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FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM AND THE SKINHEADS

by

John Clarke

Department of Cultural Studies
University of Birmingham
Birmingham B15 2TT

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Introduction

Before any real consideration of the phenomenon of soccer hooliganism can take place, I feel it is necessary to have a more historical understanding of the nature and importance of football itself. Consequently the first section of this paper is an attempt to explain the relationship between football and working-class life.

Football and Working-Class Life

Rather than give a history of football or a cultural analysis of the game's developing relationship with the English working-class, both of which are available elsewhere(1), I have limited myself to a brief review of those factors which account for the central position accorded to football in working-class culture. Basically, I see this position as being due to the reflection in the game of certain central values of that culture, notably those of excitement, physical prowess, local identity and victory.

Elias and Dunning have written of the "quest for excitement" in advanced societies(2), arguing that the increased routinisation of everyday life has reduced the frequency of extraordinary incident, and has also increasingly demanded restrictions on the expression of emotion in public. There remain, however a number of leisure activities which satisfy a demand for excitement, and also provide a legitimate setting for the expression of emotion. Football is a sport well fitted for the provision of excitement. Unlike many games it has an almost continuous flow of action, broken only by a brief interval for half-time, and that action is compressed into a very limited time period, in normal circumstances ninety minutes. Compare this state of events with cricket, for example, where the action is interrupted at regular intervals, between overs, at the fall of wickets, and between innings, and where the whole action is spread, traditionally at least, over three or even five days.

Since the Industrial Revolution large parts of working men's lives have become increasingly subject to the organisational techniques and time discipline of factory work. Football offers an alternative to that routine, but one which also draws on the major role of time in working-class experience. Arthur Hopcraft's description of the atmosphere of a football match catches these points as well as the intensifying effect of a large crowd:

The sound of a big football crowd baying its delight and its outrage has no counterpart. It is the continuous flow of foot - that excites this sustained crescendo.... In football the action is interrupted only by fouls, which add fiercely to the crowd's responses, and when the ball goes out of play, which is very often in the most hectic of circumstances...that sudden, damp silence which falls upon a football ground immediately the last players have left the pitch reflects exhaustion. The expression "football fever" may have been greatly overused, but it is an accurate description of the condition of the fan at the limit of his excitement.(3)

The excitement on the pitch is heightened by the experience of watching it

as part of a densely packed crowd of fellow fans. The physical pressure at the heart of the crowd, and the psychological feeling of being "at one" with hundreds of others, urging your team on is an integral part of the appeal of the game. I know a number of fans, who, while not being "hard-core" supporters, wholly reject the idea of watching football from a seat in the stands. They claim that "It's not the same game from up there.", complaining of a sense of distance from the game and a lack of involvement.

Football is a game based essentially on physical conflict, nothing can be done without possession of the ball, and although the formal regulation of the game over the years has removed the extremes of violent tackling which accompanied the earlier stages of the game's development, football is still very much about physical challenge and combat. In addition, the skills involved in the game are primarily physical ones, dexterity, control, balance and power. Working-class life placed a high value on physical prowess, partly because the work experience centred round largely physical tasks, whether involving physical strength or manual dexterity; and partly because of the strong cultural emphasis on toughness, masculinity, virility and connected values. There was no place, either in the factory or on the football field for the "pansy", or the man who couldn't "take it".

This brings us to the place of violence in working-class life. Because of the valuation placed on "hardness", and the harsh demands which life made on them, violence was an accepted part of life for most working men. This is not to say that they were all continually involved in fights, but that violence was seen as something that anyone might become involved. It was not seen as problematic, or in need of explanation. Hopcraft describes the atmosphere of violence or perhaps potential violence, at football matches in this way:

The point about the cheap parts of the ground is that there are a lot of men there who do hard, manual work, and an evident readiness to fight is part of the common coin of social survival amongst them. The punch-up is threatened far more often than it occurs, of course, just as is the case on the field; players will shake hands at the end of the grittiest games, and so will rival supporters reciprocally back down from their promises to thump one another. You have to stand in among the crowds to realise what the words and the emotions are which sometimes add a special quality of menace to the general clamour of a match.(4)

Football, as Critcher suggests, reflects very accurately the working-class outlook on violence:

In this alternative moral universe violence is legitimated as nowhere else in society, but it is also quite clearly limited as if football offered a formalisation of the informal attitudes so long held by working men, that it is a normal part of life in which any individual may become periodically involved, but that it is never expected to get out of hand or become a pervasive frame of mind.(5)

There are indeed limits placed on what form and what volume of violence is accepted as "normal", similarly Elias and Dunning note that only certain

types of emotional expression are condoned in the search for excitement. Nevertheless, it is just that state of excitement in which the routine processes of self-control may become less effective as one becomes less sensitive to the nuances of public expectations and the expression of emotion spill over into undesired forms. In the opposite direction, if one's own expectations of excitement are frustrated, there exists the temptation to create one's own with whatever materials are at hand.

