relativism. The criteria for evaluating research are now relative (2008: 153).

In anthropology it is hard to argue against Denzin's observations for they are confirmed repeatedly within the discipline itself. Yet, from a post-colonial (Bhambra, 2007; Henry, 2010: 56; Magubane, 2013) and "Southern" context (Connell, 2010; Reddock, 2014), such relativism might be at best a secondary consideration because, outside of cricket, the actual documentation and description of "hybrid sportoids" and "sports initially introduced during colonisation but that have (been said to have) adopted regional styles of their own" (Bale and Cronin, 2003: 4) could hardly be said to be comprehensive in the Caribbean. In the field of football in the Caribbean, for example, little has been recorded academically (McCree, 1995). Compared with academic literature on sports found in the Global North, there are vast differences in evidence and the number of voices exploring Caribbean experience and action.

Participant observation at Anfield was achieved through a central informant named Richard, whom I have known since I was six years old. My first introduction to Anfield was through him in 2000. Over regular visits to Trinidad for later PhD dissertation research, I came to be accepted and verbally labeled as a "regular" there. While no membership fee is required to take part in football games at Anfield—different people at different times provide the footballs, while local residents pay for the cutting of the grass—it is not always as simple as walking up and asking for a game. It seemed time, or "dues" (regular attendance), both as a footballer and a limer, must be paid before one is invited to play regularly. If time is not invested, "regular" members use it as leverage during a game to sometimes replace newer members of the field. If an argument ensues, this action of a regular member sanctioning a less regular member is most often supported and reinforced by the bench watching the game and the other players on the field. It also indicates a substantive difference between those considered regulars and those not.

Most simply, "regulars" are those who pay their social dues of liming and participating in the football, either playing in a game or "throwing picong" (teasing) from the sidelines at those playing.

On the other hand, the opportunity to play and stay on the field over others can be speeded up or allowed in three particular ways: 1) Introduction, i.e. which regular member "brought yuh en," or introduced you to the group. The more senior or established the regular who introduces you, the sooner you are included; 2) Ability—good players, those that compete effectively at football, could be "fast-tracked" into a game; 3) Being male. Females were rarely asked to play, and when they asked they ran a gauntlet between some men who respected them and others who were blatantly sexist.

Gaining access to the inside of this sporting institution aided the production of phenomenological data about small goal football. Through the subjective experiences and lives of those taking part, as well as analyzing language-in-use, it is possible to suggest an "emic" perspective on the socio-cultural institution itself. As an anthropologist employed as a sociologist where I am located in the Caribbean, the addition of an emic perspective to my research is included to gain specific insights about Anfield from the insider's perspective, in order to tell outsiders what matters to these insiders. For example, how do members of Anfield see race on the football field? What is the meaning to them of their various social actions? And how do these participants view the social situation of the field and sweating itself? Understanding languaculture is one way to answer such questions and can provide micro insights which are important for a variety of reasons, including: 1) documenting concepts and experiences in terms of an actor's self-understanding; 2) asking how social differences play out to actual human agents; and 3) providing a bottom-up view of the social institution itself that allows the reader to see how the social and economic history of the island manifests on, and patterns, this particular field of play in western Trinidad.

Furthermore, in an ontological sense, in the international field of the sociology of sport, where some voices are louder than others, and carry more weight due to institutional power and prolific culture industries, the emic perspective of Caribbean persons is needed more than ever (Henry, 2010: 156). Not least because the emic is an important means of learning about the key differences of unfamiliar groups to one's own (Agar, 1994; Risager, 2005).

Rich points and languaculture

According to anthropologist Michael Agar (1994), "rich points" are cultural moments, or, in some cases, particular words and phrases, that tap deeply into the cultural context and psyche of a group of people. In particular, rich points are often moments where the insiders and outsiders of cultures meet and intercultural misunderstanding occurs. Rich points can be used as indicators of "languaculture." For example, when a Caribbean-American uses the word "bacchanal" in the US, and an African-American does not really understand the term as the speaker intended it, it is because many African-Americans lack the languaculture(s) and context of Carnival in T&T to appreciate and understand how the term bacchanal has developed locally with specific focal associations (Winer, 2009: 33–34).

