Cricket as a Diasporic Resource for Caribbean-Canadians

by

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Abstract

The diasporic resources and transnational flows of the Black diaspora have increasingly been of concern to scholars. However, the making of the Black diaspora in Canada has often been overlooked, and the use of sport to connect migrants to the homeland has been virtually ignored. This study uses African, Black and Caribbean diaspora lenses to examine the ways that first generation Caribbean-Canadians use cricket to maintain their association with people, places, spaces, and memories of home.

In this multi-sited ethnography I examine a group I call the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC), an assembly of first generation migrants from the Anglo-Caribbean. My objective to “follow the people” took me to parties, fundraising dances, banquets, and cricket games throughout the Greater Toronto Area on weekends from early May to late September in 2008 and 2009. I also traveled with approximately 30 MCSC members to observe and participate in tours and tournaments in Barbados, England, and St. Lucia and conducted 29 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with male players and male and female supporters.

I found that the Caribbean diaspora is maintained through liming (hanging out) at cricket matches and social events. Speaking in their native Patois language, eating traditional Caribbean foods, and consuming alcohol are significant means of creating spaces in which Caribbean-Canadians can network with other members of the diaspora. Furthermore, diasporas are
preserved through return visits, not only to their nations of origin, but to a more broadly defined homeland, found in other Caribbean countries, England, the United States and elsewhere in Canada.

This study shows that while diasporas may form a unified *communitas* they also reinforce class, gender, nation and ethnicity hierarchies and exclusions in diasporic spaces. For example, women and Indo-Caribbeans are mainly absent from or marginalized at the cricket grounds, which celebrates a masculine, Afro-Caribbean culture. Corporeal practices such as sports, and their related social activities, can be deployed as diasporic resources that create a sense of deterritorialized community for first generation Caribbean migrants.
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Chapter One: Introduction

My dad is one of the most passionate former athletes I know. When I was a child, growing up in Markham, Ontario, he woke up and went for an early morning run every day. Rain or snow, limping or sore – he ran. I’m sure he enjoyed his daily morning ritual, but to me it seemed it was associated with a sense of duty or obligation, if only to his ascetic ideals. He also used to join a friend for regular rounds of tennis, but cricket, on summer weekends, was clearly the highlight of his week. He got immense pleasure from bowling, batting and being recognized by his peers for his achievements. His laughter, vibrant disagreements, and excited story telling at the cricket grounds told me that, in addition to playing, he also thoroughly enjoyed socializing with his Caribbean friends.

Some of my fondest childhood memories are of summer weekends in Toronto, when my family would sometimes attend Dad’s regular Saturday and Sunday games. My brother and I would play tag, soccer or cards with other children and there was always a barbeque or picnic prepared by my mother to enjoy. We never watched the cricket match. I hadn’t the faintest idea of the rules of the sport. But I was always excited for the games against visiting teams. Especially on Caribana weekends, typically the last weekend of July. For Caribana, Toronto’s annual celebration of Caribbean culture, my father’s friends from his youthful days in Antigua would come to visit us. Kanhai and Sobers would take a bus from their homes in New York City with their teams and sometimes their wives. They would play a game of cricket or two, attend a dance or picnic – hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Association of Toronto – and, of course, go to the Caribana parade and the associated festivities.

As a child, I helped my mom make dinner for the group and begged to be allowed to stay up late with our guests. However, as the night progressed and the men became rowdier,
riled up by alcohol and the excitement of playing dominoes, I was sent to bed. Instead of going to sleep, I often sat at the top of the stairs, or lay awake in my bed and listened to the men yelling at each other. They were not angry – they just found it easier to communicate when they spoke louder, slammed the table, and repeated themselves passionately. Despite their volume, I could not understand everything they said. Even my own father’s accent became unrecognizable as he slipped in and out of the dialect he grew up speaking.

Kanhai, and Sobers were not their real names. Rather, they called each other by the names of the cricketing heroes of their youth. They re-lived their memories, recounted embarrassing and funny moments, and retold the same stories year after year about the Windies team at the ARG. I later discovered that the Windies was the West Indies team, which represents the entire Caribbean in international first-class cricket, and that ARG is the Antigua Recreation Ground, where their buddy, Viv, made history before the eyes of hundreds of boys and men from that small island nation, the entire Caribbean region, and the world. I would only fall asleep after they went out to a house party, dance, or concert. At Ontario Place or Lamport Stadium, the Mighty Sparrow or whichever calypsonian was in favour for that year’s Caribana celebration performed and my Dad and his friends stayed out late enjoying the festivities.

Beyond Caribana weekend, the highlight of my summer was traveling to New York with my parents for the Labour Day Carnival, which coincided with a cricket tournament and other Caribbean festivities hosted by Kanhai’s team. I rejoiced during those years because this was an important trip for my mother and me. Our interest was not cricket, however. We looked forward to the other attraction The Big Apple had to offer: shopping! The favourable prices, fashions, and amount of time we had to shop while dad played cricket in New York was a dream come true.
As I grew older, we became less involved in my father’s cricket career. More often than not we would drop him off at his game, and return eight hours later to pick him up. In his forties he practiced, played, and traveled less. His shoulder was not designed for so many years of pace bowling combined with so few years of strength and conditioning exercises. He also failed to see the ball as well as he used to and, unlike others in his cohort, decided against physiotherapy programs and laser eye surgery to overcome the effects of ageing. He stopped drinking, which improved his health and finances, but negatively affected his experience of camaraderie at the cricket ground. In his early fifties my dad’s morning runs slowed to jogs and he ran out of tennis partners. He stopped playing cricket altogether, but maintains an ardent interest in the sport by following professional cricket through various media outlets. He wakes up at 4am to catch the Windies games in Lahore, India on pay-per-view. He keeps the internet bookmarked on www.cricinfo.com to catch the scores any time of day and night. He says “Once cricket gets into your blood, you have no choice but to live it, every day.”

** I have spent the past two years “living” cricket, every day. Before this project it had been decades since I had attended a cricket match, or even reflected on the cricketers my father had played and traveled with. It was not until I began to think about Canadian multiculturalism, diaspora, and sport that cricket once again came to mind.

The fathers of a few of my second generation Caribbean-Canadian friends also play(ed) cricket. These diasporic dads make great efforts to recreate their home(is)lands at the cricket ground. Although they sometimes travel for cricket, they envisage neither a trip to Africa nor a flight to the Caribbean as essential to fulfill their desires to ‘return to origins’ – heralded as a defining characteristic of diasporas (Anthias, 1998; Cohen, 1995; Safran, 1991; 1999).¹ They

¹ In scholarship on migration from the Caribbean, specifically from the English-speaking Caribbean, there persists an insistence upon using ‘West Indian’ as opposed to ‘Caribbean.’ The persistence of the term West Indies or West
only need to travel across the Peace Bridge for a 10-hour drive to New York City or merely to the local grounds in King City, Ontario to forge close bonds with other people of Caribbean descent; to express their culture corporeally; to enjoy Caribbean food, drink, and music; and to create nostalgic stories – imaginative rediscoveries that help to define their diasporic identities and make sense of the discontinuities and seamless connections to their ancestors and others in the diaspora. Salman Rushdie writes:

[E]xiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from [the homeland] almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands.” (Rushdie, 1991, p. 9)

Playing and watching cricket provides Caribbean-Canadians with opportunities to create imaginary homelands.

This is a dissertation about the narrative and performative production of diaspora and the creation of Caribbean homespaces through sport. This study helps us understand the intersecting and sliding subject positions within diasporas. The various spaces Caribbean-Canadians visit,

Indians is due, in part, to the popularity of the internationally competitive West Indies cricket team, so named because of its origins in the colonial era, and Columbus' mistaken belief that he had landed in the 'Indies.' Fans of the cricket team affectionately refer to the team as “The Windies,” a name I employ in this dissertation as well. In spite of the fact that many MCSC members continue to refer to their communities and cultures as ‘West Indian,’ and that cricket is not popular in all territories of the Caribbean, I employ the label 'Caribbean’ to refer to the Anglophone Caribbean following Gadsby’s (2006, p. 10) suggestion that we use “Caribbean in an effort to move beyond the legacies of colonial designations” and that “Caribbeanness as a concept cannot be narrowed down to a particular space.”

Although the participants in this study have spent differing amounts of time living in various Caribbean and Canadian locales, I refer to them as Caribbean-Canadians. This is not to suggest bi-racial status (Hernández-Ramdwar, 1995). Rather, this is to mark their dual citizenship, dual argots, and, in some cases, dual homes, while, at the same time, recognizing that this term is inadequate since in many cases their allegiances are not dual but multiple. Whereas Kondo writes of Asian-American theatre and literature as preoccupied with the claiming of America as home (1997, p. 191), Caribbean-Canadian athletes and their supporters, living, practicing, and playing in Canada, often turn to the Caribbean to mark their identities (Jackson, 2004).
including national locations (St. Lucia or England), local sites (stadiums or parks) or sporting environments (pavilions or locker rooms), enable and constrain their interactions, performances, and stories. In this cricket and social community, older men and women perform various racialized, gendered, and (trans)national identities that pull them together and push them apart in different circumstances.

My pursuit of sport studies and Caribbean diaspora studies in a Canadian context has led me to question why my family’s experiences are absent from both bodies of literature. Where the sociology of sport is concerned, the study of sporting practices of what is (problematically) referred to as ‘ethnic minorities’ or ‘ethnocultural groups’ is marginalized and Caribbean-Canadians are typically only highlighted in discussions of racism in Canadian sport and then, primarily men’s experiences are discussed. Similarly, the global circuitry of Caribbean sporting cultures and the identities they support, as well as sporting practices that are peculiar to a Black Canada, have largely flown under the radar of Black and Caribbean diaspora studies. Although the centrality of other Black cultural forms, such as music and literature, to deterritorialized Black identity has been clearly shown, the intersection between sport and diaspora has not been highlighted. I propose that studies of cricket, arguably the most significant sporting arena for the realization of a Caribbean imagined community, offer a vehicle to correct these oversights. This study of Caribbean men will bring a new perspective on Black masculinity and sport studies, which have hitherto focused on Black men in the U.S., U.K., and to a lesser extent South African and Canadian settings. Furthermore, illuminating the ethnic conflicts between Black Caribbeans and people of South Asian descent will shift the focus of racism in sport from solely exploring Black-White relations. Other than occasional team newsletters and brochures arranged for twenty-five-year club anniversaries, there is little documentation of what cricket players and their supporters do with their recreational time and no in-depth analysis of the sporting practices
of the Caribbean men who were among the first to arrive from that region in the 1960s and 1970s. This dissertation sits at the nexus of Caribbean and Canadian cultures and diaspora and sport studies; I use this fertile ground to examine how cricket is used to maintain Caribbean communities and cultures in Canada and in the broader Caribbean diaspora.

I build on the work of C. L. R. James (1963) who uses cricket to expose issues of classism, racism, and the struggle for national independence in the Caribbean in the early twentieth century. *Beyond a Boundary* was written before the terms diaspora and transnationalism entered into the scholarly analyses of the globalization of Black cultural forms, therefore James does not openly acknowledge his move to England and then to the United States as part of global flows of Blackness; and his association with cricketers, writing about the sport, and regular return visits back to the Caribbean as critical to his sense of Caribbeanness. I also expand the work of Paul Gilroy, who shows the importance of cultural flows through the Caribbean, the United States and United Kingdom, but neglects the Black presence in Canada and does not show the significance of corporeal cultures as resources that keep migrants connected to their ancestry, homeland, and border-less racial community.

In this dissertation I filter what I observed, as well as my own experiences, through the literatures I have read. I track my own development, surprises and knowledges as a diaspora scholar, dark-skinned woman, and Canadian of Afro-Caribbean descent, revealing the complexity of researcher positionality in fieldwork. I have also included poetry, song lyrics, segments of interview transcripts, and extended narrative pieces within each of the results and discussion chapters (Five, Six, and Seven) in an attempt to offer intimate portraits that illustrate the main ideas of the chapter. With these varied techniques, I present this dissertation as a model for how to honor participants’ myriad voices and narratives. This dissertation documents the ways a group I refer to as the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC) recreates
communities, cultures, and transnational networks. On the one hand, cricket offers a venue for the production of a convivial atmosphere. It brings diverse people together across class, gender, nation and ethnic lines in a fun, celebratory, music-, food- and drink-filled environment. On the other hand, in certain circumstances, individuals use their time at the cricket ground to reinforce class, gender, nation and ethnic hierarchies. Some groups are disparaged, maligned, and positioned as inauthentic, improper, or unwelcome. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the history of the Caribbean-Canadian diaspora, the project details, and the content of the remaining chapters.

The Caribbean-Canadian Diaspora

The Caribbean is comprised of dozens of island nations along with certain coastal zones of North, Central and South America (e.g., Florida, Suriname, Belize, and Guyana) washed by the waters of the Caribbean sea (see Appendix A). The Caribbean features a mixture of peoples of African, Asian and European descent, the progeny of colonizers, migrants, indentured servants and slaves, as well as Amerindian peoples (Brereton, 1979). Lefebvre (1991) refers to the reduction of three-dimensional realities to two-dimensional maps – a central tool in geographic (and colonial) work – as overly reliant on the logic of visualization, isolation from context, and ignorance of an unlimited multiplicity of social spaces that create a place. To avoid this limiting understanding of the ways space can be produced, I follow the lead of Franklin, Lury, & Stacey, (2000) who refer to the Caribbean as a fantasy, a set of practices and a context. This definition defies restriction to the circum-Caribbean sea. The mobility of people, materials, emotions, and ideas have powerfully shaped Caribbean diasporic identities and cultures, (re)making Caribbean places, cultures and bodies across the world. I think of the Caribbean diaspora in Carmen Voigt-Graf’s (2004, p. 28) terms: transnational social spaces comprised of nodes, fixed places in networks. She describes “three main types of nodes … the cultural hearth,
new center and diasporic node” (see Appendix B). Thinking of the Caribbean in this way loosens the association with geographical nation-states and transfers the emphasis to flows between spaces and the dynamic social meanings created in the cultural hearth (Caribbean), new center (Canada) and diasporic nodes (U.S. and U.K.).

The voyage of the HMT Empire Windrush, in 1948, changed the flow of traffic between the tropical paradise, Jamaica, and colonial metropole, England. Caribbean peoples followed the tide of commodities to England as well as the United States and Canada, posing a threat to the power of the ‘centre’ through what Louise Bennett (1966) satirically refers to as “colonization in reverse.” Between 1950 and 1980, “about 4 million persons left the Caribbean to establish permanent residence elsewhere, principally in Europe and North America” (Chaney, 1987, p. 8), driven by changes in the economy, agricultural production and demands, as well as by national immigration laws in the Caribbean and abroad.

Debates over migration in Canada were racialized from the onset, with an initial preference for White English and French settlers, followed by other Europeans (Mackey, 2002). Ropero (2004, p. 156) explains that Caribbeans entered Canada mainly as students or as female domestic workers prior to the liberalization of immigration policy in the 1960s:

New regulations de-emphasized nationality as a criterion for selection, giving more importance to educational and occupational qualifications. … [A] points system was introduced in 1967, whereby immigrants were assessed in terms of their skills and employability, regardless of race or nationality. … Thanks to the points system, Caribbean immigrants gained access to Canada, coming in large numbers during the late 1960s and 1970s. Canadian immigration offices were opened in Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados and other islands in order to recruit skilled immigrants. Thus, the Caribbean jumped from fourteenth place to third as
a source of Canadian migration during these years.

Changes to Canada’s immigration laws combined with a labour shortage led large numbers of skilled Caribbeans to settle in Canada’s metropolises, Toronto sheltering the highest concentration (Henry, 1994; Ropero, 2004). Vibrant Caribbean communities were created in various locations such as Scarborough, Eglington-Oakwood, and Jane-Finch. In the intervening decades, many middle-class Caribbean immigrants have dispersed into suburban areas including Markham, Pickering and Mississauga, creating a Caribbean community that spans the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). In this dissertation, I examine the fluid patterns of identification for first generation migrants and the utility of remaining connected to a nation, region, ethnic, or racial groups. Specifically, I show that upon migration to Canada, some men, initially isolated in predominantly White neighbourhoods, shifted their identities from their nation of origin to a regional (Caribbean) and even racial (Black) group based on the dominant cultures and people they found at the cricket ground. In addition to Caribbean diaspora, I use African and Black diaspora literatures to explore the enduring social arrangements and cultural and racial identifications of Caribbean-Canadians. I explore the role of sport in maintaining diasporic links for migrants who may or may not (feel a desire to) return home.

Caribbean cricket players who immigrated to Canada, specifically Toronto, knew they were not going to arrive in a country featuring test matches and clay pitches; in fact, many did not believe cricket was played in Canada at all. \(^3\) Nevertheless, they found a way to maintain their sporting practices and cultures in the Greater Toronto Area. The women in their lives – daughters, sisters, girlfriends and wives – do not play cricket, but remain embedded in a cricket subculture nonetheless. Some are excluded from cricket participation, but are linked to the community through their men, and their involvement in dances, and picnics. Others come to

\(^3\) Test matches are a type of first-class cricket organized by the International Cricket Council and played between national representative teams. Matches last a maximum of 90 overs per day for five days. Each team is required to bat twice.
Sport plays a vital role in the creation of a Caribbean homespace. *Liming* (hanging out) and attending after-parties, scoring, and enjoying the diasporic cricket culture alongside male supporters. Sport plays an important role in the creation of a Caribbean homespace.

Liming (hanging out) around the boundary, post-game parties, fundraising dances and banquets organized by the MCSC proved to be a central element of community making for these first generation immigrants.

Cricket and its attendant social activities were a primary means to maintain their fantasies of home, networks of (im)mobility, practices of consumption, and performances of African heritage, Black identity and Caribbean nationalism(s). This study allows us to see the importance to diaspora of actual transnational travels and feelings of displacement as well as the memorabilia and memories of travel that allow diasporas to remain emplaced. In this sport setting, we come to understand the unity of *communitas*, which Turner (1969) describes as a relatively homogeneous groups featuring freedom from racial, gendered and economic hierarchies; use of native, colloquial languages; and a joyful, spiritual sense of connectedness with people. At the same time we come to understand the disunities – national, gender, ethnic and sexuality hierarchies – that manifest within diasporas. Corporeal practices such as sports, and their related social activities, can be deployed as diasporic resources that create a sense of deterritorialized community for migrants.

**Project Details**

This research project was designed to explore how Caribbean-Canadians use cricket to contest, negotiate and reproduce racial and cultural categories and acquire a sense of belonging within the Caribbean diaspora and the Canadian nation. This study employs ethnographic research methods and disrupts the notion of fieldwork as a continuous sojourn through a multi-

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Liming is a Patois term that refers to hanging out and socializing in a group. The *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* explains lime as an “unorganized social gathering … to pass the time away in chat and banter” (Allsopp, 1996, p. 349) Lime may refer to any identifiable group of idlers, and limes are typically distinguished by their purpose (i.e. a roti lime is a gathering to eat roti, a cricket lime is a gathering to watch cricket). Liming is a verb that describes the habit or action of intentional idling in a public place or wasting time on a job.
sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) using mixed methods (Richardson, 1994; 1997). I observed and participated in MCSC cricket practices, games, parties, meetings, and banquets in Barbados, Canada, England, and St. Lucia. I interviewed players, supporters, team managers and tournament administrators, and MCSC members in an attempt to paint a picture of the unities and disjunctures within diasporas. I detail the performances of gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, and generation that simultaneously produce power struggles and a unified, status-free community among Caribbean people from diverse national and ethnic backgrounds.

The majority of the cricketers and their supporters played the sport as boys informally in the roads and on the beaches, and in an organized fashion in school, parish, and national leagues in their respective Caribbean homelands. A few only began taking cricket seriously in Canada, but all began playing in recreational cricket leagues when they arrived in Canada in the late 1960s and 1970s. They dominated (in number of players and successful teams) the Hamilton and District, Montreal and District, Toronto and District, and Commonwealth Cricket Leagues as well as the Southern Ontario Cricket Association for over twenty years. Some even enjoyed elite cricket at the provincial- and national-level in Canada; however, as they began to age, they were unable to run as fast, sacrifice their bodies as much, and see the ball as well. Many stopped playing due to acute injuries or illnesses such as stroke or heart attack, and never returned to the action. Moreover, the professionalization and changing racial, cultural, and linguistic demographics of league cricket in the GTA, caused the majority to opt to end their competitive careers, amalgamate some of their teams, and focus on the pleasures associated with watching or playing what they call friendly master’s cricket instead.\(^5\) Rather than confuse readers with a variety of team names, and due to the overlapping nature of the team members, I have aggregated several first generation immigrants who play cricket and travel together, into a group

\(^5\) Although ‘masters’ is sometimes used to denote elite athletes over age 29 (Hodge, Allen, & Smellie, 2008), the Mavericks use the term generally to denote recreational players over the age of 50.
I refer to as the Mavericks, and amalgamated the clubs that organize their cricket, social, travel, and charitable activities, into the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC). Although this blurring of the distinctions between teams and clubs ultimately results in the loss of specific data, the overlap in their activities and members is sufficient to warrant aggregation. Approximately two hundred Caribbean-Canadians, mainly living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), make up the MCSC. In particular I focus on a group of approximately fifty male players and male and female supporters who attend club games and events.

I engaged as much as possible not only with the Mavericks’ on-the-pitch activities, but also with the associated practices of the sport, including (grand)child minding, keeping score, and sideline cheering undertaken by female MCSC members. Due to my social location as a woman, I had unanticipated access to several of the female MCSC members, which allowed a sub-study of their experiences to emerge as data collection and analysis continued. There is much more to be written about the female members, especially those who are unable, uninterested, or unwilling to attend home games and cricket trips. Nevertheless, I have attempted to capture some of the motivations, contributions, and conversations of female MCSC members in addition to that of the men, the primary focus of the study. The Mavericks play cricket on summer weekends throughout the GTA. In addition, they rely on MCSC members’ diasporic social networks to arrange weekend bus trips (to cities in southern Ontario, Montreal, Quebec, and northeastern states in the U.S.) and two-week long cricket tours and tournaments (in England, and numerous Caribbean islands). Cricket-related travel is a highlight of the year for many of the members. Games against out of town visitors (typically on holiday weekends) and the end of every season are celebrated with award ceremonies, banquets, and/or dances to

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6 I was unable to join the Mavericks for their bus trips, which often take them to other cities in Ontario or Quebec or to several north-eastern United States (Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania). Players typically cross borders on long weekends in May, July, August and September to play. They return to the Greater Toronto Area after one or two games, often followed by a banquet or dance. Their stories about these trips inform part of my analysis.
commemorate their relationship with opponents, longevity as a club, outstanding players, and community conviviality.

In this dissertation I trace the ways in which a cultural practice such as cricket enables first generation Caribbean-Canadians to mark their communities and cultural spatial practices as distinctly of the Caribbean. The timing for this project is critical as the salience of transnational ties has been shown to decrease with multiple generations (Lucassen, 2006), the majority of the MCSC members’ children do not engage in the sport of cricket, and the number of cricket playing MCSC members is rapidly dwindling. The Mavericks’ average age was 58 years at the beginning of data collection in 2008 and many will soon cease to play due to their physical degeneration; this community of Caribbean-Canadian cricketers is literally dying out and not being replaced. Other, less physical cultural pursuits, such as creating and listening to calypso music for example, may have a following until participants are elderly; however, this study of cricket among first generation immigrants will not be possible in as few as ten years.

Furthermore, a sense of “alienation may be relatively more pronounced among the earlier cohort of migrants” (Roberts, 2004, p. 650) forcing them to turn to their homeland activities for a feeling of comfort and safety. The members of the MCSC are uniquely positioned to offer insights into questions of sport, diaspora, community, culture, and (trans)nationalisms. Most have spent over half their lives in Canada, yet they remain connected to the Caribbean through their real, imagined and ‘corporal travel’ (Joseph, 2008a) to Caribbean spaces.

Chapter overview

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapter Two exposes the gaps in the literature this study attempts to fill. I review the fields of African, Black, and Caribbean diaspora studies, Black Canadian studies, and sociology of sport. Chapter Three describes the theoretical frameworks employed. I describe cultural studies, followed by spatial, gender, and
nostalgia theories, which frame my interview themes (see Appendix C). I end the third chapter by highlighting my research questions. The fourth chapter outlines the research methodology and methods used to answer these questions, and briefly examines some of the implications of conducting ethnographic research in a field rife with sexual tension and alcohol (ab)use. In the results and discussion chapters I use songs, poetry, and extended narratives alongside traditional ethnographic reporting in the (re-)telling of the experiences of members of the Caribbean diaspora. I move from the local to the global, demonstrating how the concrete activities at home games in the GTA (Chapter Five) relate to the imagined communities and cultural space regeneration practices of MCSC members (Chapter Six) as well as the (trans)national identities that are formed across borders (Chapter Seven).

In Chapter Five, “Celebration and Charity as Caribbean Community-Making Practices,” I set the scene of the MCSC members’ activities. I show that they use cricket and its related social activities to regenerate a sense of celebration, conviviality and community. At all of their events, they create an atmosphere conducive to liming, including playing calypso, reggae and popular U.S. music from their generation on any available stereo, eating authentic Caribbean food, and consuming copious amounts of alcohol. I show the ways the Mavericks mark their cricket spaces as racialized, heterosexual, masculine spaces that marginalize women and exclude gays. I use African diaspora theory to describe the cultural retentions from their African ancestors that the Mavericks display at the cricket grounds. Black diaspora theory helps to describe liming as a racialized resistance practice and Caribbean diaspora theory shows that cross border charitable endeavours help MCSC members maintain a sense of local and deterritorialized home.

Chapter Six, “Nostalgia and the Disjunctures of Diaspora,” deploys nostalgia and spatial theories to explain men’s and women’s gendered performances in the making of Caribbean
spaces. Through the stories they tell about their childhood, the Windies cricket team, and their return visits, male MCSC members remain connected to another place and time, which helps them to survive in the present (Ritivoi, 2002). Their fond memories of their youth and homeland requires that they forget some of the struggles they experienced, their reasons for leaving, and their desire to remain in Canada. Their fixation on the past, deep embeddedness in the cricket histories of their respective nations, and ongoing (albeit conflicted) desires to return to the Caribbean one day stands in stark contrast to female MCSC members who focus on the present and do not wish to return. Although it was not my intention to study female MCSC members, once in the field it became clear that their absence (leaving space for ‘men to be men’) and presence (support in the form of food preparation, cheering, and scorekeeping) are also integral to the creation of Caribbean cricketing spaces. Female MCSC members’ domestic duties and roles in nuclear families encourage their emplacement in the diaspora. Many women who travel on the Mavericks cricket trips emphasize sightseeing, shopping, and visiting with family members in diasporic sites in addition to (or in some cases, instead of) watching cricket. Women’s use of space, gossip among each other, and interactions with men demonstrate the gender, class and nationalist disjunctures in the diaspora.

In Chapter Seven, “Nations Unbound: (Trans)Nationalisms and Cricket,” I explain the important role of transnational networks in the formation of diasporas. Caribbean diaspora theory directs us to examine the broad sense of community the Mavericks maintain with their compatriots who have dispersed to the United States, United Kingdom and throughout the Caribbean. Regardless of which country they are in, they know that where there is cricket they are likely to encounter people they know from their nation or region of origin. Spontaneous and planned reunions help to remind them of and connect them to their roots and their pasts, make them feel a sense of unity, and welcomed in another nation. Caribbean-Canadians also
encounter South Asians within GTA cricket spaces. Their interactions reveal the insufficiency of analyzing diasporas solely in relation to the dominant group and the importance of “diasporic spaces” (Brah, 1996, p. 242) to performances of nation, region, and gender within Canada. The histories of ethnic antagonisms within Caribbean territories, specifically Trinidad and Guyana, are reenacted on Canadian cricket fields between Afro-Caribbean Mavericks and South Asian cricketers, where each group vies for status as ‘authentic’ carriers of culture. The Mavericks’ dominant Afro-Caribbean culture, exclusionary to South Asians, explains why so few Indo-Caribbeans choose to play with them. Chapter Seven also highlights the privilege of transnational status in that it permits multiple, fluid performances of nationalism.

Chapter Eight concludes the study, summarizing the ways sport provides a connection to African ancestors, a link to a Black community, and a sense of permanence and belonging to both Canada and the Caribbean for older first generation migrants. Cricket and its related travel and social activities at home in the GTA, at home in the diaspora, and at home in the Caribbean provide what Nassy Brown (1998) calls “diasporic resources,” which connect Caribbeans to their past, to each other, and to multiple nations. First-generation Caribbean-Canadians, mainly born in the 1950s and 1960s selectively re-create (mainly Afro-)Caribbean culture, (re-)generate broad communities and narrow hierarchies, assuage nostalgia for home, and maintain transnational networks. In the final chapter I outline the future areas of research opened by the limitations of this study, highlight the contribution to diaspora studies and the sociology of sport, and provide suggestions for future areas of research.
Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This doctoral research project builds on previous studies in, as well as forges new connections between, the fields of diaspora studies, Black Canadian studies and socio-cultural sport studies, which have hitherto been joined in only a cursory fashion. In this chapter, I define diaspora and review key works from African, Black, and Caribbean diaspora literatures.

Diaspora scholars rarely consider Canada as an important location Caribbeans have migrated to. I then draw on several Caribbean-Canadian diaspora scholars, novelists and theatre producers to track the routes of Caribbeanness in Canada. Studies of Caribbean-Canadians often emphasize the ways Black art (theatre, music, novels) speak back to a national “imagined community” (Anderson, 1983) that excludes Caribbean people, but rarely show the ways in which corporeal movements, Caribbean associations and sporting organizations function as a means to imagine belongings or forge transnational networks.7 I follow this with a review of the small body of literature on sport in Caribbean-Canadian communities, and end with a review of sociology of sport, and the ways sport manifested in imperial and postcolonial societies. Socio-cultural sport literatures have narrowly considered African descendants in terms of experiences of racism and professional athlete migration, but Caribbean diasporic recreational experiences are virtually ignored. Within the sociology of sport, global flows of sporting bodies have been explained using concepts such as imperialism and postcoloniality, but the recent emergence of diaspora theories has much to offer.

7 Anderson’s (1983) concept of a unified, national imagined community has been critiqued for exaggerating differences between nationals and outsiders as well as commonalities within national groups. Amit and Rapport (2002, p. 42-43) explain that amongst the dense, diverse and transient populations of large and rapidly growing cities we can no longer presume social affiliations based on propinquity because the social distance separating people may prevent interpenetration and a sense of unity. Feminists in particular highlight that women remain largely hidden in theorizations of the nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997) and that national identity is upheld with violent, racist laws (Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). The concept remains indispensable for diaspora studies, however, if we consider the fantasy of unity, what Stuart Hall (2003) calls the “imaginative rediscovery” of community among peoples across many geographies and generations. We must, however, in theorizing deterritorialized communities consider the “nation” as contested ideological terrain, and focus on how marginalized groups might both imagine the nation-state differently and imagine alternative nations.
Diaspora Studies

Within the social sciences, there has been a “shift from ethnicity to diaspora as master tropes of social diversity and migration” (Amit & Rapport, 2002, p. 48). Diaspora is conceptualized in a variety of ways depending on the region, case study, and actors involved. Its overuse and increasingly imprecise application makes it difficult to use as a heuristic device (Amit & Rapport, 2002; Braziel & Mannur, 2003; Clifford, 1997). In this study I specify the use of Caribbean diaspora theory, which builds upon African and Black diaspora literatures.

The terms African diaspora and Black diaspora are often used interchangeably, a problem that is revealed upon analyses of Africans who are not phenotypically Black and Blacks who do not identify with Africa (Tettey, 2001). In the Canadian context in particular, the Caribbean is a more proximal and prominent referent for Blacks. The participants in this study are mainly Afro-Caribbeans, and though they show no uniformity in phenotype, their experiences of dislocation, efforts to maintain cultural heritage, definition of self in relation to (and often against) the White majority (and South Asian ethnic groups), and articulations within a transnational social field suggest affiliation with African ancestry and Black cultures. Following Hall (2003) and Gilroy (1993), who note memory and racialization as key features uniting Caribbean peoples around the world, I recognize the usefulness of African diaspora and Black diaspora literatures as foundational for this study of the Caribbean diaspora.

This review of diaspora studies begins with a general description of the concept of diaspora. I show why definitions of diaspora must not follow a fixed typology. I emphasize the

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8 I do not mean to suggest that all Caribbean people identify as Black, however the dominant culture of the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club is Afro-Caribbean, hence the use of African and Black diaspora theories are more appropriate than Indian or Chinese diaspora theories.
hierarchies within and spatialized understandings of diasporas, and take care to distinguish diaspora and transnationalism. I then review African diaspora literatures and show how they have been used to trace the African roots of cultural forms throughout the Americas. Next, I delve into Black diaspora scholarly literatures, which are dominated by studies of African-American and Black British people and cultures. Black diaspora studies show the centrality of internationally circulating Black cultures and racialized performances to political mobilization and anti-racist expression. Caribbean-Canadians access Black cultures for a sense of identity and community. I conclude this chapter with an examination of the Caribbean diaspora literature. I show this field’s genealogy in transnationality studies through its examination of Caribbean mobile communities, multinational networks, and transnational social fields. Caribbean diaspora studies highlight unity among people of Caribbean origin but also specify unique manifestations of national cultures depending on migrants’ individual social locations, nations of origin, and the places they now call home.

Diaspora. The word diaspora comes from the Greek verb *speiro*, meaning ‘to sow’ and the preposition *dia*, meaning ‘over’ (Cohen, 1995). Diaspora is most often used to refer to real or imagined communities scattered from a homeland to multiple sites. The concept was originally based on several ‘ideal types,’ of populations who share memories of collective trauma as they were forced from their homelands due to political disasters, slave trades, pogroms, or ethnic cleansing. The strict criteria that originally defined diaspora included dispersal from an original centre to two or more peripheral regions; development of a sense of community that transcends national borders; partial alienation from the host society or a troubled relationship with the majority; retention of collective memory of the homeland; commitment to the maintenance or restoration of that homeland due to an aspiration to return;
and continued social, political, and cultural ties with the homeland (Anthias, 1998; Hua, 2006; Safran, 1991; 1999; Tölöyan 1996).

While many populations fulfill these criteria (e.g., Jews and Africans during and after the Holocaust and Slave Trade, respectively), catastrophic origins and strict definitions of diaspora obscure the less malign Greek origins of the term, to disperse, scatter, or sow (Cohen, 1995), and the experiences of those who do not adhere to all of these characteristics, or at least not all at the same time. Clifford (1997, p. 249) focuses on the root(route) dialectic to describe diasporas and notes that at “different times in their history, societies may wax and wane in diasporism, depending on changing possibilities – obstacles, openings, antagonisms, and connections – in their host countries and transnationally.” Diasporas’ relationships to ancestry and home (roots) shift with changes across their lifespans, varying political (un)certainties in their states of origin/dwelling, transformations in their degree of economic and social power, differential access to cultural traffic, and migrations of their kin (routes).

Adherence to rigid diaspora models hides multiple journeys and reasons for leaving the homeland. The migration experience might not be ‘traumatic’ by definition, but some members of diasporas are ‘forced’ to move due to economic circumstances or persecution over their sexuality (Hua, 2006; Alexander, 2005). Diasporas are not homogeneous; rather, “disjunctures produced by the diverse intersectional experiences of gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, generation, disability, geography, history, religion, beliefs and language/dialect differences” produce power struggles (Hua, 2006, p. 193). ‘Ideal types’ of diaspora also mask diasporic peoples’ solidarities to multiple territories that result from global flows.  

9 The global dispersion of reggae music and Rastafarian culture makes Jamaica a ‘homeland’ for some Blacks dis/emplaced around the globe. My study of Brazilian martial arts in Canada (Joseph, 2008b) showed that Caribbean-Canadians who had never been to Brazil identified with that nation due to (imagined) shared African ancestry with Afro-Brazilians. Solidarities to multiple territories may be based neither on nation of origin nor dwelling.
Moreover, I argue that a focus on ideologies of return ignore the importance of dwelling, settling, sojourns and memory in the diasporic experience. I expand Cohen’s (1995) farming metaphor through consideration of what happens to seeds once they are sown. I add to the definition of diaspora the concept of growing, cultivating, and developing; diaspora is not merely a process of dislocation, it is also a process of *emplacement*. Chu (2006, p. 403) examines emplacement through the narratives of those who stay put in an emigrant village in the Fuzhou countryside along the southeast coast of China. She notes that even those who did not physically leave China “feel emplaced within a larger global and transnational social field.” I demonstrate emplacement in this study through a focus on Caribbean migrants who feel emplaced within a Caribbean homeland without leaving Canada, and furthermore who feel a sense of home in the Canadian nation-state. The material construction and embodied experience of Caribbean spaces reveal the incompleteness of ‘homelessness,’ and ‘a (yearning for) return to origins’ as organizing concepts for diasporas.

In *Cartographies of Diaspora*, Avtar Brah conceives the term ‘diaspora space’ as the intersection of diasporas. Diaspora spaces are points of confluence of economic, political, cultural and psychic processes – sites of ‘migrancy,’ ‘dis/location,’ and ‘travel’ that seriously problematize the subject position of the ‘native’ as diaspora spaces are ‘inhabited’ by those who have migrated, their descendants, and those constructed and represented as indigenous (Brah, 1996, p. 181). Jackson, Crang, and Dwyer (2005) call these spaces “transnational spaces” and Doreen Massey (1994) sees them as “meeting places.” Pratt (1991, p. 33) refers to “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other” as “contact zones.” These spaces, places and zones, must be contextualized and historicized if diaspora is to serve as a useful heuristic device. In other words, Brah, Jackson et al., Massey, and Pratt direct us to pay

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*Brah refers to native/indigenous English men and women in opposition to diasporas who end up in England. In Canada, English, French and Aboriginal groups are constructed as founding nations (Mackey, 2002) in contrast to multi-coloured immigrants who subsequently arrived.*
attention to Caribbean spaces that intersect with other ethnic minority communities and White majority cultures:

The question is not simply about who travels but when, how, and under what circumstances? … If the circumstances of leaving are important, so, too, are those of arrival and settling down. How and in what ways do these journeys conclude, and intersect in specific places, specific spaces, and specific historical conjunctures? (Brah, 1996, p. 182 emphasis in original)

A spatial analysis of diasporas directs us to consider intersections, divisions, unities, movements and settling within and among diasporas.

Diaspora spaces are comprised of various transnational flows: “Active maintenance of relations with the home community may include transactions or exchanges ranging from visits, remittances, letters, and messages at the personal or family level, to support for ruling regimes or opposition movements at home in the political arena” (Van Hear, 1998, p. 56). However, studies of diaspora and transnationalism are not entirely equivalent. Braziel and Mannur (2003, p. 8) differentiate diaspora from transnationalism based on the centrality of “a human phenomenon”:

[D]iaspora refers specifically to the movement – forced or voluntary – of people from one or more nation-states to another. Transnationalism speaks to larger, more impersonal forces … [the flow of people and] the movements of information through cybernetics, as well as the traffic in goods, products and capital across geopolitical terrains.

All diasporas involve transnational elements, however not all transnationalisms are based on human traffic.
Although the myopic lens of studies of cultures within bounded nations has been widened, the connotation remains within the term ‘transnational’ that movement (of people, ideas, material and money) is across the borders of two nations, exemplified by the language used: home and host, origin and destination, sending and receiving countries. Much of the transnationalism literature based on case studies of Latin American and Caribbean migrants, however, shows that social interactions that transcend geo-political borders connect those who migrate and those who stay in the country of origin to people in multiple other regions; thus, more all-encompassing terms, such as ‘transnational livelihoods’ (Sørensen & Olwig, 2002), ‘transnational space’ (Faist, 2000; Jackson et al., 2005), ‘transnational community’ (Georges, 1990; Levitt, 2001), or ‘transnational social field’ (Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton 1992; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 1999; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004) have been deployed as more appropriate terms to describe Caribbean cross-border associations, networks, and sites where belonging and exclusion are negotiated across multiple borders. Transnational social fields encompass people in multiple nations who are embedded in “a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices and resources are unequally exchanged, organized and transformed … national boundaries are not necessarily contiguous with the boundaries of social fields” (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004, p. 9). Voigt-Graf (2004, 2005, 2008) describes Indians in Australia variously as examples of transnational communities, transnational spaces, and diasporas. Her work demonstrates that these terms are in many ways interchangeable to describe a complicated network of people from India, Fiji and Australia, and their transforming relations to kin in other nations; cross-border imaginary, social, cultural, political, business and religious practices; and home as a place of residence, emotion, or ancestry.
I prefer the term diaspora over various transnational configurations of communities because it does not privilege connections between national contexts. The use of diaspora as opposed to transnationalism signals a move in anthropology, sociology, migration studies, and Caribbean studies away from bounded units of analysis and nationalist frameworks to a study of regions, such as the ‘Trans-Caribbean’ (Henke & Magister, 2008), and acknowledgement of the limitations of discussing Caribbean identities topographically. Diasporas undermine colonial concepts of nation states with their hegemonic, European-drawn borders, and account for the intricate and always contentious linkage between cultural identity, political organization, sovereign power and nationalisms (Boyarin & Boyarin 2002, p. 10; Gilroy, 1993, p. 19; Henke & Magister, 2008, p. xvii).

Instead of attempting to fit data into an inflexible rubric, I believe, following Clifford (1997, p. 250) that a “polythetic field would seem most conducive to tracking (rather than policing) the contemporary range of diasporic forms.” In this study I theorize diaspora broadly and draw from African, Black, and Caribbean diaspora literatures to study the racial, ethnic, local and national (imagined) communities and cultures that span borders as a result of historic and contemporary ethnoscapes. I emphasize transnational flows where appropriate, keeping in mind a goal of describing real and imagined relations, not only among those who are dispersed from a location and those who stay, but also among those who live in disparate sites and have never met.

**African diaspora: heritage, syncretism, and yearning.** African diaspora theory brings to the fore the maintenance of culture across the middle passage, the syncretism that results
from the fusion of African and Western cultural forms, and the desire for origins that results from the present complex experience of hybridity and in-betweenness of postcolonial peoples.

Despite Franklin Frazier (1966) and his followers’ claims that the slave trade was so devastating that all African cultures failed to survive the middle passage, there are a plethora of African cultures to be found in the New World. Anthropologist Melville Herskovits made it his life’s work to recount many of the repossessions of Black heritage occurring in the Americas. He brought the fields of African American studies and African diaspora studies into the mainstream, founding the African Studies Association in 1957 (Gershenhorn, 2004). Herskovits’ work on the simultaneous survival and rupture of African cultural forms in the Americas remains foundational to African diaspora studies. Yelvington’s (2006) mapping of Herskovits’s intellectual social network points to his influence by anthropologists of the early twentieth century such as Jean Price-Mars’s writings on African syncretisms in the folk culture and religion of Haitian peasants. Price-Mars (1928) was a significant figure in tracing the rich cultures of early African kingdoms in western Sudan, Ghana, Mali and Songhai to the rural Voodoo cults of Haitian peasants, and elevating the rank of their African heritage hitherto despised as semi-heathen (Geiss, 1974, p. 317). Fernando Ortiz’s and Arthur Ramos’ respective Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian scholarship also influenced Herskovits (Yelvington, 2006). Sidney Mintz and Richard Price’s (1976) seminal anthropological study of Africans in America highlights the cultural heterogeneity of the enslaved Africans in the New World and the significant impact of their mixed cultures on the diversity of beliefs and practices of the Americas. Mintz (1996) notes that no single culture can be studied in isolation, because “the peoples we study are forever subject to influences from elsewhere” (p. 292). Anthropological investigations of Caribbean societies show that materials of African origin, survive “only in
transmuted forms, which differ locally in their importance, their distribution and their substantive content” (Mintz, 1996, p. 299).

Apter (1991, 1992) followed Herskovits’s and Mintz and Price’s heritage in his analysis of syncretism (merging of multiple cultures). His analysis of certain African ‘organizing principles,’ such as antiphony (call and response), and percussive performance styles that permeate Black cultural forms in the New World provide proof of an enduring connection to a ‘Mother Africa.’

Robert Farris Thompson and others have also built on this legacy, demonstrating the prevalence and transformations of African art and religion in the West. Thompson, an art historian at Yale University, devoted himself to the study of the transformation of Kongo, Yoruba and other African art traditions and material cultures into African-American and Afro-Caribbean paintings, drawings and sculptures (see Thompson, 1984). Similarly, Routon (2006) states that in the New World, African gods embrace Catholic saints, and syncretic deities form the basis of new religions. Believers claim that their African ancestors embody them in candomblé (Brazil), santaría (Cuba), and òyóótúnjí (United States). These sophisticated analyses recognize the ongoing dialogue between Europe, Africa, and the Americas, and describe cultural forms as drawing on African roots, yet constantly evolving.

Pertinent to this particular study are examinations of retention of African cultures in language structures and cooking styles of the Caribbean diaspora. Holloway (2005) affirms that languages and dialects including Patois in the Caribbean and Ebonics in the United States (and Canada) draw on Yoruban language structures. In addition to actual words and grammar structures of African origin that have been maintained in these languages, linguistic practices such as “kissing teeth” in displays of frustration and moral condemnation are performative.

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13 This approach to diaspora seems to essentialize the cultures of a diverse continent into a singular, recognizable entity; however, close examination reveals that Mintz and Price, Herskovits and Apter refer to specific Yoruban (mainly West African) cultures.
language practices of Africa and its diaspora (Figueroa & Patrick, 2002). Caribbean cooking styles and cuisine also owe a debt to enslaved Africans who brought their culinary habits to the region. Cornmeal, okra, and root crop dishes; use of hot peppers, salt, tripe and tail; one-pot stews; and the preference for cooking outside derive from African traditions (Houston, 2005). Speaking in Patois and eating authentic Caribbean foods illustrates the analogous properties of African and Caribbean traditions, and the retentions, syncretisms and complexities of diaspora cultural reproduction.

African diaspora scholars such as Jemima Pierre (2009), Kamari M. Clarke (2006), and Saidiya Hartman (2002) have noticed an increasing trend: a growing roots tourism industry where Blacks have made efforts to return to slave ports in Ghana and Nigeria. These scholars describe participants as using a ‘common sense’ link between Blackness and Africanness, based on U.S. Black nationalist imaginaries of the mid 1960s: Blacks, who feel ‘lost’ due to the oppressive conditions and dominant culture of Whites (in the U.S. Canada, Germany etc.), can ‘find’ their ‘true African selves’ by embracing African traditions and visiting African nations. Roots tourism is also popular in the Caribbean, where tourist boards recognize the untapped potential of the African-American (and Canadian) market. Black visitors to the Caribbean may be less likely to be ‘sun-seekers.’ Instead, some visitors yearning for a connection to the homeland seek out plantations, visit chattel houses as well as other national, historic heritage sites, and attend folkloric music and dance shows (Brooke, n.d.; Garraway, 2006). These tours instill a sense of the legacy of slavery and the indicators of national pride (literary heroes, civil rights activists, and cricket celebrities).

14 Kissing teeth, also known as “sucking teeth” or “chupsing” is performed by an ingressive airstream captured in an air and saliva pocket created in the mouth through pouting or protruding lips. Duration, pitch, continuity (steady versus staccato, for example), and intensity vary and denote a wide variety of (primarily negative) significations (Figueroa, 2005, p. 74-75).
In short, African diaspora literatures have at their centre an examination of emotional and cultural links to continental Africa, enslaved Africans, or transplanted elements of African cultures. African diasporas are conceptualized through discourses of return to origins, heritage reclamation, syncretism, shared memories, and collective narratives that take us back/over to another time/place. The identity ‘African’ has moved beyond continental links. Through prefixes Afri-, Afro-, and African-, Blacks around the world signal an allegiance to their African history, at the same time as they perform a multitude of other ways of belonging, demonstrate transformations of cultures in postcolonial contexts, and create a sense of racialized nationhood or community through their everyday practices. African diaspora theories cannot capture all of the nuances of politics and cultures of the descendents of enslaved Africans in the West. African diaspora works are enriched by attending to issues of race, and re-conceptualizing multi-national, cross-border communities in terms of Black diasporas.

**Black diaspora: global racial flows.** A more recent generation of African Diaspora scholars shifted their attention to a unity across borders that has little to do with the ‘Mother Land,’ based upon the work of Paul Gilroy. His (1993) text, *Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* outlines a complex genealogy of Afro-Caribbean/-British/-American cultural and political formations. He calls this triad the ‘Black Atlantic’ and argues that a parochial search for ‘Africanisms in the Americas’ (Holloway, 2005) is unnecessary, and serves only to essentialize Blackness.\(^\text{15}\) For Gilroy, it is not connections to a distant (in space and time) Africa, or an essential Blackness that maintain the bonds of Black communities; rather, it is the

\(^{15}\) For over half a century, social, biological, and anthropological sciences have discredited all spurious theories of the ontology of race (Brace, 2005). It is now clear that ‘Black’ is a racial category that was socially constructed to denote power differentials and, more specifically, white supremacy (Davies, 1994; Gunaratnam, 2003; Twine & Warren, 2000). One might suggest avoiding use of the term Black altogether due to its colonial basis. However, Black diaspora scholars continue to use the category because it is so deeply encoded in our everyday discourse. Blackness continually returns as the basis of overt violence and terror, as well as political disempowerment and ‘everyday racism’ (Essed, 1991; Williams, 2001) and in a resistant fashion in anti-racist discourse (Gunaratnam, 2003; Twine & Warren, 2000). Therefore, despite the fluidity and subjectivity of the racial category, and based on the argot of the participants, it is not yet time to jettison the term ‘Black.’
cultural flows through the three nodes of the Black Atlantic, abiding racism and racialized conditions, political (dis)empowerment, and resistance practices that form what he refers to as the “changing same” that keeps Blacks unified, striving “continually towards a state of self-realization that continually retreats beyond its grasp” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 122). Gilroy calls for a release of African Diaspora studies from its fixed relationship with Africa. A more geographically expansive understanding of Black political culture emphasizes the interdependencies between peoples in disparate locations and of a variety of phenotypes. With the crossing and re-crossing of oceans and borders, the ‘African American,’ ‘Black Briton,’ and ‘Caribbean’ individual are “changed into something else which evades those specific labels and with them all fixed notions of nationality” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 19). The movement of peoples and cultures across America, Britain and the Caribbean are what Gilroy refers to as the ‘Black Diaspora’.

In this dissertation I follow diaspora scholar Jacqueline Nassy Brown (1998), to show that the ‘local’ constitutes a racial and spatial formation of community that sanctions cultural appropriations of other black spaces and times. Nassy Brown built on Paul Gilroy’s theories and coined the phrase ‘diasporic resources,’ drawing from Gilroy’s (1987) notion of ‘raw materials.’ Gilroy, in *Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*, argues that the culture and politics of black America and the Caribbean have become the “raw materials for creative processes which redefine what it means to be black” (1987, p. 154). Nassy Brown uses the term diasporic resources to:

- include not just cultural productions such as music, but also people and places, as well as iconography, ideas and ideologies associated with them. ‘Place’ is an especially important resource, for the practice and politics of travel serve to map diasporic space, helping to define its margins and centers, while also crucially
determining who is empowered to go where, when, under what conditions and for what purposes ... [resources are appropriated] to meet particular needs—but do so within limits, within and against power asymmetries, and with political consequences (1998, p. 298).

Nassy Brown describes the Black diaspora as captured in a “racialized geography of the imagination” (1998, p. 291); though their actual geographic roots are varied, Black people’s imagined connections remain strong because they are able to access tools, images, events, organizations, artifacts, and expressive cultures that unite Black people from diverse, yet similar, backgrounds.

Seemingly innocuous cultural practices such as wearing kentia fabric or natural hairstyles (Mercer, 1994) or listening to and creating hip hop music (Walcott, 2003; Gilroy, 1987) may all signify dissatisfaction with, and resistance to, dominant discourses.

The question of racial terror always remains in view when [Black] modernisms are discussed because imaginative proximity to terror is their inaugural experience. This focus is refined somewhat in the progression from slave society into the era of imperialism. Though they were unspeakable, these terrors were not inexpressible … residual traces of their necessarily painful expression still contribute to historical memories inscribed and incorporated into the volatile core of Afro-Atlantic cultural creation. (Gilroy, 1993, p. 73)

Racial pride images such as Nelson Mandela’s release from prison, John Carlos and Tommie Smith’s Olympic black power salute, or Barack Obama’s “Yes We Can” campaign posters serve to bind Black communities. The black, red, and green flags of Pan-African organizations—which Hesse (2000b) reminds us have been formalized since the early 1900s but probably
existed informally since the institution of slavery – also serve as diasporic resources that signal
Black power and resistance. Anti-hegemonic practices can take the form of corporeal rituals
such as samba or capoeira, which implicitly or explicitly subvert Western norms, defy Black
effacement, resist the persistence of colonialism, and allow Blacks to imagine themselves as part
of a cohesive (national and diasporic) group, generating ethnic identity and pride (Browning
1995; Joseph, 2008b). These syncretic, hybrid performances of identity demonstrate counter-
hegemonic, political forms of mixing that exist inside but also against grand narratives of
modernity, especially racist stereotypes (Apter, 1991; Brand, 1998; Gilroy, 1993; Hesse, 2000a,
2000b; Mercer, 1994; Walcott, 2003). Resources such as the philosophies of Muhammad Ali,
the writings of Austin Clarke, the lyrics of Buju Banton, or the batting of Vivian Richards
permit the mapping of the Black diaspora onto particular locales and broad regions.

In this dissertation I use the concept of diasporic resources to show that one activity, such
as playing recreational cricket, has many associated practices including clothing, travel, food,
drink, socializing and fundraising, which help Black Canadians to restore their homelands,
develop a sense of connection to a broader Caribbean community, and to create an anti-
hegemonic space in their local neighbourhoods.

Jacqueline Nassy Brown (2000) cites the writings of former slave Frederick Douglass to
explain that Blacks have enjoyed and endured a consistent plight to overcome imposed spatial
limitations. These were key to the (trans)formation of racial power. A spatial analysis of
racialized groups leads us to consider the increasing ease with which Black people flow across
borders as migrants, tourists, exiles and refugees. Today, flows are maintained by rapidly
expanding media, information, and travel technology; as well as a sustained complex global
economy built on the foundation of African slavery (Appadurai 1996, Brah, 1996; Gilroy, 1993;
Li, 1999). The movements of people across geopolitical borders allow for exchange, syncretism
and the convergence of diasporic resources. The “multiply centered diaspora network” described by Clifford (1997, p. 248) is connected “not so much through a desire for return as around an ability to re-create [Black] culture in diverse locations” (p. 249).

Though Gilroy productively moved diaspora discussions beyond analyses that fixate on displacement from (ancestral) homelands, his description of Black British life avoids discussion of power asymmetries within and across national black communities. Gilroy’s “Black Atlantic is much more concerned with a specific binary within black diaspora than it is with a full explication of the landscape of contemporary blackness…ultimately we are presented with a discourse located somewhere between London and New York” (Chude-Sokei, 1996, p. 742). Nassy Brown (1998, p. 295-296) argues that Gilroy assumes that Black American (and we could substitute Jamaican or Barbadian) cultural products can be universally absorbed, inviting an intercultural exchange for all Black peoples, while he ignores the fact that cultures spring from specific national experiences and meanings that do not always easily translate. As Mintz (1996) puts it, Gilroy ignores the historically-shaped different conceptions of Blackness among Brazilians, Jamaicans, Haitians, Cubans and North Americans (for instance), which raise the question of whether there is any singularity to the Black Atlantic (p. 299). Garvey’s Afrocentric appeals and Rastafariansim are wide reaching, but not omnipresent and not influential for all Back intellectuals, such as Haitians, Cubans, or Brazilians (p. 300). Examinations of Caribbean diaspora theory in particular lead to more questions for Gilroy. For example, how do differently positioned members of the diaspora (based on age, nationality, sexuality, gender, etc.) use the same resources differently (Alexander, 2005; Trotman, 2005)? How does the presence of an Indian majority (in Guyana and Trinidad for example) shift understandings of ‘racial terror,’ and ‘double consciousness within a Black diaspora (Munasinghe, 2001, Yelvington, 2006)?
Gilroy could be critiqued for being masculinist; for obfuscating the ongoing influence directly from Africa (including enduring Pan-Africanism and emigration from many African countries); and for ignoring unique manifestations of Blackness in other nations (e.g., France, the Netherlands, or Trinidad); however, his Black Atlantic concept remains among the most useful for scholars to examine cross-border unity within racialized groups. I follow Gilroy’s advice and Sawyer’s (2002; 2006) example of Blacks in Sweden to argue that Gilroy’s more geographically expansive concept of diaspora must be expanded further to include the local Black experience in Canada. While Canada may not be the ‘cultural hearth’ of the Caribbean diaspora, it can be considered a ‘new center’ (Voigt-Graf, 2004) or more accurately, like London, England, the Greater Toronto Area is “an important junction point or crossroads on the webbed pathways of black Atlantic political culture” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 95), from where migrants connect to others in a variety of nations (see Appendix B). Walcott explains that “our current thinking on diaspora might receive continued invigoration if a detour is taken via or through Canada … Detours are the (un)acknowledged routes and roots of black expressive cultures” (2003, p. 31). Therefore I use Gilroy’s theory of the Black Atlantic, and supplement it with explorations of race and culture in Canada and the Caribbean, which provide a more nuanced and historically-specific interpretation of how the Black diaspora operates.

Black diaspora theorists suggest that we examine Black groups across many nations as one community based on their shared experiences of racialization and marginalization, but the same diasporic resources are incorporated to different degrees and for different ends by various subgroups within Canada’s Black diaspora. For instance, a middle-aged dark-skinned Black woman, elderly upper-class Black man, and mixed race, gay adolescent may all identify as Black-Canadian, but each acquire something divergent and perhaps contradictory from a diasporic resource such as Dionne Brand’s (2002), *Map to the Door of No Return*, which
exposes multiple pathways, connections, and senses of belonging to the Canadian nation for a heterogeneous group of people who identify with African ancestry. Nevertheless, it can be said that this book, part travelogue, part memoir, serves to “root” Black Canadians, exposing their different ‘routes.’ Black peoples may desire membership in a diasporic community for inclusivity, but their aspiration for belonging is also activated by specific local debates about the exclusivity of national (gendered), White belonging (Gadsby, 2006; Nassy Brown, 1998; Sawyer, 2002, 2006). Thus, expanding the Black Atlantic to include Canada will expose how the Canadian nation-state intersects with local dynamics of the countries from which Black people have come. Discourses of Canadian nationalism influence power hierarchies within particular groups and the ways Black diasporic resources are understood, deployed, consumed, and performed in Canada.

We must also be careful not to expand our conceptions of the Black diaspora so broadly that everyone and anyone is included. ‘Blacks’ in Canada may be from (or via) nations as diverse as Somalia, Brazil, Jamaica, Germany, or Costa Rica. It is necessary to tease apart the experiences of different black groups (Tettey & Puplampu, 2005) as their cultural backgrounds are entirely different. Even Black groups that might share a cultural practice, such as South African and Caribbean Blacks who play cricket, do not experience the sport equally due to different expressions of colonialism, racial hierarchies, and use of the sport as a liberating force in their homelands. Thus, it is instructive to see the ways in which Caribbeans in Canada affirm their identities, create communities, reminisce about and travel home, and resist dominant Canadian structures, cultures, and racism.

**Caribbean diaspora: transnational cultural networks.** The nation-state is an insufficient frame for studying Caribbean cultural forms. The Caribbean, arguably more than any other region, has felt the impact of international movements of people throughout its
history, and migration can be regarded as an integral part of Caribbean culture (Foner, 2001; Mintz, 1998; Nurse, 2004; Richardson, 1992). To understand recent Caribbean transnational networks, it is important to first review the history of the first mass movements to the region.

In need of staples – sugar, molasses, rum, tobacco, cotton, indigo, and coffee – for rapidly expanding metropolitan markets, European colonizers began the import of slaves from various African nations as early as the mid-sixteenth century (Mintz, 1996). Enslaved Africans labouring primarily on sugar plantations, “engaged in numerous forms of rebellious activity, ranging from feigning sickness to stealing to burning cane to ‘maroonage’ (running away and forming free communities)” (Niranjana, 2006, p. 23). The Caribbean region, from the early 1500s to late 1800s “received perhaps one-third of all enslaved Africans who reached the New World alive” (Mintz, 1996, p. 294).

When the legal systems of Anglo-Caribbean slavery were reluctantly dismantled in 1838, the British colonies expressed a need for replacement labour and a need to depress wages where former slaves had begun to agitate for more income; eventually a system was devised for recruiting laborers, from Portugal, China and, the Indian subcontinent (Niranjana, 2001, 2006; Peake & Trotz, 1999; Williams, 1991; Yelvington, 1995a). “The end of slavery did not put a halt to slavery’s habitual social and economic accompaniments” (Mintz, 1996, p. 298). Working conditions on plantations were so poor that thousands of Africans and Indians after them were ill, punished for constant ill health, and worked to death, and little was done to improve their circumstances or integrate them into society by way of education (Munasinghe, 2001); however, by mid-1917, due to anti-indenture agitation in India, the end of indenture was certain (Tinker, 1974).

In Trinidad and Guyana in particular, where people of Indian descent make up nearly fifty percent of the population, history continues to fragment the lives of Indo- and Afro-
Caribbeans, through the imposition of and resistance to normative codes of Afro-centredness as a representative of Caribbean and national authenticity and citizenship (Brereton, 1979; Mehta, 2004; Mohammed, 2009; Niranjana, 2001; Williams, 1991). For example, what were once Black lower class cultures, carnival, steelband, and calypso, were promoted to the stature of regional symbols, thereby making the ruling group ethnically ‘invisible’ as a consequence of its claims to represent mainstream national culture; yet, in Trinidad, Indian groups sought to promote tassa drumming, chutney music and festivals such as Phagwa and Divali as national (as opposed to ethnic) celebrations, thereby undermining the authority of the powerful Black elite (Munasinghe, 2001). Even in Barbados, where an East Indian minority was able to carve out a social and economic space for themselves above the Black majority as a merchant class, Indians remained outside nationalist space due to strict ethnic identities, endogamy, and exclusiveness (Hintzen, 2002). Ethnic differences and hierarchies rose to prominence out of this (neo-)colonial encounter. Cultural traits were linked to phenotype and a stratified, colour-coded social class system evolved.

Thomas-Hope (1992) points out that for Caribbean peoples migration is not only a result of global economic push-pull factors. Migration is embedded in the social, cultural, and mental fabric of Caribbean people and a predominant feature among men and women, working class, skilled and highly educated groups. For many Caribbean countries, more members of the population live in other areas of the Caribbean, North America and Europe than in their homelands.

In the eastern Caribbean, particularly where small, resource-poor islands predominate, migration is a way of life, a common household strategy for dealing with economic scarcity. … On many islands migration is so pervasive that nearly
every household has a relative living in Britain or North America. (Gmelch, 1992, p. 3)

Since the seventeenth century Caribbeans have been dispersing from their nations of origin. The first emigrants, beginning shortly after the end of slavery in the late 1830s until the 1880s, moved away from plantations to small landholdings on other islands. More resource-endowed British colonial territories (Trinidad, Guyana, and Barbados) had expanding sugarcane cultivation and high demands for labour. Between the 1880s and the Great Depression, Caribbeans migrated within the region, but they went to Spanish and other non-British territories to work on sugar estates, banana plantations, and for jobs such as the building of the Panama Canal (Gmelch, 1992).

Two subsequent waves of immigration followed this period according to Nurse (2004). After the Second World War when Britain, the United States and Canada required workers to help in the war effort and fill unskilled and semiskilled labour shortages. Some Caribbeans joined the military overseas. Immigration to England remained prevalent until changing immigration policies in the 1960s shifted migrants to Canada and the United States as the most popular destinations. This second wave continued into the 1990s as a result of global economic restructuring and economic and social decline in Caribbean countries. Immigrants did not sever connections with the region once they arrived at their destinations, however. “Complex, reciprocal flows rather than permanent one-way movements characterize Caribbean international migration” (Nurse, 2004, p. 4). Many returned to visit, wrote letters home, generated local and international networks, initiated and sustained migrant chains, and sent money back to the Caribbean to maintain the families and communities they left behind (Foner,
Caribbean emigrants maintained their cultures creating vibrant homespaces throughout the diaspora.

Caribbean peoples’ maintenance of ties to the homeland and broader community after immigration to North America, and the politicization of a Caribbean identity outside of the tropics, were the original prototype for theories of ‘transmigration’ and ‘transnationalism’ (Georges, 1990; Glick-Schiller et al., 1992; Basch, Glick Schiller, & Szanton Blanc, 1994). In their foundational text, *Nations Unbound*, Basch et al. (1994) explain that the cases of Vincentians, Grenadians, and Haitian immigrants in Brooklyn, Harlem, and Queens, New York demonstrated that migrants do not simply integrate into a dominant culture and forget where they come from. This may be a surprise in a U.S. environment, where a ‘melting pot’ ideology assumes complete assimilation by those who came to be understood as White, especially after several generations. In Canada, a dominant ‘mosaic’ discourse that enables and encourages the maintenance of cultural heritage, could be expected to produce citizens who maintain their “feet in both worlds” (Levitt, 2003). Migrants are simultaneously involved in the social and political life of more than one nation-state, a single field of social relations, which Basch et al. (1994, p. 7) chose to describe using the terms ‘transnationalism’ and ‘transnational social field.’