Next the place of local loyalties in the game. Community and mutual assistance have always been strong themes in working-class life; local identities have been of great importance. Football drew on these local ties (most football grounds are built in the heart of early urban working-class housing areas), but it also gave them greater impetus. It gave a national focus to local rivalries, and allowed for their expression in a largely symbolic conflict. The team were in many senses the "saturday representatives" of the local people, "defending" their home record against the invaders, and themselves going to "steal" or "plunder" points from other teams' grounds. In earlier times, before the present rash of weekly transfers, these local bonds were strengthened by the fact that large numbers of players were born and lived locally. There is still a special place reserved in the game's affections for both the local lad "made good", and for the long serving "club man". (This feeling may also underlie some of the verbal rituals which surround transfers; the profession that "I shall be very sorry to leave, the people here have always been good to me." of the out-going player, and the "I'm very happy to be coming here, it's a very friendly club, and I've always enjoyed playing here" of the new arrival.) In addition, the players themselves were almost wholly recruited from the working-class, and unlike today remained a part of it, both in terms of income and life-style. One saw no pictures of Tommy Lawton or Stanley Matthews posed by their Jaguars with pin-striped suit on, and rolled umbrella in hand. This tie between player and class is sensitively caught by Hopcraft's description of Matthews:

...the sadly impassive face, with its high cheek-bones, pale lips and hooded eyes, had a lot of pain in it, the deep hurt that came from prolonged effort and the certainty of more blows to come. It was a worker's face, like a miner's, never really young, tight against a brutal world even in repose. We admired him deeply urging him on but afraid for him too as he trotted up yet again to show his shins to a big young full-back and invite the lad to make a name for himself by chopping the old Merlin down. The anxiety showed in Matthews too; again like the frail miner's fear of the job which must always be done, not joyfully but in deeper satisfaction, for self-respect. As Matthews said "It's my living."

In communicating this frailty and this effort Matthews went to men's hearts, essentially to inconspicuous mild working men's. He was the opposite of glamorous: a non-drinker, non-smoker, careful with his money...He was a representative of his age and of his class, brought up among thrift and the ever looming threat of dole and debt...He came from that England which had no reason to know that the twenties were Naughty and the thirties had Style.(6)

Finally we come to the place of victory in working-class life. In a life

dominated by the controls, orders, and instructions of Hoggart's "Them", leisure outlets are one possible way of finding opportunities of freedom of choice. Football, because of the strong local and class ties just described, has always been susceptible to at least a belief in control by the fans. Similarly in a society where opportunities for success are largely prescribed by one's class position, the enclosed world of football offers possibilities of victory dependent for once not on one's social status, but on individual and, perhaps more significantly, collective skill and physical prowess. The criteria of success in football are at odds with those which dominated the life experience of the working class. Thus Hopcraft, talking of football in the 1920's says:

To go to the match was to escape from the dark of despondency into the light of combat. Here, by association with the home team, positive identity could be claimed by muscle and in goals. To win was personal success, to lose another clout from life. Football was not so much an opiate of the people as a flag run up against the gaffer bolting his gates and the landlord armed with his bailiffs.(7)

To emphasize the symbolic importance of victory in football, let me cite the case of one of the folk heroes of my own youth, Derek Dooley. As a schoolboy he played football for a secondary modern school, who, because of a lack of facilities of their own, were forced to use the playing field of a nearby grammar school. The most crucial game of the year for Dooley's team was when they played the grammar school, and Dooley says of it:

We wanted to beat them because we knew they were better. They had better facilities, better everything. Throughout my life it's been important to me to win.(8)

The phrase often used about more typically middle class sports "Well, it's only a game.." has no meaning for football fans, as Hopcraft concludes "It has not only been a game for eighty years: not since the working classes saw in it an escape route from drudgery and claimed it as their own.(9)