The same point might be made about small goal football in Trinidad and other variants of football elsewhere in the world. Those lacking the required local experience and languaculture of "sweating" in Trinidad can misunderstand the local rules and quirks of small goal football in Trinidad. For example, a non-Trinidadian might be surprised at how loud and excited celebrations are when a player does a football trick on Anfield versus when they score a goal. Another example of a rich point might be the word "sex" when it is used on the Anfield small goal field. For an outsider, using the word "sex" to describe putting the ball through someone else's legs might make little sense. For players on Anfield it is perfectly normal and something one hears all the time.

Both these basic examples are evidence of different cultures meeting, cultures that, for the most part, are invisible and taken for granted. It is mostly when a rich point occurs that the intercultural misunderstanding becomes apparent. This is why rich points are described in anthropology as carrying a "heavy cultural load" (Agar, 1994: 227). They can be described as the moment where the cultural outsider does not have enough insider knowledge to explain or understand the term, action, or expression that is happening in front of them. It is the idea that language is not simply about syntax, spelling, and vocab; that language should be conceptualized as an integrated part of society, culture, and the psyche, and is always cultural in some respects (Risager, 2005: 185). Speaking other languages is about background knowledge, cultural translation, and local context. In order to translate cultures you have to spend time becoming an insider of them. Rich points do not only exist on a macro level between national cultures, they also appear on the micro level within national culture. For example, do all T&T nationals possess the languaculture to understand why footballers use the term "sex" for a skill on Anfield? Many men I asked did, but other men and women did not. We might describe those who do not understand the term as lacking elements of the requisite languaculture.

Interviews revealed that the term "sex" supposedly emerged because it involves the action of putting a football through another man's legs, which, within Anfield's small goal languaculture, represents "opening your legs." This in turn, it was suggested, symbolizes emasculating a man by making him a receiver of sex rather than a giver. For example, as mentioned, it is often the case that when one receives a "sex" on the small goal football field the audience all hoot and howl, offering expressions of surprise and ridicule about the man who received the sex such as "come off the field dey have plenty room on the side fo yuh." Meanwhile, the giver of the sex is spoken of in glowing terms much like a goal scorer is.

On another occasion, a group of limers on the sidelines were exalting the skill level of the Argentinean footballer, Lionel Messi. One said, "Messi is be bullin men, bullin man after man after man." This was delivered and received as a statement of the footballer's excellence. Yet, "bulling" in local Trinidadian Creole English means to have anal sex. In a homophobic society like Trinidad (Alexander, 1994; Wahab, 2012) this veneration goes against what the anthropologist might expect to find. Yet, within a hyper-masculine field of sport the use of the terms "sex" and "bulling" to describe a football skill does makes sense. We might suggest it contributes to ideas around the construction and maintenance of heterosexual masculinities. The phraseology might seem odd, but the context of putting one over on another man gives it meaning.

Two short descriptions

The following two descriptions can be summarized as:

1. Language-use on the small goal football field (racial/ethnic nicknames and others words).
2. Conflict on the small goal football field (what are the power relations amongst these footballing men and why?).

A short discussion follows at the end of each description. Where possible the original spelling, phonetics, and punctuation used by the speakers has been maintained.

1. *Racial and ethnic nicknames*

Its five minutes to five. I am looking out of the window for my ride to pull up. The WhatsApp group called—"Sweat, sweat, sweat"—has been pinging with messages since about 2 pm asking if "men sweating today?" The responses have been a constant barrage of affirmatives sprinkled with some fun and teasing threats. In Trinidad such commonly used humor is called "picong."

Alongside the simple comments and emoticons, such as, "Nice, we have big guns running ball today, and old guns too ☺," some of the men have also sent out provocative photos.