Caribbean diaspora theory directs us to acknowledge the transnational social fields migrants rely on and in which they are embedded.

Despite the focus in *Nations Unbound* on “societies of origin and settlement” we know that transnational social fields span multiple borders, not just between home and host nation. A migrant from Barbados living in Toronto may have family in the U.S., U.K., Jamaica and

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16 As a by-product of late capitalism and the colonial impoverishment of the region, sending money via remittances is encouraged by Caribbean government administrators who see donations as central to the social and economic well being of their nations (Alleyne et al., 2008; Conway, 1994; Itzigsohn, 1995; 2000; Mundaca, 2009; Portes, 2003; Wood & McCoy, 1985). The resource-poor economies of the Caribbean region, and the racializing practices of North America and Europe that maintain migrants of colour at the bottom of economic hierarchies (i.e., the first to be laid off in tough economic times) create subjects who maintain relationships that span multiple borders.
Barbados, and a reunion may take place in New York City, which is considered the ‘homeland’ for many members (Sutton, 2008; Foner, 2001). The transnational flows of Caribbean diasporas have been examined in terms of dual citizenship, multiple-sited networks, hometown organizations, abiding racisms, as well as border-crossing materials (e.g., food and clothing), vernacular cultures (e.g., music & poetry), religions, cybercultures, and remittances (Cook & Harrison, 2007; Foner, 2001; Henke & Magister, 2008; Henry, 1994; Nurse, 1999; 2004; Schmidt, 2008a, 2008b; Sutton, 2008; Thomas & Clarke, 2006), mainly in the United States and England. Caribbean migrants maintain economic, political, social, familial, emotional, and cultural ties with the home nation, new place of residence and many other nations in the Caribbean region and throughout the world.

Although diasporas are deterritorialized communities, connected to multiple geographies at once, they remain in constitutive tension with nation-state discourses. For example, Cubans and Jamaicans maintain different relations to their emigrated friends and family members in the United States due to the differences in political restrictions and travel freedoms in those countries. Also, religious hierarchies specific to a nation such as Trinidad and Tobago may shift when emigrants relocate to a multi-cultural city such as Toronto. Caribbean diaspora scholars are careful to attend to the various ways nations are reinscribed within diasporas, or show ‘the nation’ within transnationalisms.

Alissa Trotz (2006) examines the transnational networks formed within the Guyanese diaspora that hosts school reunions in Canada, and travel to New York on shopping trips. In both of these cases, interpersonal networks are formed, national allegiances blur, and class hierarchies are reinforced in the Guyanese diaspora. Burman (2002) shows how nationalism is reinforced in the Jamaican diaspora through National Independence Day celebrations in Toronto. Constance Sutton (2008) also examines nationalism in the setting of the family
reunion. She argues that return visits formalized as family reunions allow for the re-creation of kin ties, development of significant rituals, and public performances of region, nation, family, and friendship. Reunion rituals are “signifying practices,” that is, “expressive performances that call public attention to customs and values and create a consciousness of valued behavior and beliefs, even when these are disputed” (p. 44). Although national borders are regularly crossed – and for some, essentially dissolved – the political and cultural salience of the nation remains.

The degree to which certain citizens are free to cross borders and recognize the safety of ‘home’ depends on individuals’ positions in the homeland culture. For instance, M. Jacqui Alexander (2005) maintains an ambivalent relationship with her home nation Trinidad and Tobago, a country that rejects lesbian citizens. Although going home is related to pleasure, pleasure brings danger and risk. She explains that “crossings are never undertaken all at once and never undertaken once and for all…” (p. 155). Her body and sexuality are “imputed with the capacity to incite riot (read: to undo the lines of white race loyalty)” at home (p. 157), and consequently she is silenced and made invisible. Her loyalty is questioned by her own post-colonial government so she chooses to make elsewhere her home. Alexander draws our attention to the various reasons diasporas leave home, and why a return to origins is not always desired. They may be forced or leave voluntarily, they may return permanently or temporarily. Whatever their relation to the homeland, they likely maintain (conflicted) social, emotional, political, cultural, economic, or kinship ties to the place of national origins, or regional community (Rushdie, 1991). While Trotz, Sutton and Alexander rely on nationalist frameworks, they also demonstrate the unboundedness of nation through links made between Canada, the United States, England and various Caribbean nations.

It is important to distinguish the nations from which migrants come, and equally important, cautions Schmidt (2008a, p. 30), to avoid blurring the nations where migrants end up.
Referring to the Caribbean diaspora in general is insufficient: “We must distinguish between Caribbean New York, Caribbean London or Caribbean Berlin. … Even in the United States there are fundamentally differences between, for instance, Caribbean communities in Miami and New York City.” A few studies of national independence celebrations (Burman, 2002) and hometown associations (Trotz, 2006) have highlighted the unique struggles of Caribbean-Canadians and their relation to global geo-politics and racial discourses; however, the “Canadian branch of the Caribbean diaspora has often been neglected in studies of Caribbean migration” (Ropero, 2004, p. 159; see also Walcott, 2003, p. 143). A major exception to this is studies of Toronto’s Caribbean carnival, Caribana. Burman (2001), Gallaugher (1995), Nurse (1999), Jackson (2002), Trotman (2005), and several others have demonstrated in detail the ways in which Canada’s multiculturalism policies, Toronto’s police force, and ubiquitous images, ideologies, and icons of U.S. Blackness enable and constrain Caribbean expression and Canadian national identity during the parade and related festivities.

What is missing in studies of Caribbean-Canadian diaspora are the ways configurations of power differentiate diasporas internally as well as situate them in relation to one another, and to those who are constructed and represented as nationals (Anthias, 1998; Brah, 1996; Clifford, 1997; Gilroy, 1993; Nassy Brown, 1998). It is particularly important to grasp the relations among various groups in our analyses of Caribbean diasporas. Theories developed about Caribbean culture tend to describe cultural mixing as the defining feature of Caribbean societies (Schmidt, 2008b). Mestizaje, hybridization, creolization, and bricolage, theoretical frameworks indigenous to the Caribbean, all reference African, European, and Asian cultures and their mixtures through assimilation, incorporation, rearrangements, and mergers. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the mergers, conflicts and transculturations that occur in diaspora spaces when Caribbean groups encounter others.
Voigt-Graf’s (2008, p. 104) research on Australia points out: “the encounter of Indo-Fijians and Indian Indians [migrants direct from India] in Sydney confirms that Indo-Fijians are too far removed in time and space to link back into [Indian] networks and social spaces.” Although they may share an ancestral culture, these Indo- groups are in conflict in Australia due to “views that the two groups held of each other … predominantly based on ignorance and stereotypes” (p. 101). It is naïve to assume that racist ideas are limited only to the dominant group. Many diasporas that share space enact real and symbolic violence on each other.

Examination of Caribbean communities in Canada must acknowledge their intersections with other diasporas, including South Asians for example. South Asians in the Caribbean and in Canada interact with Black groups in historically loaded ways. It is a priority to investigate intersections of lived experiences of race, ethnicity, and nation among other identity markers (Brah, 1996; Clifford, 1997; Jackson et al., 2005; Pratt, 1991; Thomas & Clarke, 2006). Intersections are between individuals and groups and transform the ways spaces are enjoyed.

**Summary.** Early definitions of transnationalism allowed scholars to challenge previous conflations of geographic space and social identity, static notions of ‘home’ and the boundaries of nations. In this dissertation these concepts remain useful, but are combined with a diaspora framework to shift the emphasis from the nation-state to the deterritorialized social field. Gilroy has argued that to “break the dogmatic focus on discrete national dynamics … the undertheorized idea of diaspora” must be used (1993, p. 6). Diaspora studies critically analyze the social customs, nostalgic memories, cultural traffic flows of people who cross-borders. Studies of diaspora must not rely on strict definitions or ‘ideal types’ of diasporas as groups dispersed from a singular homeland maintaining a desire to return. Diasporas are heterogeneous groups and must be internally differentiated as well as discussed in relation to other diasporic (and dominant) groups that share their spaces. Members of diasporas variously draw on
resources that keep them connected to multiple sites, communities and nations, including the place of residence.

Migration is a fundamental characteristic of Caribbean nations. To study the experiences of first generation Caribbean migrants in Canada, I attend to ancestry, race and nation/region concepts that influence the global flows of diasporic resources. In this section I reviewed African, Black, and Caribbean diaspora literatures. African diaspora scholars are keen to point out the ways in which elements of African culture are maintained in the Americas, based on the embodied customs of enslaved Africans and the passing down of heritage over many generations. Black diaspora scholars demonstrate that Black is a shifting category, shaped by individual, ancestral, regional, national, and global motivations, politics, contexts, and histories – what Clifford (1997) refers to as the “roots” (local socio-political-national context) and “routes” (historical and geographical trajectories) of the African Diaspora. Though not all Caribbean peoples identify as Black, Black diaspora theory helps to explain the ways Caribbean peoples who all come from a particular place, take up citizenship in one or more nation-states, cross borders often draw on Afro-Caribbean cultural traffic flows and create borderless communities based on racial affiliations for their identities. All diasporic communities are transnational, yet they also feature a sense of rootedness in certain (imagined) locations. Scholars of the Caribbean diaspora recognize that migrants maintain connections to their place of residence, their place of origin, and to the places their friends and family members have dispersed to as well. They also point out that global Caribbean diasporas have uniquely national manifestations.

African, Black, and Caribbean diaspora literatures all marginalize the Canadian experience. In the next section I show the hidden history of Black and Caribbean people in Canada.
Tracking the ‘Routes’ of Caribbean-Canadians in Canada’s Racial Discourse

The crossing of borders and meeting of other Caribbeans in Canada, but being lumped together as one based on racial difference has led to a pan-Caribbean, transnational, deterritorialized sense of Blackness – one activated by Black routes. If Black Liverpudlians can circumvent Africa and draw on the U.S. for Black style and Black politics (Nassy Brown, 1998), it may be instructive to see how Black cultures are manifest in the Greater Toronto Area and how Canadian nodes of the Caribbean diaspora intersect with other national sites. Black diasporic resources are deployed in Canada to form a sense of safety, inclusion, authenticity, and community.

Black migration to Canada. Hegemonic tales of nationhood that position Canada as a place that slaves escaped to, marks a racism-free national identity and subtly legitimizes dismissals of claims to racism in Canada. In fact, in 1850 with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in the United States, many Black refugees in the Northern U.S. fled not to a racially harmonious Ontario, but to a region where segregation was the norm and discrimination was customary (Pabst, 2006; Ropero, 2004; Walcott, 2003). Commonly omitted stories are those of Canada as a nation from where enslaved Africans escaped into Michigan, Vermont, New York and other states where they could find refuge, to where over 500 Jamaican maroons were deported in 1791, and into which White U.S. Loyalists arrived bringing their Black slaves with them (Case, 1977, p. 9-11). Yet the moral geography of Canada positions it in contradistinction to Brazil and the United States, where slavery reigned as a chief economic structure from the early sixteenth and seventeenth centuries respectively. Brown (2000) asserts that slavery, and the circulation of slave narratives, were an important moment where morality was mapped onto regional, national, and hemispheric localities. In fact Canada’s connections to Caribbean peoples is often framed in terms of Christian missionary work, peace keeping and development
(including sport-for-development) organizations marking Canadians as benevolent and ‘good’ when de facto Canadian nation-building efforts required slavery, incorporated ideas of racial hierarchy, and colonized dark-skinned people. Case (1977), Driedger and Halli (2000), Henry (1994), and Mensah (2002), among others, have revealed the marginalized history of Blacks in Canada and the importance of Caribbean-Canadians and institutionalized racism to the foundational moral and social climate of the nation. Canada’s ethnic minorities, Caribbeans in particular, remain in a disadvantaged position with respect to the distribution of power, prestige and resources.

The year 1967 was an important one for Caribbean migration because it marked the end of discriminatory immigration laws and the institution of the point system. This system made qualification for entry into Canada based not on skin colour, nationality, or ethnicity, but on marketable educational, employment, and linguistic skills among other criteria (Henry, 1994: Mackey, 2002; Mensah, 2002; Weinfeld & Wilkinson, 1999). As Britain began to impose more stringent immigration requirements Canada’s system became more liberal, thus accounting for the shift in migration destination (Henry, 1994, p. 27).

Today, liberal ideologies of democracy, conscientious welfare, a classless and raceless society, and the grand panacea of multiculturalism, presumably factor into immigrants’ decisions to come to Canada. The Canadian Bill of Rights (1960), Canadian Human Rights Act (1977), Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988), and the revised Official Languages Act (1988) purport to “recognize” and “enhance” ethnicity and heritage for all Canadians. Migration, primarily motivated by the desire for economic and educational improvement, family reunification, or to resist neocolonial governments is never without difficulty (Henry, 1994, p. ix). As Walcott (2000; 2003), Mackey (2002), and Thobani (2007) maintain, the “provisions” in the law, combined with myths about
Canada’s harmonious multiculturalism, and lack of a founding Black presence operate to conserve hegemonic racist practices. Caribbeans as a group are unable to equally access the economic, social and cultural rewards of Canadian society.

In the 1960s and 1970s, equal numbers of men and women migrated from the Caribbean in search of employment. In Canada, migrants suffered a similar fate to those who migrated to England. *Sucking Salt* by Meredith M. Gadsby (2006) addresses Black Caribbeans’ plight to overcome hardships in a diasporic setting. She highlights, through a distinctly feminist-gynocentered frame, the intersections of race, nation, and gender. “Prevented by racist employers from obtaining employment in skilled professions, they were forced to take jobs that most British people no longer desired, in semiskilled and unskilled fields” (Gadsby, 2006, p. 86). Women suffered the greatest economic hardships and non-White Canadians were tolerated, recognized, celebrated and marginalized while English (and sometimes French) Canadians continued to remain unmarked. The entry requirements for Canadian citizenship created a ‘brain drain’ on Caribbean resources; given “the educational level of Caribbean immigrants, it would be expected to find them disproportionately in managerial, professional and technical occupations” (Richmond, 1989, p. 33). However, among those immigrants who arrived 1971-1981, males were underrepresented in such occupations; Caribbean immigrants regardless of level of education, length of stay, or region of residence, received incomes less than their Canadian-born counterparts (Richmond, 1989, p. 47-48). In addition to individual experiences of racism, Caribbean-Canadians have been marginalized in Canadian Studies.

**Caribbean-Canadian cultural representations.** In Canada, we find racial discourse is carried out without explicit mention of race. In fact, Walcott argues that Blackness is “repressed” in Canadian studies (2000, p. 140) such that when Blackness is discussed, it “occupies the place of ‘the special effect.’” That is, conversations concerning Blackness are
never sustained – they arise and disappear, only to arise again, as if new” (2000, p. 142). For example, in autumn 2007 in Toronto, Canada’s largest and most racially diverse city, discussions about the miseducation of Black Canadian male youth again rose to the fore.

Canadian “multicultural” identities fostered in the public school system were heralded, while Black desires for solidarity, role models, and education in the form of Afro-centric schooling were deprecated as “segregation” (see Okonkwo, 2007; Brown, 2007; ‘Separate’ 2007). Lurking under the surface of these debates were discussions about Caribbean (especially Jamaican) culture, Black “difference” and capacity for self-determination, as well as mainstream oppression and racism. Racialization is used to question Canadian belonging (Thobani, 2007; Mackey, 2002) and lead Black Canadians to re-imagine community and to connect with diasporic Caribbean communities, thus remaking their place in the Canadian nation-state through outernational connections.

Although Walcott has been critiqued for being overly theoretical, verbose, and posing more questions than he answers, he should be commended for “provid[ing] some grammars for thinking blackness in Canada” (2003, p. 13), recognizing the importance of recording a more accurate and full Canadian history, and moving beyond situating Black Canadian studies in a historical frame. He shows the usefulness of diaspora discourse, hegemony theory, poetry and music for transforming how the academy reads Black Canada and the Caribbean-Canadian diaspora: “both Black Studies and Canadian Studies have woefully neglected Black Canadian culture” (Walcott, 2000, p. 143, see also Ropero, 2004, p. 159). Yet Canada’s permeable borders and complex mixtures of re-diasporized peoples (e.g., Black Canadians from St. Kitts and Nevis via England), understood within a framework of global economic restructuring and labour migration, in addition to the broken promises of decolonization, make Canada an ideal site for conversations about African, Black, and Caribbean diasporas.
Within Canada, there is a corpus of theatrical, literary, poetic, and artistic works that examine the multiply identified members of the Caribbean diaspora. Trey Anthony’s *Da Kink in My Hair* (2005) was the first and only Black production to be featured in a major Toronto theatre. Set in a Caribbean hair salon, the play highlights the emotional, financial, and family-related struggles of Caribbean women in Canada. Member of the Order of Canada, novelist Austin Clarke, and poets, playwrights, and novelists Althea Prince, Claire Harris, Dany Laferrière, Dionne Brand, Everard Palmer, Makeda Silvera, and M. Nourbese Philip rewrite Canadian history from the perspectives of disarticulated Caribbean people who remain confronted with conflicts of idyllic multiculturalism embedded in a racist society. They demonstrate that Caribbeans from different nations, class-backgrounds, and sexual orientations have real and imagined journeys and communities that are important to narratives of nation, (dis)location, loss, safety, horror, hope, (return to) home, and belonging. Through her poetry and novels, Dionne Brand in particular complicates the idea of Black Canada, focusing on the idea of home as an uneasy place (1998; 2002; 2005). She explains that Canada is the only residence many Caribbean-Canadians have known and yet they are out of place, assumed to be new and forced to refer to another location as home. Many Caribbeans insist on making Canada their residence; however, they also are aware of the limits of belonging and thus prefer not to place all their hopes and dreams in this nation. (Ropero, 2004) suggests that there is much to learn from Anglo-Caribbean migration novels set in “that England that is not England” (p. 198), especially through the ways they acknowledge differences within Caribbean communities that become manifest in Canada.

Black writing in the form of plays, poems and novels capture Caribbean-Canadian community solidarity and belonging that is accomplished and facilitated by kinship and social relationships, churches, beauty and barbershops, nightclubs, grocery stores, and island
associations. Cultural or “ethnic” organizations and associations are important spaces for people to encounter their ‘roots,’ develop their communities, resist discrimination, and discover ‘routes’ for belonging (Carrington, 1998; Clifford, 1997; Copeland-Carson, 2004; Sawyer, 2002; 2006). Cultural organizations help immigrants to adapt and adjust to a new environment and broader relations with the mainstream society, as well as bringing immigrants together at a variety of social events that allow them to stay on top of newly emerging dance styles, music genres, politics and news from the Caribbean (Basch, 1987; Henry, 1994; Trotz, 2006).

Caribbean diaspora scholars have shown the importance of globally flowing cultural forms to bind Caribbean expatriates; however, organized physical activity at a recreational level is largely overlooked as a political resource that Caribbean people deploy. Cultural organizations often create sporting clubs to help bring members of their communities together. Through this study of an ethnic sport organization I probe “a range of Black ethnicities…femininities and masculinities, sexual politics, class relations, and a host of other social cultural and political positions” (Walcott, 2003, p. 141), which is essential for a deeper understanding of the Caribbean diaspora in Canada.

**Caribbean-Canadian athletes.** Examinations of sport in Canada tend to focus on mainstream activities such as hockey (Gruneau & Whitson, 1993; Jackson, 1994). Even Canadian sport history and policy texts (Hall, 2002; Houlihan, 1997; Kidd, 1996; McIntosh, Bedecki & Franks, 1987) largely overlook sports at the recreational level, in favour of amateur and professional sports, and also fail to notice the thriving sporting communities of, and challenges faced by, ethnic minorities in favour of class and gender issues (Donnelly & Nakamura, 2006 is one exception).

Ethnic associations are often involved with the organization of social activities including sports and leisure activities that define culture, allow for joyful and expressive actions, and
operate as a vehicle of empowerment. Basch (1987, p. 169) outlines how sports and social clubs in the Vincentian and Grenadian communities in New York organize competitive events with other clubs and, in so doing, provide a means of forging linkages with the wider Caribbean community. In his novel, *Netherland*, Joseph O’Neill (2008) describes the cricket cultures of Caribbean organizations in New York. He shows that cricket can provide Caribbean people with a global sense of place. No such studies of sporting organizations in Canada have been carried out.

Within the sociology of sport, the rise of post-structuralist understandings of power has led to race and ethnicity becoming increasingly important concerns, especially with regard to media representations (Bruce, 2004; Giardina, 2003), intersections with gender and class (Gissendanner, 1994), discourses and power (Birrell & MacDonald, 1998; MacDonald & Birrell, 1999), discrimination (Evans, 1997; Jackson, 1998), and politics of identity (Carrington, 2007; 2004). Canadian sports scholars who examine race and ethnicity tend to make issues of racism and media representations central.

Cantelon (1988) and Jackson (1998; 2004) have demonstrated the ways Jamaican-Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was mistreated by the Canadian media with his fall from heroic status after testing positive for steroid use at the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Longley, Crossett and Jefferson (2008) examine African American athletes who, beginning in 1946, began a steady flow of migration from the National Football League in the United States to the Canadian Football League to escape racial injustices. Longley et al., (2008) show that Canada was not an anti-racist utopia, but African American football players were able to have some success here. Humber’s (2004) chronicle of Black sport history in Canada covers a wide range of sports and athletes, including Caribbean-Canadian track stars, Karen Clarke, Perdita Felicien, and Angella Taylor Issajenko, demonstrating that all the black athletes are not men. Margaret MacNeill’s
(2009) examination of Felicien and Sabrina Razack’s (2009) study of female cricketers in
Canada also fill the void and document the influence of racism on the experiences of Caribbean-
Canadian women athletes.

Studies of Black/Caribbean athletes in Canada have focused on sports of hockey and
basketball. Multiple examinations of ‘negro hockey’ in Canada attest to the incredible brilliance
of many of Canada’s Black hockey players being matched only by their extreme exclusion from
the rewards of the mainstream system (Carnegie, 1997; Fosty & Fosty, 2004; Harris, 2003). Carl
E. James (2005) demonstrates the importance of basketball, specifically the potential for
basketball scholarships to U.S. universities, and dreams of making it to the National Basketball
Association (NBA) for Black Canadian high-school athletes. Black athletes dominate Canada’s
NBA team, the Toronto Raptors, yet Canada’s national team remains dominated by White
athletes and coaches. Abdel-Shehid (2003) describes the plight of Black ‘ballers who have
‘made it’ in Canada. A 1994 a review committee was commissioned by Basketball Canada to
review allegations of racism in the men’s basketball program. Abdel Shehid points out that
White coaches denied racism and claimed that Black high school players adopted an NBA or
“inner city” style which created problems for their national team program (2003, p. 251).
Assumptions about “different styles” depend on racist knowledge about Black men’s innate
physical power, congenital laziness, incorrigibility, and “inner city” upbringing. Abdel Shehid
shows that the committee “relied on racist knowledge categories and in its findings it deployed a
method of reasoning that erased even the possibility of racism … it assumes to know people –
who they are, what they like, and so on – on the basis of knowing where they come from”
(2003, p. 248). This spatial analysis of sport and race in Canada, along with that of Thornton
(2003), Razack (2009) and Fusco (2005) are useful to analyze how racial and cultural categories
are discursively produced and physically performed in different sites in Canada.
Summary. This section showed that Blacks in Canada have come from a variety of routes in Canada, yet their experiences are marginalized within dominant stories of nationhood. The majority of Caribbeans came to Canada as economic migrants and many experienced limited upward mobility due to racism, despite a dominant multiculturalism ideology that espouses equality for all. Nevertheless, resistance in the form of theatrical, musical, and literary representations of Black-Canada persists.

A diasporic framework that forces us to examine outernational connections complicates what has been studied thus far concerning Blackness in Canada and in sport. Moreover, shifting race research and sport research to a Canadian context offers a new opportunity to examine the influence of local spaces on the performance of race and culture. Research on sport and race in Canada has focused on (in)famous track and field athletes, and the sports of hockey and basketball. Sports unique to the Caribbean-Canadian community, such as cricket, have not been studied. This research project begins with the premise that Canada is a nation that encourages people of colour to turn elsewhere for cultural identification. In a community constructed as dislocated and displaced, we might think of the cricket pitch as one location that offers emplacement for some Caribbean Canadians. I now turn to sociology of sport literatures to explain the history of cricket and how first generation Caribbean immigrants came to see the English sport as ‘theirs.’

Sociology of Sport

This section argues that it is impossible to understand sport amongst a particular ethnic group in Canada without taking into account a history of imperialism, postcolonialism, global networks, transnational flows, and the diasporic dispersal of cultural forms. Only recently has the concept of transnationality emerged in the sociology of sport literature, despite the fact that peoples have been crossing borders and taking their sporting practices with them for centuries.
The use of sport as a diasporic resource, as a means to return to the homeland, connect with a multiply located community, and as a site of political, postcolonial resistance has been understudied. A diasporic framework, which has seldom been used, helps to understand these phenomena.

**Sport and imperialism.** In order to recognize the meanings of cricket in Canada and the Caribbean, we must examine the origins of the sport and the context of the Caribbean English colonies in which cricket developed. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a number of European nations, specifically England, France, Spain and Portugal, colonized much of Africa, North and South America, South Asia and the Caribbean. Stoler (1995) explains that colonizers became engaged in a process of ‘reciprocal supervision’ of their own behaviour and activities, and as well as those of the colonized population, as they saw themselves as responsible for the dissemination of ‘civilized culture.’ As the lower classes and racialized groups gained power, the upper classes erected more barriers between themselves and the groups they colonized (and whom they considered their inferiors) in attempts to secure their (in some cases new-found) status, yet the tastes and conduct, signs of prestige and distinction, behaviours and habits of both groups co-mingled. The co-mingling of patterns of conduct, deriving initially from very different social strata, resulted in a reduction in the contrasts between societies as well as individuals (Jarvie & Maguire, 1994, p. 147-148). The global spread of English sports also played a role in this process.

Elias used the term ‘sportization’ (1971, p. 92) to refer to the transformation of folk pastimes from violent activities to pursuits considered more modern, rational, and civilized. This process paralleled the ‘parliamentarization’ of political conflict whereby aristocracy and gentry developed less overtly violent habits for governing. English sports evolved into physical activities characterized by strict, explicit, governing rules that attempted to provide equal
chances for all to win, required athletes’ self-control and self-discipline, and provided athletes with a reasonable degree of protection from injury (Elias, 1971; Dunning, 1992). No longer were sports used as direct training for warfare: instead they became more competitive and professional with clubs for cricket, boxing, and fox hunting flourishing during the eighteenth century. English public schools played an important role in nineteenth century sportization of soccer, rugby, and tennis (Dunning, 1992; Dunning & Sheard, 1979; Guttmann, 1978).

What Maguire (1999) calls the “third sportization process,” that is, the transplantation of modern sports from England to its imperial outposts, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries coincided with a period of intense nationalism, ethnic identity and culture formation (Sandiford, 1998; James, 1963; Jarvie, 1993; Maguire, 1993) as well as a “willful nostalgia,” that is, the “intentional invention of national traditions through the performance of ritual, bodily practices and commemorative ceremonies, and at the expense of marginal and indigenous cultures” (Robertson 1990, p. 50). Increasing global flows of money, information, technology and people throughout the twentieth century, had a significant impact on sports. Worldwide acceptance of particular regulations and the standardization of equipment; an exponential growth of the media-sport production complex; and the migration of professional athletes, coaches and fans all enabled sport to be deployed in international competitions and thus provided a medium and barometer of imperial success and national identifications (Mangan, 1992; 1988).

Elias’s process sociology, with its emphasis on gradual (seemingly inevitable changes) cannot be used to explain all contemporary phenomena, however. Stoler (1995) reminds us that it is impossible to understand cultural formations in the metropole without taking into account the colony; the third sportization process, played an important role in civilizing subjects (colonizers and colonized) in the metropole and its colonies (Downes, 2005; Mangan, 1988,
Gruneau (1999, p. 121) explicitly critiques process sociologists for employing an imagined stance of scholarly detachment, emphasizing process over structure and individual agency, and not offering “an adequate theory of power or an engaged standpoint for social criticism.” Engaging with a cultural studies, feminist and diaspora approach provides a more provocative line of analysis in the study of sport, power and difference and domination in social life.

The global spread of sports (especially via mediascapes and ethnoscapes) enables them to serve as vehicles for the expression of certain ideologies, but these are taken up in local settings in distinctly heterogeneous ways, especially in settings where the ideologies expressed are antithetical to the beliefs of the masses. “The form and extent to which Western values spread through specific regions reflect the history and structure of the area in question” (Jarvie and Maguire, 1994, p. 149) in addition to the history and structure of the particular sport.

**Imperial cricket.** Cricket is a complex sport, reportedly invented in England in the 1300s, which centres around the struggle between bat and ball. A bowler hurls a ball across a twenty-two yard pitch toward a batsman standing in front of a wicket (three cylindrical stumps with two small chunks of wood, bails, resting on top). Armed with a rectangular bat (a willow), the batsman defends his wicket and attempts, after it bounces, to hit the ball. He must cross the length of the pitch and accumulate points or ‘runs.’ There is no limit to fielders’ possibilities of running, diving, leaping, falling forward, backwards, sideways, with all their energies concentrated on a specific objective, to do all they can to catch the ball when the batsman hits it, or use the ball to remove the bails from the stumps (Scalmer, 2007, p. 431, James, 1963, p. 207). If a batsman gets out he must not complain or jeer the umpire or his opponents. By the nineteenth century this complex game was taken to encapsulate the essence of English morality, and had a key role in managing not only national identity, but also imperial, upper-class, and
white identities (Williams, 2001; 2003; Boucher, 2003). The objective was to internalize in its participants a sense of team spirit, discipline, fair play and capacity for leadership – characteristics crucial to maintaining control over colonial subjects. Cricket was played in every English colony, from Australia to Zimbabwe. Cricket eventually spread from the colonial elite minority, to the masses at every colonial site, including the Caribbean.

Cricket’s role as an established international sport in the mid-1800s allowed it to offer a grand stage on which to demonstrate national prowess; therefore, cricket was “arguably more successful at uniting the peoples of particular nations” than other sports (Bairner, 2001, p. 167). Kaufman and Patterson (2005) successfully argue that in those colonies where there was 1) considerable status inequality between colonials and the colonized, and 2) change agents who continued to participate in and promote the game for hegemonic purposes even after the masses had taken it up, cricket was more successfully integrated into the dominant culture. Cricket remains an avenue for the display of upper-class habitus (i.e., restraint, delayed gratification, gentlemanly behaviour) as well as lower-class habitus (i.e., aggressive play, cursing, and noisemaking), and Caribbean nationalism.17

Maurice St. Pierre (1995a; 1995b) points out that cricket is watched and played in a manner that reflects the basic values and characteristics of a group. Among Caribbean peoples, cricket is watched and played in a style that reflects acceptance of and resistance to domination. Therefore, Caribbean cricketers have long been “preoccupied with such values as excellence, perfection and possession of a nimbleness of wit” (St. Pierre, 1995a, p. 58). The trading of repartee, rhyming and taunts is ‘training’ in self-control, a part of the history of the ‘hidden transcript’ (Scott, 1990) of resistance among individuals who are not permitted the opportunity

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17 Caribbean nationalism is in fact a misnomer, as the Caribbean is comprised of a number of nations. For a brief period, 3 January 1958 to 31 May 1962, ten British colonies were united in “The Federation of the West Indies” (Gmelch, 1992, p. 135). Other than this, the creation of a single representative international cricket team for the region in 1926 created an imagined community and “national” identity for the region. Nationalism in the various independent states was promoted via the success of the composite Windies team.
to exercise their voices. In cricket, the crowd is able to criticize people of higher status with impunity, and they do so, with volume. Caribbean fandom (emotional expressiveness, use of music, consumption of alcohol) was criticized as antithetical to ‘proper,’ ‘civilized’ behaviour in imperial cricket. Nevertheless, the Caribbean masses persisted in creating their own style of watching and playing the sport.

Imperial strategies to denigrate (especially Afro-) Caribbean playing styles (fast bowling, use of a wide array of batting strokes, and improvisation) depended on racist discourses. Caribbean cricketers and their supporters are often described by their high temperament, muscular bodies, erratic personalities and lack of decorum; ‘Calypso cricket,’ is an expression resonating with assumptions about the Caribbean as a tropical paradise where an uninhibited, carefree lifestyle reflects an equally ‘naturally’ exuberant, flamboyant and excitable style of cricket play (Williams, 2001, p. 35-36; 118). These biological and cultural explanations of Caribbean cricketers and fans obfuscates the social and political factors, the global interdependences, and the historical context that led to the game being referred to as ‘liberation cricket’ (Beckles & Stoddart, 1995), and a sense that cricketers of the 1950s and 1960s were playing for their national independence (James, 1963). In the Caribbean territories, beach cricket, yard cricket, and street cricket played by Blacks were the ideological weaponry of a subversive, anti-colonial creole nationalism while still reflecting the (racist) civilizing process the colonizers sought to inculcate.18

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18 Devonish (1995) explains that this Creole nationalism took on different meanings in different territories. For example, in Guyana and Trinidad, where Indian people make up a significant portion of the population (and the fans at Windies cricket matches), Creole nationalism did not supercede Indian nationalism when the Indian cricket team first toured the West Indies in 1953 – Indo-Guyanese and Indo-Trinidadians cheered on the Indian side. Indo-Caribbeans who felt disrespected and subjugated by Black/Creole neighbours and political elites venerated their Windies heroes, Sonny Ramadhin (Trinidad), and Rohan Kanhai (Guyana), who grabbed from all Caribbeans attention, respect and acceptance, acting as symbols of the newly emerging Indian Caribbean identity in the late 1950s. In the 1990s, a Windies team without any Indo-Caribbeans made the entire team a symbol of everything hated by oppressed Indian-Caribbeans “The team in its conquest of the cricketing world for over a decade, was for Indian Guyanese an acting out of the trampling of their rights by the African dominated side” (Devonis h, 1995, p. 187).
Initially, English domination of the game and racially segregated play reflected the imbalance of power inherent in colonialism. “The leading cricket clubs opened their doors only to the rich, male, respectable and white. Those who did not meet this standard were forced to establish their own clubs … skilful players were sometimes recruited to work at the elite clubs as professionals,” but class segregation was strictly preserved (Scalmer, 2007, p. 434). Race hierarchies were similarly protected. Afro-Caribbeans were:

incorporated into games with Whites, but they performed restricted roles. At first, they were ‘allowed’ to prepare pitches and fields and a few were ‘allowed’ only to bowl and retrieve batted balls during practice sessions … Blacks were regarded as machines in the cane fields and no less so as providers of batting practice for White bastmen/clonizers (Yelvington, 1995b, p. 17).

The international Windies team did not have a Black captain until 1960 when Frank Worrell (a middle-class, educated and ‘respectable’ Black man) became the first non-white to take up the post, despite decades of Black dominance within the sport in all of the Caribbean territories. The reduction in class and race biases in team selections at international, national and club levels over the past century has resulted in the creolization of this imperial sports culture. Stoddart’s (2006) work on cricket directs us “to approach sport as a constant and complex political factor inextricably bound up with the cultural evolution of the society within which it is located” (p. 792). Thus the particular context of Canadian racialization and multiculturalism must be linked to the ways in which cricket is played by Caribbean-Canadians today.

**Recreational master’s cricket.** The study of recreational masters cricket in the Caribbean diaspora has much to offer Canadian sport studies, Caribbean cricket studies and masters sport literatures. Carrington’s (1998) work notwithstanding, there is little research on how recreational sport, exercise, or physical activity may be used as a site of Black resistance, to
bind communities, to generate a sense of belonging, to make local-global connections, or to create a sense of “Black identity as an outernational project” (Gilroy, 1995). Recreational cricket leagues and clubs are ideal research sites; they offer a unique alternative voice within the cultural and historical context of both Canadian studies and diaspora studies.

Apart from historical studies explaining the nation’s rejection of the imperial game in the nineteenth century (Boucher, 2003; Cooper 1999; Kaufman & Patterson, 2005), little has been written on recreational cricket in Canada. Cooper explains that Canada was behind only England and Australia in terms of the game’s development in the early 1860s (1999, p. 51). Since that heyday, cricket declined steadily in popularity and could not challenge baseball as a summer sport by the 1930s. There were too few international successes on the cricket field to create any public interest and, “unlike in Australia, Canadian cricket did not benefit from the euphoria of a Test victory over England. …There were no opportunities for cricket to fuel the drive for Canadian nationalism which in turn would have created more support for the game” (Cooper, 1999, p. 60). Cooper distinguishes 1960 as the end of a century of rejection of the sport. Interestingly, nothing has been written about recreational cricket in Canada after 1960, which is precisely the time that cricket began to be revived as new migrants from cricket-playing regions such as the Caribbean not only cheered on their homeland in international play, but also played amongst themselves in (in)formal clubs and leagues.

Recreational cricket in the Caribbean has been studied from a sociological perspective for decades. Following the great Trinidadian scholar, C. L. R. James’ (1963) erudite analysis of the social importance of cricket in Caribbean societies, scholars such as Birbalsingh (1996), Patterson (1969), St. Pierre (1973), and Yelvington (1995b), to name a few, have shown the association between changes in the class, race composition, and nationalisms within the Windies team and the evolution of political cultures at the grass-roots in the various territories of the
Caribbean. It is well established that cricket for Caribbean peoples was once closely linked to Black nationalism, anti-colonialism, anti-racism and Pan Africanism (Beckles 2004; Beckles & Richards, 1998; Beckles & Stoddart, 1995; Birbalsingh, 1996; James, 1963; Manley, 1988; Seecharan, 2006; Stoddart, 1987; 1988; 2006). Hector (1998) notes that “the emancipation of Africa was a prerequisite to our own emancipation from the Caribbean. … Pan-Africanism was the politics, cricket was the vehicle of culture that we in these parts used to propel us upward and forward” (p. 45). Because they were the dominant team in world cricket at the time, the West Indies Cricket Boards’ views against apartheid in South Africa were influential, and the Windies’ success against White teams, specifically England, represented political victories over ‘the oppressors’. With the exception of Carrington (1998) who demonstrates that these sentiments apply whether speaking of the (inter)national team or recreational cricketers who equate success on the pitch to transgressing and surpassing ‘the masters,’ scholars of cricket and race fail to demonstrate the socio-cultural importance of the sport at the recreational level for Caribbean peoples now living outside of the region.

If we recognize the porosity of the borders of Caribbean nation-states, and the production of the Caribbean as a fantasy that has touched every continent, we must attend to cricket outside the region. In fact, the unification of the Caribbean territories via the Windies cricket team (there is no equivalent in other sports in the Caribbean) anticipates the diasporic condition of racialization and unification of Caribbean people from a range of nations of origins; therefore, an examination of Caribbeanness and cricket go hand in hand.

I also situate this study within an ageist field that tends to focus on the sporting practices of professional and amateur young adults, adolescents or children, and marginalizes the experiences of older athletes. Much of the work on older athletes either focuses on the psychological, health, and social benefits of exercise (Dionigi, 2007; Leavy & Aberg, 2010), or
reveals masters sport to be a competitive, formally organized institution where older elite athletes are motivated by intrinsic desires to improve their abilities through hard work and extrinsic aspirations to outperform their peers and demonstrate their natural abilities (Dionigi, 2006; Dionigi & O’Flynn, 2007). This work has been done from a social-psychological perspective, responding to the question: ‘Why do these individual athletes continue to play?’ in response to a hegemonic societal understanding of sport as an activity performed by youthful, able bodies. Hodge, Allen, & Smellie (2008) note that researchers employing achievement goal theory “have made a substantial contribution to our understanding of motivation in sport … [however,] they have largely ignored the desire for social connections as an additional goal of action underpinning behaviour in sport” (p. 160). The lack of attention to recreational athletes (and their male and female supporters) has allowed the desire to socialize to fly under the radar of those who examine the motivations of a narrowly defined group of masters’ athletes.

Sport sociologists have drawn attention to the medicalization of ageing and criticized assumptions of ageing as a process of inevitable decline. In contrast to propositions of physical activity as an anti-ageing pursuit, it has been proposed that sport among older adults may be pursued as a creative endeavour in its own right (Tulle, 2008), or as a means for older men to affirm masculinity (Drummond, 2008). The desire to develop and maintain reciprocal social bonds, or perceived belonging, has been identified in a number of studies investigating social aspects of motivation for sport participation amongst athletes of varied ages (Ashford, Biddle, & Goudas, 1993). However, none of these studies has employed a diasporic lens to examine the motivations behind masters’ sporting practices. One of the central aspects of diaspora is an emotional, social, imagined bond across borders (Gilroy, 1993; Henke & Magister, 2008). This concept of borderless communities has much to offer studies of masters’ sports.
**Sport and diaspora.** Many studies have examined global sporting flows in terms of fanship (Giulianotti, 1995; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007), professional athlete migration (Bale & Maguire, 1994), and, more recently, postcolonial politics (Bale & Cronin, 2003; Oh, 2009; Majumdar 2007). But only in the past decade have a few illuminating studies emerged to examine the intersections of sport and diaspora.

National belonging was “tested” via sport in 1990, when conservative British politician Norman (now Lord) Tebbit’s infamous “cricket test” called on diasporic ethnic minorities to prove their loyalty and desire to integrate into Britain by showing support for the English cricket team (Werbner, 2005, p. 756). Tebbit diagnosed multiculturalism as a threat, and demanded allegiance to a supposedly monocultural British nation (Hesse, 2000a, p. 4), represented by the cricket team. Carrington (1998) and Williams (2001) have shown that Black Britons would rather use cricket to cathect an explicit anti-racism platform. Recreational cricket offers an opportunity to eschew exclusion from elite leagues, overturn hierarchies of dominance, subvert police harassment, and destabilize class subordination while athletes connect to their homeland, language, ethnic pride, and community. Stoddart (2006, p. 803) found that international Test cricket spectatorship offered the same openings. In 1984, when the Black Windies team executed an historic massacre of a White English team in England (5-0 in five matches), with the result repeated at home in the Caribbean four years later, celebrations abounded in Black inner-city areas from Bristol to Leeds. The wins were labeled by these supporters as a 'Blackwash' (as opposed to a whitewash):

[I]t was very clear that they were celebrating not just a cricket victory but a far wider one in the wake of the Notting Hill and Brixton riots, inquiries into which
revealed the full social and political plight of West Indian communities in Britain. (Stoddart, 2006, p. 804)

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the reactions to the wins were similar in Toronto and New York. Caribbean immigrants were glued to their radios and televisions for the duration of the matches and they gathered at parks to celebrate, play their own cricket, and rehash the victories of “their team.” Relating victory to vanquishing the colonizers, and playing the calypsos “Cricket Lovely Cricket” by Lord Beginner, and “Sir Garfield Sobers” by The Mighty Sparrow as soundtracks for their own local celebrations demonstrates the powerful feelings of connectivity of the Black diaspora.

The bonds between Black athletes in Norway who share a distinct ‘Black space’ has also been examined by Andersson (2007), based on Paul Gilroy’s description of the Black Atlantic: the imaginary and material interaction between people who were (and in many cases still are) excluded from white privilege and power, rather than an imaginary relationship to a common (African) homeland. Andersson’s examination of Norwegian football, basketball and track and field reveals that Black athletes do not feel included in Norwegian society. The local history of the sport, national origins of the athlete and individual desire to risk being seen as ‘too sensitive’ by openly resisting racist labels such as ‘negro’ all influence the experience of double consciousness for Black athletes in Norway. The similarities to the context of rugby and Samoans in Aotearoa/New Zealand are striking. The othering of Samoans – even those representing the preeminent national side, the All Blacks – often prevents them from aligning themselves as national subjects; Samoan rugby players “negotiate an identity simultaneously informed by colonial legacy, notions of ‘homeland,’ and the economic demands of global capitalism – they occupy, and identify with, more than one national space … [rugby is] a crucial
site for (national and diasporic) political mobilization” (Grainger, 2006, p. 46). This examination of professional and recreational athletes’ emotional, economic, and political relation to the ‘homeland’ demonstrates the complicated questions of ethnicity and national belonging, cultural networks, deterritorialized identities, and anti-colonial resistances that form within the Black Pacific – akin to Gilroy’s (1993) conception of the Black Atlantic.

Burdsey (2004, 2006, 2007) interrogates the complexities of Asian football and cricket fans and players in Britain. While Asian football (soccer) fans often show allegiance to Britain and investment in British teams and leagues, ethnic minorities may choose to gather and celebrate their homeland cricket team – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka – in international competitions to connect with other local and distant compatriots, form an imagined community and symbolic link with the subcontinent. Their support is also an anticolonial and anti-local act of resistance, a symbolic rejection of ‘Englishness’ (Burdsey, 2006, p. 17). Madan (2000, p. 31) similarly found South Asians subvert Australian identities and landscapes through their sporting allegiances. In addition to supporting their national sides, South Asian diasporas form their own ‘ethnic’ teams and leagues in Chicago (Davis & Upson, 2004) and England (Roberts, 2004) to celebrate their culture and sometimes reenact political conflicts on the field.

Bruce and Wheaton (2009) expand understandings of diaspora beyond the classic focus on forced dispersal and non-dominant racial groups through their media analysis of New Zealand-born and England-buried yachtsman Sir Peter Blake. Blake is embedded in a long history of a New Zealand diaspora in the UK and the authors examine him as a flexible, transnational, cosmopolitan citizen (p. 600), represented variously as a hero of the nation, the globe, and the ocean; “the publicly-declared affinity for a white male sporting hero was seen as a strategy through which the hegemonic position of whiteness could be re-established” (p. 587) in increasingly multicultural New Zealand and UK settings where postcolonial, non-white immi-
grants from former British colonies (particularly in the Caribbean and Asia) threaten the idea of national racial hegemony. Abdel Shehid’s (2005) call for an interrogation of black diasporas in Canada must be answered. Examinations of the intersections between diaspora and sport help us to think through the Caribbean diasporic subjectivities that are forged through cricket in Canada.

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined diaspora, Black Canadian, and sociology of sport studies. I defined diaspora and pointed out the importance of attending to the spaces diasporic groups inhabit. I have shown the legacies of Melville Herskovits, who insisted that Blacks in the Americas retained elements of African cultures, even as they were influenced by dominant White cultures, and Paul Gilroy, who explained the circulation of Black cultural forms through the Caribbean, United States and United Kingdom and the resulting unified sense of identity. The fields of African and Black diaspora studies, and their discussions of enduring, influential, border-less cultural flows are essential for Caribbean diaspora scholars who trace the movements of people, money, and cultures out of the region and back.

I argued that in Canada, Black history is marginalized, ignored or denied. The literature on Blacks in Canada indicates that Caribbean populations are hidden within Canadian histories, continue to experience racism, and use cultural practices such as novels, theatre, and sport as forms of cultural expression and resistance. Caribbean sporting achievements, when acknowledged, are typically only examined in terms of racist exclusions. It is time to take into account the community-making efforts of Caribbean-Canadian groups, and the multi-national networks they form through sport.

Last, I used sociology of sport literatures to trace the history of sport and imperialism, specifically examining cricket’s role in imperial domination and resistance in the Caribbean. I highlighted the paucity of literature on recreational master’s sport and reviewed several studies
in the relatively new field of sport and diaspora. These studies show that the dispersal of people enables and constrains nationalisms as a function of race. A diasporic framework shifts attention from specific national contexts to the flows in between various sites. My objective in this project is to follow Gruneau’s (1999) classic research question: What is the relationship between sport, the prevailing social structure, and power? I examine the lived experiences of diasporic subjects and attempt to paint a picture of utopic and dystopic Black/Caribbean Canada through sport. At the intersection of the fields of Caribbean diaspora studies, Black Canadian studies, and socio-cultural sport studies lies the lacunae this project attempts to fill.

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19 Diasporas are described as utopic communities that bring together peoples to reinvent their traditions and share their cultures and as dystopic communities when forces of marginalization, alienation, and racism encourage people to identify with one another. See Clifford (1996), Gilroy (1993), and Boyarin and Boyarin (2002) for analyses of the cultural regeneration and pathologic elements of diaspora in postcolonial environments.
Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

While the literature reviewed above provides important insights into and context for an analysis of sport in the Caribbean diaspora, it is also necessary to establish a theoretical framework, or research lens through which to conceptualize this study. This chapter provides such a framework in four sections: Cultural Studies, Spatial Theory, Gender Theory, and Nostalgia Theory. The theoretical framework posits cultural, racial and national identity-making as fluid and contextual processes of travel. They are ongoing spatial processes dependent on the reproduction of power and memory.

Cultural Studies

A cultural studies perspective is employed in this research because it emphasizes the ways in which everyday practices consolidate, contest, maintain and reproduce power. Dynamic relations of power play an ongoing role in identity- and meaning-making and cultural studies helps to attend to those power relations. It requires taking culture seriously and not reducing everyday experiences and social movements to an effect of politics, economics, or long term historical interdependencies (Carrington, 1998; Gruneau, 1999). This study shows how micro-cultural practices, such as the formation and regeneration of *communitas*, are reciprocally related to macro-structures.

Hughson, Inglis, & Free (2005) have succinctly raised the point that sport scholars, particularly those who are focused on the meaning and structures of individuals’ everyday lives, are well positioned to investigate the ways in which sport strikes a balance between structure and agency, and subordination and resistance. Sport “is an object of struggles between the fractions of the dominant class and also between social classes … what is at stake, inter alia, is the monopolistic capacity to impose the legitimate definition of sporting practice and the

Sport is neither inherently liberating nor confining, but is produced within particular relations of power, and it is precisely issues of race, gender, class, nationality, and sexuality that form the terrain for power negotiation.

C. L. R. James, is the author of by far the richest cultural studies text concerning cricket in Caribbean and British societies. Beyond a Boundary intricately weaves cricket, politics, Marxism, sociology and anti-colonial resistance to reveal the inequity of power dimensions of England and the Caribbean. James shows that the ability to effectively mimic the dominant group reveals that power, language, and comportment was not natural, authentic, or innate. Rather, socially constructed hierarchies based on bodily performances formed the core of colonialism and modernity. In fact mimicry with a difference, what Bhabha (1994) calls the “double logic” of colonial discourse, exposes how difference and sameness can co-exist and how, through difference, the colonized can subvert imperial meanings, rules and hence power.

Carrington is reticent to celebrate the forms of cultural studies sport research that have vacated concerns about social inequality, power, and cultural politics, and have led to incomprehensibly obscure theoretical debates (1998, p. 277). Thus, I follow his impetus against some of these trends and propose to engage in theoretical analysis along with ethnographic data in order to develop a more integrative model to trace “the political possibilities of people’s involvement with a cultural practice” (Carrington, 1998, p. 277). My focus is less on sport per se, and more on the group of people who assemble regularly in the name of sport. Members of the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club form a communitas, that is, a vision of a meaningful, unified life, carried out in the cyclical, rhythmic world of ritual and myth. In The Ritual Process, Victor Turner (1969) outlines communitas as homogeneous groups featuring equality, simplicity of speech, joyful acceptance of fellowship, freedom from racial, gendered and economic
hierarchies, and a spiritual sense of connectedness with people. Turner sees Communitas as a release from predictability and structure, a mystical experience of oneness with people, a movement unbounded by time and space. Turner acknowledges this construction is utopic and that “in practice, of course, the impetus [to be free of structures] soon becomes exhausted and the ‘movement’ becomes itself an institution among other institutions” (1969, p. 112). In this dissertation I show that MCSC members in many respects successfully form a communitas, a care-free environment free of structure; however, not all power relations can be avoided at all times. People who are embedded in culture, histories and structures cannot completely free themselves of norms and some members are at times excluded or made to feel inferior.

A critical approach to cultural studies centres power relations, and reads all acts as political, history-making behaviours, the embodied result of contestation between agents and structures. Cultural practices such as the formation of a sport-related communitas are individual, but are also shared by a collective, and experiences are created in negotiation with dominant ideologies (Hughson et al., 2005). The cultural practices associated with recreational sport include travel, food preparation and consumption, after-parties, banquets, and fundraising initiatives embarked on by athletes and their supporters; and these community activities each provide for the performance and negotiation of power.

In addition to sporting bodies, that is, those who actually build up a sweat, score runs, and bowl overs, a cultural studies approach requires attention to which bodies are missing or “out of place” (Puwar, 2004) on the cricket pitch or even in the park altogether. How is cricket in the Caribbean diaspora constructed as an older, heterosexual man’s domain? Nassy Brown (1998) explains that “despite invitations to universal identification, not everyone partakes in the privileges of membership to the diasporic community with impunity” (p. 298); thus, we must
take into account disjunctures not only within the nation but also within the diasporic group. A spatial analysis helps to reveal the ways in which power shifts, is performed and acknowledged.

**Spatial Theory**

To understand the processes of identity and community making within diasporas a range of spatial terms have been used. Descriptions of (dis)located peoples, desires to map identities, and depictions of transnational communities that cross borders lead to a confusion of place and space: “it is rarely clear whether the space invoked is ‘real’, ‘imaginary’, ‘symbolic’, a ‘metaphor-concept’ or some relationship between them or something else entirely” (Keith and Pile, 1993, p. 2). In this dissertation I use the term ‘place’ to describe landscapes, sites, clubhouses and cricket grounds; people create these ‘real,’ material places, and therefore fill them with relations of power, politics and ideology (Lefebvre, 1991). According to Agnew (2002, p. 5) place represents the encounter of people with other people and things; it can be considered as ‘bottom-up’, localized, and associated with the familiar, comfort, and belonging. Place can not be understood outside social relations. Massey (1992, p. 12) and Vertinsky (2004, p. 8) conceptualize place as shaping and shaped by the particular set of social relations that interact within and beyond it.

Postmodern spatial theory is based on the social relations of places, or what Lefebvre (1991) refers to as ‘social space.’ I use the term ‘space’ to refer to social and mental constructs, for example: diaspora space, homophobic space, national space. Agnew (2002, p. 5) claims space “can be considered as ‘top-down,’ defined by powerful actors imposing their control and stories on others.” Spaces are subject to formation through hegemonic and counter hegemonic practices, simultaneously circulating through a given place at one time.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, there was a move in the social sciences away from seeing nation-states as bounded, fixed and homogeneous, defined against the other who is
outside. Rather, Lefebvre’s conceptions of space were applied to the power of the market “a complex ensemble of commercial relations and communication networks” and violence “be it feudal, bourgeois, imperialist, or some other variety,” which “combine forces and produce a space: the space of the nation state” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 112). Nation-states have been reconceptualized as geographic places and social spaces that are dynamically performed, socially networked, and ideologically constructed, based on tangled negotiations of interest, power, identity, and responsibility.

Moreover, nation-states are outward-looking: flows of people, media, ideas, technology, materials, and capital into and out of places create alternative deterritorialized geographies. Cultural geographer Doreen Massey (1992, 1993, 1994) refers to a ‘global sense of place’ in which places are extraverted, consciously linked with the wider world through networks of social relations. “[T]he understanding of any locality must precisely draw on the links beyond its boundaries…[local] identities are constructed through the specificity of their interaction with other places (Massey, 1994, p. 120-121). Massey argues that the local is always a “meeting place” where multiple trajectories, histories, identities and politics come together to create a social space. If we acknowledge that societies have never been hermetically sealed off from one another, and that imperialism alongside other more recent globalization processes have unleashed new sets of interdependency chains, then we must exploit spatial theories to analyze the networks that interconnect people from distant parts of the globe.

Drawing on the work of Paul Gilroy, Keith and Pile (1993, p. 18) explain that the term diaspora conjures a “an imagined geography, a spatiality that draws on connections across oceans and continents and yet unifies the Black experience.” Diasporas rely on “translocal understandings of place” (Appadurai, 1995), which assure that the lived spaces created at the
local level are not diametrically opposed to global process and flows; rather, they are interlinked, mutually constitutive, and dependent.

Transnational and diasporic communities are complex webs of interdependent relations. Diaspora scholars who examine cross-border families and return visits (Bashi, 2007; Baldassar, 2001; Baldassar & Pesman, 2005; Duval, 2004; Olwig, 2001; Sutton, 2008; Vertovec, 2004) among other related diasporic phenomena, find that their work is embedded in long term historical processes, relations between multiple nation-states, the legacies of colonialism, local-global flows and power influences on individual relationships and macro-social structures.

Studying the “meeting places” (Massey, 1994) or “contact zones” (Pratt, 1991) where people of many different backgrounds, meet, clash, merge, and grapple and where different trajectories and histories of networks and cultures flow in and out, creolizing and resisting change, requires “historicis[ing] trajectories of different diasporas, and analys[ing] their relationality across fields of social relations, subjectivity and identity” (Brah, 1996, p. 180). It is insufficient to describe diasporas along a ‘majority/minority’ axis or to study particular migrant groups without attending to their historical and current interdependencies and hierarchical positionings. Like Massey, Brah also emphasizes the question of relational positioning; she deconstructs the regimes of power that operate to “differentiate diasporas internally as well as situate them in relation to one another” (1996, p. 183). Studies of diaspora spaces (as opposed to diasporas) generate both an outward and inward looking perspective that demonstrates how global (transnational) and local (inter-diasporic) networks and hierarchies are forged.

W. E. B. Du Bois identified three phases in the formation of the Black diaspora: struggles for emancipation from coerced labour for enslaved Blacks; struggles to win human status, bourgeois rights, and liberties for free Black populations; and struggles for independent space in which Black communities could be self-determining (cited by Gilroy, 1993, p. 123).
suggest that a place such as a cricket ground has the potential to offer Blacks local and outer-
national networks and communities that may fulfill a need for independent space, enactment of
nostalgia for their youth and another place, and performances of multiple national identities in
Canada.

Spatial theory and consideration of imperial histories help us to understand how spaces
are gendered and racialized (Brah, 1996; Puwar, 2004, Mohanram, 1999). Ideologies of race,
and gender, central to the organization of the civilizing mission of British imperialists persist in
the creation of New World hierarchies. British imperial sports in particular were used to protect
White spaces, in which non-Whites were forced to prove their worth through exceptional talent
and deferential behaviour. Sports also served to inculcate manliness and (middle-class, White)
Sandiford, 1998; Seecharan, 2006; Williams, 2001; 2003) and the homosocial spaces created
reinforced patriarchal values such as the amateur code, physical sacrifice, and rejection of signs
of weakness and femininity. The importance of gender to the construction of sporting spaces is
explored below.

Gender Theory

Drawing on the concept of hegemony from Antonio Gramsci, Connell (1995) suggests
that instead of considering a single masculinity, “hegemonic” and “subordinate” forms should
be recognized and studied, thus positing masculinity as a hierarchical construct. Gramsci
understood hegemony as a means by which a powerful group demands and sustains social
leadership. Through authority more than direct violence (although the capacity for violence
underlies authority), dominant men construct an image of masculinity that embodies the
currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy. Patriarchy ensures the
domination of men over women and subordinate men. Any man may perform multiple
masculinities, performed differently in different spaces on the basis of race, class, ability, and sexual orientation, among other factors. Nevertheless, a dominant form of masculinity reigns in every space.

The assumption that links biological markers of men (e.g., a penis, XY chromosomes), social markers of masculinity (e.g., physical strength, emotional restraint), and sexuality (e.g. desire only for women) is referred to as the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990). This matrix operates to control men’s gender performances. Kimmel (1997, p. 233-234) stated that “manhood is demonstrated for other men’s approval. It is other men who evaluate the performance … peers are a kind of gender police, constantly threatening to unmask [men] as feminine, as sissies … Homophobia is a central organizing principle of our cultural definition of manhood.” The suppression of homoerotic desire and efforts to maintain a manly front ensures that men present as ‘true’ heterosexuals, and hence ‘true’ men. Rich (1980) coined the phrase “compulsory heterosexuality,” which is a major characteristic of the dominant form of masculinity within the Caribbean and its diaspora; however, of course, not every man adheres to this dominant form.

Messner (2002, p. 66) describes modern sport as following a strict “gender regime” and operating as one of society’s most masculine of institutions. “From young children’s sports organizations through the pros, sport remains one of the most sex-segregated institutions today.” Sex segregation has allowed sport to proliferate as a space where boys learn to be men and masculinity is defined through exclusion and stigmatization of less virile behaviours, weakness, femininity, or homosexuality (Anderson, 2005; Kimmel, 1997; Messner, 1989; Pronger, 1990). Coad, 2008 building on Pronger (1990) points out a paradox: “sports can also encourage sexual ambiguity. This is because homosocial desire, deprived of the athletic context, can easily be confused with homosexuality” (p. 10). He goes on to say that “while subscribing to
heteronormativity, [jock culture] keeps women at bay and keeps the boys together. Jock culture encourages close homosocial contact between males, but will not countenance homosexuality” (p. 17). Both heterosexual masculinity and homosexuality depend on a desire for the close presence of other men for their definitions. Thus, heterosexual male athletes make strong efforts to deflect suspicions of same-sex interests or practices and distinguish themselves from homosexuals. Not surprisingly, in sport this is especially prevalent in locker room culture (Curry, 1991), where men spend time in various stages of undress in the absence of women. The jokes and put-downs typically involved in fraternal bonding are “generally not meant for display outside of the all-male peer groups” and are thus “important in understanding how sport contributes to male bonding, status attainment, and hegemonic displays of masculinity” (Curry, 1991, p. 121).

This study concerns performances of masculinity and gender relations in Caribbean cricket spaces, which also requires attention to cricket masculinities and black masculinities. On the surface, these may seem to be at odds, given a) the historical importance of cricket as a means of ‘civilizing’ Blacks in the Caribbean by inculcating ‘proper’ (White) manhood, and b) the centrality of challenging entrenched notions of White colonial and imperial masculinities for Blacks’ masculinity.

With the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, colonizers directed their attention to the education of former-slaves and their children. In particular, a Puritan morality and Social Darwinism were promoted through sport in elite Caribbean schools (Downes, 2005; James, 1963; Mangan, 1981; 1988; 1992; Sandiford, 1998; Seecharan, 2006). Through academic scholarships, working class Black male students were enabled to attend private schools in which they were exposed to Anglo-Saxon civilization: the classics, Christianity, and cricket. The development of hegemonic masculinity in these spaces was constructed not only as
anti-gay and anti-woman, but also as anti-poor and anti-Black (Abdel Shehid, 2005; Carrington, 1998; Gilroy, 1993; Majors & Billson, 1992; Mercer, 1994). Whereas masculinity studies in North America have their origins in the discourses on sexuality, for studies of Black and Caribbean men in North America and the Anglophone Caribbean the origin has been quite different. “The specificities of family and gender relations in the Caribbean region, long the concern of social scientists, became the starting point for men’s studies and the men’s movement” (Reddock, 2004, p. xiv). Black men were understood as a deviant form of a Western or European norm and “were long represented as indolent, uncivilized, infantilized ‘boys’ according to the racist doctrines that underpinned slavery and colonialism” (Beckles cited by Downes, 2005, p. 6). Thus, Black men’s understanding of their own subordinated masculinity led to a variety of resistance practices, including unique patterns of speech, walk, style, flair, and demeanor (Majors, 1990; Majors & Billson, 1992); cultural expressions such as calypso and carnival that rehumanize them by “turning the world upside down” (Burton, 1995; Yelvington, 1995b; Nurse, 1999), and within cricket, demonstrations of physical prowess such as fast bowling and attack batting (Burton, 1995; St. Pierre, 1995a). Frantz Fanon, cited by Carrington (1998, p. 280) explains that it is on the basis of the Black male’s racialized identity that his masculinity is denied. Fanon resolved, since he was denied recognition as a black man, “there remained only one solution: to make [him]self known.” Thus it is through sport, a highly masculinized arena, that ideological domination is not only imposed but also contested. Black men attempt to reassert their racial identity through gender, specifically, hypermasculinity. The inclusion of Caribbean and older masculinities in studies of Black athletes provides further insights into studies of gender and sport.

20 For Afro-Caribbeans, Black masculinity is also defined against a feminized Indo-Caribbean male subject. Thanks to Dr. Caroline Fusco for highlighting this racialized aspect of gender performances.
Nostalgia Theory

Stuart Hall provides astute advice concerning the cultural practices of filmmaking in the Afro-Caribbean diaspora: rather than “thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (Hall, 2003, p. 234), we must question, what are those acts of production? One such important act is nostalgic story telling, the sharing of collective memories in an attempt to recreate, memorialize and re-live the past.

The continuing relationship with the homeland, including seeing it as the eventual place of return and a dedication to maintaining the original point of dispersal was once noted as the central feature of diasporas (Cohen, 1995; Safran, 1991, 1999; Tölöyan, 1996). Returning home may not always be possible or desired, yet diasporas maintain an emotional attachment to home (Brah, 1996; Clifford, 1997), which can be captured partly by the concept of nostalgia. African and Black diaspora literatures emphasize the ways nostalgia is enacted through emotional attachments, imaginary constructions, incorporation of African/Black ‘raw materials’ into daily practices, narrative constitutions of the homeland, and neo-African sensibilities created in the New World.

