

WE LOVE TO HATE EACH OTHER

Mediated Football Fan Culture

Edited by
Roy Krøvel & Thore Roksvold

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Acknowledgements

This anthology is the outcome of a process that started in late 2008 when six colleagues at Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, all with an interest in football, decided to explore the mediation of football fandom. Football fans are often portrayed as enthusiastic, loyal, critical and sometimes as violent. But what is it about football that appeals to them? How do the media such as newspapers, radio, TV, blogs and web forums accommodate the needs of the fans, and what connection – if any – is there between the imagined community of football fans and the broader society?

As we pondered possible answers to such questions, we realized that it was necessary to develop a wider network. In the process of establishing an international research network, we were supported by Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences. We therefore want to express our gratitude to this institution for providing financial support.

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We are also grateful to the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences for funding the language editing and printing of the book. Finally, we thank Nordicom for publishing *We Love To Hate Each Other*, which we hope and believe will be useful for scholars and students who are engaged in sports journalism and popular culture in old as well as new media.

Oslo, January 2012

Roy Krøvel and Thore Roksvold

Introduction

Thore Roksvold & Roy Krøvel

Life as a football fan and as a media and journalism researcher can be full of paradoxes. Most of us are educated and trained to employ critical perspectives in our field of studies. Still, as fans, many of us regularly partake in commercialism and consumerism as we enjoy sporting mega-events such as the World Cup and Champions League. Some of us also maintain critical perspectives on patriotism of all types, including nationalism, while simultaneously supporting local or national teams. Many of us also understand and interpret football and football fandom in the light of historically grounded narratives on working class struggles and the production of working class identities and communities. At the same time we support or follow teams that have, over time, become national or global brands owned by some of the wealthiest capitalists in the world. There are good reasons to reflect on the meanings, from various critical perspectives, of being a football fan.

A large and growing body of literature is exploring the interconnection between sport and media, as demonstrated by, for instance, Bryant in *A historical overview of sports and media in the United States*, Dahlén in *Sport och medier* and many others (Bryant & Holt 2006; Dahlén 2008; Hugenberg, Haridakis & Earnhardt 2008; Maloni, Greenman & Miller 1995; Perrin 2000; Raney & Bryant 2006; Rowe 1999; Wenner 1989). Such research on sport and fandom is informing debates on culture, sub-cultures and identity. Nevertheless, relatively little academic attention has been paid to the relationship between football journalism, cultural identities, ideologies and football fan culture. Such links lie at the core of the present collection. It is a field that would benefit from much more research because of the sheer number of football fans, the impact fandom has on lives and communities, and the enormous scale of the economic transactions involved in football.

Some introductory comments on theory and methodology related to the study of mediated football fan culture

The contributions to this collection reveal that this is a particularly interesting point in time for studies of the intersection between football, media and fandom. At least three interrelated driving forces can be observed. First, technology is causing changes in media and journalism on a global scale and social adaptations of new technology – satellite television and the Internet – are driving processes of construction and reconstruction of social organisation and the ways we imagine culture, community and belonging. Second, we have seen an unprecedented boom worldwide in the commercialisation of football and football consumerism. Third is the globalisation of football fandom; fans of European clubs are now as likely to be found in China or Mexico as in Manchester or Milan. All three processes of change can be registered in the unprecedented centralisation of material resources in the hands of a few leading clubs, a spiralling process stimulated by global satellite television and competitions such as the Champions League, which make the product (the rights to broadcast live from football matches) increasingly valuable. The growing economic muscle of commercial football has enhanced the power of the governing bodies of football, FIFA and UEFA, which have increasing influence not only on football but also on other issues deemed relevant to the commercialisation of sports, as seen for instance in the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. FIFA was able to generate \$2.15 billion in revenue from the sale of television rights in 2010, significantly more than at earlier events, according to press reports (Pfanner 2010).

The chapters of this collection address important issues such as these from a variety of theoretical perspectives. In this sense, the book reflects an already ongoing debate on relevant theoretical perspectives and methodologies for doing research on the intersection of fandom, football and media (Giulianotti 2004c; Ingham & Donnelly 1997; Rowe 1999).

But let's go back for a moment to the very short attempt above at describing a few forces presumed to be driving change in the intersection between football, media and fandom. A closer look at the few lines on three "driving forces" reveals a particular type of genealogy, linking it to a particular theoretical meta-perspective. It describes a sequence of events, implicitly arguing that new technologies could be seen as a sort of root cause for further developments building on already existing economic structures. These developments are then seen to influence, and lie behind, much of what is experienced, observed and found to be empirical evidence in investigations of mediated football fandom. This particular theoretical perspective is not unproblematic, however. It has been challenged from various viewpoints over the last two or three decades. Feminists have rightly criticised the lack of gender perspectives in many such analyses based on particular ontologies of material structures and power relations (Bordo

2004; Butler 2011; hooks 1984, 1989; Lippe 2010; Young 2005). Postmodern analyses of sport have resisted the often homogenous representations of groups (nation, women, blacks) celebrating diversity and difference, thereby “querying sport feminism”, in the words of Hargreaves (2004). A range of researchers has made use of Baudrillard’s radical postmodern perspective to enrich studies and understandings of phenomena related to “cultural identities within the context of consumerism and intensive media simulation” (Giulianotti 2004c: 226). The point here is not to develop these theoretical perspectives further, but to point to some of the many outlooks that can be fruitfully applied to the study of football, fans and the media. We have chosen an inclusive approach to the field.

We recognise that the debates between these theoretical perspectives have often been heated, and that theoretical perspectives should not, therefore, be uncritically adopted and applied to studies in any field. Nonetheless, we believe a broad spectrum of perspectives is necessary for this collection in order to capture the multifaceted nature of the topics we want to investigate. Even so, the theoretical perspectives are mostly grounded in some form of critical tradition, at least if we define “critical” loosely enough to include much, or most, of discourse analysis.

Four of the most cited authors in this collection are Fairclough, Foucault, Giulianotti and Elias. Scholars of football, fans and communication clearly seem to find these four theorists particularly useful as starting points for developing methodologies and for theoretical reflection and discussion. It clearly matters which of the four one agrees with most. As in all research, the theoretical perspective guides the construction of appropriate methodology, which, in turn, influences what type of findings can be produced. There is a close relationship between theoretical perspectives and findings, which helps to explain why the debate between proponents of different viewpoints has been so heated. Giulianotti, for instance, has been severe in his critique of Elias and of sports sociologists building on Elias. “By seeking to explain everything it may explain nothing,” he comments on Elias’s particular way of doing sociology (Giulianotti 2004b: 154). According to Giulianotti, it is in particular the theory of “the civilising process” that has made Elias controversial – Elias claims that the process of civilisation originated in court society in Western Europe, subsequently enveloping the rising bourgeoisie before reaching “the more respectable sections within the urban working classes” (Giulianotti 2004b: 149). But, Giulianotti argues, this “provides a comforting recourse for the routine ‘explanation’ of everything” (Giulianotti 2004b: 155). A number of investigations of hooligans have been undertaken from this particular theoretical perspective, mostly leading to conclusions related to their supposedly working class identity. Later empirical research has undermined, and to some extent discredited, many of these premature attempts at understanding hooliganism and violence from a “civilisation” perspective.

Still, many scholars find Elias inspirational, particularly because his perspective combines an interest in large societal structures with interest for individual agency, and several chapters in the collection attempt to combine insights from both Giulianotti and Elias. Radmann, for example, draws on insights from this debate to interpret his findings on media coverage of hooliganism in Sweden. Ottosen *et.al.* also find Elias useful when they ask “why there is such fascination with rule-governed contests between individuals and teams, evident in a trend that fans out from the European ruling classes after the sixteenth century”. While much valid criticism has been levelled against “the civilisation process” and other aspects of Elias’s position, Ottosen *et. al.* argue that the terminology and perspective help us to understand how “people inhabit social positions in ways that vary over time and space”.

Similarly, the simultaneous use of Foucault and Fairclough could have been questioned, based, for example, on Fairclough’s rather harsh criticism of poststructuralist and postmodernist versions of social constructivism, explicitly distancing himself from Foucault (Fairclough 2005; Fairclough, Jessop & Sayer 2004). Instead, we have chosen to focus on the many possible benefits of seeing our common research topic from various outlooks and through many lenses. In this sense, this collection aims at following the examples set by Giulianotti, Ingham and others who call for establishing a necessary dialogue between theoretical standpoints (Giulianotti 2004c; Ingham & Donnelly 1997).

While we recognise the potential tension between the dominating theoretical perspectives represented in this collection, we still believe that this tension can be a fruitful one. For example, Giulianotti, who pays close attention to economic and social structures, still finds Baudrillard’s vision “a valuable and compelling heuristic, enabling a substantive reading of specific realms of social life” (Giulianotti, 2004c: 236), although at the same time he describes Baudrillard as the “most extreme” postmodernist theorist (Giulianotti 2004a: 8). Radical postmodern theorists offer ideas which can facilitate re-readings of changes within sports culture, according to Giulianotti (Giulianotti 2004c). This perspective is particularly pertinent in considering how communities of fans (here also understood as consumers of mediated football) affect the sporting events and football itself. Consumption and meditation of football have growing influence over the game.

For these and other reasons it is necessary to take time to reflect on the meanings of being a football fan and on how to understand mediated football. One way of doing so is to relate our experiences as fans and researchers to modern social theorists relevant for our field of study, as stated by Giulianotti (2004c) in *Sport and Modern Social Theorists*. We agree, as already indicated, with Ingham and Donnelly who lamented the lack of constructive dialogue across the spectrum of theoretical standpoints, rather than *within* those standpoints (Ingham & Donnelly 1997).

This collection will be only a very small contribution to such a dialogue by opening up the field of understanding the meanings of football fandom in relation to developments in media, and analysing the topics chosen from a variety of theoretical perspectives and methodologies.

Researching fandom from a fan's perspective

From a distanced, detached standpoint, sport spectators might look like “illusory participants”, in the words of Bourdieu (1978), and communities of fans could possibly be interpreted as “cloakroom communities” (Bauman 2000), as communities producing nothing more than identities that can be put on like a new jacket or a new pair of shoes, and be dispensed with afterwards. While these and other critical perspectives probably contain important insights that football fans should consider and take seriously, there are other, more optimistic, visions of fans and fandom. According to Hognestad in this volume, football fans like to see themselves as something more than illusory participants. They see themselves, rather, as active participants in the drama they are watching. Sports fans have sometimes been observed functioning as “early movers”, taking on leading roles in the processes of construction and reconstruction of images of communities and identities. Giulianotti, among others, has demonstrated that football fans have at least the potential for critical reflexivity – an ability to see, evaluate and understand themselves and fandom from different perspectives. The research of Hornmoen and others in this collection further indicates that this potential for critical reflexivity is alive and thriving among some communities of fans today.

As we, as both researchers and football fans, try to come to terms with issues such as those indicated above, we can only hope that the potential for reflexivity and critical thinking is also present in the research we do on this thing that we (most of us) love.

Organisation of the book

This book is about mediated football fan culture, which implies that we explore not only the football fan culture as such, but also – and especially – which aspects of the culture are communicated in which way in the different competing media. Silverstone defines mediation as a

fundamentally dialectical notion which requires us to understand how processes of communication change the social and cultural environments that support them as well as the relationships that participants, both individual and

institutional, have to that environment and to each other. At the same time it requires a consideration of the social as in turn a mediator: institutions and technologies as well as the meanings that are delivered by them are mediated in the social process of reception and consumption (Silverstone 2005: 3).

By survey, observation and text analysis we explore the audience as receptors and producers in the circulation of meaning (Silverstone 1999: 15). We do not intend to describe football fan culture in its totality – that would be an impossible task, because the contexts are infinite. But we are able to present new and important findings about how different aspects of football fan culture are mediated in different ways in different media at different times – thus demonstrating not only how the circulation of meaning changes related to the properties of different media, but also how construction of meaning varies on the same preconditions.

The book starts with a discussion of the term “fan” and ways of seeing and understanding football fandom. The first chapter asks what it means to be a fan. What significance can fandom and fan culture be said to have for identities and culture in a broader perspective? How do television, the Internet and other technologies produce new ways of consuming football and new forms of fandom? The next chapter deepens this discussion by analysing the intertwined and mutually dependent developments of “new” media technologies and increasing commercialisation in football. The other chapters are loosely organised according to media, investigating football and the production of fan culture in newspapers, television and online media that potentially facilitates active fan participation.

The chapters 3-6 are based mainly on research into mediated fan cultures in newspapers. Its intention is to analyse the phenomenon from local as well as international perspectives, in addition to historical developments. A key question is related to the construction of local and national identities and patriotism around mediations of football. The section also seeks, from a historical position, to reflect on development and change in the ways newspaper journalists report on football.

The chapters 7-12 explore social media and mediated fan cultures from different angles. Are there differences in the way fan cultures and identities are produced by journalists in “traditional” media and by fans themselves on fan sites? To what extent do fans assume identities in order to fulfill pre-defined expectations of what a particular fan culture is supposed to look like? This is particularly important in relation to rivalries and violence among football fans. Online self-representation and the construction of identities among female football fans can potentially also shed new light on gender issues and the acting out of gendered identities. The section also offers a contribution that seeks to investigate what social media might mean for the journalist, and the role

played by the journalist in the world of football. Do we still need journalists? The transnational dimension of football fandom and social media raises a number of questions related to nation and nationalism, and the section contains chapters that investigate how fans use social media to produce national identities and to learn more about new dimensions of a particular identity.

The chapters 13-15 look at documentary films and television. It includes case studies that deal with the representation of minorities and football as a vehicle for constructing identity, and the use of sports by national broadcasters to “educate” children to become good sportsmen and women. The book closes with a chapter that deals with the phenomenon of live broadcast on public mega-screens of football matches. The social arenas where such games are shown are sometimes themselves filmed and included in the coverage of phenomena such as the World Cup, resulting in a sort of enhanced reflexivity where viewers become aware of the fact that they are being watched. The whole world is watching.

The contributions

Hans K. Hognestad deals with the concept of fandom and how it can be defined and described from a historic as well as a contemporary perspective. Football fandom was originally rooted in working class – and later also in middle class – cultures, with some conflict between them – even struggles, as in the case of hooliganism. Hognestad understands football fandom as more multifaceted and deeper than the fandom connected with, for instance, pop artists. He examines how the notion is interpreted and used by leading scholars, and gives examples from his own research. In particular, Hognestad scrutinises Giulianotti’s taxonomy – supporter, follower, fan and flaneur – with regard to how participation varies according to context. Hognestad agrees with Rowe, Boyle and Haines that the development of football over the last twenty years may be viewed as a move from a subculture to a global cultural reference point and a mega-business involving media and corporate ownership structures. This process makes the difference more visible between the traditional and hot supporters and followers on one side, and cool consumers like the flaneurs on the other side. The fan is more passionately involved with the club than is the flaneur, and may develop intimate ties with players, coaches and managers, although such relationships are more distant and less reciprocal than those developed by supporters. Hognestad finds that fan culture seems to be quite stable, and that club fandom is stronger and deeper than the support of a national team. In Scandinavia, and especially in Norway, football fans have for decades developed parallel allegiances to one local Norwegian team and one English. The historical background for the mediated fandom and huge

transnational support for English clubs in Norway is of particular interest in the understanding of the globalisation and commodification of football. Television and the Internet allow many fans to indulge in virtual consumption of football, and the more recent business of specialised football pubs has opened up more collective ways of experiencing and consuming the game.

Raymond Boyle reflects on how football fan culture is mediated and highlights how sports journalism has always been affected by technological change, through developments across newspapers, radio and television. One of the arguments here is that historically new media developments may often change journalistic practice; these 'new' media technologies, however, also end up co-existing with once previously dominant media forms. Satellite technology in the 1960s brought live sport across the Atlantic and around the globe through television. The restructuring of the newspaper industry in the 1980s saw intense competition between newspapers for sports-related content that altered the relationship between journalists and those on whom they reported, as money and the drive for exclusive content drove a wedge between journalists and sports stars. Increased competition in the television market in the late 1980s and early 1990s saw a massive escalation in the value of sports rights, and that money, flowing to the elite stars, also helped to widen the distance between journalists and athletes. When sports became the "battering ram" of the pay-TV market as exclusive sports content drove subscribers, the relationship between newspapers and the sports industry changed. It was pay-TV that was the financial underwriter of sports such as football, and it was pay-TV, rather than the print media, which had first call on access to the stars it was paying and helping to create via media exposure. For sports culture, the supporting narratives and background conversations may increasingly take place online, and indeed may involve more conversation between journalists and readers and supporters than was previously the case, but television remains crucial for the live media experience. For some sports journalists, social media have extended their conversations with their fan base. Related to the media history, Boyle focuses on the impact that social media have had on journalism more generally and, through some case studies, locates the impact of social media on sports journalism more specifically. He states that the issue of governance in sport, and the role of journalism in exposing and calling to account those in positions of power, has clearly become more complex as sports see themselves as part of the entertainment industries, often mobilising the same PR techniques and using the same PR companies as are found in, say, Hollywood. Another media-related development is that sporting online debate is often characterised by partisan and hostile comment, which the nature of the platform encourages in a way that face-to-face debate makes more difficult.

The city of Bergen is traditionally thought of as the most patriotic city in Norway. Bergen's leading team, Brann, won the Norwegian football champi-

onship in 2007, as it had in 1963. In a case study of this event, Peter Dahlén examines how the victory is told and retold in the two leading newspapers in Bergen, in one coffee table book created by one of the newspapers, and in banners, posters, beer labels, cake inscriptions, taxi paintings and songs. He highlights the dominating frame, “The gold came home”, alluding to the time when Brann had last won the national championship. There was a longing for togetherness and a sense of shared destiny within the city and its vicinity, and by winning the gold for the first time in forty-four years, Brann was used by the press to reconnect in a nostalgic fashion to older times and to its football heroes of 1963, to a local and well-known “home”. The gold may be viewed as a hierophany – a manifestation of the sacred – which belongs to Bergen. Drawing upon the works of the religious historian Mircea Eliade, Peter Dahlén considers how concepts of religion, myths and the sacred constitute the imagined community of football fans as it is mediated primarily by the sports journalists. Dahlén combines the categories established by Eliade with what James W. Carey describes as “a ritual view of communication” as opposed to “a transmission view of communication”. While transmitting implies imparting, sending or giving information to others, ritual implies sharing, participation, commonness and communion, thus pointing at the imagined community experienced and cultivated by the fans. The ritual cultivation of the sacred – the hierophanies of different kinds associated with gold – may promise a new golden age as a sort of re-birth or regeneration, which is a common aspect of myths. Dahlén concludes that the mediated story of the 2007 victory became a myth, an exemplary model.

Thore Roksvold scrutinises the development of newspaper coverage of the Norwegian cup final in 1919, 1949, 1979 and 2009, using both content analysis and text analysis. The reportages are gradually examined on more detailed levels, digging deeper into the texts, illustrating how the framing of the texts becomes more and more visible through the process of analysis. The focus is at first close and narrow, and then the perspective widens up, identifying the ideological implications of the analysed frames. In this respect, Roksvold’s chapter is a contribution to a linguistically inspired discourse and frame analysis. The journalists’ texts are important within the cultural literacy of football fandom. Roksvold considers the changes of attitudes and values over time, identifying processes such as increased individual focus, relationships of familiarity and intensified descriptions in the reporting. The changes in the newspaper coverage may partly be explained as responses to the increasing competition, over time, from other media – radio, television and the Internet. Particularly interesting in this process is the changing role of the journalists, who increasingly demonstrate their expertise. In recent times, the coverage of the female cup final is more focused on the course of the match and less so on individuals, and information about them, than is the coverage of the male

cup final. The verbal expressions are also less intense and the coverage is less extensive. This may suggest that football is primarily a sport for men.

Rune Ottosen, Nathalie Hyde-Clarke and Toby Miller wonder if supporters are more interesting for the media as football-lovers or as consumers, and in a case study of the Johannesburg-based print newspaper *The Star* they use content analysis to explore how *The Star* framed supporters at the 2010 football World Cup in South Africa. They examine the news coverage and the advertisements, and interview the editor in chief. FIFA has huge economic interests in the World Cup tournament, dealing with monopolising business companies as sponsors and with media transmission rights, and in several aspects big sports events are commercialised: in *The Star* the fans were represented as consumers in more than a third of the article units. This was the dominating frame, while the lovers of the game frame, the patriot frame and the vuvuzela frame were each represented in ten per cent of the articles. The chapter also questions whether the World Cup functioned as a catalyst for “bringing the nation together”, something which had been mentioned as a desirable outcome in the preceding media debate.

Hugh O'Donnell focuses on media coverage of fans of the Scottish national football team, who are collectively referred to in the Scottish (and also English) media as the “Tartan Army”, comparing and contrasting the coverage they receive from the media in Scotland with the coverage they receive from the media of other countries when the team is playing abroad. The chapter offers a brief overview of the history of the term “Tartan Army”, and illustrates the extent to which a stable material referent for the term can in fact be rather difficult to find, arguing that it is much more productive to view it as a currently mutually beneficial blend of media construct and tactical fan performance. This absence of an unproblematically “material” Tartan Army on the ground is accompanied by two quite distinct Tartan Armies at the level of discourse, which correspond to two quite different ideological strategies in relation to the social and political function of sport.

Drawing on poststructuralist theories of identities and football communities as well as discourse analysis of identity construction, Harald Hornmoen explores how the supporter and club identities of two football teams in Oslo have been created in web forums and in a major newspaper's coverage of their derby matches, showing how the players and trainers reflect their professional roles in distancing themselves from matters of great concern to the supporters. Contributors to the web forums, such as the clubs' directors and supporters do better with the contestation frame provided by the journalists. In their commentaries, both journalists and supporters may demonstrate an awareness of the constructed nature of club identities and the commercial forces at work in the process. In the forum threads, supporters play on derogatory characterisations of the opposing club and supporters to create their own supporter identities.

This may turn out to be a repetition of clichés suggesting fixed, geographically determined and class-bound identities but, even more so than in the press coverage, the forum discussions show how fans may be conscious of processes of identity construction which can be manifested in a playful and often humorous game of “mocking the stereotypes of the others” or “mocking the others with stereotypes”. The fans deconstruct the other supporters’ identity constructions while they create, interpret and negotiate their own club identities in the process. Although there are clear differences between the newspaper’s and the forums’ presentations of the derby “battling” – particularly in terms of language – utterances by different participants in both media reflect a joint concern for the status and attractiveness of the football game in the capital city of Norway.

Aage Radmann focuses on the Internet-based production and consumption of the image of hooligans and hooliganism. He examines the relationship between the new media landscape, the old media, and hooliganism as a phenomenon, asking how hooligans are depicted and described in the tabloid press and on the website *Sverigesescenen.com*, and how the picture contributes to the construction of the hooligan image. Radmann describes the media construction of hooliganism as “moral panic” and explains that the hooligan issue is about more than football supporters: the complex of problems related to hooliganism has social, cultural, political and financial dimensions. In his analysis, Radmann identifies a discourse of masculinity. In general, sports journalists may be said to share the same ideal masculinity as the hooligans, and they enforce a certain type of masculinity by writing about hooligans and other supporters. Radmann finds that the old and the new media provide different views of hooliganism, but underlines that the media landscape is multifaceted. The elusive definition of hooliganism makes it even more difficult to generalise from the findings but in any event the tabloid papers’ tendency to lump together all football spectators and to convey a sense of danger is found to be prevalent, and a wide range of aggressive threats are to be found, on the website *Sverigesescenen.com*, in a way romanticising violence.

Drawing on leading theorists within social constructionism and feminist research, Deirdre Hynes scrutinises female experiences of football (that is, the women’s relationship to the game and their role as fans) and interrogates the definition and understanding of that relationship. Women, too, have taken advantage of online forums to support their football clubs, by-stepping the physical barriers of geography and male dominated domains of stadiums and noisy pubs. The online (virtual) experience is worthy of attention because it changes and challenges the traditional environment of football fandom in two crucial ways. The first fundamental challenge is the construction of the online self; this bodyless, genderless persona adds a number of significant dimensions to the study of football fans. The second fundamental challenge is the construction of the situated self; this challenge involves a study of the

absence of the spatial and temporal aspects of, and the strategic positioning behind, the safety of the screen. The absence of symbolic, corporeal, physical and locational markers adds new dimensions to football fandom, which is unpacked and critically analysed in Hynes's article. The research draws on the online and offline experiences of sixteen female football fans. The empirical data was gathered by way of online interviews and participant observations of online forums and the research cuts across the important boundaries of public and private and masculinity and femininity in the context of everyday life and sport. The article explores the experiences and narratives of female football fans from their early histories to present day technologically-mediated relationships with their football club and considers how female football fans negotiate their identities as fans in a technologically gendered space. And, finally, it examines how those identities are constructed, maintained and mediated by ICTs in online environments.

Steen Steensen investigates what kind of discourse the CoveritLive (CiL) application promotes, and to what degree an interface like that created by CiL can be said to represent a mediation of a football fan's community. As his methodological approach, Steensen applies conversation analysis. The case is a two-hour thirteen-minute session during a round of Norwegian premier league football in the leading online newspaper VG Nett, including 283 turns at talk, or postings, from sixty-four participants, and an interview with the journalist hosting the session. Several conversations take place at the same time, which gives a complex structure. Twenty-two of the conversations deal with Norwegian football – natural enough since the occasion was a round in the Norwegian premier league – but fourteen of the conversations deal with English football. Some participants act like supporters, most act like flaneurs. The kind of imagined community formed by the chat may seem like the communities that form in urban football pubs during match days except that the journalist initiated most of the conversations, asking questions, and most of the participants addressed the journalist, who was the “king” of the conversation, playing the role of an expert. His most common discourse mode was argumentative. There is a touch of hidden irony in this, as the ideal of democratic participation that initially created the “messiness” of the discourse results in an undemocratic distribution of power.

Andreas Ytterstad explores the representations in the Norwegian blogosphere of the star players John Carew, Jon Arne Riise and Morten Gamst Pedersen on the national football team, to see how the boundaries of the national “we” have been drawn and redrawn with the ups and downs of Norwegian football. He does so from the perspective of Gramscian theory. The two key concepts are hegemony and common sense. The changing hegemony of Norwegian football nationalism is tracked and empirically grounded in the common sense of bloggers. Data have been compiled from two separate sources: an advanced

Google search on Norwegian blogs mentioning the names of Carew and/or Riise and a search on football blogs on TV 2, the main commercial television channel in Norway. Both sets of data highlight the interrelationship between conventional media and blogs, but the analytical focus and the concluding discussion are concerned with what bloggers on Riise, Carew, Gamst Pedersen and Norwegian football nationalism seem to take for granted. The observations are sorted by frame analysis. One identified frame is bleeding for the nation; an opposite frame is being somebody special. A third frame may be formulated as success speaks for itself; a fourth that you have to defend our boys against the media, and a fifth demands being more nationalistic. The sixth frame, that nationalism speaks for itself, is a master frame. One blogger frames Norwegian nationalism in an oppositional manner, but the conclusion of the findings suggests that blogging about football does not constitute an activity that challenges hegemony.

Roy Krøvel discusses how communities of football supporters can use social media to learn and develop knowledge in ways that also matter for social life outside football. His chapter aims at contributing towards a better understanding of how sports fans use new communications technology to debate, discuss, develop understanding and construct identities and communities. Two incidents of particular interest for football fans are scrutinised. The first involves several young and talented players at Vålerenga, a top division team from Oslo; the team's supporters initiated a debate when some of the team's most important players celebrated Ramadan in the final stages of the league. The supporters asked whether it is possible to be a professional athlete while fasting during the long Norwegian summer days. The other incident is a controversy that erupted after a rather unconventional goal-scoring celebration involving two Muslim players and a teammate at Sandefjord, another team in the top division. The analysis of the first incident focuses on the communication on the website for fans of Vålerenga, while the second offers a wider perspective, since it engaged both football fans and people not normally involved with football, in a debate on numerous websites and blogs. The "celebration controversy" demonstrates how relatively small groups can come to dominate a debate on controversial issues, leading to polarisation and extremism – any middle ground or attempt at deliberation became virtually impossible as claims and counter claims were shouted from one camp to the other. The internal online discussion about Ramadan among supporters of Vålerenga stands out in contrast to the debate on the celebration controversy, as it was respectful, reflexive, generated new information and produced perspectives, which facilitated deeper insight among the participants. At the same time, the participants showed a great deal of heterogeneity in their opinions and lines of argument. The forum functioned as a space for the re-thinking and reconstruction of traditional narratives of sporting heroes, and facilitated the search for a common ground in the understanding

of change and continuity in the relationship between sporting heroes and the community of supporters. Communities of sports supporters can, under the right circumstances, be construction workers, playing important roles in producing the new identities and imagined communities, and facing the challenges put forward by global flows of information, technology, people and cultures.

In 2004, the Hapoel Ichud Bnei Sakhnin club was the first Arab team to win the Israeli National Football Cup. In the aftermath, a number of documentaries were produced about the team. Alina Bernstein, Lea Mandelzis and Inbar Shenhar compare two of the most prominent films that were aired on prime time on Israeli television in 2006: *Sakhnin Cha'yai* ("Sakhnin, My Life"), the work of Jewish Israeli filmmaker Ram Loevy, and *Echad Ba'Regel Echad Ba'Lev*, by Israeli-Arab filmmaker Suha Arraf. The two filmmakers followed the team members, the coaches, and the fans from Sakhnin, and brought to the screen the stories of Israel's Arab minority through the lens of the Bnei Sakhnin saga. Through a narrative analysis of the two films, Bernstein and Mandelzis find that the films show Israel as a country that enables multi-existence through football, but the very idea that social integration can develop this way is in fact challenged by both filmmakers. Both documentaries expose the complex, problematic and often harsh daily realities of Israel's Arab minority in a Jewish majority polity, and give expression to the traditional commitment of documentary film to creating and promoting a particular worldview, on a national level, using football as a lens and barometer. Both filmmakers see football as a microcosm of social gaps and tensions for Israeli Arabs burdened by their peripheral status, where the only option, on the face of it, remains gaining visibility and leverage, accruing social capital and obtaining legitimacy through victory at sports. The narrative told by each filmmaker was created through a critical eye and self-reckoning with what it all means – weighing how much football can be a vehicle for social change and to what extent it is merely a calming act that can prevent social unrest. Loevy does so by criticising the state of Israel and its national politics. Arraf does so by criticising the Arab community in Israel for the core role football plays in their lives.

Britt-Marie Ringfjord deals with how Swedish Public Service Television makes Swedish children accustomed to practise sport themselves and to watch sports news and sports events on the same TV channel as they become adults. She presents a content analysis of how the constructions of a Swedish football culture are reported and presented by the popular Swedish Public Service TV program *Little Mirror of Sports*. This gives us some important knowledge of how media content in public service television may serve as ideal representations of sport and of football in general, and, more particularly, representations of gender identities and ethnicity for young football-playing girls and boys. In general, mediated sport for children and teenagers is strongly focused on male players and to some degree representations of football in *Little Mirror*

of Sports are still built on an ideological understanding of football as typically masculine. But, obviously, *Little Mirror of Sports* also presents some new gender ideals that could, in the long run, offer more supportive gender positions for football-playing girls and boys. There are also certain elements in the program that present ethnicity in a positive way. Ideologically, meetings with football idols underline that being a football star is attractive, and that you have to work hard to become a star. There is a hierarchy in the program, in which the children are subordinated to the adults.

In recent years, fans not accommodated in the football stadium itself are frequently offered new, mediated ways of “being there”, beyond television in their homes. They are invited by football and civic authorities to attend “live sites” or “public viewing areas”, usually situated directly outside the perimeters of stadiums or in the centre of cities, where they can watch football matches live on a big screen, and so are able to engage in a crowd-oriented experience that resembles physical presence at the match itself. The broadcast media are central to these arrangements, but they do more than just provide sounds and images of events given the operational contexts of transnational (sometimes commercialised) spaces that, through the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, foster the development of new types of socio-cultural context for experiencing sports such as football. In this volume, David Rowe and Stephanie Alice Baker explore mediated sport fandom in this form through an observational study of the FIFA International Fan Fest site in Sydney, Australia, during the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. Rowe and Baker also examine the ways in which watching broadcast screen sport is combined with new media technologies and reflexive practices involving production, consumption and dialogue. They argue that sport and general news journalism should engage with the dynamism and complexity of contemporary mediated sport fandom rather than rely on an understanding of football crowds based on the traditional, binary model of rival supporters at the stadium.

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Chapter 1

What is a Football Fan?

Hans K. Hognestad

The word “fan” induces associations in popular culture and an intense involvement in which musicians, actors, players and teams are admired and often imbued with symbolic meanings and imagined personal relationships.¹ Nevertheless, hegemonic European football fan moralities suggest that most fans would be insulted if you compared them with fans of, say, Lady Gaga, Johnny Depp or individual sports stars such as Roger Federer. Claims to identity among football fans are often charged with moral imperatives about “true”, “life-long”, “real” and “genuine” support. Football fans like to see themselves as active participants in the drama of elite-level performances. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why football has, in our time, evolved into a dominant embodiment of civic pride and identity in Europe, South America, Africa and large parts of Asia (Giulianotti 1999).

One prototype of the football fan is that of the working-class male immersed in patriotic passion and biased hedonism. It is tempting to position this prototype in direct opposition to the cooler, more critical and detached approach of a modern scientist, explaining, perhaps, academics’ long-standing tendency to position themselves outside society. But of course the contemporary football scene doesn’t look quite like that. Many scientists are also football fans. Nick Hornby’s best-selling autobiographical novel *Fever Pitch*, dedicated to “the ninety-five per cent of us who never fight at football”, marked a move away from the notorious culture of the 1980s marked by hooliganism and crowd disasters (Hornby 1992). The early 1990s marked the dawn of investments in stadium facilities and an almost incredible rise in turnover – due largely to revenues from television deals – for clubs all over Europe. Simultaneously, the game developed into a sign of cultural competence, legitimacy and a source of cultural capital for the educated classes, quite contrary to Pierre Bourdieu’s earlier depiction of sports spectators as mere “illusory participants” (Bourdieu 1978). Since 1992, the game has also gone through a dramatic commodification – evidenced by the huge increase

of televised football since the early 1990s – in societies structured around global neoliberal capitalism.²

These developments have altered the footballing habit for a lot of fans over a relatively short period of time. Yet, there is something about football and its fans that seems to change slowly and demonstrates a remarkable continuity. Conflict and rivalry remain a significant common ground in the forging of fan identities in football, and socially fans continue to drink, sing and sometimes fight.

As fans' involvement and their dedication varies historically, socially and geographically, some contextualisation is required. Football has been a global sporting business for decades, as illustrated by Sandvoss with an example of the merging of brand and "fandom" in the case of the German club Bayer Leverkusen (Sandvoss 2003: 70). Is it possible, though, to view the development of football in the last twenty years as a move from a subculture to a global cultural reference point and a megabusiness involving media and corporate ownerships structures (Rowe 1999; Boyle and Haines 2004)? In the last two decades, transnational companies have intensified their investments in the passion for football. In a pioneering analysis, Giulianotti labelled these recent developments in football a kind of *hypercommodification* (Giulianotti 2002: 29).

Giulianotti views issues of resistance, consumerism and identity through four ideal-type football spectators: supporter, follower, fan and *flâneur* (ibid.). Drawing on examples from my own empirical studies among club supporters in Norway and Scotland since 1992, I shall scrutinise Giulianotti's taxonomy of spectators, focusing on how participation varies depending on context. "Fan" and "supporter" will, in large parts of this chapter, be used synonymously, as a reference to – and also a critique of – what Giulianotti labels "hot" spectators. My choice of examples and arenas is not self-evident; subjective experiences of football for a fan are also made relevant in numerous contexts outside match days. It can be a highly private and personal obsession. For our purposes, I shall focus mainly on the predominantly masculine sociality of football dramas unfolding in and around pubs and stadiums.

Positioning the football fan

"Fan" evolved with the rise of late nineteenth century modern sports, when clearer lines between athletes and spectators were drawn in the new sports grounds and stadiums (Holt 1992), linked to the popularisation and spectacularisation of sports which unfolded in the Western world between 1870 and 1920. At the turn of the twentieth century, the British media first referred to football enthusiasts as "football fanatics" and, soon afterwards, in the abbreviated form "football fans". From the 1950s onwards the term "fan" was used in a wider

and popular cultural sense, and especially in connection with pop music and, in the film industry, to denote admirers of musicians and actors (Russell 1997).

An insider will know that criticism, if not always of the type commonly regarded as rational, is part of the footballing habitus. The passion of football fans is rooted in experience and reflection, because for a devoted fan the game often evolves around personal issues. Belonging to a football club may work as an expression of cultural distinction and, in a philosophical sense, fandom can also be seen as generative of knowledge about something fundamentally human, the passionate adoption of identity. The fan acquires knowledge (albeit of a different kind and in a less systematic way than does a scientist), about the meaning of lasting loyalties. Eduardo Archetti (1992: 210) reflected on football as a ritual with “cosmological limitations” compared to those of a more philosophical or religious nature which have the capacity to unveil understandings of the world and the role of humans in a more total order.

As a business and as a culture, football thrives on its passionate fans. The obsession about “who we are” is seen among football fans all over the world. Unlike a lot of other sports, football has, since the late nineteenth century, operated as a confirmation of belonging and a symbol of citizenship (Russell 1997: 64; Holt 1989: 172). In Britain, terrace culture was, from the start of the twentieth century, influenced by a dominant working class (and often exclusively male) culture, as was pointed out by John Hargreaves (1986) when he claimed that:

Working-class people stamped sports like association football and rugby league with their own character and transformed them in some ways into a means of expression for values opposed to the bourgeois athleticist tradition: vociferous partisanship, a premium on victory, a suspicion of and often disdain for, constituted authority, a lack of veneration for official rules, mutual solidarity as the basis of team-work, a preference for tangible monetary rewards for effort and a hedonistic “vulgar” festive element, were all brought to sports (Hargreaves 1986: 67).

Nevertheless, the historian Dave Russell (1997: 70) has pointed to a significant explanation for the popularity of the game when he argued that “rough” and “respectable” cultures mingled in the football ground, challenging the widespread notion that during recent processes of commodification middle class people have replaced the traditionally working class supporters. Russell demonstrates how the stands at football grounds have always contained a substantial middle class representation. In order to understand the popularity and dominance of football in a broader historical perspective, it seems more reasonable to view the game alongside other entertainments controlled by businessmen and corporations, as ways to provide safety valves without endangering the basic relationships in society (Tischler 1981: 136-137). The notion of entertainment, however, tends

to sit uncomfortably with football from the perspective of a fan, as participant support for a club is often embedded with moralities and a sense of personal obligation and duty which are alien to other entertainment industries.

Activists or hooligans? Early research on football spectators

The Marxist-inspired sociological analysis of football by Ian Taylor and Chas Critcher in the 1970s viewed the game as a political battlefield for working class resistance against bourgeois control (Taylor 1971; Critcher 1979). As is pointed out by Giulianotti (2002: 27), Taylor and Critcher are pioneers in the analysis of the commodification of football. By the 1960s, Taylor had already identified corporate processes in the game and had concluded that they had worked to alienate the old working class supporters and were focusing on local teams, on masculinity and on a participating subculture in which the important thing was to get behind the teams to win games. Taylor took the introduction of family sections in the grounds and a stronger focus on skill, spectacle and “a day out” for the whole family as clear indications of attempts to re-model the game to suit the tastes and needs of middle class consumption (Taylor 1971: 364); this, he argued, contributed to the changing relationship between clubs and spectators in ways which, in effect, gave rise to hooliganism from the 1960s onwards. In other words, he interpreted hooliganism as expressions of cultural alienation, an interpretation also found in some of Hargreaves’s writings (Hargreaves 1986).³

Into the 1980s, academic research on football fans was dominated by studies of the “rough” terrace cultures and a focus on understanding hooliganism and the use of physical violence. The passionate struggle for symbolic victory (expressed through chants, for instance) has often been accompanied by fights between rival supporters. Owing to several incidents of “symbolic hatred” flowing into riots, and sometimes serious violence, hooliganism has often been portrayed as the tragic face of football. Some of the most serious crowd disasters in the history of the game were caused by poor facilities (for example Ibrox 1971, Luzhniki 1982, Bradford 1985, Heysel 1985) or by poor policing (Hillsborough 1989),⁴ although it could be argued that most accidents happened as a result of dense crowds taking part in the often intense social drama of a football match. In a more general way, Victor Turner points to this tragic aspect of most social dramas when he reminds us that: “In the social drama ... stress is dominantly laid upon loyalty and obligation, as much as interest, and the course of events may then have a tragic quality” (Turner 1974: 35). Fans of the English national team have maintained an especially notorious reputation and enjoy something of an iconic position among like-minded fans in many parts of the world (Giulianotti 1999).

It is no coincidence, therefore, that researchers from Leicester University in England came to represent an influential voice in studies on football fans in the 1980s, focusing their attention on hooliganism and violence. Eric Dunning was the most prominent of these scholars, building his theories heavily on Norbert Elias's theory of the "civilising process". Framed within a historical rationalist approach, football hooliganism was seen as symptomatic of an unruly lower working class considered to represent a "breach" in this process. In much the same way as Berger (1973: 83) sees honour as an example of "ideological leftovers" from pre-modern times, what has become known as the "Leicester School", analysed hooliganism as symptomatic of non-integration into the evolutionary course of the civilising process (Dunning et al. 1988). Focus on fan behaviour was therefore equated to that on "residual behaviours". From this perspective, football fan behaviour was viewed as a "rough working class" phenomenon, tied to an appraisal of "hard" masculine values and often mixed with sexist and racist overtones in ways which prevented integration into society more broadly. The image of the football hooligan is thus presented as a young white man from the rougher sections of the working class. As was pointed out by Armstrong and Harris (1991: 431), the perspective of the Leicester School was directed at saying something about society in general, with a minimal focus on the passion, the humour and the subjective experiences of those involved as fans. A significant and very useful contribution of the Leicester School can be identified in their use of segmentary opposition as a concept for understanding the construction of rivalries and social alliances that takes place among football supporters (Dunning et al. 1988). However, football grounds were visibly more heterogeneous, and fan practices more culturally complex, than their model suggested. As Shaun Best concludes in his recent evaluation of the contributions of the Leicester School, Elias's model, transferred to the understanding of football hooliganism, mainly served one purpose: "to explain the reaction of the respectable population to outbreaks of violent behaviour at football grounds" (Best 2011: 585).

Supporters or consumers?

Throughout the 1990s, the opinions of the Leicester School were challenged by a variety of researchers who concentrated on studying football fandom as cultural expressions of identity, globalisation or commercialisation. Archetti (1992, 1999), Armstrong (1998) and Giulianotti (1999) were among those who made the most significant contributions to this shift in focus, highlighting the need for a more grounded theory. The 1990s saw a rise in micro studies of particular fans or footballing communities, focussing on narratives as the basis for exploring various aspects of how football is experienced by the participating

fan. This focus is particularly evident in three edited collections by Armstrong and Giulianotti in which this author also contributed studies of fans in Norway and Scotland (Armstrong and Giulianotti, 1997, 1999 and 2001).

As the years advanced towards the new millennium, the tendency to focus on globalisation became omnipresent in the social sciences, marking a shift in attention within the sociology of sport as a whole, but, in particular, altering studies of football as a social and cultural practice. With a greater concentration on analysing the complex interconnections between local and global communities, Giulianotti introduced Robertson's term "glocalisation" to football studies after a period in which the culture and the business of football had gone through dramatic structural changes (Giulianotti and Robertson 2009). Focusing more directly on how fan practices are structured by overwhelmingly capitalist influences, Andrews and Ritzer published an article in which they moved the spotlight on fandom further away from particularised studies, and criticised research on football fans and hegemonic virtues in football fandom for being corrupted by focusing on local heroism in the face of globalisation. With the idea of "grobalisation" in the study of football, they question the authenticity of identities presumed to be locally rooted. (The "r" replaces the "l" to include the capitalist principle of "growth" in the often diffuse and diverse phenomenon we refer to as globalisation, stressing that financial capital is the driving force in globalisation.) By arguing that no community in the world is unaffected by these forces, they assert that it is an illusion to talk about the autonomy of local communities in a globalised society (Andrews and Ritzer 2007: 40-41).

This critique should be viewed in light of a "grobal" process in football which can partly be located in the establishment of the English premier league in 1992, when the American-owned Bskyb media corporation purchased exclusive rights to screen live matches and also, to some extent, dictated the timing of fixtures. This marked the beginning of a new era as many other leagues in Europe followed suit and adopted similar marketing and media strategies. It could be argued that the commercialism hit football long before 1992, yet the incredible increase in turnovers for the big leagues and big clubs in Europe did not take place until the 1990s (Solberg and Gratton 2007). That the last two decades have definitely been dominated by high capitalist principles is evidenced by multinational ownerships structures, new modern all-seat stadiums, higher ticket prices and options for watching an almost endless amount of pay-per-view live games on TV or streamed via the Internet – from all over the world. The recent global recession has hit many football clubs and their fans badly, but the financial muscle of the global clubs in the biggest leagues seems only to increase, creating greater economic gaps in a sport and a business governed by a wealthy footballing minority.

How have these global processes changed the lives of fans? And are the changes in the lives of football fans as universal, and as marked by chronol-

ogy, as indicated above? From the early 1990s, the time-honoured idea of loyal fans who would turn up to support their teams unconditionally – in contrast to “fair weather” fans who would only turn up for big games in the sun – the notion of “supporting your team” was expressed, equally, by the purchase of the latest replica top or other items from the new football fashion industry. Richard Giulianotti’s taxonomy of football spectators evolves between two basic binary oppositions: traditional-consumer and hot-cool, framed within a conceptualisation of thin and thick solidarity, as ways to define the characteristics of the various allegiances between club communities and diverse types of spectators. Inspired by theorists such as Baudrillard and McLuhan, Giulianotti’s division between *supporters*, *fans*, *followers* and *flaneurs* (Giulianotti 2002: 30) will guide the analysis below.

Hot and cold spectatorship

In this taxonomy, the “supporter” is presented as a hot and traditional spectator who has a long-term emotional relationship with a football club. He (and sometimes she) might offer more than only vocal support during games by buying shares in the club and expensive supporter gear from the club shop. The supporter is usually a season ticket holder, travels to away games, and spends a considerable portion of his income supporting the team. This behaviour can be seen as the basis from which football clubs have generated, and sometimes exaggerated, their status – for generations – as symbolic icons for a local community or ethnic group. For a supporter it is far more important than issues of financial instability. A supporter defines himself or herself as part of a “we” marked by what Giulianotti calls “a thick solidarity”, in which children are socialised into the club through primary relations to parents and siblings. For a supporter, players and managers may be adored and cherished, but as professionals they generally come and go, and therefore the supporters usually see themselves as the stable part of the club community – and the most important emotional stakeholders. The supporters constitute a subcultural community of commitment, loyalty and solidarity, with the stadium standing as a symbolic representation of the club community and often drenched in topophilic sentiments.⁵

The other traditional spectator is the “follower”, someone heavily interested in football, and implicitly aware of particular identities and communities relating to specific clubs. The follower is less personally involved with any particular club or team and may, instead, opt to develop relations across club boundaries and with a variety of footballing communities and institutions. Relationships to clubs located in other leagues may have certain ideological attractions (such as the ethno-political characters of clubs like Celtic or Barcelona, or the politically

left radicalism of Italian side Livorno or St. Pauli of Hamburg), while individual followers might feel attracted to the fascist subcultures in a range of clubs in Italy and Spain. The follower may develop ties of thick solidarity with these clubs by establishing bonds and developing friendships across club rivalries, forming part of a transnational network (on a collective level, subcultural groups of fans in Scotland and England are known to have formed informal transnational networks and friendships with various ultras in Italy). The follower can, obviously, also develop a series of links to other clubs and institutions more marked by a thin solidarity, caused by having watched specific games, players or managers, usually on TV or other media described by McLuhan (1964) as cool. Nevertheless, a follower of this type would usually define himself against more consumerist values and ways of support by declaring traditional motives in order to make himself appear more authentic – for example by following clubs with no obvious history of, or future likelihood of, success. The follower is knowledgeable enough not to identify with clubs which are local rivals and would not, for instance, declare an allegiance to *both* Celtic and Rangers, to Roma and Lazio, or to Barcelona and Real Madrid. Nevertheless this follower does not harbour the same sense of place, of belonging to, and of knowledge about a club and its surrounding community as does the supporter. Typically, spectators at games for the national team are mainly followers, as commitment and participation may be active during a match day ritual but will not be grounded in a local community. From such a perspective it is possible to claim that active spectators at games between national teams are followers, not supporters or fans, while the more passive spectators taking part at mega-events such as the World Cup through the gaze of a tourist (Urry 2002) resemble flaneurs (see below).

Giulianotti (2002: 36) goes on to define the fan as “a hot consumer spectator”. The fan is passionately involved with the club and may develop intimate ties with players, coaches and managers. Such relationships are more distant and less reciprocal than those developed by supporters. The hypercommodification of the game has, to a large extent, dislocated players and club officials from supporters, leaving the fan to experience his club and its traditions predominantly through the purchase of replica tops and a variety of other club merchandise, as well as subscriptions to commercial TV channels and websites streaming his club’s live games. A fan is more likely to accept the rules of a free market by realising that the club depends on large financial contributions in order to exist on a desired level of professionalism and to purchase good players. Giulianotti argues that by transforming spectators into consumer-oriented fan-identities clubs run the risk of seeing fans drift away to other markets when and if the market strategies fail. This leads Giulianotti into positioning the football fan in a category comparable to those of fans of star musicians, actors and other celebrities, in its unidirectional nature and in the lack of reciprocal bonds be-

tween admirer and admired (Giulianotti 2002: 37). This is also noticeable in the way current star footballers have become fully a part of celebrity culture and how football's new markets, particularly in Asia, have seen the rise of fans of individual players like Cristiano Ronaldo rather than clubs and their communities. Although much the same could be said about the celebrity status of George Best in Britain in the 1960s, Giulianotti (ibid.) concludes that the fan identity is increasingly under pressure from the *flaneur*; the cool consumer.

The *flaneur* is presented as a direct opposite to the supporter in this taxonomy, although both categories depend to a certain extent on each other and, as binary opposites, feed the other with meaning. The *flaneur* was originally drawn from mid-nineteenth century literature; Baudelaire wrote about the *flaneur* as a male urban stroller from a bourgeois background, who would seek a variety of sensations and experiences of a more fleeting nature, preferring the hedonistic life in cafés and other public spaces to family life and the routine of working life. In a modern setting, Giulianotti (2002: 39) presents the *flaneur* as a less gender specific middle class spectator, as he or she needs economic, educational and cultural capital in order to maintain a more cosmopolitan interest in the game. In this sense the *flaneur* is presented as a cool customer spectator, entering and experiencing football predominantly through a series of virtual, depersonalised relationships such as can be gained through television or the Internet. The *flaneur* gazes on carefully chosen events and is not involved in the participant cultures, grounded identities and partisan rivalries of supporters. His or her involvement is cosmopolitan and not tribal in nature. The spending power of *flaneurs* make them interesting as customers of a range of footballing products. In that sense, *flaneurs* are embraced by many local supporters of bigger clubs who appreciate that in a neoliberal financial environment income is needed – and that it can be generated by attracting the wealthy cosmopolitan *flaneurs* with their penchant for spending money on cultural events that are considered sufficiently important and glamorous. The tendency of football clubs to flirt with *flaneurs* is noticeable if we look at CF Barcelona, widely considered to be the best team in the world at the moment. Tourists wishing to dwell on symbols of Catalan ethno-political identity consider a guided visit to their home ground, Camp Nou, just as relevant as visits to the iconic buildings designed by the Catalan architect Antoni Gaudi, such as Sagrada Familia or Casa Mila. As argued by Jørn-Henning Lien (2001), CF Barcelona is a dominant symbol of Catalan nationalism, a position fuelled by Franco's fascist regime during which such expressions were forbidden. This meant that a lot of oppositional members from the educated classes embraced the football club, and CF Barcelona has become a primary source for people wishing to associate themselves with, or to dwell on, a Catalan ethno-political identity (Kuper 2001). The example of CF Barcelona also illustrates how football has, in recent years, moved from being widely considered an exclusive work-

ing class cultural activity, to a broader source for generating cultural capital.

Giulianotti's taxonomy of spectators is useful as a set of categories, but it fails if applied in rigid ways to practical, empirical contexts. From the perspective of football spectators themselves, these ideal differences quickly dissolve – findings from my own research have shown that it is quite meaningless, for instance, to make a distinction between “fan” and “supporter” as these terms are used more or less synonymously, while “follower” appears to be an outdated category and hardly anybody has even heard of a *flaneur*! We may indeed find elements of several categories in one and the same football enthusiast, as involvement and dedication are not the same in all football contexts. The taxonomy is clearly meant as an analytical and theoretical tool, and as such it is a mind-opener. But in order to make sense of football fandom, a degree of particularisation and context is required.