One from a regular Anfield footballer nicknamed "Insect" is of a pig laid on its side, clothed in shirt and shorts, with a gun in its waist and a Rolex on its leg. The accompanying text reads, "gunned down on d football field earlier. Dats how I will have Bow looking today." Bow is another regular on Anfield. He quickly replies with an image of a fly swatter, splatting what looks like an insect; the text says, "thats what I have for u my little insect."

While these comments, or rich points, might sound to an outsider as serious, they are part of the languaculture of picong at Anfield and intended to entertain the rest of the group members who quickly send texts "lol-ing" and laughing, followed up by, "what time we meeting?"

My ride to Anfield pulls up on "Trini time," closer to five-thirty than five. He honks outside. I grab my football stuff and jump in the car. The ride to the field is a short one. We mount the curb and drive onto the "field."

As we pull up, there is only one other car there, although the group on WhatsApp keeps pinging with messages saying "on way." Mani, a reptile zoo worker, middle class, and of Portuguese and Spanish descent, exits the parked car.

Richard turns to me, "Boi, Chinee is always be here first, like he doh ever want to stay home." Chinee, is upper-class, a company manager, and his parents are of Chinese descent.

Mani approaches our car and says "Mamoo what mischief you causing this afternoon?" before turning to me and shouting "English! You should stop hanging out with this fella he no good!"

After saying hi to Mani and Chinee, we all hang out by the cars. Within a few minutes the two cars have turned into about 20. As men drive onto the grass, each one is hailed by nicknames—"Chinee, redman, rastaman, brotherman, big man, Tully, Stones, Model,

Syrian, chindian, chinaman, Alladin, insect, Bow, Mukesh, and terrorist." It is fair to say no one lacks one.

On this small goal football field it appears that some of these nicknames are built on ethnic features and might be read as racist in the wider society, and certainly in countries such as the US and UK. Yet, on Anfield they appear not to be perceived as loaded or provocative.

Discussion

In both the social media space and real geographical space of Anfield, picong and its playful execution is a constant and daily feature of the group. Picong for non-Trinis might best be described as banter. Picong in Trinidad is usually a safe way to poke at perceived differences in race and ethnicity, but it also reveals specific codes within the local languaculture. Mostly, picong is used by many Trinbagonians to heckle and mock each other's differences and similarities in a friendly manner and poke fun at persons or issues in popular culture or around politics. It is also a style of collective storytelling, where different members tell different parts of the same story or recollection, all the time trying to provoke audience laughter.

The line between humor and insult in picong is fine and constantly shifting. However, the convivial spirit of picong rarely degenerates into heated debates or physical altercations. This is because the ability to engage in picong without crossing over into insult is highly valued in Trinidadian culture, and verbal wit is prized over physical strength (Ho, 2000). It is the art and logic of the local musical traditions of calypso and satirical soca too.

In simple terms it would seem that jokes, banter, and social satire connect the group socially and confer prestige. No one is exempt. Therefore, on Anfield the ability to give and take picong, invoke particular selections of style and humor, and use ethno-racial words in a form of social ribbing could be described as a symbolic construction of community or languaculture (Cohen, 1985; Critchley, 2002: 67–69; Kehily and Nayak, 1997: 73). Participation in picong can break through customary interactional boundaries and difference to put a person on the social inside of the group—sometimes fleetingly and other times fully. As Cohen notes, community is the experience of sharing patterns of action and particular symbols, although the meanings given to certain actions and symbols may vary amongst group members. Community is,

> A commonality of *form* (ways of behaving) whose content (meanings) may vary considerably among its members. The triumph of community is to so contain this variety that its inherent discordance does not subvert the apparent coherence which is expressed by its boundaries… Thus, although [members of a community] recognise important difference among themselves, they suppose themselves to be more like each other than like the members of other communities. This is precisely because, although the meaning they attach to the symbols may differ, they share the symbols (Cohen, 1985: 20–21, original emphasis).