It is now necessary to make some concluding comments about the contents of this section. The factors discussed above are by no means an exhaustive list of the reasons for football's importance to the working-class, they are those which seem to me to be most significant for an understanding of the present topic. Secondly, I feel it is important to point out how the expression of working-class values in football reflects the more general relation between those values and the dominant social order. Football is only partial-expressive of working-class values, it is also penetrated by that dominant social order, to which the working-class stands in a partly oppositional relationship. Critcher describes this ambivalence which permeates working-class culture in this way: the world of football

at once reflects and contradicts the real world, that it generally shows a remarkable capacity to resist incursion from the outside world, but that there are certain situations inside the game which parallel those outside it.(10)

For example:

Support for the team might obliquely contradict the right of anyone to impose activities on working men, but the positions of power in a football club have always been held by those holding power outside the game.(11)*

*(Frank Parkin dealing more theoretically with these cultural ambiguities has described the relationship as that between "a negotiated value system" of a subordinate class and the dominant value system.(12)

(Thirdly, the discussion of these values, although not conducted historically, has been largely rooted in the past of the game. In the past twenty years both the game and the working class life of which it is a part have undergone significant changes. It is the changes within football that I wish to look at next.

Changes in the Game

The main post-war changes in football may be summarised as those of professionalisation, internationalisation, and commercialisation. I will briefly expand on each of these changes and then attempt to account for them and finally set out their consequences for the game.

First, professionalisation refers to an increasingly calculatory awareness in the game of the technical requirements for success. This attitude is manifested in concerns for tactics, scientific methods of training and high demands of physical fitness. Similarly, rapidly rising transfer fees indicate the readiness of clubs to add to their assets in order to assure success or avoid failure.

Secondly internationalisation describes the increasing introduction into the game of foreign competition as a supplement to the domestic game. This has taken the form of both cup competitions and friendly fixtures. There have also been a number of attempts to introduce more theatrical additions to the game, such as American style cheer-leaders, and the pre-match release of balloons. (Much of this section draws on the work of Ian Taylor, to which more detailed reference will be made later.)

Finally the commercialisation of football is to be found both in the increasing financial concerns of the game, rising transfer fees, entrance prices and gate receipts. These concerns are also to be found in the widespread ground improvements made by football clubs. The improvements to facilities include the creation of more seated accomodation, improved provision of toilet and bar facilities, better refreshment facilities, including restaurants at some grounds, and the creation of social clubs for supporters.

All these changes are tied to the beliefs about the social structure of Britain in the 1950s. This was the age of Affluence, consensus politics, and the emergence of the Classless Society. Football clubs, anticipating the disappearance in this new social order of the traditional cloth-capped football fan, felt they would have to compete for audiences with the providers of alternative types of entertainment, the cinema and television

especially. If the traditional fan no longer existed, then nor would traditional loyalties, and they would be competing for the favours of the new classless, rationally selective consumer. Consequently, the game had to be made as exciting and dramatic as possible to appeal to the uncommitted, the spectator had to be made comfortable, and his every whim catered for. Further, the uncommitted were unlikely to come each Saturday to watch an unsuccessful team, therefore greater attention had to be paid to avoiding failure.

Ian Taylor describes the combined effect of these changes as "Bourgeoisification", which is the process

which legitimises previously working class activities for the middle class or more accurately, activities which were previously seen as legitimate only for the working class, such as watching doubtful films or congregating on the Kop.(13)

Taylor symbolises this audience change by commenting that:

Clearly to attend the Saturday game is no longer simply an activity of the Andy Capps: the Brian Glanvilles and the Professor Ayers of this world are unashamedly interested.(14)