Cultures of resistance during hypercommodification

I first came into studies of football supporters when, as part of my thesis in social anthropology, I travelled to Edinburgh to conduct a study among the supporters of Heart of Midlothian. The year was 1992, the same year as the novel *Fever Pitch*, mentioned above, was published (Hornby 1992). The English premier league had just been established alongside Sky Sports, the broadcasting company which became a driving force in the moneyspinning era football was about to enter, but football in general was at a threshold in Europe at this time. Three years after the Hillsborough disaster and the subsequent Taylor Report (1990) on ground redevelopment, British clubs were faced with substantial and financially demanding modernisation. In the case of Hearts, their chairman at the time, Wallace Mercer, had proposed a takeover of local rivals Hibs and a ground relocation for a new “Edinburgh United” outside the city centre. This had stirred strong sentiments among both sets of supporters, whose united protests eventually led to all such plans being put to rest. The two traditional rivals from the Scottish capital are among the oldest clubs in the world, founded in 1874 and 1878 respectively, and both decided to modernise their old stadiums, located in the townships of Leith (Hibs) and Gorgie (Hearts), after a series of attempts at relocating their inner city stadiums to sites outside the city. In my studies of Hearts fans I was, at the time, looking for supporters who showed their commitment by attending matches regularly and participating actively in the social rituals of a match day routine. “Glory hunters” was a term often used to describe spectators who would only chase the successful teams (and resemble Giulianotti's *flaneur*). In Edinburgh, glory hunters was often used to describe locals who would travel to Glasgow to follow the big teams, Celtic or Rangers, rather than support one of the local teams, Hibs or Hearts.⁶

The political and moral aspects of support were, at times, expressed in protests and demonstrations against the owners and through the numerous fanzines which had started to appear in club communities all over Britain from around 1990. These fanzines were written and produced in a punk inspired “do it yourself” style, at low cost and with the aid of a photo copy machine.⁷ Some of these fanzines were aware of how clubs tried to attract newer and wealthier spectators, and they expressed strong resistance. At a seminar held by the Scottish Sports Council in March 1991, James Clydesdale, director at Hearts F.C. at the time, and also an architect, presented the club’s vision of a new multipurpose stadium outside the Edinburgh city centre. The publication *Always the Bridesmaid* put its own heading above the reprinted abstract of Clydesdale’s paper: “Cloud Cuckoo Land”:

Vision of the Future

Hearts’s vision for Millerhill is a concept which incorporates much more than football. The best way to describe it would be to show a typical family day. The Lothian family turn up at 9.45am and park in one of the numerous car parking spaces. Father and son spend an hour and a half in the golf range while mother and daughter play tennis at the tennis ranch.

The family all meet up again at about 11.30 am and change into their elegantly crafted Hearts shell-suits purchased from the shopping plaza within the stadium and proceed for a 10 km jog around the Joe Jordan trim course. After a shower in the play barn, the family convene for lunch in one of the many theme restaurants available on the site.

Towards 1.45pm the football supporters are agitating to visit the stadium and enjoy the many pre-match entertainment facilities on match days. There is stadium information on the information piazza, popcorn and hot dogs from the fast food concourse, as well as the sheer luxury and sense of occasion brought about by a modern stadium.

Mother and son then do the week’s shopping and place it in the car prior to going to their afternoon aerobics class, while father and daughter attend the game.

The whole family meets up again at 5.00 pm and go home quite fatigued but fresh after their leisure exposure.

This vision was seen by many fans as a threat to the whole experience and consumption of football, and in a far more dramatic way than refurbishing and modernising an old stadium. The vision directed its attention to the middle-class family with more money to spend on leisure activities than the dominant male supporter. In declaring that “mother and son do the week’s shopping ... while father and daughter attend the game” it carried an anti-sexist message, and reversed football’s traditional image as a “father and son” activity. Further, the kind of “football-food” consumed at Scottish football grounds (every football

spectator in Scotland has for generations been familiar with the standard football cuisine in Scotland – pies and Bovril – and several fanzines even ran reviews of the quality of pies at different grounds, indicating how intrinsic the food was as part of the total football experience) was replaced in this vision by hot dogs and popcorn, common at American sports arenas but largely alien to Scottish football grounds. Altogether, the characteristics of past and present football fandom were displaced in this vision, and “depassionated” in the sense that football was lined up as a leisure-time activity alongside tennis, aerobics and shopping. Commenting on Clydesdale’s article, *Always the Bridesmaid* wrote:

If you didn’t think that most club directors are so far out of touch with the normal fan that they would need a time-capsule to bring them back, then we are certain that once you’ve read this astonishing drivel, your mind will be changed once and for all ...When we first received this, we thought it was a wind up. But no, poor James is serious. So read on and discover what this non-sexist director has in store for the future Hearts “families”.⁸

Stephen S. (30, co-editor of another fanzine, *Dead Ball*), described the multi-purpose concept as a “post-modern nightmare”, referring to the multitude of “leisure-activities” on offer at the stadium. After environmentalist groups also voiced their protests against a relocation to a green-belt site outside the city, Hearts finally announced in December 1992 that they were in fact planning to redevelop Tynecastle into a smaller all-seater stadium.

Since 1993, Hearts have knocked down three stands in their old stadium and replaced them with new, modern all-seater stands. There are further plans for redeveloping their old main stand, built in 1914 and designed by the legendary architect Archibald Leith,⁹ in order to expand their current 17,500 capacity. While the new ground will, in some ways, have altered match day experiences, from the days when spectators stood, to the present, it is also possible to find some striking similarities in the sociality taking place before, during and after games. A visit to Tynecastle Park for the New Year’s derby match on 1 January 2011 revealed an atmosphere and a level of noise which were by no means less partisan and intense than that witnessed in the ground in the early 1990s. Normal match day routines were still evident in the number of crowded pubs and social clubs around the stadium as supporters revelled in the extended social rituals of an important game. I had agreed to meet a friend and former research subject in a pub called “The Diggers” after the game. As I entered, I found my friend with the same co-drinkers and fellow supporters as back in 1993, standing more or less in the same spot, about three yards from the door. They were all eighteen years older and one of my friend’s friends, showing lines of continuity and heritage in support, had brought his son, now old enough to enter licensed premises. That apart, time had stood still. The bar staff served the same types of locally brewed ales, the walls were adorned with the same

photographs, all illustrating the history of Hearts F.C., and the colours of the pub's decor still matched those of the Hearts strip: maroon and white. So, in the age of hypercommodification, there are oases of status quo to be found in the world of football. During my first field trip to Edinburgh, I was shown a cherished collectors item by a Hearts supporter who proudly pulled out a booklet with a fixture list from the 1895-1896 season. At the end of the booklet there were several advertisements, one of them for the "Midlothian Arms" which, he told me, was the old name pub we were in, the "Tynecastle Arms", just outside the Hearts ground. The advertisement read: "Before and after games, enjoy our fine selection of wines, spirits and ales".¹⁰ Hence it seems reasonable to assert that male participation in the extended social rituals before and after games have been passed down through generations and taken place for as long as the game has existed as a spectator sport.

However, the Taylor Report meant that a number of clubs in Britain did decide to relocate to more suburban locations, which has in turn also altered the social practices around games, as stadiums outside city centres generally have poorer social and physical infrastructures. In other places, the hedonistic ritual of drinking in connection with football games is a rather new phenomenon. In Norway, this did not occur on a larger scale until the commodification of the game evolved from the 1990s, in the mediated fandom of long distance supporters of English football clubs.

Shouting at the TV – virtual sociality in the pub

In Scandinavia, and especially in Norway, football fans have for decades developed parallel allegiances – to one local Norwegian team and one English. The historical background for the mediated fandom and huge transnational support for English clubs in Norway is of particular interest in the understanding of the globalisation and commodification of football. While television and the Internet allow many fans to indulge in the virtual consumption of football (Hjelseth 2006), the more recent business of specialised football pubs has opened up more collective ways of experiencing and consuming football. Along with the dawn of budget airline companies and new media technologies, this has, to a significant degree, aided accessibility to other football leagues and, as a consequence, the sociality of fan practices. An ethnographic study into the meaning and impact of football pubs in Oslo and Bergen was conducted by this author and Gary Armstrong in 2005 (Armstrong and Hognestad 2006).

The passion for English football in Norway is not a recent phenomenon.¹¹ Media reports from English football can be dated back to 1902, the same year as the Norwegian F.A. was founded (Hognestad 2003). While the pictures of footballers in cigarette boxes during the 1930s, and betting on English games

from the late 1940s, contributed to the popularisation of English football, it was the introduction of live televised matches in 1969 which colonised football imaginations in Norway, securing an almost cultic position among young people by the early 1970s.¹² During the 1970s and 1980s, a variety of English football teams supporters' clubs were founded, clubs which are today united in a common Supporters' Union for British football.¹³ This organisation currently has a membership of 98,978, spread over forty-five different clubs.¹⁴ While nearly eighty per cent of these are members of global clubs Manchester United and Liverpool, more subcultural statements of identity are evident in the number of supporters' clubs for lower-division teams such as Macclesfield, Scarborough and Woking, teams that have never appeared on Norwegian television. Many of these fans travel regularly across to the UK to watch games and indulge in the local cultures of the clubs they support. It is even more a sign of the times in European football as low cost airlines allow supporters to develop relationships with teams and supporters in other leagues. During my research among Hearts supporters, I found that many of them had developed relationships with club communities elsewhere, obtained either through their holidays or by following European games with their local Scottish club. And in return, supporters from a range of cities in Europe travelled to follow Hearts on a more or less regular basis. Such relationships may be more shallow than the support for their local team, marked more by what Giulianotti (2002: 34-36) defines as a follower. This is evident in Norway as well, where a number of Premiership clubs can boast a modest foreign contingent of supporters. The practice of groundhopping, which entails collecting and listing visited grounds in various forums, adds to the flow and level of transnational contact between supporter communities.¹⁵

Tippekampen, which became the vernacular term for the live televised Saturday games, was typically watched in the comfort of private living rooms during the 1970s and 80s. During the 1990s and into the new millennium, the lifting of restrictions on screening live English games saw the dawn of a new and more public way of viewing, in the shape of pubs that make a living out of showing live English games for enthusiastic fans with a taste for beer and football, and paving the way for a whole new business, as pubs started to make a living from a combination of selling beer and showing televised football. The Scandinavian branch of Liverpool's supporters' club has a pub guide on their web site, listing more than 300 pubs in Norway that are recommended specifically for supporters of Liverpool. On top of this, the guide also recommends dozens of pubs and bars abroad, based on recommendations from travelling supporters – from the Faroe Islands via the Philippines to Peru!¹⁶ This is part of a global phenomenon in which the brewing industries have expanded their traditional business of serving pre- and post-match drinks for football revelers going to games in a stadium, towards exploiting a market of supporters watching games on TV in pubs.

Groups of friends turn up to support various teams, and most will be wearing replica tops and other symbols of specific club allegiance. Games are announced on the Internet and, on busy days in the busiest pubs, where four or five games are screened simultaneously, you can even get information about which corner of the bar will be screening the game of your choice in the next week.¹⁷ On one evening I took my partner along to such a pub in Oslo. Not interested in football, she felt she was entering the privacy of a supersized boy's room, as the walls and even the ceiling were completely covered with nostalgic pictures of football teams and players cut out of football magazines from the 1970s and 80s, and reflecting the boyhood of the current manager now in his late 40s. Square inches not covered by pictures would display club paraphernalia from around the world, with male beer drinkers dominating the scene. Unlike in other cafes and pubs, where people talk to each other, she found that people there were not talking, but shouting – at the television. The pub in question was *Bohemen*, founded in 1998; a pub located in the Oslo city centre, partly owned by *Klanen* (The Clan), the official supporters' club for the Norwegian Premier League club, *Vålerenga*. During our research on football pubs in 2005, we conducted an interview with the manager of *Bohemen*. He boasted about the business profile and ambience of the pub in the following way:

We follow the principle that by selling cheap beer we sell more beer. Yet our pub is not a rough place. We hardly ever experience brawls. Our great effort is focused on football and we have many regulars who only appear when their team is on the screens. Therefore we have a very diverse clientele. People see us as a pub with credibility. They know what they get. We are very careful about serving quality beer. We know beer, we like beer and we know how it is supposed to taste, unlike a number of other places around here (see also Armstrong and Hognestad 2006).

The football pub has provided opportunities for a far more public and community-based kind of long-distance support, as fans turn up supporting their teams, with or without club colours, creating a collective, social basis for support. The originally individual, idiosyncratic orientation around support for English teams has given way to more collective ways, akin to that of supporting a local club, central to which is a licenced premises and a shared consumption of beer. Typically, the pub is a place frequented exclusively by local fans of *Vålerenga* before and after games in the domestic league, yet it holds an inclusive profile for fans of foreign teams, and Oslo-based fans of a range of English clubs use this pub as a social meeting point for watching games, while the transnational following of the politically left oriented German club *St Pauli*, mentioned by Giulianotti (2002: 35), is evident also in *Bohemen*, as about a dozen *Vålerenga* fans gather regularly to watch and support *St Pauli* in televised games from the German Bundesliga. The pub is known

for its multicultural profile, and games from the Italian and Spanish leagues also attract a substantial number of fans.

The pub, then, is a place where supporters of a local club mingle with a variety of other fans, with Norwegian fans of English clubs dominating the scene. Yet there has been an evident rise in the number of proactive supporters of local Norwegian teams defining themselves in opposition to what is widely seen as the “anglophile” supporters, especially since the turn of the new millennium. Such symbolic acts have especially evolved around games between Norwegian and English teams where a clear majority of attending fans are Norwegian (the latest example of this was when Norwegian Premier League side Stabæk played a friendly against Manchester United’s reserve team in January 2010; unknowingly, the Norwegian Manchester United fans gathered behind a banner – invisible to themselves, but visible to everyone else in the stadium – that read “Anglophile losers”. The banner was put there by fans of a team widely known as the “nouveau riche” club in Norway, with a history of top flight football dating back only to the mid 1990s.)

Similar expressions of nation-centred morality have taken place at European games elsewhere in Norway, notably between Brann and Everton in the round of last thirty-two of the UEFA cup in February 2008, and in a champion’s league game between Rosenborg and Arsenal in Trondheim, in September 2004.¹⁸ Antagonisms towards these long-distance supporters of English clubs are coloured by calls for monogamy and solidarity, rooted in local communities. In this sense, “anglophiles” are ridiculed by some for their superficial involvement in the media-dependent glamour of the English premier league, which is more akin to that of the *flâneur*. However, as I have shown in this chapter, the culture in Norway of support for English clubs precedes the era of hypercommodification, and has a longer history than support for Norwegian teams. Hence moral definitions of who the “real” fan is, raise issues more complex than a question of birth place or which passport one holds. Such conflicts point to interesting contestations about notions of good and bad support, and issues related to hegemonic fan moralities.

Conclusion: contestations about who the “the real fan” is

While the traditional dual allegiance of support – or mono support in Norway for an English club – have been challenged in recent times by supporters of Norwegian teams, the call for “local monogamy” is in many ways at odds with a footballing world structured by globalisation. Televised football and commodification have undoubtedly changed football fandom in the last decades, although I have given examples of continuity in the sociality of match-day rituals. Further, the polygamy evident in the ways European football fans relate to

several clubs should be understood not only as a media phenomena, but as a result of physical explorations and social networking within transnational football communities. Such explorations are more in accordance with Giulianotti's definition of a follower, rather than a fan or a supporter, although cases where transnational visits to footballing communities are lacking in social and cultural connectedness may be more easily adapted to the "thin transnationalism" or "banal cosmopolitanism" explored elsewhere by Giulianotti and Robertson (2007).

I have shown here how supporters, fans, followers and *flaneurs* may be applied to various contexts in ways I have found to be fruitful. Nevertheless, the true differences between a fan and a supporter will often be blurred in a practical context. Spectators with a "hot" involvement are likely to use these labels synonymously, whether as spectators, customers, hooligans or political activists against hypercommodification. The walls between the categories will soften if adapted to different social practices, and we are likely to find a flow between the categories, even in individual spectators. It is imaginable that the same football spectator could call himself (or herself) a supporter during a domestic league match, a fan of the club watched most often on TV, a follower of the national team, and a *flaneur* during glamorous mega events such as the world cup. In discourses on sport in general and on football in particular, the nation is often treated self-evidently as the only frame of reference in the forging of identities. While nations retain an important structuring role in the game, it is more difficult to find convincing arguments for making a general division between domestic "thick solidarity" and transnational "thin solidarity". Within the current cluster of subjective orientations and objective criteria in football, flexible models open to cultural complexities, are required in order to fully grasp the grounded contestations of identities within current spectator practices in football.

Notes

1. The word stems from the Latin term *fanaticus*, referring to a person in emotional and spiritual frenzy (www.etymoonline.com).
2. An analysis of how the radio, the oldest broadcasting device for fans unable to attend games or watch them on TV, has structured experiences of football, would have been relevant here. This author grew up on a farm at Jæren in the south-eastern part of Norway. On an average Saturday afternoon, during my teens, I would be multi tasking as I tried to balance listening to the BBC's football coverage and writing down results as they came in, while also milking the cows.
3. In more recent times there are, indeed, examples of fan resistance to the hypercommodification of football which has taken a clearer political, and less violent, course. When the owners' proposed move of Wimbledon FC to a stadium in Milton Keynes, fifty-six miles north of their old home in London, was sanctioned by the English Football Association in June 2002, it took just a few days for a group of supporters to found the new club AFC Wimbledon, following a season marked by effective protests and boycotts of the club they had once supported. AFC Wimbledon started at Level 9 of the English league system in 2002 and, after four promotions

in eight years, is currently a professional club controlled by the supporters and, at the time of writing (February 2011), is fighting for promotion from the Blue Square Premier League. Similarly as a protest against the takeover of Manchester United by the American owner Malcolm Glazer in 2005, FC United of Manchester was founded by dissatisfied Manchester United fans. The club has one of the highest average attendances for non-league games, and at a first-round FA cup match against local team Rochdale in November 2010, a crowd of 7,000 turned up

4. Sixty-six Rangers fans died in the Ibrox stadium in Glasgow on 2 January 1971 as a late goal in a derby between Rangers and Celtic caused spectators to return to the ground, setting off congestion in a narrow stairway. The disaster in Luzhniki stadium in Moscow on 20 October 1982 took place at a UEFA cup match between the Dutch side Haarlem and the host team Spartak Moscow, and was similarly caused by crowd congestion as only one gate was opened for spectators as they made their exit after the match. The official death toll was sixty-seven, although claims were made later that as many as 340 died. On 11 May 1985, fifty-six died as a result of a fire which broke out in the old wooden stand at Bradford City's Valley Parade stadium during an English third division match between Bradford and Lincoln City. The Heysel stadium disaster in Brussels on 29 May 1985 happened when a wall dividing Liverpool and Juventus fans collapsed during the final of the European cup, causing the death of 39 Juventus fans. Finally, the semifinal of the English FA cup at Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield on 15 April 1989 between Nottingham Forest and Liverpool ended in 96 dead Liverpool fans as too many fans were allowed into just one section of the ground and the high perimeter fences at the bottom of the terraced stand prevented any chance of escape. See Darby, Johnes and Mellor (2005) for further analysis of stadium disasters in the history of football.
5. See Bale (1991).
6. Hognestad (1995).
7. See Haynes (1995) for an early account of the football fanzine cultures in Britain.
8. *Always the Bridesmaid*, no. 9
9. Archibald Leith was responsible for the design of a number of football grounds in Scotland and England in late 19th and early 20th century. Many of these grounds are currently listed buildings, notably Ibrox stadium in Glasgow and Arsenal's former ground, Highbury, of which two stands are listed as art-deco buildings. Arsenal F.C. has transformed the old stadium into residents with a park in the middle where the pitch used to be, with the two listed stands forming the outer skeleton of what is now called Highbury square. See also Inglis (1987).
10. Heart of Midlothian Football Club – 1895-1896 fixture booklet.
11. For early historical accounts of how this "English sport" spread and developed in Norway see Goksøyr and Olstad (2002: 26-42)
12. While FA cup finals were broadcasted live from 1963, a league game between Sunderland and Wolves in November 1969 marked the beginning of regular screening of English football over the national broadcasting monopoly, NRK. For more detailed analysis of how the introduction of live TV coverage of English football affected football support in Norway see Hognestad (2003, 2006 and 2009).
13. See www.supporterunionen.no
14. Figures from 2011 (supporterunionen.no)
15. A forthcoming article, currently considered for publishing, co-authored by this author and Gary Armstrong, delves into the practice of groundhopping among Norwegian supporters.
16. See www.liverpool.no (figures from Jan. 2011)
17. Check for instance www.bohemien.no
18. See Hognestad (2009: 365).

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Chapter 2

Social Media Sport? Journalism, Public Relations and Sport

Raymond Boyle

Today live coverage [of sport] is supported by rolling sports news. Comment and analysis is available across every conceivable media platform and it all serves to preview and review the live content dished up by broadcasters. In many respects, sports news is simply a trailer for the main feature.¹

Journalists are certainly all content providers in a converged multimedia age. It doesn't follow that all content providers are journalists. They never have been, and they never will be.²

Journalists and broadcasters have always played a key role in mediating between sport as a cultural form and its fans, be they readers, viewers or listeners – indeed, the role of journalists as cultural intermediaries within sports stretches back into the nineteenth century. In that role they have had to liaise with sports promoters, agents and public relations gurus as well as the players, athletes, managers, fans and organisers of professional sport in an often complex, complicit and contradictory fashion (Boyle 2006; Steen 2008). To what extent, then, is the twenty-first century digital age of social media and 24/7 rolling multimedia and multiplatform news and information transforming this relationship and the role of sports journalists as cultural intermediaries? Are we seeing a fundamental re-aligning of the relationship between sports media content and fans or, rather, the next staging post on a rather long and at times not wholly healthy symbiotic relationship between sport, media and society?

The first part of this chapter briefly highlights how sports journalism has always been affected by technological change across newspapers, radio and television. One of the arguments here is that historically new media developments may often change journalistic practice; however these 'new' media technologies also end up co-existing with once previously dominant media forms. These are, of course, not always equal relationships.

The next section focuses on the impact that social media has had on journalism more generally, and locates its impact on sports journalism more specifically through some case studies. In so doing we highlight a broader argument around the increasingly generic set of challenges that face journalism, including journalistic professional status, which may lead us to question how different sports journalists are from their colleagues working in other arenas such as politics.

Way back when ...

Historically, it has been journalists who have helped to shape the narratives that have come to dominate how we think about sport. When the American sportswriter Grantland Rice turned up in town he was almost as big a draw as the sports stars on whom he had come to report (Inabinett 1994). Rice was syndicated coast to coast in the US during the 1930s and realised the power of truly national media exposure in shaping public perceptions of sport. For Rice, sporting narratives were heroic and epic in their nature. His work was part of the myth-making function of journalism and it helped to define a particular moment in American sporting culture, conferring iconic status on sports stars such as Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey and Red Grange (Oriard 1993; Fountain 1993).

The then new technology of radio and, later, television, began to change the role of journalism, its reporting of sports and its relationship with the fans. Some journalists – or sportswriters as they preferred to view themselves in the US – were, like Rice, able to straddle radio and newsprint, but by the end of the twentieth century it would be television, as both the financial underwriter of elite sport and the medium which represents international sport around the globe, that would come to dominate sports culture (Koppett 2003).

Yet one of the key lessons of media history is that each new and emerging technology does not necessarily mean the eradication of what had previously been dominant. Radio didn't replace newspapers in the 1930s, and nearly four decades later television didn't kill cinema. What tends to happen is that technology disrupts existing patterns of consumption and practice, may often change institutions, and may alter the power relations between technologies, but often they end up co-existing in an uneasy and indeed unequal relationship (Curran and Seaton 2009). Change has always been endemic in journalistic practice.

Print sports journalism didn't disappear with television but, rather, occupied a differing space, less concerned with reportage and more with comment (and often speculation), and even analysis. Television broadcasters sold their sports product initially in an era of advertising and public service and then in the satellite age, one concerned with attracting subscribers. In the process, television underplayed its position as the transformer of sports presenting it instead as offering a rather benign 'window on the world' of sport (Whannel

1992). Sports journalism often acted a source of 'free' promotion for sport, providing the back stories that helped make sense of the live narratives that television then broadcast. Radio and the arrival of the fan phone-in – which was first imported from the US into the UK through Radio Clyde in Glasgow in the 1970s – helped extend the range of 'sports chatter' that, until then, had not usually included fans in the broadcast era.

The elements re-shaping sports journalism in the last two decades or so have been focused around the rise of 24/7 news; in the UK the de-regulation of the media market that has seen a dramatic rise in media outlets, often carrying sports related content; the arrival of mainstream digital media (from around the mid 1990s) and the increasing centrality of the Internet both as a platform for media content and as an information and dissemination service for journalists and sections of the public (Cushion and Lewis 2010). Something else has also occurred, partly driven by these factors: the extent to which elite sports have become increasingly intertwined with media institutions and organisations. This is not of course a new process, but the media and sport have entered a new phase in their long-running relationship, in which, as the financial underwriter of elite, national and global sport, the media and television in particular have come to exercise enormous power over sports structures and cultures (Boyle and Haynes 2009). Accompanying this process and the influx of money into the higher echelons of sports has been the rise of practices and cultures often associated with the entertainment industries and their labour markets and star systems. In other words, public relations (PR) and media and image management practices have become part of the landscape of modern sports culture and with them come challenges for the practice of journalism and issues of access to impartial information (Boyle 2010).

Sports journalism and the changing nature of journalism

In previous research (Boyle 2006) it has been argued that far from being some distant branch of mainstream journalism, sports journalism in the digital age shares many of the characteristics of journalism more generally. Nick Davies (2008) exposed the rise of what he called 'churnalism' in modern journalism: the insipid influence of pre-packed information from a range of public relations sources and agencies that is then re-warmed and passed to an unsuspecting public as fact-checked unbiased journalism. While Davies (2008), Monck (2008) and Seldon (2009) were not specifically discussing sports journalism, their critique of journalistic practice, framed by what they viewed as the breakdown of trust between the public and various institutions, found echoes in its broader context with studies on journalists working in and across the sports industries (Boyle, Rowe and Whannel 2009).

If the stand-off between PR and journalism was not already shaping journalistic practice, the rise in the last few years of blogging and the massive expansion of micro-blogging sites such as Twitter has given rise to concerns around the 'citizen journalist' and the growth of user-generated content (USG) as the traditional mainstream media try to keep pace with both technological change and shifting patterns of media consumption and engagement (Fenton 2010; Hobsbawn 2010; Tunney and Monaghan 2010). At the heart of these journalism debates are questions about notions of expertise and professionalism and the impact on public opinion of the seemingly endless expansion of sources of information. Also of significance are the ways in which these new platforms are changing the nature of traditional forms of journalism and news-gathering practice. This, then, is the context within which sports journalism exists, and many of these broader arguments and debates are increasingly generic across all journalism, and involve asking what exactly is the function of modern journalism and, indeed, who it is for.

Economics and technology

Economics is also a key factor in shaping journalistic culture. The current crisis in the funding of public and commercial news media has meant that certain practices and institutional cultures, across the genres of journalism, are being altered. As I write from the UK, the BBC, the single largest employer of journalists in this country, is announcing the shedding of 300 jobs associated with its online journalistic provision. In a recent analysis of BBC journalism, Keith Somerville, a former BBC journalist and now university teacher, argued that real damage was being done to the integrity of BBC journalism by "cost-cutting, an obsession with impact-driven news and the editorial management culture that accompanies it" (Somerville 2009: 67), while Maggie Brown (2010) has documented the collapse of freelancing journalism, as cost cutting across print, broadcast and online organisations directly affect the ability of freelance journalists to build a career as they once did. Despite its continuing popularity, journalists working in sports are not immune from these wider economic pressures that are re-structuring the nature of journalism across the UK.

Technology has always been a central element of journalism. Certainly the spectacular rise of micro-blogging sites such as Twitter (5000 tweets a day in 2007 to 50 million a day in 2010 (Hobsbawn 2010: 3) has had an impact on journalistic practice more generally. These sites are a platform, along with other online arenas such as You Tube, to distribute content at great speed, used by media organisations to acquire user generated content (USG), and used to build brand identities and loyalty among increasingly distracted media consumers. In his analysis of the use of social media in the 2010 UK general election, Nic Newman argued:

Even veteran journalists have been surprised at how social and digital media continue to change the way journalism is practised; the growth and success of live blogging, the adoption of micro-blogging, the shortening of the news cycle and the growth of real-time conversation between political and media elites. More journalists are recognising that social media are not just something for the web team, but are relevant to every member of the newsroom.³

While those comments relate to political journalists, they are equally applicable to those working in the sports sector. To the list of real-time conversations listed above one might also add that fans increasingly engage with key sports journalists who tweet.

But rather than undermining the status of journalists among sports fans, and lest we forget journalists have not always been held in high regard by fans, Twitter has expanded journalistic contacts, and even strengthened the sense of connection that exists between once distant journalists and their readers. Thus Twitter can act as wire service, getting information out to readers, as well as a way of promoting content to be carried on other platforms and a dialogue with readers and supporters.

Of course, as Hobsbawn argues about political news, this raises crucial issues for the value of truth and trust in the new age of instant comment.

But how much of the tsunami of information that goes out on Twitter is true? There is no editing, no time to edit. Re-tweeting – passing on wholesale what others have tweeted – is widespread. So is putting up links of interesting articles, thoughts, with no means to verify them before they've gone ... prove you are more trust worthy than your opponents or competitors and your stock will rise, either literally or by brand and reputational value.⁴

As noted elsewhere (Boyle and Haynes 2011) it is not only journalists who use Twitter to test opinion and the mood of supporters and readers, but others in the sports industry including athletes, players and officials. The issue remains that most organisations, sporting or otherwise, have little proactive guidelines for the use of Twitter, with its tendency for instant comment. There are a growing number of examples of how a post match tweet or an indiscretionary comment, once online, is quickly picked up by the mainstream media which bring it to the attention of the public.

When Manchester United defeated Liverpool in the FA Cup in January 2010, the match turned on two key controversial refereeing decisions, both going against Liverpool. Shortly after the game, the Liverpool player Ryan Babel posted a tweet that called into question the integrity of the match referee Howard Webb (including a digitally created photo of Webb in a Manchester United shirt). He then posted another tweet lampooning Webb's reputation as the best referee in England. The story was picked up by other media and Babel (although he had by then posted: "My apology if they take my posted pic seriously. This is just

an emotional reaction after losing an important game” Twitter, 9/1/11) became the first player to be charged by the English FA with improper conduct over the use of Twitter – this despite Liverpool’s having previously warned players and officials about their social responsibilities in using social networking sites.

For *The Daily Telegraph*’s chief football writer Henry Winter, commenting via Twitter on the issue, the media reaction meant: “Tick tock. Only matter of time before PFA/clubs issue edict on what players can say on Twitter. Pity. Babel OTT but most tweets enlightening” (Twitter, 10/1/11). Clearly, the rules of engagement between journalists, players and supporters are being re-drawn in the social media age, for, given the ability of online groups to organise various campaigns, besmirching someone’s reputation can have serious implications for the individuals involved. In England, the mainstream media have, in the past, helped to orchestrate witch hunts against high profile referees who have given decisions against England, the most famous being the character assassination by *The Sun* of Swiss referee Urs Meier when he disallowed an England goal in the 2004 European Championships. As a result of the *Sun*-led campaign, Meier received over 16,000 abusive e-mails and was, for a while, placed under police protection. The point is that Twitter has not created something new in the ability to mobilise opinion, but that it has made the process easier, quicker and more international in scope. It also appears that most people in the sports industry fail to fully understand the role, function and impact – positive and also more problematically – that social media can have.

Some organisations such as the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) are keen to use social media to enhance their relationship with supporters and market their ‘product’ in ways not previously considered. Following the success of the English cricket team in retaining the Ashes and defeating Australia in a test series held in that country early in 2011, they found that the ECB’s Twitter followers had increased from 17,000 to almost 32,000, with 56,000 joining their Facebook page. However, the extent to which organisations understand the interactive nature of social media remains to be seen. While the ECB follows over 6,600 on Twitter (10/1/11) an organisation such as FIFA (over 302,000 followers) is only following fifteen on Twitter (fourteen of which are other FIFA sites). This lack of understanding by FIFA of the complex nature of the social media experience was shown during the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. When the Dutch brewery company Bavaria famously organised an ambush marketing event at the Holland v Denmark game (involving thirty-six orange-clad women in the stands), FIFA took action to ban the women from the ground. Bavaria were not one of the official sponsors of the event, and FIFA rigorously policed the rights of the official sponsors. There had actually been a discussion of this event on Twitter in the days leading up to the game, but FIFA were simply not engaged with the social media environment, appearing to still think in unidirectional marketing terms, using social media to push out

messages, but not as a means of actually engaging with its audience. The fact that over six months on from the WC, they still only follow fifteen on Twitter shows that they have not learned this lesson.

The final part of this article offers some snapshots from the emerging world of the digital sports journalist and the interface between journalism, technology and public relations.

Wayne Rooney and the PR battle for hearts and minds

We appear to be awash with sports-related information, driven by pay-TV and 24-hour rolling news agendas. The divisions between sports news and news news have become increasingly porous and ill defined (Boyle 2006). When, in 2010, news that Manchester United's Wayne Rooney declared that he would not be signing a new contract for the club, much of the news agenda seemed dominated by the story as rumours (more often than not started on the Internet or through Twitter and recycled to a wider audience through more traditional media sources) and information fed a media system seemingly hungry for content twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The PR people working with Rooney and for Manchester United, and the manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, all provided information to various media sources in an attempt to shape public opinion among supporters about the merits of Rooney's request to leave the club. Was he just being greedy? Was he right that the club lacked ambition? Would he move across town and join the monied revolution taking place at Manchester City? A key moment in the saga was a press conference, carried live on Sky Sports television and online, that saw a seemingly bewildered Sir Alex Ferguson publicly state that he had no idea why Rooney might want to move and leaving it clear in the minds of all supporters of the club that the impetus for this came from the Rooney 'camp' and, by association, his agent Paul Stretford. It was a pivotal moment in the saga, as the press conference was replayed across all major news organisations including mainstream non-sporting news bulletins, and circulated widely on the Internet. It was the moment that Ferguson, himself a consummate media performer (Barclay 2010), seized the moral high ground among the fans and set the dominating agenda for how the story was being made sense of by the media. In so doing, he put the player and the agent on the defensive and destroyed any residual support for Rooney and his case (which was that he wanted to leave the club because of their lack of ambition).

The Rooney case, with its lurid tales of his off-field sexual dalliances and marital problems, occupied one section of the media's news and comment agenda, while his sporting future was discussed at length in other parts of the mediascape. What we had was an example of what Whannel (2002) called the

vortextuality of sports stories in the digital age, the ability of certain sports-related stories to dominate across news, sport and comment areas of the media system, each feeding of the other, in a manner that meant even the most ardently non-footballing citizen would have had difficulty in avoiding a story perfectly suited to the ‘always on’ culture of the digital age. When Rooney agreed to sign a new contract with the club, a picture of Rooney and Ferguson, both all smiles, was released by the club and carried across print, broadcast and online – all the sections of the media that had been important in the battle to direct how the story would be made sense of by supporters and the wider public. While the press conference had been pivotal, so too had the daily comment and analysis offered by the online and print media, each referencing to the other, with print media using their online operations to move the story. Newspapers regularly used online fan chat rooms and Twitter comment from supporters to legitimise what they saw as the ‘mood among the supporters’. While ‘vortextuality’ may not be a totally new phenomena, the converged nature of media and journalistic operations, with journalists often working across a number of media platforms and using Twitter as a sort of ‘news feed’ meant that it is likely to become an increasingly frequent aspect of the emerging media landscape for sports, but also other areas of public life.

The Rooney story also highlights the importance of speed in modern journalism, as a story takes off across the online world. Once opinions are formed – and we live in an age of what I call ‘rush to judgment journalism’ – they can be hard to move. The importance of response and rebuttal are also crucial and no longer take place behind closed doors but need to be part of the media process and story. Both Wayne Rooney and Tiger Woods, in differing ways and with differing outcomes, lost control of their stories as their lack of speed to respond and rebut suggested that even their highly paid advisors failed to understand the new rules of the PR/journalism game in an age of instant comment (however inaccurate or indeed untrue these comments may often be).

Sports governance and journalism

Earlier, we looked briefly at how FIFA fails to understand that social media, does not simply involve pushing out messages. They are still thinking analogue, in an age that is now digital. It also appears, however, that FIFA has trouble with understanding the nature of modern 24/7 journalistic culture more generally. The run-up to the 2010 announcement by FIFA of the host countries for the 2018 and 2020 World Cups was marked by intense media scrutiny from elements of the news media in the UK.

The *Sunday Times* (17 October 2010) splashed with its story of “World Cup Votes for Sale”, led by its investigative Insight team of journalists. It alleged that

FIFA committee members Amos Adamu and Reynald Temarii had been caught on camera offering their World Cup votes for money. While FIFA eventually removed these members from the committee they also, perversely, criticised the British newspaper for running the story (at the time, the England 2018 bid team was preparing its final round of lobbying). Further *Sunday Times* revelations about FIFA corruption were compounded by the decision of the BBC to broadcast a *Panorama* television investigation into FIFA corruption on 29 November, just days before the vote on the location of the 2018 World Cup was due to take place. Andy Anson, the leader of the England bid, attacked the BBC decision as 'unpatriotic' (*The Independent*, 18 November 2010) and met with the director general of the BBC, Mark Thompson, asking him not to run the programme until after the vote. Thompson, responsible for overall journalistic editorial control at the BBC, was clear that the programme was in the public interest and it was aired carrying new and substantive claims against the integrity and transparency of the running of FIFA.

The England bid team was humiliated at the vote in Zurich, exiting in the first round with support from just two members of the committee. FIFA signalled that the adverse publicity in the UK media was a factor in the vote (despite the fact the president, Blatter, always favoured Russia for 2018, and in reality England was never in the running). As I watched the FIFA event live from Zurich on BBC television, I was receiving tweets from journalists in the arena who were telling me that the England bid had failed even before the announcement was made by Blatter. Minutes later, the live BBC coverage was repeating that they were hearing via journalists on Twitter that the news was not good for England. If nothing else, modern social media and rolling 24/7 news was stealing the thunder around the dramatic announcement, carefully stage managed by FIFA in Zurich. Such major sporting announcements will never be quite the same again in the age of social media.

A couple of other points are worth highlighting. The lead newspaper investigation into FIFA was not carried out by sports journalists but by dedicated investigative reporters. This lack of scrutiny from sports news journalists was also picked up by Andrew Jennings, who fronted the BBC *Panorama* investigation into FIFA. Jennings has been investigating FIFA for nearly a decade, as a freelance journalist, and censured the UK sports news reporters for failing to investigate fully the governance of the world game (Ponsford 2010). Sports journalists replied that many did not have the luxury of taking months away from filing copy to investigate stories in the way that Jennings was able to manage; they argued that they worked with economic and institutional constraints that often made it difficult to justify the amount of time, energy and money required to carry out such reporting. The broader economic and cost-cutting culture of journalism certainly makes such investigations less likely. Indeed only a handful of media organisations in the UK carry out such

investigative journalism at all, let alone investigate the interface between sport, politics and commerce.

Another point that is striking about this case is the naivety of Andy Anson, the England 2018 bid leader, in thinking that the BBC, a public service broadcaster and the main provider of journalism in the UK, would simply stand back and sit on a story that it could broadcast to maximum impact. It suggests that many in the elite end of sports governance, whether the FA or FIFA, still do not understand how modern 24/7 digital journalism operates, and that calling sports organisations to account, however uncomfortable that may be, is a central element of healthy journalistic practice.

The issue of governance in sport, and the role of journalism in exposing and calling to account those in positions of power, has clearly become more complex as sports see themselves as part of the entertainment industries, often mobilising the same PR techniques and the use of the same PR companies as are found in, say, Hollywood (Boyle 2006).

Tales from the frontline of social media sports journalism

A number of other areas of interest are emerging as the new rules of engagement between the sports industry, journalists and supporters continue to develop in the digital age. New sources of stories are one aspect that the rise of blogging and social media offer. Of course, a major issue remains of trust, accuracy and the legitimate nature of the source when stories and often rumours fly around the Internet. These are all the things that journalism is supposed to address as it mediates information, but of course in the 24/7 news culture and in an information era saturated with public relations and media management practice, these are often aspects on which journalism falls down. As noted earlier, the idea that we are all journalists is patently not true.

When, in 2010, a story broke in Scotland, and then beyond, about the head of refereeing at the Scottish Football Association (SFA) being involved in forwarding an e-mail that insulted the Pope and made light of child abuse, a media firestorm erupted. When the flames had died down, the former FIFA referee Hugh Dallas had been dismissed from his post at the SFA. What became known as 'Dallagate' raised the issue of the role of an anti-Catholic culture in modern Scotland and the debate about the role football and the footballing authorities may or may not play in this process.

What is of interest here is that the story was broken, not by a newspaper, but by an online freelance journalist who carried the story on his own website. Phil Mac Giolla Bhain was actually based in Ireland and was tipped off about the story before investigating further. He live-blogged for much of the time the story raged in the mainstream media. The story only gained traction,

however, when picked up by mainstream newspapers that broke it to their readers and the broader media a day later. One interesting caveat to this story was that, with some exceptions, most papers refused to acknowledge that the original source of the story was an online journalist not associated with the mainstream Scottish media. It also highlights the extent to which, in a social media culture, exclusive stories do not stay that way for long. While this has always been the case, the immediacy of Twitter and its ability to snowball a story means that an original scoop can have an even shorter shelf life than ever before in news media terms.

This pace of information exchange is also well illustrated by the case of Sky Sports and the row about sexism among some of its star football broadcasters that took place in early 2011. When the Sky Sports presenter Richard Keys and football analyst Andy Gray were recorded talking disparagingly about a female assistant referee and calling into question her professional ability purely based on her gender (they thought their microphones were off), and the material was leaked to the media, the social networking sites came into their own. More behind the scenes unbroadcast material from Sky Sports involving both men in making lewd comments were posted on YouTube (clearly by someone from inside the production team at Sky with access to this material), and then the link to the video evidence circulated via Twitter and was thus picked up by other journalists, media outlets and sports fans. Again, the firestorm generated across all the online and offline media, including mainstream television news, resulted in Sky's bowing to pressure to sack Gray, and within days Keys position also became untenable and he resigned. There was less than a week between the story going live and the two broadcasters' long careers at Sky coming to an end.

Twitter has also, to some extent, disrupted some of the well established patterns through which the sports industry engages with journalists across the media sectors. As Scott Dougal, deputy sports editor at the Press Association news agency noted:

The Internet, and social media in particular, means the traditional media can be bypassed, the fans reached directly. Nowhere is access under greater pressure than in top-flight football. Take one major Premier League club as an example. For a Sunday afternoon game on live television, the manager spends well over an hour talking to the media on Friday but this is broken down as follows:

- 20 minutes with the club's in-house web TV station.
- 10-12 minutes with a mixture of TV, radio and agencies.
- 15 minutes with daily newspapers – content which is embargoed until 10.30 pm the day before the game.
- 10 minutes with Sunday newspapers.
- A further 15 minutes with rights-holding broadcasters.

You will notice that twenty-five minutes of this precious hour is taken up by newspaper reporters, who still enjoy a privileged existence at most football clubs. They get to listen to much of what has already been asked before following up with their own questions, the answers to which are subject to strict embargoes. This privilege is ferociously defended and clubs, recognising the role the print media still plays in setting the news agenda, are mostly accommodating. Indeed, some savvy managers are known to save titbits for the papers in the hope it will keep them onside. Just as an aside: there has been some disruption to this set-up, wrought by Twitter with newspaper reporters live-blogging from the broadcast press conferences and breaking stories before the video can be edited.⁵

Another feature is journalists' tweeting about exclusive stories they plan to carry in their print editions later that day or next day, or using Twitter to link to liveblogs with breaking stories.

The interactive nature of Twitter has, however, taken some journalists by surprise. Patrick Barclay is an award winning football writer, currently working for *The Times*. He quit Twitter in November 2010 in the light of the abusive tweets he received after making live comments about the outstanding ability of Tottenham Hotspur's Gareth Bale. Barclay rejoined Twitter a few weeks later, but of course one of the aspects of the immediate interactive comment that the live micro-blogging site allows is to question the authority and value judgments of journalists. In addition, much of the sporting online debate is characterised by partisan and hostile comment, which the nature of the platform encourages in a way that face-to-face debate makes more difficult.

The ongoing issuing of online death threats to a high profile football manager such as Neil Lennon of Celtic (on the basis that he is an Irish Catholic) signals the downside of online sports culture, indicating that this online culture has the ability to galvanise and reinforce reactionary thinking as well as to offer the possibility of extending the parameters for rational discourse.

Conclusion

As the comment from Kevin Roberts at the start of this article indicated, the broader transformation of the media has helped facilitate the expansion in media comment about sports and the sports industry. This is of course not a new process. Satellite technology in the 1960s brought live sport across the Atlantic and the globe through television (the first live television pictures via satellite broadcast in the UK in the early 1960s were from a baseball game in Chicago). The restructuring of the newspaper industry in the 1980s saw intense competition between newspapers for sports related content that altered the relationship between journalists and those they reported, as money and the

drive to attain exclusive content drove a wedge between journalists and sports stars (Boyle 2006). Increased competition in the television market in the late 1980s and early 1990s saw a massive escalation in the value of sports rights, and that money, flowing to the elite stars, helped widen the distance between journalists and athletes.

As sports became the battering ram of the pay-TV market as exclusive sports content drove subscribers, so too did the relationship between newspapers and the sports industry change. It was pay-TV that was the financial underwriter of sports such as football, and it was they, rather than the print media, who had first call on access to the stars they were paying and also helping to create via media exposure. By the late 1990s, 24/7 rolling news was the norm, soon to be augmented by the rise of the always-on Internet and the disruptive nature of digital technology. The establishment of social media and its integration into mainstream journalism has been rapid and is still evolving. The dominant platforms of, say, Facebook and Twitter are unlikely to reign supreme for too long (remember Bebo or MySpace?), as new companies and ways of organising digital communications continually get reshaped.

As always in media and communication, it is about continuity of practice as well as change. For sports culture, the supporting narratives and background conversations may increasingly take place online and indeed may involve more conversation between journalists, readers and supporters than was previously the case. When, in April 2011, Manchester United's Michael Owen received a hostile reception from supporters of one of his previous clubs, Newcastle United, he lamented on Twitter what he viewed as their misinformed abuse. While Owen used his iPad on the team bus back to Manchester from the game to tweet his thoughts on the breakdown of trust between football stars and the print media, one journalist, Oliver Holt, from *The Mirror*, engaged him in debate. As fans joined the stream, Owen discussed various issues about the changing relationship between elite players and the journalists who report or misquote the players. Here was a clear example of a more open form of debate between fans, journalists and players than is usual on the broadcast media, and an example of the shifting boundaries that social media can, in some circumstances, facilitate. It is also important, however, to note that television remains crucial for the live media experience. Social media have also extended some sports journalists' conversation with their fan base. As was noted above in the case of Patrick Barclay, given the coarseness into which some sporting debate can descend this is not always a comfortable or indeed, at times, even a rationale debate. But it is dialogue of sorts, and once it is started it is difficult to switch off.

Some final observations from the UK experience may be specific to the media sports culture here or are, perhaps, increasingly part of a wider journalism culture. First, there remains a fixation with 'hard news' in sports journalism

and while a more reflective element of sports journalism has grown in the last decade or so, the hard news end of the market remains more pronounced than, say, in the US sports journalism arena.

Second, there are differing journalistic cultures across differing sports. The golf journalists who ignored the various antics of Tiger Woods (taking place off the golf course, but connected to the PR and corporate image being constructed around him) had perhaps one of the most intimate relationships between those who make the news and those who report it. Golf journalists appeared to have been among the last of the journalistic fraternity to have their all too cosy relationship with the players pushed into the limelight. Under scrutiny, golf journalism does not display any great evidence of journalistic rigour in calling to account those who play and run the game and the massive PR and marketing circus that have grown up around the global television-driven sport of golf.

The arrival of social media and a growing online journalistic presence means that the ability to keep a story such as the Tiger Woods sex scandal 'in-house' becomes more difficult if not impossible. Reputation management has become the new mantra for those working within sports PR as they attempt to police how digital media represent their clients (Boyle and Haynes 2011). What starts as an online rumour, for example, can very quickly gain traction through various other media outlets and platforms. Thus, when in July 2008 the *Daily Telegraph* in the UK reported that the then Manchester United player Cristiano Ronaldo had risked injury by 'living it up' at a Hollywood nightclub, they were reproducing rumours given fuel by Internet chat rooms. Ronaldo sued the Telegraph Media Group and in 2010 he won substantial libel damages against the organisation for damage to his professional reputation. Expect more court action in the years to come as a media hungry for content in an increasingly competitive media market exposes the reputations of sports stars – while, at the same time, stars will resort to pre-emptive legal action in attempts to gag mainstream media reporting, and online rumours will continue to circulate.

Sports journalists will remain crucial cultural intermediaries in the relationship between sports culture and its fans, but their growing interactive relationship with fans and changing access to information will evolve as social media become more ubiquitous, and central to fan culture.

Sport no longer exists, in media terms, merely within the confines of 'sports news and comment'. The boundaries between public and private and between what we define as 'news' and as 'sport' are increasingly porous and ill-defined. The relationships between sport and ethics, sport and national identity, sport and the law, and sport and money are only some of the areas which have grown in media coverage in the last few years. The age of social media will speed up that process and add a layer of complexity to what is an age-old

battle between those who wish to control news agendas and manage sporting reputations and those we task to bear witness to sport and also to call the powerful in sports culture to account.

Notes

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I

Mediated Fan Culture in Newspapers

Chapter 3

An Exemplary Model

The Religious Significance of the Brann 2007 Norwegian Football Championship as Told by the Media

Peter Dahlén

This chapter explores the vocabulary and the imagery employed in the newspaper coverage when the Brann football team from Bergen, Norway, won the Norwegian 2007 premier league, the club's first premier league championship since the 1963 season. The aim is to study the cultural and religious significance of football as an arena for the regenerating of local identities and local community through investigating the football coverage in the two daily newspapers in Bergen, the broadsheet *Bergens Tidende* (BT) and the tabloid *Bergensavisen* (BA). A coffee table book, *2007: The Year the Gold Came Home* (Brundtland 2007) will also be included in the analysis. The argument in this chapter rests on the relationship between religion, myth and sport, and especially on the scholar of religion Mircea Eliade's recognition that, in the words of Joseph L. Price, "many forms of contemporary secular rituals manifest fundamental religious proclivities of human beings and reflect the sacred rites and myths of previous, religiously oriented cultures" (Price 2001: 8).

There was immense interest from these two local newspapers throughout the final period of the championship. What was significant is the manner in which they depicted Brann, its fans and the players as heroes, and the significance they conferred on the gold medal for the city of Bergen. Through their coverage, the newspapers contributed to establishing a myth of origin, regeneration and a new beginning for Bergen's inhabitants through the deeds of the Brann team of 2007, as well as of the equally successful team of 1963.

BA created a page banner with the text "Get the Gold Medal Home!" ("Gullet ska' hem!"), and changed it to "The Gold Came Home!" when victory was secured. This page banner was used on every page containing articles on the subject, even weeks after the gold was secured. The banners re-appeared now and again, even in other BA articles about the gold-winning team, and then continued, rather exploitatively, to be applied to other successful sports clubs from Bergen as well. The other newspaper, BT, followed suit and created its own page banner, "The Gold Has Come Home" ("Gullet e' heme"), and used

it on every page containing articles on the subject. After victory was secured on 23 October 2007, its entire front page consisted of a single picture of the team's coach being carried by supporters, with the headline "The Gold Came Home" running across the top of the page.

A hypothesis in this chapter is that the focus on the gold was nurtured by nostalgia, a term that describes a longing for the past and that often occurs in an idealised form. In this case, I will argue that what was paramount was a longing for togetherness and a sense of shared destiny within the city and its vicinity. By winning the gold for the first time in forty-four years, Brann was used by the press to reconnect to older times and to the football heroes of 1963, to a local and well-known "home". The gold medal seems to have prompted a re-appearance of the community spirit. I will analyse the press coverage of these aspects, and how they articulated the different manifestations of the sacred. My empirical material consists primarily of several hundred articles from *BT* and *BA* from between 2006 and 2009, and I will draw attention to a selection of these articles that cast a light on my questions regarding the mythic aspects of the press coverage in 2007 of the Brann gold medal, arguing that the newspapers' depiction of the Brann victory involved different kind of myths. In so doing, I will present a methodology for the religious study of a sporting media event such as this.

Brann – the leading football team in Bergen

In his dissertation on the significance of football as an arena for generating (collective) identities in a Norwegian context in general, and in Bergen (around its leading team, Brann) in particular, Hans Hognestad (2004) investigates the significance of the Brann football club through "its iconic relationship to the city" as experienced by the club's supporters (the word Brann means "fire" and may well have connotations from the Norse language) (Hognestad 2004: 7, 23, 67). "In the contemporary popular context [the football club] Brann is the most central arena for expressing the sentiments and emotions of a civic Bergen identity", Hognestad argues. Brann has no comparable rival in the vicinity (op.cit.: 71). Hognestad even writes about "Brann's central position in the collective Bergen psyche" (op.cit.: 73).