This brief discussion of picong as a community builder may appear somewhat uncritical and presented in a matter-of-fact way; this is not meant to deny other aspects of the cultural practice such as its power to exclude or impact notions of masculinity, sexism,

and group hierarchy. For example, in the context of exclusion, while picong is normal day-to-day currency on the field, and usually passes without incident, there have been occasions where the failure to accept the ribbing or jokes has led to people removing themself from the lime. On each occasion, however, the person did return a few days or weeks later without any reference being made to the initial incident and reconnected to the group. On other occasions recorded in my fieldwork, where picong degenerated beyond humor into an actual physical confrontation, both parties were sanctioned with bans of a month from the field and they respected the ban.

The ethnic nicknames and ethnic picong found on Anfield are mostly based on the racial and ethnic stereotypes of the various cultural groups found in T&T. Picong does not remove the intercultural tensions of wider society, however. On Anfield it seems to be a mechanism where local history and culture produce a comparably distinct insider languaculture. People's nicknames on Anfield reflect this insider languaculture. The space seems to allow a level of ethno-racial name-calling that, for the most part, once you follow unspoken rules and are educated in the languaculture, is not considered offensive but could be elsewhere in the society. The potential tension is still there, but buried or dormant. In many ways the recruitment on Anfield of ethnic nicknames such as "mamoo" (the East Indian word for "uncle"), "yellow man," "dougla" (Afro/Indo mix), "Creole," "nigga," "Alladin," "chindian" (Chinese/Indo mix), "English," "terrorist," "red nigger" (light-skin black), "chinee," "rasta," "red- man" (light-skin mixed), "rasta-man," and "Syrian" can be described as resistance to the dominant and polite culture of day-to-day interaction in Trinidad by a type of linguistic subversion (Kehily and Nayak, 1997: 70). However, as Kehily and Nayak remind us in their discussion of lads and laughter in the UK (1997: 69), linguistic subversion, or "banter" and humor, can also produce aggressive masculinities and forms of exclusion.

On Anfield, we might say the reality of colonialism and its legacies, in particular the forced transplantation of many ethnic groups from distant regions, plays out in linguistic, cultural, and ontological ways that are socially different from football fields in the UK or white settler nations like the US, Australia, and Canada; and also wider day-to-day interaction in Trinidad. On Anfield, using ethno-racial nicknames to ask others to pass you the ball or to greet others on arrival seems to be part of a distinctive local style or languaculture earned through regular attendance over years.

To paraphrase Eckert and McConnell-Ginet's work on communities of practice (1992), "Language is never encountered without other symbol systems, and [in Trinidad, race and ethnicity] is always joined with real people's complex forms of participation in the communities to which they belong (or have belonged or expect to join)." Again, this is not to say that such ethno-racial name-calling can be extended off the field to all of Trinidad without consequence, or that people do not have varying amounts of cultural and social capital when it comes to using those names. Rather, it is to say this type of ethno-racial nicknaming is a distinctive feature of Anfield.

Using Korr's six-point list about the potential purposes of football, we might also say nicknames on Anfield—in addition to ethnic humor and picong—do help to some degree to build a community. It appears that the ability to do all three and not take offense and return regularly to take part in the same back and forth picong is an important part of being a man on Anfield, to the point that we might say such ethnic name-calling, humor, storytelling, and picong have been ritualized there (Kehily and Nayak, 1997: 72).

On the other side of the coin, an inability to accept such name-calling and teasing can bring into question a particular participant's membership of the group. Some naturally leave to move to other areas or countries, and some stop playing football because of age and injury. Those who self-exclude due to picong and name-calling are not something I have explicitly recorded yet. But this is not to say it does not happen; rather, it is not something I documented.