Nostalgia, from the Greek nostos (return home) and algia (longing), is inextricably linked to identity formation and maintenance (Davis 1979; Wilson, 2005). In post-modern, globalized societies, Wilson (2005, p. 8) points out, there are a number of threats, distractions and obstacles which prevent the construction and maintenance of a coherent, consistent self; “the acts of remembering, recalling, reminiscing and the corollary emotional experience of nostalgia may facilitate the kind of coherence, consistency, and sense of identity that each of us
so desperately needs.” Even if migrants are unable to make a physical trip to their place of origin, they can access the homeland and the past through shared nostalgic memories.

Nostalgia, once characterized as a private, pathological, physical illness characteristic of those forced from/unable to return home (i.e., soldiers, slaves, and refugees), evolved to be considered a normal collective emotional state (Davis, 1979, p. 14). Today nostalgia, is no longer regarded negatively, and is not only connected to pining for a geographical home. It is seen as a “bittersweet” emotion of wistful longing for the past and to recall or relive “the way things were,” combined with the recognition that return is impossible.

Studies of nostalgia today are “concerned with tracking down the sources of nostalgic experience in group life and determining what general relevance and meaning nostalgia has” for individuals, groups, and society as a whole (Davis, 1979, p. vii). Davis perceives nostalgia as a strategy to resolve the tension between the search for continuity and the threat of discontinuity – a tension noted by Stuart Hall (2003) in his description of the process of creation of postcolonial Caribbean identities. He explains that there are at least two different ways of thinking about cultural identity: “a sort of collective ‘one true self,’ … reflect[ing] the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people,’ with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning” (p. 234). The aspect of identity based on continuous unity or essence of culture that is maintained across borders contrasts sharply with a sense of discontinuity or rupture from heritage or the ancestral homeland. “The ways in which black people, black experiences, were positioned and subject-ed in the dominant regimes of representation … had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as ‘Other’” (p. 236, original emphasis). Otherness persists in and alongside sameness within diasporas.

The tension of “double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others” (DuBois, cited by Gilroy, 1993, p. 134) is particularly salient for first
generation immigrants. A potentially crippling sense of discontinuity and rupture may result for migrants who experience “a type of exile that at the same time separates one from place of birth as well from the new society encountered” (Gadsby, 2006, p. 18). At once homesick and sick of home, diasporas create identities that depend on estrangement and longing, remembering and forgetting. In her book, *Yesterday’s self: Nostalgia and the Immigrant Identity*, Andreea Deciu Ritivoi explains nostalgia as a “defense mechanism” (2002, p. 9) that immigrants use to maintain a stable identity. Longing for the past or another place provides continuity among various life stages and home spaces. Using nostalgia and positive (imagined) memories of the homeland to affirm heritage is useful to combat the debilitating effects of slavery, colonialism, and racism encountered in Europe and the Americas. Even in settings where migrants do not experience everyday racism, they may choose to recall, remake or renew the homeland to maintain a sense of self and community. Nostalgic sentiments are almost always positive; even disappointments are framed in an it-was-all-for-the-best attitude (Davis, 1979, p. 14) and, in fact, the ‘triumphant past’ and idyllic other place, contrasted sharply with a ‘lamentable present’ is nostalgia’s rhetorical signature (Davis, 1979, p. 15-16). Remembering is a political act; the past may or may not have existed as it is remembered, facts about the homeland transform into fiction, but the memory becomes *more real* with each renewal, especially as such memories are shared.

**Summary**

In this chapter I have outlined four theoretical frameworks that are useful for this study. I have shown the ways in which cultural studies draws attention to the potential for unity within sub-cultural groups and the power dynamics within and the disjunctures of diasporas and sport. Use of spatial theories helps to explain productions of culture on local and global scales and the interactions of differently positioned groups and individuals within ‘diaspora spaces.’ I draw
from gender theories that highlight masculinity as a performance, one that is constantly reinforced in sport in particular, due to the proximity of male bodies and absence of women.

Last, I show the importance of theories of nostalgia for studies of diasporas that may look over to another place, and older adults who may look back on the past, for a sense of identity, security, and connection to their ‘roots.’ These four theoretical frameworks and the three bodies of literature reviewed in Chapter Two inform the research questions outlined below.

**Research questions.**

I am curious about how those who grew up playing cricket on the street or, in the smaller islands on the beach, where they developed their batting, bowling and fielding skills (Burton, 1995, p. 96), in Island grammar schools, places of moral incorporation of colonial subjects into the nexus of health, civility, and modernization of empire (Stoler, 1995), and watching cricket on tiny grounds “cramped, short on facilities, long on excitement, and fuelled by rum” (Stoddart, 2006 p. 800) use their sport to recreate a sense of home in the Greater Toronto Area and broader Caribbean diaspora. My main research question is: how does a cricket and social club provide diasporic resources for first generation Caribbean-Canadians? I also set out to explore questions around the participants emotional connections to the homeland, perception of themselves as racialized subjects, and (trans)national practices and identities:

1. **Homeland-** What role does cricket play in assuaging or fueling their longing to return to their origins? What motivates club members to travel, where do they go, and how do cricket tours and tournaments figure into their involvement in the diaspora? What strategies do they use and resources do they draw on to recreate Caribbean homespaces?

2. **Race-** How do the sporting and social opportunities provided by/ generated within the ‘local’ Caribbean-Canadian context and postcolonial spaces, influence the formation of ‘global’ Black identities? Do local, recreational cricket spaces still operate as sites for
anti-colonial, anti-racist struggle and Black pride?

3. (Trans)nationalism- Do Caribbean-Canadians, like Caribbean-U.K. migrants, understand themselves as “stranger-outsiders” (Davies, 1994, p. 103) perpetually occupying a liminal space, “that in-between space that is neither here nor there” (p. 2)? Alternatively, do they see themselves as multiply emplaced in Canada, the Caribbean and their nation of origin? How does the increasing power and presence of the South Asian diaspora both on the international cricketing stage and at the recreational level influence their use of cricket to remake their culture? How does Windies cricket and long distance national team fandom impact Caribbean-Canadians? In the following chapter I overview the research method(ologie)s deployed to answer these questions.
Chapter Four: Methodology and Methods

This chapter outlines, in two sections, the epistemological and practical aspects of the research methods used for this topic. I begin the chapter by describing interpretive qualitative methodology and outlining the necessary provisos for qualitative research to be valid and rigorous, including the requirement that the researcher must be reflexive about the possibilities and limitations of his or her own positionality. I adhere to the conception of knowledge as fragmentary and thus position myself as neither an omniscient nor objective researcher providing a reflection of the realities of members of the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC).

This project centralizes the Caribbean diaspora, and therefore attends to and politicizes observations of public, collective affairs as well as narratives of personal, private memories. I tie these observations and narratives to (Caribbean and Canadian) national and diasporic histories, and to the familial, social, cultural, and transnational contexts of the members of the MCSC. The practice of pastiche and storytelling in Caribbean language reworked in the Canadian context reveals a uniquely positioned community, the border-transcending encounters of globalization, and the homing instincts of the community. Below I end the chapter by detailing my ethnographic research methods and procedures, including participant observation, interviews, and writing. I also demonstrate my representation strategy, which intersperses traditional ethnographic reporting with segments of evocative writing.

Interpretive Qualitative Methodology

In examining human experiences with the knowledge that we can never know them completely or objectively, qualitative methods has been particularly useful in addressing the question of lived sporting realities (Martens, 1987; Dewar & Horn, 1992; Sands, 2002). Placing
the individual at the centre of the analysis in order to understand his or her constructed reality, truths, beliefs and the consequences of these constructions (Donnelly, 2000; Patton, 2002) allows me to produce historically, politically and personally situated descriptions, interpretations and representations of human lives (Spradley, 1979). I generate this dissertation alongside cricketers who are “already doing a better job of studying/interpreting sport than is the academy” (Rinehart & Sydnor, 2003, p. 137; see also Nagar, 2003 for theoretical interpretations that arise from participants). In their daily lives and social encounters they analyze meanings and make future plans based on their interpretation of their desires and structural opportunities. These daily processes and human phenomena form the data of ethnography, a genre of writing based on fieldwork.

Ethnography sheds light on “patterns of culture” (Glesne, 1999, p. 9); interpretive approaches are particularly useful in this regard because they are based on an assumption that social reality is constructed by and through language, symbolic and cultural interpretations, webs of meaning, and signification built and used by human actors in conjunction with societal rules and norms (Boland, 1985). Interpretive approaches generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them.

Quantitative, positivist research goes to great lengths to try to conceal, deny and obfuscate the impact of the researcher on the research setting. Some qualitative approaches have followed suit, but have engendered critique from positivists for producing data that is irreproducible, ungeneralizable, not rigorous and invalid. Interpretive qualitative researchers now make no claims to reproducibility or generalizability because those concepts are based on assumptions that “that there is a reality out there to be studied, captured and understood” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 11) and that an ‘objective’ researcher can record what ‘static’ participants do, say, and believe. “But, truth is many sided” according to James (1963, p. 122);
people are like chameleons, able to change their thoughts and moods and what they choose to share depending on the pleasures and stresses in their daily lives, their interactions with a researcher, or the capacity of their memories. The poststructural, postcolonial and feminist turns of qualitative research took interpretive approaches in the direction of acknowledging that all truth is partial, all vision is embedded in discourse, and all objectivity is a mere construction, and moreover, masculinist (Guba & Lincoln 2005; Haraway, 1988; Lather, 1991). Positivists reproduce “a certain kind of science, a science that silences too many voices” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 12). Therefore, instead of generating grand narrative conclusions that apply to every person or group at all times, my objective is to paint a picture that holds purchase for some members, according to local, experiences and particular situations:

“An ethnography lacking in generalization leaves something to be desired. It is as though the author has timidly held back, forsaking the opportunity to transform observed instances of behaviour into inferred patterns of behavior, opting instead to take refuge in the aura of the meticulous scientist at work. … The important point is to state the basis on which generalizations have been formed” (Wolcott, 1999, p. 93).

Interpretive qualitative researchers seek alternative methods for evaluating their work, including verisimilitude, emotionality, personal responsibility, multivoiced texts, member checking and catalytic validity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lather, 1991)

**Validity: reflexivity, positionality, and crystallization.** Knowledge production has benefited greatly from a reimagining of the positivist notions of rigour and validity. I rework these terms in this study and understand valid research as rigorous, that is, accountable and fair (Gonzalez, 2003) and opt for validity through what Clifford (1986, p. 7) calls “a rigorous sense of partiality,” constructing a written artifact with holes and pieces, not smoothed over with an
arrogant assumption of authority. New thinking on validity abandons a responsibility for legitimization of knowledge and constructing a regime of truth in favour of research that is useful, can catalyze change, and empower participants (Lather, 1991). Validity should be seen “as multiple, partial, endlessly deferred … [and] requires the invention of counterdiscourse/ couterpractices of legitimation” (Lather, 1994, 37-38), including peer debriefing, holding our theoretical interpretations (not to mention our bodies) up to scrutiny, searching for instabilities and foregrounding the multiplicity of language games. This is a departure from classic Euro-American ethnography where embracing politics was thought to threaten the pursuit of knowledge production (Clair, 2003; Clifford, 1986) and is in keeping with ethnographies of the African diaspora and Caribbean region specifically, which sought to generate a sense of pride in African heritage, resist racial intolerance and reveal political, social and economic crises (Ortiz, 1913; Price-Mars, 1928).

In particular, validity may stem from a researcher’s commitment to reflexivity in the research plan. Nagar’s (2003, p. 357-560) understanding of validity hones in on two aspects. First, validity comes from engaging with the knowledges that ‘speak’ the languages of communities beyond the academy and working in spaces of collaborative knowledge production. Second, “transparent reflexivity,” which attempts to remove bias (and uncover truth) must be replaced with recognition of a researcher’s transitional locations, absences, and fallibilities and their impact on the analysis. Madison (2005) and Smith (1999) echo these sentiments and direct us to acknowledge the material, historical, and social situatedness of both the researcher and the researched. “Between the twin chasms of navel-gazing and navel-erasing researchers and participants should work together, creating a final product that is helpful for the community, not just to advance the researcher’s career. Participants in this project have been involved in the final writing process – their words, behaviours, actions and theories are central to the results and discussion and some participants read the text and offered suggestions and alternative readings. They eagerly wait to see their words in print, own a document of their community experiences that is free of academic jargon, and seek to prove that there is space for Blacks in Canada, on the sports fields and in academic institutions.
the ground is narrow and slippery” (Trinh, 1989, p. 28), but we must fall between in an effort to make the researcher vulnerable (similar to the objects of the gaze) and acknowledge that researchers and participants do not operate in a cultural vacuum.

One of the tensions of calls for reflexivity that warrants particular consideration is “researcher positionality” or the “insider/outsider” debate. Qualitative researchers must take into account their own past experiences, education, and social position and reflect on the ways in which these characteristics force or allow them to enter certain spaces, notice some social phenomena, or ask some questions and not others, thus shaping the particular research project.

The argument once held that researchers who are “insiders,” – that is, share one or more primary characteristics (e.g., race or gender) with the research participants – will have an automatic advantage because they are able to use their knowledge of the group to gain more intimate, honest, and “true” insights into opinions and accounts of subjective experiences (Abu-Lughod, 1988; Hill-Collins, 1986; Rhodes, 1994). More sophisticated analyses have rendered insider status null and void, claiming that social positions such as gender and race are fluid and contextual (Bulmer & Solomos, 2004; Gunaratnam; 2003; Mullings, 1999; Nagar, 2003; Naples, 1996; Twine, 2000). Research is not made more or less accurate based on the positionality of the researcher. One’s insider status might be precarious due to the ways seemingly immutable characteristics, such as gender and race, interlock with sexual orientation, ability, and a host of other characteristics, that may become more salient in particular circumstances. Furthermore, assumptions of shared positionalities are problematic because other less visible characteristics (e.g., education, marital status, class, nationality) may be deemed of primary importance for the participant or researcher. Importantly, if the researcher is ‘read’ as other than what he or she ‘is’ (e.g., rich, smart, lazy, uppity, mixed-race), insider status can easily slip away. Reflecting on her experiences as a researcher in Guyana, Brackette Williams (1996) discusses how her identity as
a participant-observer had to be negotiated “in the available system of categorical identities and their ongoing relations to conceptions of power and privilege” (p. 73). Whether her class position, local language capacity, ‘spatial promiscuity’, or skin colour mattered more in interpretations of her actions depended on the context and the social identity of the translator. Similarly, Alissa Trotz (Peake & Trotz, 1999) found that her mainly African and Chinese heritage was read as “mixed” (i.e., not Black) by Indo-Guyanese women and Black by Afro-Guyanese women, although her difference from other Blacks (‘good’ hair texture or light complexion) was evidence of advanced social capital.

Interpretations carried out by Beverly Mullings (1999) are particularly useful for this study on Caribbean cricketers, since like me, she was raised and educated in the West and shared race but not gender with the majority of her Caribbean research participants. She notes that she intentionally shifted her positionality, emphasizing different characteristics at different times, speaking with an accent, downplaying her level of education, or up-playing her knowledge of her participants’ line of work, to act as a “temporary insider” (p. 340) with Caribbean businessmen, all in the hope of getting them to identify and share information with her, without ever knowing whether or not she was successful. My own insider status, due to racial and cultural links to my participants, was contrasted by my outsider status as a female, a young person, and a cricket novice (at first). As Mullings advises, it is critical in undertaking qualitative research, to remain reflexive about the effect of the researcher presence, not only on participants’ responses, but also on the questions asked, the direction of the research and the theories employed. As MCSC members asked me to dance, offered me their seats, or flirted with me, they related to me as a young woman and instead of seeing this as a disadvantage I attempted to take advantage of the people and spaces to which this status gave me access, and used a variety of methods to collect data in those spaces. Alternatively, when my sartorial and
hairstyle choices signaled masculinity and participants expressed discomfort, I reflected on the cultural issues my ‘out of place’ body (Puwar, 2004) raised, making exclusion a rich space from which to collect data as well.

    Crystallization is a refracted methodological approach, initially outlined by sociologist Laurel Richardson around the same time as Marcus (1995) conceived of multi-sited ethnography (see below). In her now classic essay, Writing: a Method of Inquiry, Richardson (1994) suggests that using multiple research methods, theories, and investigators allows researchers to create a more complex (not more complete) picture. This is based on an understanding that there is no one truth or single view of the world:

    The central imaginary for “validity” … is the crystal, which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change and alter but are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves creating different colors, patterns and arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see depends upon our angle of repose. (Richardson, 1997, p. 92)

    Crystallization, the ongoing and dispersed process of making meaning through multiple forms of analysis and genres of representation that reflect multiple epistemologies (Ellingson, 2009, p. 125), allows researchers to “maximize the benefits of contrasting approaches to analysis and representation, while also being self-referential to their partiality” (Ellingson, 2009, p. 10). In this way, researchers can claim more valid findings because crystallization provides us with a deepened, understanding of the topic. Less important than a researcher’s innate and acquired characteristics are the ways in which these are acknowledged as having an influence on the
research setting, questions asked, interactions with certain participants, theories used and representation strategies deployed.

**Interpretive representation strategies.** Acknowledgement of the partiality of truth requires that attention be paid to the representation of research findings. This latter point has been referred to as the “crisis of representation” expounded clearly in Clifford and Marcus’ (1986) foundational edited collection, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. This crisis destabilized the research process and led to not only epistemological and ontological questions, but to acknowledgement of the inseparability of the poetic and political and the rhetorical construction (not merely reporting) of cultural accounts, because cultures “do not hold still for their portraits” (Clifford, 1986, p. 10). Often participants would rise from their seats, not merely to tell a story but to perform a reenactment, exaggerate a characteristic, or emphasize a memory. I have attempted to incorporate and recreate their stories and poetic means of communication using a variety of strategies including poetry, song lyrics and extended narratives.

It is naïve to suggest that merely changing a person’s name to a pseudonym will mask their identity given the nature of the associated narrative or quote. Sometimes it may be necessary to alter the details of a story or combine two real individuals into one fictional character to neatly portray a collective experience. Clough (2002, p. 8) explains that the fictionalization of collected data offers researchers the opportunity to import fragments of data from various real events in order to speak to the heart of social consciousness. Data can at times be disorganized and fragmentary; some participants stutter or mumble, answer questions in a confusing or poetic manner, or engage in lewd, offensive or illegal behaviour. It is the author’s responsibility to render their experiences and words coherent and meaningful for the reader, and provide participants the protection of anonymity without stripping away the rawness of real
events. Some ethnographers who examine the (moving) body, such as Sparkes (2002), Richardson (2000) and contributors to Denison and Markula’s (2003) anthology, *Moving Writing*, make the case for poesis in qualitative research representations, which stimulates different kinds of analyses, enables readers to feel the world in new dimensions, and “reduces the distance between the ‘I’ and the ‘Other’, and between the ‘writing-I’ and ‘experiencing-I’ of the writer (Sparkes, Nilges, Swan, & Dowling, 2003, p. 154). In combination with traditional ethnographic reporting, I have tried to recapture the African diasporic bent for performing oral histories in this dissertation. Below I outline the research methods and procedures I used to clarify how this ethnography was conducted.

**Methods and Procedures**

The research methods utilized in this ethnography are multi-sited and multi-method. I employed participation, observation and interviews. It would be insufficient to rely on just one of these methods due to the complexity of the social phenomena at hand. In this section I outline the rationale for multi-sited fieldwork, the crystallization approach to the production of knowledge, and the research methods I used.

**Multi-sited fieldwork.** Research on diasporas demands that ethnography be taken outside of its traditional formula of a researcher who sojourns in a single location for an extended period of time before returning to write about the experience. Many scholars suggest that research of populations that are scattered in multiple locations, maintain networks across borders, and live their lives embedded in multiple communities, requires researchers to dwell and travel along with their participants, observing and engaging in cultural patterns and intimate social interactions in many different locations (Burawoy, 2003; Falzon, 2009; Fitzgerald, 2006). These suggestions are mainly based on Marcus’ (1995) exposition of ‘multi-sited ethnography,’ his short text, *Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography*
has been foundational for transnationalism and diaspora scholars who study multiply situated subjects. Marcus’ work is inspired by Appadurai’s (1990) idea of the global cultural economy with its variety of ‘scapes.’ Marcus recommends explaining social phenomena by following ‘the people,’ ‘the thing,’ ‘the person,’ ‘the metaphor,’ ‘the story,’ ‘the biography,’ or ‘the conflict’ that crosses borders (Marcus, 1995, p. 105-110). Attention to any of these dimensions brings the researcher into contact with other aspects of global flows. For example, Cook and Harrison (2007) follow Caribbean hot sauce, starting with the harvesting of scotch bonnet peppers in Jamaica and ending with a North London family cooking fishcakes. Their description of the historical, economic, political, social, and cultural significance of the transnational flows of hot sauce paints a rich picture of Caribbean diasporic communities and transnational cultural flows.

Our contemporary attention to issues of space and place in the social sciences in general (see Mohanram, 1999; Puwar, 2004; Razack, 2002) and in sport in particular (Fusco, 2005, 2006, 2009; Wilcox et al., 2003; Van Ingen, 2003, Vertinsky, 2004) requires that we pay attention to the ways diasporic communities are (re)made in different sites, especially because spaces produce sociality (Lefebvre, 1991). Examination of a particular site, such as a cricket-ground, can draw our attention to different areas, around the boundary, on the field, in the clubhouse, at the parking lot, and the various networks, identity performances, power relations, and intersections of diasporic groups that take place. Cricket grounds in disparate countries, meanwhile, offer even richer opportunities for place-based analyses. Examination of imaginary networks and actual transnational travel is essential, but all human activity occurs in a place and also requires that we assess place-based social meanings, and for diasporas, social relations are located in multiple places.

Multi-sited ethnography displaces ‘the primary, dualistic ‘them-us’ frame of conventional ethnography … it requires considerably more nuancing and shading as the practice
of translation connects the several sites that the research explores along unexpected and even
dissonant fractures of social location” (Marcus, 1995, p. 100). Within the various spaces of my
research, and with different MCSC members at different times, my social position shifted,
forcing me to think about a variety of research methods that could be used to gain information.
Together, a multi-sited ethnography and multi-method (crystallization) approach allow diaspora
scholars to generate an intricate image of a multifaceted community that crosses borders. My
research ‘follows the people’ as they play and watch cricket and participate in cricket related
social events across the Greater Toronto Area, England, and the Caribbean.

**Research sites.** I traveled with approximately 30 MCSC members to observe and
participate in international tours and tournaments in St. Lucia (March, 2008); England (June,
2008); and Barbados (November, 2009) as well as attending home games in the Greater Toronto
Area from May to September in 2008 and 2009. The experiences differed in each site due to
the colonial histories, cultural significance of cricket, and participating teams.

Cricket has been a part of St. Lucian culture since the colonial era; however, the sport
was rivaled by football for ultimate supremacy. Inter-island competition has long been held on
the island but only in 2002 was a world-class stadium, Beausejour, built. Many of the grounds
are in dire need of reconstitution. Some grounds have clubhouses with working toilets and
sound systems, but few have pavilions. Many have only bleachers, rudimentary benches, or
large boulders and logs for seating. The sports tourism industry is just beginning to grow in this
island nation. Despite its relatively large population (170,000) few Windies cricketers have
come from St. Lucia. The local teams the Mavericks played against were typically younger on
average possibly due to a lack of interpersonal connections between the Mavericks and older St.

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22 On cricket tours, the Mavericks make arrangements through their interpersonal networks to play a series
of games against many teams within a country (e.g., St. Lucia, England, or Barbados). Tournaments consist of a series
of games where each team plays each other, culminating in a single champion. On occasion, tours and tournaments
take place within the same two-week time frame with different teams.
Lucian cricket players. They also participated in an international tournament against teams from around the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. When not playing MCSC members enjoyed the beach, tours of the island and relaxed at their hotels.

England, the country that devised and disseminated the sport, featured the most well developed grounds and clubhouses. The Black teams the Mavericks played against all rented playing facilities from more established clubs in order to host their guests in style. They did not own clubhouses of their own due to the scarcity of land and longstanding histories of many White and mixed-race clubs. Some of the teams they played against were younger than the Mavericks, indicating the ongoing interest in cricket of Caribbean migrants to England and the maintenance of the sport into second and third generations. When not playing, many of the Mavericks united with their relatives, shopped, and visited historic sites such as Buckingham Palace and Kennington Oval.

Barbados, once the colonial headquarters of the Caribbean, has a long history of elite cricket being played on the islands. Thus, the majority of grounds are well developed with beautifully manicured turfs and clubhouses featuring kitchens, change rooms, showers, and fully operational bars. A two-tier system of cricket is the legacy of upper- and working-class divisions on the island. The Barbados Cricket Association (BCA) and Barbados Cricket League (BCL) continue to operate separately, with the latter catering to working-class communities, from which the majority of the MCSC members hail. Many of West Indies cricket giants are from the island and there are a number of world-class stadiums (e.g., Kensington Oval, 3Ws Oval), in which the Mavericks had an opportunity to play. They played a friendly tour primarily against local men in their age bracket and also in an international tournament. During their stay most club members visited with local family and friends, attended fish fries and street parties, visited museums and relaxed on the beach.
Although cricket has been played in the Greater Toronto Area for more than two centuries, it has waxed and waned in popularity. Several stadiums retain world-class status: Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club, Maple Leaf A, and G. Ross Lord Park. The rest of the grounds in Scarborough, Markham, Pickering, Woodstock and elsewhere in the Greater Toronto Area are rudimentary, requiring players to bring their own matting for a pitch and boundary markers to distinguish the playing surface from the spectators area. Spectators bring their own food, drinks, and seating, and remain at the grounds from approximately noon to eight o’clock in the evening.

**Research population.** I became engaged in this research project through an opportunistic sampling strategy. In a casual conversation I had with a friend, in September 2007, I learned that our fathers had grown up on the same Caribbean island at the same time, and belonged to the same cricket league in the GTA in the 1970s and 1980s. Whereas my father had stopped playing in the early 1990s, my friend mentioned that her father continued to play and that he traveled regularly to play cricket with his Caribbean friends. I immediately contacted her father and was introduced to his friends, cricketers I call the Mavericks. This study concerns not only cricket players, but also other members of a club I refer to as the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC), which includes players’ friends and wives who attend games and social functions.

The Mavericks have an average year of birth of 1951 and range in age from 44 to 74. Census data (which includes Guyanese and Burmudians among Caribbeans) show that very few Caribbean people were admitted to Canada as ‘landed immigrants’ before 1966, and immigration from the Caribbean reached a peak in the mid-1970s (Richmond, 1989, p. 1). Migrants from the Caribbean represented more than ten percent of all landed immigrants admitted to Canada between 1973 and 1978, with the majority residing in Ontario and Quebec.
The Mavericks reflect these demographics, having an average year of migration to Canada of 1976 (ranging from 1964 to 1996), and having played the vast majority of their cricket in Ontario and Quebec.

Members of the MCSC were mainly middle- and working-class (discerned from their reports of their jobs: police officer, postal worker, engineer, retired plumber, retired teacher, retired autoworker) and the vast majority were Afro-Caribbean. They originally migrated from Antigua, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Jamaica. Approximately half were from Barbados (see Appendix D). The Mavericks’ supporters were predominantly men of similar age ranges (approximately 50-70) from the same Caribbean nations. At any given game, twenty to fifty men and ten to twenty women were present to watch the cricket game. Women were typically related to the Mavericks (wives, sisters, or daughters), and ranged in age from approximately 25 to 65. Occasionally there were women present who were (or would have liked to be) dating one of the MCSC members.

**Participant observation.** Interpretive ethnography uses participant observation as its main data collection method. I observed interpersonal interactions, styles of play, socializing, use of language expressions, and gestures at MCSC games, dinners, meetings, banquets, dances, and parties. After being introduced to the players through my friend’s father, I received the game schedules for the various teams they play for. Games were held on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and I attended the games of different teams each day of each weekend, but saw many of the same players at every ground, since each of the Mavericks plays for multiple teams. My objective to “follow the people” took me around the Greater Toronto Area, as far east as Brantford and west as Pickering, from North York in the south to King City in the north. My

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23 James Clifford (1986, p. 11) points out that senses are hierarchically ordered differently in different cultures and “the truth of vision in Western, literate cultures has predominated over the evidences of sound and interlocution, of touch, smell and taste” Although I use the Western term ‘observation,’ I used not only sight in this analysis. I observed with my body, ears, and taste buds.
initial lack of knowledge about the game and the club proved to be a benefit, providing entrée into informal conversations and questions for athletes and other club members about the sport, club, and their reasons for involvement with the MCSC.

Although I was (jokingly) invited to substitute for a number of players who became injured, ill, or intoxicated during games or tournaments, I did not participate in any cricket games throughout the 21-month participant observation period. Occasionally, I was directly involved in the game through scorekeeping, providing first aid, or helping with administrative duties; however, this should not be seen as a deficiency of the study, especially since it is a minority of MCSC members who actually play cricket. The majority belong to the club in order to socialize, which I was able to fully participate in. Occasionally I received an email or phone call; however, for the most part it was at games that I learned of upcoming social events such as meetings, fundraisers, and parties. I attended many of these events of different levels of importance, and in disparate locales, to gain insights into the making of the Caribbean-Canadian diaspora, and how sport functions as the glue binding this community. I reflected on my own experiences, and checked in with participants about their own observations as a source of data.

Maintaining tension between participant and researcher roles presented a challenge in this setting, in particular as a result of the strong role of alcohol consumption in the social activities of the club. However, as Sands reminds us, “[i]t is less a question of whether it can be done and more a question of discipline and patience” (Sands, 2002, p. 128). Accepting drinks is an important and customary means of building relationships within this community. After a few early mistakes of drinking too much and losing the desire and ability to record field notes, I developed many strategies to limit my alcohol intake without offending some of the members. Throughout the research period, I began to see the benefits of purchasing my own non-alcoholic beverage, clandestinely refilling my cup of rum-and-coke with just coke, declaring a firm rule
about not drinking before noon, or keeping a full beer bottle close by at all times – this way, when I was offered a drink, I could politely decline. In fact, my position as a young woman, who is not expected to be able to consume much alcohol, helped me in this regard.

**Interviews.** My strategy for eliciting verbal information in the field consisted of a combination of casual conversation, semistructured interviews, and *liming* (hanging out) with key informants (Wolcott, 1999, p. 52). After meeting several MCSC members and *liming* with them at a few games, I requested a chance to chat with them for my project. Dozens of short informal interviews were conducted at various social events as part of the process of *liming* with players, their wives, and other club members. My ethnographic efforts were greatly facilitated by the emphasis Caribbeans place on telling stories. Gearing (1995, p. 190) and St. Pierre (1995a, p. 58) cite Abrahams (1983) as stating that a person’s verbal virtuosity is an important marker of social prestige in Caribbean culture; the “man of words” is a highly regarded figure for his quickness of mind and ability to interact with an audience. Thus, I had few problems finding people who wanted to chat with me privately or share stories in a group setting.

I also conducted 29 in-depth, in-person, semi-structured interviews, which lasted between 30 minutes and three hours. A semi-structured format created the freedom to introduce unanticipated materials with each interview but the same general themes were addressed in each interview (see Appendix C). Members of the MCSC pointed to gaps in the interview guide and knew of other potential informants. Interviewees were cricket players (22), their wives (3), team/league/tournament administrators (2), and club members (2). Interviewees were selected with a combination of snowball and opportunistic sampling, based on their long term involvement with Caribbean-Canadian diasporic cricket communities (most had over forty years experience playing cricket and thirty of those were in Canada). Interviews took place in

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24 Whyte and Whyte (1984) cite opportunities for snowball sampling and grounded theory development as two of the benefits of a semistructured interview format.
secluded, quiet areas at cricket grounds, restaurants, beaches, hotel rooms, or on team buses and were digitally recorded and transcribed. Every participant was given a pseudonym. I deliberately chose names common to the Caribbean; some are Christian (e.g., Michael) and others Afro-Caribbean (e.g., Kundell) or Indo-Caribbean (e.g., Hussein) in keeping with the diversity of the real names of participants.

Developing close friendships with three key informants provided a balance between depth and breadth of information elicited from the Mavericks. Three men from Barbados, Guyana, and St. Lucia, who played primarily on three different teams in the GTA, and had been playing with the Mavericks for over twenty years, each provided me with information about their own histories, stories of others’ participation, theoretical interpretations, research guidance, and emotional support. All three were well informed, talkative, and friendly participants and all three presented challenges related to cross-gender (and generation) friendship, sexual harassment, and spatial gender norms in ethnographic research. In all three cases our relationships grew out of their (initially relentless) flirting. Flirtation, and a sense of play with words and sexuality, permeate Caribbean culture (Angrosino, 1986; Gadsby, 2006; Niranjana, 2006). Cricket grounds, like rumshops, are homosocial spaces infused with alcohol, where it is customary for men to comment on and ogle women’s bodies, suggest romantic or sexual encounters, and allude to their own sexual prowess (Gearing, 1995); these incidents were exaggerated while on two-week tours (as opposed to home games in the GTA) due to the hedonistic atmosphere of cricket related vacations. My key informants came to understand that my interest in them was not amorous and though sexual tension, flirting, and overtures persisted, we were able to spend significant amounts of time together at games, dances, parties, restaurants, at their hotels or on tour buses without incident. During our liming we had many opportunities to share social experiences and discuss my research.
Data analysis, interpretation, and representation. Data, including interview transcripts and field notes, were analyzed using an open coding system and NVivo 6 software. I located recurrent themes and placed them in relation to the theoretical frame that understands African/Black/Caribbean diaspora formations as historically specific, transnationally embedded, and emotional as well as political processes. I shared the findings with some of the Mavericks who offered their own interpretations and further areas of analysis. Transparent analysis was facilitated through use of field notes that record methodological and analytical decisions as well as observations. Similar themes and connections from various data sources were grouped, categorized, and used to create a bricolage that represents the MCSC as a diasporic resource for Caribbean-Canadians. The twin of data analysis, interpretation, requires making sense of the categories generated, and discovering what patterns of behaviours there are and what significance they have for the population under study. Data analysis and interpretation are ongoing.

Sections of evocative writing (Richardson, 2000) in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven are highlighted in *italic text* and are based on interview and observational data. The use of these segments, in combination with traditional academic reporting, results from three epistemological premises and experiences in the field. First, ethnographic encounters are not neutral; rather, they are practices of situated knowledge production and neither the writing of field notes nor final ethnographies should be portrayed as transparent reflections of reality. To call traditional ethnographies fictions may raise hackles, but the fashioning of narratives about one’s and others’ lives requires rhetoric, poetry and politics, which are inseparable. My incorporation of stories, poems, songs and extended participant narratives open space to make myself visible in the text, an important element of ethical ethnographies (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Haraway, 1988) and to reveal participants’ heteroglossia.
Second, I recognized during fieldwork that in some cases, the same question asked twice yielded different responses from participants depending on the circumstances (e.g., public versus private discussions, with or without alcohol consumption, or whether the question came from me or one of the participants’ peers). In some cases, interview responses and stories I overheard were coloured by forgetfulness and nostalgia for youth, for home, and for the past, which made the data they were eager to share with me “unreliable” by positivist standards. I have attempted to capture their “imaginative truth” (Rushdie, 1991), exaggerated storytelling, the vibrancy of Caribbean-Canadians exchanges and the role of linguistic practices in defining a community. I follow George Lamming’s (1953) seminal coming-of-age narrative, *In the Castle of My Skin* and present participants’ Patois voices, although my own remains in Canadian English. In slipping between dialects, I discursively affirm participants’ multiple attachments.

Third, writing some stories using fiction allowed me to portray some data that might be damaging to some participants; I maintain their anonymity while relating the richness of their everyday experiences. Stories may not reflect real events accurately. Instead, they may offer “a manner of speaking… the coherence, integrity, fullness and closure of an image of life that is and can only be imaginary” (White, 1990, p. 24), giving “order and direction to events that otherwise might be perceived as random or isolated” (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997, p. 1).

Jacques Derrida (1980) issues a warning – as soon as the word ‘genre’ is sounded a limit is drawn: one must not risk impurity, anomaly or monstrosity – genres are not to be mixed. Thus I do not announce a genre here. Diaspora theorists Paul Gilroy (1993) and Barnor Hesse (2000b) explain that Blacks’ dynamic oppositional structures require a different political and philosophical vocabulary from the mainstream. Gilroy observes W. E. B. DuBois’ technique of selectively and intermittently supplementing traditional sociological writing with personal and public history, fiction, autobiography, and poetry. *The Souls of Black Folks* and *Darkwater*
“produce a self-consciously polyphonic form” Du Bois felt was necessary to “convey the intensity of feeling … the writing of black history and the exploration of racialised experience demanded” (1993, p. 115). Incorporating autobiography, poetry, field note narratives, poems, song lyrics, and segments of interview transcripts into traditional ethnographic reporting, I attempt to capture how the data was collected, the richness of stories I was told, intensity of behaviours I observed, and the theoretical implications of the research findings.

**Human research ethics.** Participation in this study was low risk. All interviewees signed voluntary consent forms (see Appendix E). They were made aware that they may be disappointed with the research findings or may come to see that their opportunities to change the system in which they participate are limited. Participants benefitted from this research through the opportunity to talk about their experiences; sharing knowledge of the history of Canadian cricket leagues and the Caribbean presence in Canada; clarifying for themselves why they continue to participate in this activity; increasing their awareness of the benefits of cultural community groups for their personal identity, community improvement and for the development of marginal sports in Toronto; and documenting their histories before the MCSC becomes “extinct.” Reflective writing enhances the ethical standards of this dissertation because it allows me to highlight ethical quagmires that were presented during the data collection process and demonstrate how they were dealt with.

**Summary**

Here I have provided an overview of the interpretive qualitative methodology underpinning this research project. I adopt a vision of truth as partial and research findings as ultimately shaped by my multiple (and shifting) social positions and my interactions with differently situated participants. I explained the importance of researcher reflexivity and positionality for validity in qualitative research. My approach to qualitative methods emphasizes
decreasing the researcher’s power over participants and consultation with participants, not only in the final writing stages, but throughout the research process, to assist in generating fair, non-linear, artistic renderings of the culture under study. My research methods, including participation, observation, and interviews took place at multiple geographic sites (in Canada, Barbados, England, and St. Lucia) and multiple local settings (cricket pitches, hotels, beaches, and banquet halls). The subsequent chapters present the fruits of my labour, the research results and discussion, followed by a conclusion.
Chapter Five: Celebration and Charity as Caribbean Community-Making Practices

In this chapter I outline the ways in which the Caribbean diaspora is configured through cricket and its attendant social activities. Caribbean immigrants are enabled to create and maintain friendships and social capital through cricket, as well as use their cultural and social activities to create a sense of community. I begin with a story that represents the ways many Caribbean-Canadian men ‘discovered’ cricket in Canada. This narrative is based on the overwhelmingly similar experiences of many of the Mavericks and supporters.

I play cricket for the telephone company in Barbados. It was June of 1975. I went to this one game up in St. Andrews village on a Saturday and everything set for me to leave for Canada the following day. And I remember, like it was yesterday, as I was walking off the field one of the guys on my team come runnin’ and literally dive at my feet. I had a pair of Gary Sobers boots that my father brought me from England see? They had the autograph on the side, you know? They were pretty new and it hadn’t really occurred to me what I would do with them when I was leaving, but this fella, boy, he knew. He dive at me and tek me off me feet. He strip those boots off me quick fas’ and him say “You’re not going to need these where you’re going!” and run away. Well, that’s what I thought too. I thought, well you know, It’s not likely I play cricket in Canada and I’m not going for life, anyway. I plan to come here for five years and further my education and then head back. I thought, I’ll get those boots back soon enough. So I walk the rest of the way home in my bare feet.

I didn’t bring any gear here at all. I stayed with my sister first and just one week go by when I sitting in the front room relaxing and a small blue Dodge pull up. A big black man dressed in white get out the car and approach the house. I thought he was a baker, actually. I
thought, wow, in Canada de bakers deliver de bread! Then I see through the window he don’t have no bread. He ring de doorbell and when my sister get de door dat man come in like he familiar with de place. “Hello an’ good afternoon,” he said. I recognize his Jamaican accent straight away. We lived next to a Jamaican woman growing up an’ she always say dat. “Hello an’ good afternoon.” It end up that he was my brother-in-law Trevor’s buddy, and it wasn’t a baker’s uniform but cricket clothes he was wearing. I couldn’t believe my eyes. I say “You play cricket?!” stunned. I thought he’d say, “You know, just a few West Indians get together every once in a while,” but he tell me he plays in the Toronto and District League every weekend and that I should come. Well, I went with him and Trevor, and I joined the team that Sunday afternoon. That was a very bright spot in my first days in this country because there was the hope of continuing playing cricket.

We get to de ground an’ I see dey rolling out dis thing looks like carpet. I hear dey calling, “Where’s de spikes? Where’s de hammer?” And dey nail it down right on de grass. That shocked me. I asked, “What’s dat?” and Trevor explain to me that in Canada we play on dis stuff called matting cause de pitch don’t have turf. I was used to playing on turf so dat was strange, but other than dat, it was basically like walking onto de field at home in Barbados. There was people at de games selling all sweet bread, and fish cakes, and black pudding, and what you call souse. And de people dem sell beer, and pop, and stuff from deir cars. But Trevor tell me not to drink beer straight from de bottle in case de cops come around, since it illegal here. Luckily, everyone have de plastic cups ready! You would see de whole fie! pack with people and deir kids. On a Saturday or Sunday everybody come out to watch de game. I ran into guys here at de cricket grounds who were cousins or brothers of my friends from back home. Before I got here I never expec’ fe see so many black people.
The next week at cricket a guy tell me they hiring at the phone company in Scarborough. So I go to this job fair, get hired on the spot, and end up doing an easier job than I did home, but it was for Bell Canada instead. Even though lots of West Indians worked there, you know, I don’t know if I could have survived here without cricket. Some of us guys been playing together at these grounds over thirty years. After a while you just realize that league cricket isn’t really your thing. It get too competitive, guys getting hurt all the time, so we start the friendly masters team and we’re still at it. It’s our passion that keeps us going. My love for the game is just being outside on a nice sunny day. Seeing the blue sky, green pastures, white cricket clothes, a bright red ball. Being able to score some runs and have my friends give me the accolades I deserve. You know, that’s something that I would give almost anything for. During the summer I give up picnics, parties, whatever, just to be in a cricket game. My wife is of the opinion that cricket is my mistress. I say, “Well, of course!”

This chapter explores the diasporic practice of (re-)making community, specifically, the (re-)generation of Caribbean communities through cricket and its associated activities. I share the above narrative, an amalgamation of many cricketers’ voices, to introduce some of the main themes of this chapter. Many migrants come from the Caribbean with short term educational and economic goals in mind. As James (1963) describes Learie Constantine’s decision to migrate to England, many of the Mavericks were talented cricketers and never would have settled abroad if they “had had not only honour but a little profit” in their own countries (p. 109). Their decision to migrate “was the result of personal choice arising from national neglect.” With white or even light skin, they “would have been able to choose a life at home” (p. 110). Instead, they moved to Canada where they were not greeted by professional cricket opportunities. They gave up hopes of playing professionally, found competitive recreational leagues, and the social capital necessary for employment and friendship. At the cricket grounds
they were immediately introduced to a uniquely Canadian environment (e.g., matting, strict alcohol laws) and distinctly Caribbean setting (e.g. food for sale, throngs of Black people). The language they use is a mix of standard Canadian English and Caribbean Patois, signaling their African ancestry, multiple allegiances and emplacement in Canada and the Caribbean diaspora.

Below, I outline two main ways Caribbean-Canadian communities are regenerated. First, MCSC members re-create the cricket environments of their homelands and their youth, through *liming* with food, alcohol, jokes and conversation. Community-making operates at the interpersonal scale of family and friendship, and MCSC activities unite individuals. Second, the members donate money and cricket equipment to local charities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and organizations in their various homelands. Through these practices, they are able to renew a broader sense of community at the scale of the neighbourhood, ‘at home’ in their nations of origin, ‘at home’ in the Caribbean, and ‘at home’ in the GTA. They “fun(d)raise” money to pay for various aspects of their cricket trips, which helps to create the celebratory and convivial atmosphere, central to *liming* at home and away games.

**Getting a Little R and R (Rice and Rum): Regenerating Community through Liming**

Despite the freedoms that decolonization has brought for many Caribbean people, the concept of freedom “remains a constant and daily preoccupation within Black vernacular discourses and cultural practices” (Noble, 2008, p. 90). Struggles for and negotiations over diverse conceptions of freedom are not situated strictly within “party politics and political nationalist movements that characterized earlier anti-colonial and civil rights politics. Instead they are increasingly being traced out on the intimate contours of the body and the self” (Noble, 2008, p. 90).

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25 Although matting is used in some Caribbean nations (C. L. R. James describes the use of matting wickets on p. 61-63 and 83-85), many MCSC members described their surprise when they encountered matting for the first time in Canada.
MCSC members liberate themselves by carving out space in the GTA that is just for “their people.”

**GTA cricket: a Black social space.** Individual actors, whose relationships facilitate the exchange of material things and information, produce social spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 77). In any location a multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces overlap. Considered in isolation, such spaces are mere abstractions, but close examination of the symbols, signs, performances, and networks within reveal the social structure and power relationships that helped to form them. Carrington (1998, p. 283) outlines the Caribbean Cricket Club he studied in England as a “discursively constructed Black social space.” He does not specify the ethnic identities of the players; rather he sees them as black in opposition to the white cricket majority. Among the MCSC members Afro-Caribbeans are the majority in terms of numbers and cultural dominance. In this section I explain the importance of cricket spaces to Mavericks’ development of social networks, and the centrality of *liming* to the generation of a Black space.

The majority of MCSC members spent their childhoods and teenage years in the 1950s and 1960s living out the struggle for independence of their Caribbean nations; however, national independence did not free them from economic reliance on England and other wealthy nations. Club members migrated to Canada mainly in the 1970s and 1980s to fill labour shortages and secure income for their families. While much of their lives were completely transformed upon migration, especially for those who arrived in winter, cricket remained constant. They described joining teams as a saviour for them in their first months in Canada.

In some cases, family members, or friends from work introduced the Mavericks to the cricket community. In other cases they found work and even family (some cricketers met their wives) through their interactions at cricket matches and related social events. Through the
interpersonal networks of a tight knit Caribbean community, Mavericks such as Mason were able to join cricket leagues and ease the transition to their new country:

I went to trials for the Trinidad and Tobago team and I didn’t make it, so I say “Let me jus’ come to Canada an’ start my life.” I could have stayed back one year an’ everyone telling me “Stay, you’ll be selected when you’re older.” But I just decide I want to start makin’ money. … At that time there were so many jobs here. They were beggin’ us to come. It’s just what you did – finish A levels [secondary school exams] and go to Canada or New York or England find work. I get a job and make friends, that’s when I found a cricket team to play wit, so it seem everyting work out. (Mason)

Many of the Mavericks found work in factories or fields like policing, finance, and trades where a small number of Caribbeans were working. Through the men they met on the job some were introduced to league cricket:

When I came to Canada first, I eventually hooked up with the West Indian community people and they encourage me to you know, come out and have fun with them. So being new to the country I tink that was my – I would say – that was one of the focal points of me getting out and start playing cricket. (Erol)

Mason and Erol, through their new friends, set about playing competitive cricket and recreated Caribbean spaces through their liming practices at games.

For a new immigrant who felt “lost,” cricket offered a sense of familiarity, family and security:

I didn’t know that there was cricket played in Canada. I always ask and nobody ever knew. … I lived in a predominantly White neighbourhood. That was Ajax

All names are pseudonyms.
and at the time when I came there was no West Indian store. To get a West Indian store you had to come all the way back into Scarborough … You see a Black person in Ajax it was like “Oh my god!” … And I remember one day my wife was driving down Baseline [Road] and she saw a big sign, “Cricket plays here” and “Practice on Wednesdays” … So I went and I was the only Guyanese. All Bajans (from Barbados) and Trinidadians, but it was comfortable, you know? (Winston)

For Caribbean men new to the GTA, cricket provided instant access to a broader network of Caribbean people. As Vertinsky reminds us, the standardization of sporting landscapes “can make the elaboration of place-bound identities more rather than less important” (2004, p. 11, original emphasis). In the case of Caribbean men who, in many cases, are forced to transform soccer fields and baseball diamonds into cricket pitches, the transformation of the place into a Black, Caribbean space is especially important. Upon arrival in Toronto, like Caribbeans in New York, migrants “develop a panethnic Caribbean identity as a result of interacting through these networks with other immigrants from the Caribbean” inevitably giving their “ethnic identity a transnational focus” (Rogers, 2001, p. 181). Winston, an Indo-Guyanese who felt isolated in a White neighbourhood shifted his primary category of affiliation from national group (Guyanese) to regional group (Caribbean) and racial group (Black) based on his lack of access to other Guyanese people and the mixed nationalities of his first team members.

Warlie first arrived in Canada in the winter. He tried to learn to skate – unsuccessfully. He was thankful when he found a group of Caribbean men to play cricket with. I capture some of his sentiments in this poem:

*In Toronto there’s no ocean to jump in, so the Black man plays cricket and dominoes.*

*If I want to see other West Indians, any ground is where I go.*
I can be with the fellas and just relax. Winters are long, summers short.

I tried to skate once, but the ice cracked. Now I don’t fight it, cricket’s my sport.

Warlie described surviving Canadian winters as a struggle; the ice cracking beneath his feet is a metaphor for how insecure he felt when he first arrived in Canada. He enjoys being active, and feels imprisoned by cold weather, since he does not enjoy any winter sports. Summers, in contrast, are full of physical activity and opportunities to relax among friends. He plays cricket and dominoes and made many connections at the cricket ground.

Characterizing a Caribbean cricket team as “an arena that allows for Black expressive behaviour” (Carrington, 1998, p. 283) may appear to obfuscate the actual racial identity of some of the participants; however, my findings show that MCSC members, even those who are not phenotypically Black (e.g., Indo-Trinidadians and Indo-Guyanese), often refer to themselves as Black – in one case explicitly citing the Black Stalin calypso song “Tonight the Black Man feelin to party/ tonight the Black man feelin to jam.” This claiming of a Black identity removed from biological markers of race (i.e., skin colour) is in part due to the hegemony of Black culture in the majority of the Caribbean territories (Segal, 1993) and in Windies cricket (Devonish, 1995). “In spite of the ambiguous nature of the relationship between nation and nationalism in the West Indies, what is evident is the Afrocentric basis of the claim to being West Indian” (Niranjana, 2001, p. 261). Indo-Caribbeans such as Warlie and Winston are blackened in relation to the White majority and also in opposition to South Asians within cricket spaces.

I asked one of the Mavericks, Lawrence, to explain to me the difference between Black culture and Caribbean culture and he, a Trinidadian of Spanish and Indian heritage, told me that we are all Black: “All o’ we Black, you know. In Canada dey tek a look at me and dey don’t knew I Black till I start talkin’. Then you have in the Caribbean, you have the Negro culture
everywhere, so how can you separate Black and Caribbean?\textsuperscript{27} Lawrence’s desire to hide, minimize, or de-emphasize the importance of his Indo-Trinidadian ethnicity can be read in many ways. Reflections on the racialized experience of research show that multiple and cross-cutting social relations produce points of (dis)identification with participants, and have a great influence on the information that is shared with us (Mullings, 1998; Narayan, 1993; Peake & Trotz, 1999). Lawrence’s perception of me as a Black woman of Caribbean descent may have led him to more eagerly extol the equivalence of Blackness and Caribbeanness. Nevertheless, the majority of the Mavericks are Afro-Caribbean and they allow their culture to dominate the club. They ignore many Indo-Caribbean-specific cultural forms, choosing to emphasize instead Black cricket heroes, music, and drinking.\textsuperscript{28}

Constructions of Indo-Caribbean identity are not primarily in relation to the colonizing European, as it is in India; ‘rather, the difference at stake is difference from the ‘African’’’ (Niranjana, 2001, p. 262). Furthermore, Munasinghe (2001, p. 12) points out, drawing on Segal (1993), that ‘mixing’ became a peculiar feature of the Caribbean and ‘pure’ races were seen as outsiders. Blacks were seen as ‘native,’ ‘Creole,’ ‘mixed,’ and ‘authentic,’ while Indians were seen as ‘pure’ and denied genuine Caribbean status. Therefore, it is easy to see how Lawrence perceives himself as ‘authentically Caribbean’ -- that is ‘mixed’ and, due to hegemonic discourses, by extension ‘Black.’ The use of Black diaspora theory, in this context, takes on meaning as a term to deny Caribbean belonging to Indo-Caribbeans. In this dissertation I use Black diaspora and Caribbean diaspora interchangeably with the acknowledgement of the contradictory, complex and situationally contingent use of the term Black by Caribbean men of various backgrounds.

\textsuperscript{27} ‘Negro’ is a term used as a conscious sign of respect among older Caribbean persons (Peake & Trotz, 1998, p. 26).

\textsuperscript{28} Although an Indian diaspora framework could also have been employed here, analysis of Caribbean diaspora flows specific to club members of Indian descent remain outside the scope of this project.
The summers of 2008 and 2009 in the Greater Toronto Area were among the rainiest that I can remember. It rained at least once almost every weekend from May to September. Nevertheless, the Mavericks were out with their friends playing cricket under dark clouds and grey skies; if and when it rained, they continued to play until someone decided the risk of injury was too great. At that time they would call off the game and retire to the grassy area outside the boundary where cars are parked to join spectators in the non-cricket aspect of their weekend rituals: creating Black/Caribbean spaces through liming with their teammates, opponents, and spectators. The fact that MCSC members are forced to park their cars on the grass surrounding the boundary means that occasionally the fête atmosphere is punctuated by the sound of a ball cracking a windshield. Men gathered at their cars were then briefly reminded that they were in fact at a cricket game. They turned around, heckled a player or two, then returned to their conversations. Players and spectators took advantage of coolers full of food and drink, supplied their own lawn chairs, and used their vehicles as a sound system, shelter, restaurant and bar. In better weather more spectators came to the games and stayed longer afterwards; however, regardless of the forecast, every weekend, all summer long, at least twenty-two players and a few dozen spectators occupied various cricket grounds and contiguous parking zones of the GTA in their efforts to reconstruct home and regenerate their communities. Werbner (2005, p. 745) points out a paradox of multiculturalism: “in order to sink roots in a new country, transnational migrants in the modern world begin by setting themselves culturally and socially apart.” This is the function of the spaces formed at the cricket grounds.

GTA cricket spaces feature people from a number of different Caribbean territories including Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada and the Grenadines, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. However; national differences are usually minimized in favour of cultural aspects that nearly all territories share, such as the practices involved in liming. This code of
homogeneity is occasionally perforated by inter-national conflicts; however, eating, drinking, dancing, and spirited rounds of verbal sparring known as *the dozens* (United States), *gaffing* (Guyana), *picong* (Trinidad and Tobago), or *keeping noise* (Barbados) are central to the making of a seemingly unified Caribbean diasporic community. The ways in which Caribbean men and women tease, heckle and mock each other in a friendly manner with a combination of jokes and insults, socialize in an antiphonic pattern, speak using poetry, proverbs, and Patois is characteristic of Caribbean communication rituals (Cooper, 1993; Angrosino, 1986) and African linguistic customs (Adams, 1991; Brathwaite, 1984; Green, 2002; McLaren, 2009), and are Black identity marking practices.

The use of Patois in diasporic settings has been shown to provide for its speakers a sense of identity. The language is not “broken,” “bad” or a dialect of English; Patois draws directly from African linguistic structures and is common enough throughout the Anglophone Caribbean for men and women from different nations to communicate with each other. MCSC members keep their African ancestry alive with every word as they discuss their families, local and international politics, dominoes, and cricket. As Madan (2000, p. 29) notes of Indian diasporic cricket fans, in “talking cricket,” articulating allegiances and negotiating hybrid spaces, these subjects actually speak their identity as [African descendents, Blacks, and/or Caribbean-Canadians] into existence.” Their joking and socializing are the lived spatial practices that denote the cricket grounds as a Black and Caribbean homespace.

Paul Gilroy’s (1993) theoretical conception of the Black diaspora helps to think through questions of ethnic and racial identity and how the creation of Black cricket spaces, like black music, captures the phatic and ineffable residual traces of racial terror that are the reality of life in the modern West. Black cultural forms “can be used to challenge the privileged conceptions of both language and writing as preeminent expressions of human consciousness … their special
power derives from a doubleness, their unsteady location simultaneously inside and outside [modern, colonial] conventions, assumptions, and aesthetic rules” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 73-74).

Although all members of the club Carrington (1998) studied were from the Caribbean, he does not characterize the space they created as specifically Caribbean because of the club’s significance as more than merely a group of co-ethnics; the movement “to create nearly autonomous spaces are an attempt to resist what might be described as the ‘terrorizing white gaze’ (hooks, 1992) within public spaces. … [W]ithin a wider White environment, the cricket club provides many of the Black men with a sense of ontological security” (Carrington, 1998, p. 283). The Mavericks create a Black space in which they comfortably commune.

Attention to Black cricket spaces and the dramaturgy, enunciation, and gestures of communication of the *liming* therein, reveals how diasporic identities are (re-)made. Based on the seminal work of Lefebvre (1991), relativist understandings of space have become critical in studies of globalization, transnationality, and diaspora. Communities are no longer thought of as bounded within a place. Rather, cross-border flows of people articulate in networks of social relations (see Appadurai, 1996; Massey, 1994; Voigt-Graf, 2004) and the places they occupy are outward-looking social spaces, infused with social meanings. The MCSC members do not have a clubhouse made of bricks and mortar. There is no formal, indoor place to eat, drink, dance, or play dominoes before, during or after cricket. However, Club members create space for the activities that interest them and the identities they assume. All athletes lime before and after games, but it is an inherent feature of the sport of cricket – hours of passive waiting for one’s turn at bat – that allow the Mavericks to lime during games. Below I outline the ways in which they recreate Caribbean cultures, and thus generate Caribbean spaces before, during and after games.
Pre-game liming. In this section, I show that on their way to games, or before their games at the cricket ground, some players and spectators are already generating a celebratory, carnival atmosphere. Burton (1995) explains “carnival” and Caribbean “street culture” as a social, cultural, and psychological complex unique to the Caribbean. As a result of slavery with manual labour of the most crushing and dehumanizing kind imaginable, it should come as no surprise that the pastimes of Caribbean cultures would place an extraordinary emphasis on carefree vitality and rehumanizing celebrations.

On the way to games, whether on tour in a bus or in their personal vehicles, the Mavericks play and sing along with “oldies,” calypso, reggae, and country songs as well as American popular ballads. More recent music styles out of the Caribbean such as reggaeton, ragga and dancehall are not welcome since the Mavericks celebrate the music of “their generation.” On the bus to one game while on tour in England, one player contributed a Frank and Nancy Sinatra CD and a rhythm and blues CD to the ambiance, and players belted out lyrics to “Saying something stupid like I love you” at the top of their lungs. When Marvin Gaye’s “Let’s Stay Together” came on, Warlie stood up in the aisle of the bus and serenaded me. His performance included a finale where he got down on one knee and sang with outstretched arms (not an easy feat for him due to his ailing, aging joints). “How do you all know these words?” I asked him. “You haffa born early like me!” He replied enthusiastically as he struggled to stand.

Michael, who was also “born early” drove me to several home games in the GTA and insisted on belting out the lyrics to reggae remixes of country ballads by Willie Nelson:

If I made you feel second best/ Girl I'm so sorry I was blind
You were always on my mind/ You were always on my mind

Singing and/as flirting is an important means of cross-gender communication and marking the space as explicitly heterosexual within this community. Given that I was most often
the object of many of the Mavericks provocative behaviour, I had to carefully negotiate being friendly and building rapport, with not appearing romantically or sexually available or interested. Unfortunately, many of the ethnographic techniques that elicit the best information (e.g., spending extended periods of one-on-one time with informants), can be mistaken for dating. One strategy I used to avoid romantic encounters was interacting with many of the MCSC members when possible to avoid the impression that I was only interested one of them. In particular, associating with players’ wives and girlfriends was effective to abate some of the Mavericks’ advances. Some women took on an explicit mothering role and ‘protected’ me from flirtatious players by demanding that they leave me alone.

On one cold and windy Saturday in May 2008, I had bundled up before I made my way to Scarborough to watch the Mavericks take on another team comprised predominantly of Caribbeans. It was the early stages of my research, and I was still making myself familiar with some of the spectators. I approached a group of three women, wives of three of the players, whom I had seen the week before. They were the only women at the game the previous week and again they had come prepared with lawn chairs, blankets and large umbrellas. I set up my chair beside them and they expressed surprise that I had come back to another game. I told them that I would be at all the games, all summer long, but that I was surprised that they had come back, especially since it was so chilly and it had been pouring rain the previous Saturday. They acted as though there was nowhere else they’d rather be:

The problem is people – young people these days don’t know how to relax. We
need time to do these long games and lime or gaff as the Guyanese say. You come early and stay late, just relax. … Once you have a West Indian pace of life, this is all you do on the weekends. (Candy)
Money cyaant buy dis, you know. People wit money not here an’ dey don’t know what dey missing! ... We don’ wan’ no shopping or watching TV. That’s North American. What we want is lime. That might appeal to our children – walking up and down the mall – but that’s not us. (Tayana)

Percelle, the eldest of the cricketers’ wives, sat back, adjusted her sunhat (which was unwarranted, but indicated her hope that the sun would emerge), and took out a novel. “That’s what’s wrong with Canadians.” She said, matter-of-factly as she wrapped a blanket around her legs. “You’re always supposed to be on the go. Here on the weekends (she took an exaggerated deep breath). Aaaaaaaahhh. Ain’t it?” She looked to me for confirmation that spending time at the games is relaxing. I nodded. “That’s the West Indian in us.” Knowing that one of the aims of my research project was to explore Caribbean culture in the diaspora, Percelle spoke as though she had effectively summed up everything I needed to know: Caribbean culture involves relaxing.

These women contrast their Caribbean and Canadian cultures and posit the cricket grounds as ‘outside’ Canada. They ‘travel’ to the grounds to escape a (young) mainstream, consumerist Canadian society. Their descriptions of themselves as embedded within a relaxed, Caribbean weekend culture exposes the degree to which they have integrated a “North American pace” into their lives from Monday to Friday. “The world of carnival is, as many writers on the theme have stressed, a negation or subversion of the structures, hierarchies and values that obtain in society during the rest of the year. Carnival is ‘the world turned upside down’” (Burton, 1995, p. 95). Cricket spaces are carnival spaces that allow for a make-believe counter-society. If they spend their weekdays in paid and unpaid employment, on the weekends, at cricket matches, MCSC members do nothing but enjoy themselves, negating the norms of mainstream Canadian society. They use the cricket grounds as a venue to relax and take their
weekend leisure time very seriously because during the week they are forced to comply with an ‘on the go’ fast paced, stressful schedule. These women arrive early to games, set up their seats, arrange their umbrellas to shade them from the sun (or protect them from the rain), open their coolers full of snacks and alcohol, and set about the business of relaxing. They are proud of their weekends’ “West Indian pace of life” and explain relaxing without spending money and “walking up and down the mall” as part of their sense of Caribbeanness. They claim consumerism is a big part of being Canadian that they do not subscribe to, yet their clothing (new, bright coloured tops and shorts), accessories (big earrings, gold watches, multiple rings and purses to match their outfits), and choice of alcohol (imported beer and expensive cognac) belie their anti-consumerist attitudes. Nevertheless, they emphasize that they are committed to *liming* on the weekends, which is essentially free.

Bishops is a sixty-nine year old male supporter who migrated to Canada in 1989, but has been visiting the GTA to work and stay with family since 1962. He umpired for the Mavericks from the time he migrated until he developed cataracts a few years ago. Bishops still arrives to every home game at least an hour early. He no longer needs to prepare for the game; rather, he arrives early so that he can “have a drink, or whatever. See who is about … I like being around, so it doesn’t disturb my weekend. This *is* my weekend. ... How long I been comin’ here? So long I can’t remember (laughs).” Pre-game *liming* has been a regular part of Bishops’ weekend routine for twenty years. He talks with other MCSC members over the cacophony of rhythms that emanate from multiple car stereos in the parking lot. He reminisces about past games, heckles his friends, and enjoys a game of dominoes or two. His weakened eyes prevent him from driving, but his sister brings him to the matches in the mornings, and picks him up late at night, giving him the entire day on Saturday and Sunday to lime with his friends.
I arrived to many games early enough to watch the Mavericks’ pre-game routines and saw a niche where my expertise could benefit the community. I had noted that the players were constantly complaining about joint and muscle soreness, but never did any warm up routines or stretches. One morning I suggested that I might use my expertise as a kinesiologist to lead the group in calisthenics or, if they were interested, I could put together a pre-game exercise routine that would help them to strengthen their muscles and protect their joints. My attempts to give back to the research community through my skills as a fitness instructor elicited a lot of laughs: “The only fitness these guys do before the game is the bottle! Well, you see it in the morning. That’s the only fitness (motions drinking a beer). They got very strong elbows and biceps (laughs)” (Winston). My colonialist assumption that I ‘know’ what this community ‘needs’ was exposed. At every game, before the captains tossed the coin to determine who would bat or field first, side-line drinking began.