The football club Brann was founded in 1908, and although its sporting hegemony in the city has been challenged from time to time, its position as the most popular football club in Bergen seems to have continued uncontested for more than ninety years (op.cit.: 72). Without doubt, the most prolific – and mythologised – Brann player of all time is Roald Jensen, more often than not referred to by his nickname "Kniksen" (the Norwegian Football Association's player of the year award is named the Kniksen prize in his honour). Kniksen is also something of a national football icon, having made his debut for the

Norwegian national team as a mere seventeen-year old. Reputed for his outstanding technical skills, he won two league championships with Brann in 1962 and 1963 when the Norwegian Football Association first launched the original nationwide first division (op.cit.: 52, 72). Soon after that, he signed a professional contract with the Scottish team Hearts, where he played between 1965 and 1972. Kniksen died in 1987 at the age of forty-four, after an Old Boys training session in Bergen. This “consolidated [his] mythological status in Bergen”, and a statue of Kniksen can now be found immediately outside the Brann stadium gates (op.cit.: 72). Hence, Kniksen appears as the heroic incarnation of Brann, and his statue outside the Brann stadium further confirms the significance of the team and the stadium as a sacred centre for the city of Bergen.

Theory of myths and exemplary models

The work of Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) is particularly useful for a study of the deeper significance of the mediated celebration of the Brann championship in 2007. Eliade is often described by scholars and the popular press alike as the world’s most influential historian of religion, and as the world’s leading interpreter of symbol and myth (Allen 2002: xi). Eliade’s long and prodigious career can be characterised as a prolonged and sustained attempt to locate, describe, and analyse cosmic religious feeling amid the array of religious cultures – and seemingly non-religious cultures – found in the world’s “archaic”, classical, and modern societies, East and West (Holt 1996: xi). Key terms in Eliade’s work are *myth*, *the sacred*, *the real*, *the profane*, *hierophany*, *axis mundi*, *cosmos*, *chaos*, *desacralisation*, *cosmic regeneration*, and *the regeneration of time*.

In his book *The Sacred and the Profane*, Eliade’s aim is to illustrate and define the *sacred* as the opposite of the *profane*, and to show that *sacred* and *profane* are two modes of being in the world, two existential situations assumed by man in the course of history (Eliade 1987: 10, 14). The sacred always manifests itself as a reality of a wholly different order from the “natural” realities, and man becomes aware of the sacred precisely because it is entirely different from the profane.

To designate the *act of manifestation* of the sacred, Eliade proposed the term *hierophany*. According to Eliade, it could be argued that “the history of religions – from the most primitive to the highly developed – is constituted by a great number of hierophanies, by manifestations of sacred realities” (op.cit.: 10, 11). It is impossible, Eliade maintains,

to overemphasise the paradox represented by every hierophany, even the most elementary. By manifesting the sacred, any object becomes *something else*, yet it continues to remain *itself*, for it continues to participate in its surrounding cosmic milieu. A *sacred* stone remains a *stone*; apparently (or,

more precisely, from the profane point of view), nothing distinguishes it from all other stones. But for those to whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality is transmuted into a supernatural reality (op. cit.: 12).

According to Eliade, desacralisation pervades the entire experience of the non-religious man in modern societies. Consequently, he finds it increasingly difficult to rediscover the existential dimension of the religious man in archaic societies (op.cit.: 13). However, some forms of “mythical behaviour” still survive today: “This does not mean that they represent ‘survivals’ of an archaic mentality. But certain aspects and functions of mythical thought are constituents of the human being” (Eliade 1998: 181-182). Eliade argues that this can, for instance, be seen in the survival of the prestige attributed to “origin” in European societies: “At the dawn of the modern World the ‘origin’ enjoyed an almost magical prestige. To have a well-established ‘origin’ meant, when all was said and done, to have the advantage of a noble origin” (op.cit.: 182). In Judaeo-Christian ideology and in Marxist ideology we find eschatological myths – archetypal stories – about the ultimate struggle between Good and Evil, as well as a hope of an *absolute (end to) History* and a return to paradise: the apocalyptic conflict between Christ and Antichrist, ending in the decisive victory of the former and the resurrection of the dead; the redeeming role of the Just Man (the proletariat), whose sufferings are destined to change the ontological status of the World (the classless society) (op.cit.: 183-184).

It is of the utmost importance to fully understand Eliade’s definition of myth. For him, in archaic societies, “myth” means a “true story” and, beyond that, a story that is a most precious possession because it is sacred, exemplary, significant (op.cit.: 1). Mythic time is sacred time, and mythic history is sacred history. Myth thus has an irreducibly religious structure and function. Whenever Eliade points to mythical behaviour, he is directing us to certain kinds of religious behaviour (Allen 2002: 65). All expressions are necessarily symbolic, but not all religious phenomena may be subsumed under the category of myth (Eliade also investigates non-mythic religious data). All myths are religious, however. According to Eliade’s definition,

[m]yth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the “beginnings” [*in illo tempore*]. In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality – an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a ‘creation’; it relates how something was produced, began to *be* (Eliade 1998: 5-6).

Since it is the sudden breakthrough of the sacred that really establishes the world and makes it what it is today, myths describe the various and sometimes

dramatic breakthroughs of the sacred (or the “supernatural”) into the world (ibid.). A fact that Eliade considers essential is that “the myth is regarded as a sacred story, and hence a ‘true history’, because it always deals with *realities*” (ibid.). The foremost function of myth is “to reveal the exemplary models for all human rites and all significant human activities – diet or marriage, work or education, art or wisdom” (op.cit.: 8). Furthermore, all religious acts are held to have been founded by gods, civilising heroes, or mythical ancestors: among primitives, “not only do rituals have their mythical model but any human act whatsoever acquires effectiveness to the extent to which it exactly *repeats* an act performed at the beginning of time by a god, a hero, or an ancestor” (Eliade 2005: 22). Thus, religious acts are model acts, which men merely repeat time and again.

In accordance with this, Eliade has abstracted a conception of time that is cyclical, and harbouring nostalgia (Rennie 1996: 78-79). However, the nostalgia is not directed to a chronological past, an actual or historical condition. On the contrary, nostalgia is directed to an imaginary ideal that nonetheless functions as an exemplar. In the primitive conception,

a new era begins not only with every new reign but also with the consummation of every marriage, the birth of every child, and so on. For the cosmos and man are regenerated ceaselessly and by all kinds of means, the past is destroyed, evils and sins are eliminated, etc. Differing in their formulas, all these instruments of regeneration tend toward the same end: to annul past time, to abolish history by a continuous return *in illo tempore* [the holy time of the beginnings], by the repetition of the cosmogonic act (Eliade 2005: 81).

For man in archaic societies, what happened *ab origine* can be repeated by the power of rites. The essential thing was to know the myths – essential not only because the myths provided man with an explanation of the world and his own mode of being in the world, but above all because, by recollecting the myths, by re-enacting them, he was able to repeat what the gods, the heroes, or the ancestors did *ab origine* (Eliade 1998: 13-14). Hence the “essential importance, in rituals and myths, of anything which can signify the ‘beginning’, the original, the primordial” (for instance the motifs of the child, the orphan and so forth) (Eliade 2005: 81). To know the myths is to learn the secret of the origin of things. In other words, one learns not only how things came into existence, but also where to find them and how to make them reappear when they disappear.

“Living” a myth, then, implies a genuinely “religious” experience. It differs from the ordinary experience of everyday life; since the “religiousness” of this experience is due to the fact that when one re-enacts fabulous, exalting, significant events, one again witnesses the creative deeds of the supernaturals. One ceases to exist in the everyday world and enters a transfigured, auroral world impregnated with the supernaturals’ presence:

The protagonists of the myth are made present, one becomes their contemporary. This also implies that one is no longer living in chronological time, but in the primordial Time, the Time when the event *first took place*. This is why we can use the term the “strong time” of myth; it is the prodigious, “sacred” time when something *new, strong*, and *significant* was manifested. To re-experience that time, to re-enact it as often as possible, to witness again the spectacle of the divine works, to meet with the Supernaturals and relearn their creative lesson is the desire that runs like a pattern through all the ritual reiterations of myths. In short, myths reveal that the World, man, and life have supernatural origin and history, and that this history is significant, precious, and exemplary (Eliade 1998: 19).

Eliade also recognises the mythical structures of the images and behaviour patterns imposed on collectivities by mass media and popular culture (Eliade 1998: 184-193; Eliade 1985: 45-46; cf. Price 2001: 8; Miller-McLemore 2001). His examples include Superman and the characters of the comic strip that represent the modern version of mythological or folklore heroes, and the detective novel, where the reader witnesses the exemplary struggle between good and evil, between the hero (the detective) and the criminal (the modern incarnation of the demon). The mythicisation of public figures and the transformation of personality into exemplary image exist through the mass media. The aim of this chapter is thus to show how the world of professional sports, and in particular its media coverage, is close at hand as an example of these ever ongoing mythical processes.

Method

As a historian of religion, Eliade was concerned with religio-historical facts. He repeatedly claimed to employ an “empirical” approach to myth and other religious phenomena (Allen 2002: 5). Eliade engaged in the comparative study of religions, with the overall aim of grasping a variety of manifestations and modalities of the sacred in a wide range of materials. In describing and analysing the patterns and meanings of myths, rituals, symbols, and types of religious experiences, Eliade “seemingly moved effortlessly from his knowledge of one religious culture to another, producing a kaleidoscope of examples in support of his general assertions regarding the common modalities of the sacred” (Holt 1996: xiii; Miller-McLemore 2001: 116-17; cf. Eliade 1967: 13, 231-235).

Eliade frequently wrote about the principle of separate “planes of reality” and about the need to approach the religious plane as an autonomous world of reality. “The most important principles allowing Eliade to distinguish religious phenomena are the irreducibility of the religious and the dialectic of the sacred and the profane” (Allen 2002: 8-9). It is possible to demonstrate the *homologies*

between the different levels and manifestations of the sacred. Homology is defined as the correspondence between elements at distinct levels, a structural “resonance” between the different elements constituting a socio-cultural whole. As explained by Bryan S. Rennie, the word “homology” in Eliade’s works “has the sense of being ‘of the same rational structure’”. Thus, ‘homologisation’ or ‘to homologise’ will carry a sense of assimilation or integration, or having a logical structure” (Rennie 1996: 51 fn. 3, cf. 20-21).

It is of central importance to examine how the sacred is revealed – what sort of forms the sacred will take – at different levels, for instance at *cosmic* levels such as sky, water, earth, and stone. Eliade accords each piece of evidence of the sacred the title *hierophany* because each one expresses some of the modality of the sacred. He stresses that “the religious historian must trace not only the *history* of a given hierophany, but must first of all understand and explain the modality of the sacred that that hierophany discloses” (Eliade 1996: 4-5). For instance, “a study of the hierophanies of sky and water will provide us with data enabling us to understand both exactly what the manifestations of the sacred means at those particular cosmic levels, and how far those hierophanies constitute autonomous forms” (op.cit: xviii-xix). He then continues to the *biological* hierophanies (the rhythm of the moon, the sun, vegetation and agriculture, sexuality), the *local* hierophanies (consecrated places, temples) and, finally, *myths* and *symbols*.

Eliade underlines that we must get used to the idea of recognising hierophanies “absolutely everywhere”, that “anything man has ever handled, felt, come in contact with or loved *can* become a hierophany. [...] It is a very different matter to find *why* that particular thing should have become a hierophany, or should have stopped being one at any given moment” (op.cit.: 11).

This focus on deep structures and meanings in cultural material is in line with what James W. Carey (1992) describes in his book *Communication as Culture* as “a ritual view of communication”. According to Carey, two alternative conceptions of communication, that is, a transmission view of communication and a ritual view of communication, have existed in American culture since the term entered common discourse in the nineteenth century (Carey 1992: 14-15). The transmission view of communication is based on a metaphor of geography and transportation, and is defined by terms such as “imparting”, “sending”, “transmitting”, or “giving information to others”. The ritual view of communication, on the other hand

is by far the older of those views – old enough in fact for dictionaries to list it under “Archaic.” In a ritual definition, communication is linked to terms such as “sharing,” “participation,” “association,” “fellowship,” and “the possession of a common faith.” This definition exploits the ancient identity and common roots of the terms “commonness,” “communion,” “community,” and “communication” (op.cit.: 18).

A ritual view of communication is directed, not towards the extension of messages in space (as is the transmission view of communication), but “toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs” (ibid.). Here, I will apply a ritual view of communication. This has methodological implications, since it prompts me to focus on a different range of problems in examining newspaper coverage: “It will, for example, view reading a newspaper less as sending or gaining information and more as attending a mass, a situation in which nothing new is learned but in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed” (Carey 1992: 20). Of course, a ritual view of communication does not exclude the processes of information transmission or attitude change (it would certainly be strange and downright meaningless if we do not acquire new knowledge from reading a newspaper or magazine article) – it merely contends that one cannot fully understand these processes except insofar as they are cast within an essentially ritualistic view of communication and social order (op.cit.: 21-22).

Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1992) apply a ritualistic view of communication in their examination of the live broadcasting of history in *Media Events*, subdivided into “the story forms, or ‘scripts,’ which constitute the main narrative possibilities within the genre” and which determine the distribution of roles within each type of event and the ways in which they will be enacted: contests, conquests, and coronations (Dayan & Katz 1992: 25). As demonstrated by Dayan and Katz, these three forms are closely intertwined: “Indeed, the most dramatic cases speak of an initial Contest, then a Conquest, and finally a Coronation – just as in fairy tales [...]” (op.cit.: 27).

It can be argued that the final victory of Brann in 2007 started as a contest, whereupon the heroes of Brann conquered the (arena) territory of all the other teams and restored the order that was broken in 1964 (in 2007 they once again became the rulers of Norwegian football by “bringing the gold home”), followed by the ceremonial coronation where the team received their gold medals and were celebrated by the inhabitants of Bergen and the media alike.

According to Dayan and Katz, great news events speak of accident, of disruption, while “great ceremonial events celebrate order and its restoration” (op.cit.: 9). They regard media events (if we choose to join them, that is) as holidays from our daily routines that spotlight some central value or some aspect of collective memory: “Often such events portray an idealised version of society, reminding society of what it aspires to be rather than what it is” (op.cit.: ix, 1). All such events are also hailed as *historic*, as “they strive to mark a new record, to change an old way of doing or thinking, or to mark the passing of an era” (op.cit.: 12).

Furthermore, the message is one of *reconciliation*, in which participants and audiences are “invited to unite in the overcoming of conflict or at least in its postponement or miniaturisation. Almost all of these events have heroic

figures around whose *initiatives* the reintegration of society is proposed” (ibid.). Dayan and Katz even wonder whether the media-event genre may not be “an expression of a *neo-romantic desire for heroic action* by great men followed by the spontaneity of mass action” (Dayan & Katz 1992: 21, emphasis original).

I shall examine the ways in which, and the degree to which, the celebration of the Brann 2007 championship corresponds with these ritual definitions of communication as observed by Dayan and Katz. The definitions fit within the framework of this study since the media, here mainly in the form of the local newspapers, 1) portray Bergen as a city wholly united in the worship of the deeds of its team, Brann, 2) mark the passing of an era of forty-four years since the last championship in 1963, and 3) have heroic figures – the football players and their coaches – around whose actions and initiatives the reintegration of society (that is, Bergen) is proposed.

Conquering not only space but also time, media events have, as pointed out above, the power to declare a holiday, thus to play a part, in the words of Dayan and Katz, “in the *civil religion*: Like religious holidays, major media events mean an interruption of routine, days off from work, norms of participation in ceremony and ritual, concentration on some central value, the experience of *communitas* and equality in one’s immediate environment and of integration with a cultural center” (op.cit.: 16). This analogy between media events and civil religion may be pointing to Carey as well as to Eliade. Carey points out that for those who arrive at the question from anthropology, the archetypal form of communication is ritual and mythology (Carew 1992: 43). In accordance with this, he examines communication as a process by which reality is constituted, maintained, and transformed, thus advocating a ritual view of communication emphasising the production of a coherent world, which is, for all practical purposes, presumed to exist: “It is to emphasise the construction and maintenance of paradigms rather than experiments; presuppositions rather than propositions; the frame, not the picture” (op.cit.: 85).

This ritual view that understands communication as a process through which a shared culture is created has some obvious similarities with that of Eliade’s. In his book *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Eliade has documented the presence of one sort of “archaic ontology” in a number of ancient civilisations – one that claims that “proper human praxis in all its modalities repeats the models provided by divine activities as displayed in myths; and that, therefore, values human creativity to the degree that it is imitative, rather than freely original” (Eliade 1998: xii-xiii).

When exploring the media coverage of the celebration of the Brann victory in 2007, I will make use of these methods, in particular Eliade’s approach, in trying to locate the love and worship of the victorious team in the *hierophanies* that, at various structural levels, ‘express[es] some of the modality of the sacred’ (that is, Brann). It is, however, scarcely possible to account for the contents

and the interconnections of the hundreds of newspaper articles published on the issue of the Brann gold medal, and I shall therefore concentrate on four levels of Eliade's method: first, the level of music and plays; second, the level of re-birth and re-generation; third, the level of abundance; and fourth, the level of sacred places.

It would also have been possible to include the level of superheroes, but I have chosen to concentrate on four of the levels that do not focus on the Brann players specifically, although the majority of the articles deal, in one way or another, with the players of the victorious 2007 team, and are rife with reference to the heroes of the 1963 team. Let me merely mention how sacred values are ascribed to the players. In the *BA* coffee table book *2007: The Year the Gold Came Home*, the very first picture in the chronological story of the heroic journey towards victory shows the player Thorstein Helstad in the desert sand dunes during a training camp at Gran Canaria. The photo caption "Out of the desert" reads:

Legend has it that Moses wandered about the desert for forty years and that his people were thirsty. In Bergen [being a harbour city] water is never scarce, but it has taken 44 years to quench the thirst for gold. Thorstein Helstad showed promise at the first training camp of the year in Gran Canaria. He will be one of the key players to secure the gold for Brann, in a season that might well become victorious for both Helstad and Brann. In the sand dunes, he is thirsty for success (Brundtland 2007: 4-5).

The parallel to the biblical Moses is clear. According to the Old Testament, Moses saved Israel from Egyptian bondage and headed the exodus out of Egypt. Similarly, Helstad is positioned to lead Brann, and by implication, the city of Bergen, out of its forty-four year long bondage in the series, which, for too long, has been ruled by other teams. After forty-four years of drought, Brann is set to become the victorious ruler over Norwegian football territory and its own destiny, before they may finally quench their thirst with a Golden Beer manufactured for the occasion. Sacred characteristics are thus ascribed to Helstad.

Music and plays

The newspaper page banner "The Gold Came Home" was inspired by a song created by Brann supporters in April 2007, entitled "Take the Gold Home" ("Gullet ska hem"). After some time, it was uploaded to the Internet, to the Brann fanzine *Barten* (The Moustache) among others (Ullebø 2011). It could be heard at various pubs and bars in downtown Bergen, as well as during Brann's matches. Half a year later, the song appeared virtually everywhere: the mobile

phone distributors Chess issued a “Take the Gold Home” ring tone, the home appliances retailer Expert featured a “Take the Gold Home” sale, and Bergen’s confectioners sold “Take the Gold Home” layered cakes.

The history of the song, however, actually begins on the Caribbean island of Nassau, from where the folk song “The John B. Sails” originates. The song has been recorded by a good many artists throughout the 1900s, for example “The Wreck of John B.” with the Kingston Trio in 1958, “I Want to go Home” with Johnny Cash in 1959, and the most famous version, “Sloop John B.” with the Beach Boys in 1966. It was “Sloop John B.” which was turned into “Take the Gold Home”. The song might also be considered as a form of magic call for a long sought-after goal, reminiscent of psalms about revered deities and their deeds.

When Brann finally won the championship, a new song was written by musicians and other supporters, and released on CD. The song was entitled “The Gold Came Home”, and the flip side of the cover outlines its history:

A pack of friends of devout Brann supporters had been waiting for 16.060 days, 385.440 hours and 23.126.400 minutes for the Gold to finally come home. During the fall of 2007, the series results were promising. To mark the event, it was decided that if the Gold finally made it home, someone ought to shoulder the task of making the real Gold song the city deserves. The 44 year long wait vouches for the necessity of doing so. In a pure frenzy of joy, people gathered to produce a song that the city of Bergen, the team and its supporters deserve. “The Gold Came Home” is produced by mere enthusiasm and volunteerism for Brann supporters by Brann supporters. (Copyright Tinnitus Recording; translation by Hilde Arntsen)

The text further details how “The Gold Came Home” was “produced, recorded, mixed and mastered [...] in an ecstatic frenzy of joy over the final return of the Gold”. Here, we learn about the “Gold” that has finally “come home”, that the Brann fans and the people behind the song acted in an “ecstatic state of frenzy”, and that the fans and their feelings are considered to be “authentic”, that is, for real. Such themes and motifs can also be found in the song’s lyrics, for instance: “We never gave up/Since 1963/This has been our dream/Never lost faith even while down/We’ve been waiting for a long time/The journey was long and winding/Because we are the best/We are Brann/The Gold came home/To the world’s best city/The team is Brann, Brann, Brann” (ibid.). In these lyrics, past and present merge with the city of Bergen, the team and its supporters, again and again referring to supporters and the team as the bonded “we”.

The longing among Bergen’s inhabitants to re-live what happened *ab origine* in 1963 was also the theme, according to the advertisements in both *BT* and *BA*, of a “musical piece about the longing for the Gold”, that premiered on 13 September 2007, entitled “Thicker than water, a heart-warming and fun show

about the passion for Brann". Ahead of the opening night, the broadsheet *Bergens Tidende* ran an advertisement for the show. To the right of a photo of the actors framed inside a football one could read, "The Gold must come home!". As can be seen in a photo in the book *2007: The Year the Gold Came Home*, the show's leading actor, Helge Jordal, is joined on stage after the performance by some of the "Brann Heroes of 1963" (Bruntland 2007: 110).

On 14 September, the day after the show's opening night, *BT* carried a photo from the play on its front page, under the religiously themed headline "The Dream about getting to Heaven". In the photo, the "super supporter" Finten, played by the Brann blogger Eduardo "Doddo" Andersen, is "resurrected as a supporter angel". He sports wings on his back and is clad in Brann match gear. In the caption, we can read that even the other characters in the play "join in on the devout wish for a Brann Gold". As in the songs "The Gold Must Come Home" and "The Gold Came Home", there is a ritual call for the sanctified primordial act of 1963, and the intense longing to experience this anew. The director Arvid Ones commented on the theatre audience's joy in expressing this: "Acting was fun when the Gold was almost home. People really joined in on the singing during our October performances. There was true colour and festivities" (*BA* 9 November 2001: 25). After the Gold had been secured, the show reopened at Rick's Stage on 9 November. The ads in both *BA* and *BT* were then appropriately altered to "The Gold Came Home!".

Re-birth and re-generation

On 8 May 1945, the Nazi occupation of Norway ended, and the Norwegian people could once more reign over their national territory and destiny. People used to speak about the country being resurrected. The celebration of liberty, peace and order in May 1945 became a deeply mythical event in the country's history. So did, without any further comparisons, the 2007 Brann victory.

BT established the homology between the two events, when the gold celebrations were termed "the greatest celebration in Bergen since Independence" (*BT* 27 October 2007, part 2: 1). In *BT's Gold Supplement (Gullmagasinet)* on 23 October (2007: 74), sports columnist Knut Langeland writes about "the resurrection of the club", which can be homologised at the same structural level as the resurrection of Norway after the Nazi occupation. Thus, the 2007 Brann victory was generally regarded as a restoration of an exemplary order created by the reigning champions of 1963. It was no coincidence therefore that the main anchor of the TV2 sports show, Davy Wathne, compared Brann to a pregnant woman, and the Gold to a new-born baby, which, like Brann, had to struggle its way towards birth (*BA* 24 October 2007: 29). The analogy here is that Brann appears to be re-born, as did Norway in 1945.

The themes, not merely of resurrection, but rather of re-birth and re-generation, occurred frequently in the coverage of the 2007 victory, and continued to do so for almost two years afterwards. This was especially so in articles about babies, a new generation of human beings born around the time of the Brann victory. On 24 October 2007, *BA* carried a two-page article under the banner “The Gold Came Home!”, with the title “Here is the Golden Baby!”, and the sub-heading “The Gold came home for Tor Karlsen and Kari Abelsest [...]”. In addition to the Brann gold medal, this Bergen couple also “struck gold” through the birth of their baby girl: “The Gold came home at 9 p.m. Sunday. Seventy minutes later, yet another gold was delivered when this couple got their gold baby. In other words, double gold celebrations!”

The subsequent year, on 10 July 2008, *BT* published an article with the headline “Baby boom following Brann’s Gold Medal”. A photo showed a new-born baby in the arms of her two sisters, aged ten and two. The opening paragraph read: “Nine months to the day after Brann secured the gold medal, the maternity ward in the Haukeland [University Hospital] is filled well beyond capacity.” The article suggests that the victory brought about a will to renew life in Bergen: “Brann’s first gold in 44 years was celebrated by the Bergen inhabitants, again and again. Now nine months later, we are witnessing some of the results of this gold rush.” A month later, on 6 August 2008, the front page of *BA* carried a photo of an infant dressed in Brann’s red outfit, lying on Brann’s red and white flag, with the banner “Baby boom nine months after the Gold”. The headline reads: “Adrian is a real GOLDEN BABY!” A full-page article about the baby boy inside the paper suggests, once again, that the Bergen inhabitants celebrated the Brann gold medal by recreating life in its most concrete sense.

On 26 May 2009, *BA* carried yet another article on the same theme, about the “Golden Boy”, eighteen month-old Julian, who was “born while Bergen celebrated the return of the Gold. The parents then understood that the boy simply had to be something special”. Julian’s photograph occupies the entire front page of a themed section about youth sport; we see him enthusiastically participating in a children’s running competition. For most parents, their child is a *hierophany*, the most sacred, and a revelation on a microcosmical scale of the creation of cosmos. It is precisely this sense of the sacred in the creation of life that these articles convey to the readers. This is in line with Eliade’s point: “Every idea of renewal, or beginning again, of restoring what once was, at whatever level it appears, can be traced back to the notion of ‘birth’ and that, in its turn, to the notion of ‘the creation of the cosmos’” (Eliade 1996: 412).

The children’s motif could also be found in *BT’s Gold Supplement* on 23 October 2007, in an advertisement for the Stor-Bergen [Greater Bergen] Building Society, with Stor-Bergen congratulating Brann and wishing them the best of luck. The picture shows Brann’s managing director, Bjørn Dahl, placed on

the red stadium seats, holding his arm around a seven-year boy, Ole-Henrik, an avid Brann supporter, a member since 2004, and appropriately dressed in Brann's red outfit. The two look confidently at one another, and the young boy asks Bjørn Dahl: "Tell me once more, Bjørn, about those who helped Brann take the gold home..." (quotation in the ad). Below is another text, which begins: "Yes, Ole-Henrik, the story of Brann and Stor-Bergen is a great story about how we in Bergen manage to succeed if only we cooperate in the right way. Stor-Bergen, my boy, is one of those who construct houses and apartments for us." It is evident that a fairytale form with several mythic levels is employed. The boy asks the adult to tell him, once more, the wonderful tale of how they conquered the gold. When addressing the boy, the supposed voice of Brann's manager Dahl smoothly changes into the voice of Stor-Bergen Building Society, assuming the role of Brann as the city's saviour, telling that Stor-Bergen is the one who "construct houses and apartments for us". In other words, Stor-Bergen appears as the entity which arranges the living world – the cosmos – of Bergen.

The theme of re-birth can most clearly be seen in how the newspapers connect Brann to children, abundance and a sense of common destiny. The cover of the supplement to the *BA* entitled *You and I (Meg og Deg)* on 2 November 2007 carried a photograph from a local kindergarten of a man holding a little girl in his arms. Both are wearing the Brann team suit. The man even holds a toy Brann flag, probably made by the kindergarten children. In the background, more children and an adult can be seen sitting around a decorated table, all wearing Brann team suits. The story's heading reads "Kindergarten Gold Party". The article continues: "The Brann fan and kindergarten assistant Johnny Bersaas (aged 43), pictured here carrying his grandchild Patricia (aged 1,5), threw a gold party for all the 60 children and 19 employees at a kindergarten in Olsvikåsen yesterday."

Inside the supplement, the article occupies two pages, now with the heading "The Gold Came Home to Olsvikåsen", and with the sub-heading "Great Brann Party in Kindergarten". The lead paragraph reads: "The Brann song roars, sparklers are lit, balloons pop. Everybody is having a great party when the gold comes home to Norheim kindergarten." The next paragraph continues, "The pictures say it all. Have a look at the magnificent Brann layer cakes! Check out the kids' cool football suits. Even the sparklers!". Smaller photos underneath the article, lower down the page, show a door decorated with a red heart with the text "My [heart] belongs to Brann". Another photo shows the children "shout[ing] with joy when the sparklers on the awesome Brann cake are being lit up".

Further on, we are told that "60 kids are lined up in Olsvikåsen 33A while devouring Brann cake", and that the kindergarten had not less than three football cakes: the coolest of them, shaped like a Brann football team outfit, has been bought at a baker's in Åsane and has "Series Champion 07, the Gold

came home” as part of the decoration. Even the tables in the kindergarten have been decorated as football fields with goals, players, Brann place cards, red flags, hearts and balloons. The man in the photograph is “party general” Johnny Bersaas, “Brann Super Patriot and kindergarten assistant”. Bersaas and his nineteen colleagues have taken two weeks to plan the party. Bersaas, all dressed in red, who has been a Brann supporter since the age of six, is quoted: “Finally the Gold has come home! This is greater than when we had the cup final party here in 2004.” A five-year-old girl sitting at the table decorated as a football field, says, “Brann has secured the gold. May we start eating our hot dogs now?”. Another five-year-old girl says: “When the football game was over, the players disappeared underground, and when they returned there were fireworks. They got the gold medal and a trophy, just like the one I have at home. See, my Brann outfit is just like theirs. It’s just that I don’t play football.” The sixty children are all singing the Brann supporter song “Brann, go Brann, blood is thicker than water...”.

According to Bersaas, Brann was, at the time, the number one topic of conversation among the children and their parents: “We talk about the players, and all through the summer and the autumn we had a list pinned to the wall showing how Brann was faring in the series.” Bersaas emphasises that it is “important to teach the kids a good supporter culture. Beer, football and kids are not a good combination. The Brann gold is a party for everybody, regardless of age.”

This newspaper article is one of many examples of how Brann partly is being cast as the symbolic and spiritual centre of Bergen, and partly connected to children, happiness and abundance. Thus, the article is homologous with the advertisement from the Stor-Bergen Building Society and the articles on the baby boom when the “gold came home”.

Abundance

The “gold” that “came home” becomes a symbol for what victorious heroes in all fairy tales take home with them: the life-giving elixir. In the saga of King Arthur, it is the Holy Grail (a mythical sacred object often found in literature and in certain Christian traditions, most often identified with the dish, plate, or cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper and said to possess miraculous powers). In the football series, it is the gold. With the elixir comes the hope of a dawn of a new “golden age”, espousing harmony and an abundance of material wealth. In antiquity, the golden age was the first of the four world ages, the one where humankind appeared, the happiest and most elevated of the world ages. Hence, the term “golden age” has come to be characterised as climactic within the arts, sports and society in general.

In the media coverage of the Brann gold victory in 2007, examples abound of how this myth of the golden age thematised and shaped the description of food, drink and transport. When winning the league seemed to be within reach, one of the Brann sponsors, the Bergen-based brewery Hansa Borg Bryggerier started planning to launch a “golden beer” with a gold and red label (to combine the colours of gold and Brann), intended to reach the stores as soon as Brann had “secured the football league victory to Bergen” (*dn.no* 2 October 2007). As well as the name, “Golden Beer”, the tribute “The Gold Came Home 2007”, and the slogan “The Pride of Bergen”, even the Bergen’s city hymn *Nystemten*, were printed on the label. Initially, this was not received lightly by the authorities.

According to the Norwegian Directorate of Social Welfare and Health Services, Hansa Brewery was manoeuvring on a legal margin because of the combination of alcohol and sports, and the Bergen golden beer risked being stopped owing to the Norwegian ban on alcohol advertising, even though Brann was not even mentioned on the label. The directorate finally gave in, arguing that they did not see any clear breaches of the advertising ban, and that they “[were] not against the inhabitants in Bergen celebrating with beer if Brann wins the championship” (*dn.no* 4 October 2007). Hence, the golden beer was put in production in time for the public celebration of the victory in downtown Bergen, and became an instant success: within two weeks, Hansa doubled its beer sales in Bergen. It goes without saying that the focus on Brann may be behind these figures (*dn.no* 17 and 26 October 2007; *BA* 26 October 2007: 5).

Among other commodities produced for the occasion were gold hotdogs, gold cakes, gold socks, and gold team suits (*BT* 19 October 2007: 30-31; *BA* 24 October 2007: 6-7). One of the main themes in the newspaper articles about all these supposedly good products was that employees and people in general, were treated to layer cake, wheat buns, juice and coffee, etc., as were the kids in the kindergarten mentioned above. The “frenzy cannot be stopped” the *BA* newspaper reported on 27 October. At Bergen’s oldest bakery, Baker Brun, they “started developing a recipe for the Golden Bun”. The managing director’s description of the Golden Bun is a good illustration of *hierophany*: “It was important for us to make a tasty product that will yield a ‘kick’ when sinking one’s teeth into it. It also has to look like gold when holding it in the palm of your hand. It contains just enough patriotism for the Bergen people [...]” (*BA* 27 October 2007: 2). What turns this “Golden Bun” – and other golden commodities issued around the Brann victory – into hierophanies is the fact that they are profane objects which reveal the sacred, in other words, the Brann 2007 victory and the primordial act of 1963 with its superheroes such as Kniksen. A regular edible wheat bun may not in itself appear like gold nor taste like gold, and nor may it contain patriotism. That is only possible when human beings inscribe sacred significance to select profane objects.

The managing director of Baker Brun even contributed to the mediated sense of the abundance and the all-encompassing altruism (which could be found almost everywhere at the time) by his promise that it is “not merely the people at the stadium who may get a taste the goodies”: “Everybody will have a chance to smell and taste the gold. We firmly believe there will be enough for all Brann patriots”, he proclaimed.

Yet another example of *bierophany* can be found among the taxis in Bergen. One of them sported “Bergen Taxi’s Number One” in gold letters, in the hope, as the managing director put it, of being able to “drive the gold home”; that is, the Gold Trophy itself (*BT Sport* section 11 October 2007: 36). Although this was obviously a marketing gimmick by Bergen Taxi, as was much of the other gold focus at the time, there was some sense of abundance and altruism to the article. Bergen Taxi’s customers were able to “call for the gold taxi when going for a spin about town” – and at no extra charge.

Another article on this theme carries the headline “Brann Taxi”. A taxi driver apparently had “a good day at work” during the gold celebrations on 23 October: “My boss allowed me to let loose in terms of party effects, taxi driver and devout Brann fan Christer smilingly proclaims. His car is decorated with Brann flags both at the roof and at the windows. As for his own outfit, he is dressed in red [the Brann team colour] from head to toe.” At the Bergen airport, Flesland, he was summoned by customers who wanted to ride in his minibus with Brann paraphernalia displayed in the front window: “People have been in incredibly good spirits all day, and it’s great fun. Everybody smiles and are much more talkative than normal [...]” (*BA* 24 October 2007: 5).

Here, a taxi, through its connection to the victorious Brann, is ascribed a *bierophany*. It becomes a taxi with something of a sacred value. The information that the taxi driver “was allowed by his boss to let loose” and that people appeared to be happier, kinder and more talkative than usual suggests that the routine and monotonous everyday reality is being exchanged for something better and more joyful, thanks to the historic football victory.

Sacred Places

According to Eliade, every consecrated space coincides with the centre of the world, just as the time of any ritual coincides with the mythical time of the “beginning” (Eliade 2005: 20-21). Because of its position in the centre of the cosmos, the temple or the sacred city is always the centre of the earth and the meeting point of the three cosmic zones or regions: heaven, earth, and hell. This makes the centre an *axis mundi*, as it is along this axis that passage from one cosmic region to another takes place (Eliade 1996: 374-375; Eliade 2005: 12, 17).

When officially celebrating the Brann victory, the Brann stadium was transformed into such a sacred place, into the centre of the world (for the people of Bergen). Symbolically, the meeting point of the three cosmic zones consisted of Brann and Bergen 2007 (earth), the heroes and efforts of the 1963 team (heaven) and all the suffering that the team had to endure during the war-like battles in various arena territories (hell) in order to win the championship (ascend into heaven). Through winning the championship once more and then erecting an altar (podium) at the Brann stadium for the celebration of the team's heroes, there was, as in liturgical time, a periodical recovery of "the holy time of the beginning", of the repetition of an exemplary scenario and the breakaway from profane time through a moment which opens out into "the Great Time" of 1963. This "mythical behaviour" can be compared to the behaviour of man in archaic societies, who finds the very source of his existence in the myth. Therefore, it can be homologised with the archaic myth of the periodic destruction and re-creation of worlds, with the cosmological formula of the myth of the eternal return (Eliade 2005; Eliade 1967: 243; Eliade 1998: 168-69).

A conflict, however, arose around this celebratory event: the newspaper *BT* (*Bergens Tidende*) was banned from transmitting the stadium ceremony over its local TV station Btv. This received considerable coverage in Norway's leading business daily *Dagens Næringsliv*: "Brann might have brought the gold home after forty-four years, but behind the scenes there was a tug of war over the rights to broadcast the event" (15 November 2007: 86). As can be seen, the emotionally and affectively laden words, "gold" and "home" were used even in this newspaper with its nationwide coverage.

The background to the conflict was the 2005 deal in which the nationwide advertising-funded broadcaster TV2, and Canal Digital (which was owned by the Norwegian telecommunication company Telenor) had bought the broadcasting rights for Norwegian elite football until 2009 for one billion Norwegian kroner (approx. 100 million pound). The deal granted TV2 exclusive broadcasting rights during *and after* matches. The deal struck between the Norwegian Football Association (NFF) and the Norwegian Association of Local Television Broadcasters (NFL) allowed for a maximum of a one minute re-broadcast of TV2's coverage from football events, but only after 5.30 p.m. on the day following the event. This was the situation *Bergens Tidende* and Btv had to accommodate. After negotiating with NFF, Btv was allowed to record only one minute of the ceremony. This was not to their liking, and they charged NFF with breach of the agreement's clause 1.3 dealing with open discussion, free flow of information and free access to sources. Btv argued that this restricted the free flow of news. "I particularly reacted against the Gold Ceremony. This was an event of obvious news value in Bergen. Preventing us from recording there was, in our opinion, wrong in terms of the free flow of news", the editor in chief of Mediehuset [Media Conglomerate] *Bergens Tidende*, Einar Hålien,

pointed out to *Dagens Næringsliv*. Hålien was aware of the curious situation in that he and Btv in effect were charging themselves, as Mediehuset Bergens Tidende belongs to NFL, and was thus part of the deal between NFF and NFL.

Why was it of such vital significance for Btv to broadcast from the “golden ceremony”? It can hardly be a case of on the spot news value, as it was by then common knowledge that Brann had won the football league, that the victory ceremony would take place at Brann stadium and, in addition, that the ceremony was to be broadcast on TV2 for everyone to watch. The gold ceremony broadcast was actually a “media event” (as it has been defined by Dayan and Katz); in other words well known and planned in advance, and with a ritual significance. It can thus be argued that the real reason why Btv so desperately wanted to broadcast the entire celebrations at Brann Stadium, and why they were upset when barred from the event, was that in so doing they were excluded from the sacred space, from the centre of the world, from the *absolute reality*. As a local television broadcaster, Btv would thus not be associated with the positive significance and the favourable public sentiments generated by this longed for event: they were unable to get in touch with the power of the *myth*.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to show how *hierophanies* were manifested by mundane objects such as beer, taxis, and wheat buns in connection with the Brann 2007 victory in the Norwegian football league. Furthermore, I wanted to show how those *hierophanies* fit together; that the modalities of the sacred – Brann – are complementary and parts of a whole (cf. Eliade 1996: 7; Eliade 1998: 32). What these and all other kinds of *hierophanies* symbolise are qualities perceived as intrinsic to the experience of the sacred, such as transcendence (through songs and play, when the 2007 victory outdid the feat of 1963), fertility and regeneration (babies conceived during the gold festivities), unity (the coming together of the city-dwellers to celebrate and embrace one another in a friendly spirit), transformation (suddenly there seems to be an abundance of things and benevolence), and power (the strength of the players and the reign of Brann).

As in many ancient mythical dramas, the exemplary and highly mythical story – or tale – of how Brann reclaimed the victory of the league after forty-four years of struggle and defeats reminds us that hopefully suffering is never final; that death is always followed by resurrection, and that every defeat is annulled and transcended by ultimate victory. The abundance of commodities that were created and displayed when the victory was secured appeared as a promise of a new golden age. All signs of joy, friendship and the strong sense

of community exhibited in Bergen were like the birth of a new world of justice (with Brann once again the rightful winner) and happiness (cf. Eliade 2005: 127). Life in Bergen changed, if even for a short period of time and only until the start of the subsequent football season. At the same time, the media tried to connect to the joyful occasion for as long as possible (as could be seen in the articles on babies conceived during the celebration), and at least until 2009.

According to Eliade, in narrating a myth one re-actualises, in some manner, the sacred time during which the narrated events took place. In the final analysis, this may explain the recurrent emphasis on “home” in so many of the newspaper articles about the Brann victory: that “the Gold came home”. This refers to 1963 when the football club last won the league thanks to the achievements of Superheroes such as Kniksen. Through repetition, and ultimately through re-telling how the 2007 victory was a repetition of the events in 1963, we are sent back to the time when the event *first took place*, whereby the protagonists of the myth are made present; whereby one becomes their contemporary. Thus, the mediated story of the 2007 victory became a myth, an exemplary model.

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Chapter 4

A Hundred Years of Football Reporting in Norwegian Newspapers

Thore Roksvold

In the rhetorical situation (Kjeldsen 2008: 115) of football journalism the journalists mainly address an audience with interest in football, and adapt their reporting accordingly, for if they did not they would not have an audience. They necessarily report on football in a way that the audience recognises, appreciates and acknowledges. Hence the communicated attitudes and values – which constitute cultural norms and ideology¹ – in football journalism are likely to correspond with attitudes and values among the fans, signifying what is important about football, and what makes football fascinating: “Members of an interpretive community interact by internalising taking-for-granted shared meanings and draw on those meanings as a guide to their values and interpretations of issues and occurrences” (Berkowitz 2009: 106) and “effective news speaks to the audience through story frames that resonate” (Bird & Dardenne 2009: 209). Football journalists influence, and are influenced by, the attitudes and values of fans, as demonstrated by the framing of the reports and opinions.

Accordingly, football fans and journalists may be said to belong to the same subculture of football fandom. This subculture is a literate one; through reporting, the football journalists produce the narratives within this subculture, where they document facts and stimulate dreams. They construct the reality and the mythology (Roksvold 1993: 106) within this subculture. If the football stadium is compared with the church, the players with the saints, and the football fans with the congregation, then the football journalists may be compared with the priests dealing with the liturgy. Narratives are parts of framing: “Framing ... involves selecting a few aspects of a perceived reality and connecting them together in a narrative that promotes a particular interpretation” (Entman 2010: 391) and “the daily news is the primary vehicle for myth in our time” (Lule 2001: 19).

The approach of this article is constructionist (Hall 1997: 25), based on the view that we have to choose topics, words, grammar and style to express ourselves; and that our topics, words, grammar and style are chosen as a consequence of our own attitudes and our purpose for communication in any given situation. Depending on our perspective, we choose aspects on which to focus. The chosen expression, the utterance, is a construction, or reconstruction, of how we imagine the reality – at least in the present situation – and the addressed audience has, by interpretation, to deconstruct our imagined reality and compare it to their own imagined reality.

In the rhetorical situation (Kjeldsen 2008: 115) of newspaper football reportage and opinion writing, the journalists appeal to the preferences of their readers by framing, which is also integrated with professional norms in football journalism concerning cases, sources, topics, headlines, photos, genres and style. Norms change over time (Roksvold 2005), as does framing in the newspapers, competing with other media like radio, television and the Internet – that is, discursive practices (Fairclough 1992: 73). Frames also adjust to changes of conventions and norms in the surrounding society as a whole – that is, social practices (*ibid.*). According to Entman (2010: 310) we “can distinguish framing from other communication by its diachronic nature and its cultural resonance. To gain current success, frames must call to mind congruent elements of *schemas* that were stored in the past”.

The main question is how the ideological values and attitudes expressed by norms and frames in football journalism may have changed over time, and in what way. Another task of mine – in addition to answering this question – is to demonstrate how text analysis may be applied to a variety of text aspects, perspectives and variables. The ideological values and attitudes will be revealed by deconstruction of various textual elements. I will first zoom in on details, and then I will zoom out again to the applied frames and implied ideology.

Method

Framing may be explored by discourse analysis, which in itself may include a variety of methodological approaches.² As a linguist, I will focus the text, employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Bergström and Boréus (2005: 47) state that common attitudes and values within society may be uncovered by content analysis. Accordingly, the quantitative part of my study will be a content analysis of photos, genres, topics, naming of the players and personal deixis. The qualitative part will be a literary and stylistic analysis of verbal expressions, attitudes, values, frames and ideology in the texts.

The analytical corpus is the coverage of the Norwegian cup final in four leading newspapers: *Aftenposten*, *Dagsavisen*, *Dagbladet* and *VG*. All these four newspapers are now printed in tabloid format. *Aftenposten* and *Dagsavisen* (earlier called *Arbeiderbladet* and before that *Socialdemokraten*) are traditionally distributed by subscription, *Dagbladet* and *VG* (before the Second World War represented in the corpus as *Tidens Tegn*) are traditionally sold at newsstands. *Aftenposten* has traditionally been political conservative, whereas *Dagsavisen* is considered to be social democratic in orientation. *Dagbladet* and *VG* traditionally focus on sensation more strongly than *Aftenposten* and *Arbeiderbladet*. *Dagbladet* is viewed as ideologically liberal, *VG* as more populist.

I have analysed the coverage of the football cup final in these newspapers at thirty year intervals: 1919, 1949, 1979 and 2009. In 1919 there was no radio transmission of football matches in Norway; in 1949 there was radio transmission, but no television; in 1979 there was both radio and television transmission, but no online coverage. In 2009 the newspapers had to compete with radio, television and Internet coverage. The first official national football cup championship for men took place in 1902, and that for women in 1978.

The articles in the material from 1919 were short, and the football championship was not mentioned on the front page. In 1949, reports of the event covered between a half and one page in each of the four chosen newspapers (at the time all published in broadsheet format). In 1979, the male event covered two pages in *Aftenposten* and four pages in *Dagbladet* (both in broadsheet format). *Arbeiderbladet* used three pages in Berliner format, and *VG* presented the event on five and a half tabloid pages. In 1979, the female coverage was slightly more than half a page in *Aftenposten*, a half page in *Arbeiderbladet* and a third of a page in *Dagbladet* and *VG*. In 2009, all the newspapers used the tabloid format: *Aftenposten* spent four and a half pages on the male event, *Dagsavisen* (in 1919 called *Socialdemokraten* and later *Arbeiderbladet*) spent two, *Dagbladet* six and *VG* six. The female coverage in 2009 was two thirds of a page in *Aftenposten*, twenty-five lines in *Dagsavisen*, two pages in *Dagbladet* and three pages in *VG*. In 2009, *Dagbladet* and *VG* gave more space to women's football than in 1979, and more space than did the subscription newspapers.

The quantitative parts of the study will be presented with frequency tables followed by analytical comments.

Photographs

In the 1919 coverage there were no photographs at all, but after that the number of pictures increases, leading up to the player portraits (see below) in 2009. In 2009 the material contained the largest pictures and the highest number of small pictures.

Motive	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Atmosphere			4		2	
Team		1		1		2
Cup			10	3	8	3
Situation with ball		10	8	2	3	
Situation without ball			4		4	2
Individual focus		5	15		13	2
Private relationships			1		2	
Portrait		1	1		29	3
Byline			8		7	4
In total		17	51	6	68	16

The registered unit is the number of photos.

“Atmosphere” means the atmosphere surrounding the match, especially the fans. For the most part, the atmosphere was represented by photographs in 1979 and 2009. “Team” entails photos in which all the players on the team are equally represented; *Aftenposten* showed one such picture in 1949. This rather old fashioned use of photographs was still in use to present the women’s teams in 1979 and 2009. “Cup” means that the focus is on the trophy obtained by the winning team. There were many pictures such as these in 1979 and 2009. Since the cup in question is the King’s Cup, the winning players are symbolically crowned. “Situation with ball” denotes a match situation with the ball visible and more than one player involved; these pictures were most numerous in 1949 and 1979. “Situation without ball” denotes a match situation with no ball visible and more than one player involved; for instance, a quarrel between players. Such pictures were found in 1979 and 2009. “Individual focus” means that one or two people are shown and the setting is not of a match or of players on the soccer field. Such images increased strongly in 1979 and 2009 in the male coverage. The category “Private relations” shows football players together with family or friends; such pictures are found in 1979 and 2009 in the male coverage. “Portrait” entails head and shoulders images of players; such pictures are especially numerous in the 2009 *VG* male coverage, where each player was represented by his portrait. “Byline” means that the journalist’s photograph appears in the article byline; such bylines are found in 1979 and 2009.

Individuals are strongly emphasised in the photos from 1979 and 2009. Several shots from these years also show players on the winning team carrying the silver cup which symbolises the triumph of the victory and increases the value of the winning players – literally and symbolically – as if they signify mythological heroes (Roksvold 1993: 106 pp) or saints.

The newspapers use only a few more pictures in 2009 than they did in 1979 – especially in the male coverage – and in both these years some of the pictures (above all in *Dagbladet* and *VG*) are quite large (numerous and large

newspaper pictures correspond with, and may be a response to, the images on TV). Only the reports of women's matches present photographs of the whole team, in 1979 and in 2009, in *Dagbladet* and *VG*. In the old days, showing the whole team was also a common motif in reports of the men's cup final. In 2009, *Aftenposten* presented the women's cup final coverage in two editions, with different pictures in each. In one edition there is a "situation without ball" and a cup picture, while in the other the image shows female players dressed for a celebration.³ All these three photos are included in the above table. In 1979 and in 2009, photographs of men are much more numerous than of women.

Genre

Genre	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Interview		97 (5 %)	1083 (40 %)	32 (8 %)	403 (21 %)	171 (25 %)
Minutes	479 (100 %)	1 271 (72 %)	725 (27 %)	181 (46 %)	628 (32 %)	230 (34 %)
Opinion		380 (21 %)	769 (28 %)	184 (46 %)	632 (33 %)	263 (39 %)
Player's ranking		22 (1 %)	125 (5 %)		283 (15 %)	13 (2 %)
In total	479 (100 %)	1 770 (99 %)	2 702 (100 %)	397 (100 %)	1946 (101 %)	677 (100 %)

The registered unit is the number of text lines.

"Interview" entails text passages with quoted answers to questions from a journalist. "Opinion" means editorial opinions. "Minutes" entails text passages about the match which are neither interviews nor opinions. "Players' ranking" means the editors' evaluations of individual players.

In 1919 all the text was in the form of minutes. Some words to depict the atmosphere on the stands do not qualify as an "interview", since the journalist clearly did not ask any questions. The narratives of the minutes is chronological, starting with the arrival at the stadium, continuing with the first and the second half-time, and ending with the banquet. The headline tells the result of the match. The article in *Socialdemokraten* (nowadays called *Dagsavisen*) was unsigned. In the other three newspapers the articles were signed by initials.

In 1949 more journalists participated in covering the event, and the coverage consists of several articles in each newspaper. *Dagbladet*, in particular, gives a lot of space to interviews of the coaches of the two teams. One of the coaches is from abroad, and speaks Norwegian with an accent that is rendered by the journalist, and the interview scene is described quite lyrically, allowing the reader to participate in the situation. The interviews reveal that the journalists

are allowed to enter the changing room after the match; this proximity enables journalists to present themselves as intimate with the players, demarcating distance between themselves and the readers, who are unable to enter the changing room. Through the reportage the readers also get a glance at what is going on in the changing room all the same, and may at least observe and sense an inner circle⁴ of intimacy, although they are not really there. In every newspaper, the match is analysed in a separate opinion article. The football journalists present themselves as more qualified than they did in 1919, and underline their authority by writing separate opinion pieces. Minutes, however, are still the dominating genre in 1949.

By 1979, interview has become the most important genre in the male coverage, and minutes have been dramatically reduced – probably because the result of the match is already well-known from radio and television. Opinions have increased slightly in the male coverage, and players' ranking has become more common than in 1949. The focus on individuals through the interviews and the players' rankings indicate that football is perceived not only as a game played by an organic team, but by individuals, and the voices of those involved strengthen the feeling of intimacy so that the fans – the readers and the spectators – may feel included in the inner circle around the player heroes and the football journalists. The tendency to focus on individuals in football journalism reflects the increasing concentration on famous people – royal family members and movie and pop stars – in journalism in general (Roksvold 1997: 92 pp). Perhaps the newspapers also responded to the competitive challenge of radio and television by focusing on people, since the radio and television football transmissions focused on the course of the game. There is a great deal more text in the 1979 male coverage than in any other of the years analysed here.

The total coverage of the men's cup final in 1979 is seven times larger than that of the women's, and the difference is remarkable in the interview genre, showing that the journalists hardly spoke with the female players after the match, and there is a higher percentage of minutes and opinions. The dominance of the minutes genre makes the reportage of the women's cup final look old fashioned, since minutes is the predominant genre in early newspaper football journalism, as in 1919, but the growing dominance of opinions shows an evolving self-confidence and feeling of self-importance among the journalists of 1979. There was no players' ranking in the 1979 female coverage.