If English society were becoming classless, then the direction of that move was towards a society of middle class life. The key sociological concept of the period was that of "Embourgeoisement". (For a discussion of this thesis, see Volume 3 of the Cambridge "Affluent Worker" studies.(15) The process of bourgeoisification of football has had one consequence of great significance for the discussion of hooliganism, it has carried with it a changed conception of the football supporter. The "genuine" supporter is no longer the traditional working man, living for the Saturday game his own fortunes inextricably linked with those of his team, actively participating in the game, instead he is the rational, selective consumer of entertainment who objectively assesses the game from his seat in the stands. In fact, I have overdrawn this distinction. The clubs remain ambivalent about the traditional fan, but their view of him depends on his behaviour at the time. However the distinction I am making is perhaps best summarised as the "Fan" as opposed to the "Spectator". (Similar distinctions have been made with respect to other working-class leisure activities, for example, the pub, in terms of a distinction between member and customer.(16)) For me, this is the central point of Taylor's thesis, for it is this change both in those attending football matches, and the public redefinition of who the genuine supporter is that underlie the definition of the problem of hooliganism. Even though a large number of what we may consider "traditional" fans continue to attend the game the changes in the game have taken place with the new Spectator in mind. For example, ground improvements typically involve the replacement of popular standing areas with seating and the addition of new toilets, bars restaurants, and social clubs are almost always connected with the seated parts of the ground.

The difference between the two ways of watching football can be illustrated by a passage in Hunter Davies' book The Glory Game. Davies travelled to

Coventry with a trainload of young Spurs fans, and stood with them on the terraces. He says that because of all the singing, shouting, chanting and scarf waving they can't have time to observe the technicalities and niceties of the game:

It would be too easy to say that they weren't interested in the game only in the result. But by the very nature of standing physically and precipitously so close together and by making so much noise and raising their scarves and pushing each other, it is hard to believe that they can ever follow the details of the game. Coventry did win, by one goal to nil. Unlike Bill Nicholson, the fans didn't criticise the Spurs players. They didn't even admit that Cyril Knowles had had a bad game, which he had. Cyril was bloody unlucky they all said.(17)

What Davies has missed with his detached observer's viewpoint is the sheer physical experience of being part of a large crowd at a football match.

To conclude, changes within football, reflecting beliefs about changes in the wider society have produced a redefinition of what behaviours are acceptable at football matches.

The Hooligan: Stereotype and Reality

Hooliganism seems to have become publicly defined as a serious problem from the middle of the 1960s, and since then commentators have felt that it has escalated, and if left unchallenged, would take on frightening proportions:

Ten spectators and three policemen dead in scenes at a football match? It has not happened yet. But it might have happened when Liverpool players protested unjustifiably at a goal by Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough...IT WILL happen, if something is not done to eliminate this major evil of modern football.

So Eric Cooper wrote in the Daily Express in 1969, and current comment continues this tradition of doom-laden forecast. Hooliganism, along with the attraction of televised football, is probably the most frequently cited reason for the falling attendances at football games.

The stereotype of the hooligan is that of the ignorant working-class "yob" who attends football matches as an opportunity to get into a fight, and not from any "genuine" interest in the game itself. His violence, like the destructive behaviour of the vandal (whom he so closely resembles in stereotype), is perpetually described as "mindless, senseless, illogical and irratational". These two themes permeate most of the journalistic comment about hooliganism. To illustrate the persistence of this stereotype, let me quote from an article by John Arlott, one of the game's more thoughtful commentators:

It may be accepted from one who has now twice been forced to defend himself against their mindless violence, that a mob of drunken fifteen or sixteen year-olds is frighteningly illogical, unpredictable, and potentially violent...They are not an age-group, but a social phenonemon. They have taken football merely as a

convenient - indeed, inviting environment. In other circumstances they might have chosen Rugby League, dirt track-racing, boxing or all-in wrestling as their stamping ground.(18)*

*(In an article subheaded "John Arlott discusses the significance of hooliganism" the significance which Arlott attributes to it is as a causal factor in falling attendances).

Arlott's repetition of the "not real supporters" theme comes a mere four years after the Government appointed Harrington committee had come to this bewildered (and bewildering) conclusion about the sample of hooligans which they had investigated:

We have been impressed by the amount of knowledge and memory for detail (about football) possessed by fans of limited intelligence and intellectual background.(19)

The stereotype, like most stereotypes, has its basis in reality (see Barthes' Mythologies (20) for a discussion of the relationship between reality and distortion in myths), the hooligan is typically a working-class youth of limited educational background, doing an unskilled or semi-skilled job. He is, in fact, in a direct line of descent from the traditional fan discussed earlier, a part of what Taylor describes as football's "subcultural rump". But on this basis of fact are built the distortions of mindlessness and the lack of connection with football.