“Jamaica Rum” is not a real brand name. Nevertheless Courtney, a spectator, announces, “Jamaica Rum is the official sponsor of the match!” as he offers cheers to other spectators. He says, “My sport start!” indicating by lifting a beer to his mouth that he is involved in a pre-game drinking competition – as far as I could see, the only rule is: keep drinking. Spectators were not the only ones involved in that ‘sport.’ Many of the cricketers enjoyed a few brandies before taking the field. Layton explained why he did not need to stretch or exercise before his matches:

You will see a lot of cars and you will see the trunks open and once the trunks are open we are having our little ritual, which is our pre-game spirits. We call it “blood thinners” which keeps the body loose.

A few players performed a two or three stretches and gentle throwing and catching drills before some of the games, but this did not preclude them from imbibing also.
Before games (and before MCSC members were fully intoxicated) were occasions for more serious discussions. MCSC members do not often discuss the negative experiences of racism in Canada – however, they do see themselves as racialized subjects. Most players and supporters recounted experiences of institutional or interpersonal racism, such as being turned down for a job for which they were qualified, being reprimanded for infractions that were common among all employees, being stared at on a bus, or sensing (especially white women’s) fear or disgust when alone in an elevator or seated on a bus. Discussions of racism were rarely named as such, but a tacit understanding was shared between players who spoke of Whites as “they,” and described a racist look or feeling they experienced.

Invariably, they relied on a neoliberal mantra of having a “thick skin,” getting an education, and using hard work and perseverance to overcome barriers. Having a close-knit network of friends and family also helped them to survive, especially when they first arrived in Canada. “Racial barriers that block their path into the mainstream make it necessary for these black immigrants to hold onto their transnational ties and the accompanying exit option” (Rogers, 2001, p. 186). The “exit” does not have to be to an entirely different nation-state. MCSC games and events provide a separate space for Blacks to share their struggles and create an alternative community. Beyond escaping racial barriers, many of the MCSC members join together because they enjoy each other’s company and find it easy to create a care-free social environment at the cricket grounds. This group, lacking in social structure and hierarchy is what Victor Turner (1969) refers to as a communitas.

Every Maverick game featured a celebratory atmosphere, but approximately one third of the Mavericks games were fête-matches, a cricket game and fête (party) in one, featuring music from a loud sound system and disc jockey (not just spectators’ cars), food from a caterer (not just one of the players’ wives), and an award ceremony. Fête-matches were typically held in
honour of a visiting team from Windsor, Ontario; Montreal, Quebec; the Caribbean; or United States. However, one of the biggest fête-matches of the summer was between locals – the Percy Cummins Memorial Match is held every July in honour of a Toronto Police officer of Barbadian descent who died in the line of duty:

[The memorial game] is Metro [Toronto Police] versus Barbados Ex-Police. On that day you must come early or will not get a place to park anywhere. Many senior officers come. Share and Camera [Caribbean-Toronto newspapers] come to do stories on it for the local players. There is no stereo system unfortunately because we don’t have a clubhouse but people blast music from their cars. It is something the whole community is involved in. (Winston)

“The whole community,” refers to all of the members of the MCSC, not all of the Caribbean-Canadians in the GTA. There are some obvious constituents of that community missing: those who are queer, between the ages of 10 and 40, Francophones, and non-drinkers, to name a few, are not overtly welcomed in this celebratory, Caribbean space. Nevertheless, there were approximately 300 MCSC members, men and women mostly in their 50s and 60s, along with their friends and family, attending the Memorial fête-match.29

On the day of the Memorial match in 2008, I made my way to the grounds early so that I could get a parking spot. One hour before the game was scheduled to begin, only a few players and a handful of supporters were present. I wondered if I had gone to the wrong location and asked one of the men I saw relaxing at the scorers table. “No, dis [Mavericks], dey always startin’ late boy! You know ’bout West Indian time?” West Indian Time requires the addition of

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29 Many more women (mostly wives of male MCSC members) attend fête-matches, banquets, dances and fundraisers than regular season games. The guarantee of a festival atmosphere and having other women there with whom to pass the time encourages more women to attend these events. Those few who go to regular season games often bring friends along to keep them company.
at least one hour to any game’s start-time. Tettey and Puplampu (2005) explain that members of
the African diaspora adhere to a mainstream concept of time in their workplaces and in dealings
with institutions outside their homespace; however, within their communities they revert to
African time, Black People Time, Island Time or West Indian Time, which is non-linear or
polychronic and does not dwell on schedules. “The fact that they are able to apply appropriate
time schemes to particular contexts is an indication of the dialectics of continuity and
discontinuity that characterize the in-between spaces these communities occupy” (Tettey &
Puplampu, 2005, p. 154, original emphasis). Hall (1959) explains that social groups embedded
within polychronic time share a “silent language” that allows them to avoid misunderstandings
and tensions. Starting games late, no matter what country they are in, without generating a
conflict suggests that the Mavericks and their peers throughout the diaspora retain the cultures
of their African and Caribbean homelands.

By one o’clock, the scheduled start time, the crowd had thickened, but several players
were still missing. However, no one who had arrived on time seemed to mind or even notice that
the game did not start promptly. Some men started up a game of dominoes, played on a table-
top specifically designed to fit on top of the city’s one metre tall garbage or recycling bins found
at the park. In this way, players could stand and play, doing away with the necessity of
transporting chairs (or putting efforts towards getting a clubhouse). Others were gathered around
the trunks of their cars, filling their plastic cups with a caramel liquid I assumed to be rum or
brandy, telling jokes and talking aggressively. Some players were getting into uniform, using
the area around the boundary as their change room with no apparent concern for modesty. They
sat on the grass, applied their ointments, bandages, braces, and ‘blood thinners,’ in preparation
for the game. By the time the game started I was thankful that I had arrived early because the
field adjacent to the boundary had rapidly filled with cars. At the coin toss there were over 100 spectators and close to 200 more joined us by the end of the day.

**Liming during games.** In this section I show that the music, alcohol, and conversation create communities similar to what the MCSC members (imagine they) experienced at home. This popular Edwin Yearwood song was featured at many of the matches in 2009. It eloquently captures the mood at the grounds:

*West Indians, misbehaving/ Any excuse for celebrating,*

*Nothing can’t touch the mood I'm feeling/ Right now this feels like home again!*

*Any time I hearing, sweet soca pumping/ Feels like I'm home again,*

*Watch the ladies work it, sexy ladies work it/ Feels like I'm home again,*

*We don't plan on leaving, can't beat this feeling/ Feels like I'm home again,*

MCSC members use music and other cultural forms to make cricket grounds in the GTA feel like home.

In cricket, only the batsman and bowler are engaged in every play. The fielders and the other batsmen spend ninety percent of the game waiting for their turn in the spotlight, leaving ample time to drink and socialize with each other during games. One might expect such a relaxed approach to come from spectators, not players, but due to the non-competitive ethos and friendly nature of the Mavericks’ cricket, being on the field does not stop them from telling jokes, heckling other players and even eating and drinking. At one game, I witnessed Otis fielding at third man position (close to the boundary) while drinking rum and coke from a plastic cup and devouring a curry chicken roti wrapped in a napkin. He kept his beverage and lunch just outside the boundary – out of respect for the sanctity of the field, I suppose – however, in between plays he came over to chat with some of the spectators there while he ate and drank. Burton (1995, p. 91) explains that the “constant and indispensable involvement of the crowd in
West Indian cricket can be paralleled in many other Afro-Caribbean cultural institutions where there is no absolutely clear-cut separation between ‘performers’ and ‘spectators’.” For example in Afro-Christian religious worship there is passionate interplay between ‘priests’ and ‘congregation.’ In carnival the performers and the masqueraders eventually become indistinguishable. Caribbean cricket can be best appreciated and understood as a similar “collective rite” and “popular fiesta.”

A close examination of the porosity of the boundary helps to link Lefebvre’s (1991) and Massey’s (1994) spatial analyses. The boundary marker in traditional cricket is a heavy white rope that encircles the playing field. The Mavericks, lacking in many of the resources of more wealthy cricket clubs with permanent establishments, mark their boundaries with pylons spaced approximately seven meters apart. Consequently, an imaginary line connecting the pylons separates players and spectators. This porous boundary marker is symbolic of the ways these Caribbean-Canadian men play and watch cricket on local and national scales. Lefebvre’s notion of spatial practices emphasizes that rooms, parks, and churches have no meaning in and of themselves. The social relationships developed within create their meaning. Thus, for the cricketers, the boundary does not distinguish players and non-players. Locally, the supporters are often former players or current Mavericks who are taking a day off. They are close friends with the players and do not allow an imaginary line to separate them. Their back and forth conversations and combining of ‘serious’ sporting play with ‘frivolous’ word play, resists the competitive, serious, and hierarchical traditional construction of the sport, and is in line with Afro-Caribbean transformations of cricket into a fête or carnival atmosphere where boundaries are always transgressed.

In a broader sense, the Mavericks continue to play cricket with their friends and family members in and from other nations. The imaginary line separating nation-states, such as that
between Canada and the U.S. is also porous. Massey (1994) emphasizes spaces as “extraverted.” Local places are grounded in global flows that are unrestrained by boundaries. The modes of belonging to a place (i.e., within the boundaries) are defined by a multiplicity of political, social and cultural practices and procedures in other places (i.e., outside the boundary). Therefore, the players (and their food and drink) that slip through are essential to the creation of a global sense of place and *communitas* among Caribbean-Canadians.

Although eating while playing was against Otis’s captain’s wishes, when the weather is hot and a team is visiting from out of town, some cricket etiquette is abandoned in favor of the fête. Warlie’s Barbadian-British brother who came to visit him in the GTA for a few weeks said, “I like this game. It reminds me of when Maple play home all of you keeping noise here.” His comparison of the Mavericks in the GTA to Maple Cricket Club in Holetown, one of Barbados’ most esteemed clubs, is evidence that the Mavericks have done a great job recreating a homeland environment through cricket.

At fête-matches, calypso, soca, and reggae versions of pop songs and oldies fill the air. At one game in St. Lucia a very loud, rusty green jeep, pulled up alongside the grounds and Sutara announced “Reggae truck come!” as though this was one of the regular features of the match for which she had been waiting. She got out of her seat and was grabbed by her husband, Hussein. They danced at the side of the field even though he was fully dressed in cricket whites, with his pads on, waiting for the next wicket to fall so that he could go in to bat. Spectators and players grabbing women, including me, to dance around the boundary was a regular feature of the Mavericks’ fête-matches.

The experience of dancing as a significant element of the fieldwork process lends itself to methodological theorization regarding performative, embodied, or sensuous ethnography. My hand appeared tiny clasped in a balloon fingered glove and I acknowledged that unique insights
can be gleaned by pressing in close to the body of a participant holding me in one arm and a cricket bat in the other. Though I hardly have the space to consider these issues in full here, I merely hope to draw attention to the fact that the importance of physical and emotional proximity to building rapport in field relationships cannot be underestimated and a gendered, spatial analysis requires attention be paid to the interaction of real bodies, not abstract concepts.

The nature of Caribbean dance, the wining (circular motion) of the waist and jooking (thrusting) of the hips of male and female partners simulates intercourse (Cooper; 1993, 2004; Noble; 2008), and may be considered problematic behaviour for an ‘ethical’ data collector. Under a (biomedical) research ethics model – in which, unfortunately, socio-cultural research is often subsumed – our obligations to avoid sexual contact with participants are clear. However, the assumption of researcher and participant asexuality conflict with a participant observation ethnographic methodology in Caribbean settings and begs questions about the ethical limitations of studies in which the researcher is positioned as a gendered, sexualized, and even erotic subject (see Kulick & Willson, 1995). I danced with players around the boundary to have a full experience of the entertainment provided at the cricket grounds. I followed the lyrical instructions to put my “han’ in the air an’ shake it!” “Wine down low” or “Roll it gal” and quickly got to know many of the male and female players and spectators as we enjoyed our time on the dance floor (the grass around the boundary) together. I became drenched in sweat and out of breath alongside participants; socializing in this way with MCSC members allowed me to demonstrate my knowledge of Caribbean culture and position myself as an insider through each twist of my hips. Dancing with older men also made me vulnerable at times, as they ogled my body, attempted to grope me, or endeavoured to seduce me. Negotiating my boundaries and role as an ethnographer in this setting presented its challenges; however, I opted for some risks and fuller participation rather than the safety of strict observation based on Winston’s advice “You
cyaant come ’ere an be serious. Reading books an’ whatever. Dis cricket is a fun ting! You mus’ loosen up, still!” I was often admonished to put down my books, relax, and join in the festivities. This was an overt reminder that insider status must be negotiated and performed in order to be maintained. Constant reading and writing copious notes marked me as an outsider and a careful balance between attachment and detachment must be maintained in anthropological research.

Terrel took great pride in the history of the club and the way it brings people together every weekend:

We play an entertaining form of cricket. It is a community ting. We all know each other. That is what makes it enjoyable. There are more spectators at our cricket than any other cricket in Ontario because we are set up as a community cricket club. … You see there we dancin’ an’ singin,’ here, we do a prayer before it [second innings] is starting. It’s not just sport for us. (Terrel)

The prayer and moment of silence among players standing in a circle on the field before the game resumed after a tea break demonstrated to one MCSC member, whose brother had recently died in Barbados, that he has the support of his fellow players – that they are more than just a sports team, that they empathize with him and consider each other family. By describing their activities as “not just sport,” Terrel explained that MCSC provides a resource beyond cricket matches. They are a social community that draws on each other for emotional support. Their friendships are so long lasting (over fifty years in some cases) that some MSCS members consider each other “fictive kin.” Karen Fog Olwig (2001), Vilna Bashi (2007), and Constance Sutton (2004, 2008) point out that Caribbeans are involved in family networks that knit blood relatives and friends across global spaces. Their research on diasporic families focus on women’s experiences and roles in maintaining social and kin networks, especially underlining
the inclusive nature of the concept of family, including fictive kin who are “like family to us” in childrearing and emotional support (Sutton, 2004, p. 245). This study demonstrates that men also preserve communities and develop social capital through the relationships they renew with their friends and family members across the diaspora.

During games, the Mavericks entertain each other with spirited rounds of verbal sparring featuring ribald jokes, witty insults, and clever trash talking. The consumption of spirits typically accompanies their talking, which increases in volume and intensity as each afternoon turns into evening: “I find that they [Barbadians] are very aggressive in the sense of conversation, very noisy, makes a lot of noise. ‘Always miserable’ I call it (laughs)” (Layton). Caribbean men can be aggressive conversationalists – especially during domino or cricket games, which often go hand in hand. Every cricket match was accompanied by a simultaneous dominoes game at the side of the cricket grounds. Outsiders may misconstrue the constant yelling of the domino players, spectators, and even some cricketers as fighting but, as Otis and Layton explained, friends say what is on their minds and do not take it personally:

It’s a fun bunch. We have our ups and downs but when that’s finished we all family…When its done I don’t hold it against any person … You figure a bad field placing, or bad batting order or bad bowling change, these are things that can happen that cause cricketers to get frustrated, but after we leave the fiel’ we all one group. Like it never happen. (Layton)

Although Layton was shouting and swearing at (and about) his captain for the better part of ten minutes, he insists that there are no hard feelings. Otis agrees:

You see, for me I figure if me and you is friends an’ I get upset wit you an’ you get upset wit me I should be able to tell you how I feel an’ it should be no problem between me an’ you. When me speak me mind we should be able to sit down an’
have a drink an’ be happy ’bout letting we one another know how we feel. … I
don’t care how loud it get.

Their demonstrations of verbosity, volume and vehemence are central to performances of Caribbean masculinity. Barbadian diasporic novelist, Paule Marshall (1983) explains that the idiom of a people, the way they use language, reflects their very conception of reality. The Mavericks loudly ridicule each other, take note of people breaking the rules, and point out failures, often in a humourous manner in their everyday speech, demonstrating the importance of being heard, freedom of speech, justice and perfectionism in Caribbean communities.

A popular spark for loud disagreements around the boundary is a differing philosophy about the objectives of the cricket games and tours: recreation and vacation versus responsibility and competition. For example, the umpires for their matches are usually volunteers: MCSC supporters or current players who are taking a rest-day assume the responsibility. They don a white jacket and hat, carry six stones or marbles to keep track of the legal balls in each over, and are not permitted to consume alcohol. Mavericks are often resistant to taking on an umpiring role, especially because if they are not playing that day, they want to drink and lime around the boundary with their friends.

On one occasion, a few players from the batting team who were low in the batting order were asked to share the umpiring duties for a few overs each. They refused and an intense argument broke out around the boundary, with the captain yelling about players “Not having any fucking respect” and the players shouting that they cannot be told what to do (“I’m nobody’s bitch!” was a phrase that was repeated often). The use of sexist and/or homophobic remarks is commonplace in the community, reinforcing the notion of the cricket grounds as a place to make boys into (hegemonic) men (Carrington, 1998; James, 1963; Williams, 2001), and for performing a particular style of heterosexual masculinity. As a result of their differing
philosophies about appropriate behaviour, the games, matches, meetings, and post-game parties were punctuated by big disagreements.

When Hussein, a 67 year old Maverick was bumped from his spot as opening batsman for two consecutive games he threatened to quit cricket all together. The captain had suggested that the seven top Mavericks should remain in the lineup at all times to improve their chances of winning. The other players were described as “the walking wounded,” capable of bending down for balls, but often unable to get back up. Spectators often called out to the players to remind them that they were “playing cricket, not football (soccer)” because they were constantly using their feet to attempt to stop balls in the field instead of diving for catches as they may have done in years past. Hussein announced to his teammates:

I was around here from the origins [of this team], and he think he can play some fucking “super seven”? You see him? No fucking loyalty! Where would dis masters team be without me? We’re supposed to be playing friendlies. Raas!

Hussein’s swearing and use of the expletive “raas!” (which translates most closely to damn!) were uncharacteristic of him and demonstrated his anger and sense of disbelief that he was being cast aside in favour of younger players. The ‘super seven’ were not only the seven most talented, but also the youngest and most fit of the Mavericks. The blow to Hussein’s ego that came with the realization that he may be considered too infirm for this team erupted in a verbal explosion. However, his ‘anger’ dissipated as quickly as it erupted, demonstrating that the performance of anger was more authentic than the emotion itself. In his examination of the linguistic innovations and performances of the Black diaspora, Gilroy (1993, p. 85) notes that an “amplified and exaggerated masculinity has become the boastful centerpiece of a culture of compensation that self-consciously salves the misery of the disempowered and subordinated.” Majors and Billson (1992, p. 30) also point out that symbolic displays of toughness defend a
black man’s identity and gain him respect. After a team meeting where the recreation versus competition issues were hashed out at length, amidst a combination of aggressive posturing and cool disinterest, the manager agreed to prioritize recreational not competitive goals, and give every player equal game time. Subsequently, Hussein re-entered the lineup as opening batsman for some of the games, but the ‘super seven’ remained in every game for which they were available.

A final example of the players “keeping noise” and acting “always miserable” around the boundary involved a controversial decision by one captain to minimize drinking amongst players on tour in England. At a meeting two months prior to the trip, the Mavericks voted for a captain and vice-captain to be in charge of the travelling team. The captain, Marshall, promptly enacted his first order of business, a rule that no member of the team would drink while in uniform. This rule meant that cricketers could not drink until the end of the game (six to eight hours in most cases) if the Mavericks batted first, and if they batted second, alcohol could only be consumed after they were caught, bowled, run out, or what the Mavericks call “tief” or “steal” out. “It’s the only good part about getting steal out,” Vilroy said with a broad smile across his face as he exited the field after the first game and walked directly into the change room to get out of his uniform and crack open a beer. “Get steal out means you got robbed – not bowled out, but the umpire stealin’ for the other team,” Erol explained to me.

Controversy blossomed, however, when Erol, slated to bat eighth in the second innings, decided that he could not wait to crack a cold one. He was stealthily sipping beer from a plastic cup when the team captain spotted him, confiscated his drink, and suspended him for one game. Erol was very upset and called the captain a dictator as well as other more crude names. Despite raising no concerns when the rule was proposed at the meeting, most players saw the restriction on alcohol during games as too severe once it was in effect. Layton explained to me that when
they go on bus trips they usually have the opposite rule: “You must drink from the time you get off the bus, then bat your age at least! These are the rules of the road for every man.” His suggestion that a sixty-year old man could score sixty runs every time at bat was an exaggeration, but conveys the idea that drinking, being intoxicated while playing, and playing well is an important way these Caribbean-Canadian men ‘do gender’ (and race). Carrington instructs scholars to pay attention to the symbolic dimensions of various cultural practices and the multifaceted forms of constructing self (1998, p. 276). He goes on to explain that the prevailing characteristics of masculinity (power, control, authority) have been historically denied to Black men since slavery. Without “access to positions of power and prestige which, in gender terms, are regarded as the essence of masculinity in patriarchy … black masculinity is a highly contradictory formation of identity, as it is a subordinated masculinity” (Mercer cited by Carrington, 1998, p. 279). Colonialism configured Black masculinity as feminized and emasculated and left the Black man’s body as a source of denigration. Therefore the claim to a hypermasculine body is a claim to manhood and an assertion of a positive Black identity. An inability to display the same sort of physical prowess the Mavericks did as youth has been replaced with an ability to drink as a display of vigour, stamina, and strength.

The association between alcohol consumption and sporting prowess is not unique to Caribbean men. Collins & Vamplew (2002) note that since the 1800s sportsmen in the United Kingdom have used alcohol to aid strength and stamina, improve courage and confidence, and relieve stress. Among the Mavericks and cricketers throughout the Caribbean diaspora drinking while playing is standard (see Carrington, 1998; 2008; O’Neill, 2008), drinking is especially important while touring, which doubles as a vacation for many players and their partners.

On tour in England, one member of the opposing team joked to a late arriving teammate of his, “Listen, there’s no drinking today,” making fun of the Mavericks’ rule. The player
stopped frozen in his tracks for a second before saying “No what?! Just hush you mout’ jackass!” The opposition and English spectators taunted the Mavericks by pouring extra-stiff drinks for themselves. The opposing team’s captain remarked as he shook his head, “Man cyaant drink?! What?! But I thought this a touring team. Man cyaant drink, man cyaant happy!” He was truly sorry for Erol, who had been suspended.

When the rule was introduced, the captain explained that the Mavericks would be travelling as a representative team. He reminded his teammates that they signify the GTA and the entire nation of Canada and must show the Englishmen that they are serious about cricket. “They [English players] need to know that even though we’re from Canada, we know ‘bout cricket. We need to play like at home [in the Caribbean].” For him, “play like home” meant play well, like the Windies team used to, not like the second tier Canadian team. One player piped up “I drink when I play home!” and Marshall responded, “Ok, then, don’t play like home!” Marshall’s desire to show the English players what good cricketers they are, stems from insecurity about his cricketing authenticity as a Canadian citizen.

The imagery of what cricket would be like in England, the birthplace of cricket, is something that some of the Mavericks had been holding on to for over half a century. Their fantasy of ‘authentic’ cricketers – talented, serious, sober players – was ultimately incompatible with the style of play of the Black British men they encountered, who shared their culture and were ‘serious’ only about liming, their performances of Caribbean masculinity, and its associated drinking culture. The expression “Man cyaant drink, man cyaant happy!” spoken in Patois directly links Caribbean masculinity and alcohol consumption. If pleasure, fun, and happiness are motivating factors for men’s participation, then alcohol is a necessity.

St. Pierre (1995b, p. 112) explains that the cultural emphasis and value in Caribbean society placed upon things ‘White’ resulted in emulation of Whites by non-whites, yet the lack
of associated upward mobility resulted in frustration, aggression, and a range of resistance practices, including a vigorous expression of ‘ungentlemanly’ conduct as a means of seizing some control from a variety of economic and cultural mainstreams in relation to which they are subordinated. This controversial means of seizing control is described extensively by Caribbean diaspora theorists’ examinations of dancehall music and dance performativity (Cooper, 2004; Noble, 2008) and, as I argue here, in alcohol-infused noise-keeping at the cricket ground.

Deborah Thomas (2002; 2007) and Denise Noble (2008) link middle-class ‘respectability’ to the legacies of national independence movements within which the brown middle-class positioned itself as a leader of the nation by “reproducing the colonial value system” (p. 37). Efforts to control the exercise of variant vulgar sexualities and unseemly behaviour are closely tied to both colonial legacies and postcolonial nation-building efforts. For non-whites, the performance of proper behaviour, that is, moral respectability, was tied to an aspiration to be accepted by the English as equals and to establish fitness for inclusion in the rights of liberal citizenship. This is a lesson the Mavericks learned through the vestiges of colonial governance and through cricket they experienced as boys and young men, before their territories achieved national independence. Even in post-colonial eras, mastering Englishness remained a lofty goal, particularly in Barbados (and in Canada).

To be clear, drinking in public is illegal in the GTA. Intoxication, associated with loud, aggressive, and lewd behaviour is contrary to the ethos of self-restraint and decorum of the proper citizen and Puritan cricketer. I suggest that fête activities, including over(t)drinking at cricket grounds express a postcolonial politics and resistance to bourgeois restrictions on Black men’s behaviour. The Maverick’s captain, Marshall, attempted to emulate these restrictions – to contain, passify and civilize his teammates – with his rule. His decision to try to enforce colonial behaviour restrictions on a postcolonial population shows that the “cultural
achievements of the black Atlantic populations exist partly inside and not always against the
grand narrative of enlightenment and its operational principles” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 48). Marshall
reproduced neocolonial leadership in his captaincy, or at least he tried to, and this was brought
into a diasporic setting through the Mavericks’ cricket trip. He had a double inferiority complex,
of not being English enough because he was from Barbados and not being Caribbean enough
because he was from Canada. His assumption of English (even Caribbean-English or Black
British) moral and cricket superiority was based on an assumption, as exposed by Ann Laura
Stoler, of English superiority that was used to justify imperialism. Marshall, a descendent of the
colonized, still had a belief in his inferiority and the necessity of mimicking what he believed
proper English behaviour to be. His desire to present the team as more sophisticated cricketers
ended up having the opposite effect. Instead of being regarded as gentlemen, the Mavericks
were ridiculed for being “soft,” “weak,” “poofs” (homosexuals). “Dese guys cyaant play less
dey drunk!” Terrel exclaimed when the sober Mavericks’ wickets started to fall.

MCSC members spent a lot of time around the boundary keeping noise about Marshall’s
rule and when the resistance of his teammates became too strong to ignore – nearly one week
into the tour, on the bus home from a game – Marshall renounced the no drinking rule. I suspect
this was due to his sense of impending mutiny and because he recognized that the purpose, to
show the English how serious they were, was not validated. The Englishmen he wanted to
impress were diasporic Caribbean men like himself, whose primary reason for playing cricket
was to have fun and socialize; limiting the Mavericks’ alcohol consumption limited their
enjoyment of the tour as well as the pleasure of their opponents. He acceded that the rule would
remain relaxed as long as the players did not embarrass themselves, their region or their country
of residence. The team was very happy about this news. They had already been drinking
Courvoisier clandestinely at the back of the bus, but this was cause for overt celebration.
Another round was poured openly for everyone, including me. The team also celebrated by performing imitations of Erol complaining about not being allowed to drink:


(Layton)

Players were holding their bellies laughing at Layton’s accurate impersonations. Layton is known as a man who specializes in reconstructions of who said what and when, in the hotel, around the boundary, and in the pavilion, clubhouse, pub, or bus after a game. Everyone sitting at the back of the bus – also known as “where trouble start” – was laughing hysterically. Layton cut into their fun by reminding them that “The Ayatolla” (his new nickname for their captain) “is no longer on patrol, but we can’t abuse it.” Abrahams (1970) emphasizes this kind of talk as play. By mocking his friends, Layton laughs with and at them, amuses them with his verbally stylized performances, and marks his status as a leader in the community. I enjoyed my times on the bus with players but was unable to keep up with their pace of drinking. I wasted many expensive brandies because I was unable (or unwilling) to finish them.  

In the following days I looked for signs of alcohol “abuse.” To me, it seemed the Mavericks were back to their regular behaviour: beer with rum chaser. That night after the game they were drinking heavily in one hotel room until three in the morning. Without the watchful eye of “the Ayatolla” or the responsibility of driving home, their drinking appeared unregulated.

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30 This type of field work, where there are tacit and overt pressures to consume alcohol, raises a number of questions regarding the ethics of knowledge production, both in terms of how to document research findings, validity of voluntary consent after inebriation, and researcher safety. I trusted my instincts and typically left social gatherings with MCSC members before they got too rowdy or inebriated (which raises questions about researchers responsibility to care for participants). Given that after-parties are the focus of participation for many players and spectators, but are also where/when the most salacious behaviour occurred, I often struggled with how much of their celebrations I should document.
Terrel warned me that this behaviour was “nothing” compared to a trip some of them took to Melbourne a few years before:

In Australia dey play like us [Caribbeans]. Bar open 10. Game start 1. [Mavericks] were there for breakfast. We had a full dinner for breakfast, rice and peas and ribs. Seriously! It was a full course dinner for breakfast. Then we go to the grounds for 10. [Riddick] say, “We cyaant start drinking dis early?!” Me say, “wah?!” I was only the manager on that tour. Lawd. I drink like a fish! (Terrel)

Drunken stories around the boundary, in the pavilion, or at their cars about their purchase and consumption of expensive alcohol, how well they can play when they are drunk, and how much fun they had while drunk at parties, on tours, or after games are part of the gender myth making that dictates how they come to know themselves. With their increasing age and declining physical prowess, the Mavericks are forced to emphasize other aspects of masculinity to protect their status. As Whannel (2002, p. 68) notes, “some of the key ingredients of a particular form of sporting masculinity … being a rock-hard, unsentimental heavy drinker” are key to sport as “a form of masculine proving ground.”

Layton is famous in the community for always having top brands of alcohol in his car at games. Other players told me that he once purchased an “enormous” bottle of “Hennesy Visip” (their nickname for Hennessey VSOP brandy) for a bus tour they went on to Hartford, Connecticut. That bottle was legendary for its size, cost (over $400) and exceptional flavour. The Mavericks’ mark their masculinity, class status, and prominence within the group, through the alcohol they purchase, share, and consume.

Bourdieu’s (1984) analysis of the ways in which upper- and lower-class tastes and consumption practices are generated and reproduced in France demonstrates that these are used to create and sustain distinctions between social classes. The Mavericks’ maintain
distinctiveness by cultivating a taste for expensive brands of alcohol. When one woman uses Terrel’s rum to quell the sting of a mosquito bite she is chastised (jokingly) for “wasting” it. “Ah wah dis t’al? You ‘tink I here fe watch fuckin’ cricket? I here fe drink! Don’t go wastin’ me rum ‘pon stupidness, you hear?!” His mock anger and miserable attitude elicited laughter from all within earshot and this type of behaviour carried on for the duration of most games and well into the after-parties.

**Post-game liming.** I share the following fictive email, which is based on events I witnessed and stories I was told about cricket tours, to capture the heightened excitement at the cricket match, the poetry and art of the game, the exhilaration of the after-party, and the voice of the second generation immigrant children who sometimes accompany their parents on cricket tours.

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

*Hey Jamila,*

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Morrison is so good, isn’t she? I got a lot of reading done at Dad’s games and on the beach these past two weeks. Jealous yet? The weather has been amazing. Why did our parents ever move away from here? Anyway, Dad took one nice catch which I cheered for really loud, but the game was boring until he went in to bat and it wasn’t until the last five overs that everyone in the stands quieted down and watched intensely. I actually felt butterflies in my stomach!

Listen to what happened. We started out with a great run rate, but it began to look like maybe we wouldn’t win so easily. We were still ahead, but one of the batsmen we had out there was defensive. You know Navid? He refused to do anything but block the ball and selfishly occupied the strike. We needed runs! It came down to the last two overs. You can bet Dad was totally confident out there, but I was not so sure. Twelve balls to be offered, eighteen runs needed to win, one wicket and we would lose. Navid finally put the bat to the ball and switched ends with Dad. One run. The bowler didn’t look that fast and Dad seemed determined to hit that ball to the boundary. He took a big swing and I swear the ball was in the air for an eternity. It headed straight for the man at long off. Everyone in the stands gasped. Mom squeezed my hand so tight I thought she might break it. But the fielder must have lost sight of the ball in the sun because at the last minute he looked away and it bounced just short of the boundary. He hobbled over to the ball, restricted by his geriatric knees that didn’t bend like they used to. Dad was one of the youngest out there — so that tells you how elderly the fielders were!

So that guy finally retrieved the ball and threw it in, but by that time Dad and Navid had accumulated three runs bringing Navid back to the crease. He cut the first ball and it stopped just short of mid-off. For the second, he advanced his left foot to meet the ball and absorbed all its force. Two more balls blocked. Everyone in the stands with us erupted. What the hell was Navid doing? Why wouldn’t he hit those balls for a little single? I was holding on to mom’s sweaty palm — you know how she squeals when she gets nervous? It was hilarious! Mom
started yelling “Hit Them. Hit Them!” Then, the unbelievable happened. With 14 runs needed and just eight balls to go, the bowler took a few steps toward the wicket, released the ball and the next thing we knew the umpire raised his index finger and pointed to Navid. He was out, leg before wicket. Can you believe it?! The game was done. We were all silent for what must have been thirty seconds, but you know that is forever around Dad’s teammates who never shut up.

Then, you could probably guess, the blaming started. Some of the guys did not hesitate to blame Navid. Why was he always batting so defensively? Was he scared to score runs? Did he just want to stay out all day to improve his average? He should be looking to help his team win, not trying to win the man of the match trophy! Then attention shifted to the men who had batted previously. Why didn’t they keep the run rate up earlier? Who had gone out and scored more than fifty runs? Only he has a right to criticize! And, of course, the umpire was not free of rebuke. Was the umpire stealing for the other team? Was that the same umpire who was at the last match they lost? Did the umpire need glasses? I thought at one point one of Dad’s friends was going to fight Navid! I can’t say I blamed them. It was sad to end a two-week tournament losing by only 14 runs, but at least Dad ended the game not out.

Anyway, minutes later we were in party-mode. You should have seen the post-mortem. Once all the players had changed out of their uniforms, and the tournament organizers began to play Black Stalin’s calypso tune, Tonight the Black Man Feelin To Party over the loud speaker, it was as though everyone forgot about the pain of losing to the English. All of us (the players and spectators) from the Rest of the World poured rum and cokes or vodka with lemon lime bitters and went out onto the field to dance, sing, and jump up. The team from the UK stood near their change room, quietly sharing a few drinks and discussing their success, I guess. By the looks of the celebrations, you would think that we won that match – and by a huge margin.
One Trini guy who must have been sixty-five was dancing with me the whole time. He could really move for an old guy. I never thought I could have so much fun with a man nearly twice my age. He had this huge belly that he kept rubbing against my back and his sweat was dripping all over me. I can just picture you reading this email. Gross, right? LOL. You had to be there. With rum, good music and a positive atmosphere, what you once thought was unattractive becomes more appealing. I think they call it “Rum Goggles.” We were on the field dancing so long that we didn’t even notice that the organizers had brought out the food. The English got to eat first because we were too distracted to line up at the buffet. Finally, they turned down the music because they wanted to start the awards ceremony and so we came off the field to get some food and wait for the presentations to begin. It was so much fun, even though we lost. It would have been more fun if you had been here though. Miss you. See you Sunday.

Xoxo.

Latesha.

C. L. R. James (1963) recounts the details of the well-placed field, a bowler as strong as a horse, and the sound of the ball s-h-h-h, as it plumped into the hands of the wicketkeeper (p. 86). He explains that ninety-nine per cent of cricket anecdotes begin and end with descriptions of the play, which is why they appeal to so few except cricketers. He directs us to look at what had been happening off the cricket field (p. 106). His analysis of the political and social climate off the field does not highlight the perspective of a female spectator or the convivial atmosphere of recreational cricket, however. I use this cricket anecdote to demonstrate the generational, familial, gendered and diasporic connections recreational cricket offers.

In this email, Latesha, one of the cricketers’ daughters describes joining her parents for her father’s cricket tour and getting swept up in the excitement in the pavilion, cheering for her father’s team. Her version of the events at the end of the game show that the ‘anger’ expressed
by those in the stands quickly dissipates and the transition from fight mode to party mode is quick. I also use Latesha’s unique perspective as a young person (demonstrated by her use of txtspk and emoticons), and a woman to document the age difference between the players and some of the women (such as myself) they encounter at the grounds when they travel to the Caribbean to play cricket. The sport is not the only human movement of note at MCSC games. Male and female bodies rub together to the rhythms of the omnipresent music, especially after games. The lascivious behaviour increases as more alcohol is consumed, but is not dependent on whether they win or lose the match.

A cricket match might start at noon (one-o’clock Caribbean time), but many MCSC members do not arrive at the Mavericks’ home grounds until five o’clock, in advance of the post-game celebrations that typically get underway by six or seven o’clock. Post-game celebrations are a key motivational factor for MCSC members’ participation in this community. Vilroy explained to me: “Once the game is out of the way then we party!” Warlie concurs: “The joy of that cricket [with visiting teams] is the socialize after the game. It doesn’t matter who win, because we, at our age, we just havin’ fun. And its about R and R. Do you know what that means?” Warlie asked me, with a twinkle in his eye. “Rest and Relaxation?” I inquire, knowing that there has to be something more to this furtive question. “No no no no.” Warlie laughs. “R and R is rice and rum! That’s the fun part. After the game, we have someone to go cook for us every weekend, and have food and drinks.” The Mavericks refer to their sport as “R and R cricket,” “goat water cricket,” “rum cricket,” “liming cricket,” and “fête-match cricket,” which emphasizes these Caribbean-Canadians’ food (rice, goat water), drink (rum), conversation (lime), and dance (fête) priorities:

It is a very social, type of game so what happens is that the game of cricket really starts after the game. The camaraderie, the getting together after the game and
having drinks and a few post mortems and stuff like that makes the game of cricket, what it really is. (Marshall)

Most of the Mavericks’ games were followed by players gathering in the change room (or around the boundary for home games where change rooms were unavailable) for a slow process of changing out of their cricketing clothes and starting a post-mortem meeting where they discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their performances in the game over a few drinks. After changing, the Mavericks typically participated in a dinner, award presentation, and party or dance where alcohol was a significant feature.

I was the only woman to enter the change rooms, which typically remained off limits to wives, girlfriends and daughters of the players. I found entering the change room to be fruitful due to two main findings related to the importance of space in the construction of masculinity. First, the physical ailments that the players were suffering from, while hidden in what Goffman (1959, p. 22) calls the “frontstage,” due to their “impression management” in front of spectators, are in plain sight in the change room. Goffman applies a discussion of “teams” and the relationship between the work of individuals who co-operate in performance attempting to achieve the goals sanctioned by the group (1959, p. 79). Out on the field team members try to hide their limps and attempt to project athleticism to “define the situation for those who observe the performance.” This self-control functions to handle or avoid embarrassment. “Backstage,” however, the team members knowingly contradict the impression fostered for the audience indicating a more truthful type of performance (p. 112). The Mavericks’ backstage physical weaknesses stand in contrast to their “front.” The players’ use of bandages, creams and braces are revealed as their white grass-stained uniforms are removed. They limp, complain about aches, and on rare occasions help each other out by applying ointment or massaging hard-to-

31 It should be noted that at home games there are no changerooms, players change in the open or in their cars, leaving fewer chances for the performances of gender and sexuality discussed here.
reach body parts. Whannel (2002, p. 92) is clear that “any sign of ‘effeminacy’ is ruthlessly derided in locker room culture…not the slightest hint of camp or male desire for other men can be tolerated if the castle of heterosexual masculinity is to remain powerful and impregnable.” Therefore, requests for help are made quietly and privately, given the importance of the locker-room as a space to display heterosexual masculinity, and the feminization of requests for help. I did witness some of the Mavericks helping each other. The oldest men especially were treated with respect if they needed help. A contradiction exists, where weakness due to aging is tolerated, but femininity or homosexuality is derided. It should come as no surprise that the second finding associated with this space is that the Mavericks made many homophobic comments in the locker room.

Pronger (1990), and building on his work, Anderson (2005) and Coad (2008) have clearly shown men’s sports as arenas for the production of heterosexual masculinity, the production of which requires homophobia (and sexism). In the change room I observed the Mavericks’ most overt homophobic remarks and gestures. When Marshall tried to jump over someone’s gear bag that was laying out on the floor and tripped over the end of a bat that was sticking out of the front pocket, Sam, instead of being concerned for his well-being, broke into laughter and started imitating the way Marshall had recovered from the fall, emphasizing limp wrists and a high pitched squeal (neither of which Marshall had displayed). Curry (1991) explains that as part of learning to control emotions, athletes “avoid public expressions of emotional caring or concern for one another even as they bond, because [caring] remarks are defined as weak or feminine” (p. 124). He continues, “Making fun of homosexuals by mimicking stereotyped gay gender displays brings laughter in the locker room partly because it helps distance the athletes from being categorized as gay themselves” (p. 130). Sam’s effeminate caricature was meant to deride Marshall’s masculinity and sexuality, while
protecting his own, in a change room space that is free of women. Controlling ones emotions and making fun of physical or personal defects are characteristics of “doing race” for Black men. Black masculinity is defined through the capacity to both remain in control of emotions, with an aloof, indifferent attitude and to notice and comment on the failings of others “as a way to enhance their chances of self-preservation … [by] tak[ing] the attention off their own deficiencies” (Majors & Billson, 1992, p. 96). Gender acts as the modality through which a racialized identity is realized (Gilroy, 1993, p. 85). The Mavericks are not homophobic to the extent that they would cause gay men physical harm, or overtly deride them at work; in fact it is their assumption that there are no gays among them that allows them to perform race and gender through homophobic banter.

In making cruel comments or gestures, the crowd acts as a catalyst and an audience for impersonations and insults. On many occasions, as players changed they warned others against looking at their sexualized body parts. “I got my eye on you, you know!” Riddick called out as he strutted naked from the shower to where his gear was stored with a towel casually strewn across his shoulder. This elicited laughter from many surrounding players. Riddick’s suggestion that he is “watching” (policing) others who might be “watching” (lusting after) him is a way of going on the offensive against potential accusations of homosexuality. Brian Pronger, in his text The Arena of Masculinity, explores what he calls “the homoerotic paradox” (1990, p. 182), in which homosocial behaviour, and pleasure in other men, is encouraged in an arena that denies its homoerotic dimensions by performing hypermasculinity and vilifying the homosexual. Men’s delight in each others bodies could be a source of bonding, intensifying the experience of team unity; however, modern men’s sport developed as an asexual or anti-sexual field that restrained sexuality. I thought that surely another player would have something to say about Riddick’s nonchalant nudity amongst (and watching of) other men, his narcissistic tendencies,
his heightened concern with his body – evidenced by his relatively muscular frame and fit physique in comparison to his age-matched peers – but his position as a top player (in contrast to Marshall), and his pre-emptive offensive stance, protected him from persecution.\textsuperscript{32}

After the players changed out of their whites (uniforms), they typically had an opportunity to enjoy food provided by the home team. Usually one member of the team (in conjunction with his wife or girlfriend) or a female club member prepared the food. On the Mavericks’ tours, the cooks had the advantage of using the kitchens in the clubhouses to prepare meals. Clubhouse kitchens were usually busy all day with at least two generations of women spending the morning preparing tea (a meal of crustless egg, tuna or cornmeal sandwiches served with hot tea and cold juice) for between innings, and took the afternoons to cook an elaborate traditional Caribbean meal for dinner. All afternoon the mother-daughter team – sometimes with (grand)children running under-foot – chopped vegetables, seasoned meat, and prepared sauces, the aromas of which fill the clubhouse and the grounds, building players’ and spectators’ anticipation of the meal to come.\textsuperscript{33} MCSC members were unable to enjoy this aspect of tour at their home games because the meals are always prepared off-site and brought to the grounds by the caterers in their cars, thus they relished having access to a clubhouse for the fragrant reminders of the homeland it provided. The place enabled the production of a Caribbean-scented space.

Those who are able to replicate authentically the flavours of the homeland, by using Caribbean imported ingredients or recipes handed down for generations, were venerated, welcomed back and in most cases paid to provide dinner. Women’s recipes are an indigenous

\textsuperscript{32} Although work-outs, weight training, and body building have foregrounded a new masculine muscularity (see Klein, 1993), Whannel (2002, p. 72) notes that during the 1980s gay male culture shifted away from camp and androgyny towards a super-muscular, macho look. Gay male bodies are stereotyped as fitter and more muscular than heterosexual male bodies. In Kingston, Jamaica, some black gay men refer to themselves as “sports” (Walcott 2003, p. 97) naming themselves as different yet the same as athletes.

\textsuperscript{33} Despite their hard labour, the pleasure women gain from preparing these meals, especially in association with their children, should not be discounted.
knowledge system containing centuries-old information about ingredients, spices, and modes of preparation. One MCSC member who operates her own catering company with her daughters was often hired to provide meals comprised of stereotypical Caribbean food: rice and peas, fried chicken or fish, provisions (plantain, breadfruit, yams), green salad, and goat water or curry goat, with souse (pork hooves, chopped tomatoes, onions, and cucumbers in a vinegar sauce) for dessert. Depending on the predilections of the chefs, distinctly national dishes were featured: for instance, Jamaican jerk pork, Trinidadian chicken roti, or Barbadian flying fish. As Schmidt notes about Caribbean music in the diaspora, the incorporation of many national styles signals a trans-Caribbean presence, “a kind of counter-culture that offers an alternative or sometimes even an opposition to the [Canadian] mainstream society” (2008a, p. 34). These cross-national culinary dialogues signify the fusion of Caribbean cultures that becomes possible in diasporic settings (James, 1993) and the enduring presence of Africanisms in the Americas. Whether it is the cooking style of barbeque, the African-inspired use of root crops such as dasheens and yams, the partiality for spices such as curry or jerk, the incorporation of vegetables such as plantain and okra, or the omni-present hot pepper sauce, Caribbean food carries with it its regional and heritage markers, and eating it can give rise to an imagined, temporary visit to the homeland and a sense of maintenance of ancestral identifications. Sorrel juice, vita malt, coconut water and rum punch put thirsty MCSC members at ease with the liquid flavours of home. They offer a sense of regional if not nation-of-origin identity for Mavericks who are unsatisfied with “Canadian” cuisine. The members require, what Vilroy calls, “proper food” after their games:

Now some of the clubs try to outdo each other with curry goat and ting. You know it’s a social gathering. After running around in the sun we don’t want to just eat a donut, so we have some proper food. West Indian food.
Appadurai (1981, p. 494) has noted that food is “a marvelously plastic kind of collective representation with the capacity to mobilize strong emotions.” Even recipes can fulfill the psychological need for familiarity and comfort and permit the recall of the flavour of home (Kadar, 2005). Tastes in food and rituals of eating cannot be considered independently from other dimensions of class groups’ relationships to the world (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 193); the rituals of eating in a casual buffet-style; sucking, crushing, and spitting out bones; and eating until one’s pants must be loosened signal resistance to assimilation to hegemonic Canadian culture and bourgeois propriety restrictions of eating at a table with a knife and fork, waiting until everyone is served, and not talking with food in one’s mouth. Furthermore, ‘authentic’ food consumption can be fuelled by a meta-narrative of loss. The performance of gastro-nostalgia is characterized by continued preference for ingredients, cooking styles, and eating practices from the homeland, which reflect a desire to establish bonds of communion with the past and the diaspora, maintain culinary/cultural identities, and enact post-colonial resistance against mainstream cultural forms (Cook & Harrison, 2003; 2007; Theopano & Curtis, 1991).

The use of food to articulate cultural linkages and values is confirmed by an ethnography of two Italian-American families in an industrial suburb of Philadelphia (Theopano & Curtis, 1991). The authors found that women bear the main responsibility for sustaining social networks through food events such as dinners and preparing food for their children. Over the meal they reflect on the day’s events, their work, and their families, creating and building relationship ties that draw them closer together. Among Italian-Americans and Caribbean-Canadians, the cultural freezing of gender roles in the diaspora is evident as the preference is for food that takes a long time to prepare, and female cooks remain primarily responsible for reproducing, maintaining, and (pre)serving culture and authenticity under the guise of domestic
labour. In contrast to Theopano & Curtis’ (1991) findings, however, among the MCSC members’ desire for a conservative, ethnically marked cuisine persists in favour of ‘fusion’ foods and healthier options. “The consumption of ‘ethnic foods’ as a marker of otherness is a core element of Canadian multiculturalism” (Thobani, 2007, p. 169). Thus, one could argue that a sense of belonging in Canada requires MCSC members to look elsewhere for their culinary choices.

On one occasion, I lined up for dinner behind a corpulent woman, Beatrice, who was a supporter of a visiting team from New York. She took two plates at the start of the buffet table and asked the servers for two pieces of fried chicken on each plate. This did not seem to be an anomaly because many women, who are always permitted to line up for food first, get a plate for their husbands or children at the same time. However, Beatrice did not have a husband on the trip. The caterer, who knew this, pointed at one of her laden plates and asked, “Who is this for?” With a New York-Guyanese accent she exclaimed, “How you tink I get so big an’ fat?! My mumma tell me don’t be too skinny, dey tink you poor, so I’m eating for two thank you very much!” She stuck out her large breasts and round backside and pranced away from the buffet table. This comment elicited laughter from many other women in the line and sent a clear message about the social significance of food and performance of culture and class in this cricket space. We do not need to examine Caribbean communities in depth to discover examples of class-based nutritional inequalities as matters of life and death. Hurricanes, earthquakes and droughts leave many families at the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder at risk of experiencing lingering hunger, and indeed dying of starvation.

While the Mavericks demonstrate a high-class status through their alcohol preferences, the food the Mavericks purchase, share, and consume represents for Bourdieu (1984, p. 185)

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34 On occasions when the menu included barbeque chicken men exclusively operated the barbeque while women prepared salads and other dishes.
popular, working-class tastes for the heavy, the fat and the coarse. Interestingly, the Mavericks do not describe this as central to working-class emphases on the importance of body strength and cheap, nutritious, calorie-rich foods as Bourdieu describes. Instead their emphasis on indulgence and over-consumption is used to mark a higher class status; a big, round bottom and ample breasts for women in particular, are symbols of wealth, health, and distinction in this community. Not every woman took two plates, but the servings of food were always generous and seconds were provided until every scrap was consumed. Although the ground might be marked as a men’s cricket space, it also provides a venue to perform middle-class, black, older women’s Caribbean femininity through food consumption. The overt rejection of dominant North American beauty standards that require a skinny body and food portion restrictions reveal the space as outside of mainstream society.

After games are finished and dinners ended, many teams hosted a party at their clubhouse, at a street fête or at a rented hall. It is important to re-emphasize here that which team won the game is not important. C. L. R. James (1963, p. 197-198) writes, cricket is perhaps the only game in which the end result (except where national or local pride is at stake) is not of great importance. Appreciation of cricket has little to do with the end, and less still with what are called ‘the finer points’, of the game. What matters in cricket, as in all the arts, is not finer points but what everyone with some knowledge of the elements can see and feel.

James refers to emotions evoked by the players on the field, but his analysis can be extended to the broader cricket environment. What do the spectators see and feel around the boundary, in the clubhouse, or at the parties? The disparity in the numbers of male and female MCSC members is most noticeable at parties where men will only dance with female partners, and many men are left standing at the bar or sitting at tables because all of the women are
occupied. Certain players constantly asked me to reserve them a dance, so that I was never wanting for a partner. Reggie remarked “Where you get so much pep?” when another player asked if he could cut in to dance with me, and Reggie, after having danced three songs already, needed to sit and rest. About half of the club members usually remained on the dance floor for the majority of the night. They danced with their hands in the air, “getting on bad” and “wining their waists” (grinding their groins and backsides on their partners), to old calypso and reggae tunes and paraded around the dancefloor in a ballroom dance style to country songs and American ballads until they were sweaty, out of breath and sore in the joints or muscles, at which time they retreated to the seating area to rest, or to the bar to refill their glasses. Of those who did not like to dance, female MCSC members spent most of their time sitting at tables, chatting with one another, while the men spent hours standing near the bar discussing Windies cricket politics and the critical moments of the game they just won or lost: Which over was the turning point? Which bail came off which stump, and why? Was it or was it not a leg bye? Can the umpire be trusted? Should the captain have moved the slip? These questions were critical to players’ egos, their impressions of their performances, and their anticipation for upcoming games.

Terrel explained that he always has something to celebrate and is proud to be the last one to leave a party, even when he is on the visiting team: “We send home the members, we close up their clubhouse, we like to party as a community. It helps that we always winnin’!” The Mavericks do not always win, but their celebrations at the end of the night certainly give that impression. When the Mavericks travel, their celebrations typically continue from the after-party to the bus to their hotel. The locker room is not the only homosocial space athletes mark as heterosexual. The team bus is also a site of homophobia and sexism.
The Mavericks travel with women, however, they create a masculine space by congregating at the back of the bus. On the bus home from a game in England, Byron walked from the back of the bus to the front. He was quizzed about where he was going and announced that he wanted to get his camera out of the bag his wife was carrying. As he passed, Layton groped his backside and Byron hardly reacted, used to the antics at the back of the bus. Layton yelled out “He liked it! He’s a homo!” to which most players laughed. “Go get your purse!” “Don’t come back here!” other players followed up. The mere act of leaving the back of the bus, a masculine domain, and moving towards the feminized front was cause for players to ridicule Ciskel’s brother, Bryon. I witnessed few displays of overt sexism, often heralded as a key means for men to “do gender” (Curry, 1991; Kimmel, 1997; Messner, 1989; 2002; Pronger, 1990), likely due to my presence as a woman. Players may have perceived that I would be offended by sexist comments that objectify, mock, or stereotype women. They did not refrain, however, from homophobic ridicule, which I found equally offensive. It is also possible that, given that many of their wives were within ear-shot, many men were unwilling to take their performance of masculinity to misogynist extremes; however, their belief that there were not any gay men around, left them free to engage in anti-gay ‘play.’

As players became more drunk on the long ride back from some games, groping any man who passed became such a ritual that players started to shimmy between the seats of the bus, protecting their private parts with their hats, bags, or liquor bottles whenever they had to pass. Requests, such as “Come on, let’s have a kiss,” and compliments, such as “Ooooh, you look goooood in those jeans!” along with grunts and whistles, were meant to mock homosexual behaviour. In an ironic twist, the Mavericks’ homosexual games are used to celebrate their heterosexual masculinity. The change room and back of the bus, spaces from which women (except researchers) choose never to go, are spaces where signs of weakness, femininity, and
homosexuality are typically ridiculed. Especially after games when players ingested more alcohol that usual, the hypermasculinity they exhibited “nullifies the possibility of gays even existing in their space, even though they are well aware that gay men exist in large numbers in the culture at large” (Anderson, 2005, p. 13). Other players who may not approve of such homophobic behaviour or comments remained silent and there may be players who wanted to sit at the front of the bus but felt trapped by the obligations of performing masculinity. The only way to avoid participating without ridicule was by sleeping. While this may be seen as a sign of weakness in younger men, the older Mavericks understand fatigue as normative. Some Mavericks moved to or stayed in the front of the bus and slept on the way home from some games. They may have been exhausted from their physical efforts at the grounds, fatigued by all of the alcohol that they had consumed, or they may have slept to resist hurtful ways of doing gender. Kimmel (1997, p. 234) explains that men’s silence is what keeps the system running; masculinity is defined as homophobia because men who disagree do not challenge the status quo.

It is important to note that these performances of masculinity are spatially and temporally specific. Although the Mavericks tell homophobic or sexist jokes and ridicule each other in cricket-related men-only spaces, they curtail such talk in public or when women are near. Their homophobia and sexism does not spill over into their workplace and they would not likely perpetrate violence against gay men or women. Their performance is primarily a marker of their masculine gender and heterosexuality.

**Summary.** There are, assuredly, many stories of MCSC members’ outrageous behaviour in cricket spaces I could document. I share just a few of their disagreements, alcohol-related controversies, and strict Caribbean diets not to offer them for criticism. Rather, my intention is to demonstrate the ways in which liming before, during and after cricket matches is a means of
(re)creating (in) the Black diaspora. Retaining African ways of cooking and language structures supports African diaspora scholar Melville Hersković’s (1941) claim that Black assimilation into Western culture and preservation of elements of African heritage are not mutually exclusive. By drawing on Caribbean cultures, MCSC members also hail elements of their African ancestry, and though they are from different Caribbean nations, they unite based on their shared cultural roots. Gilroy’s (1993) articulation of the Black Atlantic emphasizes the importance of examining Black cultural forms that transgress national borders to examine problems of nationality. The specific countries of origin of the MCSC members are not as important as their racial and cultural identifications in this trans-Caribbean social space. People from Antigua, Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica are united in Canada through sharing Black/Caribbean cultures. MCSC members, ‘displaced’ from the Caribbean, can remain in Canada and head to their local cricket ground to capture a sense of Caribbeanness.

If Black musical forms can be considered a “counterculture of modernity,” supplying “a great deal of the courage required to go on living in the present” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 36), then Black/Caribbean cricket spaces, where banter, dancing, music and other forms of Black/Caribbean expression are dominant can also be examined as “deeply encoded oppositional practices” (p. 37) and means of “individual self-fashioning and communal liberation” (p. 40). Mavericks raucous behaviour at the cricket grounds, antiphonic communication styles and blurred distinctions between friends and family are functions of the desire to resist their embeddedness in a predominantly White culture throughout their work-week, and reliance on diasporic resources including the folk cultures of their ancestors and homelands allows them to feel *emplaced* in Canada and the diaspora.

Black and Caribbean communities are built locally among friends through celebrations at the cricket ground. They are also constructed among people who are unfamiliar with each
other through the financial commitments MCSC members make to Blacks in the GTA, in their nation of origin and across the Caribbean.

**Beyond the Boundary: Regenerating Community through Economic Activities**

The community-making endeavours of the MCSC go beyond cricket-related activities. Donations, remittances and fundraising are three economic methods that Caribbean peoples use to contribute to and maintain their local and home-land communities. Sending remittances (money and goods) to support those living in poverty in the Caribbean has been well documented as a major source of the gross national product for many Caribbean nations (Alleyne, Kirton, McLeod, & Figueroa, 2008; Conway, 1994; Itzigsohn, 1995; 2000; Nurse, 2004; Wood & McCoy, 1985) and they have “become the most often-cited, tangible evidence and measuring stick for the ties connecting migrants with their societies of origin” (Guarnizo, 2003, p. 666). Much of this literature has focused on the influence of money sent home on local economies, market development, poverty reduction, and economic growth, especially because money from remittances exceeds flows of foreign investment, official development assistance, and sales of exports (Mundaca, 2009, p. 288; Portes, Escobar, & Walton, 2007, p. 243-244). Gmelch (1992, p. 41) indicates that remittances from Panama between the 1880s and 1914 were vital to helping poorer Black families in the Anglophone Caribbean move off of plantations. Today, entire communities and nations are dependent on remittances for survival. Financial remittances are sent directly to family members at home to maintain food, clothing, education, shelter, and entertainment needs.

The concept of remittance, however, opens much richer possibilities according to Jenny Burman (2002, p. 50): “if we consider the affective content implied by the extended definition of ‘remit,’ with its many nuances exceeding the act of sending: to surrender, to put back, to withdraw, to set free, to relieve from tension.” Money and goods are sent to sites and people left
behind out of a sense of responsibility, altruism, attachment, selfishness, guilt, and/or reparation; remittances are emotive investments. Their full impact is difficult to measure, especially when social or goods remittances are taken into account. Social remittances (ideas, identities, cultural practices, and social capital) also provide critical linkages for migrants and receiving communities (Levitt, 1998; Suksomboon, 2009; Tettey & Puplampu, 2005). Maintaining respect through myths of affluence in Canada are critical components of Caribbean diasporic identities. Delivering by hand or sending home material items, known as ‘goods’ remittances, are difficult for government statistical agencies to capture, but have a significant impact on many nations’ economies and allow diasporas to further extend ideas about themselves and their hostland, and assist in maintaining and creating communities and organizations in the homeland.

Diasporas’ yearning for home is demonstrated through the creation of community associations in the hostland, which keep connections alive through financial, cultural, and political gestures that cross borders (Basch, 1987; Burman, 2002, Orozco & Lapointe, 2004; Portes et al., 2007; Trotz, 2006). These associations help to bind community members living abroad through social activities as well as maintain the homeland through fundraising initiatives. Robert Smith (1998) found that young migrants from Ticuani, a small municipio of less than twenty-five hundred people in southern Mexico, organized The Ticuani Youth Group in New York that sponsored sports tournaments to raise funds for public works projects in their home municipio. Caribbean diasporas’ connections to home are mediated by informal personal networks and often operate on a more national or regional scale. For example the Jamaican Canadian Association, Barbados Ex-Police Toronto, and the Council of Caribbean Associations host community events, donate to local charities in Canada and the Caribbean, and bring to diasporic communities a sense of conviviality and cooperative spirit in their place of residence.
MCSC members understand clearly that playing cricket is a minor part of their club’s activities. Very few of the female members have ever played cricket, but women have an important role in running the club. Importantly, the club engages in a number of outreach and fundraising initiatives that connect members to the broader GTA and Caribbean communities. In this section, I outline MCSC efforts to 1) provide financial support for GTA and Caribbean charitable organizations and individuals in need; 2) donate cricket equipment to underprivileged youth in the Caribbean; and 3) “fun(d)raise” money to pay for their return trips.

Local and Caribbean charities. Sitting in the open trunk of Terrel’s van for an hour gave him a chance to recount the history of the club and their extra-cricket activities. Terrel’s van proved to be an opportune location, because he was known to members as one of the guys who always brings ice and wine to the grounds. He also had 63-proof Wray and Nephew rum for those who prefer “the hard stuff,” though he enjoyed red wine out of a Bordeaux glass—“Plastic cups are ok for rum, but insufficient for wine drinking,” he explained. Terrel clarified for me that MCSC board members decide to invest a certain percentage of funds each year in local charities, organizations and people in need in the Caribbean:

- It’s not only involved in cricket. We do whatever we are called on to do, charitable activities, Scarborough Women’s Shelter, Sickle Cell Association. We donate to them every year. It would be a different amount each time depending on our budget. … We give equipment to different groups in Barbados. We now have an application in to support a health association in Jamaica that is not being supported by the government. We also give support to sick individuals within our community who need financial help.

The charitable funds come from fundraising initiatives such as dances and walk-a-thons, philanthropic donations from individuals, support from government institutions such as the
Consul General of Barbados, sponsorship from companies for which some of the Mavericks work, and MCSC membership fees ($100 per year). Terrel explained to me, “There are over 100 families included in our membership. Some members are even in the U.S. and a few are at home in the Caribbean as well.” Foreign MCSC members are typically once-local members who have moved away or people who are related to local members and travel to Canada regularly in the summer and participate in MCSC events.

For example, Terrel addressed a man who came over to the van to get some ice: “This guy here is from Montreal, but he comes to all our big events.” The Mavericks rely on members from near and far to contribute their membership fees, to sell $15 tickets to the dances they organize, which earn between four and five thousand dollars each year, and to raise money and attend the annual 10km walk-a-thon at Milliken Park. Terrel takes pride in his ability to give back to the less fortunate “within our community” in the Greater Toronto Area and “at home in the Caribbean.” The MCSC is a unique type of hometown association in that its members are not linked to a single nation-state.

Portes et al. (2007) outline the numerous political and financial links immigrants make with their nation of origin through hometown associations such as the Dominican Revolutionary Party of New York and Columbian Lions of Miami. These organizations are nationally oriented and attempt to make changes in homeland politics and development projects. Of Mexican hometown associations throughout the United States, 47% contribute between $5,000 and $20,000 a year for conspicuous projects such as health and education services, town beautification, and improvement of public infrastructure (Orozco & Lapointe, 2004). In contrast, the Mavericks are comprised of Caribbean peoples from a number of different nations and they support projects, individuals and organizations all over the Caribbean and the Caribbean community in the GTA. In 2005, they were able to generate $10,000 in support of rebuilding
two schools in Grenada. In 2008, they donated $4000 to a woman in Jamaica who needed reconstructive surgery. Every year they fund a scholarship for a Caribbean-Canadian student pursuing a criminology degree at a Canadian post-secondary institution. These types of financial donations demonstrate a commitment to the Caribbean community at home in their nations of origin and at home in the GTA. The MCSC members also donate goods to people in need.

**Cricket remittances.** When the Mavericks travel to the Caribbean, many of them purchase extra, new equipment and prepare to leave behind for local youth their old equipment that is still in good condition. Leaving their equipment at the grounds where they play their friendly matches marks the Mavericks as benevolent, generous, and having “made it” in Canada. Their donations confer them with the status of benefactors, and enhance their standing and respect in their home communities, which may even translate into respect for their friends and family members they left behind.