The frequency of interviews in the male coverage has decreased between 1979 and 2009, possibly due to the fact that the players have already been interviewed online, on radio or on TV, by the time the newspapers are read. In addition, working conditions have changed for football journalists, since commercial agreements between the Norwegian football association and television companies regarding rights to transmit matches also mean that the players

are not free to make their own decisions about which journalists from which media they give interviews to. The media with rights to transmit are favoured for interviews after the match, and since sponsor branding is involved the location and the scene for an interview are also regulated – which may explain the decrease of the interview genre in the male coverage. But it is also worth noting that interviews in 2009 are integrated into minutes and opinions. This tendency to mix genres means that it is not always easy to decide which is the lead opinion article. Opinions are slightly more frequent than minutes in the 2009 male coverage. Although the television companies with transmission rights give priority to discussions and comments on the match after the game, the newspapers probably consider opinions – preferably in-depth opinions – as the special field where they may be able to compete with the other media. Thus the football journalists, more than ever, position themselves as experts. Yet the interview is important enough to confirm the tendency of focusing on individuals that was also obvious in 1979. Space given to players' ranking has increased since 1979.

In 2009, coverage of the men's cup final was three times greater than that of the women's, and the female coverage was nearly twice as large in 2009 as it had been in 1979, thanks to *Dagbladet* and *VG*. (The newspapers sold at newsstands find the women's cup final more interesting than do the subscription newspapers.) *Dagsavisen* did not carry any reports at all but merely presented a table with the match result. *VG* presented a players' ranking but the others did not. The differences between the journalists' coverage of the women's cup final in 2009 was significant. In *Aftenposten*, for example, interviews occupied nearly half of the report, whereas *Dagbladet* highlighted the minutes and opinions, and opinions were the predominant genre in *VG*.

In 1919, minutes was the only genre. It was also predominant in 1949, but since radio had already presented a run-down of the match the newspapers supplemented their coverage with opinion articles, which furnished the journalists with authority. In 1979, interview was the main genre for covering the men's cup final. In that year the match was transmitted on TV as well as radio. There were remarkably fewer minutes and a few more opinions than in 1949. It is surprising that the interview is reduced, between 1979 and 2009, in reporting the men's cup final; in 2009 opinions seem to be the most important genre. In 2009, competition was not only with radio and TV but also with online journalism, which made it necessary for the newspapers to cover the cup final differently. The percentage of the minutes in the 2009 male coverage increased slightly, but the number of lines fell. The text reporting the men's cup final was less extensive in 2009 than in 1979, and only slightly more extensive than in 1949.

Measured as percentages, minutes and opinions dominated more in the reporting of the women's than in the reporting of the men's cup final – especially in the 1979 material. While from 1979 to 2009 the interview genre decreased

in the male coverage, it increased in the female – which, however, differed between the newspapers. Overall, the reportage norms seem to be more firmly established, in their uniformity and modern style, in the coverage of the men's cup final than the women's.

Topic	Topic					
	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Weather	37 (8 %)	8 (0 %)	6 (0 %)	2 (1 %)		
Spectators	54 (11 %)	79 (4 %)	49 (2 %)	15 (4 %)	14 (1 %)	3 (0 %)
Introduction	12 (3 %)	129 (7 %)	28 (1 %)	17 (4 %)	35 (2 %)	9 (1 %)
Course of the game	261 (54 %)	203 (11 %)	201 (7 %)	120 (30 %)	147 (8 %)	137 (20 %)
Summary	78 (16 %)	792 (45 %)	678 (25 %)	130 (33 %)	813 (42 %)	198 (29 %)
Inside		108 (6 %)	1081 (40 %)	46 (12 %)	495 (25 %)	155 (23 %)
Private		90 (5 %)	262 (10 %)		85 (4 %)	20 (3 %)
Celebration	8 (2 %)	183 (10 %)	134 (5 %)		57 (3 %)	52 (8 %)
Other matters	29 (6 %)	178 (10 %)	263 (10 %)	67 (17 %)	300 (15 %)	103 (15 %)
In total	479 (100 %)	1770 (98 %)	2702 (100 %)	397 (101 %)	1946 (100 %)	677 (99 %)

The registered unit is the number of text lines.

Here, “introduction” refers to preparatory remarks about the play and the result. “Course of the game” refers to what took place on the ground during, or in connection with, the match. “Summary” is any concluding remark, including analysis and evaluation. “Inside” entails information and remarks by experts other than the journalists. “Private” denotes information about players as private persons, without a connection to football.

In 1919, the coverage started with a description of the weather, described mainly from the perspective of the spectators. Would this be a pleasant match to watch? How the weather influenced the pitch or the play itself was hardly mentioned. *Aftenposten*, in particular, describes the tifos of the fans and the cheering of the supporters: the noise was “deafening” and “infernal”. In the introduction, only the names of the teams are mentioned, not the name of any individual player. The course of the game was the main content category

in 1919. Newspapers did not have to compete with other news media and readers had not received prior information about the course of the game; the chronological style of writing built up to the climax of the match when the final result became clear, and to the catharsis after the climax.

In 1919, the summaries in all four newspapers comment upon individual players as well as the team. *Tidens Tegn* comments only on players on the winning team, but in the other newspapers players from both teams are mentioned. The teamwork is mentioned in general terms: "There was never a hint of combination between more than two players, and at the expense of technique and tactics a lot of unnecessary power was demonstrated" (*Aftenposten* 1919). The aesthetic of technical details like ball handling seems to be appreciated. The players should be fast, persistent and vigorous. The referee was evaluated in three of the newspapers. In the fourth, *Aftenposten*, the referee himself was the journalist!

In 1919 there was no inside or private information at all (see table above). Celebration after the match was only mentioned in *Aftenposten* in a formal, sober and neutral style. The category "Other matters" is small in 1919.

In 1949 meteorological information is mentioned briefly in three of the newspapers. *Aftenposten* and *VG* mention members of the royal family among the spectators.

Individual players are mentioned in the introduction in 1949. *Dagbladet*: "Harry Yven came like a cyclone in the beginning of the second half-time and no human power could stop the shot that created balance in the final match." In 1949 the content category "Course of the game" is significantly reduced – particularly as a percentage of the total coverage, but also in the number of lines. The readers had probably been informed by radio about the result. In *Aftenposten* the course of the game was still presented chronologically in 1949 whereas the other newspapers focused on the highlights. Individual players were more noticeably picked out than in 1919.

The "Summary" category has grown. Measured in lines, the space given to summary is ten times larger in 1949 than it was in 1919, compensating for a reduction in Course of the game. The newspapers are meeting the challenge of radio by evaluation and commentary. Although *Dagbladet* comments that it has rated the team over the player ("individualism has never been highly esteemed in Sarpsborg"), the general impression is that the focus on individual players is stronger in 1949 than before. Evaluation of teamwork is linked to the evaluation of the players themselves, and in 1949 it was essential to conclude which player was the best. The aesthetic dimension of technical details is not strongly brought out. Technique mainly serves efficiency. The key words in 1949 are "spirit" and "drive". In 1949, the journalists put effort in demonstrating their expertise, commenting on the teams' tactics and never doubting their own analysis. *Arbeiderbladet* introduces the ranking of players in 1949.

Inside information is a result of interviewing, and strengthens the spotlight on individuals – in 1949, on the coaches in particular. The losers are good losers in 1949,⁵ but the coach on the winning team would be presented as self-confident and authoritative: “‘You see, the boys got the right instructions from me,’ coach Cerveny told a representative from Skeid, and he certainly meant something by those words” (*Dagbladet*). By presenting inside information, the journalists underline their own role as experts, and the readers are witness to the familiarity between journalists and actors in the inner circle.

“Private information” in 1949 is limited to the age, appearance and profession of some of the players. In 1949, all the newspapers mention the celebration after the match. First the journalists entered the changing room of the winning team, where journalists, photographers, coaches and players moved around with happy smiles. Later, the citizens of the winning team’s home city received their heroes with banners, torchlight processions, cheering and brass bands. Some unusual stories, underlining the journalists’ insider status, are categorised as “Other matters”.

Only *Aftenposten* notices the weather in the 1979 male coverage. The number of the spectators is mentioned, and the players praise the spectators for their enthusiasm and support. *Dagbladet* reports from a café in Haugesund, the losing team’s home city, and describes the atmosphere by quoting the local fans watching the match on TV there. “Introduction” is very much reduced from the 1949 material. The readers know the result from radio and TV. Accordingly the course of the game is reduced as well. Surprisingly, perhaps, the summary category is also reduced since 1949, in the number of lines and as a percentage.

The most extensive content category in the 1979 male coverage is the inside information, which in lines covers exactly ten times more space in 1979 than in 1949, and which is also twice as extensive as in 2009. This corresponds with the dominance of the genre interview in 1979. The newspapers focus on the individuals, in order to compete with radio and television. Accordingly the content category of privacy is also more extensive in 1979 than in any other of the years analysed here. The content category “Celebration” has decreased slightly and the “Other matters” category has increased slightly (in lines, though not in percentage) compared with 1949.

In 1979, the newspapers concentrated strongly on the course of the game in their reports of the women’s cup final. As a percentage this category was three times more predominant than in the male reports from 1949, indicating that the coverage of women’s matches in 1979 was, in a way, more old fashioned than that of men – but the “Inside information” category was less noticeable. These differences may, at least partly, be explained by the fact that the women’s cup final was not directly transmitted on radio and television in 1979. Private information and reports of the celebration were absent in the

female newspaper coverage that year. *Dagsavisen* mentioned the weather, and *VG* gave some space to the spectators.

In 2009, none of the newspapers mentioned the weather. The spectators obtained nine text lines in the *Dagsavisen* male coverage, and “Introduction” also received little space, which is natural, as both the course of the game and the result are expected to be known to the readers from the coverage in radio, TV and the Internet. Nor is there any point in expecting much from the course of the game, which is told briefly. The course of the game makes up eight per cent of the text in the four newspapers in total.

The largest content category in the reports of the men’s cup final is the “summary”, which makes up forty-two per cent in the four newspapers altogether. *VG* gives the most space to the summary of opinions, followed by *Aftenposten*. *Dagsavisen* gives the least space to this topic. Twenty-five per cent of the text in the four newspapers, in the male coverage from 2009, consists of “Inside information”. Private information is considerably smaller than in 1979; *VG* gives it the most space: fifty-seven text lines.

“Other information” in the 2009 coverage of the men’s cup final consists of stories from, and information about, the history of the cup final and the careers of the players – which teams they played for previously, the ups and downs they have experienced, anecdotes and information about their planned transfers to other teams. This is how the football journalists demonstrate their competence. I have classified quotes, in which players inform about their plans for the future, as “Private information”. The sense of privacy is stronger when the sources speak directly about themselves, and the journalists do not show off their own knowledge to the same extent.

Many of the opinion statements in the “Other information” category also deal with players’ earlier careers in other teams and with their plans for the future. It is important to be loyal to the local team, like Skiri (see below), but in 2009 it is also important for the player to play up his market value and for the journalist to demonstrate knowledge about such details to increase the image of being well informed. The player is a commodity, and the football journalist is an expert on the stock market, following the exchange listing and making forecasts. Is the stock exchange listing, perhaps, also influenced by the forecast made by the football journalist?

The “Summary” is also the main category in the 2009 female coverage, although less so than in the male coverage. The course of the game is still more focused in the reports about the women’s than about the men’s cup final (although both had been transmitted on TV) but less so in 2009 than in the 1979 reports. The “Inside information” increased between 1979 and 2009, in both number of lines and percentage.

The other content categories are more or less the same in the male and the female coverage in 2009. Private affairs about the female players are mentioned

in *Dagbladet* and *VG*, and these two newspapers also report from the celebration after the match. Other topics are the winning team's plans for the future, the players' plans for the future and the tradition and history of women's football cup finals in Norway. It is striking that the first page in the *VG* coverage is an interview with the male coach.⁶

All newspapers focus on the goal scorers in the coverage of the women's cup final in both 1979 and 2009.

The survey of genre and content shows that the newspapers adapt to the competition with the other, faster media by taking on opinions in which the journalists prove their competence – and legitimacy – by demonstrating their expertise. The journalists also prove their competence by communicating inside information.

Style of expression

In 1919 the aesthetic and artistic aspect of the play was prominent: "David practices his arts"⁷ (*Socialdemokraten* 1919) and "Gundersen directed, but never showed the smooth, pretty play which we know from other matches" (*Aftenposten* 1919). ("Directed" and "play" are musical metaphors.)

An example such as "practices his arts" is very modest, and modest expressions characterise the 1919 coverage. Strangely enough we find a similar style in the female coverage from 1979: "the sixteen-year old midfielder worked tirelessly during the whole match ... she has solid kicks on the ball and a good understanding" (*Aftenposten* 1979F ["F" = female]); "female football with great entertainment" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "Heidi Støren was clever with the ball, and several times cut her way through BUL's defence" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "this final's play was a pleasure" (*VG* 1979F).

The 1949 material also exemplifies the aesthetic aspect, but in the later decades this aspect is replaced by efficiency in the coverage of the cup final for men: "technique and physique are put to the test" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979M ["M" = male]).

In the coverage of the women's cup final, the aesthetic and artistic aspect is still found in 1979 and 2009: "rowed the victory elegantly to the shore" (*Aftenposten* 1979F); "the veteran Ingrid Andreassen passed beautifully to the right wing, who sped nicely past the defenders and put the ball behind Marianne Lindemann" (*Aftenposten* 1979F); "Elise Thorsnes's winning goal from twenty metres was a work of art" (*Dagbladet* 2009F).

Speed and force, in 1919, is subjected to hyperbole: "That goal broke down the team" (*Aftenposten* 1919) and even more prominently in 1949: "came like a cyclone" (*Dagbladet* 1949) and "geared up to overdrive" (*Dagbladet* 1949);

“sharp, strong and fast” (VG 2009M); “his speed saves him” (VG 2009M); “always dangerous with his speed” (VG 2009M).

Work metaphors are found in 1919, 1949, 1979 and 2009: “Ellef Mohn worked like he was made of iron” (*Socialdemokraten* 1919); “the defence worked hard” (*Aftenposten* 1949); “the victory goal was one of those typical work accidents” (*Aftenposten* 1979M); “we will try to complete the job next year” (*Aftenposten* 1979M); “Dean Mooney gave me a lot to do in this match” (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979M); “doing a good job on the left” (VG 2009M).

Work metaphors occur in the reportage from the female cup final as well: “two teenagers did the dirty work” (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F).

Battle metaphors are so common in sports journalism that we hardly notice them any more: “this wall is more complicated to break” (*Tidens Tegn* 1919); “the team pursued a defending strategy” (*Aftenposten* 1919); “in attack the wing-ers were very poor” (*Aftenposten* 1919); “they fought aggressively all the time” (*Dagbladet* 1919); “onslaught” (VG 1949); “great shooter” (VG 1949); “instead he fired a cannon in the own goal’s net” (*Aftenposten* 1979M); “the defenders were sleeping” (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979M).

Battle metaphors are also common in female reportage: “the midfield general Kristine Edne Wæhler” (*Aftenposten* 2009F); “the rival Stabæk” (*Dagbladet* 2009F).

Business metaphors have started to occur in recent decades: “after that, we will take inventory and then discuss what we need” (*Aftenposten* 1979M); “my contract with Haugar expires this autumn, and the only thing to say today, is that I am on the market” (*Dagbladet* 1979M); “he undoubtedly became more expensive” (*Dagbladet* 1979M); “the players expect a nice bonus ... but the amount of the bonus is kept secret” (VG 1979M); “this local procurement policy” (VG 1979M); “Carlsen is under contract with Vålerenga, but has been on loan to Aalesund this season” (VG 2009M).

Words from the world of business are used in the reportage from the women’s cup final as well: “Aase Strande has been the centre of attention recently, since she left her team in Kragerø to Oslo. Kragerø demanded a transfer fee, and BUL had to pay 825 NOK for Strande, which Strande herself has to pay back. Norwegian female football players are true amateurs!” (*Dagbladet* 1979F); “The contract with the cup champion from Oslo West expires after this year’s season, and other clubs have already shown their interest” (*Aftenposten* 2009F); “you always have to evaluate the offers you get” (*Aftenposten* 2009F); “she signs on for rival Stabæk” (*Dagbladet* 2009F); “I have got an offer from Stabæk, and am considering it seriously” (*Dagbladet* 2009F).

Restaurant metaphors also occur in the material: “this experience gave me appetite” (*Aftenposten* 1979M), and allusions to jewellery: “the shot was a pearl” (VG 1979M); “he got the golden kiss from his sweetheart” (VG 2009M).

Hyperbole underlining the grand is common throughout: “they simply get no chance to play” (*Socialdemokraten* 1919); “all of them ‘lie in the goal’ ... it

is impossible to break through this living wall" (*Socialdemokraten* 1919); "they don't see the ball, only the man, the opponent" (*Tidens Tegn* 1919); "they never shot" (*Aftenposten* 1919); "it was a great game in great pace" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1949); "simply fantastically well performed" (*Dagbladet* 1949); "all fell down like a house of cards" (*VG* 1949); "complete chaos" (*VG* 1949); "it was a huge mistake to give a penalty in that situation, and I cannot remember ever having been more disappointed" (*Dagbladet* 1979M); "no goalkeeper in the world would have saved that extremely powerful header, and being more unhappy than young Vikanes is impossible" (*Dagbladet* 1979M); "All of Haugesund was occupied by the cup final yesterday. You could not observe one single person in the streets during the TV transmission. It was just like Christmas eve" (*Dagbladet* 1979M); "the greatest day in the history of Ålesund city" (*Aftenposten* 2009M); "he was the Rambo of the stadium" (*Aftenposten* 2009M); "Yesterday, Rekdal was 'The King of Ullevaal'" (*Aftenposten* 2009M); "this was world class coaching" (*Aftenposten* 2009M); "Ålesund is my life" (*Aftenposten* 2009M); "here you see the prettiest lady in town" (*Dagbladet* 2009M); "Skiri (31) hammered Sunnmøre to heaven" (*Dagbladet* 2009M); "he decided to throw onto the field 204 centimeters of hair and beard and limbs" (*VG* 2009M).

Hyperbole was also frequent in the female coverage: "a final with an all-time opening shock" (*Aftenposten* 1979F); "not only the sun warmed yesterday, so did a brilliant first half" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "these two girls... tear the opponent's defenders to pieces" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "in the midfield, Ingrid Andreassen rules as she likes" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "goal chances hailed" (*Arbeiderbladet* 1979F); "the greatest week in my life" (*Aftenposten* 2009F).

In 1919, the language was quite modest, and the aesthetic and artistic aspects were clear in both 1919 and in 1949. This modest style was also used in the female coverage from 1979 and 2009. However, expressions of speed and force, work metaphors, battle metaphors and hyperbole are common in all the analysed material. This melodramatic style is typical of the language used by football journalists (Roksvold 1975; 1993). The business language which occurs in the texts from 1979 and 2009 expresses norm changes in the way that human beings (subjects) are transformed into commodities (objects), and that this process seems to fascinate, since it is part of the framing.

I have previously (Roksvold 1975) identified three changing processes in football journalism: an increasing concentration on individuals, more intensified descriptions and more intimacy in the relationships between player, journalist and audience within what may be called "the inner circle".

The next categories to be analyzed – names of the players, personal deixis and byline – may uncover the pattern of individualisation and of familiarity in the inner circle.

Naming the players (%)

Names of players	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Atmosphere			4		2	
Position on the team	23	16	2	2		5
Position on the team + surname	11	2	1			
Position on the team + full name	8	10	5	9	11	5
Surname only	21	18	16	4	18	12
Full name	18	24	69	64	61	58
Epithet + name	2	10		5	3	2
First name only	2	4	3	5	2	6
Nickname + name	2	4				
Nickname only	13	6				
Other periphrases		4	4	11	5	11
In total	100	98	100	100	100	99
N =	61	162	488	56	277	113

Naming the players by their function and position in the team (“Odd’s backs”(Arbeiderbladet 1919)) – often in combination with their names – is quite common in the 1919 and 1949 material. This tells us that the journalists were not very familiar with the teams and did not know the names of the players (Helland 2003: 45). However, in the early days there was also a custom of using nicknames – which may be a sign of the connection between football fan culture and working class culture at that time (op.cit.: 32).⁸ In 1979 and in 2009, the players were referred to more neutrally – by their real names. Periphrases denoting and connoting special information about the player – “the Brazilian”, “the accident-prone”, “the 32 year old guy”, “the golden Viking of the seventies” – are used in the later material.

The neutral way of naming the players may indicate that the journalists do not expose their familiarity with the players, which is an ethical problem in sports journalism (Brandsås & Odden 1997). Combining the categories “Surname only” and “Full name”, gives thirty-nine per cent in 1919, forty-two per cent in 1949, eighty-five per cent and sixty-eight per cent in the 1979 male and female coverage, and seventy-nine per cent in the male and seventy per cent in the female coverage from 2009. The manner of naming the players has changed remarkably.

The figures above indicate that when it comes to naming the players, the importance of showing familiarity in the inner circle seems to have decreased in recent times.

Personal deixis

Then who do the journalists include in – or exclude from – the inner circle by their use of the pronoun “we” and related ways of expressing personal deixis?

Year	Impersonal				Personal						N
	Exclusion			Inclusion		Exclusion			Inclusion		
				Reader ex-cluded	Reader in-cluded				Reader ex-cluded	Reader in-cluded	
	(Name of the news-paper)	"one"	"one"	"I"	"we"	(other)	"we"	"we"			
1919				1		2	1		3		7
1949	8	1		10		22	15		6	4	66
1979M	1	5	11	1	1		6	3	2	4	34
1979F			1	2	1		2		1		7
2009M			1	5		12	3	6		1	28
2009F			6			2				3	11

This table, showing the references of mainly personal and impersonal pronouns in the material, makes it clear that the reader is seldom part of the inner circle of players, journalists and fans. Most inclusion was found in the texts from 1949, which also had the highest frequency of personal deixis, although the texts from 1949 numbered fewer lines than the male material from 1979 and 2009. The journalist expresses himself as an exclusive authority in the recent decades.

This is also obvious from the convention of article signature, or byline. In 1919, the journalists were anonymous; in 1979 and 2009 they were identified by full name and often with a photograph. By self-reference the journalist increasingly exposes himself (there is no female journalists in the material) as prominent, thus strengthening his authority as the expert.

Attitudes

In 1919 individuals were not especially focused. The names of the teams were often used in the minutes about the course of the game. A few players were mentioned by their full names and also by their nicknames. Eagerness, effort, artistry and playfulness were appreciated. The journalists were eager spectators themselves, and the spectators had a pleasant time in the nasty weather, cheering the teams. The journalists complimented good performance, and evaluated some players, but did not analyse specific tactical dispositions. No coach was mentioned. The referee was recognised as an authority. The journalists seemed to do all their research as spectators on the stand.

Again, in 1949, most of the observations were made from the stand, but the journalists entered the changing room after the match and took note of what

they observed there, quoting a few remarks. One newspaper, *Dagbladet*, interviewed the coaches of the teams about their tactics. In the other newspapers there were no such interviews. The newspapers analysed the match in separate opinion articles, in which the commenting journalists referred to themselves by the personal pronoun “I”, and aspired to positions as self-conscious experts. Tactics and good teamwork were appreciated. The match was also fun, entertaining and artistic: “Yven and his satellites whirled ahead like in a cauldron of changes, passes and headers and bounces and feints, all five joined the gallop, the tempo accelerated to pure sprinting” (*Arbeiderbladet* 1949). Harry Yven, who scored a goal for the winning team, and who had been on the winning team twenty years earlier, was the man of the day. The losers are described as good losers. Sometimes, the journalists inform about the player’s age, profession and previous achievements. The individual is slightly more spotlighted in 1949 than in 1919.

In the 1979 reports of the men’s cup final, pictures focused on the cup and the celebration after the match. Both players and fans were seen demonstrating their joy. The captain of the winning team was singled out, since he planned to end his football career from the next season onwards. Another player on the men’s winning team had problems with motivation and accordingly had an agreement to train less than the others (he was so talented that they still wanted him on the team). The losing team had an accident-prone player who had scored an own goal causing the loss in the final (he was forced to explain the situation, and his feelings, in interviews after the match). The reports contained a lot of interviews, with players and celebrities – especially retired football stars – commenting on the match. The coaches, who demanded discipline, were interviewed about tactics. The losers did not try to conceal that they were really sorry and felt bad about the loss. Effort, hard work and powerful shots were appreciated. The journalists criticised some judgments and decisions made by the referee.

The reportage of the women’s cup final in 1979 concentrated on the victory trophy, the teams and the goal scorers’ performances. *Dagbladet* framed revenge, since Åse Bjørg Strande, who scored two goals, had been injured in an earlier game and had accordingly missed a few matches for the national team. Kristin Storhaug, who had replaced Strande on the national team, scored the two other goals for the winning team. Scoring ability is mentioned as the players’ number one quality; other qualities are effort, aggressiveness and entertaining play. The players seemed to lack tactical skill, and they became tired. *Aften-posten* and *Arbeiderbladet* quote the male coaches of the two teams, besides the goal scorers and one other player. *VG* quotes none, strangely enough.

In 2009 the journalists are even more expert than in 1979. They even know what people are thinking and feeling without being told it, as in this example with the coach of the winning male team, Kjetil Rekdal:

When he was standing there on the Ullevaal pitch watching the player receive the King's cup, the cunning smile appeared. What went through his head then, is not easy to say, but the smile was there for several minutes.

Kjetil Rekdal just stood there with his hands in his pocket, feeling the triumph, the satisfaction and the victory. He had a good time – a little bit extra. The tactic was a success, the players gave everything – and then there were the penalty kicks.

Those who saw Kjetil Rekdal's face when the referee whistled after extra half-times, and a winner was still missing, tell that his expression changed.

Suddenly that expression came, the cold, calculating penalty gaze, which he has had so many times before, and which gave him and Aalesund a mental upper hand.

... And when Amund Skiri, the veteran, resolutely entered to take Aalesund FK's penalty number five, Rekdal hid.

The hero from Marseilles in 1998, the man who in cold blood scored on penalty against Brazil and sent Norway to the WC, didn't dare to watch. Kjetil Rekdal sat with his face carefully hidden in his hands.

Suddenly he realised what others had felt, that summer day in 1998, when he was the one who could change the world, while people didn't dare to watch.

Now he was the one who did not control the fate. The world stopped. Kjetil Rekdal, not a believer, vanished from the world for a couple of seconds. Then, suddenly, he saw feet moving nearby, and Kjetil Rekdal realized that Amund Skiri had sent Aalesund to heaven. The club's first cup ever was won.

And while the rest of the players and the support team ran towards Skiri and the goalkeeping hero Anders Lindegaard, Rekdal went for a little victory lap alone by himself – in the middle of the pitch.

He was in his own little world for some seconds.

(VG 2009M)

This is almost documentary fiction writing, not journalism. What Rekdal actually felt and realised in the described situations, is not documented. The journalist interprets Rekdal's body language, and fantasises.

The coach of the winning team is spotlighted in all the newspapers covering the men's cup final in 2009. He is the biggest hero. The emphasis on discipline is even stronger than it was in 1979, and the coach is self-confident and pompous, boasting: "It was world class coaching ..." (*Aftenposten* 2009). There are also mythical stories about him: "It is better that I score than you fail,' Kjetil Rekdal said once as an active player, and took a penalty kick that he was not supposed to take" (*Dagbladet* 2009M). The coach seems to see winning the cup final as personal revenge: "Many have opinions about my style of management and talk big. 'Rekdal is grumpy, angry, cowardly and cynical.' This victory was a little kick to them, Rekdal said" (*Aftenposten* 2009M).

In 2009, there are no chronological “minutes” in the newspaper reports of the men’s cup final. Instead, the journalists focus on particular situations, and describe dramatic incidents on the pitch and unusual episodes during and after the match. Situations which involve and evoke emotions are highlighted, the players “telling” us what they thought and felt in these situations.

Notions about what good football might be appear in the players’ ranking, where each player is evaluated. Highly esteemed qualities in the male players’ ranking in *VG* 2009 are effort, control of opponents, accurate passing, teamwork, speed, force and the ability to be at the right place at the right moment. *Aftenposten* emphasises accurate passing, strength in air duels, tempo, a warrior’s mentality, work rate and good technique. Accurate passing seems to be emphasised more strongly than before. *Dagbladet* and *Dagsavisen* did not have players’ ranking in 2009.

Football journalists in 2009 conceive of male football in particular as the most important of all activities. The team Aalesund won the men’s cup, and the journalist in *Aftenposten* commented that this was “... the greatest day in the history of the city of Ålesund”.

The winning team also had a hero, who is even greater because of his loyalty to the club and the local community: “... Amund Skiri – the greatest local hero of all” (*Aftenposten* 2009M) and “Amund Skiri (31) hammered Sunnmøre to heaven and became the classical cup final hero” (*Dagbladet* 2009M). In accordance with the common structure of hero narratives he has had some downs, which he has learned from, but now he has special qualities:

Amund Skiri did not want to be seen as a coward any more. Therefore he did not raise his hand when Kjetil Rekdal, after extra time, gathered his players and asked them if any wanted to be spared from kicking a penalty ... “I refused to take a penalty in the cup against Brann in 2002. That was cowardly. I decided never to do that any more,” Amund Skiri says. (*VG* 2009M)

The heroes of myths and legends deserve their positions by having faced problems.

The male hero in 2009 has a sweetheart: “‘Here you see the finest woman in the town,’ the match winner Amund (31) said to the photographers before giving his girlfriend Linn Christen Osnes (26) the kiss of victory” (*Dagbladet* 2009M). The losing team has a scapegoat:

For Jose Mota (30) at Molde the season ended where it started: at Ullevaal stadium. In tears.

... Yesterday things went wrong for Mota again. The 30 year old player was the scapegoat of the cup final, since he was the only one of the ten players who missed the penalty ... Meeting *Dagbladet* yesterday he did not dance the samba. (*Dagbladet* 2009M)

According to the scapegoat the referee was to blame for the loss:

“Oh, now I am going home to sleep. I will not join the party tonight. I should have settled this at the score 2–1, even though I think I was hindered and the referee should have given a penalty. Moreover failing my penalty kick at the end of the match makes this day totally black,” the Brazilian says. (*Dagbladet* 2009M)

In the reports on the 2009 women’s cup final *Aftenposten* focuses on “Røa, the golden team”, who won the cup for the fourth time – in addition to the league – in 2009. After a description of the goal and quotes from the match winner, attention shifts to the future. The question is whether the winner will play for Røa next year. She herself comments, the male coach of the team reflects, and there are speculations around two other players as well. *Dagbladet* concentrates on the celebration. At the banquet the “match winner”, Elise Thorsnes, presented herself in “an easy, elegant, black dress” (*Dagbladet* 2009F). Her qualities as a football player are highlighted by the female coach of the national team, and some space is spent on the extra money the team will earn after this victory. Based on the hypothesis that Røa will win the Champions League as well, *Dagbladet* believes that the income may be measured in millions of NOK. This is also the main focus for *VG*. The male coach thinks Røa may be the best team in Europe. Else the match winner is spotlighted, but *VG* concentrates on the story that another player on the team made her move to Røa and shared a flat with her. Now the task is to persuade her to stay at Røa. The editorial opinions analyse the team’s success, and reflect upon the development of female football, which is considered to be improving.

Values

The values identified in the analysed football reportage may be shown as follows. A plus sign is used where the value is observed in the material.

The distribution illustrates that atmosphere, entertainment, sportsmanship and team spirit are the main values in 1919. In 1949 there is slightly more focus on individuals, and even more in 1979 and 2009. Intimacy, in terms of participation in the inner circle between journalist, players/coaches and audience/supporters/readers, was visible in 1919 and 1949. In 2009 the journalists seem to have broken the circle – placing themselves in a position above it. Hyperbole is a main feature of the style in sports journalism, combined with connotative trope. Thus, the descriptions become intense. The dramatic situations and great achievements during the match are given much attention in the texts from 1949, not least in the photographs. In 1979, the journalists underlined their professionalism by interviews bringing inside information, while in 2009 there is a tendency to report less and present inside information in opinion

articles, thus underlining the journalist as expert. Money and transfer of players have become important issues in the 2009 material.

Values	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Football is fun	+	+		+		+
Football is war	+	+	+		+	
Football is work			+		+	
Football is tactics		+	+	+	+	+
Football is the most important					+	
The journalist is expert		+	+	+	+	+
Selfishness is good					+	
Revenge is good				+	+	
Fairness is good	+	+				
Local is good					+	
There is a hero		+	+	+	+	+
Thanks to himself the hero is a hero					+	
The hero wins the match			+		+	+
Atmosphere is important	+	+	+	+	+	
Entertainment is good	+	+	+	+	+	+
Emotion is good					+	
Modesty is good	+	+				
Money is important			+		+	
Effort is good	+	+	+	+	+	+
Strength is good			+		+	
Force is good	+	+	+		+	
Playfulness is good	+			+		
Teamwork is good	+	+	+	+	+	+
Discipline is important			+		+	
The referee is to be criticized		+	+		+	

Some values are common in the reports of the male and female cup finals from both 1979 and 2009. For both male and female players, for instance, the scoring of a goal is the greatest moment in their lives. But the scope is broader and the values are more aggressive in the male coverage. Reports from the men's cup final are much longer than those of the women's; obviously, female football is perceived as less important than male football,⁹ although the female players seem to be just as dedicated to the sport as the male players.¹⁰

Frames

The analysis of photos, genres, topics, deixis, attitudes and values reveal dominating frames in the newspaper coverage of the cup final. Framing involves selection and salience. According to Entman (1993: 52), framing "is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a com-

municating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”.

Thus an identification of frames may disclose what is considered to be most important – mainly in terms of interpretation and evaluation – in the football coverage. The promoted frames may signify ideological concepts in football journalism – and the change of these concepts over time. Mohamed El-Bendary (2005: 103) describes media frame as “embedded in the way journalists interpret and compose stories to help audiences make sense of events to maintain audience interest”. The dominating frames in the material are distributed like this:

Frames	1919	1949	1979		2009	
	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Atmosphere	+					
Goal scoring	+	+	+	+	+	+
Celebration	+	+	+	+	+	+
Hero		+	+	+	+	+
Coach		+	+	+	+	+
Expert		+	+	+	+	+
Cup trophy			+	+	+	+
Scapegoat			+		+	
Revenge				+	+	
Sweetheart					+	
Market value					+	+
Transfer					+	+

Atmosphere is a dominating frame in the 1919 material.¹¹ Goal scoring and celebration are journalistic frames throughout the period. Framing the match hero and the team coach from 1949 onwards shows an increasing interest in individuals. In the 1949 material, the journalists promote themselves as experts, which may also be interpreted as a focus on individuals. Winning and lifting the cup trophy – the materialised symbol of the championship – is a frame in the coverage of both the male and the female finals from 1979 and 2009. However, winning the cup trophy in itself earns little money for the players. In Norway, professional football was not yet fully established in 1979 – in fact the Norwegian Broadcasting Company refused to transmit the cup final on TV unless the sponsor’s advertising labels were removed, and the sponsors permitted the removal. But professionalisation and commercialisation developed rapidly, and in 1984 a non-amateur licence for the players was installed. Since then the players have increasingly become sales objects, and accordingly their market value and speculation about their transfers are frames found in the texts from 2009. Scapegoats seem to be a male frame in 1979 and 2009 (are women football players regarded as too sensitive to be framed as scapegoats?). The

concept and narrative of revenge is, however, represented in the reportage from the female cup final in 1979 and the male cup final in 2009. In the male 2009 coverage, the match hero is presented with his girlfriend, demonstrating a stronger focus on individuals, whereas in the female coverage there is no such presentation. Otherwise, the frames seem to be quite similar for the male and female cup final reporting in 1979 and 2009.

All the frames described above – except the expert-frame – are communicated as narratives. The atmosphere and the celebration are narratives about having a good time together (Helland 2003: 44), feeling joy and being enthusiastic. The cup trophy represents the main symbol of reward and happy ending in the celebration narrative. The goal scoring describes the dramatic climax, documenting that the winning team deserves the victory. The winning team has a hero, often featured like a Jack the Dullard.¹² This Jack the Dullard may have something to revenge, and the sweetheart may – together with the cup – symbolise the trophy, the desired object of reward. Adapted to the actant model designed by the Lithuanian-French semiotician Algirdas Julien Greimas (Berthelsen 1974: 439-502), the coach plays the role of the helper in this narrative. The scapegoat is the counterpart of the hero on the losing team.¹³ The cup trophy and the sweetheart are not the only rewards for the successful hero – his reputation as a hero also implies increased market value and salary. The hero himself (or herself) becomes a desired object on the transfer market. The expert does not have any function in a narrative; the expert is the narrator.

Frames stored in the past are still there, but they may have been changed or restored by new frames – clearly illustrated in the table above – in accordance with the change of attitudes¹⁴ and values communicated in football journalism.

Ideology

The identified frames add up to a narrative about an individual person's success (or failure, in the case of the scapegoat) irrespective of his or her personal background. Any person with the right qualities may succeed. And the right qualities are presented in the table of values. An ideology emerges that every person creates his or her own fortune.

"The match winner" is a frequently used periphrasis in the 2009 material, corresponding with the individualising hero focus. Thus, individualisation is strong within football journalism – strangely enough, since football is a team game. But the concept of making one's own fortune runs deep in western culture, and may represent a hope for lower classes, since it connotes that all humans are equal. Admittedly, some individuals are more talented than others, but in any event the talent has to be developed by practice.

Bergström & Boréus (2005: 164) quote Jan Hylén's parameters or dimensions applicable in the analysis of ideology: humanity (optimistic-pessimistic); social theory (collectivist-individualistic); economic ideals (collectivist-individualistic; moral view (collectivist-individualistic). The football fan culture as seen through the eyes of the journalists may be rendered as optimistic in terms of humanity and individualistic when it comes to social theory, economic ideals and moral view.

In 1975, I found that focusing on individuals, intimacy and intensity in Norwegian newspaper football cup final coverage had increased since 1910 (Roksvold 1975). Since 1975, the individualisation process has clearly deepened,¹⁵ as has the process of intensifying. The usage of hyperbole signifies that standards are adjusted to special normative proportions in football journalism. What is good, is fantastic; what is bad, is tragic. The dramas in the world of football are melodramas. Thus, described as a rhetoric genre, we may say that football journalism is epideictic, a ceremonial oratory of display (Aristotle 1996: 598), appealing strongly to the emotions.

Football fandom is linked to leisure (Helland 2003: 15, 29); that the fans seek recreation, is one explanation for the epideictic character of the reporting. Football is entertainment, and entertainment involves emotions. The conflicts staged in the football stadium may be distorted in football journalism, but they are clear and simple, and appeal to momentary and noncommittal emotions. Temporarily belonging to the imagined community of football fans implies retreat from more ambiguous and complicated conflicts and problems in the supporters' domestic and public lives. The supporters have this experience in common, which may develop a feeling of common identity.¹⁶

The sense of intimacy is certainly still found in football journalism, through the private information about the players and coaches. And using a common language with technical terms specific to the subculture establishes a feeling of belonging to the subculture, of being in the inner circle. But the 2009 material, with its increased usage of the opinion genre, the summary topic, the excluding personal deixis and the self-assertive bylines, signals that the newspaper journalists are taking on the role of experts towards both the players and the audience, thus breaking the inner circle. This may be due to the competition between newspapers and the other media, but it may also be an outcome of some ideological change, as the same tendency is observed within political journalism:

News journalism goes from using discursive strategies that tend to set the scene for the politicians to speak, to strategies that tend to offer a journalistic perspective on what is going on in politics. This change in the discourse practice of framing also indicates a change in journalistic practice and the relationship between news journalism and politics (as institutions). During the past decades, a more autonomous attitude towards politics and politicians has developed within news journalism. (Eriksson 2006: 203)

Liberalism seems to be the dominating ideology in the imagined community of football fandom, as it is constructed in the newspapers' football cup final coverage. Individualisation is clearly connected with liberalism as a political ideology, in which the individual is conceived to be the fundamental unit in the society and the individual's self-realisation and emancipation to be the general objective of societal development (Skirbekk & Agedal 1973: 36). Competition is a basic element of the individual's self-realisation and emancipation project.¹⁷ The intensified descriptions, the conflicts and the narratives also support liberalism as the dominant ideology. It is interesting to note that economic liberalism is also visible in the new turn towards frames such as market value and transfer. The most self-realising individualists are, however, the journalists positioning themselves as experts clearly placed above both the audience and the players. Being an expert is the most important advantage for the gaining of status in the football fan subculture.

The changes over time in the journalistic coverage of the Norwegian football cup finals may partly be understood in light of media development. In 1919, the news was the event, the course of the game and the result. In 1949 the course of the game and the result were already known from the radio transmission, so the newspaper journalists could, instead, interview experts to comment upon the match and focus on specific highlights from the play. In 1979, many readers had already seen the match on TV, and they had seen the individual players on the screen but had not heard their stories and comments, so by publishing interviews with the players the newspaper journalists brought them closer to the audience. In 2009 the event was already well-known from radio, TV and the Internet and all that was left for the newspaper journalists was to comment upon aspects of the match – thus establishing themselves as the real experts.

The 2009 journalists even criticise the coaches, whom the players consider to be their professional authority. Thanks to the coach, the team succeeds, the hero is created and the hero's market value increases – but the success of a team and its hero is established at the cost of a strong discipline under the coach's regime. The coach demands obedience and is represented as authoritarian. The newspaper reports after the men's cup final in 2009 were a very good example of this relationship between the coach and his (or her?) team. The players accept this position, and the journalists develop and confirm myths about the coaches as dictators. Thus the sort of liberalism in football journalism is ambiguous, with traces from feudalism as well, which demands obedience towards the omnipotent leader¹⁸ – approving the lord's authority (Habermas 1975: 89).

According to social democratic ideology, sport should not be oriented principally towards the elite performers, but should bring physical health to all people. Cultivation is valued as more important than commercialisation (Slagstad 2008: 410). The social democratic feature in the early material – with

more atmosphere among the audience, playfulness on the ground and egalitarian relationships among the players and between the players, journalists, coaches and audience – is far less prominent in football reporting in Norwegian newspapers of our time.

Notes

1. Van Dijk (2009: 193) defines ideologies as the fundamental axiomatic beliefs underlying the social representations shared by a group, featuring fundamental norms and values. He includes values, attitudes and norms in the concept of ideology: "Ideologies may be seen as the basis of the (positive) self-image of a group, organized by fundamental categories such as the desired (valued, preferred) identity, actions, norms and values, resources and relations to other groups ... Ideologies control more specific socially shared attitudes of groups ... Attitudes (such as those on immigration, divorce, abortion, death penalty, and other important social issues) are general and abstract, and may be more or less known and shared by their members who may 'apply' them to form their own personal opinions about specific social events."
2. "Newspapers use specific language codes in combination with layout and pictures to produce rich meanings. Using multiple layers of visual and textual signification, newspapers frame sport and sportspeople within broader social ideologies" (Kennedy & Hills 2009: 83).
3. Rowe (2004: 147) has detected a tendency for "the action sports photograph in newspapers ... to carry hidden ideologies of gendered power through the disproportionate quantity and quality of the images of active ruggedly individual men and passive, dependent women".
4. I have previously (Roksvold 1975) identified three changing processes in football journalism: an increasing concentration on individuals, more intensified descriptions and more intimate relationships between player, journalist and audience – within what may be called "the inner circle".
5. According to Dahlén (2008: 604), the "good loser" is taken for granted in sports. The loser is expected to praise the winner.
6. According to Ross (2010: 16) four per cent of the female and three per cent of the male sources in journalism are related to sport, but the male sources, in total, are far more numerous. Luenenborg et al. (2010: 61) have found that 82 per cent of the people represented in media were male and only 17 per cent were female.
7. The translation of this and the following Norwegian examples is made by me.
8. "Even in a media-saturated culture, football's emphasis on competition and rivalry at local, regional and national levels, allied with its close association with urban working-class culture and its attendant concern with the demarcation of territory, makes it a potent cultural form for the expression of individual and collective identities" (Boyle & Haynes 2009: 199).
9. Thus the journalists' treatment of the women's cup final fit in with three of the gender-ideological propositions which according to Van Dijk (2009: 203) seem to have inspired the classical news values that men are stronger (tougher etc.) than women; that men are more competent than women; and that men's issues are more important than women's issues.
10. "Men are attributed greater worth and importance than women of the same race and class, even if their activities are similar or alike" (Van Damme 2010: 169).
11. Helland (2003: 44) thinks that one reason for this is that the journalists writing about football in the early period of sports coverage in the press not were sports journalists themselves, but all-round reporters.
12. "Jack the Dullard" is the main character in a fairy tale written by the famous Danish storyteller Hans Christian Andersen. Jack is conceived by the others as stupid and clumsy, but proves to be the most clever of them all, and becomes king at the end of the story.
13. The scapegoat and the hero are among the seven "master myths" in the news identified by Lule (2001). The other "master myths" according to Lule are the victim, the good mother, the trickster, the other world and the flood. One could say that the mediation of the coach

- alludes to the good mother myth, and in the male coverage from 1979 the story about one player being accused of having caused an unfair penalty kick by pretending to be felled in the penalty area, points to the trickster myth.
14. "The framing and priming literatures suggest that all external influence over 'what people think' derives from telling them 'what to think about'. When the media shape what people think *about*, they must logically influence what people think – i.e. their attitudes ..." (Entman 2010: 392).
 15. "While Gramsci had little to say on sport generally, he did contend critically that 'Football is a model of individualistic society. It demands initiative, competition and conflict, but it is regulated by the unwritten rule of fair play'" (Giulianotti 2004: 5–6).
 16. "Goffman noted that in modern societies, the individual's personality had become the most sacred of objects, hence social order is to be maintained through interaction rituals between people in situations of co-presence" (Giulianotti 2004: 4).
 17. "Just as classical liberalism conceived of the economy as a sphere of free choice and competition, so a parallel liberal conception of (non-economic) civil society emerged as a sphere of free choice and competition" (Starr 2007: 77).
 18. According to Brown (1998: 155) Ganshof envisages feudalism as "a body of institutions creating and regulating the obligations of obedience and service – mainly military service on the part of a free man (the vassal) towards another free man (the lord), and the obligations of protection and maintenance on the part of the lord with regard to his vassal".

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Chapter 5

Framing the Football Fan as Consumer

A Content Analysis of the Coverage of Supporters in The Star During the 2010 World Cup¹

Rune Ottosen, Nathalie Hyde-Clarke & Toby Miller

As a global sports event, the men's World Cup of football offers an opportunity to dig into the contradiction between the idealising rhetoric of the Fédération International de Football Association (FIFA) and commercial realities, where the quest for profits is essential. According to FIFA, the purpose of the tournament is to “foster unity within the football world and to use football to promote solidarity, regardless of gender, ethnic background, faith or culture” (“FIFA Brand” quoted in Aranke and Zoller 2010: 132). In order to run a successful tournament, FIFA needs a host nation which can cultivate profound local emotional attachment to the game, and at the same satisfy the neoliberal interests of investors (ibid.: 135). With this in mind, our purpose in this article is to explore how supporters were framed in the media coverage of the 2010 men's football World Cup in South Africa. The research question which informs our article is: “Are supporters mainly interesting for the media as football-lovers or as consumers?” or “Are the supporters mainly presented in the media as football-lovers or as consumers?”

As a case study, we analysed how supporters were framed in the daily coverage of the Johannesburg-based newspaper *The Star*. We examined the news coverage and the representation of supporters in the advertisements, and interviewed the chief editor of *The Star*, Moegsien Williams. We also conducted a survey among supporters, but in this article we focus primarily on a content analysis of the newspaper material, although some findings from the survey and the interview are included for contextual purposes. By choosing only one newspaper, we can hardly claim to have proved how the media in general framed such a global event, so this must rather be seen as a case study that highlights some examples of how a media outlet framed supporter culture during the period in question.

Bringing the nation together?

In an overview of South African media coverage of the World Cup, Guy Berger points out that forces were at work urging journalists to adopt a “positive” news agenda. To some extent this was initiated by public relations agencies at work on behalf of the organisers (Berger 2010: 179). It is not surprising that a recurring theme in talking with supporters, listening to official speeches, and reading the media was the expectation that the World Cup would be a catalyst for “bringing the nation together”. This partly reflected the political ambitions of the ANC-led government (Jacobs 2010: vii-viii). In addition, FIFA president Joseph (Sepp) S. Blatter made it clear that not only was South Africa hosting the event as a country, but it also represented the whole continent of Africa (Aranke & Zoller 2010: 136). The organisers and the government hoped that a “positive angle” could compensate for some negative press during the run-up to the World Cup warning both local and international supporters about the possibility of conflict, crime and bad organisation (op.cit.: iX).

The dilemma for journalists in such environments is to be part of a nation-building process, to represent a continent, and to be critical (Ottosen 2001). This dilemma was also mentioned by the editor of *The Star* during our interview: “There are three main sport codes in Africa, rugby – which is politically important – and then cricket which tends to speak to English speaking white South Africans. And then soccer (football), the sport for the black South Africans, so it’s a bit of a sports apartheid.”² When asked if he saw parallels to the 2006 World Cup in Germany and bringing Germans together to rally behind the flag for the first time since the Second World War, he said:

Precisely. This was an opportunity to go beyond the differences between the sports and look at a unifying future. But it would require a commitment by South African fans and the general public to be supportive. Take the match against Uruguay in Pretoria as an example. Ten minutes before the end, some people walked out in disgust. This is wrong. We have to support local soccer, support the professional soccer league, premier soccer league, and then build up to the next World Cup.

Claims for the Cup as a contributor to nation building were made in several articles in *The Star*, in both editorials and commentaries. In this study, we will show that *The Star* newspaper largely identified with the nation-building hopes attached to the World Cup and largely covered it in a supportive manner, while being critical of certain aspects. Notably, not all local media adopted the same stance and, in some cases, were even more critical.

Different opinions in the media

The vast majority of South African media lived up to the expectation of a “positive” framing in their coverage (Berger 2010). But it would be wrong to talk about a unified media in this respect. The idea of “bringing the nation together” through the World Cup was harshly opposed by Zola Maseko in the weekly *Mail & Guardian*’s first edition after the opening. Under the title “Rainbow-nation patriotism, pah”, Maseko points to class differences, poverty among blacks, and a country divided *de facto* along race lines. He writes: “To divert the attention of the masses huge fortunes and corruption runs wild, while poverty and non-delivery are the order of the day. All this as the masses are overcome by one month of delirious flag-waving and patriotism (kiss the Boer!)” (*Mail & Guardian* 18-24 June 2010).

Overall, the *Mail & Guardian* took a more critical approach to the whole World Cup event than did the *The Star*. They gave voice to those South Africans who protested against the World Cup, and serve as an example of the variations within the media in attitudes towards the Cup. Without getting much attention from the global media, thousands of South Africans protested against the government’s massive spending on the Cup at a demonstration in Durban on 16 June. These activists were joined by hundreds of stadium stewards caught up in an ongoing dispute over low wages. They were met by riot police with tear gas. The *Mail & Guardian* wrote:

“Get out FIFA mafia!” chanted the crowds in a Durban park, their ranks swelled by stewards who were involved in clashes with riot police on Monday after protests over their wages.

Monday’s protests triggered walkouts by other stewards, which have led South Africa’s police to take control at the World Cup stadiums in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and Durban.

Ever since it was awarded the staging rights, South Africa’s government has faced accusations it should not be spending hundreds of millions of dollars on stadiums when about 40% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day.

Spending on the World Cup has cost South Africa around \$4.3 billion, a significantly higher figure than was estimated in their initial bid, and due to a variety of factors, early hopes of a financial windfall for the country have largely been dashed ... FIFA expects its own World Cup profits to approach \$3 billion from television rights alone (*Mail & Guardian* 16 June 2010)

Even though *The Star* chose a more positive approach than the *Mail & Guardian*, in our interview, *The Star*’s editor said that in the build-up to the tournament his paper ran critical stories on corruption, problems with getting sites ready on time and so on. But when the World Cup finals started the paper adopted a positive and supportive angle. *The Star* hoped to increase circula-

tion from the event and a special supplement called “Shoot”, sponsored by the largest national telecommunications firm, Telkom. The editor of *The Star* admitted in our interview that the supplement could not have come about without sponsorship by Telkom, which was also a sponsor of the World Cup. Although there was a multitude of self-promotion by Telkom in the supplement, it was not clearly stated in the supplement that this was a sponsored product and a *de facto* advertising supplement. This mixture of journalistic article and sponsorship is ethically questionable and symbolises the commercialisation of journalistic coverage during a global event. The front page of the Shoot supplement on 23 June had this message on the front page: “Telkom – a proud national supporter – go do it for Africa”. Alongside this text were two photos of footballers. Whether this was a front-page story or an advertisement was not clear. By blurring distinctions in the media between supporters and consumers the supplement certainly provided motivation for the current study.

Background and previous research

In order to understand media globalisation, the expression the “world as one place” was introduced by Roland Robertson (1992). A major football tournament is an important “laboratory” for digging deeper into issues such as cultural identity and national media representation of a global event (Helland 2003).