While the stereotype sees the typical hooligan actions as being those of fighting, throwing dangerous missiles, etc., the typical offences for which youths are actually ejected from football grounds or arrested are those of pushing and swearing (almost 70% at grounds in the Metropolitan Police district in 1969, (21)). Compare these "offences" with Hopcraft's description of the typical scene on the Kop:

The steps are as greasy as a school playground lavatory in the rain. The air is rancid with beer and onions and belching and worse. The language is a gross purple of obscenity. When the crowd surges at a shot or a collision near a corner-flag, a man or a boy, or sometimes even a girl, can be lifted off the ground in the crush as if by some massive, soft-sided crane grab and dangled about for minutes on end, perhaps never getting back to within four or five steps of the spot from which the monster made its bite.(22)

Making football respectable for the middle-class audience has involved the redefinition of previously common-place behaviours as no longer acceptable. This is not to say that there has been no increase in violent behaviour at football matches, but that that violence has been made to seem more extensive than its actual incidence would seem to warrant because it has included this previously normal behaviour now defined as deviant. (One suspects that if the police were ever to eject all those pushing and swearing at football matches, the terraces would be almost totally deserted.)

The changing view of the supporter accompanying the changes in the nature of the game have not been lost on the fans themselves. Taylor(23) quotes

examples of clubs introducing additions to the pre-match entertainment being met with "derision and scorn" from the popular terraces. Similarly that the ground improvements have occupied so much of the clubs' finances has prompted the typical reaction: "What's the use of having a f...ing palace for a ground when we haven't got a team". Among Sheffield Wednesday fans the money spent on the ground improvements, and those who spent it are still held responsible for the club's relegation to the second division three years ago. The fans themselves, as noted before, have benefitted very little from the improvements. The fans are bewildered by the club's rejection of them; the Spurs fans interviewed by Davies commented:

The club call us hooligans, but who'd cheer them on if we didn't come. You have to stand there and take it when Spurs are losing and the others are jeering at you. It's not easy. We support them everywhere, but we get no thanks(24).

The young fan is caught in an impossible dilemma, his game, his team are being taken over for the bourgeoisie, it is being made respectable and he is disapproved. When he attempts to reaffirm his loyalty to the club through the limited channels open to him (the informal contacts which existed between club and fans have been replaced by more formal and institutionalised relations through such bodies as supporters clubs, as befits the emergence of football as part of the entertainments industry), he "glorifies" their name by painting it on subway walls, defends them against the insults of opposing fans. However when he acts out his allegiance to the club in these ways they disown him further. The views of football held by the clubs and the fans have drifted apart, and the fans lack the articulacy to bridge the differences through formal channels. Taylor characterises their response as one of "desperation", which does not seem to overstate the difficulties of their position.

The fans are engaged in an attempt to perpetuate some of the traditional features of the game which are being lost in its colonisation by the bourgeoisie. Thus, they keep alive the traditional rivalries which have become of less importance to the clubs, the territorial "invasion" symbolised in the away match is now physically enacted in the "taking" of the home fans' "end", and also the newer rampage through the away town's city centre.

The nature of the away trip is itself significant in this respect. The all-male working-man's day out has long been a occasion for letting "hair down", and fitting considerable drinking into the day's activities (witness the Guinness advert featuring a typical excursion coach linked by a pipe to a large Guinness tanker). The days were also marked by a group assertion of the superiority of their local identity as opposed to the native culture (eg. the taste of local beer, how good-looking the girls are, etc.), and finally by an air of expectation of excitement. (For an analysis of the relation of the seaside weekend and Mods and Rockers clashes, see Cohen's Folk devils and moral panics(25).

So far the discussion has largely followed the lines of Ian Taylor's argument, it is now time to take stock of its shortcomings. His papers have performed the vital function of linking the violence with football itself, but do not account for why sizeable numbers of teenagers should

have this extremely close relationship with the game, especially in an era when the major "youth cultural" developments have centred around newer developments such as pop. It is to this problem that I want to turn now, and look at the wider social changes which have both affected, and been reflected in, the changes in football. The consideration of these changes will be dealt with in relation to the rise of the Skinheads, for many the epitome of football hooligans.

"Where Did They Come From?" - Social Change and the Skins

The skinheads first emerged in the East End of London in 1968, and by the end of that year were becoming visible in large numbers at football grounds around the country. They attracted plenty of public attention and comment as a consequence both of their involvement in football violence, and their highly distinctive "uniform". The typical skinheads "gear" was: large working boots, often with steel toecaps, denim jeans supported by braces, worn with a gap between the top of the boots and the bottom of the jeans, a coloured or patterned, shaped shirt with a button-down collar. Over this was worn a sleeveless pullover and for colder weather a "Crombie" overcoat. The outfit was topped with very close cropped hair.