Goldring (1998) points out that diasporas can contest and redefine regimes of social hierarchies in their home and host nations, and improve their social position in both locations. They may use social networks beyond national borders to circumvent structural and social disadvantages in the hostland. In his examination of Mexican transmigrants in the U.S. for example, Goldring (1998, p. 188) found that people who would have had little or no ‘pull’ in Mexico have an alternative source of social capital and power as representatives of hometown organizations in the United States. Their cross-border ties imbue them with power that can foster their horizontal and vertical integration. They meet with local politicians who are responsive to their interests due to their ability to obtain funds and mobilize Mexicans in the United States. At cricket matches in the Caribbean, Mavericks can demonstrate their status through affiliation with high powered individuals, such as government officials. Arnold introduced his brother-in-law, the Minister of Health, to the team as “a big man dis” (this is an
important man) to assure that his teammates acknowledged his brother-in-law’s status and by association Arnold’s family importance in the context of the island. A donation of cricket equipment from Arnold to a local team then reflects well on his entire family, and in this case, the local government as well.

The Mavericks transnational transactions are not formally through NGOs or governments. On a more local, individual scale, they are celebrated for what they can bring to the parishes and villages they visit for friendly games while on tour. For example, Kundell acted as the liaison between the Mavericks and a local team in St. Lucia due to his social and kinship relations with members of the team. As a consequence of the high quality competition and hospitality the team offered the Mavericks, he was venerated by his peers. The donations the Mavericks made to that local club resulted in Kundell’s receiving accolades from his compatriots as well. Goldring (1998, p. 173) notes “transnational communities and social fields offer a unique context for interpreting individual and collective status claims … in a historical and community context, where certain practices, rituals, goods, and artifacts have mutually intelligible meanings to community members.” Diasporas are interpreted as having done well in relation to those they left behind based on the way they behave or dress, artifacts and friends they bring with them upon return, and their generosity with money and materials. Even if they experience marginalization in the host country, valorization among those who share community membership ‘at home’ evinces the importance of place in shifting levels of status within diaporas’ transnational social networks.

When the Mavericks return to the Caribbean they operate in a liminal space between local and tourist. The desire and ability to afford to give away relatively new items, marks the Mavericks as wealthy and from the islands, but no longer of them. They also are able to
distinguish amongst each other who is the morally superior, philanthropic, transnational citizen who really cares about his people, and who takes his (relative) wealth for granted.

A particularly poignant scene occurred at the Dennery cricket ground in St. Lucia. While the Mavericks were playing a friendly match against a local team, two young boys about six and eight years old, started playing a bat and ball game. They took turns bowling to each other and trying to specify in advance where their ball (which was actually an empty plastic pop bottle) would go once they hit it with the bat (which was fashioned out of a broken piece of plywood). Immediately after the game at this ground the players had a post-game ceremony where the captains and organizers gave speeches. The captain of the local team offered words of thanks to his Canadian “brothers:”

Participation in this tournament contributes to the redevelopment of sport in St. Lucia. We are thankful that you could also find time to come here and play a friendly game with us. Refurbishing the Dennery cricket field would not be possible without the support of players like you from Canada and the UK. We really really appreciate what you do for us.

In response, the Mavericks’ captain thanked them for the opportunity and a great game:

We are just happy we can come here and contribute, give back to our local communities. You know we brought our fees to play but we also brought some small tokens to help your club. Please accept these small gifts on behalf of the Ontario players.

At that moment the Mavericks started digging into their gears bags and brought out shoes, pads, helmets, and bats to donate to the cricket club so that underprivileged youth, like the two playing with the plywood and pop bottle, could have an opportunity to use real equipment and succeed in the sport. The captain described Dennery, as one of “our local communities,”
although he is not from St. Lucia, indicating his sense of home away from home. He also specified Ontario as home, distinguishing himself as an outsider who is “happy to contribute.”

I commended Ciskel, who told me that he purchases a new bat every year and takes his old one when he travels to the Caribbean because “You know for sure you’ll see someone who needs it.” He wished he could have been on the receiving end of such generosity when he was a boy. “Doesn’t that get expensive?” I asked, since bats can cost between $200 and $400 each. Ciskel explained why he feels an obligation to be generous:

No, well, in Canada, it’s like every man for himself. If I get few dollars I keep it in my bank account. But in the Caribbean it’s like, help your neighbour, or at least it should be. It’s just … that bat was my contribution, you know? I mean, a boy like that would never play with a solid bat [if] we don’t bring ’em down. Winston agreed:

When I was growing up there was hardly any donations. You know, there was hardly any outside source, the school had to raise money to buy gears for the girls and the boys … we wear gears that was probably two, three generations ahead of us. Probably my dad used those when he was a boy because in those times we never had help. So if I can help out a school or something, I bring my old stuff down. Why not?

Goods remittances, in the form of cricket equipment, are important elements in the two-week Caribbean cricket tours on which the Mavericks embark. Similar to sending money, leaving cricket equipment behind helps to maintain particular (sub)cultures at home, and also maintain diasporic peoples membership in local Caribbean communities. The Mavericks provide youth with resources to which they never had access, and prove that they have not become ‘Western’ (i.e., individualistic, selfish); they have maintained their solidarity and sense of obligation to those left behind and to a broader community. Their apparent benevolence and resistance to an
individualist philosophy reveals some of the ambivalences and contradictions of post-colonialism, as they certainly benefit individually from the purchases they make for themselves, marking a middle-class status through their individual sartorial styles and new equipment. Importantly, though, they marked themselves as communitarian, in direct contrast to imagined (White) Canadians who set out only to pad their individual bank accounts. It should be noted that their communitarian ethos and donations to private cricket clubs instead of schools benefits boys in their homeland and not girls.

Their donations must also be set within their discussions of the decline of the West Indies (Windies) team and the lack of youth interest in the sport. To get ‘their boys’ on the Windies team back on top, development of youth cricket is always heralded as the second most important factor, after rectifying the West Indies Cricket Board (Griggs, 2006). Ironically, all of the Mavericks describe having to grow up without the use of pads and helmets as especially good for their cricket development: they had to be brave, learn how to control the ball and how to keep their shins out of the way. Now, in addition to remitting material cricket bats, they also remit what Levitt (1998, p. 933) refers to as “normative structures,” that is values, ideas and beliefs about the importance of proper equipment. Not only for protection, but to become accustomed to using the best tools so that when they join league cricket or elite ranks, they will be able to compete with the rich boys. Donating proper equipment allows the youth to improve their games and makes a small contribution towards the improvement of Windies cricket.

MCSC members’ donation of cricket materials is their way to “Rally ‘Round the West Indies,” and realize the lyrics of the calypso song by David Rudder they so often listen to at their games:

*For ten long years we ruled the cricket world/ Now the rule seems coming to an end*

*But down here, Just a chink in the armour/ Is enough, enough to lose a friend*

*Some of the old generals have retired and gone/ And the runs don’t come by as they did before*
But when the Toussaints go the Dessalines come/We’ve lost the battle but yet we will win the war

   Rally, rally round the West Indies/ Now and forever

   Rally, rally round the West Indies/ Never say never

   Pretty soon the runs are going to flow again like water

   Bringing so much joy to every son and daughter

   Say we’re going to rise again like a raging fire

   As the sun shines you know we gonna take it higher

In order for those runs to flow once more, the young boys on the island need the tools necessary for success.

Burman discusses the example of money sent to Jamaica in order to build a home for future residence as of interest both as a financial investment and as a dream of return: “The process of construction creates a different kind of connection with home, concretizing that dream but also disrupting nostalgic reverie because of the details and interpersonal relations involved” (2002, p. 55). Cricket remittances establish the Mavericks as successful emigrants, improves their status and the status of their friends and family members and, in the hands of particular talented boys who have dreams of one day playing at the professional ranks, the Mavericks’ donations make connection to home and to the future of Caribbean cricket concrete.

Fundraising. In addition to raising funds for charity groups and donating their equipment, the MCSC operates numerous fundraisers each year to subsidize club initiatives. Some of the funds from specific events are allocated to supporting home games, weekend bus trips, or two-week tours. The funds raised contribute to the cost of buses, umpires, hotels, meals, grounds, trophies, gears, renting halls, paying DJs and other MCSC expenses. Everyone who participates in MCSC events benefits from these initiatives, so all are encouraged to fundraise.
At one club meeting, Sam, acting as the team manager, complained that some members, who always benefit from a reduction in fees for their trips, had not pulled their weight in terms of attempting to raise funds. He threatened: “I will change our policies for [the trip to] Australia 2010 so those who raise more money reap more benefits. What’s more, I will drop some players from this list who do not show their commitment [through fundraising]!” He then shared a story about a Barbadian team, the Cavaliers, that visits North America regularly to play in friendly tours and once did so much fundraising that they could come to Toronto without any out of pocket expenses. They wanted to travel to Boston as well, but “they couldn’t get a Toronto bus to make the trip so they even rented a bus from Boston to come up and pick them up and take them down to Boston to play.” I was unable to find anyone to corroborate this story, but more important than its veracity is the vehemence with which Sam shamed his fellow cricketers into putting forth more effort to alleviate costs for all. His hyperbolic story confers the value of fundraising, the freedom that it affords, and the necessity of contributing to the club. The Mavericks choose a different captain and/or manager for every tour they embark on and seem to constantly resist his authority. I doubt that Sam’s speech roused players who typically refuse to raise funds to spring into action, but it remains to be seen whether he will truly leave them behind for the Australia 2010 tour (especially those players in the ‘super seven’).

Assimilation hypotheses suggest that the longer immigrants remain in a country, the better able they are to navigate their environments and the less they should be actively involved in the home country. The findings of this study echo those of Portes et al. (2007, p. 260) and Guarnizo, Portes, & Haller (2003, p. 1229) who discovered that because they have resources of time and money to dedicate, it is older, better-educated, and more established immigrants who are more prone to participate in transnational ventures. For example, a Canadian passport
enables transnational travel without restrictions, and migrants with secure jobs or retirement pensions can afford to make charitable donations.

The activities that the Mavericks engage in to raise funds are always ‘fun.’ An email I received advertising a “Fun Raising Dance in Aid of Their 2010 Australia Tour” made me question whether the Mavericks team manager had made a typographical error. Sam assured me that he wanted to emphasize the ‘fun’ time that would be had by all due to the door prizes and the excellent DJ they had hired. Another player hosted a domino tournament at his home and asked for a $20 donation from each participant to help to pay for the bus for an upcoming trip to Philadelphia. I thanked him for the invitation, and when I told him that I do not play dominoes, he convinced me to come anyway. He claimed that someone would teach me and that even if I didn’t play the female MCSC members have fun sitting and talking or dancing in his living room. MCSC members also organize fundraising trips to Casinos and 50/50 draws. They always have fun raising funds to ensure a fun trip. Fundraising initiatives are imperative for diasporic community building because they facilitate making connections with other dispersed Caribbeans, the purchase of ‘authentic’ Caribbean food for the after-parties, and the smooth functioning of and celebratory environment of the games.

Summary

This chapter describes migrants’ desires to reproduce their homeland cultural practices and customs and improve their communities in Canada and in the Caribbean. Cricket players and their supporters eat and drink regional foods and beverages and listen or dance to ‘authentic’ (Afro-)Caribbean music such as calypso and reggae due to their desire to recreate the environments of their homeland and the hegemony of African cultures in those spaces. The spirit they produce at the cricket grounds is associated with the spirits they imbibe, making the cricket grounds a celebratory, space for the performance of masculinity. The sport of cricket
itself, the bodily and verbal language they use in communicating with each other, and the segregation from women allow the cricket grounds to operate primarily as a homo-social space. The MCSC invests in their local and homeland communities when they donate money and cricket equipment. Their generous donations help to improve the lives of the poor and infirm, the potential of the West Indies cricket team, their own cricket experiences, their status both here and there as morally upright, benevolent, and generous members of the diaspora. These investments are an important element in the regeneration of Caribbean communities.

Fundraising to pay for authentic Caribbean food, well kept grounds, professional umpires, or trips to the Caribbean or diasporic Caribbean cricket spaces, is important to replicate the cricket they were able to play at home, thus remaking the past and reconstructing the homeland.

Chapter Five made clear the social spaces MCSC members create to maintain diasporic connections. Their foods, drink, music, sport, financial and goods donations all operate as diasporic resources that permit the development of local and broad senses of community. In Chapter Six I demonstrate that “the syntagmatic sphere of language [and] ordinary discourse” Lefebvre (1991, p. 65) create spaces of nostalgia for Caribbean-Canadian men. Through their conversations, male members of the MCSC create spaces that take them beyond the boundaries of cricket, into the past, and over to another place. Women, in contrast, remain in the present, connected to the diaspora through their current transnational relationships and labour for the MCSC.
Chapter Six: Nostalgia and the Disjunctures of Diaspora

This chapter demonstrates the power of orality to weld members of the Caribbean diaspora into a common culture and the power dynamics that operate within diaspora groups. I simultaneously follow critiques lodged by Paul Gilroy (1993), Stuart Hall (2003), and Kobena Mercer (1994) who dispute the homogenizations, generalizations, and essentialist assumptions made of diasporas in which all individuals of a particular group are perceived as inherently similar. I demonstrate that while participation in MCSC activities provide Caribbean-Canadians with an opportunity to develop camaraderie, unity, and a sense of belonging, cricket cultures also offer space for expressions of the contested classes and nationalisms of Caribbean diasporas and exclude some members of the diaspora from participation.

Following Holger Henke and Karl-Heinz Magister (2008, xv-xvi), I see the shared memories and gossip of cricket spaces as “vernacular expressions,” that is, “cultural expressions that are rooted within the sphere of the indigenous and popular.” In the Caribbean, vernacular expressions are hybrid products of a long historical encounter with colonialism; their gendered nature reveals the intersection between patriarchy and empire. These expressions, a system of verbal, physical and intellectual signs, are based on understandings and ideologies that are always relative and changing.

This chapter has two goals. One goal is to demonstrate the power of memory in the creation of Caribbean spaces. Men’s stories told around the boundary, at their hotels and homes, in interviews, and at their meetings narrate the past – how it really was, how it may have been, and how they knew it was not, but hoped it would be. Their nostalgic stories paint a picture of a nurturing past/other place that helps them to transcend local scales and survive the present. While the male MCSC members maintain culture through nostalgia for the past and the homeland, female members, due to their position within patriarchal families, focus on the
present and the hostland. The second goal of the chapter is to show the importance of Caribbean-Canadian women, as expressed through their absent-presence, gossip and support at the cricket grounds, to the production of diaspora spaces. The spaces they produce at the cricket grounds create, reinforce, and struggle against gender, class and nationalism hierarchies.

**Men’s Nostalgia: (Be)Longing at/for Home**

You see dis bat? I use dis to score more hundreds playing friendly cricket than I ever did in Guyana or in the Toronto leagues. I guess you could say I really came of age in the last twenty years. Hahaha! Once I had my feet wet, in the leagues, there was no stopping me. Oh, one tour we went on in Boston, you know against, what he name? You know, Marcus Jones’s cousin there. Ah, yes, Dighton. I was facing him and make 99 runs. We needed one run to win, and me, one run to make a hundred. That would be eight centuries for me in friendlies. So I standin guard like dis. I waitin, an I see he talkin talkin to de captain. Next ting I know, he bowl wide. Wide! Dat ball come all de way out here so. You ever see anything so stupid? Raas! Me cyaant believe dat captain tell Dighton bowl wide so me cyaant make me hundred. Dey would ratha lose than give a man a hundred against dem. So I was 99 not out that day, boy. You see me? I neva woulda do dat. But you know, dat how tings go today. Everyone competition competition. Dem no care bout honesty, 'tegrity, or sportsmanship like we learned in before times. What?! When we were boys, we would play morning to sunset an no matter you win, lose or draw you always show the other guys respec’. Dem always respec’ me cause I do it all. I was good. Bowl, wicket keep, bat. I neva had a bat like dis in dem days, but still, I could lash!

In this narrative, I have combined several players’ nostalgic reminiscences about previous friendly games they played to demonstrate the passion with which the Mavericks remember their career highlights (and lowlights). They often use props, tee-shirts, score sheets, and cricket equipment such as “dis bat,” to tell their stories and ‘prove’ their on-field
prominence. Their stories involve friends and family members who were there, such as “Marcus Jones’ cousin,” indicating the importance of interpersonal relationships to their participation. Their recollections are always acted out, told with gestures, pointing “out here so” (one metre away) to replicate the original events so a new audience can bear witness. They also often emphasize how different things are today in Canada, in comparison to “when we were boys” and “before times” in their homelands. Their desires for and stories about another place and another time tie them to their homelands and to each other. Thus, cricket memories operate as a diasporic resource for Caribbean-Canadian men.

Analyses of diasporic communities emphasize fragmentation of identity and lack of a sense of belonging that results from leaving behind one’s first home and language, a familiar environment, and previously unacknowledged sense of security – especially when one is a racialized subject in the new home (Boym, 2001; Ritivoi, 2002; Tettey 2001; Walcott, 2000; 2003). African diaspora literatures highlight that diasporic subjects may long for their origins, but question, can one ever belong at ‘home’ again? This chapter examines the role of shared memories in mediating longing and belonging.

Original conceptions of the African diaspora viewed the ancestral homeland as the site of nostalgic longing. A pan-African aesthetic that developed in the 1960s alongside Black civil rights movements signified a return to origins through sartorial styles (e.g., kente cloth), religious ceremonies (e.g., Kwanzaa, ṥoṣẹ́nja rituals) and roots tourism (Clarke, 2006; Gilroy, 1993; Mercer, 1994; Schmidt, 2008b). The narrative that legitimates the centrality of slavery as the basis for African diasporic connections to home in the 1960s was replaced in the 1970s with a narrative of economic migration as the defining feature of transatlantic global circulations; the referent of the homeland shifted from Africa to the Caribbean for many Black migrants.

This chapter begins with examples of Boym’s (2001) concept of reflective nostalgia and Davis’s (1979) concept of private nostalgia, both of which emphasize individual longing for
home (**algia**). Imagery of, stories about, or objects from ‘back home’ help to cultivate and assuage longing, buttress a sense of identity and ease adjustment to a new language, different foods, and another system of navigating the world. The truth or accuracy of nostalgic memories and stories are not as important as the bittersweet feelings they evoke (Fairley & Gammon, 2005, p. 185), and why and how these memories emerge and are used (Wilson, 2005, p. 46). Memories may be private, but are sometimes also shared within the natural events of MCSC members’ interactions, and in the explicit context of a research project, where I elicit stories about interviewees’ pasts. In this section, I demonstrate two ways Caribbean-Canadian first generation immigrants express **algia**. First, by telling stories about the past and another place, namely their childhoods in various Caribbean settings, the Mavericks can imbue hard times with positive memories, thereby transforming their histories. Second, by sharing their memories of West Indies (Windies) cricket supremacy in the 1970s and 1980s, the Mavericks and their supporters are able to demonstrate their knowledge, revel in the pride they once felt for their nation, region, and race, and exhibit the (dis)continuities of the immigrant experience.

This section ends with narratives of restorative (Boym, 2001) and collective (Davis, 1979) nostalgia, that is, those practices which emphasize the re-creation of a lost home (**nostos**) and imagined communities. The re-creation of home and the past, through social activities and dialogue are “an essential part of survival” (Boym, 2001, p. 51) in a new setting. MCSC members (stories about) return to the homeland and other Caribbean diasporic sites appease their longing for the past and desires for permanent return. Their cricket-related travels and recreation of games at the same sites, against the same teams year after year permit a grounded sense of belonging to the homeland and the diaspora. Through talking about those experiences, they relive the past, confirm their belonging, and re-generate what they have lost.

This section, then, illuminates the ways in which Caribbean-Canadians have responded, through nostalgic practices, to the political and racial climate confronting them, and to their
distance (in time and space) from the homeland of their youth: story telling about childhood, reminiscing about Windies success, and discussing traveling to diasporic locales summon accounts of another time and place and are key strategies to generate feelings of belonging to deal with the pain of temporal and physical displacement and longing for home.

Stories of childhood cricket. Stuart Hall (2003, p. 235) draws on what Said (1985, p. 55) once called an “imaginative geography and history” to describe an important component of the identity of postcolonial peoples: the “imaginative rediscovery” of “hidden histories” offers a way of “imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation.” For the first generation Caribbean-Canadians I interviewed, the “imaginative rediscovery” is not of Africa. Rather, as Hall emphasizes, a shift to the Caribbean as “Africa, of the New World … a spiritual, cultural, and political metaphor” (2003, p. 241) has taken place, and within the spaces they have created through the MCSC, members are able to assuage longing for home through their nostalgic, imaginative stories. Hall emphasizes that Caribbean people’s sense of continuity, oneness, and similarity is not discovered through archeological unearthing, but grounded “in the re-telling of the past” (p. 235, original emphasis).

When I asked how long they have been playing cricket, one former player, Ned, exclaimed that he was born with a cricket bat in hand: “When I was a boy we would play morning to sunset. Cricket was a religion!” Most of the Mavericks are eager to reminisce about their experiences playing childhood cricket. Their stories spill into tales of poverty, creativity, perseverance, and community cohesion. Hall reminds us that the past is “always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative, and myth” (2003, p. 237). The Mavericks’ stories of their pasts may not all be true, but they are detailed, numerous, and similar, regardless of the specific Caribbean territory in which they grew up. Boym (2001, p. xv) explains that an excess of time for conversation and reflection increases nostalgia. At cricket games when men are liming – sitting around the boundary watching the game or waiting for their turn at bat, standing in the
field waiting for a ball to fly or roll in their direction, or leaning against a car parked on the grass, waiting for their thirst to be quenched and their bellies to be full – they have ample time to ‘keep noise,’ that is, joke and socialize. The anecdotes of one become the yarns of many.

Many of the MCSC members did not have access to “good surfaces” until they began playing friendly cricket and touring the diaspora. As youth in the Caribbean, they did not belong to wealthy clubs and as a result had no opportunities to play on well-maintained fields. In Canada they were forced to play predominantly on matting, since there are few recreational grounds that they can access that have adequate turfs. As a result, players exalted the ‘fast’ grounds they encountered when they returned to the Caribbean for friendly Masters’ tournaments. Then, they are permitted to use professional stadiums, such as Beausejour Stadium in St. Lucia or the 3Ws Oval in Barbados, for their games. Erol told me: “You can see when they really care [for] the grass, keep it short. You get a true read of the ball, eh? You hit it right an’ it go straight to de boundary ’cause de grass fas’ see?” Erol continued to share stories about the ‘slow’ grounds and rough pitches he was forced to play on as a boy. The physical characteristics of the spaces MCSC members enter are triggers for sharing their memories of the past and their homelands. Their longing for home then, is not for the cricket fields of their youth. Though they look back fondly, they prefer to use and play on professional caliber equipment and grounds. Their new class status permits improved experiences of the homeland, nevertheless, they often reflect on their childhoods with affection.

MCSC members often described how poor they were as children and the ingenuity they deployed to create equipment for the bat and ball game that sustained them throughout their youth. Helmets were deemed unnecessary until the late 1970s even for professional cricketers, so they were not a concern for the Mavericks as children. Gloves, shoes, and shin pads were all

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35 Matting is a piece of canvas nailed onto grass which is used as a pitch. The bowler delivers the ball, which bounces on the matting before it reaches the batsman. The rough grass the matting is laid over often causes the ball’s bounce to be unpredictable and when it gets wet it can be slippery for players to run on.
a luxury they hardly considered until they were older. However, bats and balls were a necessity, and they came up with dozens of strategies to gain access to the equipment they needed.

In the early 1950s and 1960s, when the majority of Mavericks were children, bats cost over $30 (CAD) and balls were more than $5 (CAD) each. The cost of one bat and one ball was more than the combined weekly income of some of their parents. Because they could not afford to purchase equipment, they made, borrowed, or stole the bats and balls they needed to play. Regardless of which island they were from, all of the Mavericks were familiar with the terms ‘coco bat’ and ‘rubber ball.’ Gmelch (1992, p. 85) similarly describes the life history of Roy Campbell, a Barbadian immigrant in England, who recalls his younger days playing cricket “with anything that was round [for a ball], and the bats were made from a cherry tree, coconut limb, or any old piece of wood that you could cut into the shape of a bat.” In group discussions, MCSC members would laugh at each others’ stories of the lengths they would go to obtain cricket equipment and each man had an elaborate description of his particular technique.

Their bats were especially treasured because they made them themselves and lasted much longer than balls. Generally there were only two means of fashioning a bat, with woodworking equipment or with a machete: “I liked making [my bats] from wood because I loved working with wood and a saw, so I cut my bats out myself with wood and a saw. I used a plane and planed them out and stuff like that. But that was later on” (Marshall). Later on, when Marshall was an adolescent, he had access to wood and carpentry equipment at school. However when he was a child, like most of his peers, he would make his ‘willows’ from coconut branches. The instructions were simple and echoed by nearly every player I talked to: We would find “a coconut branch from a coconut tree, and wait until it dry, and then we shape a bat out of it with a machete” (Warlie). Every Caribbean territory has its share of coconut trees and this is the dominant strategy boys used to make bats.
To make cricket balls, however, there were nearly as many instructions as there were cricketers. At one practice in the batting nets, the players lined up behind the batsman to await their turn. I sat by the entrance ensuring each batsman got his 12 minutes at the crease. As each player finished his turn, he would come sit with me and tell me about his ball making technique:

We would make our own balls by melting down rubber we could find, for instance, the casing around a ham was good, or we would smash up a milk tin until it was round. (Warlie)

[To make knit balls] what you needed was something round in the center … we’ve used a rock inside there or a seed … and then we took cloth and wrapped it around and kept it round. [At] Easter, we flew kites, then after Easter there was lots of twine around and that’s what you knitted the balls with and some guys were experts at knitting balls. (Marshall)

A rubber string ball … is actually made from the inner tube of a bicycle [tire] so you cut it into strips six to eight millimeters in width and its just like an elastic [string] … so you have to get enough string to wrap around a piece of wet newspaper and you actually form it into the shape of a ball … it black when it finish and the rubber gives it the good bounce and the paper makes it hard. (Robert)

We would tape up the orange [and play with it] until it explodes then we would get another one, we would start with a bucket of oranges and you know when we’d run out of tape we’d just throw the oranges at the batsman just to play. (Kundell)

A few of the MCSC members came from families or attended schools that provided equipment, however, the majority cherished one particular ball making technique. They were resourceful and took advantage of their rich tropical environments.
The Mavericks and their supporters (many of whom are retired from cricket but played extensively as young boys and men) enjoyed showing me the cricket wounds they received from playing with improper equipment. These wounds act as objects of nostalgia, embodied artifacts that have no inherent meaning, but are imbued with the power to act as symbols of creativity, perseverance, courage and pride when they tell stories about them. The players described injuries, superficial scrapes as well as deep lacerations with which they continued to play. At times they built off of each other’s stories, interacting as though I had disappeared, sharing their similar experiences despite their dissimilar nations of origin and even class backgrounds. Turner (1969) explains that *communitas* requires ignoring differences and emphasizing being *with* a multitude of persons, sharing facts, myths, or imagination. Their bleeding shins, foreheads, elbows, and the resulting scars attest to how serious and passionate they once were about the game, and to their bravery (a marker of masculinity). Roland explained to me that they had to be prepared with nails and a heavy rock to use as a hammer at the cricket grounds because “if the bat would split we would nail it back together.” Unfortunately, “sometimes nails would fly out (laughs). Oh yes!” Kundell and Marshall have many scars as a result of projectile metal:

We used … Carnation milk cans … as a ball when we didn’t have one … By the time you’ve hit that around a few times it’s pretty round … and obviously when you miss … and you get hit with the corner? Ooooh! I’ve got lots of wounds on my shins to attest to that. (Marshall)

What we did was we would burn up a whole heap of plastic nylon and … when the plastic is soft you put it in the coconut shell, roll it around and then it becomes the shape, and then you have a cricket ball, but it is as hard as a rock you know! (laughs). If dat catch you [hits your shins], *wow* [it hurts]! (Kundell)

The Mavericks acknowledge that they were forced to use these strategies to make and keep equipment because they were unable to “put a few pennies together and buy one ball”
(Roland) much less purchase a bat. Their tales of living in poverty and making their own equipment were rich and demonstrate Wilson’s (2005) and Ritivoi’s (2002) findings that informants can recall in vivid detail a tragic experience, yet regard the experience with humour or positive feelings. Their reminiscences are a way of evaluating a present that is in stark contrast with the past.

Today, their gear bags are full of not only bats and balls, but also hip pads, gloves, helmets, bandages, ointments, and bifocals. Yet they are proud of their previous economic distress, which they rationalize as integral to their skill development. Kundell explained that “playing without equipment is a good way of developing your skill.” Because the only thing between him and “busted shins” was his bat, he trained to use it as a defensive weapon. Roland also noted: “You learn to avoid getting hit on the shins. Because, if it hurt enough you’ll find a way to avoid it.” I share Roland and Kundell’s words to point out the ways they and their peers made the best of a bad situation; transforming a lack of resources into exceptional batting skills.

Due to their mounting shin injuries from their make-shift balls and bats, some players were innovators in shin pads: tying towels, pieces of cardboard, and/or clothing onto their lower legs. Others used their business savvy to make deals with older boys to borrow or rent their second hand equipment. Still, like Roland and Kundell, some Mavericks assert that they did not get hit in the shins very often, because they quickly developed the dexterity to protect their wickets (and their legs) with their bats. Roland also points out that it was not only their equipment, but the playing surfaces of their youth that posed a danger: “The surfaces we had usually had rocks and stuff so you learn to defend yourself. Not getting hurt. Then when you get on a good surface its like you’re in paradise. Yeah so that helped our technique quite a bit.”

Back in those days the wickets were not as good – the grounds were not as good as the grounds now. We used to play on pitches that was very small. … We made
do with what we had. The grounds were not that good, but we produced lots of
good cricketers in those early days. (Warlie)

According to the Mavericks, the success of the Windies team provides proof of the
ingenious and talent of Caribbean men.

Once they spent the requisite time and energy finding or making bats, balls, and shin
pads, the Mavericks took turns using them. In fact, they developed a number of games specific
to their impoverished circumstances. Hussein explained:

With only one bat and one ball, the first thing I played was cricket. Bare feet
running around ... no pads, nothing. ... And you didn’t have any wickets. You
have to put out a little tin there and then knock [it] down.

Once the tin was knocked down, Hussein explains, the batsman would be considered out and the
bowler would get a chance to bat. “Or you put a ‘pass-in-pass-out’ marker [on the ground] and
[if] the ball pass through there, you’re out (laughs).” Games like Pass-In-Pass-Out allowed
Hussein to practice bat control in Trinidad. If the game only permitted him to hit the ball to the
left, or through a narrow gap, he would perfect his strokes until he could do it.

Marshall grew up in Barbados and shares a similar experience:

Back then every little nook and crevice you found, like there, that area [pointing
to two square meters of grass between two short palm trees] ... as a little kid we
would play cricket right there. ... And the ball would seldom go into the water or
go over the fence because you were forced to control it. ... There were some
people who would [be mad] ... if you hit the ball in their garden ... so you had to
be very careful. (Marshall)

MCSC members demonstrated to me a number of different games they would play which
allowed them to become superior batsmen and bowlers. To show me the games, they got out of
their seats and called friends over to enact the rules. Sharing their stories with me allowed them to reenact the past. They still use some games occasionally when they warm up before a game.

Jared didn’t consider their childhood games as training; for him it was merely entertainment:

There was no TV when we were kids so we had to be very creative to entertain ourselves. We came up with dozens of games we played to practice our cricket skills. It wasn’t like we were practicing. To us we were just playing around but we played tough and hard. … We were good because we would bowl for an hour for money. After school the big boys would be playing an’ they want to practice batting, right? So they would let us little boys bowl to them. They even put a quarter on the stumps. If we could bowl them dung [get them out] we could keep the money. I practice bowling every day! Twenty-five cents was a lot of money back then and especially for a kid. (Jared)

[We played] ‘One- tip-out-a-man.’ You must run if the ball hits your bat, no matter how far the ball goes. … [To play] Take Me Two, you have to hit the ball and you have to run from one point to another and back otherwise you’re out. … [To play] ‘One man’ just one person bowls and fields. There is one wicketkeeper, but the bowler just basically runnin all over the place. Or ‘donkey’ was a catching game – if you gaff you get one letter – if you spell donkey you are out.

(George)

Jared and George insist that these types of games should be documented as Caribbean folklore. Their recollection of the games they used to play is associated with a pride in their region and race and disappointment that the important achievements of Caribbean Blacks too often remain hidden and unrecognized. Furthermore, they note that these types of games should be resurrected to help current youth develop their skills: “All those things will build up your
athletic skills … How do you think we [Caribbeans] got to be the best batsmen and bowlers in the world?” (George). The Mavericks are quick to note that their contemporaries, boys from underdeveloped nations who grew up using the same (make-shift) equipment and playing on inferior grounds, ended up conquering the world in cricket in the 1970s and 1980s.

The linking of the stories about how and where they used to play as children to their success and to the achievements of the Windies team in a bygone era provides evidence of how the Mavericks imbue the past with meanings that are relevant beyond their desire to return home. Their practices of creating equipment and games to suit their social needs and produce recreational spaces can be understood through Foucault’s (1980, p. 152) spatial analysis of the history of powers (plural). The “little tactics of the habitat” are generated in relation to “great strategies of geopolitics.” The powers of global capitalism and colonialism created the conditions under which these boys grew up. They had very few resources at their disposal; colonial oppressions did not achieve total domination, however. Resilient children used their creativity, the blessings that nature provided and the garbage they could find to generate cricket equipment and games. They managed and exploited their environment to create a space for pleasure within restrictive power relations.

Boym (2001, p. 251) describes home as knowing “that things are in their places and so are you; it is a state of mind that doesn’t depend on an actual location.” The object of longing, then, is not necessarily a place called home; rather, the Mavericks long for a time when creativity and perseverance were precursors for success, when a child with ‘nothing’ could still achieve greatness. They celebrate the cricket spaces and equipment their middle-class status now gives them access to, but they long for the past, a time when their region was successful in cricket, when they could associate their racial pride with the achievements of the Windies team.

**Memories of Windies supremacy.** Although the Windies have not been a successful team for over a decade, MCSC members continue to support them through mediated access to
their games, actual visits to their international test matches, and sharing memories of their past triumphs with each other. They are passionately critical about the minutiae of Windies players’ successful or lackluster performances and consistently debate the Windies Cricket Board’s political maneuvers and decisions. James (1963, p. 232) describes English people as having a conception of themselves from birth that includes Drake, Shakespeare, Waterloo, and the success of parliamentary democracy. For Caribbean men, the three W’s, Ram and Val wrecking English batting, and Garfield Sobers’ 365 help to fill a gap in their consciousness. James goes on to describe the personal attachment so many Caribbean men have to professional cricket:

There is a whole generation of us, and perhaps two generations, who have been formed by [the cricket ethic] not only in social attitudes but in our most intimate personal lives, in fact there more than anywhere else … All of us knew our West Indian cricketers, so to speak, from birth, when they made their first century, when they became engaged, if they drank whisky instead of rum. A test player with all his gifts was not a personage remote, to be read about in papers and worshipped from afar. They were all over the place, ready to play in any match, ready to talk.” (p. 41; 62)

The centrality of past Windies teams to their personal social circles and their ongoing banter and social exchanges around the boundary suggests that what occurs at the professional cricket ranks and at an international scale is central to some Caribbean-Canadian men’s identities and narrative exchanges at the local scale.

The Mavericks were thrilled to be playing a recreational tournament game in the beautiful Beausejour stadium, built in St. Lucia in 2005 in preparation for hosting the cricket World Cup in 2007. Upon arrival at Beausejour, players began to take pictures of themselves

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36 Sobers set a world-record for the highest individual Test score with 365 runs (not out) in Jamaica against Pakistan in 1958. This record stood for 36 years.
standing next to the pictures of their cricket heroes on the walls. They stood in front of images
of the great Antiguan, Isaac Vivian Richards, running out Alan Turner in the 1975 World Cup
final at Lords. They clamored to get a shot of Jamaican pace bowler Michael Holding
celebrating the dismissal of Tony Greig at The Oval in the fifth test match in 1976. These
images prompted discussions of “how great we were” amongst the cricketers. Many of them
explained to me, with stars in their eyes, that the feats of the Windies “back in the day” were
“unbelievable,” “uncomparable,” and “a sight to behold.” Griffith said to me, pointing at the
picture of Vivian Richards:

Janelle, you’ve never seen anything like it! I was in the stands that day ... Have you ever heard a deafening roar from a crowd? You feelin’ you bones rumble?
That was it. You know he [Richards] is probably the best batsman ever. Ever! He had the fastest century ever, in I think it was ’86, and he scored the most test runs by a single batsman in one year, and he took wickets and run dem dung [ran everyone out]! This from a man from an island with a population smaller than where I live now. You tell me how that’s possible.

Griffith lives in Whitby, Ontario (population 110,000), and takes great pride that a man from his small island, Antigua, rose to become the greatest in the world. “Now that is something to study,” another player advised me, pointing to the same picture:

We were great, unstoppable in those days. Beat dem with pace [fast bowling], beat dem at the crease [batting]. We did it all in those days, man. Imagine. You ask anyone, from any country and they will agree that [Vivian] Richards, [Garfield] Sobers, and even [Brian] Lara are the best of all time!

Their reference to the Windies team as “we,” heralding of champions from the 1950s to the 1990s, insistence that I should focus my research energies on Windies Test cricket(ers), and their surreptitious omission of current Windies poor performances shows “how memory is
encoded in cultural history and artifacts, and how individually experienced activity fuses personal biography with history” (Agnew, 2005, p. 21). James’ (1963) examination of Windies cricketers showed the passion with which fans attended to every success of Learie Constantine, George Headly, and the three Ws, Worrell, Walcott, and Weekes. The Mavericks’ attentions are directed to the superseding generation: Gary Sobers, Vivian Richards, Desmond Haynes, Michael Holding and Courtney Walsh. These are the heroes whose record-breaking performances, artful mastery of bowling, and breathtaking strokes are memorized and memorialized. “To watch cricket critically you have to be in good form, you must have had a lot of practice, you must have played it” (James, 1963, p. 35). It is with the eye of ‘experts’ that the male MCSC members watch current games and analyze games of the past.

They are embedded in Windies history and draw a distinct contrast between then (1970-1990) and now: “Yeah, back then we were spitting out champions!” Michael agreed. When they speak of the Windies successes generally, the Mavericks are not engaging in romantic or willful nostalgia, imagining success where there was none. The Windies teams of the 1970s and 1980s had performances that were unrivalled, and a striking number of the world’s best-ever cricketers come from this tiny region (see Beckles & Stoddart, 1995). The Windies team enjoyed an era of supremacy that has been matched in intensity and longevity by poor performances since the mid 1990s. In the Toronto Star newspaper, Garry Steckles (2009) asks a question the Mavericks ruminate over regularly:

For decade after glorious decade, … [the Windies] ruled imperiously with style, with panash, with the sort of swagger that no other cricketers, no matter how talented they were, could hope to match. It was called Calypso Cricket … How could one of the greatest teams in the history of sport – any sport – go from a swashbuckling, world-conquering dynasty to a pitiful and pitied basket-case in just over a decade?
The Windies dramatic deterioration leaves the Mavericks and their supporters longing for the heyday of their younger years.

Kundell eloquently described for me his passion for cricket and pride in his ‘national’ team:

Kundell- I give up on them every game but the next game I think the interest is just the same (laughs). Yeah, every game they lost and I [say] “Ok that’s it, these guys are worthless!” and then I can’t wait until the next game (laughs).

Janelle-What is it for you that keeps you coming back?

Kundell-I don’t know it’s, I guess, my love for cricket and being a West Indian. … I followed the West Indies team when they were at their strongest and I always … admire teams that play cricket at that level and the West Indies team, as they did during that era, were the toughest team around and nobody could beat them … Yeah it was always a joy to beat England, you know. I think it goes back to colonialism because we felt a little oppressed by the English, so every time we beat England it was like a moral victory. We beat the White boys again, and we beat them, and we beat them to the ground! It was a Caribbean victory, not just for the West Indies team or for the eleven players on the team, but the whole Caribbean enjoyed beating England. Even in 1980 when England toured the Caribbean, or was it ’82? And the tour manager had a heart attack. … There was no sympathy for them at the time, even with the tragedy.

Janelle-He died?

Kundell-Yeah he died of a heart attack. There was no sympathy throughout the Caribbean over that because it was the West Indies causing the pain!

Kundell paints a vivid picture of the links between cricket success, political “moral victory,” and racial pride so often described in the Windies cricket literature and by so many male MCSC
members. Players and supporters take the opportunity around the boundary to compare the best-ever players and recall their favourite games or moments in the Windies archive. These stories often have a racial element as they discuss how “surprised those White boys were,” or recall the pleasure of beating “the English bastards.”

Until 1957, the Windies team was captained by a White or ‘near White’ and the game of cricket mirrored life in general in Caribbean society where Whites were represented in the top echelons of society out of proportion to their small numbers in the population (St. Pierre, 1995b, pp. 107-108). The Mavericks, growing up in the 1950s and 1960s in the Caribbean, witnessed a profound shift in social and political power out of the hands of Whites, and cricket best exemplified that social mobility and meritocracy was possible for poor black boys. Sports are “a transgressive liminal space where Black men can attempt, quite legitimately, to (re)impose their subordinated masculine identity through the symbolic, and sometimes literal, ‘beating’ of the other, that is, White men” (Carrington, 1998, p. 280). Non-whites set out to out-perform whites in all facets of European culture according to St. Pierre (1995b, p. 112):

There was the dress, the speech, the culinary habits – and there was cricket! The thirst for recognition produced non-white cricketers superior to white cricketers in every department of the game.

Windies cricketers from that era are described as embodying their frustrations with the unequal power structure in Caribbean society and releasing violence in the forms of long run ups and ferociously fast bowling, big swings and tremendous centuries. According to Kundell, the Windies players were even able to use their violent attack to cause England’s assistant team manager Ken Barrington’s heart attack and death in 1981 at the age of fifty. A self-centered sense of accomplishments attributed to sporting success among Black males has been analyzed as a means of self-expression within an otherwise limiting structure of opportunity (Abdel Shedid, 2005; Majors, 1986, 1990; Majors & Billson, 1992; Sailes, 1998). Success in cricket
and even the death of a White sporting figure were a means for Black Caribbeans, even those already living in the diaspora, to feel proud and united since they were forced to carve out an alternative path to hegemonic success, given the strictures placed on their advancement. The impact of spending a childhood prior to national independence, when White English and light-skinned Blacks held all the positions of power, cannot be underestimated. MCSC members relished every opportunity to see the White man suffer at the hands of Blacks.

Charles, a passionate and long-standing Maverick supporter points out that the West Indies Players Association (WIPA) was on strike (in July 2009) because the players wanted more money. In “his day,” Windies players would “never strike” because they knew how “privileged they were” to have risen above their humble beginnings and be selected to represent the region at the highest level. He had a vituperative exchange with a number of players around the boundary because the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) decided to “put in the second-string guys [to] play against Bangladesh an’ they lost!” His interlocutors mentioned:

They should fire all a dem, pay dem for their stats. Then you can see who shows up for work, who really wants it, who has skills.

They pay so-and-so this much money and he ain’t bat 35. You can put any one a dese ol’ men on the fiel’ right now into dat line up an’ dey can bat 35!

Charles continued: “Lose To Bangladesh?! What kin’ of bullshit is dis?! Black people everywhere should feel shame! … Players today are no talent, selfish SOBs. WIPA is a fuckin’ joke!” Half a century ago C. L. R. James wrote letters of complaint to the WICB over their censure of Gilchrist, a fast but unruly bowler, and hero to the people. The Board ignored James’ advice and the people’s wishes. He notes, This was not the first time that I had had doubts of the inability of the Board to understand the age in which it was living” (1963, p. 236). Complaints about the WICB are enduring. Charles and his friends’ racial pride is linked to the success of the Windies team, which Charles believes is actively prevented by the “stupidness” of today’s
WICB. He equates the Windies previous successes with a sense of accomplishment not only for people in the Caribbean, and not merely for the Caribbean diaspora, but for “Black people everywhere.” Watching Windies successful performances in their living rooms or at the games if they were lucky, or more likely in sports bars in the Greater Toronto Area, offered a diasporic resource for MCSC members. The images themselves, as well as the opportunities for socializing games presented, helped to unite geographically dispersed Caribbean-Canadian men. In contrast, Windies failures denote racial shame.

Charles expresses *algia*, not for a place (the Caribbean) or a time (the era of the Windies supremacy), but for a space of Black power and pride he felt in the 1970s and 1980s. The Windies success provided proof that Blacks *can* compete amongst the best in the world, that being from ‘little’ islands, the ‘third world,’ and ‘the periphery’ did not equate to small achievements, third rate performances, or peripheral status. Today, however, Charles explained “When people think of Jamaica, all they think of is gun violence in Scarborough or Jane and Finch. Even our people [Caribbeans]. They don’t know about [Michael] Holding or Courtney Walsh!” The Mavericks are fearful that the prowess of former Windies players and the associated national, regional and racial pride, will soon dissipate, especially when they lose to second tier teams like Bangladesh. Concomitantly their own accomplishments will soon be forgotten as the number of MCSC members decrease as they age, retire, and sadly, pass away.

During the era of supremacy, the WICB and Windies, finally managed and captained by Blacks, showed promise and unity. Since then, however, Hussein notes, the WICB has “fallen apart.” In reference to a movie, *Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India*, Hussein explains that cricket is a fine example of a sport that can unify people. In the movie set in colonial India in the late nineteenth century, he explains:

Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims played together. They had to cooperate for survival like all the islands of the West Indies. Before times, we were this powerful Black
team, like you see how the Australians see themselves as all white and all
Australian. After they [English colonialists] realized they couldn’t hold us down
we were really like one black nation. These days there are more internal rivalries
between the islands, no cohesion or team work.

Discussions of internal rivalries between Caribbean cricket nations quickly spill into more
general discussions of Caribbean politics, political corruption, a lack of harmony on the Board,
and a lack of cricket talent development in local youth. When Curtly Ambrose and Courtney
Walsh “retired, just after the turn of the century, [the days of the all conquering West Indies
attack] were effectively over. Gradually, reluctantly, the supporters started to acknowledge what
had become sadly obvious; the regions players simply weren’t as good as they used to be”
(Steckles, 2009, S6). Hussein claims that Caribbean young men lack the passion for the sport
that he and his generation had.

The signature nostalgic move, according to Davis (1979) and Wilson (2005) is to
compare then and now, “before times” and “these days” and to look for culprits to explain why
things have gone downhill. Many cricketers cite the lack of interest in cricket among Caribbean
youth, both in the Caribbean and its diaspora as evidence of a declining cultural and racial pride
and a failure on the part of the West Indies Cricket Board to educate today’s youth about the
team’s history and develop skills at the grass roots. Whatever the cause, the cricketers of today
cannot compare to those of yesteryear. Instead of focusing on current failures, the Mavericks
enjoy reminiscing about momentous events in Windies test-match history that they witnessed.
Their capacity to repeat narratives with the same wording, expressions, and detail in different
settings, demonstrates the ability of nostalgic reflections to reify history. In an interview,
Kundell told me of one of his favourite memories from watching the Windies play. Weeks later,
I overheard him re-capture the details to a friend in the pavilion almost verbatim:
There is this one over which is described as the best over in the history of test cricket for this century and that was bowled by Michael Holding to Geoff Boycott … Actually I saw part of that game because at that time I was at the Police College in Barbados and we got the day off to go watch that game … One commentator described … the look on his [Boycott’s] face was like he had seen a ghost. … Yeah (laughs). Yeah (sighs). He bowled him five balls that were just unplayable and on the sixth one he bowled him [out] and Boycott said that this is one dot [out] that he got [that] he never felt bad about because the pitch was prepared for fast bowling and that’s what the West Indies had. … Yeah I saw that over. It was (pause), it was amazing.

Nostalgia is “an interpersonal form of conversational play which serves the purpose of bonding between individuals” and may be used for political gain (Wilson, 2005, p. 147). Kundell shares this story and listens to others’ interpretations of the same event to forge a collective identity with his peers. They are men who know the breathtaking genius that the Caribbean has to offer the world through sport.

Jared told me, “You probably can’t really appreciate this because it was before you were born, but you know, it was like anything was possible back in those days. Anything.” The Mavericks deploy what Davis (1979) refers to as private nostalgia; their reflections cultivate and assuage algia, a longing for the past. Their impassioned memories of the time when the Windies was supreme are significant, because this period coincides with a time of transition, hope, and pride. It overlapped with the granting of political independence to their nations in the 1960s and 1970s and the period when the loud echo of the U.S. Civil Rights and Black Power movements reverberated in the Caribbean. Even though Blacks were the majority in most territories, to be Black was to be devalued and the Black Power movement emphasized taking pride in Black accomplishments. The Windies provided a rich source of accomplishments to draw from. For
the MCSC members their sense of Black pride was directly linked to their sense of themselves as Black men, like their nations’ Black heroes. They believed they were capable of greatness. Furthermore, the supremacy of the Windies co-incided with their migration to Canada (see Appendix D), their hopes for educational and economic success, the birth of their children, and their dreams for opportunities and achievements beyond what they were able to access in the Caribbean. The 1970s and 1980s was also a time when the Mavericks were at the apogee of their own physical prowess; they were dominating cricket leagues in Southern Ontario.

Caribbean-Canadians may yearn for another time or place as a result of the post-modern condition: that is, the industrial, urban, capitalist culture that creates a sense of alienation and fragmented identities amongst human beings with a dizzying array of possibilities for creating the self (Featherstone, 1991; Turner, 1987, 1994). Alternatively, their physical decline and impending mortality may be the reason they look to the past with such fondness. Many of their dreams of Black liberation remain unfulfilled as they witnessed the family and friends they left behind remain dispossessed and impoverished. Older adults reminisce about past successes to maintain their self-concept through the lifespan and memories are validated through dialogue with others (Radley, 1990). To this list, I would add that the observation of the deterioration of Windies performances, with no evident hope for restoration, may cause them to reflect on better times in the past and the narratives they construct may act as a vehicle for facilitating the continuity of their diasporic identities, and boosting their national, regional, and racial pride.

A sense of estrangement may be common to diasporic subjects who always already feel bifurcated, and long for a past when they felt “whole” (Ritivoi, 2002). Diasporic subjectivity compounded by experiences of racism in the new country may cause the Mavericks to use nostalgia as a form of temporal escape. Nostalgia may allow individuals who are dissatisfied with a particular aspect of an identity to utilize memories that contain a more positive aspect of (or experience with) that identity; references to past events can evoke strong senses of stability
in the face of current life uncertainties, anxieties, feelings of loss, or fears of a menacing future (Aden, 1995; Hewison, 1987; Lowenthal, 1985; 1998; Sedikides, Wildscut & Baden, 2004). The older, racialized, diasporic subject, emotionally attached to a once-successful team, turns to meaningful, locally available resources, to reconstruct what Rushdie (1991) calls the “imaginary homeland.” Stories of the Windies team’s former success may allow the Mavericks to feel young, to momentarily transport themselves to another place and space, to express wholeness, and to positively identify with their racial and national difference.

**Narratives of travel.** The ‘impossibility of return’ is an oft used phrase in diaspora studies. Return may be impossible because subsequent generations do not know the exact location of their ancestors (e.g., African diaspora), because the homeland no longer exists (e.g., Palestinian diaspora), or because, as Winston James (1993) describes, both the homeland and migrant have changed too much during the period of separation. The Caribbean migrant experiences a “third rupture” (the first is from Africa or Asia, the second is from the Caribbean), when he or she returns to the nation of origin and discovers that it is now unfamiliar.

One way to reconcile an unfamiliar homeland is to travel there and inject meaningful, commemorative activities, such as heritage practices, into the visit. MCSC members are not merely exiled subjects, dispersed from a center; rather, they are transnational subjects who can manage the emotional difficulty of their displacement by returning to the same fields to play the same sport year after year. They reconcile their feelings of a lost home by going ‘home’ (to the Caribbean, if not their nation of origin) or by going elsewhere (e.g., England, or the United States) to visit Caribbean spaces created at cricket grounds and associated social events such as picnics and dances. Their practices within the rituals of the games and social events resemble what Boym (2001) calls “restorative nostalgia,” which stresses nostos and a remaking of the past/home. Sport tourism has been identified as an important means of remaking the past; athletes and fans return to the same locations due to nostalgia for the sport, nostalgia for the
social experience and nostalgia for the place (Fairley, 2003; Fairley & Gammon, 2005; Gibson, 1998a; 1998b; Mason, Duquette, & Scherer, 2005). The trips MCSC members take and their narratives of their experiences reinforce the idea of cricket matches as more than just games; they are ‘heritage practices,’ which permit the consumption of other spaces and other times. Thus, I outline here how narratives of travel to Caribbean spaces are important resources in nostos or the re-production of home and the formation of a continuous identity.

Memories the MCSC members share about the trips they have taken reinforce the nostalgic recollections in the minds of group members, the identity of the community and their longing to return again. As Fairley and Gammon (2005, p. 192) note:

> When repeat trip participants come together to take part in a trip, memories of past trips become particularly salient. … newcomers become aware of the activities that are important to the group to the point where they are able to relive past trips vicariously.

MCSC members constantly compare their current activities (playing cricket, drinking, dancing, or playing dominoes) to spectacular experiences they have had in other times and places. When I told Erol I had never before visited Barbados, he assured me that there is no better way to see the island than on a cricket trip:

> You come wit’ us an’ you see the whole island. We play games every part and we have fun. You go fish fry, you see all the stadiums. You get to really party … Every tour we went to Barbados [we had] coolers pack up with ice, drinks, Barbados rum, Guinness. Dem bring fish cake, dumpling, food [dasheen and yams], everyting! We drink an’ play. What?! Play and drink same time. No matter what you drink you never get drunk. You jus relax. Go beach for conch salad. Jamaicans brings jerk chicken, Barbadians brings sweetbread, rice an peas
and this is every day! They had police escorts, security to protec’ we and our bus pack up wit drink! You will see.

This description of an all-you-can-drink-and-eat affair (with little mention of actual cricket games) is Erol’s idea of paradise and this story is repeated to entice others to join the team on their upcoming trip.

Inevitably when I introduce myself as being of Antiguan descent, most players have a story about a great trip they had to Antigua that usually involves watching or playing at least one game of cricket. Wesley speaks longingly of the beautiful weather and challenging games he played in Antigua when he traveled there with an Ontario representative team in 2005. In fact, he was wearing the team shirt from that trip the first time I met him and he used the shirt as a prop in a story he told me about the loss they suffered in the final game in that tournament. Wesley’s detailed explanation of how his team had been on a pace to win easily and gave away the game is paralleled by his intricate description of the parties they attended on that trip.

I still wear this [shirt] with pride even though we lost that tournament. The guys trying to show off – against my advice, I might add. Dey gave up the wickets slowly, by not running, and waiting instead fe see if balls dey hit mek it to de boundary. “What you standin’ there for?” I was yelling at dem. … “Take t’ree [runs]! OK, take two!” Not even one? Dem tink the ball a go out so dey waitin, waitin, den it just drop an’ roll to deep square leg [fielding position near the boundary] an’ him pick it up an’ t’row (shakes his head). So den dey decide fe run. Ah (pause). We end up losing’ by t’ree runs (holds up three fingers and shakes his head). … But you know we were in beautiful Antigua, so I cyant really complain. Dey say 365 beaches, you know. Wow. Dat sand was beautiful and white, white, white. Dey really know how to party. We went to one fête on
the beach an’ dey was playing some sweet calypso an’ reggae. I think we party
till sun come up. I don’t tink I did dat since I was your age but we had some fun
in Antigua, boy!

That game obviously meant a lot to Wesley who remembers every detail of the final moments. He was disappointed and embarrassed by his teammates’ failure (or inability) to run and their resultant second place finish in the tournament, but he contrasts this with one of the goals of the trip they managed to achieve: to party all night long. Repeating “waiting” twice and “white” three times is an Afro-linguistic strategy that adds emphasis (McLaren, 2009). Three “whites” means the sand was a brilliant white and white sand is the most valued for its smoothness and therapeutic properties. He recites the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Tourism’s official line of 365 beaches and encourages others to travel there as well. Staying up all night partying on soft sand is a strong motivator for cricket-related travel. Players transport each other back to the tour venue through their props and stories of great parties and even sad defeats.

On a trip to England in June 2008, the Mavericks encountered a team of young men (in their 20s and 30s) who beat them soundly. The Mavericks fielded first and two players from the opposing team scored a century each within the first hour and a half of the game. After the tea break, the Mavericks, who typically score around 200 runs, went in to chase 408. What is interesting about this event is the way the story was told and retold to their friends and fellow cricketers upon their return. The physical stature of their opponents, the number of sixes they hit, and the final score were exaggerated. Their reverie amalgamates the selective memories with the emotions associated with those memories so that the devastating loss could only have been at the hands of semi-professional cricketing giants. This story is told to encourage other cricketers and supporters to join the Mavericks when they return to England the next time to “beat them backside!” and “run dem tailpart” (conquer their opponents). Fairley’s (2003) ethnographic study of a group of fans who travel by bus to watch their favourite Australian
football League team examined the importance of nostalgia. She concluded that the recollections of past trips the participants shared was a bigger part of the positive experience than actually watching their team. This echoes my findings that the social experience, rather than the game outcome, is a focus for heritage sport tourists who seek to recreate their positive experiences and regenerate their homeland cultures with every trip.

Sport forms lend themselves well to being avenues for the reconstruction of tradition since each time they are played with the same team members, rules, time frames, uniforms and at the same grounds. The re-creation of cricket matches they played as youth, now in older adult form, permits a sense of stasis and affirms continuity with their narratives of nation, region, and imagined diasporic community. Cricket matches themselves as well as the pads, scorebooks, and bats are artifacts, similar to pad Thai, matryoshkas, or afros that signify a particular geographic region and time and transfer distance into proximity.

Radley (1990) points to collective remembering through access to different kinds of objects that are made specifically to help us remember; artefacts and the fabricated environment are tangible symbols of and justifications for our memories – the material aspects of our myths – which are created together as we commemorate joint experiences. Kadar (2005) describes the tattoos and necklaces of Holocaust survivors that bore Häftling numbers, the Schutzstaffel’s “biographical story” about the interns (p. 92) – an abbreviated story of incarceration. In an “act of defiance and spiritual revolt” (p. 96); recipe books were compiled at Auschwitz by starving Jewish women, to document an alternate collective biography, a rich story of freedom, normalcy, home and relationships with their mothers. Reflecting on both the numbers and the recipes reinforces Jewish diasporic women’s sense of identity, ability to overcome trauma, and desire to celebrate life. Though the Mavericks’ loss of home cannot be weighed against the suffering of Holocaust victims, their active construction of memories, sharing of narratives, and use of objects to recall the past are similar. When the Mavericks invite friends and fellow
cricketers to their homes to socialize or for team meetings, the objects on the walls or mantle from previous cricket games initiate discussions that reify experiences, commemorate loss, and celebrate past visits to Caribbean spaces.

For every tour the cricketers create a new uniform with an embroidered team name, and sometimes the date and location of the tour. Trophies, plaques, flags, and pins are all exchanged between teams to commemorate the games; statuettes or plaques engraved with the date, location, and names of the teams involved are given to the man of the match and/or captain of the team to honour his contributions. When they return from their trips, some of the Mavericks display in their homes the plaques and trophies they have received amongst team pictures, old uniforms, balls (they hit for a century), framed newspaper articles, or posters advertising their matches. These metonymies of home “anticipate and provide material support for a state of mind. They offer a vantage for creating a retrospective story, which not only aspires to record a past event, but also purports to immortalize it” (Ritivoi, 2002, p. 131).

At one meeting held at Reggie’s house, I noticed a picture on the wall of cricketers in uniform arranged in two lines and flanked by supporters on each side. A few players and their wives gathered around the photograph, which did not feature any overt indication of when or where it was taken. Based on the MCSC members in the photograph, the uniforms they were wearing, and the background, it didn’t take long for them to figure out that it was from a tour they had gone on six years prior: “No it couldn’t be Grenada because Hussein was having heart surgery that year so he didn’t go, remember?” “Oh yeah, then it must be Barbados. You see the crest [on the players’ shirts]” “Yeah, yeah, we took this picture at the end of the game. Remember dat game de captain tell Dighton bowl wide so me cyaant make me hundred. Dey would ratha lose than give a man a hundred against dem. So I was 99 not out that day, boy!” The cricketers used props to remind each other of memorable events. Their exchanges continued over drinks for over an hour after the meeting had formally ended. Wilson (2005, p. 36) reminds
us that “nostalgia may be experienced collectively, in the sense that nostalgia occurs when we are with others who shared the event(s) being recalled. In this way, nostalgia might be used as conversational play and as a strategy for bonding.” Memories are how groups pass on traditions, rituals, culture, and group history and demonstrate the important events in terms of traumas and celebrations:

Memory is an important term of analysis for diaspora and feminist theorizing precisely because it is closely tied to historical and political struggles. … [I]t can reveal both the inner psychic states of postcolonial diaspora women and men – such as desire, fantasy, repression, denial, fear, trauma, identification, revulsion, and abjection – as well as the social state of diasporic communities ... it can disclose the working processes of both hegemonic memory and countermemory. (Hua, 2006; 197-199).

When MCSC members travel they not only engage in the game of cricket as players and spectators, but they also tour the various islands and cities they visit, stopping to take pictures at tourist sites such as Derek Walcott Square, and Castries Market in St. Lucia, or the Mount Gay Rum Factory, Cricket Legends Museum, and Sunbury Plantation House in Barbados. Nostalgia is enacted through visiting museums, gift shops and heritage tourism, where the past is preserved. In his examination of roots tourism, and return trips Black Americans make to slave ports in West Africa, Jordan (2007, p. 49) demonstrates that visits to historic “sites of memory,” and learning about the background of these spaces, “link disparate continents, identities and cultures and demonstrate the fragmentary and spatial character of race.” Although MCSC members may not go to the Caribbean explicitly in search of ancestral roots or Afrocentric identity, the tours they take allow them to discover the unique history of enslaved Africans in the making of the cultures and the national heroes on various islands, thus confronting their ancestral past. Hussein and his wife Sutara took two days off of the cricket tour to explore the
island of Barbados. Hussein is explicit that he can “drink rum anywhere…but I never been to Barbados before, Janelle, an’ I plan to make the most of it.” He passively chastises his teammates who choose to spend the afternoons without scheduled games drinking at the hotel pool. Sutara and Hussein took a tour of the island and enjoyed learning about the diverse flora and fauna, national heroes, and historic sites. They felt it was important to really get to know the entire Caribbean, and informational tours help them to become knowledgeable members of the diaspora. The pictures they took serve as reminders of their national, regional, racial, and ancestral histories and communities and their enjoyment of the Caribbean in their later adult years. After the tour they shared their experiences with other MCSC members and they brought a photo album to the meeting, highlighting the cricket matches and the island tour they took, an aspect of the trip that others did not get to enjoy, but which will be fused with their memories of the trip in the future.

Collective memory is an active process by which meaning is created through the interactions of individuals. Any discussion of memory, especially amongst older immigrants, necessarily raises questions of “truth” and the relative value of verification. Imaginative, narrative or collective truth (based on relationships, emotions, values and interpretations) may be just as important as, if not more significant than, historical truth (based on facts that can be verified). Salman Rushdie (1991, p. 10) writes that “imaginative truth is simultaneously honourable and suspect.” The meaning of a memory is more complex than simply resurrecting events. Rushdie uses the metaphor of looking though a broken mirror. Only fragments of the past can be recalled due to the mistakes of a fallible memory compounded by quirks of character and of circumstance (e.g. alcohol consumption). But he values the broken mirror because it shows the provisional nature of all truths. As their memories fade, older adults rely more and more on the stories they tell each other. Their personal memories are dependent on intertextuality, borrowing and bending to rhetorical conventions, family and cultural scripts, and
claims to truth of their peers. “Collective memory, however, never paints a whole and accurate picture of the past” (Wilson, 2005, p. 19). The preference for narrative over historical truth is one aspect of African cultures shared by many Caribbean-Canadians who are skeptical of (white, middle class, colonial) documentation of historical facts that erase the experiences of ethnic minorities, and avoid the use of metaphor and fables. When the historical facts are insufficient, Caribbean peoples turn to oral narratives that are often shared in the kitchen, at a meeting, or around the boundary of a cricket match.