Our approach was partly inspired by the claim that sport “is an ideal field for interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches” (Mehus and Osborn 2010:90). Our hypothesis is that nationalistically-oriented sports journalism misses such basic questions as why football supporters travel to big tournaments and which aspects of the event they cherish. Perhaps supporters travel primarily to satisfy their identity *as* football supporters, but FIFA and, to a certain extent, the media, find them most interesting as consumers in a market (Desbordes et al. 2007), understanding consumers to be buyers of products such as tickets to matches; media products (access to matches on television, newspapers carrying reports from the tournament); supporter equipment and clothing; and food and drink at the venues. Up to this point, most studies of major sporting events have concentrated on opening ceremonies and their media coverage, without addressing fan reactions (Miller 2010). And football in South Africa received little attention from academics before the run-up to the World Cup (Alegi and Bolsmann 2010). Our research indicates the sticky indexicality of nationalism as well as supranational organisation and global finance.

A theoretical approach to fan culture

It is important to consider the Cup and its coverage in the media in the context of dominant discourses of fandom. The last century and a half of scholarship, policy and punditry has seen obsessive attempts to correlate the popular classes with antisocial conduct, emphasising the number and conduct of crowds, fans, and audiences: where they came from, how many there were, and what they did as a consequence of being present. This psy-function (psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis, and psychotherapy) has created what the ethnomethodologist Harold Garfinkel called the “cultural dope”, a mythic figure who “produces the stable features of the society by acting in compliance with pre-established and legitimate alternatives of action that the common culture provides”. The common sense rationalities ... of here and now situations” used by ordinary people are obscured and derided by such categorisations (1992: 68).

German-British figurational sociology mixes the psy-function and sociology to comprehend sport. Norbert Elias analysed sport and social structure synchronically and diachronically, coining the term “figuration” to designate how people inhabit social positions in ways that vary over time and space. The figural keys to sport that he identified are exertion, contest, codification and collective meaningfulness. Without these factors, its magic attractions – tension and catharsis – cannot be guaranteed. Elias asks why there is such fascination with rule-governed contests between individuals and teams, evident in a trend that fans out from the European ruling classes after the sixteenth century (Elias 1978; Elias and Dunning 1986).

Sentiment and behaviour were codified from that time, supplanting excess and self-laceration with temperate auto-critique. The displacement of tension and the search for ordered leisure allocated to organised sport the task of controlling and training gentry, workers, and colonists alike. High tension and low risk blended popular appeal with public safety – a utilitarian calculus of time and joy (Elias 1978; Elias and Dunning 1986). These trends have been subject to local customisation and struggle. Henning Eichberg (1986) points to contradictory, non-linear shifts in European sport between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, with enclosure and openness in an ambiguous relationship. The spatial separation of sport from nature in late nineteenth-century industrialisation marked a trend whereby bodies in motion were progressively contained, enraging hygiene movements but permitting surveillance, spectacle and profit:

Battle lust and aggressiveness, for example, find socially permitted expression in the infighting of groups in society or, for that matter, in competitive sports. And they are manifest above all in “spectating”, say, at boxing matches; in the daydream-like identification with some few people who, in a moderate and precisely regulated way, are allowed to act out such affects. This living

out of affects in spectating or, for instance, just watching a murder film, is particularly characteristic of this kind of civilised society. It is crucial for the development of books and theatre, and decisive for the role of the cinema in our world. Already in education, in the prescriptions for conditioning young people, originally active, pleasurable aggression is transformed into a more passive and restrained pleasure in spectating, consequently into a mere visual enjoyment (Elias 1978: 240).

Following the figurational model, Joseph Maguire (1993) typifies today's sporting body as a model of discipline, a mirror, a site of domination, and a form of communication with the crowd. The disciplined body is remodelled through diet and training. The mirroring body functions as a machine of desire, encouraging mimetic conduct via the purchase of commodities. The dominating body exercises power through physical force, both on the field and, potentially, off it. Finally, the communicative body is an expressive totality, balletic and beautiful, wracked and wrecked. The fan invests in these bodies both as extensions of him or herself and as sites where repressed desire can be played out.

These taxonomies bleed into one another, and can be internally conflictual or straightforwardly functional. They are carried by human, commercial, media, and governmental practices that stretch and maintain boundaries between athletes, performances, aspirations and audiences. Twentieth-century social reformers sought to harness such energies to nation-building and economic productivity at the same time as capitalism was transforming sport into a practice of spectatorship that was as rule-governed as the games being watched – part of the spread of biopower. Biopower made the relationship of populations to their environments a central strut of governance, as productivity and health were linked to work and leisure both performatively and indexically. Each part was subject to human intervention and hence governmental interest, via forecasting, measuring, and estimating.

The figurational account, whereby sport is a release for otherwise unruly forms of public life as well as a means of generating profit, ran into problems when sport returned to its ungoverned origins in the 1970s. In Western Europe, live football became the crucible of such concerns, often impelled by concerns about nationalistic, racist, misogynistic, and hyper-masculinist conduct and the desire to control such urges as part of state power and commercial expansion. This “problem” was largely contained through *embourgeoisement* and governmentality. As stadia became all-seaters, the policing of everyday conduct grew more intense; and rival groups of fans were institutionalized in separate zones at matches (Brimson & Brimson 1996; Armstrong 1998; Robson 2000).

By the 2010 World Cup, the discourse on football supporters was split between figuration, the psy-function, resistance, commodification, and governmentality, which formed the backdrop to the Cup and its address to fans and

coverage of them. At a popular level, the core issue was a romantic attachment to a pre-commodified lifeworld where organic ties linked fans to clubs and players had affective rather than contingent connections to their teams. In their work on media representation of fan culture during the World Cup in France in 1998, Hugh O'Donnell and Neil Blain note "a variety of themes – media-tization; commodification; the fate of ideology in the world of consumption; the relationship between the local and the global; the nature of the symbolic value of public behaviour – which may require analyses from postmodern as well as modern standpoints" (1999: 211). With for-profit club sides of increasing importance to the game, the Cup remained a zone where some of these attachments to nationalism were seen to outweigh the mammon of salaries and the masculinist energies of hyper-nationalism were uncomfortably juxtaposed with a pacific, universalist discourse of beauty.

Content analyses of supporter-coverage in *The Star*

We chose *The Star* newspaper for a content analysis of fan culture during the World Cup in 2010 as a typical representative of the mainstream daily press in South Africa. *The Star* has its core market in Johannesburg. In 2008 it had a readership of 840 000, and came out six times a week. *The Star* is regarded as the leading "serious" or "quality" morning paper in Johannesburg, the main centre of the World Cup, where the opening match and the finals were played. The content analysis was conducted by a research assistant whose coding instructions defined the task as identifying articles and advertisements where supporters were mentioned in articles and visuals.³

The sample

The material collected covers the period 11 June – 25 June 2010, during the tournament's qualifying round. It must be underlined that this sample does not claim to give a representative picture of the *The Star's* overall coverage of the Cup. It is purely an analysis of how supporters were represented in *The Star* during this period.

The total sample of the items (advertisements and articles) was 527 units. In the two weeks during which the research was conducted, *The Star* carried hundreds of articles about the World Cup and the South African team nicknamed "Bafana Bafana". Most of the front pages during this period were dominated by articles on the World Cup. An example is the front page of 11 June, the tournament's opening day. The main story was a tribute to the World Cup itself, with the headline only the historic day of the beginning of the tournament "11/6 /2010" (with the colours of the South African flag shading the text). The article

graphically surrounded a photo of the World Cup trophy in the middle, between two headlines for the two top articles: “The world in Bafana’s hands” and “Next moment of greatness”. The connotations of this front page are national pride, optimism and expectations, sentiments that were quite representative of many South Africans at this stage of the tournament.

The Star did not hide the fact that the newspaper supported the tournament. In the interview, the editor expressed this quite clearly:

We took a very positive stand from the beginning. We always had the view that the World Cup been given to South Africa to host, the World Cup was a right decision although some media elements across the globe were quite pessimistic about our ability to host an event of this magnitude, nature and size. We always believed that we would be able to host a successful World Cup, that we would be ready in time, and I think we were right.⁴

This outlook expressed itself in some enthusiastic, almost patriotic articles in *The Star*. One of these was printed on the first day of the World Cup under the title “Sing, South Africa the beloved country sing!” (*The Star*, 11 June 2010), making reference to the internationally-acclaimed novel *Cry the Beloved Country*, written by the South African author Alan Paton about the apartheid era. However, by altering “cry” to “sing” *The Star* clearly associates the Cup with a different sentiment, promoting nationhood and unity. Foreign supporters also became a part of this patriotic framing through an article after the first match between South Africa and Mexico. Despite the fact that South Africa only drew 1-1 in the first match against Mexico, some comfort could be found in the positive statement: “Foreign visitors love us and love our Bafana boys” (*The Star* 12 June 2010) although there was some criticism of the organisers, especially at the beginning of the tournament when there were problems with transport to arenas. This was expressed through the title on the front page after the opening match, “Fans outraged at train delay” (*The Star* 11 June). Later in the week, industrial action among stadium stewards at the arenas received some attention; low wages among the staff and discontent among the bus drivers over wages and working conditions was highlighted in an article on 15 June with the headline “Rea Vaya bus drivers quit over transporting soccer fans” (*The Star* 15 June 2010).

The size of articles

This overview of the size of the articles gives an impression of how the 527 units in the sample appear in the overall editorial context of the paper.

Table 1. Size of analysed units (articles and advertisements)

Size of unit	Number	Percentage
A Main story front page	5	0,9
B Main story inside	1	0,2
C Big front page story (1/2 page or more)	12	2,2
D Big story inside (1/2 page or more)	84	15,9
E Medium story front page (less than 1/2 page)	7	1,4
F Medium story ininside (less than 1/2 page)	71	13,4
G Small front page (less than 1/4 page)	8	1,5
H Small inside (less than 1/4 page)	278	52,8
I Brief	61	11,7
Total	527	100

Most articles were small stories placed inside the newspaper; only one per cent made it to the front page. Only one front-page lead focused on supporters. That was on the day after South Africa lost its second match to Uruguay 3-0. The title was “Bafana dream on knife-edge”, with a huge picture of depressed supporters in costume, their faces in agony.

Table 2. Categories/units where supporters were mentioned

Category	Number	Percentage
A News article	186	35,4
B Commentary	59	11,2
C Editorial	10	1,9
D Reportage	3	0,6
E Interview	1	0,2
F Match report	17	3,2
G Brief	50	9,5
H Advertisement	139	26,5
I Readers' opinion	27	5,1
J Supplement	2	0,4
K Other	33	6,1
Total	527	100

The vast majority of the units comprised news (35,4 per cent) and advertisements (26,5 per cent). The latter percentage is quite interesting since the impression was that images of supporters were used in all kinds of advertisements in newspapers, posters and commercials. Framing the cheering supporters with a brand connotes that the cheering crowd salutes not only the game and their team, but also a specific product such as Budweiser, Hyundai, Adidas, or Visa.

Many sponsors tried in different ways to capitalise on the tournament. One example from *The Star* during this period was an advertisement in which a waitress dressed as a footballer posed in front of the logo for her restaurant (*The Star* 18 June 2010). Here we see the force of commodification of the spectator, with fans providing implicit endorsements of particular businesses.

If we place the advertisements in one table, we find that almost all of them framed supporters posing as supporters of a *product*. In contrast, very few articles in *The Star* during this period included interviews with supporters, reports about them, or a focus on them in match reports. This finding supports the hypothesis that the supporters' own expression of their love for the game played a minor role in coverage.⁵

However, the table below (Table 3) shows that supporters were a principal or important theme in 70,1 per cent of those units. This finding tells us they were represented but not invited to speak for themselves in interviews or through cited comments.

Table 3. Supporters' position in the articles

Supporters' place in articles	Number	Percentage
A Supporters main theme	160	30,3
B Supporters important theme	217	41,1
C Supporters less important	76	14,5
D Supporters peripheral	74	14,1
Total	527	100

Framing the supporters

An analysis was undertaken to find out in detail how supporters were framed. Some preset frames were tested on the sample of units.

Table 4. Framing of supporters within units

Framing	Number	Percentage
A Foreign supporters praising organisation of the World Cup	4	0,8
B Enthusiasts for Bafana Bafana ⁶	55	10,4
C Critics of FIFA commercialism	23	4,4
D Supporters expressing love of the game	50	9,5
E Supporters in a commercial framing	164	31,1
F Strange or funny supporters	21	4
G Supporters interviewed about the match	0	0
H Supporters in a violent/criminal frame	11	2,1
I Vuvuzela ⁷ frame	51	9,7
J Supporters and charity	5	0,9
K Disappointed in Bafana Bafana supporters	12	2,3
L Other	131	24,8
Total	527	100

It is not always easy to place articles in a preset framing scheme – the fact that twenty-five per cent of the units did not fit into the preset frames underlines this. It represents an obvious methodological problem and reduces the value of our analysis. That said, we can see some interesting patterns. Bafana supporters are more likely to be framed as enthusiastic supporters before the match, than “depressed” supporters following a defeat. After the 3-0 loss to Uruguay, fans were censured for not taking losses in a sportsman-like manner: “Don’t ever let the vuvuzelas be silenced”, *The Star* wrote in an article on 18 June after observing that “Bafana fans left Loftus [the stadium], even before the third goal was scored”. The story continued: “The mighty vuvuzela was silent. Was it plain disappointment or are we really that fickle as supporters?”

When we interviewed the editor after South Africa’s first two matches, against Mexico and Uruguay, he said that the results were a problem for both the football nation South Africa and for the commercial interest of *The Star*, because it tended to sell more newspapers with an optimistic than a negative front page. In the light of our article’s initial hypothesis, it is worth noting that nearly ten per cent expressed a love for the game in the article and many of the Bafana enthusiasts framed also expressed their emotions as football fans. But none of the supporters were asked about their views of the match – that job was monopolised by journalists and expert commentators. The largest category is the frame in which supporters are placed in a commercial setting, mostly in advertisements. Thus there seems to be a certain contradiction in the material: the hypothesis of a commercial use of supporters is confirmed but is combined with supporters expressing their love for the game. On this point the hypothesis was only partly confirmed; in ten per cent of the articles in our sample, supporters express their love of the game.

The vuvuzela frame

Spectators’ use of the vuvuzela (a plastic horn) was much debated during the tournament. Many supporters enthusiastically played the vuvuzela and talked positively about it. But many in the stadiums complained about the noise level and numerous players complained that they found it disturbing, sometimes drowning out the referee’s whistle. Argentine superstar Lionel Messi was one of those who complained (*VG Net* 14 June 2010). TV viewers across the world also complained about the noise; a survey revealed that thirty-five percent of British adults watching the World Cup did so with the volume of their television turned down because of the vuvuzelas. This worried the advertisers, who had bought valuable time during broadcast matches (*The Star* 18 June 2010).

It is no wonder, then, that close to ten per cent of the articles had a vuvuzela frame. In *The Star*, similar criticism was expressed through a statement by the Portuguese player Ronaldo: “Ronaldo hits at deafening vuvuzela” (*The Star* 14

June 2010). Overall, the vuvuzela was framed in a positive manner in *The Star*, because it was a sales success, and when threats to ban the vuvuzela were rejected by FIFA, the business section of *The Star* wrote approvingly: “Vuvuzelas make it to next round of World Cup” (*The Star* 14 June 2010). The vuvuzela was a commercial success for the producers of the controversial instrument, including Australian retailers, and Sydney’s Appaloosa Toys enjoyed a “1000 percent rise in sales of the trumpet since the start of the World Cup” (*The Star* 22 June 2010). The vuvuzela therefore represents resistance to the biopolitical incorporation of fans, a refusal of governmentality and commodification, and an imposition of difference via expressive totality outside corporate and state endorsement.

Balance in the visual representation of Bafana Bafana fans?

Pictures of fans from different countries with their T-shirts, flags, face painting, caps, and glasses represented a popular, colourful way of representing fan culture. On a daily basis, *The Star* presented such pictures in the news, sports, and business sections, and in advertisements. What can these pictures tell us about the representation of fans in the light of gender and race?

As background, it is worth noting that according to the editor of *The Star*, sixty-two per cent of its readers are black Africans, 30 per cent are white, and about eight per cent are coloured or Indian [Asian]. It was mentioned in the opening section that football has traditionally been a black sport in South Africa – and it will probably continue to be so despite the wishful rhetoric of “bringing the nation together” expressed by organisers and the media. It was obvious that many whites attended a football match for the first time during the World Cup. But it takes more than a tournament to change patterns rooted for generations in social and class structures (Hylland Eriksen 2004). In the survey among the 877 football fans we conducted during the World Cup as a part of this research project, 29 per cent identified themselves as black, 37.2 per cent as white and 23 per cent as coloured.⁸ The first two categories were relatively evenly split between South Africans and those from other countries.

An analysis of fifty-two pictures of football fans in *The Star* during the analysed period shows that black Africans are much more dominant than the figures above would suggest.⁹ In all stories and photographs of fans in arenas, parks, and public transport, there is hardly a white face to be seen. A lot of visuals show supporters posing for the camera – both sexes evenly represented – to show their enthusiasm and colourful clothing. In just five of the pictures (ten per cent) do we see a mixture of white, coloured and black supporters together – in most of the pictures all the supporters are black. On 14 June we find a rare picture, taken at a fan park, of a white and black, smiling and pos-

ing actively together, swinging their vuvuzelas. In the stands in the arena it is possible to identify a few white faces, but they can be counted on one hand. This is especially interesting as prior to the World Cup there were concerns that the local black population would be unable to attend owing to the cost of the tickets.

Only in the advertising can we see a balance between white, coloured and black, leaving the impression that advertisers appeal to all races by identifying their products with fans through a balance of gender and race. It is noteworthy that the only white player on the South African team, Boot, posed in commercials for a pharmaceutical product (*The Star* 12 and 19 June 2010). The visual content of supporters' representation in *The Star* seems to indicate that football appeals to black people in the main, despite all the rhetoric about "bringing the nation together". The statistics from the survey, and the impressions we gained from talking to many white fans in the fan parks and arenas, suggest that the visuals in *The Star* under-represent the white presence among fans.¹⁰ Advertisements, by contrast, were careful to stage the supporters as a multi-ethnic crowd.

Ambush marketing and gender

In the 2006 World Cup, Anheuser-Busch was famously ambushed, to use marketers' *argot*, by smarter opposition. It held exclusive beer promotion rights to the event, but a Dutch brewer circumvented that by giving thousands of branded *lederbosen* in team colours to Dutch fans. FIFA's intellectual property regime has strengthened since then, and World Cup lawyers even obtained an injunction preventing Kulula, a South African airline, from advertising itself as "Unofficial National Carrier of the You-Know-What". Meanwhile, MTV, which does not have the rights to carry games, ran spots around the world during the Cup with the tag line "We understand why you aren't watching MTV". ESPN Deportes, Disney's US Spanish language channel, also lacked the rights to direct coverage, but nevertheless dispatched twenty-five reporters to South Africa for the Cup, and ran a promotion called "*90 minutos no son suficientes*" (90 minutes aren't enough), specifically referring to the duration of matches, to indicate the importance of background and synoptic material as well as play-by-play coverage.

An episode during the match between Netherlands and Denmark on 14 June received a lot of attention in *The Star* and in other media. Thirty-six sexily dressed women were forced out of the Soccer City stadium, accused of ambush marketing, and held in a FIFA office for several hours for wearing an orange outfit designed by a Dutch beer company. A small logo for the beer brand on the side of the dress was barely visible. After refusing instructions from a FIFA

delegate to leave the stadium, the women were surrounded by forty stewards who forced them out. Thirty-four of the women were kept for three hours in FIFA detention; two spent several hours more in custody.

Most of the women were South Africans, hired by a local events company on the basis that they could pass for being Dutch by their blonde hair (*The Star* 17 June). The tight orange miniskirt, known as the “Dutchy dress”, was part of a gift pack bought with Bavaria beer in Holland during the build-up to the World Cup. On 15 June, *The Star* ran a front-page story interview with Peer Swinkles from the Bavaria beer company; he denied any attempt at branding, but FIFA representatives insisted that this was ambush marketing. One of the women interviewed by *The Star* claimed: “We were sitting near the front, making a lot of noise, and the cameras kept focusing on us. We were singing songs and having a good time” (*The Star* 15 June).

Since three of the detained women were Dutch citizens, the episode caused a diplomatic dispute when the Netherlands embassy in Pretoria questioned the legality of their detention. Dutch foreign ministry spokesman Aad Meijer claimed that “We are not aware of any South African legislation that allows people to be detained for wearing an orange dress” (*The Star* 17 June).

This drew attention to changes in South African legislation during the Cup to secure the commercial interests of FIFA. In terms of FIFA’s rights-protection programme, spectators could not wear mass-produced, commercially-branded clothing or accessories prior to the matches or during the finals. Special courts were set up to deal with violation of FIFA regulations. According to National Prosecuting Authority spokesman Mthunzi Mhaga, none of the seventeen cases brought before the courts at the time involved the detained women (*ibid.*). Most cases related to theft and fraud, while courts in general remained empty most of the time – there was less street crime during the World Cup than many had expected. Some stories in *The Star* focused on supporters being robbed, among them an Irish reporter: “An Irishman who was hoping to wave his flag throughout the World Cup had his trust in humanity dented when he was robbed of all his belongings – including his match tickets”, *The Star* wrote on 18 June.

FIFA had prosecuted two incidents of market ambushing before the incident with the orange-clad women. One case concerned Eastwood Tavern in Pretoria displaying World Cup flags on the roof, while another involved Metcash Trading Africa selling “2010 POPS” lollipops. The company avoided a court case when the lollipops were removed from the market (*ibid.*)

The orange dress incident cost Britain’s ITV World Cup host, Robbie Earle, his job when the tickets made available to the women were traced to him; he had allegedly made them available through a third party (*ibid.*). When two of the Dutch women appeared in the World Cup court on 15 June, a spokesperson for the Dutch foreign minister, Maxime Verhagen, protested and asked why ordinary citizens walking around in orange dresses were arrested, rather

than the beer company. The two women were released on bail of R10 000 each, and told to appear in court on 23 June to face charges under a special measures regulation (*The Star* 16 June), but the charges were dropped after a court settlement on the day before the trial. Mhaga announced that the matter had been resolved: “FIFA was not interested in proceeding with the matter,” he said. “There was a settlement that was reached between the parties and we ... decided to exercise discretion and not proceed” (guardian.co.uk 22 June 2010).

Even though FIFA was successful in removing images of the women from television production, many letters in the newspaper, on Internet blogs and social media expressed sympathy for the women (*The Star* 17 June).

The story about the orange clad “Dutch-looking” female supporters is an example of how the battle for commercial use of supporters drew attention away from the game itself. FIFA’s handling of the matter embodies the fact that supporters’ images are commodities in their own right.

Visa’s monopoly

Corruption within FIFA has been an issue for many years, as documented by John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (1999) and Andrew Jennings (2006). In 2010, FIFA vice-presidents Reynald Temarii from Tahiti and Amos Adamu from Nigeria were suspended because of corruption prior to the vote for hosting the World Cup in 2014 and 2018. The Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet* documented how FIFA vice-president Jack Warner was involved in a huge operation to channel tickets to the black market during the World Cup in 2010 (*Dagbladet.no* 19 October 2010). Jennings documents in his book that Warner did the same in 2006, but was protected by Sepp Blatter and kept his position, while he made further revelations in a *Panorama* television programme immediately prior to the 2010 vote.

One of the authors of this chapter has written before about how the commodification of the game has changed irrevocably (Miller 2010). One aspect of its market-driven mechanisms was the battle to grip fans as consumers. If spectators wanted to buy food, drinks or supporter equipment inside the World Cup arenas, they could only purchase products from the companies that had the status of sponsor. If you wanted a soft drink you had to buy Coca-Cola; if you wanted a beer you could only buy Budweiser, and so on. To pay for these overpriced products, only cash or Visa cards were accepted. On the counters, huge signs read: “We are proud to accept *only* VISA”. Jennings shows how FIFA manipulated MasterCard, which had a binding contract with FIFA as a sponsor, in order to get a better contract with Visa in the run-up to the 2006 World Cup. In 2003, FIFA president Blatter hired Jérôme Valcke, a Frenchman, to get more money out of contracts with sponsors (Jennings 2006: 361). Despite the fact

that MasterCard had made the best offer, with a value of 180 million USD, in bidding for the sponsorship contract for the 2010 and 2014 World Cups, Visa got the contract. Blatter's man Valcke apparently offered Visa an opportunity to get the contract by manipulating the whole bidding process (Jennings 2006: 360-65). As a result, MasterCard sued FIFA. In New York, US District Judge Loretta Preska sided with MasterCard, ruling that FIFA had breached its contract, and in the settlement following the case, FIFA had to pay MasterCard 90 million USD in damages, half the value of the entire sponsorship contract (Reuters 22 June 2006).

When the idea of applying for the World Cup was sold to the South African public, the potential economic externality was an important argument. In the propaganda in favour of hosting this event, people were promised income from tourism, foreign visitors, and so on, and the fact that sponsors had *de facto* monopoly on products before, during and after the matches was not part of the propaganda. That FIFA forced the South African government to abstain from imposing taxes on any of the expected three billion dollars FIFA would earn from television rights and sponsor contracts was not mentioned to the public before the decision to host the World Cup was taken (E24.no 19 June 2006). FIFA was also sued, and had to go to court for not paying its bills during the tournament (Dagbladet.no 19 October 2010). The upshot was that during the period we investigated *The Star* did not focus on corruption and greed in FIFA. The fans were framed as supporters of selected products through advertisements, and not shown as victims of exploitation by multinational companies.

Conclusion

Our findings confirm that the supporters in the coverage of the World Cup 2010 in *The Star* were deemed "interesting" and appeared frequently as consumers.

The overall picture also confirms the hypothesis that the organisers saw the fans primarily as consumers in a market. The story of the women dressed in orange being part of an ambush marketing operation symbolises commercial abuse of supporters. The mixture of branding and supporter culture, and the fact that the ambush marketing succeeded in getting a lot of attention, puts an ironic light on how FIFA was able to implement laws and regulations to secure profits. In the end, the Association's attempt to enforce these laws failed, probably because the attempt to punish the orange clad "supporters" would have backfired on FIFA, highlighting its greed. Even though *The Star* covered this in a critical manner, the incident was not contextualised to draw public attention to the commercialisation of supporter culture. The empirical evidence from our study therefore shows a discrepancy between the rather idealistic attitude of the editor and the brutal commercial policy of FIFA.

It is also clear that the business community understood the value to its products of framing supporters as fans through advertisements. In contrast, the news coverage of fans largely downplayed the fans' own voices expressing their love of the game. It is clear that, overall, fans in *The Star* were hostage to consumer culture, with few references to the genuine interest in the game that fans expressed when we interviewed them.¹¹

As a result, this study refutes previous work on news representation of fan culture which found that the media downplay the fan role as a commodity in a market. Sadly, this diversification has decreased in the news content around the World Cup in South Africa, and this, in turn, raises serious questions about the commercialisation of sport and the subsequent effects on the public interest.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this article was presented to the IAMCR conference in Istanbul, 12-17 July 2011.
2. Interview with editor Moegsien Williams conducted by Rune Ottosen on 21 June 2010.
3. Many thanks to Tonje Eide for doing an excellent job as research assistant and to Ketil Heyerdahl for constructing the database for coding.
4. Transcript from interview with editor Moegsien Williams conducted by Rune Ottosen on 21 June 21 2010.
5. One example of such interviews was to be found in the Shoot section on June 12, thus not in the period of our sample. One fan praised the cup for "being such a fascinating experience. I have been to four World Cups, including in Germany and I must say South Africa takes the cake".
6. Bafana Bafana is the nickname of the South African football team.
7. Vuvuzela is a horn about 65 centimetres (2 ft) long, which produces a loud monotonous note. The vuvuzela has been the subject of controversy when used by spectators at soccer matches. Its high sound pressure levels at close range can lead to permanent hearing loss for unprotected ears after exposure. Despite the criticisms, FIFA agreed to permit their use in stadiums during the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup and 2010 FIFA World Cup.
8. A Southern African term used to refer to mixed-race descendants, usually associated with, but not limited to, the Cape Malay culture. In 2010, it was estimated that coloureds accounted for 8.8% of the South African population – the two other main race groups were identified as 79.4% Black Africans and 9.2% Whites (Statistics South Africa 2010: 7).
9. Many thanks to the research assistants Marianne Santos Alvær and Natalie Preminger for an excellent job in coding the content analyses of pictures and advertisements.
10. Rune Ottosen interviewed several white fans during the matches who had never been interested in football before, but used the occasion to develop the interest for football and support the World Cup as a national event.
11. The full survey and the interviews will be presented in another publication by the authors.

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Chapter 6

Scottish Football Fans

Hame and Away

Hugh O'Donnell

*Why Aren't England Fans
Like the Tartan Army?*

The FA want rid of the violent image attached to the national team's supporters – and see Scotland as the role model to bring decent fans in.

The quote given above – which is taken from the English newspaper *The Observer* published on 3 June 2001 and contrasts the behaviour of English football fans with their Scottish counterparts, known as the “Tartan Army” – shows us a number of things:

1. Football Associations – or, at least in this case, the English Football Association (FA) – are not just interested in the performance of the national football team; they are also interested in the performance of the fans
2. The fans as well as the football team are seen as, in some way, representing the country.
3. This issue is considered of sufficient public interest for quality newspapers such as *The Observer* to want to report on it.
4. When judging the performance of the fans, the FAs are just as aware of the behaviour of other countries' fans as they are of the performance of other countries' teams, when judging the performance of their own team.

In *Försvenskning av Sverige* [The Swedishing of Sweden] Oscar Löfgren (1993: 24-27) argues that during the period of intense nation building at the beginning of the nineteenth century a “nation-building toolkit” emerged, consisting of all the obligatory diacritics of nationhood: a flag, a national anthem and so on. No self-respecting nation could possibly afford to do without any of them. In the early twenty-first century we might argue that for many countries' elites not only does a national football team now form part of that list – official recognition of such a team is currently much sought after by countries enjoying only sub-

national status but who aspire to full statehood (the Catalan case is a striking example)¹ – so also does a set of supporters, whose behaviour, particularly when they follow the national team abroad, can be presented in some sense as “doing their country proud”.

Violent or destructive behaviour by groups of fans – however small – can as a result give rise to intense feelings of embarrassment and even humiliation among primarily (though by no means exclusively) elite groups concerned about the home nation's international image, particularly when such behaviour is picked up, and in some cases significantly amplified, by the media of other countries.² Relief at the “good behaviour” of the English fans during the 2006 World Cup in Germany and the 2010 World Cup in South Africa was, for example, palpable in the English media, while the joyful and hospitable behaviour of the German fans during the 2006 World Cup was the cause of much self-congratulation in the media there (Inthorn 2007: 95-128; Sullivan 2009).

This chapter focuses on media coverage of fans of the Scottish national football team – collectively referred to in the Scottish (and also English) media as “The Tartan Army” – comparing and contrasting the coverage they receive from the media in Scotland (“hame”)³ with the coverage they receive from the media of other countries when the team is playing abroad (“away”). It offers a brief overview of the history of the term “Tartan Army” as a way of referring to the fans, and illustrates the extent to which (to use terms from semiotics) a stable material referent for the term can in fact be somewhat difficult to find: while the fans themselves, and the Scottish working class from which they overwhelmingly derive, are demonstrable material realities, I will argue that it is much more productive to view the Tartan Army as a currently mutually beneficial blend of media construct and selective tactical fan performance. This absence of an unproblematically “material” Tartan Army on the ground is accompanied by two quite distinct Tartan Armies at the level of discourse. These two different Tartan Armies correspond, of course, to two quite different ideological strategies, located in quite different material frames, in relation to the social and political function of sport.

In search of a referent: the “Tartan Army”

The link between fans of the national Scottish football team and the term “Tartan Army” is now so well established that some foreign journalists take it for granted that it has always existed. For example a journalist working for the Dutch daily *De Telegraaf* (13 November 1999) wrote the following of a Scottish football fan entertainingly called William Wallace: “Perhaps he saw the light of day in 1937 when the Tartan Army laughingly brushed the English aside before 149,547 spectators”. In this version of Scottish footballing history not only has

the term “Tartan Army” been around since the 1930s, it is here used to refer to the team, not to the fans. More recently a Macedonian journalist writing in the daily *Vreme* (8 September 2008) took the view that the term referred to the Scottish Football Association’s (SFA) *official* fan club:

The Scotland team’s fan club numbers over 15,000 members. They have organised themselves into the popular “Tartan Army”. They go to away games in their popular kilts, whose multicoloured vertical lines are called tartan. The fan club was formed in the 1980s and all its members are required to abide by its rules regarding behaviour. Those who break the rules lose their membership.

These are very clear examples of the cultural specificity of much sporting discourse. No Scottish journalist would ever make these mistakes. In Scotland the term “Tartan Army” is known to be of much more recent origin, and is only applied to the fans (and exclusively to the fans of the national football team), never to the team. In addition, not only does the term *not* refer to the official fan club, the Tartan Army exists in quite specific opposition to officialdom of any kind and to the kinds of externally imposed rules and regulations it represents.

The behaviour of Scottish football fans *at individual team level* has not always been the toast of the country’s media and political elites. The darkest – now mostly repressed – recesses of Scottish footballing history hide grim memories of Rangers fans invading the pitch at the Camp Nou in Barcelona in 1972 just before the end of their team’s victory over Dynamo Moscow – behaviour matched (rightly or wrongly) by collective (or perhaps selective) memories of an equally “robust” performance by the players on the park.⁴ Such incivility at team level has not gone away. The behaviour of some Rangers fans during their team’s Champions League match against Barcelona in 2007 remains a sore point in the Spanish media, and rioting by groups of Rangers fans in Manchester in 2008, when their team played Zenith St Petersburg there, was much commented on and analysed by all sectors of the British media. Media discourse relating to such behaviour replicates closely that used in relation to English fans since the 1990s and earlier, as a result of which no distinction between Scotland and England becomes possible. The following statements in the Spanish sporting daily *As* (23 November 2007) in relation to an impending visit by Aberdeen football club illustrate the point vividly:

As already happened in Barcelona [during the visit by Rangers earlier in the year] the Aberdeen tidal wave will jeopardise the city’s by-laws. These fans usually get together to consume large amounts of alcohol in the street. They stock up in shops and shopping centres and get together in public places (in Madrid it is usually the Plaza Mayor). The legislation currently in force in Madrid prohibits such activities, as it does in Barcelona. However, this is the least of the city authorities’ or the club’s worries. Keeping the fans under

control in the hours leading up to the match and preventing incidents at key points in the city centre is currently their greatest obsession. Both the police and Atlético [Madrid] want the game to be a feast of sport and nothing else.

The discourse of the Tartan Army exists not only in stark opposition to – indeed negation of – such (continuing) behaviour; it has also abstracted itself from the level of individual clubs and occupies a much more rarefied space of purely “national” supporters, to such an extent that enquiring after club allegiance breaks one of the fans’ informal self-imposed rules, and the wearing of team colours is strictly taboo (Giulianotti 2005: 296). The Tartan Army is a space of *national* identity formation, where contrasts with England are both aimed for and welcomed. However, as we shall see below, it is not only a site of national identity formation but simultaneously, and just as importantly, of class identity formation.

While no foundational date can be found for the emergence of the Tartan Army as blend of discourse and practice, there is general agreement that it was some time in the late 1970s or early 1980s, the key moment being perhaps the World Cup in Spain in 1982, a moment when wearing the kilt – these had been virtually nowhere to be seen in outings by Scottish football fans in the 70s and earlier, including during the famous “Wembley invasion” of 1977⁵ – and the development of a general bonhomie and good-natured relationship with both other fans and locals came together. This period was in the aftermath of the time when the Scottish national team had been managed by Ally MacLeod, a period remembered as follows in an article in the Edinburgh broadsheet *The Scotsman* on 30 May 2002:

The high-point of Scottish un-reason occurred under the inspirational management of Ally MacLeod. It was under Ally that the notion of the Tartan Army as a beneficent, idiotic force of drunken diplomats was first popularised. Under Ally, we suffered the happy delusion that we were a footballing force. Under Ally, the celebrations were held before the tournament. Under Ally, everything was possible.

Whatever its precise origins, the term has had a remarkably successful career, but as we will see it has come to carry not only different, but even, to some extent quite contradictory, meanings.

The Tartan Army at hame

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* French theorist Michel Foucault describes discourse as being characterised by what he termed “rarity”, which he explains as follows (the basic unit through which discourses are expressed for Foucault is the *énoncé*, translated into English as the “statement”):

It is based on the principle that *everything* is never said; in relation to what might have been stated ... statements (however numerous they may be) are always in deficit ... there are, in total, relatively few things that are said (1989: 134).

The discourses through which the Tartan Army are constructed are a striking example of this phenomenon. Since the emergence of the discourse in the late 1970s/early 1980s, and in particular since its eventual establishment in the early 1990s the same few topics reappear endlessly, constantly repeated at every appropriate opportunity.

The central element in the construction of the Tartan Army in the Scottish media – and the one by which all the remaining elements of the discourse are to some extent enabled – is the idea of a strong, self-confident, even to some extent nostalgic male working-class identity. In many ways this is quite remarkable, since Britain – like many other European countries and most obviously the United States itself (Zweig 2001) – has in the last thirty or so years witnessed the progressive weakening of the concept of class and even of society.⁶ The enduring presence of this part media-constructed, part performative working-class space which the Tartan Army offers brings into sharp focus the limits of the hegemonic processes set in train by the Thatcher administration in the UK in the 1980s and broadly followed by both its Conservative and its New Labour successors in the nineteen-nineties and beyond.⁷

This working-class – and quite specifically *Scottish* working-class – identity is characterised by a strong sense of fun and by opposition to established authority of any kind (including, I should add, to the SFA and its various offshoots, among them the official fan club which the Macedonian journalist quoted above was keen to see as synonymous with the Tartan Army). It is also characterised by endless ingenuity (particularly in terms of getting round official rules and regulations, getting match tickets when none appear to be available and finding cheap ways of travelling abroad to support the team); by unflinching loyalty to the team; and by a resolute commitment to fraternise not only with the fans of the opposing team but also with the locals.

For all its centrality, this working-class discourse is seldom (if ever) stated explicitly. In Barthesian terms we might say that it subject to “ex-nomination” (1970: 225), but whereas in Barthes’ case it is the ex-nominated bourgeoisie which reappears as the “nation”, here it is the unspoken working class which re-emerges as the national subject: within the Scottish discourse of the Tartan Army the “nation” – without, of course, ever fully losing what we might call its “everyday” meaning – also becomes a place-holder for class.⁸ The discourse of class is most frequently mobilised by contrasting the behaviour of the Tartan Army with what is seen as the effete, neurotic and utterly funless behaviour of the southern English upper class, and also, if less frequently, of the Scottish middle class, the presence of this second axis making the class (rather than

purely national dimension of the identity) quite clear. While Scottish readers of such statements have no difficulty whatsoever in recognising the discourse at work, successful decoding in fact relies on a complex repertoire of cultural competences: indeed, contrary to a widely held view of the sports department as the “toy department” of the newspaper (Rowe 1999: 36) this meticulously crafted complicity between journalist and reader tends to be a much more highly developed feature of the sports pages than of any other section of the publication.

On 25 June 2009, James Traynor, one of Scotland's best-known sports journalists, published a lengthy article (1,215 words) in the Glasgow tabloid *Daily Record*, in which he mused on the possibility of the Tartan Army descending on Wimbledon to support Scottish tennis player Andy Murray (and also the Scottish Elena Baltacha, the then current British women's number one) in the ongoing absence of victories for the Scottish national football team (tennis, it should be pointed out, is widely seen as a middle-class sport in Scotland). The upper-classness of everyone associated with Wimbledon is indicated by their use of language (referring to Wimbledon as “Wimbers” is unimaginable in a Scottish working-class context),⁹ by what they drink (Pimms is in the UK an archetypal upper-class drink, whereas the Tartan Army drinks beer), and by the way they dress (blazers instead of kilts, this expressed through use of the neologism “blazerati”, modelled on terms such as “glitterati”). A few extracts from Traynor's article will give a flavour of the complex and highly entertaining complicity he establishes between himself and the readers.

Never thought I'd ever write anything like this but now more than ever before the country [Scotland] needs those ugly followers of the beautiful game [the Tartan Army]. We need them to march on London the way they used to in the days of the Wembley Weekend¹⁰ ... today the tartan hordes have the chance to play a central role in creating a piece of sporting history which would be talked about for decades to come. The destination remains London but this time it isn't Wembley.

This time set the sat navs for SW19.¹¹

The Big W. Wimbers. But hurry.

The chinless wonders¹² of the All England Tennis and Croquet Club have been crying into their Pimms after a jolly¹³ awful opening day at the Championships when six Brits were turfed out. Monday equalled Britain's worst opening-day effort in the modern era and stiff upper lips¹⁴ were beginning to tremble.

• • •

Scotland's fans recoil in horror every time Team GB is mentioned,¹⁵ yet Murray and Baltacha are down there carrying the flag alone. Come on, they need your help and if Murray is to go all the way to the Final a week on Sunday

he could be doing with a bit of good old-fashioned, terracing-style backing.

The ladies and gentlemen of prim and proper England took a while to generate a real atmosphere as Murray beat Robert Kendrick in four sets on Tuesday and we can't risk another low-key support. It's time to roll.

The Range Rovers and people carriers will trundle out of Dunblane¹⁶ but this is a job for the Tartan Army.

...

Just imagine the pristine surroundings of Wimbledon, the leafy avenues of the well-heeled as kilted aliens descend to clipped cries of: "Quick chaps, get the women and Bentleys indoors."

And the tennis complex itself, heaving with new, never-before-seen life with a colourful new range of sporting expressions and songs.

[When Goran Ivanisevic won in 2001] this was sport in the raw, without its clothes on and inside a rigid place where uniforms and uniformity mean so much.

The blazeratti [sic] were nowhere to be seen, probably barricaded inside their VIP areas making frantic emergency calls to the RAF and First Royal Tank Regiment. Ivanisevic's victory created scenes never seen before 2001 or since but Murray's emergence has the potential to leave a tartan imprint and claim the very heart of England as their own.

...

Fine, let's go to Wimbledon, but what about tickets, you might ask. How would a mass of Scotland and Murray fans get into the hallowed grounds? Wimbers' best seats have been sold out for ages ...

...

But think back and remember the English football authorities wouldn't give us tickets for Wembley as soon as they realised Scotland's support there outnumbered their own. Each time Scots got their hands on those precious tickets. They always did and they'd find ways of getting into Wimbledon too.

Just allow your imagination to take flight. Andy Murray walks out on to the lawn of his sport's greatest arena to be met with a wall of noise and blaze of colour. Saltires and Lion Rampants¹⁷ draped over every ledge and wall.

The loud chink of Buckfast¹⁸ bottles, chilled to perfection, of course.

Then Roger Federer appears in his white jacket and white flannels. "Haha, haha, hahahahaha..."

The umpire calls for quiet and the masses turn to the Royal Box and tell the Blue Bloods to button it.¹⁹ After more than four hours Murray wins a five-setter and as the light begins to fade the Tartan Army spill on to the court and carry off the net, posts, scoreboards, balls, rackets, umpire's chair, umpire himself ...

This could be Murray's moment but it could also be the Tartan Army's finest hour. This time they could be cheering a Scottish win. He and they deserve nothing less.

And you know what, crisp, ever-so-proper and dapper Wimbledon also deserve them. Just for a dose of reality. As well as a laugh.

Though it is nowhere explicitly stated, all Scottish readers of this article would take it for granted that the key element of this scenario is the irreverent and anti-authoritarian party, not whether or not Andy Murray might in fact actually win. This is a fundamental part of the discourse, as illustrated by this article in *Scotland on Sunday* (18 November 1999) when England knocked Scotland out of the European Championships:

Yes, Scotland were out of Euro 2000. England, after two lacklustre performances, held on by the skin of their teeth to reach next year's event in the Netherlands and Belgium.

That, surely, would be enough to stifle any Scottish humour or enthusiasm on the long road back from Wembley.

Not so.

After Wednesday's final whistle at the last match to be played under Wembley's twin towers, the 7,000 Scotland fans were in no mood to mourn. In fact it took police more than an hour to usher the vociferous Tartan Army out of the stadium and into the ensuing gloom.

Not only are the central elements of the discourse of the Tartan Army present here in a highly entertaining form – the working classness, the fun, the drinking, the irreverence, the anti-authoritarian stance, the anti-Englishness, the ingenuity – the extent to which the Tartan Army frame conditions the (re) writing of Scotland's footballing history is also there for all to see. While the invasion of the pitch at the Camp Nou by Rangers fans in 1972 is relegated to the cobweb-covered recesses of the unspeakable, the "Wembley Invasion" of a mere five years later provides an outlet for a joyous "return of the repressed" by being incorporated into the Tartan Army discourse where it continues to be celebrated to the present day. Here James Traynor quite clearly – though without ever mentioning it explicitly – uses it to structure part of his imagined scenario of Scottish football fans descending on Wimbers. His reference to a scene where "the Tartan Army spill on to the court and carry off the net [and] posts" evokes a collective memory which no Scottish reader could possibly miss.

Traynor's article is a particularly expansive and hugely entertaining example of the discourse of the Tartan Army, bringing all elements of the discourse together in the same place. Needless to say, less developed expressions of the discourse occur in an absolutely routine manner every time there is a game between Scotland and another national team, and even occasionally when

there is no direct link to any concrete football match. Though smaller in scale these repeated rearticulations of the discourse are just as important in keeping it active as is Traynor's more memorable purple patch. As Foucault also points out in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, in relation to discourse it is not necessarily the striking and the original which produces the greatest effect: on the contrary "the field of statements is not a group of inert areas broken up by fecund moments: it is a domain that is active throughout" (1989: 161).

The Tartan Army away

From a Foucauldian point of view there is likewise nothing remotely meta-physical about discourse. The statements which mobilise a discourse, though they may be so great in number as to be for all practical intents and purposes uncountable, have an absolutely physical existence as words on paper, words spoken or sung at quite precise spatial and temporal coordinates, drawings produced by cartoonists, photographs taken by photographers and somehow brought into the public domain, and so on. As a result, the spread of the alternative "European" discourse of the Tartan Army has followed a quite concrete itinerary depending on which countries the fans happen to have visited as a result of their randomly-drawn opponents in the leading international competitions. Even as recently as 2008, getting a handle on the Tartan Army proved a considerable challenge for Macedonian journalists when the travelling Scottish fans visited that country for the first time: indeed, even how to designate the fans can represent something of a challenge for overseas journalists, and terms such as "Kilted Army" or even "Army of the Skirts" – all unimaginable in Scotland – are not uncommon.

There is little recorded international interest in the phenomenon of the Tartan Army during the 1980s, though this clearly began to change during the World Cup in Italy in 1990 where the fans' ability to party irrespective of whether their team won or lost – a feature they shared during that championship with the Irish fans, though the latter never quite generated a brand name for themselves as a collective – was the subject of considerable media comment. A qualitative step forward was achieved during the European Championship in Sweden in 1992, when certain actions by groups of fans attracted great media coverage in Sweden – coverage which was itself of course widely reported back home in Scotland. In both cases quite precise contrasts with the behaviour of the English fans present at the same tournaments were a very obvious driver in this coverage: "[The Scots are] the other fans from the island – once cursed, now welcome", wrote the *Frankfurter Rundschau* on 20 June 1990, "Many of them soon got really drunk, but they remained peaceful. No trace of violence", while the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* wrote two years later of the Scots in Sweden:

They sang and laughed, clapped their opponents, and cheered their own players like heroes even when they lost ... They drank and had fun, but they quarrelled with no-one, and were incredibly popular in their base in Norrköping. Just think that neighbours and football supporters can be as different as the Scots and the English! (*Aftenposten*, 29 June 1992).

As might be expected, these early days showed that although the foreign journalists quickly picked up on the moniker “Tartan Army” they often had little understanding of what this meant in a Scottish context, as a result of which they were obliged to fill the term with their own meanings. Clashes with the Scottish understanding were clear from the start.

Swedish television (SVT) dedicated three reports to the Scottish fans in 1992. The first of these (broadcast on 12 June) showed the Swedish journalists struggling to come to terms with the bizarre yet somehow appealing behaviour of the visitors. The opening shots of Scottish fans fraternising with Dutch fans (one wearing a horned helmet and with a long plastic penis over his nose) were accompanied by the following voice-over:

It's strange that there are people who dedicate their entire lives to being football supporters. It feels a little simple-minded and even frightening for us Swedes. They look a little bit like hooligans here in Sweden but we're talking of supporters. Now it's the European Championships and they're here and, simple-minded or not, football would be more boring without them. The Scots are the European Champions when it comes to fans.

The third report, broadcast on 15 June, showed a group of Scottish fans drinking in a pub. Though the general atmosphere is relaxed and the fans are more than willing to provide good-natured replies to the reporter's questions, there is a moment when, visibly hamming it up for the camera, they can be clearly heard singing “We fucking hate England”. A little later one of them shouts out “Ye can shove yer Tory poll tax up yer arse”.

This third report breaks two of the rules of the Scottish discursive formation of the Tartan Army. Firstly, while a certain amount of ritualised anti-Englishness is allowable within the Scottish discourse so long as it is expressed in the mode of fun, statements of aggressive anti-Englishness – though perfectly audible on the terraces at international matches, whether the opposing team is England or not – seldom filter through to public expressions of the discourse. In other words a line such as “We fucking hate England” will *never* be reproduced within a Scottish mobilisation of the discourse. Secondly, while the Tartan Army are by definition anti-authoritarian, even anti-establishment, in the Scottish discourse they never appear as overtly political in the *partisan* (party-political) sense: their opposition is to authority in general. Ethnographic work has shown that in the 1990s they voted in the main for the Scottish National and Labour

Parties (Bradley 2002: 183) with relatively few Conservative voters – ten per cent – among their numbers (as among the Scottish electorate as a whole), a situation that is unlikely to have changed much in the interim,²⁰ but no Scottish journalist or newspaper would show them offering explicit criticism of the Conservatives (the Tories). We can surmise that the strong Scottish accents,²¹ coupled with an of course entirely understandable lack of knowledge of what the “poll tax”²² might be (if the term was picked up at all) led the Swedish journalists to misread the situation entirely. But whatever the explanation the resulting statements were ones which could not be heard on Scottish television.

As time has passed, however, the confusion has decreased, and the European discourse has acquired quite clear contours and an equally clear set of rules of its own. It borrows elements of the Scottish discourse – the fun, the colour, the friendliness, the ability to drink without becoming aggressive – all reproduced in highly positive and admiring tones. A report by German public service channel ZDF during the European Championship in England in 1996 showed Scottish and English fans fraternising in the centre of London, described the Scots as the “friendly neighbour from the north” and added that “the atmosphere was as peaceful as the sun was warm” (15 June 1996). Things have changed little since, as the following set of examples related to visits by Scottish fans to Austria, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Italy, Macedonia, The Netherlands, Norway and Spain will make clear. The only clear innovation is the increasingly frequent references to the generosity of the fans as expressed through their gifts to local charities. The examples are in chronological order starting in the late 1990s:

There are more than 5000 of them and they are known as the Tartan Army due to the colours of the tartans which differentiate the Scottish clans. They wear kilts and red-haired wigs, they cover their heads with enormous tammies and occasionally they sing the delightful songs of their country. They also drink beer. Lots of beer. And no-one is afraid of them. “Alcoholism against hooliganism” is their motto. (*El País*, Spain, 10 June 1998).

While the behaviour of Rangers fans in the early 1970s has become a more or less taboo subject in Scotland, this same paper does not hesitate to bring it up, but turns even this to the fans’ advantage by emphasising the scale of their transformation:

It has fallen into oblivion, but the Scots were the first to trigger acts of great violence in football. In the early seventies Glasgow Rangers fans overran the Camp Nou following a Cup Winners Cup final against Dynamo Moscow. But due to their desire to set themselves apart from everything English they reacted quickly and imaginatively against hooliganism. They turned into one of the most colourful and peaceful groups of fans in world football (*El País*, Spain, 10 June 1998).

The Dam²³ has become a kind of home base for the Scots. A few hundred Scots have got together there and they're singing, drinking beer, playing the bagpipes and waving Scottish flags.

At about half past three a lot of Dutch fans joined the Scots on the Dam. The supporters are dancing and having a party. The atmosphere is enjoyable and there have been no incidents so far, said the police. A spokesman described the atmosphere as "cosy". Lots of cafés are full to bursting.

The Amsterdam police do not expect the invasion of dozens of Scots to cause any problem (*De Volkskrant*, The Netherlands, 13 November 2003).

While their team is ranked 86th in the world, the kilted Scots laugh and assert that they are the best supporters in the world ... they sing when they win and when they lose. Yesterday these colourful gentlemen put on a wonderful show on Karl Johan ... [they are] about a football-fellowship and an intensity which exceeds what most other nations have to offer. The results mean a lot, of course, but the Scots refuse to be downhearted about all the dreadful games the team has played in recent years. (*Aftenposten*, Norway, 7 September 2005).

While English fans, at least in the past, brought trouble the Scottish supporters are known for enjoying a drink and peaceful behaviour. It's for this reason that the "Tartan Army" has received Fair Play awards from FIFA and UEFA.

At away fixtures the visiting Scottish fans regularly contact the "opposing fans" and organise friendly matches with them before the national teams take the stage. (news.at, Austria, 30 May 2007).

William Baxter, captain of the Tartan Army supporters team which is taking on a "group of friends" from Bari in a friendly being put on in Green Park in via Fanelli is getting ready for the match by downing beer in Biancofarina, a pub in Vittorio Emanuele avenue. He's put on a tee-shirt saying "Congratulations Italy, World Champions. The Tartan Army salutes you" ... His heart is beating fast: "We gave a donation of 1500 euros to the children's hospital". Passion and solidarity. (*La Repubblica*, 28 March 2007).