One of the few female players on Anfield did speak with me, however, and said the sexism she experienced on Anfield—in particular through picong and name-calling—was the worst she ever experienced playing small goal anywhere in Trinidad and led her to seek out women only "sweats." She also indicated how much of the picong might seem playful but the play could quickly turn to insult if members recruited sexist or homophobic slurs. In a conversation with one of the better players at Anfield I asked him about what she said. He said some of the men felt she was not good enough so gave her a hard time But that he thought "she could handle her stories on the field." Again, it is hard to discern how many males have excluded themselves from sweating on Anfield, but clearly picong plays a role in excluding and including people.

2. *Who has power amongst these footballing men and why?*

The rule is "one goal come off." It is the way order is maintained when more players turn up to sweat than the field can accommodate. The games are generally seven vs seven. When there are more than 14 players, the game is timed to 20 minutes. If no one scores, the winning team is decided by penalty, after which the other players on the side lines come on to take their turn. If someone does score within the 20 minutes, the game ends and the players on the sideline come on that way too.

This system works. Mostly. Occasionally some persons try their luck and stay on the field when they have lost, but the weight of convention and all the other members supporting the rule means that it is normally respected, and everyone claims a game eventually—although regulars sometimes try their luck. On one occasion, Jason was refusing to come off. He just stood there, immobile, blocking one of the goals. With his presence the numbers were uneven and the next game could not start. This bad behavior, which violated the group norm, provoked a barrage of expletives thrown at him. But this did not move or budge him. He continued to stand there. Like stone. Rigid. His facial expression sullen and unchanging. He seemed to believe he was going to play, and nothing was going to change that. Convention, rules, and the weight of the other members of Anfield would not even be enough to stop him from playing. Yet, for Jason to play, someone else who had the right to play would have to give up their sweat and that was not happening either. The scene was now one man against the community

As tensions raised, Kevin, one of the longest standing members of Anfield, stormed off the pitch. Almost like he was performing for the crowd, he threw his shirt to the ground, flapped his hands around as he tried to get his words out, and in an exasperated manner shouted out to everyone, "if all yuh allow this to take place man I'm done with all yuh. This is not how we do things. Jason yuh doing shit man."

Kevin was livid. His face was red and his body was shaking. He took a seat on the sidelines and put his hand to his head. Both teams then started to walk off the pitch leaving Jason alone. Some hurled words at him as they passed. Others shook their heads or

laughed at the absurdity of the situation. Just as the day's football looked as though it was coming to an end, Richard, another vocal member of Anfield, and my main informant—a man of mixed decent and dark skin color—turned to Jason—a white Trinidadian—and said "yuh see this white supremacy bullshit, we not on dat man. Take your white supremacy home with yuh man!"

Amongst a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-hued group of men, where white is a distinct minority of great social power, both in the group and the society at large, Jason's whiteness and its historical social power was seized upon by others.

> Yeah dat is bullshit man. Iz white supremacy fuh real boy! We don't want dat here!

Many voices rose and called out as many more men started to accuse Jason of white supremacy.

Another said,

> Yuh feel yuh special. That yuh cud do wat yuh want? Nah man. We not on that. Move from the field. Come off man!

The emotional shouting—what people in Trinidad call "grand-charging"[5] and "cussing"—turned toward an air of male aggression. Jason was offended. He resented being separated and isolated from the multi-hued group. He walked toward Richard, who had started the white supremacy jibing. He was clearly upset about the accusation. They were now nose to nose. Jason reached to grab the man in a neck hold. Tension rose higher still. The attention of the crowd focused in on the potential altercation. At the same time Richard added,

> If it not white supremacy den its gangsterism, and that jus as bad!

The extra wording changed everything. Colloquially, "gangsterism" is something everyone with power in Trinidad is accused of or complicit in. As the Trinidadian author, Lloyd Best (2004), once described it, it is a local ethos, one at the heart of "getting ahead" socio-economically through forms of opportunism, such as nepotism, corruption, violence, and proposition in a post-colonial nation.