Collective memories are political because they recreate history and reveal collective desires, needs, self-definitions and power struggles. The stories the male MCSC members tell about their prior successes and defeats at cricket grounds throughout the diaspora are crucial in order to create masculine and racial pride, show their class status (through their ability to travel), and to preserve and record their version of the past when their stories are forgotten or ignored by national (both Canadian and Caribbean) historical sporting archives. bell hooks (1990, p. 147) notes that the struggle for memory can help “to create spaces where one is able to redeem and reclaim the past, legacies of pain, suffering and triumph in ways that transform present reality.” It is important to ask who wants whom to remember what, and why? The memories of home that the MCSC members choose to share simultaneously mask the experiences they would rather forget. Many of their women-folk were bored at times on their trips and some of their less well-off peers could not make the trip at all. When reflecting on their youth some players who attended their islands’ top grammar schools, where they were first introduced to formal team cricket, do not highlight the class hardships they experienced as the scholarship students (admitted because of top grades, not family income). For example, Jared told me of his disappointment and joy due to not being invited to social functions with his school and cricket mates. He was disheartened because the upper-class boys did not want to associate with him, but joyful that he would not have to attend parties in his school uniform (the only nice clothes he
owned). The Mavericks also do not focus on the hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes that damaged their villages on a regular basis. When pressed to discuss this Tayana recalled flippantly, “Oh, well of course, every few years you feel a strong wind, the sky turn dark. You see a metal roof flying down the road. … You know a hurricane coming and you rush inside.” Her simplistic description of living through hurricanes obscures the fact that some of the MCSC members’ homes and communities were severely damaged in Hurricanes Baker (1950) and Donna (1960) when they were young. More recently, Hurricane Ivan (2005) caused fear for the safety of their loved ones remaining in the Caribbean and they raised money to spend on hurricane relief efforts. Many MCSC members fail to acknowledge the feelings of lack of security due to the whims of Mother Nature in favour of remembering their homelands as beautiful places to live and holiday. Like their memories, their selective forgetting of various aspects of the homeland forms their identities.

MCSC members’ sense of communitas is reinforced through their active memory making; they remain connected to each other, their homelands, and Caribbean spaces around the world through their stories of trips they have made there. This study supports previous findings that collective memory is an important aspect of group identity and solidarity (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997) and is especially significant in shaping the social life and communal consciousness of diasporic communities (Safran, 1991; Van Hear 1998). Nostalgic memories are resources that are critical to understanding the past and the homeland, and giving meaning to the present (time and place), as groups choose how they portray themselves through selective memory and fable formulations.

Mason et al. (2005, p. 267) explain that when a community is thriving, as in the case of the Canadian and National Hockey Leagues, reliance on heritage elements and nostalgia building is low. When interest in the minor league baseball system dropped precipitously in the 1970s, in contrast, the open embrace of “heritage elements in its marketing, promotion, and
stadium construction” followed suit. As the Mavericks age they incorporate an increasing number of ‘heritage cricket tours’ into their lifestyles. While this may be a result of increased disposable income, more free time due to retirement, and lack of constraints as a result of their adult children leaving their homes, one cannot ignore the impact on their memory making of their decreasing levels of performance, increasing illnesses and injuries, and impending sense of mortality, not to mention the poor performances of the current Windies team. These factors also amplify a desire to connect with another place and time. The symbols of their cultural past enhance the self-esteem and pride of communities that have been eroded by experiences of racism (Agnew, 2005, p. 7). The Mavericks, who have been playing together since the 1980s in most cases, and since the 1960s in others, are unable to recreate past games, but they come close to capturing the past and keeping the past alive through the stories they tell about previous games and trips, and by returning to the same Caribbean spaces to play against the same teams year after year.

Summary. In this section I have shown how men maintain their culture through the stories they share about their childhoods, the memories they indulge in about Windies supremacy, and the narratives of their previous trips they tell and retell. Through these linguistic strategies, they hold on to ‘the way things were.’ Though women are absent from many of their stories, Caribbean-Canadian women also use cricket and its associated social activities as a means of maintaining culture. Rather than focus on the past, and a yearning for the homeland, female MCSC members highlight the current connections they are able to make to the Caribbean diaspora and their role in maintaining their culture. Below I show how the wives, daughters, friends and (potential) girlfriends of the Mavericks use the cricket and social club as a diasporic resource.
Liberation Cricket(?): Women and the Disjunctures of Diaspora

The cricket ground is not an exclusively masculine space. As Terrel reminds me, “We are not only men, because this is a cricket and social club, so we include families.” Between 10 and 30 percent of the crowds at most games are women: wives, daughters, friends, and lovers of the players. Despite their similar ethnic backgrounds and experience of the same cricket and social club places, the experiences of female club members reveal the complexities of any notion of a shared experience or hierarchy-free communitas. Their stories show that there are multiple disjunctures within Caribbean-Canadian communities.

I have divided the female MCSC members into three groups. There are women who either have no interest in the sport or remain in charge of childcare and domestic duties, and rarely access MCSC games. I call these women ‘cricket widows.’ They often attend dances or banquets but spend their summer weekend days without their husbands. Of those who do attend games, few are interested in cricket. This group of ‘gossipers’ use the grounds as they would the beauty salon or the kitchen, as a place for women to get together and share stories and experiences. They also come to the grounds to observe and police their husbands’ and other single women’s behaviours. Third, there is a group I refer to as the ‘supporters’ who, like the male Mavericks supporters, are invested in the on-field performances and in the functioning of the club. Most of these are women with very young children who they bring along, no children at all, or adult children who do not accompany them to the games. They follow the game, cheer when the players perform well, cook food for the post-game celebrations, sell tickets to dances, keep score, heckle the players, and lime with the male spectators. The cricket widows, gossipers, and supporters are not mutually exclusive categories. Some women perform one or all of these roles at different times, in distinctive spaces, and in disparate contexts. Women’s (absent-) presence at games and social functions is paramount to the re-generation of the
community. Their regeneration of a celebratory, fun environment along with the class and
gender hierarchies of the homeland ensures the reproduction of Caribbean identities and
diasporic communities in Canada.

**Cricket widows.** Approximately sixty percent of the Maverick cricketers are married to
women, and fewer than half of their wives attend cricket matches. Many studies of Caribbean
and Latin American societies emphasize a home/street divide, where the home is associated
with femininity, responsibility, and the sacred, while the street represents masculinity, freedom,
and the profane. Notions of social class, race, and gender intersect as men of the oppressed
classes are expected to spend time outside of the home, and endorse the values of the street
including infidelity, drinking, and staying out late. Meanwhile women are expected to place
their loyalties in their husbands, hope for honest, sober, responsible behaviour, and wait for their
husbands to come home. This dichotomy is found in the families of many MCSC members.

“Places are made through power relations, which construct the rules, which define the
boundaries; these boundaries are both social and spatial. They mark belonging and exclusion”
(Vertinsky, 2004, p. 9). The cricket ground and its environs, including the grassy area around
the boundary where people sat and especially where cars were parked, were constructed
primarily as places for men.

Cricket widows could follow their husbands to the grounds, but the homosocial bonding
space of the grounds made some women uncomfortable, especially those who were not fond of
the sport itself. Kundell explained that his first wife “wasn’t a cricket fan. She came to one game
and that was it. In 1989.” The street culture evident at the cricket ground included men’s loud
talking, swearing, spitting, scratching of genital areas, and boasting of their cricketing, sexual,
or business prowess. One of the Mavericks wore a shirt stating that he was a member of “a
drinking team with a cricket problem” extolling his true objective at the grounds. Another’s shirt
said “Me nah eat nuttin me cyan put hot pepper sauce on!” alluding to his alleged disdain for cunnilingus. These behavioural and sartorial performances of masculinity were a turn-off for many wives, daughters and friends of the Mavericks and effectively marked the space as hyper-masculine.

Though women might like to enjoy time at the grounds, some are effectively excluded by sexist behaviour. Analyses of men’s sport as sites of homosocial bonding have shown that women are overtly excluded, or the environment is made unwelcoming due to “some men’s fears that including women in ‘their’ sports will destroy the homosocial bond that has become so foundational to their sense of self … [or] because they know (or sense) that the equation of athleticism with men and masculinity has served as an important ideological underpinning of men’s social power and privilege” (Messner, 2002, p. 142). Messner discusses sex segregation in terms of on-field sport participation; however, as the previous chapter showed, participation in Mavericks cricket is as much about liming around the boundary as it is about actual cricket play. Therefore, women’s effective exclusion from (or segregation to) a small area outside the field of play warrants similar analysis.

One player’s wife, Tayana, explained that most wives have “too many other things to do than sit pon de grass all day Saturday wit a bunch a men.” This short statement elucidates two significant points. First, few of the local clubs have been able to mobilize the funds or municipal support to build a proper clubhouse, which forces spectators to bring their own seating, stand or sit on the grass, something that is not comfortable for all women, especially older, middle-class, Caribbean women. A club house might make the space more inviting for women who are concerned about staying warm and dry while they watch the games and socialize. As Agnew describes of the United States, a tension exists between the idealized space and the actual place (2002, p. 17). On the surface the cricket ground appears to be a loud, friendly Caribbean space that is “not only men … we include families” (Terrel). However, without amenities such as
chairs and washrooms, the cricket grounds on which the Mavericks play are not very appealing places for many older women to spend sixteen to twenty hours on a weekend and the majority of players and spectators’ female partners and children do not join them.  

Second, having “too many other things to do” highlights the unpaid domestic labour that many women do, which indirectly supports their husbands’ sport. In her text, *Mother’s Taxi*, Shona Thompson (1999) demonstrates that doing laundry, cooking, driving, and raising children unaided, as well as emotionally supporting their husbands and abandoning their own sporting pursuits, are characteristic of wives of recreational tennis players in Australia. The wives of cricketers also perform these tasks in addition to massage, health care provision, and attending to their children’s sport, which allows their husbands the freedom to spend time at the cricket grounds and cricket-related social activities every weekend from May to September. Thomas (2007, p. 114) observes that:

> Contemporary diasporic resources, while potentially drawing people together – materially or symbolically – in ways that are useful to them at particular historical moments, are never innocent of the broader conditions of power that shape their availability in specific sites at specific times.

This diasporic community is splintered by disjunctures due to power relations that prevent many women from participating at all. Nassy Brown (1998, p. 298) draws our attention to “the possibility that actors may assign mutually contradictory meanings to the black cultural productions they appropriate … despite invitations to universal identification, not everyone partakes in the privileges of membership to the diasporic community with impunity.” One might consider that cricket is not available to these Caribbean-Canadian ‘widows’ as a diasporic

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37 At most grounds there is a portable toilet available or a shopping plaza with public washrooms within a five minute walk.
resource for a number of reasons related to their subordination within patriarchal societies and nuclear families.38

Many wives have no interest in cricket because they were prevented from playing the sport as young girls. Some wives may be interested in playing cricket, or enjoying an afternoon at the grounds without the burden of excess labour that would come before or after, yet by staying away, they ensure the institution’s historical pattern of unequal gender relations remains in tact. We must also consider the agency of individual ‘widows,’ like Kundell’s wife, who came to only one game in 1989. She sees her husband’s obsession with cricket as giving her the freedom to do as she pleases every weekend in the summer. While she may attend dances and other club functions, her interest in other weekend activities surpassed her interest in cricket and the Black space created at the grounds. Not every woman who refrains from joining her husband at the ground is miserable at home without him. Some women’s absences may be a form of resistance to sexist sporting cultures or to engagement with the diaspora.

The cricket widows’ husbands are occupied with cricket for the entire summer, but for them it is not enough. Erol complains that they “only have this three months in a year”:

In the summer, we only have cricket twice a week. We practice Tuesdays and Thursdays at [a GTA] ground and then we play Saturday-Sunday. And if a holiday fall on a Monday we play that day too, Canada Day, Labour Day weekend we play a game also, but that’s it.

He minimizes his participation, describing it as only “three months in a year” and only “twice a week,” when he in fact practices twice each week and then plays two or three

38 The majority of MCSC members are married to other people of Caribbean descent. I must consider, however, that a minority of wives may not be interested in going to the cricket grounds because they are not from the Caribbean and the sport and liming culture hold no appeal for them.
times each week. Moreover, the cricket season lasts from early May to late September, which is indeed five months. Some of the Mavericks drive over two hours – from London, to Mississauga, Ontario – for two-hour practices. Combined with hours of playing and socializing they could spend over thirty hours away from home each week, burdening their wives with domestic and childcare responsibilities.39

Some of the wives who attend games bring their young children with them. In my own experience, cricket games were a family event until I reached approximately eight years old. Once my younger brother and I began weekend sport and dance programs of our own, and preparing a picnic and activities for us to do at the cricket grounds for a whole day became more of a hassle for my mother than a joy, we ceased attending. My father was able to continue playing for another decade without his family there at the matches.

Many women describe the impossibility of supporting both their partners and their children:

I haven’t been going to the games much since [Sandra] is getting older, since there’s always something to do on the weekends. But when she was a baby or before she was born I used to [keep] score … In fact, when they went on the trip to Jamaica I was pregnant with [Sandra], so I guess we took her to all the games back then … But now at times they practice twice a week and then they play Saturday and Sunday so I don’t see much of him so my friends say “Oh you’re a cricket widow for the summer!” … After they finish playing [cricket] they play dominoes, and that’s when it takes even longer. … But over the years I’ve grown to live with that. (Eunice)

39 The majority of the Mavericks’ children are adults who live away from home; however, some have children or grandchildren who are under the age of 18 and/or live at home and require care.
Jean explains that her son Jamal is now her first priority.

I’m usually with [Jamal]. There’s no choice any more. I’m usually with him, I mean before when he was much younger, yes we were at every game whether it be Saturday and Sunday we were always there … and when he got into his baseball more competitively less and less we would go to [my husband’s cricket] game, because somebody has to be with [Jamal].

Now Sandra and Jamal are involved in a number of sports teams in their high schools and neighbourhoods and their mothers, Eunice and Jean, attend those games instead of their husbands’. They do not experience it as a choice. They “live with that” because “somebody has to” care for their children.

Many of the Mavericks expressed content with the fact that their wives and girlfriends give them the space and time they need to enjoy being a MCSC member:

I used to think about it every once in a while. Like, “Why doesn’t my baby come and watch me every once in a while?” You know, its OK. I have no problem with that. … [My wife] is definitely not a cricket fan. I guess for her it’s like being idle … She would prefer to do something else with her time … [but] she’s the type of lady that, you know, it doesn’t bother her that I’m with the guys … For me, to be able to play cricket every day, lets say on the weekend, among friends, I love that … for my wife to give me permission to go … That’s one thing about that side of her personality I love. To me that is very attractive. … Every cricketer needs a wife like that. (Terry)

Roland also echoed these sentiments. He has a wife who gives him his “freedom”: 
Roland- When we start having children she choose to stay home and she understands cricket was in my life before her. And I love her, but cricket is still (pause)

Janelle- The first love?

Roland- Well, if you want to put it that way. It was there before her and she understands that. …You know I get home and I’m very sore and limping and stuff like that and she’ll look at me and say “You’re enjoying the game aren’t you?” and I’ll say, “Shut up, you know I’m suffering.” She will make me beg for a back rub (laughs). But I beg. And I get one.

Women’s ‘absent presence’ during cricket matches allows men to use the space as an arena for male bonding, the experience of which would be negatively transformed if their wives were there. The wives “give permission” and “understand” that cricket is important to them and facilitate their play, especially because cricket was in their lives first. Roland sees his wife’s decision to stay home as a “choice.” She is away from the games caring for his children, and then performs labour in the form of massage (and cooking, cleaning, and laundry) to enable his sports participation. I wondered if there was an activity in her life before him and before their children. If there was, it likely remains firmly in the past since she must devote herself to domestic work, while her husband revels in the camaraderie, memories, homosociality and conviviality of the Black space of the cricket grounds.

Due to women’s role as the keepers of the insular nuclear family in Western patriarchal structures and nation building, some Caribbean-Canadian women become more assimilated into Canadian structures (e.g., their children’s schools and sports, mainstream grocery stores) than their husbands do. Although older women (with adult children) may eschew “walking up and
down the mall” on a weekend, women with young children might not have a choice but to get their shopping done on weekends. In the Caribbean, women may bring their children to games, have nearby family members to call on to help with childcare, or leave their children to play in the neighbourhood. In the diaspora, they may be limited in their ability to reproduce Caribbean homespaces within the MCSC due to a lack of support resources and discursive tools available to them for assistance with child-minding and domestic duties. Children must always be supervised and mothers I spoke to while on tour indicated that they do not have as much free time as their husbands to socialize on the weekends. As a result, women may generate a smaller network of friends of Caribbean or other origins, and tend to focus less on the homeland.

Cricket widows surrender their men to the sport. The absence of many women from the grounds is key to its function as a masculine homosocial space.

Nassy Brown (1998, p. 298) asks: “how do power relations within the diasporic space of particular black communities determine participation in the transnational space of diaspora that Gilroy calls the black Atlantic?” In the case of the MCSC, patriarchal relations prohibit many women from full participation in community activities. Interestingly, forty percent of the players are single and of those, all but one were once married but are now divorced or separated. While I cannot be sure that cricket factored into the demise of their marriages, husbands and wives who are still married both express the critical importance of accepting the role of cricket in a man’s life.

A few women do attend games, but remain engaged in knitting or reading, separated from the players and other male and female supporters. I wondered why a woman would bother coming to the grounds but segregating herself. Percelle enlightened me about a second reason for abandoning cricket widow status: “Wives who stay at home don’t have a clue what’s going on down here. There are a lot of women who would love to distrac’ our husbands.” She acknowledges that there are a number of chores she “should be doing” at home but while she is
“working at home, another woman will be *wukking* the game, you know what I’m sayin’?” Her use of the word “distract” and play on the term work/wuk has been well rehearsed in calypso lyrics where wuk refers to sexual dancing or intercourse and the suggestion is that a woman can easily distract a man (i.e., get his attention) but must wuk/work hard to keep it. From her perspective, it is a wife’s duty to regulate her husbands’ attention. A woman who is present at the grounds, but segregated from the crowd can use her ‘absent presence’ to keep an eye on her partner. Percelle’s husband, nearly twenty years her senior, is a ‘catch’ that she is not willing to let slip away. Any woman who misses her cricket-dedicated husband has only one choice according to her:

> If you can’t beat ’em, join ’em! ... Let me tell you, for five years I was miserable, complaining. He’s out all weekend, comes home late, too sore to do anything.

> Now I come out, find someone to chit chat with, have my drink an’ my fun.

Percelle has a young son, who she brings to the cricket ground regularly. He runs around with other children or if he is the only one, a spectator usually throws a ball to him so that he can practice batting with his father’s cricket bat. She has not yet experienced a conflict between her husband and son’s schedules and easily made the transition from cricket widow to gossiper.

**Gossipers.** The primary motivation for male spectators to attend games is to socialize with friends. Female spectators are no different. Unlike the men, who seem content to stand around or lean on their cars, female MCSC members always travel with canvas folding chairs or blankets to sit on. They bring coolers (insulated boxes) full of coolers (sweet, carbonated alcoholic beverages), ice, wine, beer, hard liquor, and soda to drink. They also pack potato chips and fruits to snack on, and books, crosswords, Sudoku puzzles, knitting and crocheting to occupy their time. These women are marginally concerned about the game. Percelle told me “When we come down here we don’t have a clue what’s going on in the game, but we cheer
when they cheer.” Instead of focusing on who is catching balls or scoring runs, the majority of the female MCSC members who attend games congregate around the boundary to talk about hairstyles, fashion, difficulties with childrearing, politics, money, their love lives, their families “back home,” and a number of other topics pertinent to their lives. They usually pay attention towards the end of the game or during “expensive” overs (when players score a lot of runs), but for the most part they focus on each other. Women who are expected to stay home produce their own socio-spatial relations at the cricket ground, and resist its construction as a male dominated space. Rather than trading in insults and quarrels as men do, they distinguish their femininity through the gossip they share.

Tayana described working in the “White world of banking” and having to get a Masters degree just so she could compete with and be taken seriously by the White men she works with, some of whom have less education. Candy shares her disgust with “the system” that has her husband playing cricket on fields with hydro wires overhead, bushes around the perimeter, and no clubhouse. She is unwilling to navigate the bureaucratic quagmire required to access the resources the club might leverage from the city, municipality, or province to improve their grounds; nevertheless, she is eager to complain to anyone who will listen. The gossips also discuss other people’s lives: whose teenage daughter looks “in the way” (pregnant), who is sick with “the cancer,” who is sending/refusing to send money home to their families, and who recently brought their mother up to live with them. Through these discussions, the values and concerns of the community become known.

The women who gossiped around the boundary distinguished themselves from “those blacks” sometimes naming them as young black Jamaican men and women, and sometimes marking them as lower class (or “classless”) Blacks who are constantly bringing shame to the Caribbean community. They, Jamaican women in particular, distinguished their adult children
from the stereotypes of the gun toting gang member or welfare single mother, by talking about their children’s academic and financial successes. They were sure to share stories of their children choosing a university program, purchasing their first home, or making money in the stock market. Their discussion of the after-school sport and martial arts programs in which they enrolled their children to teach them discipline and respect, as well as the tough love they doled out so that they would not grow to be lazy or foolish, places the blame for the problems among Caribbean youth on bad parenting, ignoring structural limitations that hamper opportunities for success. Their pride in their children’s accomplishments were extended to me. Tayana told me “When a young person is doing a project like that, it makes me really really proud. I [am] really impressed, especially [you] being an African descendent, just like my daughter going for gold.”

Unlike Faye Harrison (1991) and Francis Twine (1998), whose ‘light-skin’ imbued them with ambiguous social status during their research on race in Jamaica and Brazil respectively, I took this comment as evidence that I was ‘read’ as a Black woman and therefore accepted as family “just like my daughter.” This demonstrates the ‘insider’ racial status I enjoyed with this particular group of women; however, racial categories are neither static nor coherent: national identification and class also proved to be important.40

These who did explicitly reprimand of Jamaican youth, lower class Blacks, or bad parents reveals a) the stereotypes of Jamaican incorrigibility that pervade mainstream Canadian society are also embraced by others of Caribbean descent, b) the national conflicts and class hierarchies prevalent within the seemingly unified Caribbean diaspora, and c) the crisis of identity felt by some of these women who recognize that outsiders do not make a distinction between Jamaicans and Grenadians and see all Black/Caribbean people as dangerous,

40 Positioning me as a daughter also served to mark me as a non-threat, a woman who was not at the cricket ground to pursue romantic interests in their husbands. Several women were explicit about ‘taking care of me’ by offering me food, a seat and a place to sleep on cricket trips. Their motherly ‘protection’ from leering men was necessary and appreciated on occasion.
uncivilized, and undisciplined. The gossipers put down certain nationalities within the Caribbean community in order to define themselves.

Gossipers were quick to disparage women who come to the grounds with unkempt, “nappy” hair, who should know enough to wear a headscarf “with hair like that,” or men who are so intoxicated that they can’t walk straight: “You know him smile ‘cause him see four breast pon you!” Another favourite topic of conversation was the “shameless” single women who attend MCSC matches and dances looking for love in all the wrong places.

I was constantly stared at, whispered about, and questioned by many of the players’ wives when I first started associating with the Mavericks. As a young, seemingly unattached woman at the grounds, I stood out. After the first game I approached Rose, the wife of the captain of the opposing team to thank her for the delicious food she had prepared. She responded bluntly, “Whose wife are you?” I answered, “I’m not married.” She pressed me, “Is he your dad?” pointing to Learie. I said “No.” She stared at me, waiting for me to reveal my purpose for being at the grounds. Other than kinship, she was at a loss for why a young woman like me would attend a game with older men. She assumed that I was there to find a man to take care of me financially and romantically, and was wary of my proximity to her husband, Amal. Many of the Mavericks (even some who were married) offered to do both, and I constantly declined. I explained to them and to Rose that I was there to do research. Other “shameless” single women, who sporadically attended games precisely with the intention of developing relationships with some of the older men, were often critiqued for demonstrating appalling alcohol-induced behaviour and scandalous dress, or innocuous flirting with or even looking at married men.

41 I became engaged to be married shortly after this conversation, and married ten months later, not to an MCSC member. Experiencing this environment as an attached, then engaged, then married woman revealed interesting insights into the performance of gender identity, sexuality and matrimony within this setting, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation.
When Percelle witnessed several men flirting with me at one match she suggested that if I had a boyfriend or any male friend, I should bring him to the cricket matches and MCSC dances with me. “Otherwise, people will take you for that one there” she said, pointing to a woman in a tight, low-cut, bright orange halter top and jean shorts that hardly contained her large round bottom. She was standing around a table where four men were engaged in a game of dominoes. “What’s her story?” I inquired. Candy overheard our conversation and piped in describing the disgraceful outfit the woman had worn to the last dance, that she had not taken the time to get her hair done, that she had appeared haggard, and that she came on the arm of one man and left with another. Percelle also chimed in, excitedly, about a rumour she had heard about the woman’s financial situation. Apparently she had won a worker’s compensation lawsuit for an injury she had claimed happened at her job, but “She look disabled to you?” Percelle asked incredulously as she kissed her teeth and rolled her eyes in an exaggerated look of disgust. I glanced over and at that moment the woman happened to be screaming “oh lawd, stop!” doubled over in laughter, holding her belly with her left hand and slapping her right hand on the chest of the man standing next to her to stop him from continuing the joke he was telling while she caught her breath. “Imagine, Martin tell Kenyon an’ Kenyon tell me dat she spend all dat money on dat car! Looka deh (look there).” Percelle said, as she pointed to an expensive, brand new white Lexus SUV parked on the grass beside the cricket grounds. Flanked by the mid-size Honda Accords and Toyota Camries of the other players and supporters her vehicle was conspicuously out of place.

I was warned against appearing to be a “loose” or immoral woman in addition to being directed against appearing too manly. I am 182cm tall and have a muscular physique from nearly a decade of martial arts and weight training. When this body type was complimented by long locked hair, earrings and feminine dress (skirts or tight jeans) I did not receive any negative
comments on my fashion or appearance. Over the course of my 21-months in the field I transformed my hair, cutting it first into a low afro and then wearing it in a short fauxhawk style. I also refrained from wearing skirts and earrings as much. As I became more familiar with the participants I began to feel more comfortable ‘just being me’ and my personal style alternates between a feminine and a more androgynous look. When I attended one game in a pair of cargo pants and a tee-shirt without make-up or earrings I was admonished by a few cricketers and a many of the women at the grounds for “looking like a boy.” I was told “You so tall, min’ dey don’t tek you for a man!” “Now I know you look like a boy.” “Lawd! What happened to your hair? She look like Mr. T (laughs)!” While changing my appearance was not an intentional ethnographic experiment, it did offer insights into the gender dynamics of the grounds, and speaks to the claim that a researcher’s social position, in this case gender performance, is changeable, contextual, and impacts the research setting because it is understood in relation to participants (Bulmer & Solomos, 2004; Gunaratnam; 2003; Mullings, 1999; Nagar, 2003; Naples, 1996). The MCSC members made it clear that an appearance similar to Mr. T may be appropriate for a man, but certainly not for a woman.

The more markers of femininity I abandoned (long hair, earrings), the more my masculine characteristics became visible (height, muscularity), and this gender (and sexuality) ambiguity was unsettling in a space such as the cricket grounds where gender difference and heterosexuality are constantly reaffirmed. Lefebvre (1991) argues that the human body remains at the core of spatial theory, that the body is a site of struggle over unequal power relations, and that bodies and identities are produced and maintained in specific social spaces. Among the gossipers, at the ground, sexual conduct, aesthetic grooming, and ethical behaviours are distinguished as important class and gender markers of the Caribbean community. Percelle’s

42 Mr T, born Laurence Tureaud, is an actor who played a violent, extremely muscular character, B.A. Baracus, on the 1980s action television series The A-Team. He is famous for his mohawk hairstyle.
explicit advice to bring a male partner to the ground and to be sure to “always wear long earrings with short-short hair” also sent me a message that to gain the respect of these women, I had to perform middle-class, conservative, heterosexual respectability.

I contested dominant, middle-class femininity by abandoning some performative aspects (e.g., wearing skirts and earrings); however, I chose to wear my hair neatly, moderate my alcohol intake, and reject players’ sexual advances, typically by referring to my male partner. I brought him to a few games for several reasons. I wanted to show him the type of work I was doing and introduce him to some of the friends I had made but, as Percelle advised, this act also helped mark myself as a) heterosexual and b) ‘unavailable,’ which decreased the chance that I would become fodder for gossip. Female MCSC members are expected to dress conservatively, but feminine, so as to appear attractive to men, work for a living rather than ‘take advantage of the system,’ and be monogamous. A double standard exists, however, as male MCSC members, whether married or not, are expected to be polyamourous and use their body and verbal language to mark themselves very much as ‘available.’ I noted that flirting among Caribbean men is a kind of gender performance that is typically not expected to result in a romantic or sexual liaison. Instead, single men flirt with and proposition women to demonstrate their heterosexuality and married men hit on and ogle women to show they’ve ‘still got it.’ Relatively young, attractive and/or scantily clad women can expect to be the greatest recipients of such banter. Nevertheless, some of the male MCSC members, married or not, did follow through and develop relationships with interested and available women.

On several trips players left their ‘cricket widows’ at home and traveled with their mistresses instead, clearly indicating another reason why players appreciate their wives’ absent-presences from cricket-related spaces. Infidelity and promiscuity amongst the Mavericks was also a preferred topic of conversation among the gossipers. At one game I sat with two women
who pointed at male MCSC members around the field and adjacent area where spectators congregate. They indicated which men were cheating on their spouses and which females have been romantically involved with more than one player.

Everyone knows he is married and he sometimes bring his wife to big functions like a Christmas dance, but his girlfriend goes everywhere else with him. Watch, he introduces her by name, “This is [Sheila].” He doesn’t say, “This is my wife,” so most people assume she’s his wife but she don’t come to cricket. I knew his wife from back home. He’s been with her for 20 years and the girlfriend for 15.

(Teresah)

I asked if they would ever tell that wife about her husband’s infidelities and they were vehement that such an intervention would be inappropriate because, first, it is “not their business” and second, “she must know.” They exclaimed, “How could she not know?” “For fifteen years (kissing teeth)?” “You see me? I’m not gonna be the one to rain on that parade!” “All she would have to do is come down here [to the cricket grounds] one afternoon. Just one. But in 20 years I have never seen her so…” Trailing off suggests that a cricket widow who “chooses” to remain uninvolved in her husband’s affairs can expect that he will not be faithful and either knows about his girlfriend and does not wish to confront him, or is blissfully ignorant.

As women strive to reproduce their national and regional cultures in the diaspora, the gender hierarchies intimately linked to those identities are also reproduced, and women are subordinated. In their gossiping the women do not reflect on the ways their tacit compliance assures infidelities will continue. Angrosino (1986) in his analysis of Afro-Caribbean masculinity notes that even married men are expected to seek their ‘extra ginger’ with an ‘outside woman’ at one or more points in their lives. Furthermore, he is expected to brag of his sexual conquests, one of the great themes of the indigenous musical art form, the calypso, and a
key feature of the Caribbean reputation system (p. 69). Instead of criticizing men, the gossipers point to the mistress and wife as symbols of im/proper femininity. “That woman knows about his wife. They used to work together. [She has] no class.” They mark themselves as smart (undupable), classy women by their presence at the grounds and long-term monogamous relationships and rest assured that no other MCSC member would be gossiping about them. However, they also acknowledged that many women are satisfied with their husbands’ affairs as long as their husbands continue to provide for them and never embarrass them. “Some men have very abundant needs, you know (laughs and winks)” Percelle quipped. She suggested that a woman who can satisfy her husband sexually will not have to worry about him becoming a philanderer at the same time as she hints at the fact that a wife might be thankful that she will no longer have to respond to all of her husbands’ sexual desires.

As a naïve researcher, I reached out for help: “How do I know which women are wives and which are girlfriends?” Thereseah and Eunice taught me some strategies of data collection. “If you see a man bring a different girl to every dance, you see for yourself.” “If he kissing her up in public or grabbing her backside, she not his wife.” “If a woman comes to a game and another woman comes to the dance, but then the first woman is back again [at] the next week game, that is his girlfriend.” “If she wearing a tight or low cut top? Girlfriend. Miniskirt? Girlfriend.” Thereseah and Eunice reminded me that observation yields information not easily articulated by individuals especially immoral or illegal information, and that informal conversation (Tillmann Healy, 2003), dialogue (Brooks, 2006) and gossip (Abrahams 1983) provides insights that may not be shared in an interview session.

Teresah is Jamaican and distinguishes between gossip and rumour. She expresses disdain for those who don’t “talk fact.” She claims that she would never say anything behind someone’s back that she would not say to their face:
For example, we could be here talkin’ bout dat woman’s skirt and how it too short for her age. An if she come over here me go tell she, “put on some pants!” But you see dese Bajan women, dey out to destroy you. Dey call you an say dey saw your man huggin up so-and-so. Cha! When is real, people hush, hush, hush. Dat’s why I told [T.J.] “Do not give out our home number!” Me noh want none a dese petty women callin’ me!

This quote raises two important points. Teresah reinforces the fact that an unfaithful man often gets away with adultery because the community is “hush, hush, hush;” that is, silent about the issue around his wife. She also points out a fissure in the seemingly unified Caribbean diaspora. She marks herself as not from Barbados and revolts against the spreading of rumours, half-truths and full lies, a characteristic she attributes to Bajan women.

In another example, when a cricket team was visiting for the weekend from the Bronx, New York, a woman who had come to Toronto to support her team, Beatrice, commented that they were missing the Caribbean Festival that weekend, but she did not mind because the “Trinidadians an’ dem always win.” A discussion ensued comparing the New York and Toronto Caribbean festivals and the coup led by the “Trini organizers” in both cities. Non-Trinidadians claimed what was once a diasporic celebration of unity, emancipation and inversion, has become divisive, imprisoning and a replication of the status quo of the national politics of the Caribbean. They claimed people from the smaller islands, such as Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and St. Kitts and Nevis are unable to have their voices heard, their music played, or their achievements honoured. A few women mentioned that they stopped going out for Caribana events a long time ago, because:

You go to a dance, and all you hear the whole night is calypso, soca … Where you see Bajan [dance] is gonna be a little more mixed in the sense of they like the same kind of music [as Guyanese do], soul, slow, good music. …They would like the
reggae an’ stuff like that, right, and the dance music, but Trinidadians is mainly 

soca (laughs)! You get soca from the time you walk in until you get tired of it, you 

get a full diet of it. (Candy)

Hall (2003) and Gilroy (1993) point out how the boundaries of difference within diasporas are 
continually repositioned in relation to different points of reference. Vis-à-vis the ‘developed’ 
(White) West, Caribbeans are all the same. Even within some Caribbean groups, depending on 
the topic of discussion a philosophy of “one people, one nation, one destiny” (Guyana’s motto) 
may prevail and a cohesive communitas forms. However, “under the influence of time, the need 
to mobilize and organize resources and the necessity for social control among the members of 
the group…[causes] the existential communitas [to be] organized into a perduring social 
system” (Turner, 1969, p. 132). Hierarchies reveal themselves and the differences within groups 
take on importance. Reggae is not soca, and some territories have more power than others, due 
to their population and longevity in Canada, mobilization as a group, and class privileges.

At the cricket grounds, those MCSC members who identify with the nationality that was 
being put down would typically have a quick retort if they heard these types of comments, but 
rarely would the discussions devolve into angry arguments. I suspect this is because it is 
unbecoming of a ‘proper woman’ to yell in public. Although men often shouted at and argued 
with each other, especially as they became more intoxicated, the gossipers never raised their 
voices in anger, suggesting that women who had legitimate concerns with one another would 
find a way to retort, remain silent about the issue, or leave. This might also explain why so few 
women came to the grounds in the first place. The gossipers provide examples of the 
disjunctures of diaspora and a reminder from Clifford (1997) that nationalism (or, for that 
matter, local hierarchies and conflicts based on class, village, or family politics) do not merely 
disappear although we discuss the African, Black, or Caribbean diasporas as though they were 
unified entities. Turner (1982, p. 47) explains that a care-free, status-free, spontaneous
communitas “can seldom be sustained for long. Communitas itself soon develops a (protective social) structure, in which free relationships between individuals become converted into norm-governed relationships”

In sharing their gossip with me, women around the boundary of the cricket match welcomed me into their friendship circle, delineated the boundaries of appropriate femininity, and enacted their national identities and transnational subjectivities. Many Caribbeanists (Gadsby, 2006; Marshall, 1959, 1983) have explored the kitchen as integral to women’s formation of identities, appreciation of language, and awareness of self-worth. For Caribbean women the kitchen is a therapeutic site, “a privileged space where they can speak freely and gracefully of the pain, economic adversity, and racial and gender oppression that confronts them” (Gadsby, 2006, p. 6). They learn to understand black feminine beauty, poetry and wisdom while they restore their senses of self through discussions of the their work, family and social experiences. Gadsby describes black immigrant women who worked as live-in domestics in the 1960s as shielding themselves with communal support and spiritual sustenance, at least for the time they were alone together, through a community they created for themselves in their kitchens. Paule Marshall describes her mother and other housewives who taught her an appreciation for ordinary speech:

Once inside the warm safety of [our kitchen] walls the women threw off the drab coats and hats, seated themselves at the large center table, drank their cups of tea or cocoa and talked … endlessly, passionately, poetically and with impressive range … the talk that filled the kitchen those afternoons was highly functional. It served as therapy, the cheapest kind available … it restored them to a sense of themselves and reaffirmed their self-worth … and functioned as an outlet for the tremendous creative energy they possessed (1983, p. 2-3).
The gossip of the “poets in the kitchen” is articulated in Patois, a fusion of English and West African languages, a weapon that “wreaks havoc” on the English language. At the cricket grounds of the diaspora, Caribbean-Canadian women continue a tradition of resistance to colonizers’ attempts to suppress African and Caribbean culture through a strict linguistic system. Abrahams (1970) suggests that gossip belongs to a particular performance tradition governed by cultural rules related to vocality and bodily movement. Each time the women use their Patois language, start a sentence with “Imagine…,” or “You see me…,” when they kiss their teeth, use a gossiping mode of communication, or touch each other as they talk, they draw on Afro-linguistic vernacular that transgresses Canadian borders, dramatize the ideals of the group, and maintains a subconscious connection to their African roots. The spectating area of a cricket match offers a space for women to slip between or fuse their Canadian and Caribbean selves, thus demonstrating their refusal to be colonized or assimilated.

The stories the women tell, and gossip they share, are a means for them to mark their own social locations, elucidate public morality, delineate community boundaries in the face of internal and external pressures, and create friendship networks. Amit and Rapport (2002, p. 59-64) emphasize the formation of community based on shared experiences of participation in particular associations and events. They point out that parents of athletes who spend time together on rainy mornings while their children compete, long bus trips to sports fields, and endless waits for games to start form long lasting bonds. Irrespective of their husbands’ games, some of the gossipers maintain close friendships and use each other for support. They also maintain strict hierarchies and assert themselves as “proper” Black women by pointing out the improper ones. Analysis of the gossipers reveals that spaces of resistance or ‘counterspaces’ are not only resistant or unproblematic (Lefebvre, 1991). They may reinforce certain power hierarchies. In some ways, these women reproduce class, race, gender and nationalist systems
by which they have been marginalized, yet in their own alcohol consumption, Patois language
and colourful clothing they express “a resolutely postcolonial moment of resistance to the

Van Ingen (2003, p. 212) calls for sport sociologists to “move past descriptive accounts
of sport landscapes, abandon spatial and conceptual generalizations and begin to unpack the
heterogeneity of gender, sexuality, race and other relations that characterize sport spaces as
social space.” My findings demonstrate that there are sport related social spaces where
Caribbean women’s resistance practices, therapy, and humour are expressed. In Canada, a site
as unlikely as a men’s cricket game offers room for Caribbean women to speak freely, generate
artistic linguistic expression, and demonstrate a sense of control over their circumstances.
Female MCSC members’ descriptions and enactments of class, sexuality, and nationality
hierarchies within the Caribbean-Canadian community remind us to guard against diasporic
celebrations of hybridity and syncretism in the Caribbean. Classisms, nationalisms, and (hetero-
)sexualisms remain within diasporic community-making ventures.

Supporters. Research on diasporic cricket fans and players (Carrington, 1998; Davis &
Upson, 2004; Madan, 2000; Roberts, 2004) show the importance of religion, nationalism, and
masculinity to individual cricket experiences, but generally ignore the role of women in the
making of diasporic communities.43 Women come to support the Mavericks games for a variety
of reasons. When the Mavericks host touring teams, or “go on a trip, that’s when a lot of wives
and girlfriends and friends comes out” (Layton). The motivations for female supporters to come
out to games may include creating (or preventing) romances, cheering for (or heckling) the
players, or helping the club.

43 Davis and Upson (2004, p. 638) note that women were actively prohibited from watching an India-Pakistan
cricket match at the South Asian Friendship Center and Bookstore (pseudonym) in Chicago “because it just wasn’t
safe for them.”
Many women supporters, some of whom have been following the Mavericks for decades, openly flirt with many of the players. For example, one afternoon Vilroy, was wearing a shirt with Niagara branded across the chest, purchased at his most recent trip to the Falls with his grandchildren. Maury thought it said ‘Viagra,’ and that Vilroy was advertising a pharmaceutical sexual stimulant. He began poking fun at Vilroy when Bethany, a single woman who is often at the games, astutely noted that if Vilroy was taking Viagra it would be beneficial to advertise, because a woman who might not give a man in his late sixties a chance might reconsider. Vilroy recommended that Bethany come to the games if she wants to see what his bat can do. Vilroy's metaphorical reference to his sexual organ continued the sexual innuendo but made it clear that he was not interested in her. This is an example of the im/explicit sexual banter that women and men engage in at the grounds, banter that makes some wives suspicious of single women’s intentions (suggesting that their husbands’ intentions are always already known).

Some women who come out to support the players have successfully found romance at the cricket grounds. Yalancy, a beautiful 49-year old Barbadian-English woman attended a game in England and, after only a few hours at the cricket ground she had made a suitor out of one of the Mavericks. Although I had seen Oliver chatting intimately with her at the game while on tour, I was unaware that this relationship had fully blossomed until I arrived at a cricket game in the GTA a few months later and I ran into Yalancy in the woman’s washroom at a plaza close to the cricket grounds. I recognized her face and was shocked to see her because in England she had told me that she did not care much for cricket and was only at the game because a friend begged her to attend. Her friend knew that few of the players’ wives would make it to the grounds for a weekday game and was desperate for some company. Yalancy described the game as “dead boring” but had a happy consolation: “I met [Oliver], so I guess I
got something out of it! (laughs).” She came to Toronto to visit her new boyfriend for four weeks. Oliver received copious accolades for having such a beautiful woman cross the Atlantic to be with him and support him at all of his home games. After he was late for one game and then got injured when a ball hit him in the lip, other players teased him that perhaps Yalancy was too stunning, too much of a distraction, that he could not handle such a voluptuous, wealthy woman and that perhaps he should give her up. This type of joking is an essential part of performing heterosexual masculinity in cricket spaces.

Theresa does not usually attend home games. In fact, her husband is heavily involved in the organization of the club but she prefers to remain uninvolved – unless he is going on a tour. When I noted that her husband is a chief organizer of the MCSC and asked how she supports him or the club, she told me that she has traveled around the world with the Mavericks, and, in addition to sightseeing, one of her reasons for making the trips is “hotel security. … I trust him, but I know how these fellas can get. I’m glad I’m here to keep an eye on him.” She explains that he needs “support” to not drink excessively. Players wives limit the type of banter their husbands engage in. If they are drinking too much, telling extremely offensive jokes, or otherwise behaving inappropriately, their wives will control their behaviour with a look, or a private talk, protecting their masculinity while bringing them back in line. Other than flirting with players, creating romances, and policing their husbands’ behaviour, the majority of female MCSC supporters come to cricket games and social events because they enjoy watching the sport and remain dedicated to helping the Mavericks at their games, fundraisers, picnics and dances.44 They are fully embedded in the MCSC and spend their time at the games.

44 I only observed one woman, Maria, ever playing cricket alongside the Mavericks. She was selected for a touring team based on her longstanding friendships with many of the players and her outstanding cricket record. Unfortunately, she only participated in two games (in one she batted and fielded, in the other she was “twelfth man” meaning she dressed in uniform and would have substituted for any injured player), but she became ill and sat out all remaining games. Maria was treated with respect and a degree of reverence. She was always singled out during the post-game speeches – even after games she did not play in – and her prior cricket accomplishments were
scorekeeping, serving and eating food, playing dominoes, drinking alcohol and/or heckling the players alongside male spectators.

Hussein’s wife joins him at most home games and on every trip. “How long have you been married?” I asked him. “39 years…To the same woman, eh? Well I’ve known her since she was 18, since she was little” and with a raised eyebrow he added “little little” to indicate that he was not just referring to her age, but to her body size. “I think I’ve got two for one now! I’ve got a bonus (laughs)!"’ Despite his teasing about her weight, Sutara brings him food and drink whenever he needs it. She interrupted our interview to ask him, “You want a likkle ting? …You’re such a blessed man, eh? Look at you … Here you are like a king sitting down and your wife serving you.” Most wives assume a subservient position to their husbands, but enjoy themselves at the game. They acknowledge that the games are long, but they “find some fun in it” (Sutara) and would not rather be anywhere else on the weekends:

I used to play badminton, but then I learned to score keep to keep busy at the games. Now I’m just a spectator. I know how the game is played and I know exactly what’s happening so once you understand that it makes it more exciting.

(Eunice)

Approximately half of the women at the games are knowledgeable scorekeepers. They know that keeping score “is one way to keep the boredom away” (Sutara). I learned to score keep at the first Maverick game I attended, which was quite helpful to learn the rules of the sport, build rapport, and offer something to the community instead of just “taking” from my research participants. However, I soon learned that scorekeeping is a very important, underappreciated, and feminized role that restricted me to conversing with and collecting data from only those applauded. Although her official position as a team member marked her as “one of the boys,” the homosocial nature of the team and constant reference to her role in “women’s cricket” marked her as an outsider. Due to her gender and, ultimately, her illness, she was relegated to lime with the female supporters.
players and spectators who lime at the scorers’ table and even then, the total concentration that was required for me to keep track of what was occurring on the field prevented me from engaging in meaningful dialogue with those who were close by. I quickly learned to support the team in ways that allowed me to access conversations with other women as well as male members.

Some female MCSC members support the club by preparing food for the after-parties, selling tickets to the dances and helping to organize walk-a-thons and banquets. Sometimes they are so busy with this (unpaid) labour, they are unable to attend games in their entirety, which is disappointing for some. As mentioned above, even cricket widows can be considered supporters, as they provide driving, laundry, and massage services, all of which help to keep the club running smoothly, and maintains a sense of authentic Caribbeanness, as they adhere to gendered expectations of the community, and maintain relationships across the transnational social field.

**Summary**

While on tour or playing home cricket games, MCSC members are involved in the remaking (*nostos*) of, and longing (*algia*) for, the past/home. There is pleasure in longing: playing cricket with their compatriots and friends provides opportunities for them to reflect on and invoke collective memories of the 1950s and 1960s and the cricket they played as children, of the 1970s and 1980s and the supremacy of the Windies team, or the 1990s and early 2000s and the cricket-related travel they engaged in. In addition to clothing they had especially made for certain trips, they use props for their stories such as bats and photographs, which help to remind them of the past/another place. They share stories about their histories, which relieves the burden of facing the reality of their impending physical decline and the end of their careers on a micro level, and the degeneration of regional and racial pride on a macro scale.
There is pleasure in returning to the past through stories: their ritual of sharing memories around the boundaries at games and at MCSC social spaces re-creates home and provides them with a sense of community, nationalism, regionalism, and diasporic belonging. Their stories may not always be true, but in expressing their longing for times past through phrases such as “...dem days were good!” and “...you shoulda seen it!”, they create a sense of stability and community. Ties to Caribbean communities can lessen the pain of missing home. The sharing of nostalgic narratives amongst men in cricket spaces is one way Caribbean-Canadians maintain a connection to their homeland. These men’s relationships, especially their long histories of Windies fandom and traveling with each other allows them to remain rooted in the past and another place.

Women, in contrast, do not spend much time reflecting on the “good old days.” The majority of female MCSC members are not Windies cricket fans. They have never played and for the most part they do not care much for cricket. In fact, most female members will attend dances, fundraisers, walk-a-thons and important fête matches, but do not come to the majority of Mavericks games. This analysis of women’s (non-)participation in cricket spaces shows that cricket is a diasporic resource for men to produce *communitas*, while many women feel excluded from or marginalized within the sporting spaces of the MCSC. Some women do not attend the cricket matches because they are busy with domestic duties or value that time as their own. Their absence from the grounds is appreciated by their husbands as it gives them the freedom to spend time with their friends without the pressures of domestic duties, child care, or a nosy wife.

A few women I call ‘gossipers’ attend home games and travel with the team because they have made a group of friends with whom they can socialize. The cricket grounds offers a space for talk therapy akin to beauty salons and kitchens, which have been explored by Black diaspora scholars as central to women’s survival in racist, patriarchal Western societies. Like the
male MCSC supporters, they lime, eat, drink and create their own social networks. Unlike their male counterparts, however, they pay little attention to the players and the outcome of the games. ‘Gossippers’ conversations demonstrate the fissures, inter-island rivalries, and class hierarchies of the Caribbean-Canadian community.

Last, there is a group of female supporters who are passionate about cricket and/or the MCSC. They flirt with players, police their husbands’ behaviours, and support the club by cheering, scorekeeping, providing food at their games, as well as attending and helping to organize fundraisers, picnics and dances. Their labour allows the club to run smoothly and they are central to the efficient functioning of all MCSC events.

Analyses of men’s sport often overlook the important (absent-) presence of women in the making of community. Chapter Six demonstrated that although cricket spaces are predominantly male homosocial spaces, in which men have opportunities to reflect on their childhoods, Windies fandom, and prior travel experiences, the entire cricket event depends on the labour of women. Even those who do not attend games may perform laundry, driving, or massage labour to enable their husbands’ participation. Women’s absence or relatively small proportions at the cricket ground allows for male bonding but makes homophobia and hypermasculine displays necessary to secure the heterosexuality of men. Although male and female MCSC members may be subsumed within the title Caribbean-Canadian diaspora, it is important to note that “solidarities are sutured together, of course, by power inequality” (Hua, 2006, p. 193), and the over-riding patriarchal structures in which they live enable and constrain male and female member’s participation differently. In Chapter Seven, I hone in on the issue of disjunctures in diaspora spaces and reveal the ways in which cricket is instrumental in the concomitant reification and dismantling of national boundaries. Through their transnational travels, local interactions with other diasporic groups, and performances of nationalism, MCSC members epitomize and embody the fluidity of nation in diasporic space.
Chapter Seven: Nations Unbound – (Trans)Nationalisms and Cricket

Diasporas are founded upon transnational movements. Both concepts are used to describe similar phenomena, the movement of peoples away from their homeland and their ongoing political, cultural, familial and emotional relationships with their nation or region of origin. Transnational studies that include only two nodes and presuppose back and forth movements between two locations (e.g., Glick, 1999; Klein, 1999) disguise the multinodal networks of transnational spaces (Faist, 2000; Jackson et al., 2005; Voigt-Graf, 2004). Close examination of transnational flows draws attention to what Massey (1994, p. 149) calls different “power-geometries.” Different social groups, and individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to cross-border flows. Some initiate movements, others stay put, some are in control and others are effectively imprisoned by the flows of others. A key aspect of transnational spaces is that they are dynamic and include flows between a “cultural hearth” and “diasporic nodes” (Voigt-Graf, 2004, p. 38).

Recently, scholars have shifted attention from pointing out that transnational spaces exist to demonstrating how they are maintained. Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999) assert that the unit of analysis must be defined in transnational research and a focus on the everyday activities of migrants is important in order to point out their agency within structural limitations (e.g., racial hierarchies, economic restraints). Karen Fog Olwig (2001) and Vilna Bashi (2007) show how Caribbeans everyday activities involve family and social networks that knit members across global space. Some migrants moved from the Caribbean to New York, and later returned to the islands leaving friends and kin behind; others, whose first destination was England, relocated to Canada and maintain contacts with compatriots and family in both the United Kingdom and their nation of origin. Olwig and Bashi point out that while economic or
educational opportunities may be motivational forces in choosing a destination, many people move to be surrounded by family or are drawn by friendship ties and these links have a profound impact on the ways in which diasporas perform nationality and associate with other ethnic groups. Hesse (2000a, p. 20) calls for “conceptual tools and forms of analyses which are sufficiently nuanced to take into account the post-colonial formation of cultural differences and the social and demographic changes which seem diversely historicized, discursively globalized and intensely localized.” This chapter offers such tools and analyses.

I first demonstrate that the friendship ties of cricketers lead them to travel Gilroy’s (1993) ‘Black Atlantic’ (Caribbean, United States, and England) and Canada, criss-crossing borders to maintain their relationships through return visits. I document their interpersonal networks and diaspora movements to show their “simultaneity” within a transnational social field (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Second, the performances of nationalism in different spaces may cause conflict between some groups. Examination of any diaspora requires attention to transnational flows and the ongoing desire to (or actual) return home or to constructed homespaces begs the examination of inter-ethnic relations in the hostland. In the case of Caribbean-Canadian cricketers, their discomfort and sense of marginalization in Canada is not only in relation to the White majority. South Asian cricketers enable and constrain their participation and pleasure; therefore, they are not only pulled home by a nostalgia for origins as described in the African diaspora literature. They may also be pushed home due to inter-diasporic group conflicts. Third I show that performances of multiple nationalisms in different spaces, through the use of iconography and symbols, are central to the attempts to both fix and transcend national boundaries and identities. A double conciousness of being simultaneously Canadian and ‘not quite’ fixes MCSC members’ connections to both here and there.
Transnational Networks and Return Visits

“Old Dog Tom!” a portly, dark skinned man shouted from across the parking lot. Erol’s head peeked up from over the gear bag he was desperately searching through at the side of the cricket pitch. He would be unable to bat if he did not put ointment and a tensor bandage on the knees he’d abused for fifty years. He had heard the call but could not make out the figure crossing the parking lot, although it was clear that the man was beckoning to him. Tom was Erol’s nickname in elementary school. When he was seven years old he’d had a fascination with the illustrations in the Old Dog Tom books. He would carry them around with him, trace the images, and beg borrow and steal art supplies so he could try to reproduce them. In the islands most dogs are feral, but Erol was the strange boy who wanted a dog for a pet. His friends started calling him Tom and many of his school mates hardly remembered his real name. When he heard someone, in England, calling for “Old Dog Tom” he knew it must be someone who knew him from his younger days. At the collegiate they had started calling him Elcamido after the famous spin bowler and after that his name was Shakey which was related to a particularly boisterous night at the dancehall. As the portly man drew close, Erol began to distinguish his features, a round dimpled nose, skin black as tar, and teeth big like a lion. It could be none other than his childhood friend, Chris, whom he had known as Boca, due to his big teeth and the fact that it was the only word he got right on their first form oral Spanish test. They embraced warmly. Thirty years apart and it was like they were back at the Maple Cricket Club grounds in Holetown, Barbados.

I share this segment from my field notes of a heart warming reunion as just one representation of the dozens of reunions I witnessed between MCSC members and their friends and family members. Many members describe reunions as a primary motivation for traveling on cricket trips as opposed to family or individual vacations. They encounter dozens of diasporic
Caribbean people on their cricket tours and never know which old friend or distant relative they will run into. Memories come flooding back and social networks proliferate with every old relationship that is renewed.

Return visits are defined as periodic but temporary sojourns made by members of migrant communities to their homeland or another location to which they have explicit social and cultural ties as a result of emigration (Baldassar, 2001; Baldassar & Pesman, 2005). Return visits are critically important in facilitating the survival, mobility, socialization and possible repatriation of many migrants (Duval, 2004). The transnational networks that form as a result of visits allow migrants to remake home, in the sense that they develop social capital, share knowledge and resources, provide/gain emotional therapy and advice, and shield each other from society’s discriminatory blows (Basch 1987; Basch, Glick-Schiller, & Szanton Blanc, 1994; Glick, 1999; Levitt, 1998). The Caribbean family, according to Basch (2001, p. 126) “has historically served as the primary social unit and central survival strategy for its members. … Today, kin are often the central pegs of migrant transnational social fields.” With Caribbean families dispersed across the Black Atlantic, return visits are one means of developing and maintaining transnational family networks and socially meaningful identities in the place of residence and the homeland. Sutton explains that family reunions allow people to meet and stay in touch and potentially precede future reunions (2008, p. 50). Similarly, Duval describes return visits as a mechanism or strategy for maintaining social ties in the Caribbean and facilitating repatriation (2004, p. 57). Social ties with real and fictive kin are critical to the maintenance of a broad sense of community.

Much of the diaspora literature focuses on migration, settling, and (impossibility of) return, but few scholars have examined the regular, short visits that Caribbean people make to diasporic locations (Trotz, 2006 is one exception), and how these visits may reinforce not only
migrants’ sense of connection to the homeland, but also their sense of citizenship and permanence within the hostland. The Mavericks’ histories of growing up playing cricket with friends, peers, and colleagues and ongoing interpersonal networks in multiple locations, allow them to organize cricket trips from afar. Return visits in the form of cricket tourism involve bringing a group of close to thirty players, family, and friends to a Caribbean location or a diasporic node. These ritualized gatherings in the form of cricket matches, banquets, parties, and dances in addition to sight-seeing and relaxing on a holiday, have implications for local economies. In particular, hoteliers, taxi drivers, and restauranteurs who are familiar with migrants’ visits can benefit personally and over time, combined formal and informal transnational practices can alter the economies, values and practices of local cities and entire regions (Levitt, 2003). MCSC members travel to international diasporic nodes with the explicit intention of reuniting with family members, friends, and other Caribbean cricketers who live there. In this section I describe reunions and the transnational networks that formed internationally, in the Caribbean, and on home grounds in the Greater Toronto Area.

**International return visits.** The MCSC travels to England quadrennially and to the United States at least twice each summer. Cricket trips are predicated on the economic achievements that resulted from their initial migration. The majority of club members migrated to Canada in the 1970s and 1980s due to a lack of economic opportunities in the Caribbean. Though most intended only to live and work in Canada for a short period before returning home, they found employment, started families, and decided to stay. Many have subsequently retired and use their leisure time and disposable income to travel with their friends on cricket-related trips.

In June 2008 the Mavericks traveled to London, England for a two-week tour, organized by one MCSC member’s childhood friend, Nestor:
I came to Canada for my cousin’s wedding. I came down to Toronto. James picked me up at the airport, took me back to his house, and said to me, “The blokes over here want to come on a tour. Is it possible you can organize a tour?” Right? So I promise him that when I go back to London I would make some inquiries and let him know. So anyway I said yes, that I would undertake looking for the teams for him and that’s how it all started. (Nestor)

Nestor’s brief sojourn in Toronto on his way to a wedding in Montreal resulted in a networking opportunity, and as a result the MCSC was able to make contact with eight Caribbean-English teams and arranged to play games in England over a two-week period. James did not travel with the team, but proved to be an essential liaison. Along with Nestor, he ensured that each team in England hosted the MCSC with a dinner, and on some occasions, an after-party. He also arranged for club members to attend the annual Barbados Cultural Organization Charity Ball in London. Several cricketers reunited with old associates and family members – unexpectedly in many cases – at games, parties, and the Charity Ball. Because the main organizers of the tour were from Barbados, many of the events they organized were specific to that nation, however there were men from throughout the Caribbean on the tour and they were able to reunite with Barbadians and others. Even I ran into a man from Antigua who shares my last name at one of the games. We spent several minutes trying to figure out whether or not we are related.

At the first game in England, I was surprised to find more than a dozen Caribbean men out to support the cricketers. On a Tuesday, their numbers steadily increased by about five supporters per hour, so that a group of forty men were gathered by six o’clock in the afternoon. Caribbean-British men in their fifties, sixties and seventies sat playing dominoes and drinking beer in the clubhouse at 11 am before the game started. I commented to one of them that it is nice to see so many people out on a Tuesday morning and asked if they were all retired. Some
of them responded that they were, but the majority had negotiated their work schedules so that they could come to the game. They had changed their shifts, called in sick, or arranged to have the day off because they knew this would be a great game between their “local Bajan boys” and a “West Indian team from Canada.” One man told me he was working but will remain “out on deliveries,” until at least the end of the first innings, “Once there’s cricket man will come” he explained. Warlie clarified for me that the potential for reunions is a strong motivator for travel:

That’s when everybody comes out to see who it is and rekindle old relationships or friendships that they haven’t seen for a while. Cricket builds that because you go all over the world and you get to meet people. People that you haven’t seen for X amount of years, but you remember.

When I mentioned that I was studying Caribbean culture and cricket the locals said: “If you want to see a carnival you shoulda been here two weeks ago for the Australian High Commission vs. Barbados High Commission game.” “There were one hundred cars in the parking lot, coaches (buses) come from all over the country, people set up stalls to sell food.” “There was music, big speakers and thousands of people. The entire back fiel’ was full up of people selling their wares.” “People drinking at their cars and blasting their car radios.” The scenes they describe equate Caribbean culture and cricket with a carnival atmosphere, and were an exact replica of the annual Percy Cummings Memorial Match held in the GTA. Rather than travel to Barbados, or Canada, the Caribbean-British men can come to their local grounds to experience a Caribbean homespace, “see who it is” and potentially reunite with their compatriots and friends.

For several hours a fierce game of dominoes was being played at a table beside the clubhouse, with loud slapping of the dominoes on the table and heckling of fellow players. Mavericks who were not in the batting order for the cricket match played dominoes alongside
local Barbadian-Englishmen. I asked the locals if they come to the grounds regularly on a weekday. “It’s a rum ting” I was told. They make their way to the ground “every now and then when the fellas are playing a visiting team.” One spectator seemed confused that I would even ask the question. For him coming to the grounds is his only pastime. “Cricket is like part of the ting so to speak. It’s almost like second nature. It’s like dis is what we do, dis is what we get involved with. Weekday, weekend. We here.” Others had heard a visiting team was in town so they came to “lime and play dominoes with the Canadians.” The cricket match is secondary; it merely provides the venue for them to socialize with other members of the diaspora. Another man pointed out “the only time us ol’ blokes from home get together is cricket and funerals, isn’t it?” Once they realize that some of the players on the Canadian team are from their village back home, they are excited to reminisce. “The return visit can be seen as a transnational exercise through which multiple social fields are linked” (Duval, 2004, p. 54). The memories that they share connect them socially and embed them in a network of social relations.

A number of players had gregarious reunions with their schoolmates at the cricket grounds, parties, and while sightseeing in England. A typical greeting was an exaltation of the players name followed by “A you dat?!” (Is that you?!). In the Caribbean, few men go by their real names. Erol explained to me “You know who is your close friend because they call your nickname.” Hearing that name, especially when it is a surprise because you weren’t expecting to see an old friend “instantly brings back all the memories. It’s like my whole childhood rushing back when I look ‘pon he face an’ he call ‘Old Dog Tom’.”

MCSC members introduce themselves to locals by their first and last names and their nation and parish of origin. Because the players (both English and Canadian) are of similar ages and some of the parishes they came from are so small (less than 5000 people in some cases), and

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45 In many Caribbean communities funerals have come to rival weddings for the scale and duration of the reception.
the communities so tight-knit, the chances of two men from the same parish knowing each other through school, church, sports, kinship or neighbourhood are relatively high.

We had a lot of rivalries between different clubs but I can distinctly remember going to Checker Hall, St. Lucy [Barbados] and playing those guys up in there and … I actually met one of the guys that I used to play cricket against in there [a clubhouse in England]. … It was great meeting him again, you know after the competitive sports and after all these years and we still playin’ cricket. (Eving)

One cricketer explained to me that the potential for reunions is an important aspect of why he travels with the Mavericks:

Janelle - I noticed that you ran into a guy last night. Did you know him from back home?

George - Yeah, from my neighbourhood and from school … he used to play cricket also. … [On these tours] You meet people that you knew before and you’re rekindled, you know? I also met a guy at the Embassy, the Barbados Consulate when we went there, that went to school with me and I didn’t know he was up here [in England] either, so that’s what happens.

George points out that it is not only cricket, but also the local tourism the MCSC members engage in when they travel, that allows them to encounter their compatriots. They spent one of their first days in England shopping in the cricket department of Lillywhites, a sporting department store, and visiting the Barbados Consulate offices. At both locations at least one Maverick ran into a Caribbean-Englishman he knew.

Family reunions are often an intentional aspect of the cricket trip, but occasionally, they happen accidently. Warlie joyously describes unexpectedly meeting a cousin at the cricket grounds on his previous trip to England with the Mavericks.
When I came to England last I met my cousin that I haven’t even met as kids. I knew he lived in England but where in England I didn’t even know, but he happened to find me at the game and it was like “Woah!” I didn’t even remember him, but we (my family) have a distinguished look so you get to recognize them.

When Warlie’s sister, who lives east of Toronto, heard that he had met their extended family and that the MCSC would return to England in 2008, she made plans to travel with the club. She was not eager to watch cricket; rather, her priority was to meet her cousin and his side of her family for the first time, as well as to catch up with her Barbadian friends who had migrated to England shortly after they had left highschool. “There is this feeling you get when you see your family for the first time. It’s like you suddenly see your mother’s face on another woman, you know? When [Warlie] showed me pictures I just had to come” to England. Baldassar and Pesman (2005, p. 201) describe return visits as secular pilgrimages of redemption, renewal, and restoration that allow migrants to remain close to the people and places of the homeland.

Warlie’s sister was able to spend time at her extended family’s home instead of staying at the hotel with the players, which provided her a chance to discover her genealogy. She also made arrangements to meet up with her highschool friends at the Mavericks’ games. “So we come to the arena and get caught up. Like ‘what have you been doing for thirty years?!’ (hugs her friend).” Her reference to the “arena” instead of “grounds” demonstrates her unfamiliarity with cricket. A tornado could have wiped out the entire field of players and Warlie’s sister would not have noticed. She spent the entire game in the clubhouse chatting, laughing, and getting reacquainted with her friends.