Scottish football fans have carried out a humanitarian action by collecting £1200 for handicapped children in Macedonia ... The Scottish fan group "The Tartan Army" has announced that it will make donations to two Macedonian charitable institutions ... £4000 to the Day Centre for Homeless Children in Shuto Orisari... and £8000 to the "Topansko Pole" Centre for the Rehabilitation of Children and Young People. (*Večer*, Macedonia, 5 September 2008).

The Scots are without doubt a highly fun-loving people when it comes to football and it is known that the Scots intend to show up in great numbers for the game against Iceland on Wednesday. At least the Scots have got together in the town and are dressed in their Scottish way in their kilts (Scottish skirts).

They will no doubt be eye-catching today in the pubs in town and anyone can enjoy their company in the town centre. The Scots are not known as football hooligans, instead they sing and dance like wild men and enjoy the football match. (*Sport-IS*, Iceland, 8 September 2008).

Thousands of kilt-wearing, flag-bearing Scots took over the streets of Prague before, during and after their Euro 2012 soccer qualifier against the Czech Republic Oct. 8.

Known within soccerdom as one of the nicest sets of fans around, the singing Scots made their presence felt even days before the game, and without a hint of trouble in sight. (*The Prague Post*, Czech Republic, 13 October 2010).

Although coverage of the Tartan Army in other countries is usually (though by no means always) relatively limited when Scotland is playing at home, an imminent visit by world champions Spain to Scotland recently prompted the *Diario Vasco* to publish a short article on the fans, describing them as “special and unique”. “The Scottish fans never go unnoticed. Their traditional kilts bring a splash of colour to the games” (*Diario Vasco*, Spain, 11 October 2010). This article, like many of the others quoted above, was accompanied by an image of a Scottish fan lifting his kilt to reveal a bare backside.

What should be abundantly clear by now is that while the European discourse of the Tartan Army shares a number of elements with the home-grown discourse – the fun, the fraternising, the colour – what is missing altogether is what is most central to the Scottish discourse: the sense of working-class identity and all that goes with it – irreverence, anti-authoritarianism, bending the rules. As Foucault would have predicted, two different discourses have produced two quite different objects. While the Scottish discourse is rooted in the history of Scotland and in its relationship with England, the European discourse abstracts the Tartan Army from all of that and moves it into a quite different function – that of representing ideal fandom. In Scotland, the Tartan Army are routinely referred to as “great ambassadors for the country” but this idea is nowhere to be found in European coverage, where they are instead constructed as “great ambassadors for sport”.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered a Foucauldian analysis of the press discourses used in Scotland and elsewhere to produce two quite different objects both known as the Tartan Army. It has not offered either a sociological or an ethnographic study of the Scottish football fans “on the ground”, although such studies are indeed available – see Giulianotti (1995) and Bradley (2002). Having said that, I went to Sweden in 1992 with the travelling Scottish fans and have attended

a number of international matches since then and, on the basis of these and other experiences, can offer the following comments:

- For all the unswervingly positive press coverage, the Scottish fans are not, in fact, everyone's cup of tea. Although alcohol-inspired disturbances are extremely rare, particularly when the fans travel abroad, alcohol consumption is significant and the inevitable build-up of pressure on bladders is routinely relieved by urinating in hedges, fountains and so on (Scottish fans are not, of course, the only ones to indulge in such behaviour). Not everyone approves, needless to say, although their voices are seldom heard. Discourse silences as much as it produces: indeed, silence itself has a productive force.
- Despite the constant references to peaceful behaviour, violent incidents have occurred, however rarely. A Scotland-England match played at Hampden in 1999 was followed by skirmishes between fans in the centre of Glasgow. This has also been relegated to the realm of, if not the unsayable, then at the very least the unlikely to be said.
- Fan loyalty to the team is not unlimited. I have attended games where players seen as underperforming have been booed or shouted at as they went through the tunnel at the end of the game.
- Not all fans conform to, or even approve of, the kind of behaviour which has become associated with the Tartan Army discourse. In a recent football phone-in on the Scottish Real Radio station, a fan who had followed the national team abroad for many years fumed about the Tartan Army – which for him meant those fans who dressed in tartan, including the obligatory kilt – whom he emphatically identified as a minority, claiming that they now believed that they, and not the football, were the show, and asking for a more “serious” relationship with Scottish football.

Despite this, the discourse, in both its versions, remains remarkably resilient, easily able to shrug off potentially uncomfortable jarring notes from the non-discursive world. It is able to do so because both versions have been absorbed into much larger and extremely powerful discursive formations, for whom they have become “objects of desire”. As Foucault puts it:

Statements are not, like the air we breathe, an infinite transparency; but things that are transmitted and preserved, that have value, and which one tries to appropriate, that are repeated, reproduced, and to which a status is given in the institution; things that are duplicated not only by copy or translation but by exegesis, commentary, and the internal proliferation of meaning. Because statements are rare they are collected in unifying totalities, and the meanings to be found in them are multiplied (1989: 135)

In Scotland, the discourse of the Tartan Army has become a key element in a larger, complex and even to some extent contradictory discursive formation combining Scottish national identity with Scottish working-class identity where – following a pattern identified in Scottish press coverage of other sporting events (O'Donnell, 2011) – each becomes an at least partial expression of the other and where anti-bourgeois sentiment is recoded as irreverent anti-authoritarianism or as anti-Englishness, England frequently being reduced to its middle and upper classes. The counter-hegemonic impulses are clear. These are to some extent depoliticised by the journalists by being recoded as anti-Englishness – and the use of a lexis of nationhood comes at its own ideological price, as the occasional skirmishes with English fans reveals – but in this particular game “England” is as clearly understood as a place-holder for an abusive upper class as the “Tartan Army” is understood as a place-holder for a resistant working class.

Outside Scotland, on the other hand, the discourse has been absorbed into a larger discursive formation of ideal fandom and ideal sport. As the Italian *Gazzetta dello Sport* put it:

Above all it's the tremendous spectacle of the Scottish fans, so passionate and colourful but entirely sporting. The risk of trouble is absolutely zero, what we have here is the quintessence of football (11 November 2008).

Here the Scottish fans' well-documented fraternising with the local fans – including English fans – is not coded as the kind of working-class solidarity it is seen as in Scotland, but as an expression of commitment to “quintessential” sporting values: given the insistence on “fair play” these are in fact synonymous with English aristocratic sporting values, indeed those of the Pimms-drinking blazerati ridiculed in James Traynor's article. Given the level of wide-spread institutional and elite support for such values from, for example, governments, football associations, Olympic Committees and so on, official recognition – something fundamentally at odds with the Scottish discourse – was bound to follow, as indeed it did.²⁴ The extent to which such a move fails to chime with the reality of the Scottish fans or *their* project is illustrated by the fact that the prizes awarded were not – could not be – given to the Tartan Army since its lack of formal existence and official structures means there is nothing or no-one to accept such awards. They by-passed the Tartan Army altogether and were given to the SFA-sponsored Scottish Travel Club (now the Scotland Supporters Club) to which the Tartan Army represents a rougher, working-class antidote.

Such contradictions should not confound us. They are part of the normal functioning of discourse. As always, meaning does not reside in words – the Tartan Army – but in the discourses to which they belong. The discourses of the Tartan Army are the evolving product of all those who reproduce them –

including the fans – and can be shaped to meet the needs of diverse ideological projects, as well as being a source of considerable enjoyment and fun.

Notes

1. The absence of official recognition of a Catalan national football team is a cause of significant frustration in Catalonia. An advert broadcast on television there in 2006 showed a group of young children playing football in a park. One is wearing a Spanish strip, another a Brazilian strip, but they signal to the boy wearing the Catalan strip that he cannot play in that strip. The advert – which was eventually banned as “harmful to children and social cohesion” (Rabasseda, 2010: 70) – can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbBaBH-5oLQ&feature=related>. An unofficial Catalan national football team does indeed exist but cannot participate in any of the official international competitions. It occasionally plays friendlies against other official national teams (e.g. Argentina) or against other unofficial national teams from other parts of Spain, for example the Basque “national” team or the Andalusian “national” team. The (likewise unofficial) Catalan national ice-hockey team has been accepted into the Latin American Copa América competition, but cannot play in other official international tournaments. In all such cases the desire for official international recognition of nationhood via ownership of an official national team is clear: see also Kuper (1994: 85-92).
2. See Blain et al. (1993: 88-119) for an analysis of the behaviour of English fans during the 1990 World Cup, and Boyle and O'Donnell (1996) for an analysis of their behaviour during the 1992 European Championship in Sweden.
3. This is not a spelling mistake. Scotland is a country with three languages – two official national languages (English and Gàidhlig) and a third language which enjoys “regional” status, Scots. The number of Scots speakers is currently unknown – the 2011 census was the first ever to include a question on the use of this language, and the results have not yet been published – but it is certainly the most widely spoken language among the Lowland population, particularly among the working classes, and it is far and away the dominant language of football fans. This language has many things in common with the Scandinavian languages (for example “hoose” for English “house”, or words like “bairn” for English “child” or “clegg” for English “horsefly”), the word “hame” – for English “home” – being one of them.
4. A joke circulating in Scottish society for some time afterwards told how then Rangers captain John Greig came off the park at the end of the game with two broken legs... but neither of them was his!
5. All footballing cultures have their great historic moments and even on occasions accompanying statements which have become part of common knowledge: Kenneth Wolstenholme's “They think it's all over – it is now” in England (World Cup Final match against Germany in 1966) or Børge Lillelien's “Your boys took a hell of a beating” in Norway (Norway's 2-1 win over England in a 1981 World Cup qualifier) would be good examples. Scotland's historic moment was when fans invaded the pitch at Wembley after a 2-1 victory over England in 1977 and carried off the goalposts, the nets and parts of the turf. Though much celebrated by both fans and journalists to this day (in stark contrast to the pitch invasion in Barcelona in 1972), needless to say much more censorious views of this event are easy to find. Video of the invasion can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4Ez7T1y8Yc>
6. In 1987 Margaret Thatcher famously said in the *Women's Own* magazine that “there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families”.
7. The other great repository of counter-hegemonic pressures in the UK are the British soap operas. For a detailed analysis of this see O'Donnell (1999), in particular pages 192–211.
8. This phenomenon – which may be connected to Scotland's status as a “stateless nation” – is not limited to coverage of the Tartan Army. For another case where a lexicon of national identity expressed a discourse of working class identity in the Scottish press see O'Donnell (2011).
9. It is, of course, also unimaginable in an English working-class context, but is in keeping with

- the stereotypical English middle-class trope of referring to “champagne”, say, as “champers”, or to “rugby” as “ruggie”. Recently a number of cartoonists in the UK have taken to referring to former public-school boy and current Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg as “Cleggers”.
10. Games between Scotland and England were an annual event as part of the so-called Home Championship (contested by England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) until 1984, played alternately at Wembley and Hampden. When they were played at Wembley this was known in Scotland as the Wembley Weekend: it was characterised by the arrival of great numbers of Scottish fans in London.
 11. SW19 is the postcode for the Wimbledon area of London.
 12. A pejorative term for an aristocrat. It refers to the effects of in-breeding.
 13. In Scotland at least this use of the term “jolly” (meaning “very”) is seen as a stereotypically English middle-class phenomenon.
 14. In British culture a stuff upper lip is seen as the ultimate defining characteristic of the aristocrat: it refers to a refusal to betray emotion of any kind.
 15. The proposal to form a single British football team for the Olympic Games was met with widespread opposition in Scotland.
 16. A small middle-class town close to Stirling where Andy Murray attended school. People carriers and Range Rovers also carry strong middle-class connotations. As these references make clear, the Scottish middle class is likewise “not up to the job”.
 17. A curious result of Scotland’s stateless nation status – a status which, as Moorhouse argues, causes topics such as football to acquire “an overdetermined significance” (1991: 201) – is that it has not one flag (as in the case of established nation-states), but two, since for over 300 years there was no Scottish government to determine what the national flag should be. These are the Saltire (a white Saint Andrew’s cross on a blue background) and the Lion Rampant (a red lion rampant on a yellow background), both routinely seen at international football matches.
 18. A cheap fortified wine stereotypically drunk in Scotland by down-and-outs.
 19. Colloquial phrase meaning “to be quiet”.
 20. The results of the 2011 Scottish general elections showed a strong societal shift of support from Labour to the Scottish National Party, a shift which also no doubt took place among Scottish football fans.
 21. It is quite clear in other parts of the report that there are moments when the Swedish interviewer has relatively little idea of what the fans are actually saying.
 22. The poll tax was an extremely unpopular form of local tax “trialled” in Scotland in 1989 before being extended to England the following year. It generated massive opposition and resentment in Scotland (and later in England), where many people took the view that their country was being used as a testing ground for policies to be implemented later in England.
 23. The Dam is a large square in downtown Amsterdam.
 24. Prizes awarded so far are the UEFA Fair Play Award, European Championship (1992); voted best supporters by journalists at the World Cup – the Per Ludos Fraternitas trophy presented by the International Association for Non-Violence in Sport (1998); the Belgian Olympic Committee Fair Play prize (2001).

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II

Social Media and Mediated Fan Culture

Chapter 7

Battling for Belonging

How Club and Supporter Identities are Created in the Mediation of an Oslo Derby

Harald Hornmoen

FUCK, NOW WE'RE GOING TO TAKE LYN, DAMMIT!!! ... we shall PISS on LYN in goal difference the 21st May !!! NOW THEY SHALL BLEED!!! And apart from that I think that Lyn ... must be dissolved and burnt. (vpn.no 17 May 2009)

tomorrow is the day goddamn it will be fun to crush the trash, both on the stand and the field. (bastionen.no 16 April 2006)

These are the words of football supporters in their respective forums just before a league match between their favorite clubs. Browsing through threads addressing an Oslo derby, one may be struck by the use of coarse language, and tempted to dismiss forum discussions as just another opportunity to give vent to some pent-up aggression. But isn't there more to forum utterances than that?

This chapter will argue that there is. It explores how the identities and values of two football clubs in Oslo, and their supporters, have been constructed in web forums, as well as in a newspaper's coverage of the city derbies between 2002 and 2009.

Lyn was established in 1896. The club, from the west side of Oslo, played a major role in the foundation of the Norwegian Football Association in 1902. Lyn has won the premier league championship twice and the Norwegian Cup eight times. Its most recent period of success was during the 1960s, when it won four trophies and reached the quarter finals of the European Cup Winners' Cup (http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyn_Fotball, read 02.05.11).

Vålerenga was founded in 1913 and named after the neighborhood Vålerenga, traditionally a working class area on the east side of Oslo. The club achieved its first national award by winning the premier league championship in 1965 and has won it four times since then, as well as winning the Norwegian cup four times.

Traditionally, Lyn has been perceived as representing the middle and upper classes, whereas Vålerenga¹ has been seen as belonging to the workers. When Vålerenga became one of the major Oslo teams, the club emerged as

a symbol of working class and east-side pride in Oslo (Reim 2008). Former Vif-player, now journalist, Viggo Johansen (1983) puts it this way: “The worst humiliation for the fans, for the faithful, that is, to lose for Lyn. The bigwigs. The gilt-edged. The rich man’s club with shipowners and barristers. This is an attitude that was created many years ago, but it still prevails” [my translation].

There is still an east-west divide in social demographics in Oslo, although it is now weaker in the clubs’ supporter bases. However, the rivalry between the supporters increased as their clubs were competing in the same league for seven of the eight years between 2002 and 2009.

Major occasions for displaying the different cultures of the two teams and their supporter clubs, Bastionen and Klanen,² have been their premier league matches at Ullevaal. The stadium was the home ground for both teams until recently, before Lyn went bankrupt and was relegated to a lower division in 2010.

When these two teams were playing in the same league, the matches between them were considered to be the only true derbies in Norway. The largest Oslo-based newspaper, *Aftenposten*, wrote quite a few articles about these matches, partly focusing on the expectations and rivalry of the team’s supporters. In the supporters’ own media outlets – particularly their websites’ forums – supporters discussed the match in their own dialogical discourse. In the process of constructing supporter and club identities and values, these web forums seem to play a key role.

I seek an understanding of how the newspapers constructed identities and social relations in their coverage of the Oslo derbies. The analysis of the *Aftenposten* coverage is followed by an analysis of identity and value construction in the web discussions among the supporters of the two clubs. The overarching research questions are: how are club and supporter identities constructed in *Aftenposten*’s coverage of the Oslo derbies that have taken place between 2002 and 2009, and in the supporters’ forum discussions taking place in their own websites?

Theories of identity and football communities

My analysis draws on understandings of identity and football communities that have been developed within discourse studies, cultural studies and sociology.³ Whether articulated by scholars such as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) or Stuart Hall (1996), group identities are seen as something one is assigned to, or acquires and negotiates in discursive processes: one acquires identities through being represented in discourse. Identities are always organised relationally: one is something because there is something else that one is not. Thus group identities are a social phenomenon, not a collection of inner essences. Identity theories understand groups as constituted when some possibilities of identity are em-

phasised as relevant and others are ignored. In discursive group formation, one may shut out "the other", the group one identifies oneself in opposition to, and ignore differences within one's own group. However, like discourses, identities are subject to change.

Theories of football communities may, in a related way, stress how supporter groups are constituted by enacting rituals around and through contested symbols such as football clubs. Brown *et.al.* (2008: 307) see football communities as fluid and always open to change. They draw on the work of Anthony Cohen, who notes that communities act upon symbols in relation to other symbols. Symbols are not fixed entities that can only be interpreted in set ways; instead, they are constantly being reinterpreted and re-negotiated, and this process can lead to changes in the constitution of community groups.

Some postmodern concepts of community in the context of football supporters stress that a reflexive consciousness has developed among them. Giulianotti (1999: 148) points to how supporters he designates as "post-fans" may criticise and parody aspects related to their favorite club – for instance its board of directors and their relationship to the media.⁴ Brown *et.al.* (2008: 309) note that members of football communities are continually reflexive about who make up "their community" and what this means for how the group is perceived by its own members and by others.

Analytical approach

I will draw on such theories of supporter communities as a part of my analysis, assuming that there will be marks of reflexive identity construction in the material. More specifically, my analytical approach is inspired by suggestions of how to do discourse analysis of group identities (for example, Jørgensen and Phillips 1999; Svennevig 2009). My readings are inspired, in particular, by questions Svennevig sees as fruitful to pose in order to examine identity construction. I thus pay particular attention to the following:

- Which words and expressions mark the speaker's or writer's group identities?
- How do the speakers or writers present themselves and their supporter group, as well as the opposing supporter group, with respect to qualitative aspects of identity such as feelings, attitudes and knowledge? (I take into account both what is expressed explicitly and what is presupposed and expressed implicitly.)
- What kinds of roles are actualised through communication, and how do the participants relate to the commitments that these roles entail?
- To what extent do the different actors express distance or proximity to-

wards the clubs? Such relations may, for instance, be indicated by modal adverbs, commonly used to express the speaker's view of the truth value of a proposition with which it is associated.

Sample

In order to detect text samples that enable the illuminating of some typical tendencies in the supporter's identity formation, I began by reading through all the *Aftenposten* articles and the forum threads addressing the derby from 2002 to 2009. The articles were obtained through the Norwegian newspaper database Retriever by searching on the Norwegian equivalents of "battle of Oslo", "Lyn-Vålerenga", "Vålerenga-Lyn" and "city derby". The forum threads are easily accessed on the supporter websites, *bastionen.no* and *vpn.no*. However, because of the extensive threads that these matches generate, I have chosen to concentrate on two derby threads in particular: April 2006 and May 2009. After noting some general tendencies in the newspaper coverage and forum discussions, I have selected what I consider exemplary text excerpts for illustrative purposes and closer scrutiny. They are exemplary in the sense that they enable consideration of some typical tendencies with respect to identity construction in the material.

Text excerpts from *Aftenposten* and the forum threads will not be analysed schematically in an attempt to answer the aforementioned questions in turn. I want, rather, to alternate more flexibly and comparatively between linguistic observations and theoretical considerations.

An assumption is that the supporter and club identities will be expressed quite differently in the two media, owing to how different groups of actors participate in them and because of the different properties and functions of the media and their modes of communication. The print newspaper mode is mainly one-way communication, whereas the web forums have an including, multi-voiced mode of communication, continuously negotiating what the football club should signify and, not least, what it means to be a supporter of that particular club.

Aftenposten – the major Oslo newspaper

In terms of circulation, *Aftenposten* is the second largest newspaper in Norway, but it is the largest subscription paper. The Oslo-based *Aftenposten* is the only newspaper in the country that is published as two print editions, although this is now limited to three of the weekdays.⁵ The morning edition has nationwide circulation, while the evening edition, *Aften*, is a local newspaper for Oslo and its surrounding areas. My text samples are chosen from both editions of the newspaper.

The articles in *Aftenposten* address a potentially large and diverse readership

consisting mainly of people from all around the Oslo region who have different degrees of involvement and affinity with the teams – if any at all.

Different perspectives on the derby

In its quite abundant coverage of the derby matches, *Aftenposten* has routinely built up to the match in a series of articles entitled “The Battle of Oslo”. Articles are written in various genres such as news reports, feature stories, profiles and commentaries, and offer some recurring perspectives on different aspects of the “Battle of Oslo”.

In the newspaper’s coverage of the derby – as opposed to the web forum discussions – it is characteristic that different utterances found in the various articles about the derby emanate from different actors (professional or not) in different roles, and not only the supporter’s role. Such other actors may also contribute to the construction of club and supporter identities but, as the following discussion suggests, the stance of such speakers – their affinity with, or commitment to, propositions about the club – may be less strong than in the case of the supporters.

I shall present and analyse dominant perspectives originating from what the newspaper – by representing them – considers to be major actors in, and sources of, this football event. By “perspective” I refer to how certain persons make the world appear in a certain way. The term “perspective” refers more precisely to how the text sees its world through a certain point of view: how certain persons (and the group they represent) let the world appear in a particular way, with particular eyes, thoughts, evaluations and concepts (Hellspong and Ledin 1997). In this case, then, the analysis focuses on how different major actors let supporter and club identities appear.

Players’ perspective

A common topic in the quite numerous portrayals of the players is how they relate to the opposing team as well as the supporters of both teams, whom they may be asked to evaluate against each other. The recurring catch phrase “The Battle of Oslo” evidently functions as a constitutive conflict frame for the portrayals of the players. Below headlines such as “Four about the enemy” (16 October 2007) and “Lyn’s ‘Psycho’ against Vålerenga’s ‘Panzer’” (24 August 2002), the journalists arrange duels and combats by confronting players from the opposing teams in the columns. But what I interpret as efforts to stir up a heated atmosphere before the match are not particularly successful as the opposing teams’ players, rather, emphasise their friendship and respect for

each other (for example, “They (Lyn) have a lot of nice players, whom I stay in touch with”, 16 October 2007), thus deconstructing the hype of hostility between the clubs in this respect.

A couple of the players portrayed are what one club’s (Lyn’s) supporters consider renegades, as they have transferred to the rival team. These players’ comments about the supporters are marked by what may be read as a cautiousness discourse, understandable in the light of the possible fuss that less cautious public statements might stir up. However, their language use reflects how today’s professional football players’ affiliation with one team is necessarily looser than it is among supporters of teams. Linguistically, a certain detachment from the supporters’ concerns may be expressed by modalities in utterances, as in a non-modal form with a modal function (I believe) in the following statement by the earlier Lyn-turned-Vif- player (when the article was written), Jan Derek Sørensen, regarding the relationship between Bastionen and Klanen: “Apart from some unfortunate episodes with fighting in the city, I believe the relationship is ok”⁶ (in *Aftenposten* 23 January 2007). But a distancing from supporter concerns may also be expressed more bluntly: “He [Sørensen] hasn’t made much reflective effort in considering the way he will be received by the Lyn fans ... ‘No, now I’m a Vålerenga-player, and then my job is to contribute so that we win matches’” (ibid.).

Sørensen’s statement reflects rather clearly the different relationships to football clubs of supporters and of players, the supporters’ being one of emotional and often lasting commitment, whereas the player is bound professionally to whatever club he represents at the moment, where his value – and thus his further involvement with the club – is determined by his ability to perform for that team.

Another VIF player who used to play for Lyn, Per Egil Swift, is depicted by Akerselva, the river running through the city and conventionally considered to be not only a geographical but also a demographical line of division between predominantly working class east Oslo and a mainly middle-class west side. Confronted with the journalist’s assertion that the supporters consider the river to be such a clear mark of division, Swift replies suggesting a certain player distance to the construction of club identities among the supporters, not least by his use of a modal marker “probably”: “We players do not think so much about the divide, but the supporters probably do” (quoted in Nesje 2004a).

It is interesting to note how such expressions of a lack of attention among players to what is a major element in the supporter’s identity construction contrasts with the pronounced involvement of a veteran player in the question of a demographic divide in the club identities. When portrayed before the derby, Erik Foss, who played for Vif in the 1970s and 1980s, remarks: “I remember we looked upon Lyn as a real west-side team, a shipping-team” (quoted in Thomassen 2007: 24). This is also the sole sample among the newspaper por-

trayals of players in which the interviewee is represented with the distinctive marks of a sociolect, in this case by phrasings traditionally considered to be typical of east-side Oslo and a working class sociolect, such as “*frøktelig*” (a variant of the standard *fryktelig*, terribly, here in: “Lyn get *frøktelig* motivated for such a match”) and “Vif- folka” (“the Vif people” or “Vif folks”), instead of the standard plural for folk, “*folkene*”).

The portrayal of the veteran player indicates the changing conditions for top football players in the Norwegian league over the last thirty to forty years. Foss himself points at the semi-professional status of the players in the early 1980s, emphasising that they had full-time jobs elsewhere and only trained in the evenings. Such radically different conditions help to explain the stronger affinities with the club and the more marked signs of partaking in identity construction based in social demographics. Today’s professionalism in elite football implies greater player transferability between different clubs and less stable recruitment of players from a particular area or region.

Trainers’ perspective

Some articles juxtapose the viewpoints of the two teams’ trainers before the derby. But very little of what the trainers, Kjetil Rekdal (Vif coach) and Henning Berg (Lyn coach), are quoted as saying has to do with club and supporter identities and values. On the contrary, one can detect a certain detachment from club identity concerns when the coaches reflect on the meaning of such a derby. Although they note the influence of the supporters in raising the significance of the match, there is an implicit personal indifference to its significance in the build-up and marking of the club’s identity.

Our supporters are very preoccupied with the match, and this rubs off on the trainers and players, and makes this a special match. Even though only three points are awarded to the winning team, Henning Berg admits (Kirkebøen 2006: 40).

A pragmatic presupposition in the statement seems to be that had it not been for the efforts of the supporters, the match, for the trainers, would have been just one of many bouts to achieve, at best, three points. As is the case with players, the implicit distance expressed to matters of great importance to the supporters reflects the transferability of professional football coaches. Their positions may be even more exposed and vulnerable than those of the players, as suggested by the recurring pre-season speculation in the newspaper sports sections in Norway – which coach is going to be fired first?

Directors' perspectives

In quite marked contrast to the coaches, the most prolific managing directors of the two teams in the period studied, Vif's Kjetil Siem and Lyn's Morgan Andersen, partake enthusiastically in the construction of club identities, as is particularly reflected in Andersen's utterances; his strong evaluations of the opposing team contribute to the construction of his own club's identity. A strategy seems to be to appropriate marks of identity that enthusiastic supporters of the opposing team have been using, in this case a genuineness or authenticity they conventionally associate with a club emerging from a working class culture (Hjelseth 2005; Reim 2008).⁷

We are Vålerenga's opposite. Our supporters are even more genuine, they are from this area of the city (the Ullevaal Stadion area) and not influenced by such a typical herd instinct as others. We invest eight million kroner a year on players below twenty and we have our own youth academy. We build from the bottom up, whereas they (Vif) select players to a greater extent, although I'm not saying that is a negative thing. (Quoted in Johansen 2005: 32)

The bottom-up strategy and the genuineness are both suited to provoking the other team's supporters and whipping up the atmosphere before the derby. However, there is something of a politeness strategy in Andersen's last line, above. Strategies of politeness may be interpreted as part of the conscious identity construction of one's own team, marking a certain generosity a positive trait for which a club would want to be renowned. Vålerenga's director, Siem, also uses a politeness strategy towards Andersen and Lyn, by taking as his starting point behaviour that opposing supporters probably consider as a distinguishing feature of Vif and their fans (boastfulness), thus allowing him to play up a positive value (humility) to be associated with Vif: "We may be bragging, but not stuck-up. The moment that I claim that Lyn cannot become larger than we are, I have lost all humility. And I have not done that" (ibid.).

But however much such politeness strategies are used to create and project positive club values, the directors' utterances also seem to reflect a relationship characterised by cooperation and mutuality, for instance: "I want [our supporters] to shake hands and congratulate each other after the match" (Siem), and: "Genuine supporters are supposed to dislike their neighbors. But I will not turn sour if Vålerenga succeeds (Andersen, quoted in Johansen 2005: 32)".

The directors themselves provide a key to explaining such mutual generosity. Both are quoted claiming that there exists a relationship of dependence between Lyn and Vålerenga, and they point to how important it is to make the best possible use of the strong position such a local derby has in Norwegian football, demonstrating a marked awareness of the kind of symbiotic relationship that also exists between the football clubs and media such as *Aftenposten*. What comes across is a skilful, self-conscious and strategic use of the duelling

roles that the newspaper offers the managing directors of the two clubs. In their positions it is a major task to promote the club in public, and they seize the opportunity to connect positive values to their respective teams (one may add that such duels serve, not least, another party in a symbiotic relationship – namely the newspaper itself).

Journalists' perspective

The journalists' perspectives on the match are most clearly pronounced when expressed in the columns of a genre that conventionally allows for opinion journalism: the commentary. These typically focus on the importance of the derby to the city of Oslo. Before the matches, even editorials may urge inhabitants to fill the stadium: "Today's derby is the moment to show that neither Trondheim nor Bergen is Norway's largest football city" (*Aftenposten* 26 July 2004).

After the matches, complaints may be levelled at the national football association for choosing the wrong time for arranging the matches, thus making it impossible to fill the stadium. Such commentaries reflect the interest that the newspaper itself has in elevating the buzz surrounding the match, and in this respect one should note how, for a time, *Aftenposten* had bonds with Vålerenga. From 2002 to 2008 *Aftenposten* was one of Vif's partners and sponsors (see Markiewicz 2007 on this relationship). It would be naive to assume that such ties would not be reflected in the newspaper's journalism. Brurås emphasises how sports arrangers "make sure that the sponsoring media companies are proliferated, and in return they achieve free advertising, publishing services and other return favours" (Brurås 2010: 106). [My translation]

But it is questionable whether the sponsor relationship is reflected in a stronger pro-Vålerenga stance, that is, in more marked attempts to create reader identification with this team in the newspaper's coverage of the derby. Although Markiewicz (2007) shows that *Aftenposten* wrote considerably more articles about Vif than about Lyn in 2007, and indicates that this probably reflects a general tendency when the teams have played in the same division, her interviews with the football journalists at the newspaper also display how they consciously strive for coverage on equal terms, not least – as they point out – because there exists a collaboration agreement between Vif and *Aftenposten*. The journalists emphasise the journalistic ideal of balance as being of paramount importance to their coverage.

Some of the commentaries, however, reveal how the journalists may consider themselves more closely in touch with the emotions of a team's fans than are the team's own trainers, as in the following statement about the Vif coach Martin Andresen: "Andresen should realise how much it pains the teams supporters to lose for Lyn" (Johansen 2008). An understanding of the

supporters' feelings – if not to say identification with them – forms the basis of indirect advice distinguished by a strong expressive modality (Andresen *should* realise).

But other journalistic commentaries may, in contrast, be characterised by a distinctly ironic distance from the supporters of the clubs, or, rather to the way the identities of the supporters are created and played up. In one such commentary entitled “A gang of peasants” (Kagge 2005), the writer exhibits his knowledge of the constructed nature of supporter identities. In an ironic tone occasionally slipping into sarcasm, the commentator points to what appear as contradictions in the identities constructed by Klanen and Vålerenga. Here is an excerpt:

To listen to the highly mixed male choir Klanen abuse their opponents as peasants is funny/peculiar.⁸ Especially when one hears how they refer to themselves with “eg”, “je” or “æ”.⁹ They stand there and cheer for a club driven by men who have grown up in mountain cracks in western Norway.

Klanen's spokesman complained in *Dagsavisen* [a newspaper] about late matches. They are such a problem for those who have long way to drive. A peculiar problem for the peasant-haters in “Oslo's pride”.

If the farmers youth organisation in the city wonders what has happened to their members, they ought to know where to look for them. Klanen's largest group of customers are obviously migrants who want to buy themselves urban identity. They get that in “Sjappa” [Vålerenga's shop located in the city centre]. If that's not enough, they can get liquid courage at Bohemen [the supporters' pub in the city centre] before they go out on the town. (Kagge 2005: 2)

This commentary draws on a traditionally popular genre in Norwegian newspapers, the “petit”, whose main objective is to entertain. The use of hyperbole and categorical statements certainly contributes to exhibiting the ludicrousness of fan behaviour. But when the writer deconstructs what have come to be known as main slogans and staples in the Vif supporters' identity formation (Oslo's pride, Sjappa and Bohemen), the text invites itself to be interpreted as a clever attempt to raise the reader's awareness of how a supporter group's identity is not a stable and fixed entity but a constructed unity or, to use Anderson's (1991) phrase, an *imagined community* among its members. Furthermore, the writer apparently wants to draw attention to how marketing strategies and commercial forces are at work in the construction of club and supporter identities. One notes how a marketing and commodity discourse permeates much of the text; the urban identity that the migrant supporters are portrayed as seeking is presented as a *commodity* that they can buy in roles as *consumers*. A group from a different demographic background is similarly portrayed within such a discourse:

In addition to Vålerenga being distinguished by people from western Norway comes another gang with a background from the west side of the city. They are money movers and daddy's boys¹⁰ who buy themselves public-mindedness and a slightly rude image. With a little practice they achieve a thick l [a mark of an East-Oslo "working-class" sociolect] in both Klanen and Vålerenga. If they can't manage that, they stick to "Enga" [insider abbreviation for Vålerenga] (ibid).

Thus, the journalist demonstrates a similar understanding as Brown *et. al.* (2008) have put forward, namely that football communities are not bound by geography. Brown *et. al.* point out how communities are not something that one is born into – football supporters, rather, throw themselves into them (op.cit.: 309). What the journalist ultimately points to is the cleverness of the marketing strategies in increasing the attractiveness of the communities. In this way, the commentator displays a kind of reflexivity that otherwise has been attributed to what Giulianotti (1999) has termed post-fans: that is, football fans who – in contrast to mere "fans" – are cognisant of the constructed nature of fandom.¹¹ They may display an ironic stance towards major actors involved in the club and be acutely aware of the commercial forces at work in the creation of a club's identity.

Supporters' perspective

Aftenposten does pay considerable amount of attention to the supporters of both teams in its build-up to the match. The newspaper writes about and presents the supporters in different types of stories, and two of them display the fans' perspectives in particular: 1) Journalists' reported pre-match duels; and 2) pre-match duels where representatives of the supporters are invited to write about the opposing team and their supporters.

The first and largest category may be seen in part as the reporters' perception of the supporters. One notes again how the phrase "The Battle of Oslo" is part of a dominant conflict frame for the portrayals of the supporters, as it is in the reported duels of the other actors. In the reports of arranged supporter duels before the derbies, the newspaper actively engages in emphasising and creating differences between the teams' supporters. The juxtaposing of the fans may slip into stereotypical representations of urban working class roughness and middle class marks of distinction. Vif supporters may be quoted as using east-side sociolect, for instance "*er'n ikke fin*" (ain't it nice), "*jeg trur*" (I believe; the standard is "*tror*"), "*dau*" (the standard for "dead" is "*dø*"). These fans love of their team may typically be depicted in ways connoting street credibility, one of them for instance "strokes" the supporter bus – termed "wreck" or "banger" (*kjerre*) so that it: "rumbles, ready for departure" (10 May 2002). On the other

hand, when Lyn supporters are quoted, they may to a greater extent use a more specialised and “difficult” terminology, such as “that is to be *coquettish*” [my emphasis], (“*kokettering*” in the Norwegian text), “It is smart to *ignore* others” [my emphasis], (“*ignorere*” being an anglicism not typical of colloquial Norwegian). The speaker in this case is entitled “herr” (mister or sir) by the journalist, thus further adding to the impression that these supporters belong to an elite social group. The journalist ends this article by summing up some marks of the supporters such as the Lyn fans’ use of “en-endings” (west Oslo sociolect)), whereas the Vif fans use “a-endings” (east Oslo sociolect) and have “many tattoos” (ibid). In this way, the depictions look more like caricatures, suggesting a humorous intent.

However, within the newspaper’s frames, the supporters – as they are quoted – may themselves contribute to stereotypical representations, and generalise about conditions for creating genuine supporter values and identities: “The ski and basket club Lyn? Sorry, but who cares, Frode Ræden cracks. Football is a working class sport. Therefore you have lost already from the starting point when you live at the west side, says Aslesen” (quoted in Sørdal 2002: 12).

Genuine involvement is seen as dependent on class affiliation, and the myth of football as a working class sport is maintained. The other team’s fans may occasionally support such a view and see supporter identities as arising naturally out of working class culture. A Lyn supporter reflects in this way about why there are far fewer Lyn supporters than Vif supporters: “Football is working class culture, so the difference is completely natural. In Klanen this is a question of identity. People here are more preoccupied with garden work and boat sanding ... I miss the passion among the people who live here (ibid.).

But equally striking is how the supporters display a consciousness about the way they construct their identities and a sense of belonging, as they speak to the press. Quite a few of their comments refer to the making of identities as a major function of the duelling; for instance, the supporters may talk about “tifos”, the spectacular choreography displayed on the stadium at the beginning of a derby such as this. The supporters exhibit their knowledge of the rules of the genre; that the tifo message has to be short; worship one’s own players; and drag the other team through the dirt: “Tifo is a way to display our strength. There is an eternal competition between the supporters. We love hating each other” (quoted in Nesje 2004b).

The last sentence is an oxymoron that self-consciously and playfully shows how expressions of hatred towards the rival club are considered a means of consolidating one’s passion towards one’s own club. Similar expressions showing awareness of the strategic function of hatred in building club identities may re-occur in the fan reports:

Football supporters have a more healthy relationship to hatred than other people. They manage to hate without harming each other. It is said that in order to really love you have to be able to hate (quoted in Skalland 2006: 28).

They [a fan of Lyn and one of Vif who are friends] think it is important that hatred, such as the hatred between the supporters yesterday, is only a football-hatred. There isn't a great difference between us two. Only the football separates us, says Jørgen. What unites us is humour, says Espen (quoted in Skalland 2007: 49)

One can, however, trace a change, through the years, in the way the hate-love dichotomy is expressed by the supporters in *Aftenposten's* coverage. When the derbies started again in 2002, and as the teams were once again playing in the same division, the supporters were represented as talking about hating the other team without reservations: "... now I can feel ... my hate towards Lyn growing. It's a long time since I felt such hatred (quoted in Sørdal 2002: 12). "... It is clear that we hate Vålerenga like the plague (ibid.).

Such expressions may at one level be seen as a result of the journalist's efforts to create a duel. But when the supporter's tone in later reports changes markedly in this respect, it is reasonable to assume that it has partly to do with the emergence of a casual's culture around some Norwegian football clubs during these years. One such group has expressed support for Vif and on occasion displayed violent behaviour towards Lyn supporters. The response in *Aftenposten* indicates how the behaviour of casuals has generated a more nuanced reflection on what hatred should mean within supporter discourse. The newspaper's "battles" in this respect appear gradually as being more of a negotiation of meaning, in which both teams' supporter clubs and *Aftenposten* have a common interest in promoting a tolerant football culture in Oslo.

A tone of playful "football-hatred" also pervades the commissioned written duels between the supporters which appear in the paper. Such duels may rephrase clichés about snobbish Lyn people and poor and needy Vif people, but there is a strong sense of humour in the teasing utterances:

... Chew on that one, you in the sailor shoes armada (Grønningen 2003: 34).

Since industrial workplaces are disappearing ... they had to add another brand: Bohemian. Those who took part in the brainstorming must have forgotten to look it up in the dictionary. There hardly exists a bigger leap than between bohemian and worker (Kvam 2003: 34).

The second utterance above reflects ironically around the contradictory constructions of supporter identity. Both of the writers display self-irony ("Now, I'm completely aware that we neither are much to write home about" (Grønningen 2003: 34); "Have you become any wiser about my relationship to voff? No, of

course not", Kvam 2003: 34). This adds further to the impression of the supporters' discourse as largely reflexive and expressive of a post-fan sensibility. However, the persons who are invited to duel in the columns typically have leading positions within their supporter clubs. The question is whether the multi-voiced web forums exhibit different constructions of identities and values.

Part 2. The supporters' forums

The communication in supporters' forums is quite different from that established in a major daily newspaper. In the forums, all the participants are more or less dedicated supporters, and we assume that the participants produce comments that they expect to be read mainly by other supporters of their club. A forum is suited to contribute to a sense of virtual community among its regular users. For football supporters, a forum emerges as a medium for sharing feelings and attitudes towards – and knowledge about – the club, thus forming an ideal public space for the construction of club and supporter identities and values.

This is the place where the liveliest mediated discussions of different aspects related to the city derby unfold. However much concerned they are with one chief topic (the team and its preparation and performance), the derby discussions are in general characterised by a multitude of voices touching on a variety of topics. They are multi-perspectival in a different sense from the newspaper articles. Sources with different roles are not selected to speak about different aspects of the match. This is, rather, where the fans themselves voluntarily participate, with their viewpoints rarely censored or edited by the moderator. Fans of the opposing team are allowed to partake provided they follow codes of conduct, but such fans do not often participate although, as a starting point for the exchanges, the threads may quite often present utterances made on the opposing supporters' website. This suggests that fans may follow each other's threads closely.

The discussions may be considered partly as continuous, ongoing negotiations of what it means to be a supporter of the teams, what the marks of a club and supporter identity are. Speakers may, in turn, present their views on a topic without necessarily partaking in a dialogue, but the latter often occurs, not least in the derby threads.

Among the extensive derby threads on *bastionen.no* and *vpn.no*,¹² I have most closely examined two of them (April 2006 and May 2009). In these, quite a number of topics emerge in the course of discussion, for instance: the team likely to play the match; the coaches of both teams; the newspaper coverage of the derby; the supporters' performance during such matches (for example, their singing); and, not least, the opposing supporters' behaviour and characteristics. I shall limit my discussion to discourse produced on the last of these topics, because of the role it plays in the construction of identities.

Labelling the opposing supporters and their team

In comparison with how the supporters appear in (the journalistically represented and edited) direct speech of the press coverage, the tone in the threads is more emotional, uninhibited, direct and rough. Spontaneity is a distinguishing quality of forum interactions, and matter-of-fact reasoning is, according to one Vif supporter, not what ignites discussions: “... if everybody were ... matter-of-fact all the time there wouldn't be much activity on debate forums” (vpn.no, 17 April 2006). A favourite verbal activity in the derby threads is to use derogatory terms for the opposing team and supporters. The following are expressions frequently used by the supporters.

Lyn supporters may refer to Vif supporters as “voff-people” (“voff” being the onomatopoeic, the sound of dogs barking); “barking supporters”; “worst kind of rubbish found”; “the monkeys” (*apekattene*); “The Enga-clowns” (*Enga-klovnene*); “the directorate of labour enterprise Klanen” (*Aetat foretaket Klanen* [Aetat is an agency responsible for battling unemployment]; “klan-skull” (*klanskalle*), or “the people from the east side”.

The club is referred to by terms such as “the trash” (*Søpla*); “the unnameable”; “the enemy”; “voff”; “*Dårlig-Enga*”, [a pun on Vålerenga as “bad-Enga”]; “our ugly neighbour” (*vår stygge nabo*); or “the fashion hype Vålerenga”.

Some typical expressions used by Vif fans to label Lyn supporters: “The bastards from the west side”; “Prebens from holmenkollen” [Preben is a male name commonly associated with upper middle class west side families]; “a gang of monkeys without an own identity”; “little kids on the west side” (*drit-tungene i vest*); “the west side dregs” (*bermen fra vestkanten*); or “pathological liars” (*lystløgnerne*).

The club Lyn is referred to by terms such as: “Liin” (possibly mimicking ‘refined’ west side sociolect), “the ski club” [the club has a division for skiing]; “these parasites”; “the west-side club”; “west-side boys”; “the tiny club”; “shitty daddy's boys”; or “pathetic muck-team”.

A primary function of such derogatory naming is to create one's own club and supporter identities. A group becomes something in opposition to what it isn't, or rather, in this case, as distinct from the images that it creates of the other team and their supporters.

Among the variations on “shit”, “muck” and “trash”, one does spot in both teams' supporter threads a tendency to create identities through demographical and geographical boundary work. For some of the Lyn supporters, references to barking sounds, deviant behavior and unemployment among the opposing supporters may be seen as a way of setting themselves off as a more civilised and well-educated grouping with better qualifications and abilities. Such implied contrasting may be expressed quite arrogantly and bluntly: “Is there nobody with writing abilities among the monkeys? ... There will be a victory tomorrow once again. As in life” (bastionen.no, 13 April 2006). Other comments, however,

display a reflexivity and ironic attitude towards what they refer to as their own stereotyping of the other team (see below).

Vif supporters set themselves apart from the conventional marks of snobishness commonly ascribed to west Oslo, such as the manner of speaking and preferences in clothing and sports (such as skiing). Something commonly thought of as an urban or working class authenticity is evoked as characteristic of their identity. Linguistic markers in the supporters' own manner of speaking about the opposing supporters contribute to the process of identity-making – for instance, east side *a*-endings and swear words may frequently occur when the behavior of Lyn fans is commented upon: “Huh? Are they raising the ticket prices¹³ for this one match!?!? God damn! Burn in hell bloody liin idiots! (vpn.no, 15 April 2006).

But then again, the tone in other utterances is more ironic and humorous: “Hope for a lot of spectators today and good atmosphere. If only the daddy's boys in Bastionen are allowed to stay up for so long (after all there is school tomorrow)” (vpn.no, 20 September 2009).

Now and then one may even find that supporters of one team credit the supporters of the other team for being humorous (“they have written some quite funny things on vpn.no lately” (bastionen.no, 15 April 2006).

Tearing down the other supporters' identity formations

One of the most prominent features of the discussion is what emerges as a word-conscious reflection commenting upon how the opposing supporters construct their own identity and how they scold and make fun of the opposing team and their supporters. This can be done with reference to stadium behaviour during matches or to what has been said in the press or on the other supporters' websites.

A major verbal task is obviously to tear down the identity and values the other team's supporters have built or are building up. Unlike the press representations, the utterances may be delivered as appeals to opposing supporters, as the following statement from a Vif supporter. Presented in a context where most of the readers are fellow fans, the choice of such a form of address may be seen as a way that appeals to the community of emphasising superiority and hegemony when it comes to identity formation.

[I] want to appeal to young Lyn supporters: please, stop doing everything you can to imitate fashion, trends, language, general behaviour that originates from the east side. It is so damned sad to watch three to four Prebens from holmenkollen with blue bandanas and saggy trousers use words such as “*lø*” and “*volla*” [urban slang] and at the same time abuse everything that the east stands for. You are a gang of monkeys without an identity of your

own striving to fit into the culture we on the east side create, and it becomes inconceivably sad when you while you're at it do everything you can to support a club built on WHOLLY different values. You undeniably have a grip on the city derbies, but you will forever remain the little brother nobody likes. (vpn.no, 18 April 2006)

In a paternalistic manner the comment expresses weariness with the other supporters' efforts at creating an identity. Accusing the Lyn supporters of lacking identity is rather usual among Vif supporters. In what sometimes emerges as a type of contest between the forums, such comments may generate responses where Lyn supporters comment upon the Vif supporters' construction of characteristics of the Lyn supporters. These responses can be equally expressive of fatigue: "Ok, fair enough that one is to cultivate stereotypes in connection with these matches, but one becomes rather tired of the repetition of clichés every year, and when it also is badly written, it just becomes embarrassing" (bastionen.no, 16 April 2006).

In some comments, an objective of the speakers is apparently to turn the opposing supporters' own rhetoric against themselves. In the following quotation, a Lyn supporter is commenting on statements made by the Klanen leader in *Aftenposten*:

Nordtug [says] that "football is a sport grounded on public-mindedness and one cannot buy that" ... if there is a club that has bought/and sold public-mindedness, it is precisely Vif. Hardly anyone else has used so much money and so many marketing strategies in order to reach innumerable target groups, and in this way Vif has managed to create manifoldness. First the rich man's club on the east side, then the workers' club that also could welcome bohemians. After that, everyone on the east side was welcome, especially if one wished to appear urban. This before they became "Oslo's pride" and finally "the team for most people". "Identity crisis", Dr Phil would have said. (bastionen.no, 12 April 2006)

Akin to what may go on in the newspaper battles, the speaker attempts to deconstruct the other supporters' identity constructions, in this way exposing what he considers to be a "truer" image of the opposing team. In this case, the notion of possessing an authentic, natural and widely appealing core of public-mindedness is challenged, and a fluctuation between marketing brands is disclosed. Another, less direct, function of the rhetoric is to challenge the conception many hold (not least Vif supporters) of Lyn as the club for successful people who are brought up believing that money can buy anything.

A post-fan mentality is certainly also displayed in the derby threads and, I would add, more frequently than in the newspaper columns. A good deal of what is going in terms of identity formation on these websites may be described as a humorous and ironic deconstruction of the others' staples of identity, so

that conventional meanings are undermined and contradictions in the supporters' discourse are exhibited. With Fairclough's concepts, one could say that fans themselves are displaying how a creative discourse practice is realised among the supporters. As opposed to a conventional discourse practice, which is realised in relatively homogenous texts, creative discourse practice is realised in texts which are relatively heterogeneous in their forms and meanings (Fairclough 1995: 60). Some of the fans' texts in the forums may, in this manner, be sensitive barometers of change, and serve to illustrate a point made by several social theorists, among them Hall (1996:4), that identities in late modernity are fragmented and unstable, constructed through various contradictory and often antagonistic discourses and constantly in the process of transformation.

But rather than solely producing mixed, creative discourses, some fans, in a rather subtle manner, display – as we have seen – a meta-level ironic reflexivity about processes of identity formation. Such fans demonstrate their knowledge about how they are partaking in a constant negotiation of club identities and, in the process, creating symbolic meanings that “belong” to them. These fans may also criticise other fans if they lack an understanding of the codes of the ‘battling game’, so to speak. For instance, a Vif fan addresses a Lyn fan in the following way in a Bastionen thread: “lynpower, take the article for what it is; a semi-serious kick in the groin in order to whip up the atmosphere. It's not so bad that you can't cope with it” (bastionen.no, 16 April 2006).

In such self-reflexive discourse, the battling may be depicted as the staging of a play where stereotyping is seen as a way of “fuelling up” with a particular function: “This week has been the week of stereotypes, and in the build-up to a city derby this is an important part of the game of hegemony in Oslo football” (bastionen.no, 12 April 2006).

So the reflexive discourse does not only mock the stereotypes created by the other supporters. It may also applaud the use of them in a game of “mocking by stereotypes”. As expressed by these post-fans, the function of the word game emerges above all as one of raising the attractiveness of “Oslo football”. In this respect, the rhetoric in the supporters' forums and in *Aftenposten* serves a similar purpose, and in the threads one does note rather frequent references to formulations made by leading supporters in the newspaper's coverage.

Summary and concluding remarks

In *Aftenposten*'s news coverage, actors with different roles in relation to the derby express varied perspectives with differing degrees of commitment to the clubs. The newspaper's framing of the match as a battle is deconstructed when players from one team are confronted with players from the opposing team, and this also applies to ‘duels’ between trainers. Their utterances imply a

distance from matters of great concern to the supporters, thus reflecting professional roles marked by club transferability. The directors' words, on the other hand, show how they eagerly promote their clubs in public, in accordance with their roles. Their politeness strategies are not only used to project positive club values but also reflect a relationship characterised by cooperation, motivated by a joint concern for raising the interest in football in Oslo. Such concern is also expressed by both journalists and supporters.

In commentaries, journalists may depict themselves as more sensitive of the supporter's feelings than are the trainers. In news articles, the journalists' juxtaposing of the fans may result in stereotypical portrayals of working class roughness versus middle class snobbishness. The supporters, for their part, may – not least when represented within the news articles' conflict frame – generalise about the conditions for creating “genuine” supporter identities, seeing them as arising naturally out of working class culture. However, both journalists and supporters may also show an awareness of the constructed nature of such identities and of how commercial forces are at work in this process. Through ironic reflections around contradictions in the supporters' identity formations, such commentaries indicate the presence of a post-fan sensibility in parts of the newspaper coverage.

In the multi-voiced forum threads, derogatory characterisations of the opposing club and supporters are used to create one's own club and supporter identities. Identities are created through demographical and geographical boundary-drawing, and may result in a repetition of clichés that suggest fixed, geographically- and class-bound entities and features. But, even more so than in the press coverage, the forum discussions also exhibit reflexivity among the fans, manifested in a playful and often humorous game of “mocking the stereotypes of the others”, or “mocking the others with stereotypes”. In this manner, the fans deconstruct the other supporters' identity constructions while they create, interpret and negotiate their own club identities in the process.