The skinheads merged against a background of social changes, which marked the breakdown of a number of strong patterns in the working-class way of life. Perhaps most important of these is the disruption of the traditional community. This took place in three main ways: firstly, large numbers of houses were sold to "outsiders", often to the immigrants, the most visible of outsiders, but also to middle-class families in search of cheaper housing. Secondly slum areas in most major cities were redeveloped, usually as "high-rise" schemes, again with outsiders moving into the new homes. Thirdly, families were moved out to the new estates being developed around the outer suburbs. The effect of these changes was felt by the youths as this statement from a member of the Collinwood gang (one of the first groups of skinheads) shows:

The particular block of flats that I lived in in Stepney, Ring House, were a complete transfusion of people from a street called Twain Court. So what you had was the same quality of life in Ring House as you 'ad in Twain Court, except that now people live side by side and over and under each other. Everyone knew everyone else intimately. Flats are not like that now, flats are not what I remember Ring House being, 'cause they draw people from all over. They don't take a street full of people, who have sort of seen each other and 'elped each other and fought each other, and sort of lived together. They don't take that lot and say bang you lot are gonna live in 'ere. That particular good thing is missed in blocks of flats, because they 'ave taken a person from 'Ackney and another one from Woolwich and so on.(26)

The other consequence of this redevelopment has been the disappearance of communal meeting places. Phil Cohen comments that: "The first effect of the high density, high rise schemes was to destroy the function of the street, the local pub, the corner shops, as articulations of communal space"(27). (Cohen's article provides a more extended treatment of the dislocation which accompanied the redevelopment.)

The removal of long standing meeting places meant that those which remained took on extra significance. One of those which remained was the football ground.

It is noticeable that areas where skinhead gangs became most prominent were typically either new council housing estates or old estates being either redeveloped or experiencing an influx of outsiders. For example, in London they were to be found in the East End, and round the new outer ring estates; in Birmingham the main areas were Northfield, Smethwick, Quinton and Ladywood.(28)

The traditional leisure activities of the working-class were also undergoing significant changes. Football has already been discussed; both the pub and the working-men's club were becoming more self-conscious providers of entertainment. The modernisation of the pub has not been restricted to town centre sites but local pubs have also changed beyond recognition. The clubs have increasingly concerned themselves with supplying professional entertainers for their customers, culminating, one supposes in the Batley Variety Club.

Leisure activities for the young have become increasingly concentrated on town centre facilities, bars, discotheques, night-clubs and cinemas, especially since the closure of large numbers of local cinemas throughout the country. This has further speeded that weakening of localities previously mentioned. However the point here is not that there are now universally available cultural activities, the television for instance, but rather what patterns of usage there are, and more importantly, what different meanings the activities have for those who participate in them. As the Hunter Davies example cited earlier indicates, the activity may have widely differing meanings for different groups of watchers.

We noted earlier the 1950s beliefs in the arrival of the open, classless and affluent society. The 1960s, by contrast, were noticeable for the rediscovery of both poverty and class-conflict. The experience of the lower working-class youths who formed the core of the skinheads hardly fitted the myths of the open society. In the school, the supposed step ladder to the golden age, opportunity has remained structured on largely class-based grounds. Moreover the fact that job selection and promotion have become increasingly based on formal educational qualifications, means that a dead-end job or sequence of dead-end jobs follow even more certainly than before on poor school performance. Even the illusion of someday working one's way up through the firm is no longer possible. School remains an alien place to large numbers of working-class young, where Hoggart's "Them" continue to dictate the pattern of life:

It (school) is a place where they make you go and where they try to make your life unpleasant if you don't do them or don't do them right(29).

The literature of the sociology of education contains a number of examples of subcultural alienation from the success values of the school which emphasise academic performance(30). The Collinwood referred to successful kids as "dummies", and described the differences between their lives in

this way:

Say they give us homework or say memorise this. So their parents (i.e. the successful kids'), as they say when they come to school meetings, "What, I lock 'im up in 'is bedroom and make 'im do 'is 'omework. I let 'im out once a week to watch Spurs." And that was that, their parents made them do it, made them do it, forced them though some must have had the willpower themselves. Where me, I wouldn't think "cor, I've got 'istory tomorrow". I'd be out on the streets. I didn't 'ave no interest. I couldn't be bothered devoting all my life to learning. I wanted to do other things(31).