Another family reunion took place within Erol’s mixed-race family. On a previous cricket tour he had taken his wife and daughter to Barbados and integrated with a number of family members on his (Black) side of the family, but his wife Eunice was eager to use the trip
to England as a chance to reconnect with her (White) English parents and to introduce their
daughter to her relatives.

    My uncle came to Canada six years ago but my aunt didn’t come with him and
they have two boys, my cousins, so for her to see them [was a motivation for
coming on the trip] … We use this [cricket tour] as a base, but see the family at
the same time. … Its important for her to know that she has English family and
history over here. (Eunice)

Traveling to England to teach their daughter, Sandra, about her White, English history was very
important for Eunice. Sandra’s embeddedness in Caribbean culture through her father and the
erasure of Englishness as an ethnicity in Canada may have furthered her self-perception as a
Caribbean-Canadian. Fortunately, a cricket trip enabled her to reconnect with her English
ancestry; roots emerge through various cricket routes.

One of the highlights of the cricket tour in England was the invitation to the annual
Barbados Cultural Organization Charity Ball. Most MCSC members considered this event
expensive. At £50 per ticket, they were adamant that the food served “better be delicious” and
that the organizers should offer “more than just a dance.” They were not disappointed,
especially when they were entertained by a Caribbean comedian, offered door prizes as grand as
a trip for two to an all inclusive resort in Barbados, and had an opportunity to meet the special
guest of the evening, Sir Gary Sobers, one of their cricketing heroes and arguably the greatest
all-round cricketer of all time. The Mavericks scrambled to introduce themselves, take his
picture, and thank him for what he gave to cricket and to the West Indies. They were “honored
to shake his hand.” The dinner was followed by a dance and a professional photographer set up
a small studio in the lobby. While some patrons began to dance others lined up to have their
photographs taken. Ten of the Mavericks managed to get a picture taken with Sir Gary. I ran
into Otis and Layton immediately after the photo was taken and they both had stars in their eyes. “Well, this is one trip to the motherland I will never forget!” (Layton) “Dat picture going right in my front hallway, you understand? Front an’ center!” (Otis) The ‘motherland,’ England, offered these two Barbadian men an opportunity to meet one of their national icons.

The MCSC’s long distance travel facilitates the more proximal trips they take every long weekend from May to September. Vilroy put it simply: “Barbadian teams that you play on let you meet people you know from home.” The opportunity to rekindle friendships can be understood as one means of assuaging the nostalgia for home said to be characteristic of all diasporic populations. An inability to return to live in their countries of origin is mitigated by connecting with old friends internationally. Furthermore, meeting old friends and family members, who also have networks of their own that span a number of different cities and nations, is one way to spark future tournaments or tours in a number of cities. When I asked Vilroy to explain how this works, he told me that on the last tour to England the team captain, Sam, “ran into a friend from back home” whose brother and cousins had all moved to the Boston Massachusetts area. “In Boston there are lots of Barbadians [Sam] knows from back home, so now we always go there for return visits. They come play us and then we go play them.” The Mavericks thus maintain connections with Caribbean teams in many cities throughout the north-eastern United States.

We travel every year, wholly and solely the long weekend in May. That’s one of the things. The club travels … our trips consists of between Boston, Philadelphia, Toledo Ohio, Hartford. Once there’s an invitation out there we go. … Even if there was no cricket I think we would go. We always travel that long weekend. For example, our [club’s] 25-year anniversary, most of the group was going to England in 2004 but some of the group was here [in Canada] and
within two weeks we put a trip together to Toledo, Ohio and we had a full bus
[45 people]. So nothing stops us from going away that May long weekend.
Nothing. (Layton)

The Mavericks are devoted to long weekend travel for conviviality. In addition to the May long
weekend, Layton has been in charge of planning annual bus trips for Canada Day long weekend
in early July and Labour Day in early September. He explains that the annual bus trips are big
events in the MCSC social calendar. Even the female members are enthusiastic about the trips:
Shopping! The women love the shopping in the US. … Because we travel on the
Friday night, on the Saturday morning you probably don’t get to the hotel until
two or three o’clock. So the ladies from here will meet up with ladies from there
and will probably go shopping somewhere and the Sunday they are all there [at
the game].

Some women, who have been travelling with the Mavericks for decades, have developed
relationships with the wives of some of the players from the other teams. In some cases they too
have family and friends in the cities the Mavericks visit, so the cricket trip for the long weekend
provides an opportunity for them to regenerate family and friendship ties as well as taking
advantage of the Canadian-U.S. exchange rate, greater bargains, wider selections, and lower
taxes on food and clothing items in the U.S. The reasons for visits were rarely mutually
exclusive, highlighting the complex imbrication of economic and social/cultural investments
that underlie transnational networks within diasporas (Burman, 2001).

**Caribbean return visits.** Return visits to the homeland have been explored in terms of
their role in reintegration. Migration scholars have long described the importance of repatriation
in the completion of the migration cycle (Gmelch, 1980; Da Vanzo, 1976). However, it has also
been found that:
so much of the Caribbean has now been transposed onto the streets of London, Birmingham, Toronto and New York that many migrants simply do not see a permanent return to the Caribbean as the ideal retirement condition. Being “in touch” is more important. (Byron cited in Duval 2004, p. 56)

Revolutions in communication and transportation technologies resulted in the time-space compression of globalization and allowed return visits to be quicker, easier, more readily available, and more affordable (Foner, 2000; Vertovec, 2004); migrants are able to stay in touch through regular letters, phone conversations, emails, and skype (video internet) calls, in addition to visiting the Caribbean. These visits allow them to maintain social ties and status at home, reunite with their compatriots, and make preparations for, or replace entirely, repatriation. Migrants sometimes find, after return visits, that the homeland has changed too much (or not enough) and subsequently alter their retirement return migration plans.

Byron, who lives in Florida and joined the Mavericks on their trip to England to watch his brother, Ciskel, play explained to me that he originally intended to move home (to Guyana) after he retired, but now he sees repatriation as ‘unnecessary.’ Byron used to return to Guyana at least once every year either on a cricket trip or a family vacation. His mother passed away two years ago, all of his siblings live in either Canada or the United States, and he says there is nothing in Guyana for him anymore:

When my mom was there, even in the last days when she didn’t hardly know who I was I would still go and sit by her. And then last year, it was the one-year anniversary [of her death], so I went with my brothers, but now? What do I need that I can’t get when we go down [to Barbados] in November [for cricket]? The fixtures are already set, we drink some rum, have some jokes. ... Why go home [to Guyana] when everything I need right here [indicates cricket ground in England].
Gilroy (1993) explains that a referent to a single diasporic homeland is no longer tenable. Byron’s ‘home’ can be accessed via the friends and family he enjoys spending time with at the cricket grounds, and regardless of whether he is in Guyana, Barbados, England, the United States, or Canada, as long as he is with his friends and family, watching or playing cricket, he is home. He is not nostalgic for a particular place; rather, he emphasizes shared intense social experiences with his peers that allow him to transgress everyday social norms and develop camaraderie and a sense of community, which, according to Green and Chalip (1998), is a prime motivator to participate in sport tourism.

Rather than feeling displaced and dependent on a desire for home or nostalgia for the past, Byron is emplaced, comfortable living in Florida and meeting up with friends and family in various Caribbean diasporic nodes. While many migrants continue to feel unsettled in their receiving countries due to the hurried, violent, or financially devastating conditions under which they left, a feeling of displacement is a non-issue among certain MCSC members due to the luxury of their middle-class incomes and flexible schedules that permit international travel in order to maintain communities across borders. MCSC members are emplaced in the diaspora by virtue of their cross-border networks.

The Mavericks travel to the Caribbean at least once per year with the cricket team and many take additional vacations to their homelands to visit family every year. The perception of (Black) Caribbeans as perpetual outsiders in Canada speaks to “the degree to which they are willing to participate in activities and social networks comprised of other migrants” (Duval, 2004, p. 58) and the financial commitment they are willing to make to return home to the Caribbean. Conveniently, the economic crisis of 2008 drove flight prices down to one third of the regular airfare by 2009, allowing more trips for more of the Mavericks.
Regardless of whether the Mavericks were returning to their nation of origin or to another Caribbean nation, their trips were seen as something of a homecoming, evinced by the reunions they had with locals who had previously migrated to Canada and then returned to the Caribbean, or by (sometimes unexpected) reunions they had with men they encountered at the cricket ground. Reuniting is not only with real friends and family. Coming home to the Caribbean and playing in tournaments hosted at premier stadiums offers a chance to have an imaginary reunion with cricketing heroes. At the Beausejour stadium in St. Lucia, and Kensington Oval in Barbados the players walked around the change room in awe. “Imagine the greats who sat on this very bench!” Kundell gasped. The Mavericks occupied the same change rooms, used the same toilets, and played on the same grounds as the Windies team. Through the place, the bricks and mortar of the stadium, the Mavericks became embedded in the space of the World Cup that had transpired only months earlier. In Canada the connection to the Windies team is mediated and in their memories. In the islands the connection to the Windies team is imagined, but feels more tangible as they stand in the place where their heroes played. Having an opportunity to play on a well kept, fast, turf field is an honour and privilege that they cannot enjoy in Canada. The players began taking pictures immediately of the stadium itself, of the change room, and of each other with various aspects of the stadium in the background. They were eager to document and preserve their proximity to the professional cricket lifestyle that they dreamed about as boys and to celebrate their connection to their regions’ cricket history.

Cricket tourism offers a similar diasporic resource as roots tourism, whereby African descendents return to slave ports in Ghana (Hartman, 2002; Jordan, 2007; Pierre, 2009) or plantations in the United States (Buzinde & Santos, 2008) for a glimpse of the past and to appreciate “the way things were.” Caribbean-Canadian cricketers and their supporters attend local and international cricket matches to perform their culture, reify the past through their
stories, and return to their origins; the past and their culture ‘comes alive’ at the cricket grounds. Their travels fuel their sense of belonging and provide them with new stories to sustain them for years to come.

On the fourth day on St. Lucia, Rambally’s Radiators and Precision Welding was an unlikely stop on a mini tour of the countryside, preceeding a friendly game Kundell had organized between the Mavericks and a local team on which his godsons played. Rambally’s was the business of Amal, a former player on Canada’s Under 19 and Under 25 national teams. Amal, a Trinidadian who grew up in Canada and migrated to St. Lucia to begin a welding business and raise his family, was a good friend of a few of the Mavericks. Amal organized the first friendly (non-tournament) match they played. Some players wanted to tour the premises of his home and business, say hello to his family and, of course, share a drink with him. This brief stop turned into a long visit and those of us who thought we could wait on the bus for the tour to finish were eventually forced out by the heat. Some players indicated that Amal had really “lived the dream.” He had played elite level cricket, got a Canadian education, married a beautiful wife, made enough money in Canada to open a business in the Caribbean, and never has to endure another Canadian winter. They describe returning to the Caribbean as the “good life,” due to its slower pace. “The only rat race you see round here [is] in the bush, boy!” Hussein joked. They idealize life in the islands, seeming to forget the economic burdens they faced when they used to live there.

Some of the Mavericks still intend to move home when they retire, and those who have already retired, like Vilroy, travel to the Caribbean many times each year, especially in winter:

I don’t go anywhere in the summer because of Cricket. Now [that I’m retired] I can go to Barbados in the winter every year at some point between November to March. I have two teams I play with in Barbados.
Vilroy returns to Barbados annually to see his family and escape the Ontario winters, but, importantly, he returns to have uninterrupted cricketing opportunities:

Up here [in Toronto] I’m gonna play on the weekends and maybe have a chance to practice once or twice a week, but when I go to Barbados, every day I can be out practicing. I can find a team somewhere that is playing.

The Mavericks return to the Caribbean to be reunited with a cricket-centric environment. One where pick-up games are easy to come by:

When I go home for holidays I borrow stuff from friends and play a game or two.

I still love cricket. The camaraderie, the excitement, the premier team opposition – only won in the last over – that’s (points at Amal’s son) what it is about.

(Riddick)

As Riddick and I were talking, Amal’s four-year old son was running around wearing adult cricket pads that were nearly as tall as him. His antics, swiping at imaginary balls and running between make-believe wickets, entertained us all.

Otis explained that playing cricket in the Caribbean on so many tours has really given him an appreciation for the region. “You don’t only travel to your country – you get to know the whole Caribbean (on tours).” Being a cricketer makes MCSC members truly Caribbean because they become familiar with the flora, fauna, dialects, foods, music, tourist sites, history and people from different nations in the region.

Return visits to the Caribbean give the club members an opportunity to connect with other diasporics who now reside in many different nations. At one game in Canaries, St. Lucia both Griffith and Michael encountered old friends unexpectedly. They both ran into men who now live in St. Lucia that they had known when they attended the Royal Police Training College
in Barbados. None of the four men was St. Lucia-born and all were surprised and thrilled to meet each other at the game. They had intense conversations trying to get caught up on the goings on of the past three decades. MCSC members consider the opportunity to see old friends as an unintended bonus of going home to the Caribbean, even if not to their nation of origin. I recount these stories and their similarity to the reunions that happened in England, to demonstrate the deterritorialization of the Caribbean. Reunions that occur in St. Lucia are not merely for St. Lucian-Canadians, and not only with locals. Some Caribbean peoples are constantly on the move, and Mavericks are just as likely to encounter their old friends in Boston, Massachusetts; Bridgetown, Barbados; Birmingham, England; or Brampton, Ontario.

I do not intend to paint a seamless picture of Caribbean people moving freely across borders. As Trotz (2006, p. 52) points out, “[b]order controls not only regulate people’s movement but also help to produce racially and nationally differentiated bodies.” The MCSC members may be freed by their middle-class status, but they are simultaneously fixed by the racism they experience at Canadian borders. MCSC members devise a number of different strategies to alleviate tensions with customs officials. Those who have dual citizenship use their Canadian passports at Canada Customs, some hide their Caribbean accents, tidy their locked hair, and most misrepresent the goods they are taking across the border to avoid harassment. At one meeting, one player reminded his peers to say that their gear bags were full of hockey or baseball equipment because “you have to pay oversized baggage fare for cricket equipment. One more way they tax the Black man!” This led to discussions about negative experiences with customs agents and nearly every player and supporter had a story to share about having their bags searched, identification questioned, and reasons for travel doubted. For some, the Canadian border is constraining, humiliating, or immobilizing.
The MCSC’s return visits are not always ideal in terms of the security, familiarity, and pleasure home is supposed to provide. Kundell was particularly eager to show his friends a good time on his native island of St. Lucia. He was also looking forward to the opportunity to visit with his parents and extended family, and to visit his favourite restaurant, The Lime, in Rodney Bay. He looked forward to introducing his teammates to the eatery and tasting that home cooked food again. Before we departed he spoke to me at length about the places we would visit on days off from cricket. He eschewed the team hotel in favour of returning to his childhood home and visiting with his elderly parents. After the first game in the tournament Kundell was awarded ‘man of the match’ honours for scoring 84 runs in a winning effort. With this honour also comes the ‘reward’ of buying the first round of drinks. He accepted both prizes and directed all of the Mavericks to The Lime for a big celebration. When we got there, we found it was under new management and renovations, and were directed to a lower quality pub across the street. Kundell’s disappointment was palpable. He had looked forward to the “oxtail with rice and food” for weeks. He was already salivating. Unfortunately, he was shocked and disappointed at how much things had changed. This “third rupture” (James, 1993) experience demonstrates that nostalgia paints an idealized, static picture of a home that may no longer exist.

Kundell’s disappointment extended to his actual performance after his illustrious start to the tournament. He initially thought a tournament at home in St. Lucia would be the ideal location. He imagined he would play matches with friends and family in the audience and against some of his old mates on grounds he had accessed as a child. However, after the first week, he started to feel as though playing cricket at home was too much, as he did not have enough time to visit all of the extended family he was obligated to. Arranging matches against local teams became stressful, due to the laissez faire attitude of the locals, and he was unable to
concentrate. His cricket performance suffered as a result. I described this experience to Riddick who related similar stories of disappointment upon return to his homeland.

I’ve been here [in Canada] thirty something years versus the 16 I spent in Barbados so I guess I feel more Canadian than Barbadian. When I go home I’m ready to come back after two or three weeks. Here you have the theatre. There you get tired of the beach. ... I go to Barbados every year and visit my family and play cricket. It’s real relaxed there. No pressures. But it’s not like when we were kids. There’s nothing to do. (Riddick)

Unlike Kundell who experienced too many obligations, when Riddick takes return trips to his nation of origin he is easily bored. In Toronto he enjoys watching plays, eating Malaysian food, and reliable internet access. In Barbados, he feels relaxed, but socially restricted.

Marshall is disillusioned with Barbados due to the rude behaviour he so often sees on the streets:

Marshall- I don’t understand why people have to be so ignorant. Last time I went home this one pregnant woman was taking her time crossing the street. I wait for her in my car, but she was really taking her time. Finally she gets in front of my car and I say “you’re welcome” kind of sarcastically, but she really taking forever! Then, can you believe she has the nerve to cuss me out? And not just a little cussing. She went up one side of me and down the other with swears. I see it all the time when I go home now. People just too ignorant!

Janelle- Maybe you’re too Canadian now? You’re too polite?

Marshall- Maybe that’s something like it. Either I changed or they did, but I’ll tell you something, it makes me want to change my mind about retiring there.
Marshall’s nostalgia for a homeland where ‘proper manners’ are a priority is rudely interrupted by his interaction with this pregnant woman. Nostalgia, despite its private, sometimes intensely felt personal character, and psychological manifestations, is a deeply social emotion (Boym, 2001; Davis, 1979; Wilson, 2005), and therefore also has political connotations. Nostalgia is “a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed ... a sentiment of loss and displacement ... a romance with one’s own fantasy” (Boym, 2001, p. xiii). The Mavericks’ regular visits to their homeland allow them to replace fantasy with reality, which can sometimes be jarring.

Interactions with rude people ‘at home’ was a common refrain among some of the Mavericks. They explain this behaviour in one of two ways. Locals may anticipate the diasporic returnee as overly-polite, relatively rich, touristic, and opinionated. Hence, they are pre-emptively rude as an act of resistance. Alternatively, some MCSC members acknowledge that after living in Canada they have come to expect courteous customer service. My question reinforced a stereotype about Canadians as polite. I did this to try to challenge Marshall’s conception of his compatriots. I considered that he might only see them as rude now because he has been away so long and assimilated into a Canadian habitus. Thomas-Hope (1992, p. 84-85) explains that Caribbean emigrants are expected to return from North America with improved diction, grammar, decorum, taste and prestige. Marshall believed that a change had taken place but could not pinpoint its locus. Perhaps locals might share MCSC members’ admonishments of (especially young female) workers in the service industry who curse, roll their eyes and kiss their teeth; however MCSC members’ gaze has shifted from local to returnee, some of whom see themselves as knowing better than the locals. Duval (2004) has pointed out that return visits can facilitate the process of repatriation. They can also force diasporas to see home not as the idyllic utopia they remember, but as a dynamic site, and the change may be for the worse. It is
these types of disappointing return visits that lead many of the Mavericks to recreate their homelands elsewhere. If they stay ‘at home’ in Canada, they can create the environment they desire and associate with people who share their values.

**Hosting return visits in Canada.** Not every member of the Mavericks can afford to or desires to travel regularly to reconnect with the homeland (culture) and compatriots now dispersed all over the world. Travelling may assuage the desire to return permanently, but it is not an option for the migrant who faces economic hardship. For those Mavericks who do not travel, attending home games with visiting teams is one means of maintaining their transnational networks. When the Mavericks are the hosts, they show their guests a good time by recreating a carnival atmosphere. Most invitations to matches in the GTA are in July and August; blazing heat is the “best weather for cricket” according to the Mavericks.

They welcome teams from the north-eastern United States, Quebec, southern Ontario and the Caribbean. One team from Barbados makes regular trips to the GTA, playing games in Pickering, Scarborough, Woodstock, and Cambridge before making their way to Boston, U.S.A. Terrel boasts that the Mavericks “was the first team to bring U.S. cricket teams here to play” in the 1980s. Their welcoming of visiting teams can be understood as political acts.

The reciprocal visits they make to play against U. S. teams, especially those bordering Ontario and Quebec, carry symbolic significance. This is made clear through the names of the awards they compete for: the “Throughway Trophy” and the “Railroad Cup.” Canada is symbolized as a place of liberation in narratives of the Underground Railroad, the route and series of safehouses escaped slaves and their allies used to cross the border from the United States to Canada in the nineteenth century. Walcott (2003) shows that Blacks in Canada were limited in their freedoms and excluded from belonging both by the Canadian government and by Black Americans working to establish the National Association for the Advancement of
Coloured People. Nevertheless, the route from the United States to Canada remains as a symbol of freedom, commemorated in the names of the cricket trophies and the speeches made when delivering them to the winners of the games with visiting teams:

We want to thank our American brothers for coming up to Canada to share this weekend with us. We’re delighted to have you here, but sorry to have to beat you like that but … I think we proved once again that Canada is the best place for a Black man to be (laughs). … No seriously, we love having you here to carry on the traditions of everything this [holds trophy in the air] stands for. (Sam)

While cricket may be a means for members of the Caribbean diaspora to differentiate themselves from African-Americans, these games also demonstrate that the configuration of cricket is not merely a Caribbean phenomenon, but a space to celebrate Black freedom, and to acknowledge the shared racialized history of Blacks in the U.S. and Canada. While cultural celebrations by ethnic groups have been demonized as dangerous distractions to the anti-racist struggle (hooks, 1990; Brah, 1996; Hesse, 2000a, 2000b), the two are not mutually exclusive. The cricketers do not dwell on the horrors of slavery, but they acknowledge their histories as they turn to a celebratory ethos.

Layton points out that along with bus trips, hosting visiting teams is a highlight of the summer but laments that the Canadian summers are too short. “Sometimes we have too many offers to hold one weekend so we really have to set aside time for certain clubs. We have a club that comes every Caribana weekend from the U.S.” Supporters come to Toronto for long weekends to socialize with their friends and family from Toronto and from elsewhere. For instance, Exeter, a team that visits annually from New York for the Civic holiday in early August, which often coincides with Caribana, Toronto’s Caribbean festival, fills a bus with fifteen players and close to thirty supporters. The MCSC also welcomes visitors from Montreal,
and even England as many members of the diaspora use the festival and the cricket match as an excuse to descend on Toronto. They have a choice to either attend the parade or a cricket game on Saturday afternoon; the Mavericks host a dance on the Saturday night, arrange a cricket match on Sunday, and the team departs on the holiday Monday.

One Antiguan player from the Exeter team referred to his first trip to Canada as “such a good party. Could hardly believe we were in Canada. So many other West Indians came [to watch]. The music, food, the weather even! I told my boys we gotta come back. We been coming back each year since 1981.” These longstanding traditions are central to the making of communal memories and deep transnational friendship networks.

The atmosphere at Caribana and the Mavericks games and dances are similar. These homespaces offer:

a kind of social therapy that overcomes the separation and isolation imposed by the diaspora and restores to West Indian immigrants a sense of community with each other and a sense of connection to the culture that they claim as a birthright.

Politically, however there is more to these carnivals than cultural nostalgia. They are also a means through which West Indians seek and symbolize integration into the metropolitan society, by coming to terms with the opportunities, as well as the constraints, that surround them. (Manning, 1990, p. 35)

Similarly, Nurse explains that the “merriment, colourful pageantry, revelry, and street theatre” of diaspora carnivals “are born out of the struggle of marginalized peoples to shape a cultural identity through resistance, liberation and catharsis” (1999, 662). The Caribbean spaces created through carnivals and cricket act as a bond within the diasporic community, that is, between migrants and those who remain at home, and also among migrants dispersed throughout the Black Atlantic.
On several occasions, players from visiting teams have become members of MCSC when they have moved to Toronto for work or family reasons. Gersham describes being too young to play in the first master’s tournament the Mavericks entered in 1985. He was just shy of the 40 years-old eligibility then, when he moved to Toronto from Boston. He explains that he visited the grounds where they were practicing and “it was like a reunion, seeing these guys I haven’t played against in years, so I just stayed.” Four years later he was eligible to travel to Denmark for a masters’ cricket tournament and has been playing friendly cricket with the Mavericks ever since. Similarly, Warlie found a team to play with in Toronto via the team he played with when living in Montreal:

There was a team from Montreal call [Civics] and dey used to interchange every year, [they visit the Mavericks and the Mavericks visit them]. … So when I moved to Toronto I was introduced to the same team. At least some of the guys knew me and asked me to play with them so I play with them and stay here near thirty years.

Even Mavericks who don’t travel regularly are able to create long lasting cross-border friendships and transnational networks at home games. Terrel reminds me that “if you are a member of [Mavericks] you have a friend in every country.”

**Summary**

This section provides evidence that a bi-nodal transnational frame is evidently insufficient to describe the cross-border family and friends connections important to the Mavericks migration and cricketing experiences. Community maintenance is not dependant on a bi-nodal transnational circuit: movement from their place of origin to Canada and back. Their deterritorialized identities and practices are formed through travel from Canada to their home
nation and other Caribbean countries, as well as to Caribbean spaces in the U.K. and U.S. (See Appendix B). Accepting visitors from abroad and throwing a Caribbean fête in Canada is one means to strengthen their community networks and define themselves as Caribbean (and Canadian). Unlike some diasporic groups, such as Indo-Fijians, that retain only a symbolic connection to the “cultural hearth,” (Voigt-Graf, 2004), first generation Caribbean-Canadians maintain strong links to their nations of origin and make efforts to reproduce national and regional Caribbean cultures in multiple diasporic cities. Their production of Caribbeanness is infringed upon when they encounter other cultures in cricket spaces. The MCSC members define who they are in relation to other ethnic groups, in particular South Asian cricketers.

**Post-Colonial Politics and Inter-Diasporic Group Relations**

Using Avtar Brah’s (1996) notion of diaspora space draws our attention to the ways various diasporic groups interact in a place. Analysis of racialized and ethnic difference “is not simply about different people with disconnected ways of doing things but rather about unequal access to power, about the relations through which differences are produced and reified” (Peake & Trotz, 1999, p. 5). In the words of Ortiz (1947, p. 102-103), when different groups interact they acquire new cultures, experience loss or uprooting, and create new phenomena altogether. This process of transculturation is renewed each generation under new social, political, economic, and historical circumstances. Pratt (1991), Anzaldúa (1987), Nurse (1999) and others are optimistic about the new categories created when cultures meet. However, there may also be resistance, refusal to integrate, and rejection of creolized cultures, based on historical antagonisms between groups.

Brackette Williams (1991) alerts us to the fact that history calls individuals “to particular identities (personal and group) under conditions of territorial nationalism” (p. 14). Individuals
earn their place in historically constituted hierarchies, and continue to interact with other ethnic groups based on meanings of earlier periods:

constructed along paths well trod by Europeans centuries earlier as they fashioned themselves into different races, nationalities, and nations. … [Therefore,] if we are to provide informative accounts of [people’s] struggles … we must take into consideration the complexities of historically constituted interpretations of the nature of social and cultural interchanges. (p. 15)

There are other transnational histories and crucibles of diasporic trajectories: “where Europe is not at ‘the center’ – which retain a critical bearing on understanding contemporary diasporic formations and their inter-relationships;” thus it is necessary to deploy “a concept of diaspora in which different historical and contemporary elements are understood, not in tandem, but in their dia-synchronic relationality” (Brah, 1996, p. 190). In Trinidad and Tobago, for example, attempts to break free from White, racist imperialism were championed by the Black Power movement of the 1970s, which distinguished between Black Government (already in place) and Black Power (freedom from political decisions dictated by economic interests of White and Black middle-class elites). This movement initially attempted to include lower class Africans and East Indians in solidarity; however, conflicts between all ethnic groups eventually divided the country. Black Power came to mean ownership and control of the government and economy by the black ‘majority’ (Kiely, 1996, p. 112, Munasinghe, 2001, p. 19-20), thereby subjugating the Indo-Trinidian population. In Trinidad and Guyana by the mid 1970s, politics were firmly divided along ethnic lines and large-scale violent confrontations, allegations of electoral fraud, and political assassination were the back-drop of racially oriented political competition (Williams, 1991, p. 35; Yelvington, 1995b, p. 30). Afro- and Indo-Caribbean ethnic conflicts are not limited to those territories with significant Indian populations. African
Jamaicans resented Indian Jamaicans’ competition for work and wages, and feared that Hinduism and Islam would have adverse religious influences (Shepherd cited by Mohammed, 2009, p. 62). In Barbados, Indians perceived Blacks as lazy, materialistic, and prone to criminal activity (Beckles, 2004b). Therefore, conflicts between Caribbean Africans and East Indians are not new, but this investigation of conflicts in diasporic setting, using a sporting lens, is. In this section I show the making of Caribbean-Canadian transnational communities is imbricated with South Asian groups at the cricket field.

Four of the Mavericks, especially those who are younger (late forties to late fifties) and very skilled, play friendly games with the MCSC and continue to compete on league teams. I inquired, “What is the biggest difference between friendly and league teams?” Riddick immediately responded: “Bus trips! A lot of Indian guys don’t travel. That’s their culture. The bus trips are Black trips.” But, I interjected, “What about [Michael]?” Michael is an Indo-Guyanese man who is always present on the bus trips Riddick described. “[Michael] goes everywhere. He is the blackest Black man on the team!” Riddick tried to clarify, “He likes to dance and party … Indians don’t drink. They wouldn’t fit in so we don’t invite them.” This exchange brought several issues to the fore. There is a confluence of racial and ethnic signifiers, where Black is used not to refer to African heritage but as a marker of Caribbeanness in a Canadian context. Riddick considers Michael and the rest of the Mavericks as ‘Black’ in relation to the White dominant group in Canadian society and the South Asian dominant group in cricket. His comments highlight the inclusion of Indo-Caribbeans into MCSC activities only insofar as they are willing to perform “Black” Caribbean culture, defined as dancing, partying and drinking. Puwar’s (2004) advice to pay attention to which bodies are missing or “out of place” brings my focus to the forms of Caribbean cultures absent from the bus, the cricket pitch or the Mavericks social events. In addition to South Asians, Indo-Caribbeans who don’t drink,
or prefer chutney, Bhojpuri, or bhangra music, also don’t “fit in” on the bus trips. These types
of comments were pervasive among Afro-Caribbean Mavericks in their conversations with me,
drawing attention to two points. First, Brackette Williams’ (1996, p. 79) question, “Who are you
and what are you to me?” -- a question, she suggests, that must be continually asked by
ethnographers and by informants about themselves, in their varied and shifting local social
personae. A researcher’s features, in my case ‘Black’ skin, shape which data are gathered, but in
unpredictable ways (Twine, 2000). The complex politics of race and culture can sometimes
elude researchers, partly because of unexamined notions of what his or her own race and culture
is or means (Niranjana, 2006, p. 7). Riddick’s open discussions with me about the pervasive
Blackness of the MCSC can be read as an effect of his understanding of our shared racial and
cultural backgrounds. An Indo-Caribbean researcher may have gathered different data from him.

Second, Riddick draws attention to the “contestation over the power to define the
cultural coordinates of the symbolic space of the nation [region]” (Munasinghe, 2001, p. 1). The
Caribbean region is reproduced through hegemonic processes that privilege Black elites who
claim to represent the region’s authentic culture. Many of the Mavericks, both Afro- and Indo-
Caribbeans, described ethnic conflicts, with other South Asian clubs. The ability to ignore racial
tensions among them is in line with the ‘All ah we is one’ motto of Trinidad, recognized by
Yelvington (1995b) as suppressing the cultural differences between Indo- and Afro-Caribbeans.
Although both South Asians and Caribbeans are passionate about cricket, language, food, age,
religion, and other cultural differences lead to conflicts between the groups.

**From English to Caribbean to South Asian leagues.** Cricket in southern Ontario was
originally an imperial game, Canada’s national sport, and was dominated by Englishmen until
the mid twentieth century (Boucher, 2003; Cooper 1999; Gruneau, 1999; Kaufman & Patterson,

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46 One exception to this is music with an emphasis on liming, dancing and drinking; for example, the chutney-soca, an Africanized, Black and carnivalized expression of Indo-Caribbean culture, from Indo-Caribbean artists such as Hunter and Ravi B.
2005). As English immigrant cricketers aged and retired from the sport, and Caribbean immigration and participation increased, the first ethnic shift occurred. Farley describes watching his fellow Englishmen leave the game in droves in the 1970s and 1980s as they were replaced by young men from the Caribbean:

It was half and half when I joined [the team] in ’69, but by the time in the ’80s I was one of the few white guys not just on our team but in the whole league as the older English guys became old and retired. I was often the only white face in the field.

From the mid 1970s to mid 1990s, Caribbean men dominated cricket leagues in Southern Ontario and Quebec. The Hamilton and District, Montreal and District, Toronto and District Commonwealth and, the appropriately named, SOCA (Southern Ontario Cricket Association) leagues were filled with black and brown faces during a period that directly coincides with the biggest influx of migration from the Caribbean region as well as supremacy of the West Indies team in first-class international Test cricket.

Many of the cricketers grew up playing the sport daily as children, competed at elite levels as youth, and some came close to representing their respective nations in the sport as adults. Upon arrival in Canada, they easily found and joined teams mainly comprised of people from their nations of origin and maintained a high level of competition. Farley, the sole White English-Canadian who plays with the Mavericks, remarked on the homogeneity of the team other than himself:

It surprised me a little bit. As an English guy, I thought well, you know, these guys have been discriminated against and that, you know, they won’t do that but
I noticed that in our league there was a … mostly Barbadian, and then there was other teams that was mostly Jamaican.

Farley acknowledges that although it seemed to him at first that the Barbadians and Jamaicans were actively excluding people from other islands and countries, in fact they were merely playing with guys from their islands because they “probably know them, grew up together, played cricket together … So they, you know, they do stick together.”

Riddick describes initially moving to Montreal when he came to Canada as an adolescent. Cricket in Canada was very similar in composition and competition level to the leagues he left behind in Barbados because his “team was all West Indian. Only one team in the entire [Montreal and District Cricket] League, had Whites.” Vilroy moved from Barbados to London, Ontario in 1964 and faced a similar experience:

There was an influx of West Indians to Canada in the ’60s. There were more Blacks into London than Whites, which quickly changed teams to primarily Black clubs. We tended to be better than the Whites and took over because the Whites quit. (Vilroy)

In the early 1990s Farley began to witness a second ethnic shift:

I’m still the only White face, but there are less West Indian guys for sure. In the middle ’70s and through the ’80s the league was predominantly West Indian, and now through the ’90s and especially now with the Asians or whatever they are. [The leagues are] switching more to Indians and Pakistanis, you know Sri Lanka, that type of area. Very much so. Like I say, the [Caribbean] boys that came up in their twenties, their children they, they don’t play cricket.
In the 1990s, as Caribbean cricket players aged and began to retire from league play, fewer Caribbean immigrants arrived, and the second generation (the Mavericks’ sons) did not take up the sport, the numbers of Caribbean cricketers in the Canadian leagues began to dwindle. Meanwhile, the number of South Asians in Canada more than tripled from 223,000 in 1981 to 917,000 in 2001 with the lion’s share (70%) calling either Toronto or Vancouver home (Tran, Kaddatz & Allard, 2005, p. 21). South Asians are poised to become the largest visible-minority group in this country by 2017, with 1.8 million people, according to Statistics Canada (Canada's visible minority, 2005). The ethnic composition of the leagues in Southern Ontario are following suit. Several Mavericks referenced conflicts with South Asians as one of their main reasons for permanently leaving league play and engaging only in friendly matches with their Caribbean peers.

At every Maverick practice or game that took place at multi-pitch fields and nets South Asian and Indo-Caribbean teams occupied adjacent spaces. When, during his tenure as captain, Vivian Richards described the West Indies cricket team as “African,” it might have been satisfactory for most Caribbeans based on dominant nationalist discourses; however, it was unacceptable for large sections of the Guyanese and Trinidadian populations, who saw it as yet another instance of black hegemony and dominance (Yelvington, 1995b). In Trinidad and Guyana, many Indo-Caribbeans supported India in test matches against the West Indies, revealing their ongoing feelings of marginalization by Black leaders (Devonish, 1995; Mohammed, 2009). This history of divisiveness might explain Indo-Guyanese and Indo-Trinidadian cricketers’ reluctance to play with the Mavericks and be subsumed within a “Black” Caribbean cricket team.

There was typically a team of young Sri Lankan boys donning the blue and yellow of their national team in the adjacent batting cage, and in the Mavericks’ cage before and after their
practice. “There are more Indians than India here, boy!” Hussein joked when the Mavericks arrived and were forced to wait while twelve brown skinned youth and their coach filed out. At some games, especially in Scarborough, which operates its own cricket league outside of the Toronto and District League, “brown” teams played on a number of proximal fields. They included a mixture of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian, and Indo-Guyanese teams. The Mavericks often refer to all members of these teams as “Indians” and overt and tacit conflicts between the mainly Afro-Caribbean Mavericks and the “Indians” were common because both groups use cricket venues as spaces where they can comfortably express their cultures. Furthermore, the Mavericks’ conflicts with South Asian cricketers must be contextualized within wide webs of power and change within international cricket over time, which mirror occurrences at the local level.

The Mavericks’ sense of regional and racial pride is tied up with the success of the Windies team, which has been unsuccessful for over a decade, captured in Griggs’ (2006) article From Calypso to Collapse. The decreasing prowess of the Windies is accompanied by a shift in power in international cricket to the subcontinent. The ascendancy of India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, currently (as of June, 2010) first, fourth and sixth, respectively in International Cricket Council Test Match rankings, has led to a plethora of studies on South Asian cricket. As Gupta (2004) observed, “non-Western countries have begun to dominate not just on the field, but more importantly, in shaping the economies and politics of the game” (Gupta, 2004, p. 257). There is a melancholy among Windies fans associated with the realization that “India is the new cricketing superpower. … In the modern cricket world, the Indians lead; the others follow” (Majumdar, 2007, p. 88). Chris Rumford (2007) refers to the shift as the “post-Westernization” of cricket and Williams (2003, p. 105) calls it the “Asian-led

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47 The Windies is currently ranked 8th of 9 teams, above only Bangladesh.
commercialization of international cricket.” South Asians are the dominant group in cricket at the local and international level.

The Mavericks are explicit that in 20 years there will be no Caribbean fête-match cricket in the GTA. They are self-described dinosaurs who, due to their slow extinction, are losing their teams and their grounds. “You used to fin’ us all over Markham, Scarborough, Pickering, Ajax, Mississauga, Cambridge, London out to Woodstock, an’ up to Ross Lords Park. Now you look and all our grounds have Indian players there.” Vilroy explains. Every ground the Mavericks play on is now shared with South Asian teams. If, as one spectator suggested, “the only time us ol’ blokes from home get together is cricket and funerals,” and their time at cricket grounds is steadily decreasing, the future does not bode well.

A lot of these guys will be gone in a few years, getting on in age, their bodies at some point in time will say no no no. The short summer is a benefit at their age because their bodies cyaant las’. They don’t teach their sons the sport so who’s gonna take over these grounds? Indians, of course. (Byron)

You start to see merging of Black clubs and consolidate resources. That is already happening. … On the teams we play for now, the players are all interchangeable. We call on people who are not even members because there are so few of us left. (Riddick)

Roland’s anti-South Asian animosity is so strong that he uses the pejorative term “Paki” to describe the other men who now play cricket at what used to be his home ground.

Now we love the game and we, even if you’re limping when you get home you still do it because there’s nobody else to replace us. … My cricket career is pretty well done. Like I said we trying to keep it alive because after us, there’s only the Pakis. (Roland)
These comments illustrate the pervasiveness of anti-Indian sentiment and the Mavericks’ frustration with what Majumdar (2007, p. 92) refers to as “The Shift – the transformation of South Asia into the nerve-center of global cricket power – a process that started in earnest in the 1990s,” which is equally reflected on the local stage. Many of the tens of millions of South Asian enthusiastic cricket supporters Majumdar describes are also cricket players, and a significant number live in the diaspora, including in Canada. They span multiple generations and are growing in number. The number of Windies fans and Caribbean cricket players, in contrast, is rapidly declining. Neither the Mavericks’ sons, nor the recent immigrants from the Caribbean are interested in the sport.

Whereas the Mavericks used to play for many distinct teams, they increasingly call on each other to fill spots on their teams because their peers are slowly dropping out of the game due to injury, degenerative diseases of the eyes or joints, acute disabilities like strokes or heart attacks, and even deaths. On the last day of the tour in Barbados I spent the night in the hospital with Kundell who complained of increasing severe chest and abdominal pain after the game. We waited for eight hours to see a doctor and by 6:00 am he was in excruciating pain but had still not been seen by a doctor. He decided to leave the hospital against medical advice, return to his hotel, pack his bags, and get on a flight home to Toronto. His ailment disappeared as gradually as it developed and remained undiagnosed months later. He chalked it up to “old age” but insists that he “will have to be in the ground” before he retires from the sport.

I witnessed two games where players pulled themselves out of the game (unheard of in a sport where masculinity, perseverance, and endurance are so highly venerated) due to shortness of breath and chest pains. Griffith was in the field doing very little in the way of physical activity when he called for a substitute and came to the clubhouse complaining of chest pain. He spent over an hour prostrate in the change room with a damp cloth on his forehead. I directed
two fans at his body and took his pulse every fifteen minutes until it descended from 140 beats per minute to a more healthy 96. He was panicked and had never felt so dizzy before. In another game Delson left the crease because he was feeling unwell. Subsequently both players were hospitalized and required heart surgery. Thus, the threat of losing players is acute. I went to visit Winston at his home when he was recovering from a triple-by pass heart surgery:

I can count on one hand how many Antiguans are playing in Toronto right now…

Not very many. They all stopped playing a long time ago. They just die out or give up, right? I come back after surgery. Yeah. This is my second surgery, right? Most guys don’t make it back. (Delson)

Many of the Mavericks’ male supporters are former players who did not “make it back.” They relegate themselves to keeping noise around the boundary because they are “too old” to play. Slowly watching their friends get injured or sick, retire from the sport, and in some cases, pass away, has a significant impact on the Mavericks’ sense of self and constructions of masculinity. The Mavericks are witnessing a diminution of their numbers and power in the GTA at a time when the South Asian players, against whom they define themselves, are growing. The cricket field is the last place where they can show their physical dominance to their peers and perpetuate their cultural heritage.

Several Mavericks told me that differences in culture, particularly differences in language and types of foods prevented the two ethnic groups from getting along. This is reflective of tensions within the Caribbean between African and Indian groups vying to define a national culture in nation-states such as Trinidad and Guyana (Munasinghe, 2001; Peake & Trotz, 1999). The (lack of) consumption of alcohol also created conflicts between Caribbean Mavericks and South Asian opponents and team members, tournament organizers, and umpires.
Language and food barriers. Verbal misunderstandings between Caribbean and South Asian cricketers were one of the most common reasons given to justify Mavericks’ Caribbean-only teams. Riddick claimed that at the cricket ground South Asians “speak in their own language. You know, this makes me really, really upset. I don’t know why they do this. It creates a barrier. Are they saying things they don’t want us to know?” He was vehement that he communicates in English “so that should be the language on the field”! Although Riddick was a very competitive, athletic, and skilled player, he refused to play league cricket with “Indians [who] can’t even talk proper English.” Wesley, who was also very competitive and fit at age 57, was not yet ready to leave league play but saw the influx of South Asians as a problem. He considered moving to another team because of the increasing numbers of South-Asians on his Brampton team. His racist language is very casual as he assumed that I, as an ‘insider’ (fellow Afro-Caribbean) would not be offended: “There are only five West Indians left and all of the other 195 club members are Pakis. There are too many and I can’t understand what they’re saying half the time.” My discussions with Wesley and others about their use of the term “Paki” revealed their understanding that this is a racist term and their belief that it is acceptable to use it when not in the company of any of “them.” In Jack Williams’ (2003) chapter, Paki Cheats!, he shows that in English-Pakistan test cricket tensions in the 1980s and 1990s the English derided Pakistani cricketers based on their beliefs of moral and cultural superiority and their difficulties adjusting to the rise of Pakistan immigrants on a local scale and cricket power at an international scale. The Mavericks’ similar feelings resulted in covert rather than overt abuse.

The Indians tend to speak their language all the time, although they can all speak English. Don’t know if that was a power thing, to “don’t let other people know what I’m talking about” you know? … They just shut you out. And they just keep you out. (Hussein)
Demanding that ethnic Others speak proper English, homogenizing all members of a group to one nationality (such as calling all South Asians “Indians”), or using derogatory names (such as “Pakis”) are all racist tropes used by dominant White groups to disparage Caribbean Blacks and South Asians. Ethnic groups become more vocal about their racism when they feel that their hegemony is being threatened, and when they feel they are talking to a member of ‘their’ group. The Mavericks have experienced declining power in a physical, numerical, and political sense, and as a result they lashed out against South Asian men. One of the most influential texts on Caribbean masculinities was Errol Miller’s *The Marginalization of the Black Male*, which located concerns with masculinity at the heart of the postcolonial quest for upward social mobility (Reddock, 2004, p. xiv). Where the Mavericks saw their power being limited by South Asian men, they lashed out. Their racist comments about South Asians’ choices to speak in their native tongues cannot be excused, but it must be understood in relation to their declining power and the limited places in which they can comfortably speak in Patois in Canada.

The Mavericks’ language of choice at the cricket grounds is a combination of Canadian English and Patois – a fusion of the English of the colonizers and the West African languages of the Mavericks’ ancestors. Patois has been described as a language of resistance when it is used in public spaces; however, it is often relegated to private communal space for most Caribbean peoples. The admonition to speak properly and to avoid using bad English in public banishes Patois to the realm of “homespace” (Gadsby, 2006) or “Black space” (Carrington, 1998; 2008), in which Caribbeans are oblivious to or separated from non-speakers, feel comfortable and safe to use their native tongue, and/or at times at which there is an explicit desire to make their language unintelligible to others. Their use of Patois is a weapon against the extinction and marginalization of their culture that can result from disuse.
Their bifurcated belonging is demonstrated through the language they choose to speak in particular contexts. George says “me no wan fall dung you know! Leh we go fin’ some food an ting” (I don’t want to faint. Let’s go find something to eat) when I seek him out after a game in order to conduct a formal interview. He puts on a thick accent when he is talking about food, which foreshadows the delicious traditional Bajan meal he is about to eat. His predominant use of Patois at the grounds with his peers directly contrasts with the Canadian English he chose to speak while I formally interviewed him. His ability to speak both languages fluently evinces his binational belonging and double consciousness. As Nakamura (2009, p. 99) points out, shifting between languages or accents allows for lateral connections within and through diaspora, which destabilizes any notions of pure culture.

The middle class professional from the Caribbean uses accent as an important aspect of the projection of self and ability to assimilate; in English-speaking Canada professional environments, it is the British university accent that is aimed at (Case, 1977, p. 63). Meanwhile some working class Caribbeans refuse to speak in the dominant English despite having lived in Canada for several decades. Otis uses a thick accent no matter to whom he is speaking: “Dey ask me, ‘you been ‘ere so long an still talk so?’ I say ‘yeah, how I supposed to talk?!’” A few MCSC members’ work in factories or independent jobs such as plumbing, which permit them to spend time alone or with other Patois speakers and they do not require the adoption of a Canadian-English dialect. Whether they are able to turn it on and off, or their Patois “stays on,” the Mavericks use language to mark the cricket grounds as a Caribbean ‘homespace.’ They do not always speak Canadian-English, despite their admonishments that South Asians should do so. South Asians’ resistance to “turning their language off” infuriates some MCSC members. They resent the ways South Asians exclude them and turn “their” cricket grounds into a Hindi or
Bengali homespace, an arena to protect South Asian cultural heritage. The Mavericks’ own resistance to using “proper English” may keep South Asians away.

After the Mavericks’ captain lifted the ban on drinking in uniform, Erol commented as his teammate, Roland, who had previously not batted well all tour, walked off the field: “Him only need him drink. He get 69 runs, not poopah runs either” (He needed to have a drink to make 69 runs). I understood his meaning of “poopah” runs. Roland had accumulated those runs with big hits, mainly fours and sixes, not “poopah” singles and doubles. However, I decided to tease Erol for using the expression “Poopah?” I asked with a smile. “Yes. We Bajan. We talk a different language than you!” He smiled back. With this comment Erol emphasized our difference, marking himself as a Barbadian, firmly grounded in a language that I, as an outsider (born in neither Barbados nor elsewhere in the Caribbean) might not understand. Their language is a significant means of marking the boundary around their community. They define ‘insiders’ as those who speak and understand Patois, meaning that even I was excluded at times.

Nakamura (2009, p. 100) explains that while shifting accents can be endearing or friendly, done to ‘tease’ an outsider, it can also be used to exclude. While I could understand most of what they were saying, when the Mavericks were keen to say something (often sexist, lewd, racist, or otherwise offensive comments) they did not want me to hear, understand, or record in my field notes, they would pour their accents on thickly, thereby marking me as “Other” and excluding me from conversations. They invert colonial hierarchies whereby Canadian English is valued over Caribbean Patois.

Layton and Terrel claim that they tried to bridge the divide by inviting South Asian players onto their team, but were unsuccessful:

We ventured out, we look for new blood but the other teams schedule [games] within their own nationality. The reason for that is, they don’t eat most of the
time what we eat. Two, they probably won’t socialize because one of the reasons is they probably won’t understand [what] the hell we’re saying when we get together in our group. (Layton)

Indians come into the Club but they have different foods, they don’t understand us talking talking talking, joking, joking, joking. Even though he knows the game he might not appreciate the culture. We welcome them but they don’t stay. (Terrel)

Learie believes unity with South Asian groups is “hopeless” because MCSC members’ “cultures are not too far off even though we’re from different islands and different countries. There is a greater understanding of the language, the food and even the jokes are the same. They [South Asians] don’t get it.”

MCSC members ribald jokes and swearing are a form of slackness (Cooper, 1993) that resists mainstream Canadian culture and marks a masculinity that is incongruent with some South Asian men’s performances of gender. The ways the Mavericks talk and joke, making fun of each other and speaking aggressively is a means of honing and disseminating their cultural (gender) values and actively excluding South Asians when they are forced to share their cricket spaces. Especially as they get older, Mavericks are concerned less about the sport and more about the camaraderie. They feel unable to become friends with South Asians who “shut them out” and “don’t get it,” thus preventing the development of amity between some teammates.

Before I left [the league] there was a big influx of Sri Lankans and the problem was that when they came, the whole atmosphere changed. … In the past, we hang out as one, a whole group after each game. We either went to a pub or a bar or went to somebody’s house and they’d cook up curry. … But the Sri Lankan guys started coming in and there was quite a number of them. Then they started
hanging out by themselves, you know pretty much and then you know, having
their own little cliques kind of ting, didn’t want to eat wit us and ting.

Interestingly, curried foods might have been a point of convergence for the two ethnic groups,
given the predominance of the spice in their regional dishes, but Learie blames Sri Lankans for
excluding the Caribbeans and their cooking. These types of conflicts over food and drink are
characteristic of the meeting, clashing and grappling Pratt (1991, p. 33) describes when different
ethnic groups find themselves sharing the same space. These contact zones can become
contentious if conflicts are not resolved.

‘Spirited’ conflicts. In addition to eating their favourite, home-cooked foods, the
Mavericks prioritize drinking alcohol, mainly in the form of rum, brandy and beer, which puts
them into conflict with many of their South Asian, in particular, Muslim, counterparts. During a
home game scheduled for fifty overs some Mavericks began to complain that the game was too
long. “This should be a 20-20 game!” Marshall exclaimed. Riddick responded “Yeah, it’s a lot
of overs. Bang bang (he emulates the sound of the ball hitting the bat) and let’s drink.” He
makes the true intention of the gathering known: “At least the water break is a beer break.”

Under the auspices of cricket, drinking and its attendant socializing are the foci for many
of the Mavericks. Sharing expensive Remy Martin Cognac and Australian Shiraz wines or
national rums such as St. Lucia’s Chairman’s Reserve or Jamaica’s Wray and Nephew are a
means of marking MCSC members’ upper class status and patriotism; drinking copious amounts
and still playing well mark their masculinity. Although drinking in public is technically a breach
of Ontario laws, if it is done from a cup and not a bottle, or a bottle covered with a paper bag,
the Mavericks do not seem concerned. This type of behaviour is in direct conflict with the
values of some South Asian Muslim cricketers who do not consume any alcohol, eschew the
breaking of local laws, and dislike being surrounded by intoxicated teammates and opponents.
The conflict over alcohol and cricket culture was starkly demonstrated at the 2008 Mayor’s Cup sponsored by the city of Mississauga and city of Toronto. The Mayor’s Cup is an annual tournament that takes place at a multi-field venue, with simultaneous games. The event opens each year with a speech and Toronto Mayor David Miller, an avid cricket fan, participated in a symbolic over in 2008. The tournament originated in 1998, spurred by South Asian councilors, Members of Parliament, and Members of Provincial Parliament from suburban areas of the GTA, Brampton and Mississauga. These cities are affectionately (and by some, pejoratively) referred to as ‘Bramladesh’ and ‘Mississaugistan’ for their rapidly increasing South Asian populations. The organizer claimed the “aim of the tournament is to recognize and encourage the sporting contributions of ethnic minorities in the city.” Although Caribbean boys and men have been playing cricket in the GTA for nearly two decades prior to the inaugural Mayor’s Cup, it was not until South Asian politicians were willing to find sponsors and organize the event that cricket came to be recognized as an important sport for the region’s newest ethnic groups. The Asian organizers fulfill a stereotype of the ‘right’ kind of immigrant, willing to work hard and demonstrating a drive to succeed (Mohammed, 2009).

The Mavericks were invited to play in the Mayor’s cup via the Toronto Police Team, which always has a berth in the tournament amongst seven other predominantly South Asian teams. The Police team has always played friendly games and was once predominantly Caribbean, but is now run by South Asians:

I captained the police team for 10 years. It used to be 95% West Indian. … But as guys retired, not too many West Indians came up to replace them. They rely on immigration from cricketing nations to fill the spots. That’s why you see so many Asians on the team now. In the 1970s and 1980s there was more immigration [from the West Indies] and more Black players. (Lionel)
Many of the Caribbean police officers, including Lionel, have retired from the force and/or from cricket. Nevertheless, a number of MCSC members still come to watch the Police games and socialize with their friends and are recruited to play when the team’s numbers are low. They have been supporting the team for more than two decades in some cases and continue to do so.

At the Mayor’s Cup there was no public drinking allowed. There was no sharing or selling of alcohol or food from cars in the parking lot. There was no loud music playing during the game and the atmosphere was serious and competitive, rather than the happy, festival atmosphere of typical Maverick games. Mainly Indians ran the tournament, and their cultural influence was seen and heard at the tea break: aloo gobi (potatoes and cauliflower) and naan (flat bread) were served along with Tandoori chicken and rice, and traditional Indian music was played over the loud speakers. Some of the Mavericks managed to drink in a clandestine fashion out of water bottles, coloured plastic cups and coffee mugs. They ended up in conflict with the tournament organizers, and their own South Asian teammates.

First, the organizers ran out of food by the time the Mavericks’ game ended. Although there was little concrete evidence of a conspiracy (there rarely is), some of the Caribbean-Canadian men complained that it was “convenient” that the organizers forgot to save some food for the only Black team in the tournament. “They probably figured we wouldn’t eat that shit anyway” Charles remarked as he threw back the remainder of his third beer, disguised in a Tim Horton’s coffee take-out cup. The Police team captain, Prasham, went with another player to a local fast food location, Popeye’s Louisiana Kitchen, and returned with spicy fried chicken, biscuits, and French fries, in which the Mavericks indulged instead. “Even if it’s not that good for you, I’d prefer this,” Charles explained, using his eating practices, and sacrificing his health, to take a resistant stand against the South Asian organizers. I noted their shift from a Caribbean culinary habitus to an African-American one. As Gruneau (1999, p. 29) explains, citing
Bourdieu, sport is an object of struggles, with various groups vying for the capacity to impose the legitimate function of sporting activity. For the Mavericks, who choose to only play ‘friendly cricket,’ that legitimate function includes celebrating Afro-Caribbean culture.

Secondly, the Mavericks were upset when the umpire slotted to work their game was busy on another field and that game was still at least an hour away from being finished. The organizers tried to replace him with an umpire who had a reputation of being biased towards the opponents. The Mavericks vehemently objected using curse words and shouting, and offended the replacement umpire, who then refused to work their match. “Indians organize [the tournament] and you see which games are on television, who gets the good field, and the umpires.” “They forget all’we lunch and all’we umpire?!” “I don’ need to fucking sit around and watch this jackass steal [outs] for the other team. This is not cricket!” “You see dis? (the player indicates the clear blue skies and warm weather, as well as the frustrations with the organizers). All dis an me cyaant even have one beer?! Raas!” The tournament organizer attempted to allay their frustrations in a meek but factual manner. He insisted there was nothing he could do to bring more food, get the originally slated umpire off the main field, bring the television crews to film their matches, or change the drinking laws of the province. He repeated several times that there was to be no drinking in the park, passively suggesting that he was aware that the Mavericks had been drinking without directly confronting them. His demeanour was read as patronizing and further infuriated some of the Mavericks who threatened to pack up their gears and leave the tournament.

This argument must be situated within a context of historical and local politics and entrepreneurial power, from which Black Canadians have been effectively marginalized, as well as a broader understanding of cricket politics. Historically speaking, as Caribbean planters faced the prospect of the end of indenture, any hint of solidarity between Black and Indian labourers
“was speedily crushed…[and] images of the shiftless, lazy African and the industrious coolie
[Indian] circulated with increasing frequency” (Niranjana, 2001, p. 262). Indians stereotyped
Caribbean men as having an overly strong emphasis on _liming_, they are “concerned only with
socializing and conspicuous consumption” (Williams, 1991, p. 59). Although this is not their _only_
concern, Afro-Guyanese insist on a balance between work and socializing, which may tip
in favour of socializing. Similarly, “Afro-Trinidadians tend to perceive hard work and thrift not
as virtues but as obstacles to enjoying the ‘good life,’ the fruits of civilization” (Munasinghe,
2001, p. 24). In contrast, Indians are stereotyped as obsessed with work, highly organized, and
financially stable. They “draw the line between work and sociability less clearly … work itself
should provide pleasure” (Williams, 1991, p. 60). It is in relation to these differing stereotypes
and self-descriptors of ethnic groups within a Caribbean setting that we must read interactions
between the primarily Black Mavericks, their South Asian teammates, and tournament
organizers in a diasporic setting.

In just a few decades, South Asians have transformed their transnational migration
experiences into successful businesses that sponsor the Mayor’s Cup, successful careers in
mainstream Canadian politics, and successful media outlets such as the Asian Television
Network, which covers the tournament. Caribbean migrants who have been playing cricket in
the GTA for twice as long have significantly fewer resources at their disposal.

On the rare occasions that they played on integrated teams, the Mavericks engaged in
regular arguments with their South Asian teammates over adherence to the rules of cricket. As
the Mavericks became more intoxicated over the course of the afternoons, their arguments
would become louder and some players tirades, which are also performances of Caribbean
masculinity, attacked certain South Asian team members. For example, a fight once broke out
over whether players should be called off the field once they make fifty runs so that others can
bat. The Indian captain of the Police team wanted to give everyone a chance to play. The predominantly Barbadian players were adamant that the rules of cricket should never be changed regardless of the circumstances: “If he is out there to make 100 runs then let him have the spotlight!” “What he doing out there? Making runs! You gonna call him in, send another man out dere do the same thing? Dat make sense?!” “Every cricketer takes a chance when he comes out to the grounds that he will not bat, especially if he is late in the order. Every cricketer knows that!” “If the lead batsmen stay out dere all day I consider it like myself staying out dere. Some people here ain’t see a ball! Dat don’t matter! There are rules! You don’t make it up as you go along.” The Mavericks’ vehemence about adherence to the rules of cricket is reflective of the era in which they grew up, the cultural capital following rules afforded them (and their nations in their quest for independence), and the passion with which they protect their space from the intrusions of South Asians.

Caribbean cricketers are expected to adhere to Puritan values, as described by James (1963, p. 26):

Before very long I acquired a discipline for which the only name is Puritan. I never cheated, I never appealed for a decision unless I thought the batsman was out, I never argued with the umpire, I never jeered at a defeated opponent ...

From the eight years of school life this code became the moral framework of my existence.

The Mavericks are deeply embedded in a cricketing history that is tied to their understandings of themselves as “proper men.” Much has been written about The Windies, especially in regard to its role in colonization and nation building (Beckles, 2004a; Beckles & Stoddart, 1995; Birbalsingh, 1996; Seecharan 2006). Stoddart (2006, p. 791) is clear in his assertion that, for the Caribbean, “The rise of cricket in the second half of the nineteenth
century, then, coincided with the crucial post-emancipation period” which was marked by significant social realignments, community building, social ordering and identity marking efforts (p. 794). Cricket was integral to these processes, especially because of its synonymy with fair play, civilized behaviour, cultural distinction, and opportunity for accommodation with and recognition from the ruling elite. The Mavericks maintain strict adherence to the anachronistic amateur ideals of the sport; claiming that they follow the English letter of the law which dictates that fairplay, following the rules, and a gentleman’s attitude are paramount.

James (1963, p. 39-40) asserts, however, that the Caribbean masses did not care a damn about Puritanism: reticence, self-discipline, stiff lips, upper and lower; they shouted and stamped and yelled and expressed themselves fully in anger and joy. This dichotomy is reflected among the Mavericks on the field, who were reserved and respectful and those off the field accompanied by MCSC supporters who yelled, jeered, and enacted all varieties of obscenities.

The captain, Prasham, shouted to the Mavericks to “Stop that! Stop that! It’s just a game so we should all have fun and get a bat.” On his side were other Indian players, one of whom was next in the batting order, “I don’t leave my house 10 hours to go field! This is just a tournament. We all want a knock!” He yelled back.

Warlie, exasperated, walked away from the field. I followed him and asked his opinion about the disagreement. He was frustrated that the South Asians are “too aggressive and too cliquey”:

Just about 20 years ago I switched to friendly games. … The reason for that is in my late stages they had – there were lots of (pause) I don’t want to say (pause) Indians and Pakistanis and Sri Lankan people coming … They’re very aggressive. They’re a very aggressive people and they want to fight. They come to the games and change the rules, when the decisions don’t go their way they
want to fight the players, they want to fight the umpires, and that’s when I realized that’s not for me and I left and I joined the older group, my age group and I play friendly cricket.

Warlie had vowed to play cricket only with his age group and only with other Caribbean players:

> I used to play for Police, but their style of cricket don’t suit me because – the police team has Black people, White people, Indian people, and I find dat I used to play with them. When the Black guy’s runnin’ the show, you get a game. But then the Indian guy he takes over, and then the next thing he does he bring all his Indian friends to play. …Then you know there will be some fight like this … I say “no thank you.” I came today because [Cotter] ask me, but mark my words, today … I stop playin’ wit dem.

Cotter, who continues to work for the Police force, remains one of the few links between the Mavericks and the Police club. His overt attempts to keep the peace between his two communities are increasingly futile. Warlie’s frustrations demonstrate that unlike the ‘fights’ MCSC members have among each other, the loud exchanges with South Asians are laden with real animosity. The language the Afro-Caribbean Mavericks use is reminiscent of popular Caribbean discourse of the 1970s, of an East Indian ‘takeover.’ In particular, in Trinidad and Tobago strides made by East Indian business and professional classes into sectors long considered Afro-Trinidadian preserves were alarming (Munasinghe, 2001). The Mavericks goal is to generate *communitas*, foster understanding between men who share a language and culture, lack pretensions and status claims, and create spontaneous friendships. Unfortunately, their ability to promote and maintain non-hierarchical relationships and spontaneity is encumbered by the organizational process. A *communitas* is “vulnerable to the institutionalized groups
surrounding them. They develop protective institutional armor, armor which becomes the harder as the pressures to destroy the primary group’s autonomy proportionally increase” (Turner, 1982, p. 49). The more firmly they hold on to the way things were before they encountered so many South Asian cricketers, the more conflicts they end up in with South Asian teammates, opposition, and tournament organizers.

Many Mavericks indicate that they left league play due to their displeasure with some South Asians’ ungentlemanly behaviours within the game. Marshall advocates that cricket is a “gentleman’s game.” When he was young players were “civilized” and respected their rivals:

If your opponent does well against you, rather than ignore him when he’s out, you’d see, back in the early days, somebody would shake his hand – one of the opponents! Or they’ll applaud when he’s walking off. … The batsman didn’t always wait for the umpire’s decision. Back then, the batsmen would walk [off the field if he is out] … It’s like I do unto you as I would like you to do unto me, so to speak.

These Christian/amateur/fairplay values were fundamental to colonial (cricket) culture in the Caribbean, which was equated with civilized behaviour. Marshall continued:

In baseball, if you bean a guy, [the pitcher] just stands there and stares him down. In cricket, if you hit a man, you tell him you’re sorry. Even if you intended to. … One of the things I tell my students all the time is that the big difference between cricket and baseball is that in baseball you hit the ball, in cricket you stroke the ball. That in itself makes it seem very civilized.