There are some clear differences between the way the derby battling is presented and acted out in the newspaper columns and in the forums. In the first, different text participants are preferably selected, represented and edited within the journalists' news frames, whereas participation in the forums is voluntary and dominated by dedicated fans of one team. In the latter's multi-voiced threads, discussions are more emotional, uninhibited and rough in tone.

However, the contest appears to have some common purposes in both media. Both are sites for identity building, places where supporters may display a symbiotic need to construct images of the other in order to create an own identity. And amid all the derogatory stereotyping a key function of the battling discourses – whether mediated in *Aftenposten's* pages or played out in the forums – is to ignite the atmosphere before the match. Utterances may thus reflect a joint concern for “Oslo football”, a wish to raise the status and

attractiveness of the game in the capital city of Norway – where even the leading team Vålerenga has been far less successful than Trondheim's Rosenborg and where football matches, for quite a long time, have been played for markedly fewer spectators than in for instance Bergen (Brann) and Trondheim, the second and third largest cities in the country.

As a Vif supporter expresses the need for Oslo rivalry:

Just the thought of “the whole of Norway's” Rosenborg and their far too great success makes my urban tigercity¹⁴ heart skip fifteen beats, while my moustacheless¹⁵ face folds in a thousand wrinkles. (Grønningen 2003: 34)

Notes

1. For the sake of brevity, Vålerenga will be referred to by the popular abbreviation Vif.
2. Vif's supporter club Klanen (“The Clan”) was founded in 1991. The name is inspired by the Scottish clan system and its structuring around notions of family strength (Hognestad 2004). It is the largest football supporters' club in Norway with more than 12,000 members (Markiewicz 2007). Lyn's supporter club Bastionen (“The Bastion”) was founded in 1992 and numbered around 2000 members during Lyn's recent premier league period.
3. Theories of supporter communities and identities briefly presented in this article are also drawn upon in other Norwegian studies of football identities and supporter cultures, for instance Hognestad (2004), Hjelseth (2005, 2006), Reim (2008) and Røssevold (2008). None of these studies, however, pays particular attention to how supporter identities are constructed in mediated contexts. Chapter 9 by Peter Dahlén (2008) is an exception.
4. Elsewhere, Giulianotti (2002) distinguishes between *fans* and *supporters*. According to him, fans are further from the club than are supporters, who are more participatory and consider themselves an important part of the club.
5. One edition is published on all the other days of the week, including Sundays.
6. This quote and all the following quotes from the newspaper and the forum discussion are translated by me.
7. In her study of Klanen, Reim (2008: 68) notes that for quite a few of the most dedicated Vif supporters Vålerenga, as an area of Oslo, becomes an important part of their identities as supporters. They attempt to tie a bond by moving to, or close to, Vålerenga, marry or baptise the children there. Such choices form a part of a football discourse where it is the working classes' traditional, locally rooted football culture that is seen as authentic. (See also Hjelseth 2005).
8. Both meanings are conventionally attached to the Norwegian word “artig”.
9. Personal pronouns in dialects remote from urban Oslo language.
10. “Pappagutt” refers to a young man who is successful because of his father's wealth.
11. According to Giulianotti there is strong evidence that the new middle classes have “a sizeable stake in the production, mediation and consumption of football ... The middle classes are at the heart of the production and consumption of mainstream football media, which mushroomed throughout the 1990s” (Giulianotti 1999: 149).
12. Bastionen.no and vpn.no are the web sites for the forums of the supporter clubs, Bastionen (Lyn) and Klanen (Vif).
13. “Prices” is written here in Norwegian as “prisa”. The official standard form is “prisene”.
14. *Tigerstaden* (the tiger city) is a nickname once used to describe Oslo as a dangerous and merciless city.
15. The term here indirectly refers to a stereotype of men from Trondheim as men with moustaches.

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Chapter 8

The New Media and Hooliganism

Constructing Media Identities

Aage Radmann

The increasingly blurred line between the creators and consumers of media content has been recognised and examined by media researchers. The term “Web 2.0” implies a growing number of people becoming “prod-users”, producing media as well as consuming it, and acting and interacting in new ways. Furthermore, the development in new media techniques means that a growing number of agents are involved in producing and creating media messages.

Media power is becoming diversified, and the right of interpretation, which has previously belonged to owners and reporters who used to control the media, is now scattered. It can belong to anyone with access to digital resources, at least in theory. Nations that attempt to censor social network communities such as Facebook face great difficulties, and global information projects like Wikileaks are part of formulating the arena of world politics. At the time this chapter was written, in January 2011, many eyes were on the “Facebook revolution” in Tunisia, a revolution that forced the president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, to flee. The social networking website Facebook is a growing force owing to its accessibility and online location. The Internet seems to be gaining power as a catalyst for processes leading to democracy, and as a tool for cultural reflexivity on an individual as well as a societal level.

The new media landscape affects sport. A multitude of media agents and an increasing number of other people produce and consume information about sport via the media. Football is one of the most mediatised sports – not only when it comes to the actual sports events, but also when it comes to supporter activities. The increasing media attention on football has also raised interest in the media climate around hooligans. Internet sites produced by supporters are growing in numbers and the interactivity on these sites make them an interesting source of material for academic studies as they portray the emic picture of the hooligan and of hooliganism. In order to understand and explain hooliganism – which has been, and is, seen as a great problem by authorities in society – it is necessary to explore and map out the core values within this group. In

addition, it is likely that the picture given by the hooligans themselves differs from the picture given in “old” media. The purpose of this article is, therefore, to map out and analyse the social constructions of football hooligans and hooliganism in “new” media and to compare it with the narrative pictures in “old” media and I will discuss the complexity of these pictures and identities. The main focus is Internet-based production and consumption of the image of hooligans and hooliganism on the Swedish website www.sverigescenen.com. The analysis will be carried out as a comparison, using three themes: the theatrical performance; the meaningful violence; and the “real man” – the social construction of masculinity.

Important concepts

Before turning to an analysis of the social construction of hooligans and hooliganism in old and new media some clarifying definitions of the concepts used are necessary. First it is important to consider the definition of hooligans. There is no general agreement on this, as previous researchers have used various ways of pinpointing the group and phenomenon – and distinguishing regular supporters from hooligans is no easy task. A common categorisation employed by the judicial system, by football clubs, by the media and by the hooligans themselves is to divide the supporter groups into categories from A to C supporters (BRÅ 2008). The A supporter is a fan who behaves and who will never fight or get into trouble. He or she is the ordinary supporter. The B supporter is also a fan who normally behaves and who does not seek confrontation; yet these supporters can be a part of football-related violence in certain circumstances – for example, if they are provoked in certain ways. In this article, however, the focus is on the C supporter. Characteristic of a C supporter is that he (almost 100 per cent are male) is willing to fight for his team and his group. In the context analysed in this article it is important to emphasise that this group, C supporters or hooligans, are highly active producers in the contemporary media landscape.

Second, it is also important to explain the concepts “old” and “new” media. Here printed tabloid press will be used as an example of old media. In the past, the right of interpretation of hooliganism belonged to the old media while the medial hooligan scene now encompasses a diversity of national and international actors (Johansson 1986; Dunning 2002). Taking the tabloid press in general as an example of old media is, however, an over-simplification. Most contemporary newspapers are multi-media enterprises that mix old and new technology and are constantly adapting to changes in the media landscape. Papers publish continually updated material online, and several newspapers now offer their material in Ipad format. When it comes to sport, it is necessary

to recognise that new technology enables users to subscribe to sports results that are sent directly to their mobile phones. Therefore, classifying the tabloid press as old media is only partly correct. Contemporary tabloid papers are also integrated into the Internet culture. Several papers have created social media groups on Facebook.

New media is, in this article, seen as characterised by new digital technology and the overall term cyber culture, defined by Nayar as the "... electronic environment where various technologies and media forms converge: video games, the Internet and email, personal homepages, online chats personal communications technologies ... mobile entertainment and information technologies, bioinformatics and biomedical technologies" (Nayar 2010: 2).

Nayar's definition of cyber culture will be used in this article in order to point to the clear difference between new and old media. In new media most people with access to digital technology such as computers or mobile phones can participate actively. This is apparent in football and hooligan culture and the past few years have seen the rise of a completely new media scene around football and other sports. Supporters themselves now interpret and describe happenings on their own websites, blogs and sites like Twitter and Youtube. The new technology widens the media landscape and enables medial hyper-texts within football culture. Sveriges scenen.com is as a good example of how new media is created.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework used in this chapter will be based on works by the sociologist Erving Goffman and the network sociologist Manuel Castell, as well as theories connected to the social construction of masculinity. The dramaturgic metaphor introduced by Goffman (1959) is helpful to understand hooligans' presentation of self (Spaaij 2008). Goffman argued that all social interaction is like a theatrical performance in which actors perform one of the many roles available to them, depending on the situation in which they find themselves. Important concepts in Goffman's analysis are "onstage" and "backstage". In order to explain these concepts one can use them to describe the roles of a football-player who is "onstage" when he or she is on the field, trains, plays a game, gives press-conferences and deals with issues related to his or her profession as a football-player. The same logic applies to the referees, trainers and other professions related to the football landscape. The new media landscape, however, has blurred the differences between "onstage" and "backstage" so that there are hardly any differences between them; this blurring is explained by the risk of being watched through new media channels such as mobile cameras. The possibility of being constantly watched, commented on, taken pictures of, and

written about in a numerous websites all over the world situates the professional sportsmen and sportswomen onstage twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In this chapter, Goffman's metaphor of social interaction as a theatrical performance will be used in the analysis of the narrative picture of hooligans in old and new media and it will be argued that the narrative of hooliganism in new media is shaped by the fact that the hooligans are "onstage".

As the interaction on an Internet site constitutes the main source material for this article a theoretical inspiration has been Castell's discussions of "symbolic communication", a term that signifies that identities are constructed according to organisational principles in the interplay between the Internet and the self, rather than through local social belonging (Castell 1996, 1998; Nayar 2010; Sveningsson 2003). Castell claims that these virtual communities are centred on the identity to which an individual aspires, the contexts to which the individual feels he or she belongs, and the social actions he or she desires to perform. The quest for identity and meaning is the main driving force behind individual interaction on the Internet, but is also a consequence of it. I don't agree with this analysis when it comes to football websites as these websites distinguish themselves among Internet communities by often having clear ties to a physical and geographical location determined by the favourite team's home arena and city. In addition, I dispute the idea that identities based on race, gender, sexuality and age can be chosen on the Internet and that they have no relation to essential bodies as the actual male body seems to play an important role for the hooligan websites (Nayar 2010).

Many researchers conclude their studies about hooliganism with the statement that hooliganism is connected to a certain form of masculinity, a masculine identity based on physical power, heterosexism and a hard body. According to R.W. Connell these are important characteristics of a hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1996). In addition, the hooligan masculinity is socially constructed as in opposition to something which is not masculine (Armstrong 1998). However, the social construction of the hooligan masculinity is likely to be more complex and just as Connell has concluded for the social construction of masculinity in general, there is no singular pattern of masculinity to be found everywhere (Connell 1996). In line with Connell, Ramòn Spaaij, a football researcher who has followed different supporters and hooligans and conducted over 400 interviews with hooligans from different countries, concludes that masculinities are not homogenous, simple states of being – they are continually produced and reproduced. Football cultures exist, not on their own as locations for the construction and contestation of hooligans' aggressive masculinity, but, rather, in complex interrelationships with other cultural sites, including the family, schools, labour market, media representations and the legal system (Spaij 2006, 2008; Mac an Ghaill 1996). Nor do hooligans develop a single form of masculinity. Outside football, they adopt other masculine roles as partners,

parents, children, workmates and friends (Giulianotti 1999). The analysis in this chapter is, however, restricted to the media narrative, and hooligan masculinity in relation to family and friends will not be studied here. Instead, questions on whether the social constructions of hooligans' masculinities differ in old and new media will be posed.

Previous research

International research on hooligans and hooliganism has focused on explanations of these phenomena Dunning (2002). The focus has been on football hooliganism in Britain. The researchers have come from several mother disciplines and have used various theoretical frameworks for their research, such as anthropology (Harris 1991; Armstrong 1998), postmodernism (Giulianotti 1999), Marxism (Taylor 1971; Clarke 1978; Hargreaves 1986), cultural sociology (Marsh 1978), psychological theory (Kerr 1994) and history (King 1997; Robson 2000). The discipline with the widest spread, inside and outside Britain is "figuration sociology" or "process sociology". This discipline is a synthesis of psychology, history and sociology, based on the civilisation theory founded by Norbert Elias. Eric Dunning, a follower of Elias, has integrated the latter's civilisation ideas into the context of football and hooliganism. Empirically, these ideas are based in three perspectives on hooliganism: explaining the "meaning" of hooliganism by analysis of empiric material from or by the hooligans themselves, localising hooliganism in the social structure with emphasis on questions of social class and gender, and examining the dynamics at work in interactions between hooligans and other groups in society (Dunning 2002). Despite being the most widespread theory, the figuration sociologists' model of explanation has been heavily criticised for lacking in critical reflexivity, being overly descriptive and not being grounded in sufficient empirical evidence (see for example Giulianotti 2004).

Despite the tough and often harsh debate of the past twenty years among English football researchers, most agree that hooliganism is a highly complex issue that is difficult to demarcate in theory and practice. In addition, and as I have already mentioned above, it is also problematic to define what constitutes hooliganism since the definitions that have had the most impact are those created in the worlds of media and politics, and include almost any disturbance motivated by sports. In practice, this means that the violence of individual thugs on or off the field, verbal assaults, physical violence, threats of violence, and vandalism of public or private property are all included in the term hooliganism. In the words of Dunning (2001: 1): "Probably the most important thing to stress is that the label 'football hooliganism' is not so much a scientific sociological or social psychological concept as a construct of politicians and the media".

It is clear from this quote that Dunning sees the media as having a crucial role in constructing the image of hooliganism. Dunning emphasises the importance of what he labels the tabloidization of the popular press and claims that the media's treatment of these issues strongly contributes to the spreading and development of hooliganism. He points to two tendencies in media reporting that illustrate this well. First, the media has been giving the impression that the problems are more major and serious than what is actually and objectively the case. Second, the large amount of media attention on hooliganism has fortified their collective identity and increased the number of hooligan clashes (Dunning 2002: 4). It is important for this chapter to stress that Dunning's conclusions are connected to old media, but even so, it will be claimed here that new media has a crucial role as well. The actual reporting, and what I have chosen to call the narrative picture may, however, differ between old and new media.

The role of media in connection to hooliganism has also been emphasised by researchers other than Dunning. The first Swedish report on hooliganism was published in 1986 by the educationist Martin Johansson, in which he provides an overview of psychological, socio-psychological and sociological explanations of hooliganism. Worth noting is how he points to the difficulties in measuring the frequency of violence that pertains to sports, since much of this violence can only be triggered by its being noticed in the media (Johansson 1986). Just like Dunning and other researchers, Johansson's analysis stresses medial influence on the hooligan discourse.

Other Scandinavian criminologists have emphasised the power and influence of the media (BRÅ 2008). The criminologists have – in almost a moral panic – upheld various social evils that have normally and frequently been related to the power of media in general. A conclusion has been that this power can be wielded to induce fear of crime and disorder in ordinary people as well as to reproduce a fear that is disproportionate to the actual risks. That this conclusion is valid for the Swedish case as well is demonstrated in a previous study in which I analysed articles in newspapers reporting from the time around the 1992 European football championship for men. I also conducted interviews with visiting supporters, and an analysis of articles in tabloid papers before, during and after the championships (Radmann 1994). The findings, which are in accordance with similar English football research, show that tabloid coverage of hooliganism was centred around stigmatisation of those involved, creation of a climate of panic, over-simplification of the underlying causes, and attempts to solve the problem by means of stricter control from above (such as classification systems, riot police, closed circuit cameras, and all-seater arenas) (Dunning 2002).

Research on sport, the Internet and fandom is scarce, especially in a Scandinavian context. There are, however, two good and interesting studies by Anders Svensson and Arve Hjelseth. Svensson has analysed a website for ice hockey supporters and his main idea is to consider whether the discussion

on the Internet site could be considered public, communicative, democratic and deliberative. He compares it to the political discussion on two websites, Usenet and America Online, and according to Svensson, "The hockey discussion shows a higher degree of deliberation than the political discussions" (Svensson 2007: 255). Hjelseth analyses the discussion on different websites for Norwegian football supporters and how the different supporters react to the commercialization and commodification of Norwegian football culture (Hjelseth 2006). Another Scandinavian researcher who has been interested in the links between sport and new media is Peter Dahlén, and he has also written about sport and masculinity (Dahlén 2008).

To summarise, previous research on hooliganism is focused on England, on explaining the hooliganism phenomenon and has given media an important role when it comes to the construction of hooliganism. This chapter will present a new perspective on hooliganism, as it focuses on a mapping out and analysis of the social construction of football hooligans and hooliganism in Swedish new media in order to ascertain whether this picture differs from the one given in old media (and in previous research).

Source material and methods

Sveriges scenen.com was started in 2002 and is one of the largest and most popular websites for hooligans and others in Sweden (www.svenskafans.com). By March 2011 there had been 46 583 contributions to the site. The site includes texts, pictures and links to other media. Sveriges scenen.com is divided into thirteen categories: "Columns", "Guest Columns", "Rumour has it...", "The Scene Year by Year", "Casuals", "On the Pitch", "AIK Hall of Fame", "We Hate", "Match schedules", "Legal Aid/Police/Media", "Boss & Josh of the Week", "R.I.P." and "Forum". The producers of the site aim to compile a historic hooligan bank (link The Scene – year by year), describing hooligan fights in Sweden in detail. Furthermore, the site gives its users the opportunity to debate the approach to football in general, and hooliganism in particular, that is held by other stakeholders such as police, media, the Swedish Football Federation and football clubs.

The website contains an enormous amount of material, and is a medial hybrid in its inclusion of links to other sites and newspapers. A random selection has been made for the purpose of this study and the material has been approached heuristically. The narrative picture of the hooligan and hooliganism is mainly analysed in texts extracted from the "Column" section of the website since it is produced by some of those behind the website. The interaction by producers and consumers is, in this context, understood as hooligans sending their reports to the site.

On *Sverigescenen.com*, the hooligans themselves report what could be referred to as primary empirics, such as first-hand accounts from people involved in hooligan fights. In great detail they describe the chain of events, which is then discussed and graded. The reports may only be sent in by people who are acknowledged by the site producers as “real” hooligans (members of acknowledged hooligan organisations, or recommended by members). This group is called “users” in this text. The source material is different from that used by previous research in two ways. First, the site gives researchers an opportunity to gain access to first-hand stories from hooligans. This was possible for previous researchers, but in using new media the emic narratives can be easily controlled by others, among them other researchers. Second, the emic narratives are new from a media perspective.

The site’s target audience is “football lads from different clubs as well as other initiated people.” It is run by supporters of AIK, a club based in Stockholm, and focuses explicitly on hooliganism. One of the main ideas is to present, discuss and grade hooligan fights. According to its creators it has approximately 200,000 visitors a month and more than 1,235 forum users (*Sverigescenen.com* 26 March 2011). That there are 1,235 users means that the website attracts 1,235 prod-users categorised as C supporters. In its 2010 annual report, the producers of the site describe their ambitions for their website:

During the last year, *Sverigescenen.com* established its position as the most influential website for AIK supporters. After *Svenska Fans* it is also the most popular. Our credibility is strong, and this entails a need to maintain a high standard when it comes to textual content as well as responsibility for what is distributed, not least when it comes to things printed in FB’s (Firman Boys) name. This is why updates can be infrequent. We have made this decision, to put quality before quantity in what is written on the website. (Translation by author)

According to the producers of the site it is the most influential website for supporters of this team and the most popular site after *www.svenskafans.com*. Moreover, they emphasise that the site maintains high standards. By claiming this they underline its credibility and correctness in reproducing what is happening in connection with hooligan activities. They use the name Firman Boys, which is actually a well-known hooligan group supporting AIK, to certify the contents of the site and its reliability. It is not only the creators of the site that claims that the information is correct. *Sverigescenen.com*’s credibility and legitimacy also seems strong elsewhere. In an interview I conducted with a member of the supporter police, the interviewee stated: “The site is eerily correct; in many cases one might suspect them of having direct information from the police.” In the analysis of the narrative picture of hooliganism I will return to this stressing of the reliability.

Apart from reports on the fights in texts, pictures and film clips, there are several references to violence in a popular cultural context. Motifs from Stanley Kubrick's movie *A Clockwork Orange* is of special importance. In the heading of the site, a silhouette of the four main characters from the movie is set in between the words "Sverige" and "scenen". The reference to *A Clockwork Orange* is not new. The hooligans connected to AIK have used it for a long time on jackets and even as tattoos to express their view on violent behaviour.

Naturally there are problems related to source material with a website like this. One of them is that the website is produced by members of Firman Boys and that they can, of course, exaggerate their own importance, power and strength. However, in this chapter the stress is not on whether the actual number of fights is correct, or even whether they are described correctly. Instead the focus will be a mapping out and an analysis of how hooliganism is socially constructed. Used in this way, the site is very interesting source material as it is acknowledged by hooligans themselves. Another problem is that research based on Internet culture inevitably faces the difficult issues of demarcation in time and space, how to select objects of study and how to determine which information is relevant (Sveningsson 2003). The Internet is a complex and multidimensional social arena for activity and interaction. However, the most important thing for this study is to know that this is a very popular site for the hooligans themselves, and as it is popular it is likely that the social constructions of hooligans and hooliganism on this site are in accordance with the group's own voice on their ideas about their world.

The theatrical performance

This section will start with a comparison between the "narrative picture" of hooliganism constructed in traditional media and new media. As I have already pointed out, the reports on hooligan fights are the main focus of the site Sverigescenen.com. This is a typical example from this site:

IFK Gothenburg-Helsingborg, Football, Allsvenskan

16 May, 2005:

The sixth round of Allsvenskan (Swedish Premier League), and a so-called high-risk game at Gamla Ullevi in Gothenburg between the home team and the guests from Skåne. In Askim, on the outskirts of the 031 area (031 is the area-code for Gothenburg), Category C supporters from both teams clashed in a planned battle. 40 Wisemen [supporters of IFK Gothenburg] against approximately 25 Helsingborgians [supporters of Helsingborg IF] in a 30-second fight interrupted by HIF's back lines turning and fleeing, resulting in the rest of the Scanians scattering from the site with Wisemen as the indisputable winners.

The very typical report starts by informing the reader about which supporter groups are involved, when and where the fight was situated, and the outcome of the fight. The number of supporters is presented as well as the exact time for the fight (here 30 seconds). The outcome of the fight, or "the box" as it is called on the site, is often discussed by the website's own columnists under the headline "Sveriges scenen's thoughts". In this column the fighting groups are awarded points and it is decided who has won. The report is often presented as a narrative. This is clearly seen in the next quotation, which describes one of the largest hooligan fights in Sweden. It took place on 12 June 2010, and was a typical "box", far away from football arenas and match days.

KGB (Hammarby IF) – Firman Boys (AIK) – fight, 12th of June 2010

For some time, relations had been frosty between Hammarby and AIK, approaching freezing point during the winter after several, in AIK's opinion, unacceptable actions by Kompisgänget Bajen (KGB).

Everything culminated Saturday the 12th of June in an encounter in Gnesta outside Stockholm. Amazingly, 440 boys from both groups were on the prowl that day, and the fight has been classified as the biggest organised football fight in Scandinavian history!

KGB were completely flattened by the raging and violently punching AIK lads in front of 8 policemen, some of them from the supporter police in Stockholm, who wisely decided to stay on the sidelines and record the events on video. It took exactly 43 seconds before Kompisgänget Bajen, in AIK-circles nicknamed Kickersgänget Bajen, fled the battlefield.

The AIK mob roared in triumphant joy while the Hammarby supporters gathered their wounded warriors (broken arms and legs, broken noses and other lesser injuries) and hurried to their cars ...

As in the previous example, the report starts with a short heading introducing the "teams" or, rather, supporter groups. After that a moment of tension is introduced as the writers say that the relations between the supporter groups had long been tense. In this report the place and date of the fight is presented too, and how many took part (440). Again, the duration of the fight is very precisely given: forty-three seconds.

The tension described and the setting of the fight, as well as the outcome and how it is presented, can be explained using Goffman's interpretation of social interaction as a theatrical performance (Goffman 1959). The stage and the dramaturgical effects are clear in the hooligan narrative on the site. The actors are the different hooligan groups. These groups are onstage, performing in relation to other actors and an audience. The audience is the media consumers and there are reviews, just like there would be with a theatrical performance. It is important to stress that without these consumers the the-

atrical performance would lack meaning. In new media, Sverigescenen.com, the fights are depicted as well-directed acts. An interesting point that can be made is that this theatrical performance (the hooligan fight) is presented in the same way as a sports game would be presented in old media. The participants (the hooligans), the game (the fight) and the outcome are presented. Furthermore the game (the fight) is reviewed and different players (hooligans) are marked.

This way of presenting the hooligan fight stands in contrast to how the fights are described in old media – as being chaotic (for an analysis of old media, see Radmann 1994; Andersson & Radmann 1998). That the new media offers the possibility of watching the same fight over and over again also gives room for discussions and common reflections.

The presentation of hooligans and hooliganism in new media differs from that in old media in another way as well. On the website Sverigescenen.com the hooligans are described as very credible persons when it comes to supporting their own group: "... by showing loyalty to our friends, always supporting and never backing down for anyone. We are well-organised, disciplined; everyone knows who we are and what we represent. We are the tough guys, feared and respected. We dominate the crowd, and we fully believe that football and violence belong together. We have a reputation to uphold and care for." (<http://www.sverigescenen.com/sverige.html/FB-thehistory>)

In this quotation, loyalty and discipline are emphasised. Hooligans are presented as people who will not "back down". They are tough, feared and respected. There is also an emphasis on the fact that this group dominates others and that football and violence belong together. There are also several examples on the website of instances where fans have been "unjustly and illegally" treated by the justice system. In old media the narrative of the hooligan is very different. They are not seen as loyal supporters but, rather, depicted as violent and lacking normal human capacities. They are even presented as "animals", and not seen as supporters or fans of football because they destroy the football event and the experience for themselves and for everyone else including the football club (Radmann 1994). This is clearly seen in this quotation:

Shame on all the idiots who don't know how to behave when watching football. A year ago, the football season concluded with Djurgårdens' so-called tail, Blue Saints, kicking the referee to the ground in the middle of a game. This year, Allsvenskan started in exactly the same fashion. The 08-scum came to Halmstad and cut an ear off an eighteen-year-old. Instead of celebrating getting the ball rolling we received reports about riots and riot police. The devilry culminated this summer when Djurgården's inner circle of supporters tore up asphalt and attacked the audience in Gothenburg ... it is impossible to be completely safe from lunatics, but spectator violence must be culled,

whatever it takes. We have to be able to go to a game without risking our lives. (*Kvällsposten*, 31 December 1996)

Another example, ten years later, from old media is this quotation:

These pigs ... They're weak, scared, unmanly little boys who really shouldn't be allowed to come to games without a parent or guardian. Stop coddling the mob. Banish them from the arenas. They don't care if matches are interrupted or clubs punished. That only satisfies their power-hunger. They want to show they exist, that they can mean something. Primitive and tragic. This mob doesn't care about Allsvenskan results – to the extent that they can even read them – they just want to fight their way out of their anguish, their aggressions, and their misdirected hatred. The symptom of their disease is that they enjoy destruction, the fear they instil, the chaos. (Åke Stolt, *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 29 August 2006)

The meaningful violence

Violence is an important characteristic of the hooligan world, when it is described in both old and new media. It is, however, important to see that the violence is presented in different ways in the two media forms: when described in old media, violence is seen as chaotic, without meaning, and totally in opposition to what society “is about”, whereas, as previous research has pointed out, in the narratives of the hooligans violence is given meaning (Armstrong 1998). This is also seen on *Sverigesenen.com*. The producers of the site even comment on the old media narrative:

When it comes to approaching a solution to the constantly debated problem of “sports-related violence”, the authorities have failed miserably. Could it perhaps be time to change tactics? Perhaps it is time to leave behind Mats Olsson, Lasse Anrell [two well-known, middle-aged, sport journalists] and their generation, as well as its constant cries of “England” and demand legislation suited to terrorism instead, to see the issue in its full complexity. That means acknowledging that there is an unspecified number of men of our generation who identify themselves and live with their club. They do this at a level fanatical enough for them to be prepared to practise violence against like-minded men who belong to a different club. This is not about race, religion or politics. This is about lads and alpha males who will always see themselves as the chief protectors of their club, and who are prepared to go further than anybody else for the sake of their conviction.” (<http://www.sverigesenen.com/sverige.html/FB-thehistory>)

In this quotation it is stated that the authorities have failed to handle sports related violence, and that another solution has to be chosen; contemporary supporters belong to a different generation from the reporters writing in old media. The website provides no example of a solution, but explains why some men choose to live as supporters of a team and why some of them choose violence. The explanation is based on a social construction of masculinity (I shall soon turn to a discussion of masculinity, but must first emphasise that it seems like the hooligans themselves – or at least those writing on the website – are self-conscious and analytical in a way that is sometimes radically different from how they are portrayed in the old media). In addition, I claim that this way of presenting the violence as something inherent in the culture can be connected to the way the fights are presented. As I have already pointed out, the fights are described in the same way as sports games. There are even rules for these fights, as there are rules for sports games. The rules of this game, the “box”, include violence and it is in this context the violence has to be interpreted. It seems that many people actually accept quite a lot of violence in sport when it is regulated; in ice hockey, in rugby or American or Australian football or in boxing, for example, violence within certain limits is regarded as a part of the game. That violence is accepted in sport when it is regulated is held by the sociologist Messner (1992: 69), and it can explain the acceptance of violence among the hooligans. In addition, if Goffman’s framework of interpreting social interaction as theatrical performances is used (Goffman 1959), violence can be seen as the most essential part of the hooligan performance.

This chapter will now turn to a comparison between how the narrative hooligan in old and new media is constructed in relation to others in the football landscape (other supporters, journalists, the police). The manner in which the various hooligan fights are reported follows the same general pattern when it comes to relations between the fighting groups and the police. The quotation about the fight between supporters of the teams Hammarby and AIK presented above is completed by a reference to the other “actors” – the police. When the Hammarby supporters left the battleground they opened the stage to: “... a helicopter and some fifty policemen from Stockholm and Västerås ... Both groups leave the scene of the crime in their vehicles; some are stopped by the police while others drive in a zig-zag to avoid the long arm of the law. No arrests.”

The number of policemen is presented, yet there is no further comment about the police. Descriptions of police action are, however, often included although here it is only stated that no one was caught. The “grand finale” of the fight is the account of the “losing” supporter group in this fight:

The truth eventually caught up with Hammarby and its organisation. Hammarby have dressed up in a far too big and poorly cut Dressman suit and its supporters have acted like first class gypsies all winter, proving beyond all doubt their determination to behave disgracefully until the very end. De-

spite their lies they were crushed by what is currently Sweden's indisputably toughest football firm. This, if anything, is justice.

The losers – the Hammarby supporters – are described as incapable and inferior to the supporter group they met in the fight. They are derided, depicted as wearing clothes that are not suitable for real hooligans, and labelled “gypsies” – a description used to humiliate them. Finally it is stated that their opponents are the real hooligans – the toughest football firm. The theatrical performance is concluded and the curtain can go down. The actors are no longer on stage.

The “real man” – the social construction of masculinity

The real hooligan is a “real man” according to the hooligans themselves, and when the users of the site Sveriges scenen.com describe what characterises the firm's (that is, the hooligans') community they use words like respect, belonging and deep comradeship – characteristics connected to a socially constructed masculinity. The traditional male gender role, characterised by resilience; loyalty towards the group; sacrifice for a greater cause; an internal, almost invisible hierarchy; strict boundaries between the public and the private; and a despising of weakness, is clearly in accordance with the hooligans' description of their own masculinity (for a discussion of hegemonic masculinity, see Connell 1996; Mendel-Enk 2004). In addition, the masculinity on the website is not just *any* masculinity; it is clearly connected to a masculinity formed by toughness and a certain style. From the depiction of the losing “team” in the quotation above it is obvious that a real man dresses in a certain way. That a hegemonic masculinity is formed in relation to other masculinities is discussed by Connell (1996) and obviously the masculinity of the winning group is related to an inferior masculinity of the losing group.

Surprisingly enough, there are significant overlaps in how masculinity is constructed among sport journalists in old media and on Sveriges scenen's website (according to the Swedish philosopher Kutte Jönson (2010: 68), the journalists in old media actually help to build the image of the “alpha male”). Even though an old media journalist depicts hooligans as being “weak, scared, unmanly, little boys”, it is simultaneously obvious that “real men” are supposed to be “strong, manly, big boys”. This description of masculinity is a narrative with which hooligans on the site Sveriges scenen.com would concur. Another example is the reportage about ice hockey from Niclas Wikegård who, when given two minutes on air during the television broadcast sports gala of 2011, chose to make a joke about how “... floor ball isn't a sport, it's an activity for left-handers and bed-wetters.”

On national television Wikegård mocks the ice hockey players for not partying enough, and concludes by kicking over a table and saying, “Get up on

the tables, come on ... stare at the biggest guy at the next table and ask him, 'What are you looking at, you fucking bowler' ... bowler is the worst insult there is. I want some action, where the hell is all the action?" Wikegård is known as a dedicated and harsh ice hockey commentator who likes "rough stuff". His words (whether ironic or serious) during the sports gala, reproduce and establish a masculinity that entails having a drink, practising the "right" sport and defending one's masculinity with physical violence. This is a notion of masculinity in complete accordance with the ideology of masculinity permeating the texts published on Sveriges scenen. The men who belong to the various firms like to think of themselves as the "last fortress of masculinity", "alpha males" defending their territory or club, and doing this in protest against a culture of over-protection:

Being a dedicated supporter today means going against everything that the rest of society is working so hard to achieve: generations of men following the norm by picking up children at kindergarten, doing laundry, paying taxes, driving eco-friendly, not swearing, drinking in moderation, trying to quit taking snuff or smoking, thinking about nothing when masturbating and, above all, never succumbing to low, primitive, Neanderthal urges such as threatening, swearing, mocking and boxing. These customs are not even accepted when one's opponent welcomes them. (<http://www.sveriges scenen.com/sverige.html/Gästkrönikan>)

Conclusion

To summarise, old and new media present *different* narratives about the hooligan and hooliganism. Whereas the former emphasise that hooligans and their fights are chaotic, disturbing the societal order, the latter can be interpreted as demonstrating that the hooligan fights are, in accordance with what Goffman says about social interaction (Goffman 1959) theatrical performances. On the website Sveriges scenen.com the hooligan fights are described as theatrical acts with exciting beginnings, a climax, and even "grand finales". Actors and counter actors are portrayed, and the stage is well set in space, place and time. All of these seem to fit well with a description of a sports game.

New media views the fights as full of meaning, and rational – not irrational as is assumed by old media. That violence is seen as meaningful by the hooligans has also been pointed out by previous research. This chapter, however, stresses that the hooligan violence in new media can be interpreted within the sports context where regulated violence is accepted. In the performance on stage, violence is expected and performed – and even reviewed as part of the action.

A third conclusion is that the two media forms strongly resemble each other's social construction of what a "real man" is supposed to be: strong and loyal

to the group; never “backing down”; prepared to use his body – possibly, or even preferably, in a violent way to prove his cause.

A fourth conclusion to be drawn in this chapter is that Castell’s term “symbolic communication” which signifies that identities are constructed according to organisational principles in the interplay between the Internet and the self, rather than through local social belonging, has to be disputed (for this definition, see Castell 1996). Castell’s claim that virtual communities are centred on aspired identities has to be problematised – at least in the context of new media as represented by Sveriges scenen.com. To become a user of the site, and in that way to become somebody who can publish reports and comment on others, one has to have proved, through using his body (it is primarily a masculine body), that he is a “real hooligan”. A “real hooligan” is prepared to use violence – is prepared to fight. In that way, identity is not negotiable and cannot be constructed only on the Internet.

Despite the seemingly contrasting descriptions of hooliganism and masculinity depicted in new and old media, but very much overlapping in their representations of the real masculinity, new media prod-users on the hooligan scene seem to use old media narratives when constructing their image. Old and new media are, obviously, difficult to separate. Old media and its view of hooliganism actually seem to be seen by many hooligans as a positive force that helps them build their identity.

Every time the papers printed a small press item it felt like a victory. Five seconds on the evening news was enough to merit a party. One could experience it all again, record it and watch it over and over, it was a kind of validation. I would say that it is a way of finding an identity, one seeks a sense of belonging among the supporters and that new image is confirmed in the media. (Twenty-four-year-old member of Black Army, quoted in Andersson & Radmann 1998: 117)

Johan Höglund (the pseudonym behind a Swedish hooligan novel *One of the Lads*) also shows how old media has had a massive influence on the firm’s identity, choice of name and expansion. At first, the hooligans named themselves “Rötäggars” (“bad eggs”), taking their name directly from what the press called them. They were pleased with this name and said that, “We liked the headlines and appreciated how the media portrayed us as deadly threats to the public. People respected and feared us, especially outside of Stockholm. They barricaded themselves in their houses when the Stockholm teams came to visit” (Höglund 2005: 104).

It is interesting to note how Höglund confirms that old media has been an important factor of validation in his long life as a hooligan, and that the aura of violence that emanates from the news has accompanied him since he was thirteen and took part in his very first hooligan fight. He writes:

The day after the riots, the papers delivered a juicy article with big, bold headlines about how Black Army caused a massive car accident on Nynäsvägen. It felt weird, seeing those words shining from the news bill. At the same time it gave me a nice shiver of pride, because I'd been there in the thick of it only twelve hours previously. That day at school people who knew I went to the games were asking me about what really happened and if I had seen or done anything. (Höglund 2005)

And the beginning of this chapter, the increasingly blurred line between the creators and consumers of media content was pointed out. Here a comparison between old and new media demonstrates that the line is both blurred and very sharp. It is sharp when it comes to the general categorisation of the hooligan: in old media the hooligan is presented as irrational and inhuman, whereas new media, as represented by Sveriges scenen.com, describes him as rational and essentially connected to nature. When it comes to masculinity, however, there is true blurring, as both old and new media depict a real man in the same way although they are not in accordance on the hooligan as representative of this social construction of masculinity. To disentangle and understand the narrative picture, more research is essential.

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Chapter 9

“Jaysus! Is Janno a Bird?”

A Study of Femininity and Football Fans in Online Forums

Deirdre Hynes

Football has traditionally been accepted as exclusively masculine – a man’s game (Whannel 1992; Harris 2004; Robson 2000; Jeanes and Kay 2007). Despite the enormous popularity of football (among female fans) and as a participatory sport, the men’s game remains the preserve of the popular mass media and of financial, corporate investment. More importantly, it remains ideologically masculine¹ in nature. Female football fans exist in a web of conflict where they struggle for acceptance and ownership of the masculinised game. This conflict is compounded by the internal struggle of what it means to be female, and by expressions of heteronormative femininity. There has been a good deal of academic attention given to the female relationship with the game of football, both as players (Caudwell 1999; Lee 2008; Scraton et al. 1991) and as fans (Jones 2008; Goig 2007) but relatively little research has been done on female experiences of football, their relationship to the game and as fans, and how that relationship is defined and understood.

The explosion of football forums and online communities has sought to provide virtual environments for fans to build communities for discussion and collective actions. Football fandom has evolved in the past two decades with the advent of satellite television coverage and the Internet. It is now possible for clubs to nourish a global fan-base using web 2.0 features and social networking sites where fans can convene to chat, argue, discuss tactics and so on. Women, too, have taken advantage of online forums to support their football clubs, by-stepping the physical barriers of geography and male dominated domains of stadiums and noisy pubs. The online (virtual) experience is worthy of attention because it changes and challenges the traditional environment of football fandom in two crucial ways. The first fundamental challenge is the construction of the online self. This bodiless, genderless persona adds a number of significant dimensions to the study of football fans. The second fundamental challenge is the construction of the situated self. This challenge involves a study of the absence of the spatial and temporal aspects and the strategic positioning

behind the safety of the screen. The absence of symbolic, corporeal, physical and locational markers add new dimensions to football fandom which will be unpacked and critically analysed in this chapter.

The research draws on the online and offline experiences of sixteen female football fans. The empirical data was gathered by way of online interviews and participant observations of online forums. The research cuts across the important boundaries of public and private, and masculinity and femininity, in the context of everyday life and sport.

This chapter, therefore, has a number of aims. First, it seeks to explore the experiences and narratives of female football fans from their early histories to present day technologically mediated relationships with their football club. Second, this chapter seeks to critically analyse how female football fans negotiate their identities as fans in a technologically gendered space. And finally, third, this chapter shows how that identity is constructed, maintained and mediated by information and communication technologies (ICTs) in online environments.

To achieve the above aims, it is first necessary to briefly examine the institution of sport and gender in general, and football and women in particular, to identify the ways in which it has come to espouse a masculine identity. Once the context of sport, football and the position of females within has been established, a theoretical framework is synthesised using Butler's work (1990, 1993, 2004) on the body and gender and Goffman's work (1959) on the presentation of self in everyday life. The value of this theoretical synthesis lies in a critique of the body as a site where gender is performed. Tied to Goffman's theatrically inspired metaphor of performance, the resultant framework will critically inform the concept of performativity, the fluidity of identity, the absence of the corporeal body in a masculinised cultural space.

Theoretical framing and review of literature

The body, gender and performance

Judith Butler's critique of gender is fundamentally corporeally related. The body is tied to the gendered act, employed primarily to carry gendered constructions of the individual persona. Gender is not a fact and it is not a given. Instead, Butler argues that gender is a set of repetitive acts that formulate a gender construction. Crucially, there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender, but instead that identity is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its results (1999: 35). The body becomes a crucial theatre of gender performances. Gender is played out in public through gestures, movements and styles of various kinds. The performance produces the gendered self. This idea of self is sustained through corporeal signs and discursive means. Gender, then for Butler, "is not a singular act, but a repetition

and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalisation in the context of a body ... and on the surface of the body" (2007: 185).

Our gendered performances are socially constructed and produced through language, symbols and signs. The public performance of gender is an everyday ritual in which one assumes a performative role.

The metaphor of performance and theatre features prominently in the work of Erving Goffman, who wrote that people adopt particular roles when interacting publically. The public performance is built by what Goffman calls "face-work" in the presentation of self in everyday life (1959). Social data is communicated through the body and we gather such information about those we meet daily through appearances, cues, expressive gestures and status symbols. Goffman argues for the symbolic existence of front and back regions or stages. In keeping with the theatre metaphor, the front region is the public sphere of appearance employing fixed 'props' and the back region is the private sphere where the public persona is constructed.

Butler builds on her work of *Gender Trouble* (1990) by concentrating on the site of gender played out in *Bodies that Matter* (1993). Sport, in particular, is an institution where the body features most crucially. The strong, fit masculine body has been regarded as the powerful weapon in the sporting arena. Traditionally the weakened and vulnerable female body was protected and discouraged from sporting activities. This point will be discussed in more detail in the coming sections, but it is first important to mention that while sport (the physical activity) promotes the centrality of the body, the fandom aspect of sport renders the body less crucial.

When football fandom is experienced in an online environment, the body is removed from its physical state and the public structures which outwardly display gender characteristics disappear. The body as a physical entity becomes replaced by a bodiless virtual self. Referring back to Goffman (1959) to help us make sense of how the self is presented in everyday life, it is necessary to renegotiate the concepts of front stage and back stage. The back stage area becomes the realm of everyday life where gender and femininity get drawn back to the body. The front stage becomes a virtual stage where the newly constructed persona emerges and engages. The act of 'performing' online allows for new identities to be managed, modified and manipulated.

Sport and women in general

Theberge presents a critique of sport as a 'fundamentally sexist institution that is male dominated and masculine in orientation' (1981: 342). Further to this male domination of the institution, sport has also been constructed as a masculinising process (Connell 2005) where muscle, aggression, strength and skill (all tied to and embedded in the male body) are linked with competitive

achievement. Masculinity, therefore, exalted through competitive sports, is hegemonic (Connell 2005: 37).

In an edited collection by Messner and Sabo (1990), Whitson, Dunning, Crosset, Sabo and Panepinto each discuss aspects of the relation between sport and masculinity. Sabo and Panepinto (1990: 120) studied how football ritual contributes to the social reproduction of masculinity. The authors found that football ritual resembles primitive male initiation rites: 1) where man-boy relationships are formed and values and norms assigned; 2) conformity and control methods are used; 3) males are socially isolated from family and females; 4) deference to male authority and establishment of male hierarchy, and 5) pain. Dunning (1993) argues that male hegemony is strengthened by honouring such skills as fighting and physical prowess, and that male advantages are eroded when society is pacified and when the segregation of sexes breaks down. The inclusion of women into sports has come to be viewed as a challenge and threat to masculinity. Significant effort has been made to preserve the masculine 'proving' ground. Supporting Sabo's and Panepinto's position, Crosset (cited in Messner & Sabo 1990:18) draws on Foucault to argue that sport blossomed in a rational nineteenth century as a response to the challenge to and erosion of men's power and privilege over women. Sport was used by men to naturalise ideological conceptions of male sexuality as superior to female sexuality. Whitson (cited in Messner & Sabo 1990: 20) furthers this argument by discussing two claims: first, sport as a male institution in a numerical sense but also in the values and behavioural norms it promotes; second, sport and male ways of being (aggressive, competitive) help to confirm patterns of male privilege and female subordination that exist outside sport. Harris (2004: 110) argues that sport, and particularly football, is delineated as an exclusively male domain where idealised conceptualisations of hegemonic masculinity are promoted and celebrated. In his study of tabloid media representations and imagery, women were portrayed as highly sexualised accessories used to provide excitement and arousal. Women hardly featured on the male dominated back page. Kennedy (2004: 147) argues that contemporary televised football shows are intended as women-free spaces where masculinity can be performed, while Robson (2000) lists "masculine" as a key indicator of an authentic fan in his "ideal-type" taxonomic set of football fans.

Football and women in particular

It can be argued that football was born from the working class (skilled and semi-skilled). It was something that "working men did" (Russell 1999: 16). It was the people's game, a noisy partisan spectacle. Russell talks of the (working-class) male fan enjoying football as a reward for "breadwinning" and acknowledges the Victorian notion of a 'woman's place' in which boisterous public behaviour

was unsuitable for women and physical exercise as a threat to maternal health as the main factors excluding women from the game.

Lee (2008), Woodhouse and Williams (1999), Williams (2003) and Magee et al. (2007) all provide detailed histories of the origins, development and nature of women's football. Crucially, each collection testifies to the barriers and obstacles that women were forced to overcome in their desire to play, participate and achieve acceptance. Such barriers included symbolic and biological threats to femininity and motherhood.

Lee (2008) relates the fact that participation in sport was not entirely ruled out for women in Victorian times. Engaging in milder sports was deemed acceptable, but excessive vigorous sports were out of the question. Physicians were consulted to provide 'medical evidence' that such involvement in vigorous sports endangered the health of women. Lee cites a Victorian report stating that excessive exercise robbed women of other energies they needed to be women: "muscular women of the brickfields ... lose their feminine qualities, becoming unsexed by toil and drudgery, leading to callousness and a lack of modesty ... and masculine women and effeminate men – neuters – spoiled copies of the human condition." (2008: 13). Excessive exercise made women masculine, which in turn threatened the family, the basic unit of civilisation, fostering confused sexual identity that became linked to sexual depravity and prostitution (2008: 13/14). As a result, football became a male space where men affirm their masculinity and women endanger their femininity (Williams 2003).

Yet it was within this cultural context that women continued their relationship to the game of football. Coddington (1997) writes about the women lost from football history – the mothers, daughters, and girlfriends – in her book *One of the Lads* (1997). She captures their experiences as match-goers, as wives and as legitimate football fans in their own right. She highlights the role of women in football culture as *proper fans* of the game and not as scarf knitters or score keepers.

Women and football research areas

Academic research weighs heavily on the side of female players, teams and peripherals issues (such as toilets, food and whether women find the match environment too macho a kind of thing). While such studies focus on different aspects of the relationship between females and football, they nonetheless give us important insights into the complex environment of the position of women in and around football. Several significant contributions are discussed below.

For instance, Jayne Caudwell (1999) presents a study of female football players for whom the 'butch lesbian' label was a concern. In a journal article (1999), Caudwell draws on qualitative and quantitative research material to show how gender functions in the cultural arena of women's football in the

United Kingdom; this is then closely tied into the social construction of gender and its relation to the notion and label of lesbianism. While this paper concentrated mainly on female players of the game, its importance lies in how notions of sexuality slip into and merge with theories of gender. Caudwell presents a post-structuralist interpretation of a structuralist analysis of how gender is understood and constructed. The key findings of this study suggest that the “butch lesbian” identity is a concern for female players taking part in a sports defined as “male”. Heterosexual players rejected and actively resisted the butch lesbian label and found that playing football had affected their representations of their sexuality. The gay players were happy to identify as out-lesbian or bi-sexual women. Caudwell also introduces the notion of how women can experience oppression and domination – not always as a result from men and masculinity – but that this exclusion and oppression is subjective and is bound up with Foucault’s theories of sex and power. Caudwell’s paper identifies another aspect football culture – its being a *man’s* game the focus falls on masculinity and its place within the gender hierarchy – where heterosexuality naturally sits on top.

Ramon Llopis Goig (2007) highlighted the growing number of female *penas* (football supporters’ communities) in Spain. These communities of fans are formal and informal gatherings in bars, cafes and clubs. Goig describes such communities as safe havens for women, free from the masculinising environment. Female fans reported feeling at ease, and a sense of acceptance and belonging among other women in female only *penas*. The women experience football away from the condescending observations of men, free to make comments without ridicule or contempt. The women, however, are not free from the traditional roles and responsibilities that usually fall to them – childcare, household chores and duties – whereas male football fans are free from such domestic shackles.

The question of the extent to which female only *penas* serve the removal of boundaries between male and female fans needs to be posed. The fact that women are removed from the male space, excluded, isolated, and segregated on gender grounds serves no purpose other than to crystallise the differences and the masculine domain of the game and football culture. To what extent do female only *penas* serve to bridge the equality gap?

Katharine Jones’s (2008) article on female fandom is directly relevant to this chapter. This article is concerned with women’s relationship to football culture. Her key finding from her study of female match-going fans is that women sometimes downplay their gender identities to reinforce their fan identities. Using thirty-eight interviews, Jones highlights three strategies employed by women in response to sexism and homophobia at football matches; the first is that the women displayed disgust at other fans for making sexist and homophobic remarks at the game; these female fans tended to redefine fandom to exclude

abusers. The second strategy employed by some women was to downplay sexism, and the third was to embrace gender stereotypes. These female fans accepted the traditional ideas about gender within football – femininity is inconsistent with “authentic” fandom and abuse is part of the game.

This final category should be explored further. The challenge women face in order to fit into the male game is a recurring theme in the studies of female football fans. In Woodhouse’s (1991) study of female fans and Scraton’s (1990) study on violence and women, the women voiced concerns at attempts to cleanse and feminise the game and to use women as the calming influence – which might possibly further isolate women from the game. Coddington (1997) also makes reference to the impact and influence of the *Italia 90* World Cup as one of the core instigators of the feminisation of football: the iconic images of Gazza’s tears, the operatic tones of *Nessun Dorma*, the openness and aesthetically pleasing presentation of football, the transformation and sanitising of the domestic game in the wake of the Hillsborough tragedy, an emphasis on footballing family, the removal of the terraces paving the way for Dads and Lads seating areas, family tickets and all-seater stadiums, and most importantly the transformation of football of the 70s and 80s where racists and thugs brought football to its lowest depths – saw a turnaround in the early 1990s with a number of change indicators. Those included the 1990s ladette culture; the Spice Boys of Liverpool FC and Manchester United; the celebrity culture of football from the back pages to the front pages and football magazines to Hello magazine; the Sky Sports’ dramatisation of football (Americanised); ITV’s *Footballers’ Wives*; ² and Sky One’s *Dream Team*.³

Coddington (1997) and Crabbe and Brown (2004) argue that nostalgia and notions of a more masculine and authentic past have served more as exclusionary forces alongside the feminisation, sanitisation and gentrification of the game while overtly welcoming previously excluded social groups (including women) at football stadia. The introduction of more women and ethnical minorities would mean ‘other’ fans (white men aged twenty to forty) would behave ‘better’ and would exercise some sort of social control (Crabbe & Brown 2004: 34).

Research context: methods and sample

The research presented is not about the Internet and it is not about the chat rooms. Instead, it attempts to unpack the game of football and to analyse where women fit in, in online and offline environments. As was said above, football has long been understood as a masculine domain. But yet women have still engaged with the game. This research, therefore, aimed to trace how women found their way into football, their early relationships with the game and how

those relationships are currently mediated by online fan forums. Theoretically, to understand how gender influences the football relationship online, I wanted to blend Goffman's presentation of self in everyday life, and Butler's performativity and centrality of the body, to make sense of the experiences of female football fans in fan forums, as this is a technologically mediated experience. Methodologically, the approach needed to investigate a virtual experience that is very much embedded in the everyday routines and habits of women. Gaining access to women who were football fans and who engaged in football related discourse online was made easier through my own experiences as a female football fan. My own personal experience mirrored that of the women interviewed, and that facilitated gaining access to women interested in taking part in the research.

Football fan behaviour offline is different to that online. The emergence and development of message boards that permit discussion and interaction between fans has been an object of academic research.