It is of course lower working-class youth who encounter the educational-employment complex in its most extreme form. Most of the kids in the Collinwood gang expressed little interest in getting a job with any inherent satisfactions (described in the literature of occupational sociology as "having realistic expectations"), and many found little assistance in finding a job. Typical comments about the role of the Youth Employment Service at this period were:

"The Youth Employment and Labour, they're just interested, when you come in, in getting rid of you as quick as they can." and "If you're thick they don't wanna know you but if you've got a bit of education, and you go in they can't do enough for you...I went up there and they just seemed to pawn me off, they didn't wanna know"(32).

Taken together these experiences mark what Critcher describes as a "cultural crisis" in the working-class, the traditional patterns of working-class life which once provided a secure identity for members of the class have collapsed in the face of the challenge from the new mass entertainments, while for many the typical experiences of working class life, notably those of education and employment, show no signs of having disappeared.

Since the advent of rock'n'roll and the Teds in the early fifties young people have attempted to resolve this cultural crisis and the lack of identity which it produces by creating their own cultures, more consonant with their own needs and experiences. (The reaction of older working-class people to these changes has been mixed, some look nostalgically back to the old days, while others go through the "Affluent Worker" syndrome of an introspective turn into the family). In the middle 1960s the two mainstream developments of youth culture were the continuation of the "Mod era", and the growth of the British Underground. Neither of these two styles fitted the experiences of the youths who were to become the skinheads. The Mod style was taken up by large numbers of working class boys (the typical offender arrested at Margate in 1964 was a semi skilled manual worker(33)), but those at the heart of the mod scene, the trend setters were more typically in lower white collar jobs, clerks, office boys and shop assistants, see, for example, Tom Wolfe's description of the clientele of "Tiles" in "The Noonday Underground" (34). More importantly the mod style was that of the affluent consumer, their ethnic was that of conspicuous consumption, styles were created, taken up and dropped with

amazing rapidity. By the end of the '60s Mod had become a highly organized commercial enterprise and had become institutionalised. As its styles were increasingly taken over by executives and their wives the mods themselves were driven to wilder flights of fancy to maintain their "differentness". The movement's musicians, once the kids' representatives had become institutionalised "superstars" (see the discussions by Herman and Fowler,(35)). Now, established figures in the world of Rock, they became more concerned with their own problems and their music than with their audience. This has not been lost on the stars themselves, in a recent interview Roger Daltrey of the Who, perhaps the mod group, said that the group had lost "that working-class feeling" on their last L.P. through being too concerned with musical technicalities. By the time the skinheads arrived on the scene the real impetus of the Mods had gone and only the commercial remained. In fact, the skinheads came to define themselves against the mod image, just as the mods had defined themselves against the Rockers. This opposition of styles is illustrated in this quotation from Phil Cohen:

...the original mod life style could be interpreted as an attempt to realise, but in an imaginary relation, the conditions of existence of the socially mobile white collar worker. While their argot and ritual forms stressed many of the traditional values of their parent culture, their dress and music reflected the hedonistic image of the affluent consumer...(the skinheads) life style in fact represents a systematic inversion of the mods - whereas the mods explored the upwardly mobile option, the skinheads explored the lumpen(36).

The skinheads' creation of a style involved a reassertion of the old traditions, a defence of that culture which seemed threatened with contamination by middle class styles and values. Thus, the skinhead uniform is a highly stylised version of "working clothes", the inverse of the flash of the mod styles. Indeed, the whole skinhead style may be seen as a stylized re-creation of a image of the working-class. Everything, the clothes, the haircut, the attitudes and the violence are all overdrawn, as if in a self caricature.

What has been said of the opposition between the mod and skinhead styles applies even more forcefully to the relation between the skinheads and the Underground. The hippie movement was seen as a middle-class indulgence, being both individualist and intellectualist (especially its music - Pete Fowler said of the skinheads(37), "nothing is more loathsome to them than the junk of progressive rock"). Against the hippies was mobilized the tradition of working-class puritanism: the hippies were dirty and work shy.