MCSC members criticize South Asians for being too competitive, fighting, and often wanting to change the rules. While these acts are seen as uncivilized and “not cricket” (not fair), MCSC members remain comfortable with their own yelling, drinking and swearing behaviours.
The manner in which a group comes to be ‘situated’ in and through a wide variety of discourses, economic processes, state policies and institutional practices is critical to its future. This ‘situatedness’ is central to how different groups come to be relationally positioned in a given context (Brah, 1996, p. 183).

If the everyday stories we tell ourselves, individually and collectively, come to stand for “who we are,” it is clear that the Mavericks tell themselves they are not like South Asian cricketers and do not take advantage of business contacts and political resources as their South Asian counterparts do. Now that they are (nearing) retirement age, and defining themselves against South Asians, they are even less likely to mobilize resources to get their own grounds or clubhouses, or organize large scale, televised tournaments. Nevertheless, retrieving and claiming space for cultural autonomy remains one means of survival within Canadian society for marginalized ethnic groups. Caribbean-Canadian cricketers are rapidly losing their autonomy within cricket spaces and so grasp at what power they have to create their own spaces. Consequently they resent the intrusion on what they consider to be their spaces by South Asian cricketers.

**Summary.** The Mavericks’ exclamations of disappointment and frustration with South Asian organizers, umpires and fellow players are reflective of their feelings of increasing marginalization within Toronto’s official cricketing communities due to their age and a lack of second generation or new immigrant Caribbean cricketers, and their anti-South Asian racism, bred in their homelands. South Asian immigrants are positioned as model minorities and above African descendents in intellect and manners. Their entrée into business and politics in the GTA stands in contrast to Caribbean-Canadians who have historically been excluded from these fields due to economic constraints and racism (Henry, 1994). Cricket has always been a space where Black Caribbean men could assert their physical and intellectual prowess, generate a welcoming
community, and reinforce their heritage; however, MCSC members are decreasingly able to use cricket for this purpose as South Asians increase in numbers and power within cricket spaces. The strong links MCSC members are able to generate with Caribbean communities within the GTA and other diasporic nodes, provides an “option for escape or exit, which coincidentally may dampen the immigrant’s interest in political participation in general, or radical political action or systemic reform more seriously” (Rogers, 2001, p. 184). Thus, a cycle occurs where Caribbean-Canadians feel marginalized by the host, turn to the homeland or other sites for a sense of comfort and security, fail to invest in improving their status and degree of assimilation in the hostland, and continue to feel marginalized. Ironically, the Mavericks admonish South Asian players for not speaking English, eating a restricted diet, fighting at the grounds, and behaving in an uncivilized manner, criticisms that are often leveled against their communities. They do not consider how their own behaviour is exclusive and raucous.

Analysis of the (especially Afro-)Caribbean Mavericks interactions with South Asians helps to expand Paul Gilroy’s narrow analysis of the Black Atlantic cultural forms as created through the racial terror of modernity (1993, p. 73). While those terrors were inaugurated by slavery, they cannot be understood outside of the process of indentureship as well. The project of racial emancipation in the Caribbean did not occur in a world merely “split into white and black halves, and where the darker half was held back by race prejudice and legal bonds, as well as by deep ignorance and dire poverty” (DuBois, cited by Gilroy, 1993, p. 116). In fact, in the post-colonial era, Blacks dominated the Caribbean territories, except in the cases of Guyana and Trinidad, which were split into Indian and Black halves. The desire for a Black space among cricketers and their supporters perpetuates a Black Caribbean dominance that excludes, marginalizes, and denigrates Indian cultures as ‘inauthentic’ representations of Caribbeanness and masculinity. The Mavericks rejection of South Asians represents not only a rejection of
Pakistanis and Sri Lankans. It is a dismissal of Indo-Caribbeans who do not share their cultural penchant for drinking, calypso, aggressive talk and bus trips.

Although the Mavericks generally do not enjoy playing alongside South Asians, there are teams in the GTA comprised of both Caribbean and South Asian cricketers who manage to get along.\footnote{One man who has been an MCSC member and cricket player for nearly thirty years was born in Pakistan. He describes himself as an “adopted West Indian.” He does not play with the Police team. As a result I was unable to capture his interactions with South Asian cricketers.} Especially among younger Caribbean migrants, second generation Caribbean-Canadians, female cricketers, and those engaged in league play, there are many positive interactions between Caribbeans and South Asians (see Razack, 2009). The main difference between these groups and the Mavericks is the generational difference, and the explicit socializing, re-creational play, \textit{liming} and community emphasis in the Mavericks’ version of the sport. Their objective is to use friendly cricket to renew a Caribbean community, which is impeded by the presence of South Asians (and their foods and languages) within a diaspora space that is not exclusively Caribbean. Within GTA cricket spaces inter-diasporic group conflicts reflect the shifting social hierarchies and identity-making processes of migrants.

At cricket matches, the home team is always responsible for providing the food. Increasingly when the Mavericks play with or for the Police team, the chicken offered is tandoori not jerk. Ladoos and samosas have supplanted plantains and dumplings. Curry and rice may be the only staples on which South Asian and Caribbean groups can agree; however, the ways they are prepared seem to continually keep the groups apart.

In this section I have shown that any analysis of racialized diasporas cannot be read only in relation to the dominant White group because sources of conflict and identity marking often stand in relation to other minority ethnic groups. Clifford (1997), Brah (1996) and Thomas and Clarke (2006) call for the examination of lateral and horizontal inter-relationships within diasporas and moving beyond ‘racism’ in our historical and ethnographic theorizations of...
transnationality and diaspora among ‘Black’ groups. “[O]ther circulations [are] equally critical in the unveiling of counterhistories and the constitution of community” (Thomas & Clarke, 2006, p. 14); for example, examining overlapping networks that connect transnational communities such as Caribbeans and South Asians demonstrate the importance of other axes of power in the making of culture and marking of identity such as religion, age, and political power.

**Performances of Nationalism**

In the social sciences in the early 1990s, transnational processes were linked to globalization and the decreasing significance of national boundaries. This “post-national” world was said to be diasporic, liberated, counter-hegemonic, and even anti-national. Whereas African and Black Diaspora scholarship diminishes the value of national borders, scholars who investigate Caribbean diasporic networks insist on demonstrating the specific consequences of, relationships between, and durability of nation-state borders; governmental economic, military and political power; and subjects’ national loyalties and resistances (Alexander, 2005; Glick Schiller, 2005; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 1999; Walcott, 2003). These are linked to national identity formations, despite the deterritorialized, diasporic settings in which they occur.

I have already detailed the overlapping nature of diasporas and transnational communities. This section highlights the performance and importance of the nation within trans*national*ism. When Caribbean people become unbound from their nations of origin, symbols, language, food, media, sports and politics continue to connect them to their ancestral nation-states as they are hailed into entirely new “imagined communities” (Anderson, 1983). In their foundational text, *Nations Unbound*, Basch, Glick-Schiller and Szanton-Blanc propose a rethinking of the immigration process, integration, and identity, to include migrants’ relationship to the home nation state. I agree that the representation of, ongoing connection with, remittances
to, and longing for the homeland is important to consider, especially because (re-)claiming the home nation may be an anti-assimilation move. However, performances of nation are fluid and contextual, and migrants may simultaneously celebrate their homeland and Canadian nationalism, especially when they travel outside of Canada. Thus, we must also rethink the immigration process in terms of migrants’ ambiguous attachments to the homeland and links to other diasporic nodes, which expose their attachment to symbols, icons, and ideologies of multiple national, regional and racial identifications. Here I consider Clifford’s (1994, p. 251) question, “Are diaspora cultures consistently anti-nationalist?” The answer is a resounding “No”.

The Caribbean diaspora and its popular culture forms such as reggae, carnival, films, or cricket are remade in Canada to fit the local (Toronto) context. Canadian nation-state policy, in particular official multiculturalism and its heritage discourse, informs how Caribbean and Black popular cultures are produced by people “crucially and simultaneously engaged in a politics of how to belong to the nation-state as not-quite-citizens and how to desire beyond the too rigid confines of nation-state governmentality” (Walcott, 2003, p. 134). Walcott describes rhythm and blues diva Deborah Cox as belonging and not belonging to Canada, lodged between her parental homeland, Guyana, nation of origin, Canada, and residence, the U. S., which creates a desire for elsewhere “conditioned by a partial refusal of the nation-state’s ethnic governmentality” (Walcott, 2003, p. 127). I posit that the desire for (and travel to) a Caribbean elsewhere in fact opens up space for Caribbean migrants to perform Canadian identities. If popular culture is a political practice, as Walcott suggests, then Caribbean-Canadians might use the Canadian discourse of heritage within multiculturalism to stake their claim to nationhood. Conversely, when appropriate, Caribbean-Canadians passionately disavow attachment to Canada in order to preserve their sense of Caribbeanness and, more particularly, specific national identities.
Members of the Caribbean diaspora sometimes experience conflicts with one another, or some sub-groups remain silenced within a deterritorialized Caribbean community.

**Representing the Canadian nation-state.** The ideologies and practices prevalent in Canadian nation building are pertinent to the ways in which Caribbean-Canadians construct their identities. Snel et al. (2006) found that transnational involvement in general does not impede immigrant integration. This study extends Snel’s finding to suggest that transnational involvement may actually bolster immigrants’ patriotism for their new home. Madan (2000, p. 33-34) argues that describing an ethnic community as a diaspora is a “political act signaling the fact that large, globally connected, migrant communities are shifting away from ethnic and national subjectification into postmodern spaces that are beyond the Nation ideal, beyond assimilation.” My study shows that the diasporas and nationalisms are not mutually exclusive.

The Canadian response to growing immigrant populations of colour has been a multiculturalism policy that encourages maintenance of “ethnic heritage” (Thobani, 2007; Mackey, 2002). As such, Caribbeans in Canada continue to identify with their ancestral cultures and ethnic identities. Co-existing with the emphasis on whiteness as a cultural ideal, and Canada as a French and English nation, is the view of a mosaic, in which ethnic minority groups celebrate their cultures through, what James Donald and Ali Rattansi (1992, p. 2) noted of the English education system, are the saris, samosas, and steel pans that are given the power to represent difference and cultural pluralism, and erase racism and structural inequalities. The ability to celebrate their heritage by eating traditional foods, speaking native languages, and playing sports from the homeland is commemorated by the Mavericks. Playing cricket has enabled them to retain their cultural heritage and be accepted as hyphenated Canadians.

Many of the Mavericks are former high performance cricketers, which may play a role in their continued participation. Their above average skill, decades of experience, opportunities
to compete at an elite level, and the centrality of cricket to their social circles and senses of self, all led to the intensely competitive cricket they played upon arrival to their new homes in Canada. Warlie and Riddick both moved from Barbados to Quebec and began playing elite level cricket almost immediately.

I played inter-province games which Ontario play Quebec every year. And they go like one year they play in Quebec and one year they play in Toronto, here. So I represent Quebec at that time. I did well in those games too. (Warlie)

Warlie expresses great pride in being a provincial representative. Similarly, Riddick explains, smiling “When I was 18 years old I started playing for the Quebec provincial team. It was an all Black team. We went to tournaments in Calgary, BC, and Ontario. The Quebec and Ontario teams were the strongest in Canada.” The origin of the members of the all-Black provincial cricket teams was the Caribbean. Riddick points out the racial difference of the team from the Anglo mainstream in Ontario and Quebec in the 1960s and from the current South Asian-dominated provincial and national teams. Delson also proudly represented his province on all-Black teams. He “never played on a White team” in Antigua or in Canada:

With my performances it gave me an opportunity to be selected for the trials to play for Antigua … many times I found myself in the final 16. I didn’t quite make it to the final 11, you know, or 12 guys. I just missed out. But I represented Ontario in cricket. I remember one year we played, I topped the batting average in the competition, of all the provinces, I was top.

The Mavericks’ pride in their ability and opportunity to represent their new nation is expressed in the memorabilia they retained from those days, including provincial uniforms, brochures with their names on them and the ways in which they discuss their success. They do not merely
recount that they played provincially, they insist that they “did well,” were “top,” and “the strongest” in the intra-provincial leagues.

In a touching moment, one player, Jared, laments not being selected for the Canadian national team as a defining moment of his life. He was in his late twenties and had been living in Canada for three years:

I really wanted to make the Canadian team so that we could come up against the West Indies team in a tournament. Then I could play against Viv. I used to dream of that. Me on the Canadian team, him playing for West Indies.

Jared grew up with Vivian Richards, who was knighted in 1999 for his contribution to the sport of cricket. Jared saw the prospect of being an international cricketer as a distinct possibility. He did not want to believe that his migration – forced upon him due to his family’s economic constraints – meant an end to his professional cricket aspirations. Unfortunately, it was not migration but a combination of talent and his need for income that kept him out of cricket’s top ranks. He tried out for the Ontario team in the late 1970s but did not succeed. Some of his contemporaries made it, however:

Dey called me up. An’ dey had dis team touring to Barbados an’ I got a game playing for Canada. In Barbados! … It was amazing fe me [wearing the Canadian national uniform]. After leaving Barbados to come to Canada an’ wear Canadian colours it was a great ting fe me. I really enjoyed de time I got to spend dere and got to show who I am … [but] I very outspoken an’ dat prevent me from progressing farther into it because, for me, I look at it like life is difficult an’ [I] come from Caribbean to play for Canada an’ I recently married an’ I had a kid on the way. … I figure if I gonna leave [work] to represent de Canadian team I should at least get something fe compensate me. …. Dey call me at certain times
for their uses an’ I refuse. … Yeah at de time (pause), funding was critical in dem
times dere. (Otis)

I came here and was an exceptional player by their [Canadian] standards. There
were lots of guys at my level back home. … I played for the Ontario team and the
Canadian national team versus the U.S.A. for three to four years, but at that time
it was 80-90% West Indian. Even the selectors were West Indian. … I was
selected to play for Canada in the World Cup in 1967, but cricket was not in the
police peripheral so I couldn’t get the time off. I was new and I had to choose
between police as a career versus cricket as a career. (Riddick)

They were little fish in a big sea in their jobs, but through cricket they were revered for their
skill and enabled to compete internationally, which gave them a sense of Canadian national
pride, black power, and a way to make their mark in a new land. Unfortunately, many players
echo the experience of having to choose to work over playing cricket due to obligations to feed
their families and a lack of funding and national respect for the sport (this continues even
today). In their home nations many employers would give time off to allow a young man to
pursue a cricket career and if he were talented enough, playing cricket could provide an income.
However, many of the Mavericks did not have the skill to compete at the national level in the
Caribbean, and economic hardships in their nations of origin, the legacy of colonialism,
motivated many of the Mavericks to migrate; their new employers were not so understanding
and Cricket Canada had minimal funds with which to pay them. Their pride in being able to
represent their new nation was not enough to sustain their participation at elite levels.

In addition to playing for national and provincial teams when they were young, the
Mavericks travel to international destinations as seniors and enter tours and participate in
tournaments as the Canadian or Ontario Masters’ team. When they do so, they battle the stigma of Canada being regarded as a weak cricketing nation.

See what happens when they say Canadians can’t play cricket? We were on a tour in Barbados. I go in wit my partner an’ he hit dat ball so far, I tink dat ball still flying down Bridgetown today! (Erol)

In a pep talk on the bus before the first game in England a player stood up, hoisted a uniform into the air, and reminded everyone, “The uniforms might say [Mavericks], but they also have that maple leaf, so we’re representing Canada in a sense. Play good!” This type of overt Canadian pride was matched by the tacit use of the symbols and iconography of the nation.

When touring, the Maverick’s enact a significant ritual that is not present at their home games. They typically travel with a national flag and find a way to affix it close to their change room, their side of the clubhouse, or the stands where their supporters sit. Games in the GTA do not offer opportunity for such performances of nationalism because players from both teams identify as Caribbean-Canadians. In Barbados, England, St. Lucia or the United States, however, playing against Caribbeans with other national affiliations opens up the contest to be more than a friendly game between Caribbean ‘brothers.’ Sport plays an important role in the construction and reproduction of a national identity (Jackson, 1994; 1998; Jarvie, 1993). When the game is represented as an inter-national competition, it becomes linked to national heritage and pride.

All of the games I attended with the Mavericks outside Canada were held at grounds with clubhouses, and every clubhouse featured pictures on the walls documenting the history of the club’s boards of directors, members, or teams. Plaques and newspaper clippings commemorating important games, certain players’ achievements, or notable facts about the city
or region adorned the walls. The Mavericks defined themselves as part of and in opposition to what they saw on the clubhouse walls. In response to the gradient of increasing numbers of non-white faces in the photos over the years since the clubs’ inceptions (both in the Caribbean and in England) the Mavericks expressed racial pride and Black nationalism. Marshall pointed to the photos from the 1970s and said “You can see which years they start letting Blacks join the club. Then they couldn’t deny we were the best!” He says “we” although he is pointing to Black- (and South Asian-) British faces. Alternatively, by placing the Canadian flag on their opponents’ clubhouse, the Mavericks marked their difference from the British. Thus the place enabled the social interaction, that is, the clubhouse and the ways its walls were adorned provided opportunities for simultaneous displays of Black and Canadian nationalism.

After every game when the Mavericks were on tour in the Caribbean or UK, the two teams made presentations to each other to trash-talk, show gratitude for the opportunity to play, and exchange gifts. During his post-game speeches, The Mavericks’ captain, Sam, handed out Ontario flags and maple leaf pins and invited his opponents to come to Canada so that the Mavericks could extend the same hospitality. At one game he stated:

I would like to bring greetings on behalf of the [Mavericks] of Ontario and Canada to England and to [Hereford] Village Cricket Club. So as I said we have a part of Canada to share with you. As you know we are part of the Commonwealth, so part of us is still ruled by England and the Queen, so we have – well this is the Ontario flag and it has the Union Jack and the [crest] from Ontario – to share with you and we also have some pins … we didn’t know so many Jamaicans would be here (in England) so its our pleasure to meet our West Indian brothers here and any time you come to Canada you are welcome. (Sam)
The symbols of the province and nation, Ontario flags and maple leaf pins were given to every player the Mavericks encountered on tours and at tournaments. Four players were charged with going to their local city hall and obtaining 25 pins or flags so the team would have enough to hand out to each opponent. In addition the Mavericks travel with statuettes of beavers, deciduous trees, and loons they hand out to honour the captain and man of the match of their opposing teams. These exchanges were important parts of every game, signified by the gathering of players to photograph the exchanges, and speeches made about the symbols. Sam explained the significance of each gift, “the beaver is our national animal,” “everywhere in our province you can see this kind of tree,” “the maple leaf is the symbol on our flag” – and effectively articulated the Mavericks’ connection with and pride in the nation. Some players also wore Canada hats and t-shirts when they were out of their cricket uniforms, proud to represent their home. Their immersion in an urban lifestyle – perpetually distinct from the forest symbolism used to represent the nation – is obfuscated in favour of a celebration of Canadian flora and fauna. Their use of these symbols to represent themselves, when many admit they have never been outside of the city and infrequently access camp grounds or cottages, articulates the tensions between diasporic identity and powerful constructions of nationalism. What authorized symbols of nation could they share with their Black British brothers to connote an urban, Caribbean-Canadian identity? The language, discourse, and ideology of Canadian nationalism is inadequate to represent their hyphenated identities.

Sam lauds the label of “Commonwealth partner,” in conversation with other Barbadians living in England to demonstrate his passion for his “adopted nation,” Canada, and the bonds of Empire. MCSC members’ privilege as mobile citizens allows them to celebrate Canadianness and brotherhood with the English through representation of the game as one between Ontario and Hereford, Canada and England, instead of a game between two groups of Caribbeans. We
might also consider the ways their passion for cricket and celebration of a Commonwealth connection is related to an antagonistic relationship to Black America and sports such as basketball and grid-iron football, which few have ever played. Nassy Brown (1998, p. 297) examines the ways American cultural imperialism has determined the lopsided nature of transatlantic exchange and created resistance from Blacks elsewhere. The Mavericks’ captain, Sam, marks himself as Canadian and not-American simultaneously.

Loyalty to Canada is also fashioned in less obvious ways. Despite being embedded in a Caribbean cricket and social club, some players detach themselves from a Caribbean identity and are critical of the loud, raucous, and ignorant behaviour of many of their Afro-Caribbean peers. On one occasion a number of the Mavericks became embroiled in a loud argument over how *bakes* (a flour dumpling) are made. Some thought they were deep fried, others, pan fried, and still others insisted they were baked, hence the name. For close to 10 minutes they all talked at the same time, yelled, slapped the table for emphasis, and clinked glasses full of cognac with others who shared their opinions. Sitting at the periphery Hussein distanced himself from the conversation “You see this? This is why Caribbean people don’t get anywhere. Sit around all night talkin’ stupidness. You know what the other [English] team is probably talkin’ something intellectual, politics. ... Here we goin’ on ’bout bakes for half an hour!” Hussein, who retired after thirty years of teaching often noted his surprise that Caribbean immigrants did not change their ways “after so long in Canada.” This was based on what Ropero (2004, p. 188) refers to as the assumption that culture should not travel, but confine itself to national borders. Hussein complained that he moved to Canada to “get an education and get away from rum shops and foolishness” but it seems he was unable to fully escape his masculine, Trinidadian culture, especially when his peers were drinking. Hussein’s Indo-Caribbean status also complicates his critique of his mainly Afro-Caribbean teammates; however, Learie, an Afro-Guyanese, is
equally critical of the Mavericks “simple-minded” arguments. He quietly removes himself from the group and reads or sleeps. Interestingly, neither man challenges the group, but both detach themselves from this particular mode of representing Caribbean masculinity.

Political leaders make claims on citizens as active and loyal members of their nation-states, regardless of where they dwell:

Often through the use of symbols, language, and political rituals … this ideology recognizes and encourages continuing and multiple ties that immigrants maintain with their society of origin. Ignored in this construction, however, is the ongoing incorporation of these immigrants into the society and polity of the country in which they have settled. (Basch et al. 1994, p. 3)

Benedict Anderson (1983) conceptualizes the nation as an “imagined community,” imagined because members never have face-to-face encounters with all other members; however, based on the sharing of print media, every person in a nation-state can feel a sense of unity. Within Canada, the “imagined community” is based on a multicultural ideology that “fosters perceptions of Blacks as having non-Canadian origins, a form of displacement, alienation, and expatriation” from Canada (Pabst, 2006, p. 119). The print media Caribbeans in Toronto turn to include “ethnic” newspapers such as Share, Pride, and Caribbean Camera. Thus, the imagined community of Canada excludes Blacks and creates the possibilities for them to imagine a community of their own, one that extends beyond nation-state borders. Deterritorialized nation-state building treats the boundaries of nation-states as elastic, defining them in social rather than geographic terms. While the Mavericks see themselves as part of a Black nation, they also, through their captain, endorse the symbols of the Canadian nation-state. Sam

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49 Canada’s Caribbean communities are not unique in this regard. Many ethnic groups (especially first generation immigrants, including Vietnamese, Portuguese, French and British), form uniquely ethnic associations, newspapers, and sports organizations. Arguably, Canada, with its multicultural ideology is an ideal setting for the generation and maintenance of diasporic communities.
disperses the symbols and discusses a colonial history to hail his teammates into a Canadian imagined community. His identity can be manipulated and contested depending on the agendas of his interlocutors and the situation. While he can perform a decidedly Canadian nationalism on one hand, on the other he can reject Candianness.

**Performing Caribbean ‘nationalisms’**. The Mavericks’ performances of nationhood are contextual. In certain circumstances they are enthusiastic about disavowing their Canadianness in favour of a Caribbean or territory-specific nationalism.

An argument broke out at the side of the field at a game in England and many of the Mavericks were quick to label themselves as Bajans – not Canadians. A local passersby, Dudley, who identified himself as “pure Bajan,” “just off the rock” stopped to watch the game. He boldly stated that “these Canadian Ol’ men don’ know nothing ’bout no cricket.” The Mavericks did not take this lightly and began to heckle him. He was significantly younger than them, believed his skills were superior, and offered to “embarrass” them at the next game. “I’ll make a call tonight an’ I go be dere tomorrow. I go bowl dung half a you!” The Mavericks did not accept his prediction that he would get half of them out with his superior bowling skills. Otis tried to explain to him that although they are old, they have the benefit of experience and that many of them were elite players in the 1970s. “We talking BCL (Barbados Cricket League)! Whose era was better? We had Joel Garner, Gordon Greenidge, Desmond Haynes! Legends! Do you understand? I came up with these players!” Sam chimed in “Dem tink we from Canada don’t pay no good cricket. Dey say we from snow white. Not one tour we go on where dem noh say looka dese ol’ men. Dem nah know we!” Sam is passionate that living in Canada, the land of snow, for half their lives, and being old, does not mean they cannot play cricket. “Dem nah know we” (They don’t know who we are or what we are capable of) indicates that he does not like to be judged and his use of Patois authenticates his Caribbean status. Pabst (2006, p. 119)
explains that “black Canadians are cast out of authentic Canadianness … [and] similarly cast out of discourses of blackness.” They constantly struggle to (dis)avow their Canadianness and Blackness in the face of challenges from ‘more authentic’ subjects. “It’s the background that’s important!” Vilroy adds. Here he attests that Caribbean-Canadians and Barbadians are on equal footing because they were brought up in the same cricket systems. “I look Canadian to you?!” Delson called out, drawing on a stereotype of Canadians as White and reifying the idea of the impossibility of belonging to Canada for Blacks/Caribbeans (Walcott, 2003).

Their sojourner mentality, dreams of permanent return, frequent trips, remittances to family and friends, property holdings and other assets in the islands, reading of Caribbean and Caribbean diaspora newspapers, tuning into Caribbean and diaspora radio shows, following cricket scores on www.cricinfo.com, and belonging to immigrant national associations in addition to membership in the MCSC all point to a transnational identity that allows the Mavericks to disavow their Canadianness in favour of a Caribbean identity when it suits them. Because Warlie lived in Barbados until he was thirty and travels back every year he considers himself “a real Bajan” and enjoys getting into discussions with others about the prowess of Bajan cricketers. “My name is Warlie Michaels, and I’m a real Bajan. All the others are counterfeit!” The constant discussions of nationalism and criteria for belonging allude to the insecurity of this category. Connell (1995) describes a compulsory heterosexual masculinity that is so fragile that it is in need of constant re-affirmation in homosocial spaces such as locker rooms. Within first generation Caribbean-Canadian men’s sport, the complexity and vulnerability of nationhood also requires continual reaffirmation. Players can do this through their use of language (speaking in a thick Patois) and performing well on the cricket field.

In Schmidt’s (2008a, p. 24) examination of trans-Caribbean cultures as “polyphonic bricolage,” she emphasizes the heterogeneity of voices and constantly changing cultural
practices and identities that comprise the diaspora. She shows how cultures are constructed through the interactions of many members who:

interpret their culture quite diversely and individually, depending on their circumstances. … Each member marks different fixed aspects of their culture, sometimes language, history, political conflicts or sometimes popular religiosity, depending on the place they live, the aims they are fighting for, the situation [with which] they have to cope, and the borders they want to construct. (Schmidt, 2008a, p. 31).

As a young, newly immigrated man, Dudley regarded himself as a “true Bajan,” in contrast to older Caribbean-Canadian Mavericks whose (temporal and spatial) distance from home leaves them inevitably disconnected from Barbadian (cricket) culture, and old age prevents them from enacting physical cricket superiority. His lack of a sense of security in his new British home may be a precursor to his outer-national identification and attempt to mark his own authenticity by lashing out against and denigrating other men of Barbadian origin. He likely maintained a plan to live in Britain for a few years to make money and then return home, just as many of the Mavericks I interviewed told me, “the plan was to come here just five years” or “I came to be a cop but you know the kids start coming an’ I just stay.” Dudley assumed that these men, who had stayed in Canada for thirty or forty years could not possibly be true to their Bajan roots, and due to the image of Canada as a non-cricketing nation, they could not possibly have maintained their skills. These factors, combined with the arrogance of youth, were used to construct a border between himself and Barbadian-Canadian Mavericks.

On the other hand, the Mavericks deployed aspects of their culture: the Patois language – “dem nah know we!”, the history – “Long time West Indian cricketers have been dominating”, and the ancestral ties –“it’s the background that’s important” to show that they are “true
Bajans.” They even posit their age as an asset, due to the experience it affords. In an interview, Sam explained that he is able to play more cricket now than he could as a youth at home in Barbados because there are so many teams to play for in the GTA and he has the time and money to travel due to his early retirement at age sixty. Schmidt (2008a, p. 31) argues that, as a consequence of marking different aspects of the culture as important, diasporic groups “sometimes struggle with each other about the dominant feature of the bricolage.” To an outsider, this is one happy, homogeneous Caribbean community. From the inside, we see that differences in age, time since migration, and integration into the host community can cause divisions within the group. Furthermore, where were the Trinis (Trinidadians), Yardies (Jamaicans), and Kittitians (people from St. Kitts and Nevis) in this conversation? They remained quiet while the Barbadian cricketers kept noise over who was more authentic. And, it should go without saying that female MCSC members, unable to prove their nationalism through cricket prowess, were also excluded from competing for Bajan authenticity on these terms.

Nationalisms also appear strongly during holidays, in particular the Mavericks’ respective National Independence Days. Nearly every Caribbean territory celebrates its independence in Toronto. On these days the Mavericks appear less as a unified team and segregate themselves into groups based on their nation of origin. Jamaica’s Independence Day, celebrated annually at Keelesdale Park in the GTA is an opportunity to participate in island national affairs from a new dwelling place. The organizers advertise in the Share, Pride, and Caribbean Camera, organize a picnic with music, a fête for insiders – not a multicultural reggae music festival open to all Canadians – and therefore “forge a direct connection between the Jamaicanized city and postcolonial Jamaica” (Burman, 2002, p. 59). Some of the Mavericks turn
down the opportunity to play cricket and go to the Jamaican festival on Saturday, July 26, 2008, a notable decision given their devotion to the sport in the “short” summer.

For Guyana Independence Day, the celebrations involve a cricket match:

Reggie-When is Independence, Guyana Independence, the Guyanese national team always come up … they have a big function at L’Amoreaux Park … and if you wanna reach a lot of Guyanese just fin’ where that park is.

Janelle- So who do they play against?

Reggie-They play against the Ontario 11 or the Canadian 11, so it’s a very very [competitive game]. One year I played in that.

Janelle- On which side? (laughs)

Reggie- I played in, (pause) Oh! (surprised) I can’t remember now. Ah, I think it was the – oh yes, the Guyanese, because me and him (indicates Learie, another Guyanese-Canadian) played – yeah, we played on the Guyanese side … Of course!

We represent South America!

Reggie’s inability to initially remember which country he represented exemplifies the fluidity of choice of the transnational citizen and their always already placement within multiple national frameworks. His exclamation, “Of course!” comes late as he suddenly recalls his national (and continental) pride. Hussein, a Trinidadian explained to me, in a joking manner, that the Guyanese see themselves as superior to the rest of the Caribbean, “We are no little islanders! … We are big country people. We know better than anybody else, regards cricket.” The extended laughter at this joke, from Hussein and others within earshot, signaled how preposterous an idea it was that Guyanese could be a) superior due to their mainland status or b) experts at cricket compared to men from other Caribbean nations. The hierarchies among the islands are typically presented as a joke when players are keeping noise around the boundary, but every joke is based
on a kernel of truth and may strike a chord or play on an insecurity of some members of the supposedly homogenous Caribbean diaspora.

On a rare day off while touring in England, some of the MCSC members took advantage of the opportunity to do some shopping and sightseeing. We spent hours in a variety of sport stores looking for a warm up suit that the entire team both could afford and found attractive, only to come up empty handed. If ever there was doubt that the Barbadian nation-state had its hold on these migrants, that doubt could be dispelled when they made a point of abandoning the team track suit search in favour of visiting the Barbados High Commission in London, their national government representative office. Coincidentally, when we arrived at the commission a ceremony was about to begin. Four Parish Ambassadors (aged 18-30) from Barbados were being recognized for their role in a development program that aims to get youth involved in the national independence celebrations via a “Spirit of the Nation” competition. The ambassadors each spoke about “just taking the opportunities available to all,” “reaching out to the underprivileged,” and “the honour of working in one’s community. The final ambassador to speak was the youngest. At just 18 years old she appeared to be the most confident and well spoken of the group:

Without the Parish Ambassador Program, I wouldn’t be stan’ing here in dis cold country…please come back and support people in Barbados … Help our people become strong, make a better representation for the island. Come to Barbados – that’s what ex-pats can do to help. This trip to London is part of our community outreach. Thank you.

She received an overwhelming round of applause. The High Commissioner introduced the Mavericks as a “cricket team visiting from Canada, primarily Barbadian and wholly supportive of the diaspora efforts.” He then proposed that there be two youth ambassadors from the
Barbadian diaspora in London, New York and Toronto. The crowd seemed pleased with this suggestion that “will help to keep the broader Bajan community together.” This formal ceremony was followed by a traditional Bajan meal, which the Mavericks were grateful for after a long day of window shopping. They mingled with other diasporic Barbadians as they ate and learned about current development projects they could get involved in, or how they could mobilize the Toronto youth upon return to Canada. Sam boasted about the fundraising projects he already has on the go and the association the Mavericks have with the Poverty Alleviation Bureau in Barbados. As such, he marked himself as a good Bajan citizen who mobilizes funds to give back to the homeland.

Summary

In this chapter I have shown that Caribbean-Canadians draw on their networks of migrants, living in dispersed diasporic nodes to create opportunities for transnational travel and reunions. Return visits to play cricket games, like family reunions, allow them to maintain their kinship and friendship bonds.

I have also pointed out that Caribbean transnational social fields intersect with South Asian diaspora networks, and sites where older, first generation cricket playing migrants meet have the potential to be explosive. Based on the anti-South Asian racism that is hegemonic in their homelands among Afro-Caribbeans, many of the Mavericks continue to eschew all things “Indian” in favour of dominant Black customs. Although there are a few Indo-Caribbean cricketers who continue to play with them, the racist attitudes and exclusionary behaviours of the majority of MCSC members likely keep out both South Asians and their Indo-Caribbean peers. This study shows that it is insufficient to examine hierarchies only in terms of relations with a White dominant group. Interactions among and within diasporic groups reveal the ways in which ethnicity, age, class, and culture differences generate power dynamics that enable and
constrain people differently. Caribbean-Canadians experience conflicts with South Asians over the language they speak, foods they eat, and (restrictions on) alcohol they consume. Because MCSC members use cricket to create Caribbean spaces, they are resentful of the ways South Asians use their political power to generate their own homespaces on the same grounds.

I demonstrated that diasporas are not inherently anti-nationalist. Nationalisms within transnational spaces are selectively presented and contingent upon circumstances and location. Transnational subjects are multiply positioned and able to draw on many national and regional discourses and symbols for the purposes of making identity. While all Caribbean-Canadians may appear to eat similar foods and understand Patois, they may choose to obfuscate the connections to their homelands in favour of a Canadian identity, or they may eschew those similarities in favour of identification with their nation of origin. In their interactions with others who are of the same origins, but have spent the second half of their lives or more in various countries, performances of Canadian affiliation are ever more important. This chapter has shown that some members of the Caribbean diaspora create a hierarchy of nations; thus, revealing some of the fissures within the Caribbean *communitas*. The following chapter offers a conclusion to this study.
Chapter Eight: Conclusion

In my search for tidy conclusions and final confirmations I came up empty handed, or “wit me two long arms” as my participants would say. In this multi-sited ethnography I examined the social spaces created by a group of older, first generation Caribbean-Canadians I call the Mavericks Cricket and Social Club (MCSC) (pseudonym). The concerns of my research were the intersections of diaspora and sport. I asked: how is a cricket and social club used as a ‘diasporic resource’ for first generation Caribbean-Canadians? Diasporic resources are the symbols, materials, images, people, and places used to connect migrants to others in the homeland and throughout the Black diaspora (Nassy Brown, 1998). To Nassy Brown’s list I add corporeal practices, spectator activities, and sport-related travel as resources deployed to maintain the Black diaspora.

I set out to understand MCSC members’ emotional connections to their homelands, their perception of themselves as racialized subjects, and their (trans)national practices and identities. Ultimately, I explored the ways club members use a cricket and social club to maintain their association with people, places, cultures, and memories of home, and how the club permits class, gender, nation and ethnic hierarchies to be reinforced. A close look at what goes on at cricket matches, during after-parties, and on trips provides insights into the fluidity of Canadian nationalism, the elements of Afro-Caribbeanness deemed unassailable, and the influence of global ethnoscapes on community-making.

The transnational flows of peoples and cultures of the Caribbean diaspora have increasingly been of concern to scholars. However, the overlapping nature of African, Black and Caribbean diasporic resources have not been clearly elucidated. In particular, the Canadian setting has often been overlooked, and the use of sport to connect migrants to the homeland has
been virtually ignored. Within socio-cultural sport scholarship a similar gap exists: the concept of diaspora, and (especially older) Caribbean-Canadian athletes have been overlooked. Combining a spatial approach with a diasporic lens opens up the complexities of how national, gendered, and racialized identities are produced by and in various spaces and the power relations that flow between and within nations.

The migrants I studied were primarily Afro-Caribbeans, born throughout the Anglo-Caribbean. They were mainly between fifty and seventy years of age, and knew each other in Canada for nearly four decades. My ethnographic objective to “follow the people” (Marcus, 1995) took me to parties, fundraising dances, banquets, and cricket games at grounds throughout the Greater Toronto Area on weekends from early May to late September in 2008 and 2009. I also traveled with approximately 30 MCSC members to observe and participate in international tours and tournaments in Barbados, England, and St. Lucia. I conducted 29 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with male players and male and female supporters.

This study expanded C. L. R. James’ (1963) use of cricket to explain Caribbean nationalism and anti-racism struggles. Though James himself operated in U.S., U.K., and Caribbean settings, he did not see cricket as a diasporic resource that connects Caribbeans across the Atlantic ocean. Here I examined cricket using a diaspora framework, and noted first that although many migrants regularly return to their nation-state of origin, many others remain connected to the homeland through reliance on their memories of and nostalgia for the past/other place, and the economic connections they maintain with Caribbean individuals and community organizations both locally and elsewhere. Second, a study of sporting diasporas also led me to consider the ways in which migrants remain multiply-located. They may travel to other Caribbean nations, or diasporic nodes in the U.S. or U.K., or they may stay in Canada, recreating a homespace in their place of residence. Some members may eschew a Caribbean
identity in favour of a Canadian one in certain circumstances. Third, Paul Gilroy’s (1993) notion of the Black Atlantic, which defines diasporas as deterritorialized, racial communities created by ongoing cultural transnational flows, was helpful to analyze the different cultural aspects that flow across borders in association with the sport of cricket. Members of the Caribbean diaspora may draw on the same diasporic resource in different ways: some members may be passionate about sport while others emphasize the social opportunities the club affords, the Caribbean music, food, and alcohol readily available at every game helped to create a convivial atmosphere and status-free friendly communitas. At the same time, cricket spaces represented freedom for some powerful members and constraint for more marginal others. Different members of the diaspora are positioned differently and this research demonstrates the contradictions and complexities of performances of class, nation, race, gender and sexuality in diaspora and sporting spaces. Below I summarize these three main findings -- maintenance of the homeland community, multiply located participants, and the simultaneous unities and divisions within diasporas – before offering the future areas of study opened by the limitations of this study and the overall contributions this study makes to sport and diaspora studies.

**Homeland maintenance**

Men’s ritual of sharing memories at the cricket field and MCSC social events is a means for older men to re-create home and restore a sense of history, community, nationalism, regionalism, and diasporic belonging. These club members are deeply embedded in nostalgia for the past; in particular, their lack of cricket resources as children is framed as an element of their upbringing that made them stronger, more courageous, and more creative; they tell tales of the supremacy of the Windies team, and their own prior on-field greatness as demonstrations of their racial pride. The stories they tell may be embellishments, half-truths or fully acknowledged
lies, but in expressing their longing for times past, they create a sense of stability and community.

In addition to the “imaginative rediscoveries” (Hall, 2003) of their homeland cultures, club members are able to contribute financially and materially to the amelioration and restoration of their Caribbean communities. Caribbean diaspora literatures highlight the importance of economic flows from the diaspora to the Caribbean, which contribute greatly to the gross national product of the homeland. This study reveals that through their economic commitments, including making donations to organizations and individuals in the Greater Toronto Area and throughout the Caribbean, the members of the MCSC maintain a connection to home. Club members feel a sense of obligation to help those in need who were unable or unwilling to migrate. Fundraising to pay for charitable donations, ‘authentic’ Caribbean food, well kept grounds, professional umpires, and trips to the Caribbean or diasporic Caribbean cricket spaces, is important to replicate the cricket they were able to play at home, and to display and improve their social status (in Canada and the Caribbean) as prosperous, morally upright, benevolent, and generous members of the diaspora.

Both their nostalgic story telling and their economic donations have a gendered dimension. Especially as they get on in age, they rely on each other to reinforce their memories and to recreate imagined Caribbean communities, which lessens the pain associated with (missing) home and the decline of their capacity to demonstrate their masculinity through on-field prowess. Meanwhile, their donation of cricket equipment to underprivileged boys in the Caribbean is a real investment in the making of masculinities at a local scale and an imagined contribution to regional cricket prowess on the world stage. Their participation in the sport of cricket helps to maintain the homeland and communities of their memories and reality.
Multiply-located participants

Rather than orienting solely toward a singular homeland or feeling dislocated, as
diasporas are often described, the nostalgic (and often embellished) memories, people, foods,
alcohol, language and music from their nations of origin provide a sense of emplacement in
multiple Caribbean diasporic locations. The longer they remain in Canada, the more integrated
these immigrants become. As Werbner (2005, p. 751, original emphasis) notes of Pakistani
immigrants in Britain, “increasing prosperity and indeed integration … has been associated,
paradoxically, not with cultural assimilation, as might be expected, but with ethnic cultural
intensification, as the ritual celebrations of the elite have increased in scale, expense, frequency
and cultural elaboration.” Therefore, MCSC members’ creation of vibrant homespaces may be
an example of the performance of a highly valued Canadian ideology: multiculturalism. These
migrants are able to feel emplaced in Canada because their local cricket grounds are a symbolic
stand-in for the Caribbean. They do not necessarily need to travel to feel ‘at home.’

Nevertheless, many of the Mavericks travel regularly. The Mavericks Cricket and Social
Club creates opportunities for cricketers and non-cricketers alike to travel throughout the
diaspora to (re-)generate Caribbean cross-border kinships, friendships, and networks. Cricketers
engage in ‘roots tourism,’ but instead of returning to slave ports in Ghana or plantations in the
United States for a glimpse of the past and to appreciate “the way things were,” Caribbean-
Canadian cricketers and their supporters tour Caribbean and diasporic villages, towns, and
cities, visit world-class stadiums and see other heritage sites, thereby expanding their knowledge
and understanding of Caribbeanness, global cultural flows and racial communities. The past and
their culture ‘come alive’ at the cricket grounds, government offices, and local community
events they attend, not only in their nations of origin, but in a more broadly defined homeland,
found in other Caribbean countries, England, the United States and elsewhere in Canada. Their
travels fuel their sense of belonging and provide them with new stories to sustain them for years to come.

Caribbean diaspora literatures demonstrate that cultural flows across the Atlantic (such as music and fashion) help to create transnational social fields that interconnect migrants dispersed across Europe and North America as well as those who stay behind in the Caribbean. Sport is an equally important cultural flow and it provides opportunities for the simultaneous representation of the Mavericks sameness and difference from African-American, Black British, and Indo- and Afro-Caribbean peers at various cricket grounds. When they travel abroad they share symbols and discourses of Canadian nationalism, Caribbean regionalism, and pride in their nation of origin with their Caribbean ‘brothers’, demonstrating the complexity of their national affiliations. This study shows that Caribbean-Canadians simultaneously oscillate between Black diasporic consciousness, pan-Caribbean identity, and hegemonic nationalism. The tensions between deterritorialization and displacement and retaining (multiple) national identities and feeling emplaced are ongoing and constantly struggled over and revealed in sport settings.

Communitas and Disjunctures

The Mavericks, a group of male, mainly Afro-Caribbean-Canadians, know that on any weekend in the summer they can head to one of the local cricket grounds and unite with members of the Caribbean community, thus restoring a sense of neighbourliness they once had at home. For certain special events they are guaranteed to encounter visitors from abroad, and hundreds of local supporters who help to create a convivial atmosphere at the cricket grounds. Speaking in Patois and eating traditional foods retains elements of their African ancestry in a Canadian setting. Listening to Afro-Caribbean music and consuming alcohol are significant
means of creating distinctly Caribbean spaces. Members of the MCSC celebrate the unity across nation-state boundaries they are able to generate.

At times, the Mavericks are able to reproduce a care-free, status-free, celebratory *communitas*. Men and women cavort, Afro- and Indo-Caribbeans mingle, men of all classes, including plumbers, police officers, and teachers interact in spontaneous friendship. At other times, some members of the diaspora are absent, marginalized, denigrated, or excluded. Some Caribbean men perform masculinity through homophobic jokes and banter, their expensive travel and alcohol consumption excludes their low-income peers and non-drinking peers. In particular, I have pointed out that women and men of South Asian origin are marginalized from MCSC community-making.

First, due to women’s roles as the keepers of the insular nuclear family in Western patriarchal structures and nation building, Caribbean-Canadian women are more assimilated into Canadian structures than their men-folk and are limited in their ability and desire to reproduce Caribbean homespaces. A lack of support resources and discursive tools available to them for assistance with child-minding and domestic duties prevent many women from participation in day-time, weekend MCSC activities. Hence, an important finding of this study was that the regeneration of a male homosocial space is dependent upon women’s absence and labour during cricket matches. Many Caribbean-Canadian wives stay away from cricket matches to grant their husbands the freedom to create homosocial spaces.

Second, overt expressions of anti-South Asian racism including the denigration of South Asian foods, music, and language sends a strong message to South Asian-Canadians and Indo-Caribbeans that they are welcome to participate only if they accept and adopt an Afro-Caribbean habitus. Carrington explains that sports contests are racially signified, that is, they “act as a key signifier for wider questions about identity within racially demarcated societies” (1998, p. 280).
The acceptance of Afro-Caribbean cultural forms as the only representation of authentic Caribbeanness at the cricket grounds excludes many Indo-Caribbeans who may remember or wish to celebrate their homelands differently. This may explain the ongoing presence of distinct Indo-Guyanese and Indo-Trinidadian cricket clubs when many of the other territory-specific clubs have amalgamated. Disjunctures in Caribbean-Canadian communities are created by ongoing power struggles within diasporas, and are revealed in this study of the making of sporting and diasporic spaces.

**Future Research**

There are a number of future areas of study opened up by this dissertation. My shared “racial skinship” (Williams, 1996, p. 89) with the majority of the Mavericks, combined with evidence of all Mavericks referring to themselves as Black men under certain circumstances should not obfuscate the differences between Indo- and Afro-Caribbeans. Ignoring race differences is to ignore differential connections to class, gender, and ultimately, cricket. My desire to examine issues of race solely in terms of a “Black diaspora” and to discover how recreational cricket spaces still operate as sites for Black pride (see Chapter Three, research question 2) perpetuated the Black hegemony of Caribbean states including Trinidad and Guyana (and even nations with smaller Indian populations such as Barbados) which have sought to project a unified (non-Indian) nationalist culture (Munasinghe, 2001). This study has not been able to translate the cultural specifics of Indo-Caribbean experience; there is something similar yet different at stake for Indo-Guyanese or Indo-Trinidadians in this Caribbean community. Their reasons for distinguishing themselves from South Asians, desire or capacity to forge

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50 Munasinghe (2001) remarks that during the 1980s and early 1990s, “Indo-Trinidadian cultural activists, religious and political leaders, moderates and radicals, were united in their efforts to challenge hegemonic Afro-Creole representations of the nation” (p. 7). In Trinidad as in Guyana and Surinam, Indians were relegated to a fourth tier in the social structure, behind Europeans, elite Blacks and Creoles, and lower class Blacks. Their social and spatial isolation during indentureship operated to situate them symbolically outside the core of society (p. 10).
future alliances with South Asian or Indo-Caribbean teams, or feelings of exclusion within the MCSC deserve to be explored. For example, how are the ethnic divisions and hierarchies of Guyanese women described by Peake & Trotz (1999) replicated or challenged amongst diasporic women? Not all Caribbean cricketers in the GTA play cricket with or against the Mavericks. There are Indo-Caribbean clubs that may or may not have a different approach to playing, spectating, and liming. This is a study of a Caribbean cricket community, but it does not capture all of the makings of Caribbeanness through GTA cricket. Caribbeans of Indian heritage were a minority at the grounds I visited, but their stories of maintaining racial and ethnic communities across borders could also provide rich insight into the making of the Caribbean diaspora, not to mention the Indian diaspora.

Another important site for future research concerns those club members who stay put. In this study I have observed a number of MCSC members who travel throughout the diaspora, or locally throughout the Greater Toronto Area in search of a cricket game. There are, however, those Caribbean men who remain in Woodstock, Markham, Cambridge or Pickering, Ontario to play and watch their friends. It remains to be explored, what are the unique manifestations of cricket and Caribbean culture in these sites among those who refuse to/are unable to travel long distances? In contrast, an equally rich area for research is those (especially wives, but also some male friends and brothers of Mavericks) who choose to join the team only for the cricket tourism it offers. What is the role of sport tourism in maintaining connections to the homeland? Why don’t these spectators attend home games? What do ‘cricket widows’ do when they are not at the cricket ground?

My initial focus was on male cricketers and male supporters; subsequently the importance of their female partners came into view and I have only scratched the surface of their involvement with this study. What are women’s experiences at club dances and
fundraisers? What are the roles and experiences of White Canadian women who marry into the Afro-Caribbean culture celebrated by the Mavericks? What types of opportunities are available for women who would prefer to be players rather than supporters (Razack, 2009 provides insights in this regard). For brevity I will stop the questions there, but clearly an in depth study of female supporters and club members is warranted.

Another important study that emerges from an examination of the MCSC concerns the second and third generations. Many members expressed disappointment that their sons were not interested in the sport. They were unable to pass on this important aspect of Caribbean masculinity in a social setting where cricket had little salience among Canadian rites of passage such as ice hockey, football and baseball. However, now that cricket is becoming popular in Canadian secondary schools there are more opportunities for second and third generation Caribbean children and adolescents to play. Their interactions with South Asian youth and ability (or desire to) to maintain Caribbeanness through sport should also be examined to demonstrate how the diaspora maintains itself over subsequent generations after dispersal from the cultural hearth.

In summary, more attention could be paid to the people who do not regularly appear at the Mavericks games, or seem ‘out of place’ when they do. The importance of cricket for identity making and diasporic connections for Indo-Caribbeans, Caribbean-Canadian women, and children of Caribbean descent are each rich sites for future research.

**Contributions**

This dissertation makes several contributions to existing literatures.

1. I expand the scope of diaspora scholars who have shown the significance of leisure practices to transnational networks (e.g., Trotz, 2006), and Black diasporic music and film to a sense of racial pride and identity (Mercer, 1994), but have neglected to study sport participation. I
extend Jacqueline Nassy Brown’s (1998) concept of diasporic resources to include corporeal resources that are fundamental to community making.

2. Diaspora scholars examined the flows of African diasporas throughout the “Black Atlantic” (Gilroy, 1993), while neglecting flows from the Caribbean, United States, and England into and out of Canada. This study contributes to the field of Black Diaspora Studies by offering the first sustained, in-depth analysis of Black Canadian diaspora, utilizing a Canadian sport setting to uncover and critically address the performative, corporeal, and narrative production of Black diaspora. I highlight that Black masculinities are produced in relation to a history of White racist oppression, but that Black men are also the perpetrators of racist exclusions against men of South Asian descent. Our understanding of the “Black Atlantic” should include an analysis of interactions within and among diasporic groups.

3. I extend cricket scholarship, which recognizes the importance of the West Indies team and professional cricket to pan-Caribbean unification, nationalism, and anti-colonial struggles (Beckles 2004; Beckles & Richards, 1998; Beckles & Stoddart, 1995; Birbalsingh, 1996; James, 1963; Manley, 1988; Seecharan, 2006; Stoddart, 1987; 1988; 2006), but has ignored recreational Caribbean cricket players in the diaspora (Carrington, 1998, is an exception). This study of cricket in Canada also extends Canadian cricket treatises that often focus on why cricket is not popular in Canada. I show that for some Canadians, cricket is the most important sport, and it offers a venue for ethnic divisions of Caribbean homelands carried over to the diaspora to be played out.

4. I make both corrective and conceptual contributions to sociological research on sports. First, I demonstrate the rich stories to be gleaned by studying marginalized ethnic groups (Caribbean-Canadians), under-researched age groups (older men), and non-mainstream sports (cricket). Second, by broadening definitions of (trans)nationalism in this field, studies
of which often fail to account for the importance of “multilocale attachments, dwelling and traveling” (Clifford, 1994, p. 249), I show what diaspora has to offer in terms of theorizing fractured national identities, spatialized racial performances, global travels of athletes and the communities they create in their new homes. In addition to addressing nation(-states) and community, diaspora theory can help us attend to issues of sport and identification, belonging, homeland nostalgia, homing desires, sport tourism, race, exile, dis/emplacement, travel, cultural traditions, and (permeable) boundaries.

5. I contribute to studies of masculinity, in particular Caribbean and sport masculinity studies, which tend to focus narrowly on young men. I show that, within the diaspora, older men from various Caribbean territories also generate spatialized performances of hyper-masculinity, including sexism and homophobia, but their acknowledgement of the injury, fatigue, and sense of mortality that comes with aging also leads to a less strict gender performance.

6. This study provides evidence that immigrant populations, even older adults, do participate in sport in the GTA. Playing with other expatriates is vital to their transition to a Canadian identity and for maintaining their homeland cultures. It is evident that non-dominant sports such as cricket are under-resourced. Cricket grounds in the Greater Toronto Area, whether occupied by Caribbeans or South Asians, are well used throughout the summer months and should not be riddled with hydro wires, or insufficient parking, seating, or toilets. This study offers evidence that Canadian sport policy makers could use to improve cricket facilities, including the building of club-houses.

7. I included autobiography, poetry, song lyrics, segments of interview transcripts, and extended narrative pieces to make myself visible in the text, an important element of ethical ethnographies (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Haraway, 1988), to import disorganized fragments
of data from various real events to share a coherent story and protect participant anonymity (Clough, 2002) and to reveal participants’ heteroglossia.

8. Perhaps most importantly, I intend to transform this dissertation, and give back to the community through responding to their explicit requests for a text that represents their experiences – one void of academic jargon – that they can read to understand Black Caribbean Canadian cultures. Fictional or poetic reporting techniques can make the findings of the study available to a wide range of readers. Thus, evocative writing also serves a political purpose, to democratize knowledge and allow text to remain open to a variety of interpretations.

* * *

In conclusion, I have shown here that the research on diaspora must take into account actual transnational travels and the memorabilia and memories of travel, the unity of communitas and the class, gender, national and ethnic hierarchies that manifest in diasporic spaces, the use of sport as a source of racial and national pride, and the conflicts between and within different diasporic groups in multicultural settings. The diasporic resources the Mavericks’ club offers its first generation Caribbean-Canadian members include access to Caribbean music and food, opportunities to speak in Patois, involvement in jokes, gossip, stories and hierarchies of the homeland and past, travel, family reunions, friendship, and symbols of nationhood, chances to contribute financially to (local and nation of origin) communities, and chances to exclude those of South Asian descent. Cricket, is a critical diasporic resource for some Caribbean-Canadians.

“How, then, to describe this play of ‘difference’ within identity?” is a question asked by Stuart Hall (2003, p. 238). He refers to the ‘play’ of history, culture and power that results in an identity not based on an essentialized past, but in a continuously changing narrative of our
selves. We can ‘play’ with diasporic identities because they are forever unstable, unsettled, and lack any final resolution. He also uses the word ‘play’ to remind readers of the specific origins of dispersal for many Blacks in the West: the Caribbean. Here the varieties of Caribbean musics ‘playing’ exceed a binary structure of ‘past/present,’ ‘them/us;’ Caribbean music signifies the mixtures, constant borrowing, and creativity of Caribbean cultures. To his analysis I would like to add the ‘playing’ of sport in diasporic settings. Caribbean physical cultures, and, importantly, their associated histories and social practices, reveal the ways communities are built across borders and within nations. Sports, such as cricket, played here and there, mark Caribbean spaces, communities, cultures and identities that are in-between.
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Appendices

Appendix A- Caribbean map

[Caribbean map diagram]

Appendix B- A model of the Caribbean Diaspora and Mavericks’ cricket flows

Diagram showing relationships between England, United States, and Canada with the Caribbean as a central node, marked with symbols for New Center of diaspora, Node of diaspora, Cultural hearth of diaspora, Migration flow, Maverick cricket flow, and Transnational social field.
Appendix C- Interview themes

General areas that I asked interviewees about include:

Demographic Data
- Immigration status and reasons for leaving native country
- Duration of stay in Canada
- Family connections in other nations
- Languages/Dialects spoken
- Ethnic self-identification
- Age and family status (married, children)

Cricket Play
- Initiation into cricket and motivations for playing; recruiting new club members
- Experiences playing as a child (e.g., through school, recreationally, competitively)
- Learning/training methods; expectations/experiences of success
- History of club/league
- Challenges/conflicts with teammates/captain; decision-making process
- Experiences on other teams/in other leagues
- Time and financial commitment; shifts in past and predictions for future commitment
- Experiences of transformations in the regulations, style of play, ethnic composition of the leagues; Predictions for future transformations
- Involvement in club/league administration
- Family member involvement
- Barriers to more enjoyable experiences
- Differences in cricket in the Greater Toronto Area, Caribbean, and Caribbean diasporic sites
- Reasons for retirement (as applicable)
- Fondest memories; biggest upsets

Social Aspects
- Other sports/physical activities engaged in (e.g., soccer, basketball)
- Frequency/significance of Barbecues/Picnics; types of foods prepared
- Activities when not playing (e.g., around the boundary, before/after games, off season, fundraisers, receptions, meetings)
- Social experiences at Caribana (Toronto) or Labour Day (New York) tournaments
- Family involvement in cricket and associated activities (e.g., labour, cheering, absenteeism)
- Impact of club on broader community (i.e., sponsorship, cultural awareness programs, introducing the sport to schools).
- Significance of nicknames
- Effects of cricket on personal/family relationships

Diaspora
- Explicit connections to the Black Diaspora; South Asian Diaspora
- Experiences in tournaments in other cities, countries
- Situatedness within the nation-state; patriotic sentiments
- Relationship to the English game; anti-colonial sentiments
- Knowledge of parallel leagues in other countries; organization of international tournaments
- “Windies” fandom
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<sup>51</sup> First immigrated to United States via U.S. Army in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (1966).
<sup>52</sup> First immigrated to New York (1970)
<sup>53</sup> First immigrated to England (1960)
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^{54} First immigrated to Montreal (1975)
^{55} Migrated to Montreal first
Appendix E- Research Information Letter and Consent forms

Research Information Letter (on departmental letterhead)

Project Title: The Cultural Politics of Belonging in Canada: Cricket in the Caribbean Diaspora
Investigator: Janelle Joseph (PhD Candidate, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)
Supervisor: Dr. Peter Donnelly, (Professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am a PhD. student in the Faculty of Physical Education and Health at the University of Toronto. Under the supervision of Dr. Peter Donnelly, I am conducting a qualitative research study on cricket amongst people of Caribbean descent in Canada. I am interested in Canadian belonging, Windies cricket fandom, and the ways cricket is used to bring together people from multiple nations and to reconnect with your homeland. There is little research written about cricket in North America and about Caribbean Canadian sporting practices, thus, this project will bring many interesting issues to light.

I am inviting you to assist me by agreeing to participate in this study if you will be in Toronto or Hamilton in the spring/summer of 2008 and have been involved with cricket for more than one year.

There will be thirty interviewees. Your participation would involve at least one and maybe two interviews taking place over the course of the 2008 cricket season at a convenient location and time for you. Each interview will take approximately one hour. All interviews will be digitally (audio) recorded, unless requested otherwise, and you will have an opportunity to review the transcript, make corrections, withdraw or add comments and use a false name.

Potential Harms and Discomforts/Inconveniences to Participants
There is no physical harm, discomfort or inconvenience. Some of the questions, however, may cause some unexpected distress, depending on the nature of your experiences. I will not coerce you to disclose any information that is not offered voluntarily. If at any time, you feel uncomfortable during the interview, you are free to refuse to answer questions, stop the interview, or withdraw from the study without penalty. If you withdraw I will immediately destroy all audio recordings and/or transcripts. I will also provide you a list of referrals for counseling or ethno-cultural services, should you so require.

Compensation
There will be no compensation for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality
Data (audiotapes, transcripts, consent letters, discs and notes) will be locked in a secure place at the researcher’s home. Only the supervisor and I will see the data and drafts of the report. Computer data will be password protected. False names will be used throughout the final draft and obvious identifiers of the club and the research site will be changed, and only those transcript excerpts that have been approved by you will be used in future presentations or publications. Transcripts and interpretations will also be available for you to read, in order to confirm accurate transcription, representation and interpretation. You may request a copy of the findings or final report at any time. All data will be destroyed approximately ten years after the research has concluded.
Risks and Benefits
There is a potential risk that anonymity cannot be completely assured because (1) the cricket community in Toronto and Hamilton is so small and (2) there will only be thirty interviewees. Thus, those in the cricket community may recognize some of the experiences described. However, when portions of the research are published or presented, the location of the research will be changed and false names will be used. Because of this minimal risk, it is important to emphasize that participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.

Although the findings in this study will not benefit you directly, your participation will add to existing research, and potentially inspire other questions for researchers to pursue in the future. You may gain some satisfaction in furthering knowledge, and from the opportunity to share and reflect upon your experiences. Your stories will add to our understanding of cricket, Caribbean-Canadian culture, connections to the homeland and multiculturalism and belonging in Canada.

After you have approved all transcript excerpts and the final draft is complete, I would be happy to provide you with a summary of the findings from the study, and you may, of course, attend the PhD defense, as well as access the entire report, once it is published.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Janelle Joseph
Principal Investigator
(416) 978-5548
janelle_joseph@hotmail.com

Professor Peter Donnelly
Supervisor
(416) 978-5071
peter.donnelly@utoronto.ca
Participant Consent Form (on departmental letterhead)

Project Title: The Cultural Politics of Belonging in Canada: Cricket in the Caribbean Diaspora
Investigator: Janelle Joseph (PhD Candidate, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)
Supervisor: Dr. Peter Donnelly, (Professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your reference, is part of the process of informed consent. The information letter that accompanies this form provides a detailed overview of what the research is about and what your participation involves. Please feel free at any time, to ask questions if you need clarification or more information. Please take the time to read this carefully.

This is to certify that I, __________________________ have authority to and give permission for the conduct of the research on my club, given that my club’s participation will be confidential. I acknowledge that the research procedures described in the information letter has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that, my club’s participation in this study will involve the researcher participating in practices and games and asking my players questions about their experiences in cricket. I also acknowledge that some players will be interviewed and asked about their cricket experiences.

I understand that I am under no obligation to have my club participate in this study, and that I may withdraw the club from the study at any time. I understand that neither my name, nor the name of my club will be used in any report or presentation that may arise from this study without my permission unless required by law.

I understand both the potential harms and benefits. I know that I may ask now, or in the future, any questions I have about the study or the research procedures and that I may request a copy of the findings or final report at any time. I understand what this study involves and agree to participate. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

________________________________
Signature of participant

________________________________
Signature of Researcher

________________________________
Date

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact the investigators:
Janelle Joseph
Principal Investigator
(416) 978-5548
janelle_joseph@hotmail.com

Professor Peter Donnelly
Supervisor
(416) 978-5071
peter.donnelly@utoronto.ca
Interview Consent Form (on departmental letterhead)

Project Title: The Cultural Politics of Belonging in Canada: Cricket in the Caribbean Diaspora
Investigator: Janelle Joseph (PhD Candidate, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)
Supervisor: Dr. Peter Donnelly, (Professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Health)

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your reference, is part of the process of informed consent. The information letter that accompanies this form provides a detailed overview of what the research is about and what your participation involves. Please feel free at any time, to ask questions if you need clarification or more information. Please take the time to read this carefully.

This is to certify that I, __________________________ agree to take part as a volunteer in this project given that my participation will be confidential. I acknowledge that the research procedures described in the information letter has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that, as a participant in this study, I will take part in an approximately one hour long interview, and that I will be asked questions about my cricket experiences in Canada and the Caribbean.

I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study, and that I may refuse to answer any questions, stop the interview or withdraw from the study at any time.

I understand that neither my name, nor the name of my club will be used in any report or presentation that may arise from this study without my permission unless required by law.

I understand both the potential harms and benefits. I know that I may ask now, or in the future, any questions I have about the study or the research procedures and that I may request a copy of the findings or final report at any time. I understand what this study involves and agree to participate. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

________________________________
Signature of participant

________________________________
Signature of Researcher

________________________________
Date

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact the investigators:
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