The two men began to laugh with each other. What looked as though it was going to be an aggressive neck hold became an arm around each other's shoulder. Laughter replaced aggression. The mood changed immediately. The jokes and picong—normal everyday currency of life on Anfield—started to flow again from the sidelines. These included both jokes about Jason's sense of privilege and also the ridiculousness of his behavior. The football started back up and Jason asked for a quick second of everyone's time. He apologized for his behavior and took a seat on the sidelines waiting his turn to play like all the other players waiting to get on and play.

Discussion

A few weeks after these events I sat down with Jason to ask questions about them. He told me he had played football at Anfield since the late 1980s. We spoke about his

whiteness and he agreed that being white might denote some privileges, although at the same time he stressed that being white in a local black and brown majority nation made him feel like a minority. As such, he described being white in Trinidad meant he suffered racism. In his eyes, this meant that most of the time being white was not necessarily a privilege. He was also adamant that on the field that day his desire to stay on was solely about wanting to play more football. He did not feel his actions represented a claim of racial hierarchy. In fact, he stated he only became angry when accusations of white supremacy were thrown at him. Prior to that he said he was "foolin around."

In a multi-ethnic group and languaculture where white is a minority, yet still symbolizes social power, it might not matter much whether Jason saw his actions through a privileged racial lens or not; the group certainly did and purposively sanctioned him for it. The football was halted and, regardless of Jason's long-term membership on the field and the tried and trusted nature of his regular attendance, liming, and participation, the multi-hued group disciplined him and picked on his whiteness as matter out of place.

The group, in what appeared to the ethnographer as a fairly organic fashion, enacted a distinct legacy of colonialism—structural racism. Amongst the grand-charging, name-calling, and male aggression, this structural racism was not used against those who traditionally suffered negatively from its power: non-white persons. Instead, it was used against whiteness, to sanction it and deny its power. It appeared as though the accusation of white supremacy was enacted as a way to take power back from an individual who threatened the cohesion of the multi-hued group. There was no necessity for a top-down legal or political authority to reassert social order in the space. Once Richard's racially-loaded picong had focused the group's attention to skin color and history there was no particular ringleader directing comments at Jason, nearly all joined in the accusations. Instead, out of what seemed to be a mild sort of anarchy, many voices rose in a dialogic fashion to tackle what was perceived as matter out of place and ensure order/playing football could be reinstated.

Another important point to clarify about this story is Jason's claim of experiencing racism. Jason claimed he "suffered racism" on account of being white, and white being a minority group in Trinidad. Clearly, we might say the group was able to sanction Jason's whiteness, name it, and deny its power. But it is also important to note that what Jason claimed is racism is not racism. Racism is a structural phenomenon. It systemically oppresses a group historically disenfranchised, and subjects them to violence on account of its phenotype. What Jason faced could not be racism in the academic sense (Bonila-Silva, 1997: 469–474; Fanon, 1967: 77). Yes, the group denied him power on Anfield, but Jason can leave Trinidad, and Anfield, and will not be marked by race in ways which deleteriously follow him and pejoratively affect his life. He is white. Jason is not subject to racism as he believes, and what is taking place on the field is not racist, but it is clearly patterned by a history of racism and colonialism that is lived out and made personal and meaningful by the limers on the field.

Concluding remarks

Individuals are hierarchically differentiated, but differentiated on the grounds of their particular abilities, rather than their past careers

(Gramsci, 1994: 73).

As Gramsci (1994) noted in 1918 of football in Italy, hierarchy in football is not intrinsically about race, class, or ethnicity; or at least does not have to be. For example, in the suburban, small goal football space this paper looked at, members had a variety of day jobs. Some were doctors and dentists, one was an assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, and there were two university lecturers. Others had more entrepreneurial and laboring positions, one had a food stand, another was a struggling musician, there were mechanics, students, people who sold marijuana, one who worked in the customs business, a couple of secondary school teachers, as well as some party promoters, and persons who were unemployed. On the field, however, football ability more than occupational or other statuses seemed to be the basis for hierarchal distinctions.