So, because the existing youth cultural options did not fit with their experience of the world, the skinheads created their own, and the inevitable setting for the re-enactment of traditional working-class values was the traditional Saturday meeting place of the class, the football ground. Football hooliganism must therefore be seen not only as an attempt to defend football for the class, but as a micro-cosmic reflection of an attempt to defend the culture against the encroachment of the bourgeoisie. Their violence, racialism, puritanism, and localism (the reflection of the

community in the group, who are bound to stand by each other when trouble threatens) are all part of this re-creation of a way of life.

However, the wider society, just like the football clubs, found this active return to the past unacceptable. Institutionalised nostalgia was alright, "Coronation Street", "Family At War", for example, but the actual recreation of the past in the present was not. The skinheads, like the mods and rockers before them, were roughly treated by the law, eg. skinheads approaching football matches would have their boots impounded and the belts removed from their trousers. Precautions to avert violence, certainly, but also quite clear attempts at degradation.

To recap more theoretically, this section has been an attempt to illustrate how general social processes, in this case, the "eclipse of community", greater affluence coupled with persistent, class-structured inequalities can be held responsible for the generation of such different responses as the mods and the skinheads from within one class. Partly the answer is to be found in the fact that there exists no monolithic working-class consciousness, that the major changes are differently experienced by different groups within the class. Also it is to be found in the fact that the possibilities open to such groups at different moments in history differ. Thus, the mods emerged at a period in English life when the themes of classlessness and affluence were of considerable significance, whereas the picture had changed significantly by the end of the 1960s and the mod phenomenon was itself part of the social background in which the skinheads developed.

Conclusion: Deviancy Amplification or "Who's Interested in Football

The skinheads, like most other youth cultural phenomena, were originally a self-generated movement. The themes of the skinhead movement spread quickly to most major towns in the country through two main channels of cultural diffusion. It spread partly through face to face interaction among the fans at football matches and partly through the extensive attention which the phenomenon received in the press, for example, by the summer of 1969 both the Sunday Times and the Observer had carried articles on the skinheads, and naturally the warnings of magistrates and police about the dangers of this new form of "gang warfare" had received wide publicity.

It is possible to identify a number of factors contributing to the "rising tide of violence" at our football grounds. Initially, the reaction of the clubs was to increase the numbers of police on duty at football matches, this higher rate of organisational activity, as Kitsuse and Cicourel have suggested about official statistics generally, is reflected in higher rates of arrests and ejections from matches. That is to say, there is built into the situation both a higher expectation of the possibility of "trouble", and a higher organisational capacity to respond to it when it takes place.

The presence of large numbers of police itself heightens the likelihood of action. Brian Jackson says this of the "Saturday night police riots in Huddersfield:

The middle class expects help from the police, the working class

expects trouble. When a policeman appears on the steps of the Reform Club it is hardly of any consequence to the members; but when he appears outside a Huddersfield working men's club the air is tense with protective hostility...Police are executants of a law that still remains weighted in favour of the middle classes. Their uniform (how the rioters go for these helmets) may, to many middle class eyes, be the mark of a servant, as with a hotel commissionaire or a bus conductor, to the working class it announces mastery and threat(38).

Action taken by, or even inaction on the part of, large numbers of policemen is likely to be greeted with either derision, at the least, or outright hostility from the terraces at a football ground.

We must also recognise that the creation of a popular stereotype of the football hooligan may have the unintended consequence of making the original phenomenon become more like the stereotype. These sorts of changes have already been described in the cases of the Teds and of druggtakers(39). They occur in two ways, either the original participants may come to identify themselves more closely with the behaviour described in the stereotype (a classic case of the sociological notion of conformity to role expectations), or the stereotype may attract new participants who feel that the behaviours and characters described fit their own experience. That is, the stereotype of the football match as a place where people go to find a fight may attract those who are looking for just such a setting in which to be able to build up a "rep" or reputation.

Thus the phenomenon tends to become more like the public definition of it, a self fulfilling prophecy takes place through the forcefulness of that public definition. There are indeed now those who attend football matches not out of interest in the football but for the opportunity of fighting, though one suspects these numbers are small (the expense of travelling to away games makes such fights an expensive proposition, when, as one Spurs fan said "I could get a fight much easier at the pub down the road."), and they are certainly looked on disapprovingly by the core of the skins, who see them (in stereotypical terms) as being "mad", "unreliable" or out to prove something.

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