Writing about cricket in the Caribbean, CLR James (1963) peeled back the layers of sporting encounter and revealed the social story beneath. On the field, the violence perpetuated by the social system, such as its racial infrastructure of white supremacy and racial hierarchy, he believed was being opposed symbolically without disrupting the social fabric. He used cricket to describe the relationship between social structures and everyday social change. His eloquence and proto-discourse analysis described a sporting spectacle containing resistance, equality, and battle. This led him to analyze the sport as a way into issues of social justice. This paper took a similar Jamesian analysis, and described how social structures that undermine equal opportunities, such as race and ethnicity, can be confronted and destabilized on the small goal football field. Two short descriptions illustrated this and suggested that recognition of a relationship between language and culture helps to describe the context and reality within which the phenomenon and social institution of small goal football and grassroots football on Anfield exists. In particular we learned three distinct features of this small goal community:

1) We learned about the uniqueness of the Caribbean social-reality, and how the scars of colonial history, such as racial hierarchy and white supremacy, can be subverted linguistically in grassroots sport under a banner of continuity and change.
2) We learned about sport and masculinities, and how some everyday qualities of masculinity in Trinidad can be reorganized, reinforced, and disciplined on the field of play.
3) we saw sport through the eyes of local Caribbean men who engage in small goal football, providing insights around the social institution and its languaculture.

The anthropologist, Michael Agar (1994), developed the terms rich point and languaculture as a way to talk about cultural translation. The concepts speak to the fact that we are all members of multiple cultures rather than one singular cultural group. A rich point often marks a breakdown in communication between cultures. It suggests cultural exclusion and intercultural confusion is based on a lack of insider knowledge of language, meaning, and culture, or languaculture. In the context of small goal football, rich points provide evidence of a specific languaculture or community of practice for acceptance and membership within this small goal space.

The anthropological approach is unique in its emphasis on culture and in a postcolonial context like Trinidad can describe how sport—a significant cultural practice—is adaptive. The data collected suggest that languaculture structures affects and determines

the space, content, and practice of conversations and interactions that take place on the small goal field called Anfield. In a post-colonial context that dominant Western notions of race and racism can be and are often remade is an illustration of the potential resistance of the space of sport. Whether footballers on Anfield are conscious of it or not, the field and its languaculture are inextricably implicated in socio-historical processes and legacies associated with colonialism, post-colonialism, and neo-colonialism, such as white supremacy, racism, and resistance to class-based, racially informed social identities. As such, this paper suggests that some small goal football spaces might be seen as micro examples of a reconfiguration of racial power dynamics—Western discourses of race and racism are destabilized on the field of play—no matter that such reconfiguration does not extend beyond the field or erase how other discourses of power, such as gender and heterosexual masculinities, are reinforced at the same time.

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Notes

1. At the UWI, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad, Nov 2013.
2. The common Trinbagonian term and local cultural practice of "picong" (Ho, 2000) refers to light comical banter, usually at someone else's expense.
3. "Thomas Hylland-Eriksen describes 'liming' as 'entirely contingent on the shared meaning that can be established spontaneously.' It is hanging around, socialising, talking, laughing, and a great deal of reminiscing – and can be extremely productive … Opinions get aired … more importantly, however, relevant topics of interest to the lime and the limer's community are made manifest. The liming situation establishes a forum for its participants, and through this the parameters of the group's world are partially established" (Scher, 2003: 94).
4. "Language culture is a concept [developed by Michael Agar in his book called *Language Shock* (1994)] to remind readers that actually using language involves all manner of background knowledge and local information in addition to grammar and vocabulary" (Risager, 2005: 2).
5. In Trinidad to "grand-charge" is to hurl words and abuse at someone, to force your version of events onto them. It can be the prelude to violence. It is far more aggressive than picong. It is the stage where humor starts to dissolve and local persons start to take offense at statements that they might previously have received playfully.

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