The research object did not fit in with traditional modes of data collection (S. Jones 1999). All respondents were emailed and asked to consent to participate in the study (Mann & Stewart, 2000: 79). Owing to the gender sensitive nature of the research I opted against a general call for women to participate on football forums. Instead I chose a specific and targeted sample in which many respondents were known to the researcher and others were recruited by snowball sampling. The respondents' anonymity was assured, as was their right to withdraw their participation. Their online contributions are not part of this study but I encouraged the women to refer to instances or posts they may have made or threads they became involved with. The participants were informed about the reasons for the study and any potential uses of the information.

The interview document was sent and returned via email. Respondents were encouraged to take their time and to contact the researcher if anything was unclear. The interview document was a standardised form with different sections focusing on current and past aspects of their experience. The majority of the questions were open-ended, which allowed for elaborated responses. The advantages of such an approach was that focused and specific contextual information could be obtained with minimal effort, cost and time (Mann & Stewart 2000: 71-75).

The research sample numbered sixteen respondents. The youngest respondent was twenty-right and the oldest was fifty-five, with one respondent preferring not to state her age. The majority of the women resided in England but respondent locations ranged from Asia, Australia, United States and other European countries. Five were married, five were single, one was a widow, one was separated, two were co-habiting and two preferred not to say. While sexuality was not explicitly asked in the interview document, no respondent identified herself as homosexual.

There was excellent rapport with the respondents and all were very enthusiastic about the research topic. It did not 'require any selling at all' (Mann & Stewart 2000: 131). The interviewees felt that the subject was very close to their hearts and had no problems in responding to the questions. Some expressed their pleasure in recounting their experiences as very cathartic.

Findings and results

It is first useful to present a general overview of the sample's key characteristics.

Many members of the sample remarked upon the absence of a female football culture. Girls tended to rely on male friendship networks and siblings with whom to initially play football and to discuss football related matters. In some cases, football was very much a family thing that had remained a constant in the lives of the women. Football forums were used as a means to maintain and nurture this relationship and were seen as a complimentary activity to attending matches regularly, and an essential activity for those who did not, or could not, attend their club's matches.

The forums were used to reinforce local relationships and affinity to club – especially when they were from the locale, as the club is a clear identity marker for the city of the club. In some cases, participation in football forums helps to strengthen ties to the country, as football was seen as a very British thing as experienced by those who now live overseas. A clear sense of "belonging" and "ownership" was expressed, the women reinforcing their relationship with "my team" or "my club" as well as a sense of belonging to a "family" of fans that shared experiences of highs and lows.

Football and the construction of early relationships

The majority of the women's early relationships with football were closely defined by a significant male. In most cases this turned out to be their father, brother, or male partner:

My dad ... it was something we bonded over! ... It was something which was always there because of my dad... Both my parents used to go to games and they used to take me when I was young but my dad is the football fan. (Annak)

In this respondent's case a number of issues need to be opened up. The role of the father is key when it comes to building the initial relationship with the club. Football is seen as a family thing but the role of the father is a key shaping factor. Football is the glue that forms a bond between father and daughter.

In another example, this respondent recollects the role her father and male friends played in defining her relationship to football.

My first match was actually a reserve game at Goodison, I followed the big lads from our street and thought I was watching Liverpool cos they were playing someone in red. My dad got on the same bus on the way home, he had been to Anfield, he started taking me to games after that.

Several respondents mentioned how the violence of the 1970s and 1980s featured in their early memories of the game and how their mothers related to their identity as a football fan.

My mum was a fan when she was young but cut it out completely in the 1970s ... My mum stopped going when the racism of the 1970s was evident and she then stopped my dad from taking me to games because of both the racism and the hooliganism ... After that we moved to Leicester and the boys at school were all Leicester City fans and lots of them had older brothers or friends in what was called 'The Baby Squad' which was Leicester's firm in the 1980s. It was also associated with the NF [National Front] – as were parts of Leicester – so I didn't engage with football at school because it was racist and violent in our area. (Annak)

She didn't mind at all though she used to worry about me going to Old Trafford as a teenager. (NM)

The testimonies above highlight the dark days of football and the difficult position of women in relation to their continuing support for their clubs. The overt racism, violence and threatening stadiums served to deter many women from attending live matches (it should be noted that many male fans also stopped going to football when hooliganism was at its worst).

Use of the forum and forum names

The choice of forum name used to represent the women's identity (or non-identity) was a source of contention for some of the respondents.

Most people initially thought I was a bloke, and it was kinda funny seeing the reaction when they realised I wasn't. And I guess most people who don't know me would think I'm a bloke due to the fact that people tend to take it for granted that people there are blokes – old fashioned as that may seem. (BM)

People who haven't come across the username before don't have a clue whether I'm male or female. Some people have even thought I was a forty-year old bearded Muslim from Saudi Arabia. (SD)

... once in a while I may let something slip! But with topics on the football forums – nope, I doubt it's possible to deduce my gender. (BM)

In some cases the forum name was chosen purposely to suppress female identifiers:

I didn't thoroughly consider its consequences when I signed up. In retrospect, I'd rather be "neuter". With reference to my "main forum", it was some kind of sensation. I got lots of attention – but less respect at times. (KL)

After somebody recently referred to me as "she" indirectly, one poster replied to him "Jaysus! Is jannno a bird?" Poster replied he didn't know for sure but had always assumed so and put out an apology for any embarrassment he may have caused. I ignored the whole conversation ... [I] wouldn't lie directly. I avoid any questions – of which there have been half a dozen or so, and one direct "outing" attempt which I found intimidating and I didn't answer it. Nobody on the forum (except Admins) could know for a fact. (JT)

They know now but in the beginning I didn't go out of my way to tell them. (AK)

Made public when I joined. Probably a bit of MCP behaviour until they realised that I knew what i was talking about and didn't just fancy the players". (NM)

For some, posting on Internet forums as an "out" female fan was deemed problematic. The increased levels of attention they received from male posters was unwelcome and disrupted football discussions. For others, it was intentional to remain gender-free or, at best, be presumed male until the groundwork of proving one's credibility as an informed, "authentic" fan⁴ (Robson, 2000:87) was done.

Everyday life as a football fan and online engagement

The majority of the respondents felt that meeting other females fans from the forum or having access to networks of other women as fans (as support) was not a high priority for them.

The interview results show that the process of engagement for the respondents was a very individual experience. The common theme connecting the experiences was the wish to maintain local relationships (for those living in the vicinity or travelling regularly to the games), and the wish to maintain the connection to the football club through news, gossip and the club's day-to-day happenings. This experience was expressed if a soap-opera – with regular interactions required to keep abreast of their club's developments and news.

It was cheaper and healthier talking about the game I'd just been to, on Internet forums than it was staying an extra three hours in the pub. Also, you can participate in discussions any time you like and not have to shout to be heard. It seemed more civilised, sometimes. (SD)

Initially as it was a way to discuss and interact with other fans, especially as living in Manchester I knew no other hard core Liverpool fans at the time. (BM)

It is important, and since I joined the message boards, I have engaged in more discussion, learned a lot about the club and football in general, I feel closer to the club from 12,000 miles away than when I lived in England and probably took it for granted. (JT)

The engagement online was very much mediated. The respondents spoke of a cautious, even rationed, approach.

It's harder to express yourself and you have to think about the words you are using. (AM)

I guess in real life it's more spontaneous and basic! At a game it's just about getting behind the team. Online I guess it's more measured. (BM)

An online communication can be tricky (lack of mimic and gestures, etc.), and it makes you realise that there are actually 'real' people behind the keyboards. (KL)

Comments would be made online but lengthy discussions were avoided. Withdrawal and disengagement with the discussions were commonplace. The respondents were very aware of the differences between male and female communication behaviour. They were quick to point out the differences between how they and other women (that they knew of) communicated, compared to the overtly macho-hegemonic masculine style of banter, bullying and arguments. The forums were described as a virtual "school playground" where rational debate existed alongside the teasing, joking and trolling.⁵

Masculine vs feminine behaviour

Aggression, competition, abuse and insults were common features of male interactions according to the respondents. This kind of engagement was unattractive to the respondents and led to disengagement with the discussions.

The women seem to not feel the need to compete with each other like the blokes do, therefore the exchanges are more genuine. It's a constant (and often) puerile communication amongst the blokes – mostly in the non football forum, as to who can out do each other in crap jokes or generally lecherous comments, it's like being back at school there a lot of the time. But maybe that is how blokes let off steam right! (BM)

Possibly, although when one has questioned my gender, others have expressed great surprise at the idea, and a couple became more "attentive" and even a bit attention-seeking, but I could be imagining it. (JT)

We are less alpha male in our replies. I try to give a balanced view of my opinions and do not resort to swearing and throwing tantrums to get my point across! That's not a sweeping generalisation honest! (CB)

I think I tend to be less aggressive than the male posters. (SS)

The above quotes highlight how some of the respondents experience everyday engagements on the forum. An interesting observation was made by JT who noticed a shift in the behaviour of males online and how this is received by females.

I think males don't think they have to behave as well as they would if they were talking to you face to face. I'm sure that none of them would dream of saying "What's your problem love, time of the month?" in person to a woman who was getting wound up, but it happens on the forum and nothing is said. To me, that is the same as saying to someone you know to be say, Asian, "What's up, too much spice in your curry?" or similar, which would rightly be deleted and the person infractioned straight away. It can cut dead what you were contributing to the discussion and make you feel you have to justify your presence – even if said jokingly. I think a certain type of poster can take males expressing anger or irritation but not females and they will be less tolerant of it. (JT)

And she goes on to say:

I have been in discussions where it⁶ has been said to another female, but as I am trying to protect my own "identity" and because I think some suspect, I have resisted jumping in to defend them or put down the sexist. I suppose I am trying to avoid the label of "uptight woman" that some unreasonable people might express if my gender was known and I objected to sexist comments. I find myself aware of this concern and it inhibits my posting. (JT)

The above quote is critical in terms of how showing how internet football forums permit some women to remain – or at least to appear – gender-less through careful mediation of views and interactions. JT describes above how she carefully protects her offline identity and how she strives to conceal her female gender.

Threatened by hyper-femininity

One of the most interesting findings from the research dealt with the differences in relationships that exist between female fans themselves. This manifests itself in a number of ways.

At the match (waste of ticket):

But one thing that does get on my tits is when I see a girl walking to the game in her six-inch stilettos, her Armani handbag and Gucci jeans, arm in

arm with her similarly affected boyfriend, and I'm thinking "Christ, someone who actually wants to watch the game could have had your ticket." (SD)

On the forum (wannabe wag):

Sometimes you'll get a thread started by some eighteen-year old wannabe WAG, saying "Hiya, boys, I'm new here ..." and she'll get 350 replies from would-be Casanovas wanking over their keyboard. That really annoys me. Some girls treat football forums like a dating site and it's pathetic. (SD)

Knowledgeable or not:

Depends on their knowledge, if they're clueless and just want to talk about someone's hair or cute face then I would rather they stay away.(CA)

What can be summed up from the quotes above is that to be accepted as legitimate football fans, women need to conform to a generally accepted code of conduct. First, an appropriate dress code is required. Women should not wear sexually distracting clothes. Second, women should not use football for dating purposes; it is about the game and nothing else. Finally, women need to know their stuff when it comes to football. Failing these three codes undermines the hard work that other women do to be accepted.

Conclusions

Sport has always been a domain where hyper-masculinity is encouraged and celebrated; a domain where muscle, strength, aggression and skill are dominant attributes. Female exclusion, oppression and domination focused on protecting women from physical exertion, injury, violence and vulgarity at the grounds essentially re-emphasises the masculine domination of the game where women are made to fit into its constructs as defined by men.

The body, usually personified by the male body, plays host to such attributes. The body, as Butler argues, is also where gender attributes are played out and performed. When the masculine sphere of sport and the body are separated, as in football forums, female inclusion still remains problematic.

In online forums, physical visibility is no longer an issue for the women. For example in Jones's (2008) study of female football fans, her respondents were physically exposed and their identity as female was plain for all to see regardless of how they tried to "dress down" in more "appropriate" football attire. What we see in the present study is the ability to blend into the crowds (in a technological sense), to remain faceless, bodyless and genderless. For some women, the ability to mask their gender or to "perform" and adopt a neutral gender position is key to their existence as a football fan when engaged with others online. Virtual engagement provides an extra line of cover and the

ability to camouflage one's identity, and gender allows some to divest their female characteristics and remain unidentified. The ability to do this is hugely significant for some women. The women carefully mediate their gender identity through association with men and fan types, dedication to the club, conformity with the masculinised environment, non-engagement with abusive posters or gender based postings, and active withdrawal from certain topics of discussion.

Another comparison with Jones's (2008) study is the use of hegemonic masculine definitions which women considered important in order to be understood as "proper" fans. This is echoed in the present study where the women had strong ideas about who can be considered real fans. The respondents distanced themselves from displays of what Jones calls "emphasised" femininity by rejecting women "who didn't do fandom properly": who appeared dolled up and made up, who wore high heels, and who acted as a trophy girlfriend. What we see is a stressing of the contradiction between femininity and football. The women studied in this chapter identify a distinction between their own femininity and normative femininity. Hyper or extreme femininity is rejected. It is seen as a threat to their credibility as football fans. The desire to assimilate into the accepted masculine territory of the football forum demands a stifling of the characteristics of femininity (and, to a certain extent, feminism). Such conclusions are made on the basis of online interactions and engagements in football forums and not on "real-life" bodily enactments in the offline world, where things may be very different.

Several of the respondents appropriated masculine language in their online engagements in order to subtly fit in and appear, at best, gender neutral rather than female. This is managed through regulation and self-control online of their outward sexuality and gender identity markers. Online textual discourse provides a digital and virtual camouflage, in direct contrast to offline experiences. Football and online football fandom replaces the corporeal body, physical strength, muscularity, and aggression with verbal and textual discourse. The bodies that matter and the sporting muscles, aggression, speed and competitiveness is replaced online by a different set of skills. A statistical and historical knowledge of the game, rhetorical verbosity, verbal articulation and competency outrank the physicality of the game. To Butler (1990, 1993, 2004) and Goffman (1959) the outwardly physical markers of gender become less important and fade into obscurity in online domains. But the textual markers remain. However, these can be modified, as the women have shown.

Yet, despite this, there remains a reluctance to advertise, celebrate, negotiate or perform femininity. Femininity gets drawn back to the female body. Issues and notions of masculine ownership (of the game and perhaps, too, of women's bodies) is a constant obstacle to women's inclusion – not only in football but also in sport in general.

Notes

1. Masculinity, here, is understood as the popular and universal 'deep' or 'true' masculine stereotype upheld and celebrated in popular culture. The masculinity in question is that of hegemonic forms – the most honoured and desired – where muscular male sporting heroes are shining exemplars. Of course, I agree with Connell's claim that there is no one pattern of masculinity and that we should speak of multiple masculinities shaped by culture and history, separated by social relations and diversified by relations of hierarchy.
2. ITV's *Footballers' Wives* (2002-2006) was a highly sensational and sexualised television drama about the fictional Premiership club Earl's Park FC's players and their wives.
3. Sky One's *Dream Team* (1997-2007) followed the on-field and off-field trials and tribulations of fictional Harchester United.
4. Robson's ideal-type taxonomic set (2000:87) lists a number of key definers of authenticity. Among those are: loyal, long standing, working class, local, live match attender (home and away), masculine, passionate, streetwise, passionate and knowledgeable.
5. Internet trolling is slang for someone who deliberately posts inflammatory comments.
6. "What do women know about football?"

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Chapter 10

Conversing the Fans

“Coveritlive” and the Social Function of Journalism

Steen Steensen

They present themselves with nicknames such as “chealsefan”, “gerrard”, “Viking” and “Alien”. They are sixty-four football fans, who have decided to participate in a live chat hosted by the leading Norwegian online newspaper *VG Nett* during a round of Norwegian premier league football. The practice they are about to take part in is a premier example of how live coverage of sports events in online newspapers is developing into an arena where audience participation flourishes, especially in the form of chats and discussion forums boosted by applications like “CoveritLive”¹ (CiL). The utilisation of such technology potentially changes journalism from being a disseminator of source-driven and framed bits of information to a public, to an event-driven, audience-involving and thus conversational practice of mass communication (Kunelius 2001; Livingston and Bennett 2003). Such a change promotes a different social function for journalism in line with the ideas of public/civic journalism and, later, participatory/interactive journalism. Public journalism is aimed at, amongst other things, engaging citizens and (re)connecting journalism with communities (Nip 2006: 214), thus promoting a social function for journalism implying a collaborative approach to information diffusion and knowledge production within a public sphere.

As technologies like CiL diffuse in online newsrooms, ideas of audience involvement and collaborative knowledge production gain increased significance in the shaping of journalism’s social function. It is therefore important to analyse whether or not the way such technologies are socialised within the field of journalism bring about such changes. This chapter analyses one such example of event-driven and audience-involving practices of journalism: namely a *VG Nett* CiL chat that took place on 25 April 2010 during a round of Norwegian premier league football. The research question was: what characterises a live chat between a journalist and football fans in an online newspaper and what social function does this communicative space serve?

Given the conversational “nature” of the chat, the research question is investigated by utilising conversation analysis in order better to trace the social function served by the chat. The research aims at uncovering the structure of the chat, the different levels of participations, the norms and rules of interaction within the chat, and the roles played by the different participants – including the journalist, who moderates the chat. The findings will be analysed and discussed in terms of what kind of mediated, virtual community of football fans is constituted by the chat and what kind of social function this mediated community serves.

Participatory culture and the changing social function of journalism

Traditionally, the social function of journalism has been related to ideas of democracy and the formation of public opinion. As Rosenberry and St John III (2010: 1) put it: “The traditional view ... held that journalists would report, citizens would read the reports, and some form of public opinion would develop that helped to connect the will of the people with public action”. Ideas of journalism as “fourth estate” and critical “watchdog” are well embedded within this traditional social function of journalism, as is the notion of the journalist as a “gatekeeper” (White 1950) who controls the flow of information, the selection (and/or construction) of information and the framing of information. However, as journalism has become increasingly commercialised, critics argue that this traditional social function has been marginalised and replaced by a function of producing “entertainment and information that can be sold to individual consumers” (Hallin & Mancini 2004: 277). Franklin (1997) argues that instead of serving public interest, the social function of journalism has been diverted to merely interest the public.

Reflecting this development, a movement towards a more citizen-engaged journalism arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s – a type of journalism that would help newspapers to re-connect with their readers and revitalise communities. The movement was labelled “public journalism” (Glasser 1999; Rosen 2001), and it implied a re-negotiation of the power relations between journalists and their audiences. As Internet technology paved the way for a “participatory culture” (Jenkins 2006), implying increased audience participation in mass mediated communication, ideas of public journalism and the like (“civic journalism”, “participatory journalism”, “wiki-journalism” and so on) diffused in online newsrooms and society at large. The diffusion of such ideas has pushed academics to argue that boundaries between journalists and their audiences, and thus between the production and consumptions of news, are blurring, because the people “formerly known as the audience” (Rosen 2006) are becoming amateur journalists as bloggers; they comment on online news

stories, they participate in online newspaper discussion forums, they contribute with pictures and videos to online news sites. And they do so on topics that have a history of generating public engagement, such as, for instance, politics – and, of course, sport.

Consequently, Gillmor (2004) argues that news should be more like a conversation than a lecture and should utilise the “collective intelligence” (Lévy 1999) of the audience. By treating the audience as intelligent contributors of knowledge within a news discourse, journalism could tap into “an alternative source of media power” (Jenkins 2006: 4), thus letting go of its gatekeeper role and adapting to a reality where information flows everywhere, at any time, through multiple “gates”. This potentially changes the social function of journalism from being the fourth estate and a critical watchdog, forming public opinion through gatekeeping in order to boost democracy, to being a facilitator of a public sphere where knowledge is produced and reliable information disseminated through a process of public collaboration.

However, whether journalism’s societal role is in fact changing in such a direction is an empirical rather than a theoretical question. Empirical research on the degree of audience participation in online newspapers reveals that professional journalistic institutions are not revolutionised by the participatory culture (see Steensen 2011 for an overview). Domingo et al. (2008) find that audiences are not allowed to participate in the selection and filtering of news in online newspapers, thus concluding that professional journalistic institutions tend to be rather protective of their traditional roles as gatekeepers. Alternative flows of information and knowledge production do not, in other words, influence practices of professional journalism to a great extent, and the clear divide between journalists and the audience remains intact.

That said, it seems that the recent diffusion of software such as CiL might contribute to the blurring of boundaries between journalists and the audience, and thus come closer to fulfilling the predicted changed social function of journalism. CiL creates a communicative space marked by collaboration and participation, and it is therefore of interest to investigate what this communicative space looks like when it appears in online newspapers, and what social function it promotes for journalism. What roles are the journalist and the audience allowed to take in this communicative space? To what degree are interactions marked by traditional power relations between the journalist and the audience? And to what degree does the communicative space resemble a community?

Football fandom and virtual communities

The CiL chat to be analysed in this chapter represents a mediation of football fandom. To determine what kind of mediated community the chat establishes

and thereby what social function it serves, perspectives on football fandom and fan communities are important to the analysis. Virtual communities of football fans in online newspapers have emerged in line with the growing trend of participatory journalism and diffusion of software like CiL. As discussed by Hognestad in this volume, football fandom comes in multiple forms and is expressed in numerous ways across time and space. In order to determine the role of the participants in the CiL chat, Giulianotti's (2002) categorisation of four modern-day ideal types of football spectatorship (supporter, followers, fans and *flaneurs* – see Chapter 1 in this volume) will be applied. Of particular interest to the analysis is the *flaneur* ideal type, who is (in its most extreme form) detached from any specific club and the physical spaces it occupies, and “belongs only to a virtual community of strollers who window-shop around clubs” (Giulianotti 2002: 39). The *flaneur* is more likely to be engaged in football via communication technologies – he watches games on subscription television and his relationship to football is marked by what Giulianotti, building on McLuhan and Baudrillard, describes as “the cool social relations that structure the communicative processes involving the electronic media” (2002: 31).

The *flaneur's* “thin solidarity” with clubs and their spaces makes him more likely to be a participant in a chat/discussion forum on football with no affiliation to a specific club's fan base. He is more likely to be interested in football as such – the finesse of the game, individual skills, the looks and appearance of players, teams, spectators and stadiums – and does not shape a cultural and social identity as a member of a specific group of supporter. However, as Hognestad argues in Chapter 1, the boundaries between *flaneurs*, fans, supporters and followers are blurred, and the individual football spectator might present himself as any one of them, depending on the social context. In line with this argument, Stone argues that Giulianotti's description of the *flaneur* spectator is too rigid when limited to the cool and consumer oriented spectatorship. According to Stone, the ubiquity of football in our “liquid modern world” offers “almost unlimited levels of engagement which can be utilised in different ways, at different times, for different reasons” (Stone 2007: 178). It is therefore necessary to also include in this group of spectators those with a “hotter relationship” with football, argues Stone.

Even though the *flaneur*, as an ideal type, is more of an individual than a group member, it is impossible to discuss even this type of football fandom without some notion of a community shaping the spectatorship. Today, communities are no longer bound by time and space, they may have the temporary and random character of “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991; Maffesoli 1996). Such communities are formed and sustained in informal friendship networks, and characterised “by the fluidity of occasional gatherings” (Stone 2007: 180). The participants in an online newspaper's match-day chat typically form such

an imagined community. The gathering of participants is occasional and the community is extremely fluid in that it suddenly appears, only to vanish after a few hours. The question, however, remains as to what further characterises such a community of football spectatorship. Are social bonds formed, and do the participants engage in interactions common in similar, non-virtual communities, like the random gathering of spectators in football pubs?

Conversation analysis

To answer such questions and the question of the potentially changing social function of journalism they relate to, this chapter will utilise the methodology of conversation analysis (CA). CA is a qualitative methodology rooted in discourse analysis and speech act theory, implying an understanding of language as linguistic action rather than linguistic form (Austin 1975). The subject of CA is to analyse interactions in social context; turns at talk in conversation, how for instance agreements and disagreements are articulated, how the opening and closing of conversations unfold, and how conversations are organised (Mazur 2004: 1077). Even though CA has not, to my knowledge, been used to analyse interactions between journalists and the audience in online newspapers, it is a core argument of this chapter that this methodology provides a suitable framework and analytical tool with which to understand the implications of the participatory turn in online journalism.

CA was initially utilised to analyse transcripts of telephone calls, but has also been widely used to analyse (transcripts of) face-to-face interactions. Such analysis is based on the notion that “talk is seen as organised and orderly” (Liddicoat 2007: 9), and the subject of CA has therefore been to understand how such order is established in interactions. Crucial to such an analysis is the notion of “recipient design” (op.cit.: 6) – conversational contributions are designed with a recipient in mind – and the understanding of talk as “context-shaped”. Every turn at talk in an interaction is shaped by the context in which it occurs, and the context is renewed as each new fragment of talk “constrains and affects what follows and influences how further talk will be heard and understood” (Mazur 2004: 1077).

Within this classical tradition of CA, the unit of analysis is the *turn construction unit* (TCU) – a potentially complete unit of talk. A TCU may consist of a single word (“yes”, “no”, “hm?”), a full or incomplete period, or several consecutive periods (as is the case in story-telling). At the end of a TCU, speaker change may occur. The order of speaker change, or the system of turn-taking in conversations, is constrained by two techniques of *turn allocation*, according to Sacks et al. (1974): turn allocation may occur as either a “current speaker selects next” technique, or as a “next speaker may self-select” technique. How-

ever, if the current speaker in a conversation uses a “select next” technique and someone else self-selects as the next speaker, it is regarded as an “accountable action” which is “misplaced in this context” (Liddicoat, 2007: 67).

In group conversations it is quite common for participants to be ruled out and for turns at talk to be concentrated among only a few members of the group. Consequently, such conversations may split into several parallel conversations with their unique turn-taking system (Liddicoat 2007: 72). Furthermore, a conversation is normally also divided into clusters of turns at talk, or conversation sequences, where the relationship between turns at talk is coherent and orderly. Such sequences are often organised in what Schegloff has labelled *adjacency pairs* (like greetings and questions and answers). The first part of an adjacency pair (for example, “How are you?”) is labelled *first pair part* (FPP), the second (“I’m fine, thanks”), *second pair part* (SPP). In addition, adjacency pairs have a “normative force” in the organisation of conversation, implying that they set up “expectations about how talk will proceed and if these are not met then the talk is seen as being problematic” (Herritage 1984, cited in Liddicoat 2007: 107). Analysing the occurrences of conversation sequences and adjacency pairs might therefore be a way of determining the coherence and thus meaningfulness of the conversation, which in turn relates to its social function.

Problems in conversation related to accountable actions concerning turn allocation, or failed expectations established by the lack of an appropriate SPP to a FPP, may be fixed by different conversation repair strategies. A turn at talk seeking to fix such problems is, in classical CA, referred to as a *repair turn*.

Conversation analysis and online talk

CA has been applied to the analysis of some forms of online talk, especially related to e-learning and online chats between teachers and students. In an overview of CA research related to such a digital speech exchange system, Mazur argues that:

The chat window and the distance between client and server machines affect turn-taking and the sequential organisation of the on-line “typed” talk. These characteristics of the talk-in-interaction relate to the affordances of the technologies used and these affordances need to be considered as part of the context of the conversation. (2004: 1081)

Technology is, in other words, crucial as context for online communication, and as such it plays a significant part in the shaping of the communication. Hutchby (2001: 183-184) has identified four ways in which technology shapes online chat in a different way from spoken communication:

1. Participants can take a turn only by entering text in the text line box and pressing the enter key.
2. There is a temporal lag. The “turn” reaches others only when the sent message is accepted and distributed by the remote server.
3. The lag described in two results in disjointed sequential relationships between when talk is produced and when it is “enunciated” or displayed on the public talk space.
4. While all of the above is happening, the conversation is conducted in a scrolling window on the shared public space. Depending on the volume of traffic to the server, prior contributions tied to a specific response or turn may scroll off the screen by the time it reaches the public display.

All these four points are relevant for interactions in a CiL chat, and they illustrate the difficulties in tracing conversation sequences and thus coherence of turns in such a group conversation. It would, however, be a mistake to simply regard online chat as incoherent because of the disjointed sequential relationship between turns. Herring (1996) demonstrated as early as in the mid-1990s that participants in online chats develop conventions in order to overcome these conversational problems. One such convention is cross-references, or what Werry has labelled *addressivity* – for example, starting a turn with the user-name of the intended recipient (cited in Mazur 2004: 1094).

In spite of the visibility of such conventions for the researcher, it is a time-consuming task to analyse the coherence of live and synchronous online chats involving multiple participants, such as a CiL session in an online newspaper. The case to be analysed in this chapter is a CiL session that lasted two hours and thirteen minutes and included 283 turns at talk, or postings, from as many as sixty-four participants. The whole CiL-session was copied and imported for analysis into an Excel-file. The unit of analysis is the single posting, which is treated as a turn at talk. Each turn was attributed to the user-name of the “speaker” and the time of the posting. I have read all the turns over and over again in order to determine, for each and every one of them:

1. Whether it belongs to a conversation;
2. Whether it is part of a cluster of turns;
3. What the intention of the turn is (to *initiate* a conversation, to *agree/disagree* with a previous turn, to *follow up* on a conversation, to *repair* an accountable action or to *close* a conversation, or if the turn must be regarded as a *misplaced* turn (that is, it does not relate to a cluster of turns and it does not intend to initiate a new conversation);
4. If there are any turn allocation techniques involved (select next or self-select);

5. Whether the turn is part of an adjacency pair, and if so, if it is a FPP or a SPP;
6. Whether there are any conventions (such as addressivity and post-turn actions) involved to overcome the conversational problems caused by the technological affordances.

The aim of this analysis is to determine the coherence and thus meaningfulness of the group conversation; to find out who is talking to whom in what way; and how power is distributed among participants. This analysis is therefore suited to pinpointing the characteristics of the temporal and fluid community that emerges within the chat, and thereby its social function.

In addition to the CA, the analysis also draws upon content analysis (Krippendorff 2004) of the chat in order to determine what the football fans who participate in the chat present themselves as (*flaneurs* or something else?); the topic of each conversation found; and the dominant discourse mode of each turn (expressive, explorative, instructive, argumentative or descriptive), which is vital to gain insight into the overall purpose and function of the communication.

In order to gain more insight into the discursive practice, of which the CiL session is part, I was allowed to be present at the sports desk of the online newsroom of *VG Nett* on the evening the CiL session took place. I have also conducted a qualitative, semi-structured interview with the journalist hosting the session, in order to learn more about his intentions and experiences with such forms of communication, and to examine how he perceives his role as a journalist in such interactions.

Characteristics of the CiL session

The analysed CiL session took place on Sunday 25 April 2010 between 17:39 and 19:52. During the session, a round of six Norwegian premier league football games was played out, and the CiL session was part of *VG Nett*'s live coverage of these games. In addition, a couple of English premier league games were played out that afternoon, and the journalists also covered these games.

VG Nett is the largest online newspaper in Norway, and their live service² is the most popular of all such services in the country. Included in this live service is, *inter alia*, a minute-by-minute coverage of each and every game; video clips of major events of each game published within minutes of the event taking place (available only to subscribers); constantly updated statistics and tables on teams, players, games and standings in the two top divisions of Norwegian (male) football and the English premier league; links to discussion forums; and an integrated CiL chat hosted by one of the newspaper's most heavily profiled football journalists (see Figure 1).

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The journalist hosting the CiL session explains the intention behind it like this:

The idea was ... that we had to involve the readers and engage them even more, and this is probably a good offer for them. I do not write to promote myself; I write for them to have ... a cool experience when they follow games live. That's the point.³

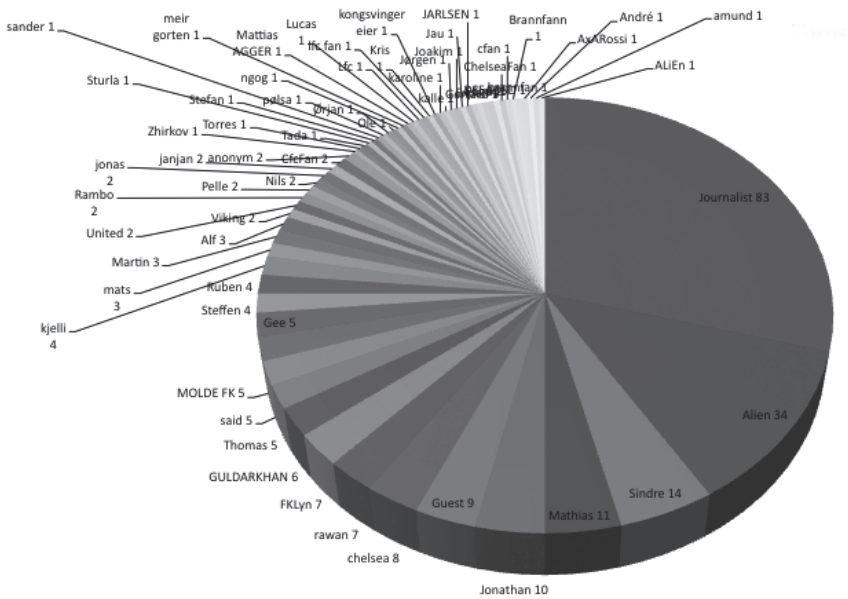
Even though all CiL postings written by members of the audience must be approved by the journalist before they are published, he says he publishes everything except questions to him regarding his religious beliefs, and posts he describes as “pure idiocy”, which he exemplifies with a post that typically reads “fucking cock”.⁴

During the two-hour, thirteen-minute session, the sixty-four participants (including the journalist) produced 283 postings with an average length of 14,2 words. Each turn at talk is, in other words, rather short, often consisting of only one or two periods. Some participants use pseudonyms (such as “chelseafan” or “gerrard”) as user-names, others use common Norwegian first names, which might be their real names – there is no way of knowing for sure. Deciding the age, race and sex of the participants is therefore impossible, but all but one of those who use common first names as their user -names, use male names, which indicates that the majority of participants are male.

An interesting feature of the CiL session is that more than half of the participants, thirty-six, take only one turn at talk during the whole session. The majority of participants are, in other words, rather passive. Based on the standard deviant, we may define an active participant as one who takes six or more turns at talk during the session. Only nine participants (in addition to the journalist) can be regarded as actively taking part in conversations. Two participants stand out as much more active than the average: the journalist contributes with eighty-three turns at talk (twenty-nine per cent of all turns), and one of the readers contributes with thirty-four turns at talk (twelve per cent). The journalist is, in other words, by far the most active participant. Disregarding these two contributors and the thirty-six participants who take only one turn at talk (the outliers), the other twenty-eight participants contribute on average 4,9 turns at talk to the chat (see Figure 2).

The journalist also writes the most extensive postings, with an average word length of 19,4. The other participants' turns at talk are on average thirteen words long. The longest posting comprises fifty-one words (written by the journalist); the shortest only one character.

The nature of audience participation in this chat can therefore be characterised as rather detached and cautious, since the majority participate only a few times, with short turns at talk. Such detached participation is a characteristic of the *flaneur* spectator. Moreover, the majority of participants, thirty-eight, express no strong solidarity with a specific club, which is typical of the *flaneur*'s

Figure 2. Turns at talk per participant in the CiL session on VG Nett 25 April 2010

“cool” relationship to football. Nine of the participants express sympathies for more than one team during the chat, thus mimicking the window-shopping mentality towards club support by which the *flaneur* is marked. However, the chat also includes participants with strong bonds to single clubs. Twenty-five of the participants stick to writing comments on their favourite team alone, thus expressing a “hotter” relationship to that club. Two participants express characteristics which are more common among what Giulianotti (2002) labels *the supporters* in that in their posts they are preoccupied by the atmosphere at the stadium and brag about how many times they have been there.

Conversation analysis of the CiL session

In order to pinpoint what is a conversation or not in the CiL session, I employ the following criteria: a) someone must initiate a conversation in a turn at talk that has a recipient design relevant to the context; b) consecutive turns at talk that relate thematically to this initiation belong to the same conversation.

Guided by these criteria, I was able to identify thirty-eight different conversations containing two or more turns at talk, and six attempts at establishing conversations that were not followed up in consecutive turns (these six are included in the analysis, since attempts at conversations that fail are as interesting for the analysis as “successful” conversations). The topics of these conversations fall in two large groups. Twenty-two of the conversations are related

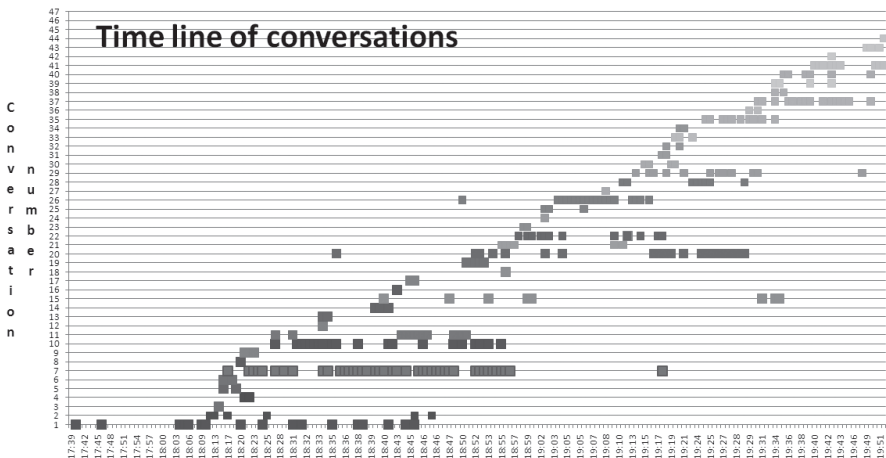
to Norwegian football, out of which seventeen are related to the Norwegian premier league and the on-going round of Norwegian premier league games. However, as many as fourteen of the conversations are related to English football and out of these fourteen, eleven conversations are related to Liverpool, Manchester United and/or Chelsea. Furthermore, these conversations about English football are generally longer and involve more participants than the conversations about Norwegian football. Altogether, they comprise 138 turns at talk and they have on average 4,6 participants. The twenty-two conversations on Norwegian football, on the other hand, comprise 108 turns at talk and involve on average 2,9 participants. In other words, it seems as if the audience is more engaged in English than in Norwegian football.⁵

A “messy” discourse

The majority of all conversations are marked by disjointed sequential relationships. The different conversations are woven together, and what in ordinary spoken conversations would have been tightly joined adjacency pairs are, in these conversations, split up by intervening turns at talk belonging to other conversations.

As is visible in the conversation time-line in Figure 3, all conversations are interrupted by other conversations, resulting in a seemingly chaotic choir of several conversations. Conversation number eleven in Figure 3, for instance is initiated by turn number thirty-four in the whole chat and ends with turn number 107. This conversation comprises thirteen turns at talk that are mixed in-between fifty-eight other turns that belong to thirteen different conversations.

Figure 3. Conversation time line of the CIL chat, VG Nett 25 April 2010. The chart is not completely accurate, since several posts occur within the same minute



This disjointed nature of the conversations is a potential threat to the coherence and meaningfulness of the chat as a whole, as it makes it difficult to follow single conversations. The journalist is, however, well aware of this problem:

[I] try not to make it too messy ... but maybe I approve too much, because it can become like ... if I pose a question to the readers, and then they suddenly write ten posts on something else, and the reply comes as number eleven, you know, then it becomes very messy. But... that's the way it looks, so there is not much to do about it. I want everyone to be allowed to participate, it is important that people contribute over and over.⁶

The journalist suggests that he may overcome the lack of coherence (due to the disjointed nature of the conversations) by approving fewer posts, but this compromises another important value, namely the democratic ideal of letting everyone participate. In other words, coherence is sacrificed at the altar of democracy.

On average, each conversation comprises 6,4 turns at talk involving 3,4 participants. There is however a strong correlation (0,94) between number of participants and length of conversations, implying that the longer a conversation becomes, the more people who will join in. The chat is therefore not dominated by long, one-to-one conversations.

One conversation, number seven in Figure 3 above, is much longer than any of the others (forty-five turns at talk involving sixteen participants), and the median value of conversation length (3,0 turns at talk) and participants in a conversation (2,0) is therefore a more accurate description of the typical conversation. One such typical conversation is what appears in Figure 3 as conversation number fourteen, which consists of the following three turns:

18:38 "Martin": How, in fact, was the Liverpool game? Was it as the result suggests? Didn't catch the game, unfortunately.

18:40 The journalist: Hi Martin. No, Burnley impressed me at least and created plenty. 0-1 was a big blow since Gerrard's shot deflected off a centre half. 0-2 was world class from Gerrard. 4-0 does not reflect the play of the game, but after the first goal it became difficult for Burnley to retaliate.

(Four intervening posts)

18:40 "Alien": Neither did I. I know that Gerrard scored two goals and Maxi one and Babel one.

Extract from Chat One, Conversation Fourteen. This conversation relates thematically to the English premier league game Burnley-Liverpool, which was played earlier the same day. The game ended 0-4. (Translation by author.)

“Martin’s” initial turn in Conversation Fourteen consists of two questions and one comment – three periods in all. Each of these three periods is a single TCU, which, if they were part of a spoken conversation, would have marked a transition point where next speakers might have taken a turn at talk. In a chat, however, there are no possibilities for other participants to take turns at talk at such transition points within turns, and TCUs therefore play an insignificant role as markers of potential speaker change. This is a vital difference between spoken conversations and chat, since a turn becomes part of a conversation only when it is published, regardless of any TCUs within the turn.

Lack of pre-sequences and *the rule of efficiency*

The insignificance of TCUs becomes even more evident in the second turn in conversation fourteen written by the journalist. He starts the turn with a TCU (“Hi Martin”), which in spoken conversation is known as a part of a “generic pre-sequence” (Liddicoat 2007: 127). The aim of such pre-sequences in spoken conversations is to establish contact and make sure there is a recipient available for conversation. Such pre-sequences in spoken conversation therefore take the form of an adjacency pair, where a FPP (“Hi Martin”) is followed up with a SPP (typically “Hi [name of recipient]”), before the conversation proceeds. If no such follow-up SPP occurs, then the conversation is likely to be compromised. In a chat, however, no such SPPs are required, and pre-sequences are quite uncommon. In fact, those who try to initiate a conversation with a generic pre-sequence FPP turn do not succeed, as is shown in the following sequence of turns:

- 19:02 “Sander”: hi
- 19:02 “Mathias”: New poll? Most people think Jan Jønsson. More than
50 per cent! Impressive!
- 19:03 The journalist: [New poll] Who will become the PL top goal scorer?

Extract from Chat Two: unsuccessful attempt at conversation with the use of a generic pre-sequence FPP. (Turn number two from “Mathias” refers to a previous poll on who is most likely to become the new coach of the Norwegian premier league club Rosenborg.)

“Sander’s” generic pre-sequence FPP turn (“hi”) does not receive a reply, and his attempt at conversation thus fails. Instead, the journalist chooses to follow up on “Mathias’s” concrete request for a new poll, which allows the journalist to reply in a single turn, while it would require him to write a SPP turn, followed up by a new turn by “Sander” and then a new turn by the journalist, if he was to interact with “Sander” in a meaningful conversation. The turn-taking

system of the chat is, in other words, marked by a *rule of efficiency*. If a turn is not an immediate contribution that pushes a conversation forward, it is likely to be ignored. This deprives the chat of what in spoken conversations might be interpreted as a discourse of politeness, since pre-sequences often function as polite requests. It seems that such a discourse of politeness is considered a waste of time in the chat. It is not part of the conventions for such interactions. “Sander” is probably a newcomer to the CiL chat, and he does not possess the (tacit) knowledge of these conventions. Alas, his short attempt at participation is the only contribution he makes to the chat.

Turn allocation techniques and the *rule of preferred recipient*

Conversation Fourteen (see *Extract from Chat One* above) is initiated by a participant in the form of two direct questions (“How, in fact, was the Liverpool game? Was it as the result suggests? Didn’t catch the game, unfortunately”), which form a potential FPP-turn of an adjacency pair. This initial FPP turn does not have an explicit recipient (and no pre-sequence turns have established a recipient). So anyone may self-select to give “Martin” a reply. The one who self-selects is the journalist, and he does so immediately (there are no intervening turns at talk belonging to other conversations in between the initial turn and the journalist’s reply). This is a common feature of the chat. The journalist immediately self-selects to answer all questions posted by readers, whether or not he is selected as next speaker by the one posting the question. In line with the increased emphasis on opinion and evaluation in sports journalism found by Roksvold in Chapter 4, the journalist moderating the chat assumes the role of an expert, and the audience treats him like an expert.

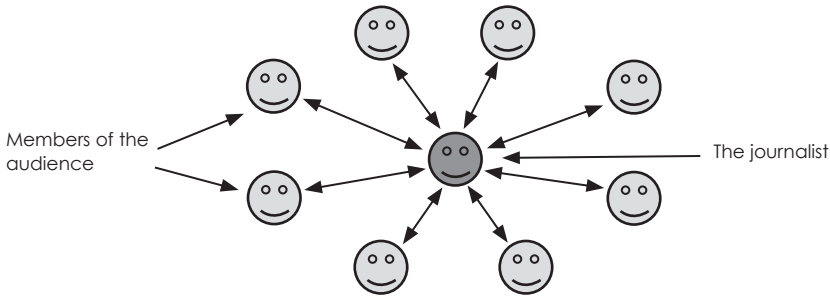
It seems as if the participants have the journalist in mind as the selected next speaker even if this is not explicitly articulated in their turns. Almost all conversations are structured in a similar fashion: initiated by an explorative turn (mostly questions) either by the journalist or by a member of the audience, in which case the journalist is the intended recipient (whether or not it is explicitly articulated). This is therefore another convention of the chat, which might be formulated as the *rule of preferred recipient*. The audience clearly prefers the journalist to give them replies, rather than other members of the audience, even though they do not explicitly determine that the journalist will be the next speaker. Many turns do, however, indirectly assign the journalist as recipient and next speaker by using the personal pronoun “you”, which in theory could relate to any participant, but which, given the rule of preferred recipient, is clearly related to the journalist. However, only twenty-five per cent of all turns in the chat allocate a next speaker, either explicitly (by using the user name of the intended recipient) or indirectly (by

using “you”). Without the *rule of preferred recipient*, the chat would therefore have been even messier and deprived of a functioning turn-taking system. This rule establishes the convention that *if no next speaker is assigned in a turn written by a member of the audience, the journalist/moderator is the preferred next speaker*.

Since this rule applies only to turns at talk by members of the audience (and not to turns at talk by the journalist), the journalist depends much more heavily on the use of turn allocation techniques. This is reflected by the fact that he explicitly allocates a recipient in forty-three per cent of his turns – a much higher percentage than for the other participants (twenty per cent). Such turn allocations from the journalist occur as seen in the second turn in Conversation Fourteen (see *Extract from Chat One* above), where the journalist starts his turn with the TCU “Hi Martin”. This looks similar to a generic pre-sequence in spoken conversations, but the function of this TCU is not primarily to politely establish contact with a recipient – it is to address a specific recipient, the technique described above as *addressivity*, which in previous research is found to be a common convention of online talk. Furthermore, when the journalist makes use of such a turn allocation technique, it is in responses to questions or comments from members of the audience. The coherence of the conversations is thereby strengthened, since the technique constructs explicit adjacency pairs, as seen in conversation 14 (see *Extract from Chat One* above), where “Martin’s” turn form an FPP of an adjacency pair with the journalist’s turn as the follow-up SPP. The third and last turn in this conversation (“Alien”: “Neither did I. I know that Gerrard scored two goals and Maxi one and Babel one.”) does also form an adjacency pair with “Martin’s” initial FPP, but the coherence between these two turns is much weaker because of the lack of addressivity in “Alien’s” turn. Note also that the coherence is even more weakened owing to the four intervening posts of different conversations that “split” the pair.

One other aspect of addressivity as a turn allocation technique is of interest: all but one of the turns where this technique is used, have the journalist as either sender or intended recipient. In other words, there is only one occurrence in the whole chat where one member of the audience addresses another member of the audience. As illustrated in Figure 4, the journalist, as the only participant in the chat, is involved in all conversations. He is the one that the others would like to talk to – they are not interested in talking to each other. The power of speech is thereby centralised and only to a minimal extent is it distributed among the audience.

Figure 4. An illustration of power distribution in the CiL session on VG Nett, 25 April 2010



The rule of multiple SPPs and delayed recontextualisation

The centralised power structure of the chat's turn-taking system, as illustrated in Figure 4 above, is also reflected in how adjacency pairs are constructed in the conversations. The following extract from Conversation Ten (see the conversation map in Figure 3 above) illustrates how such pairs normally are constructed in the chat.

18:27 The journalist: The United fans are happy that Liverpool won today and still has fourth position within reach, it will be a very exciting match against Chelsea. If they didn't have anything to play for, do you think Liverpool could lose on purpose to Chelsea, just to spoil things for United?

[Five intervening turns]

18:31 "Kris": Liverpool is not a team that bail out, they will fight to the bitter end to win fourth position!

18:32 "United": I doubt Liverpool would lose to Chelsea on purpose, they have quite an important position to fight for! If they don't achieve place four I wonder what's gonna happen with Torres and Benitez among others!

18:32 "DFEADSD": Doubt that Liverpool would lie down and lose, no teams are like that in premier league, in addition would the fans go crazy if they chicken out?

18:32 "Chelsea": It will be a tough game against Liverpool in the end. but believe that Chelsea wins :)

18:32 "ChelseaFan": As long as Chelsea wins I don't care what Liverpool does.

18:32 "Sturla": Yes, they would have played worse on purpose.

Extract from Chat Three. These turns are part of Conversation Ten in the analysed chat. The first turn by the journalist is a FPP turn of an adjacency pair, while the following turns all are different SPP turns responding to the initial FPP turn. (Translated by author.)

As the *Extract from Chat Three* shows, this sequence of Conversation Ten is initiated by a question the journalist poses to the readers. Six readers respond to this question, and each and every one of these responses qualifies as a SPP turn to the journalist's FPP. Each of the responses therefore forms an individual, coherent adjacency pair with the journalist's FPP. This is a type of conversation sequence that is not unique to online interactions; it is also found in spoken interactions. Think of, for instance, a classroom situation where a teacher poses a question to the students without allocating a specific next speaker. Several students may then raise their hands and have turns at talk that function as SPPs to the teachers FPP. But in such a situation, the context is changed each time a student replies with an SPP, and the next speaker might therefore adjust his or her turn to the previous speaker's turn and the conversation is therefore more likely to construct new, sub-adjacency pairs in which the students interact as much with each other as with the teacher. What is different in the chat is that the readers probably write their SPP responses more or less simultaneously, thus talking turns at talk without any knowledge of a changed context. A conversation like the chat is therefore more likely to consist of multiple SPPs to a single FPP, as is seen *Extract from Chat Three* above. This feature of the chat might be articulated as the *rule of multiple SPPs and delayed recontextualisation*.

The role of the journalist

In the final part of this analysis, I will take a closer look at the role of the journalist. So far, the analysis has revealed that the journalist takes the role of an expert, and that he is recognised as such by the readers. He controls the conversation and is empowered in the turn-taking system, and not only because he moderates the chat. He is the prime initiator of conversations (eleven of the conversations are initiated by him), and he is the preferred recipient of reader-initiated conversations.

But how does he write his posts? What norms does he follow, what best characterises the discourse mode of his turns at talk? The most common discourse mode he uses (in forty-three per cent of his posts) is argumentative, implying that it is important to him to state his opinion. He thus takes the role of the commentator more than the role of the neutral reporter, which he normally takes in his "ordinary" sports reporting. However, he is not quite comfortable with this role as commentator

What bugs me the most with the chat, ... is that ... all stories in *VG* and *VG Nett* are extremely dependent upon front page visibility. This means that I have to produce typically tabloid opinions, or else the chat won't be given any attention on the front-page, you know. I think it's *wrong*. I have to sit and produce opinions *and* let [the front page editor] know that now I have made a really tabloid-type statement. It's a difficult thing, you know.

Being a highly profiled sports journalist for both *VG* and *VG Nett*, the journalist has a position that allows him to be opinionated. Furthermore, his position makes it attractive for the front page editor to pay attention to his opinions, if they are "tabloid" (controversial) enough. He feels an obligation to produce such opinions, even though he doesn't want to, in order to attract an audience to the chat. This gives him an unintended role as a provoker of debate.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to analyse some implications of the participatory culture for journalism's social function, and to what degree a match-day CoveritLive (CiL) chat in an online newspaper functions as a community of football fans. The analysis of the CiL session reveals that it produces a rather "messy" discourse, with many simultaneously on-going conversations. An ideal of democratic participation prevails over coherence of conversation. However, reducing the noise caused by the disjointed nature of the conversation's turn-taking system reveals conversations that establish coherence by utilising a set of rules; *the rule of efficiency*; *the rule of preferred recipient*; and *the rule of multiple Second Pair Parts (SPPs) and delayed recontextualisation*. These rules allow for coherent conversations if participants adhere to the conventions they establish. As a consequence, the chat is dominated by a powerful moderator – the journalist – who takes the slightly unwanted role of an opinionated expert with whom the participants prefer to talk. There is a touch of irony hidden in this consequence, as the ideal of democratic participation that initially created the "messiness" of the discourse, and thus made it important to establish the rules of the turn-taking system, thereby results in a highly undemocratic distribution of power. The journalist is in control – he is the undisputed king of conversations, the gatekeeper.

How does this relate to interactions in non-virtual football fans' communities? If we picture a group of fans watching a football game from the stand, or on television in a pub, or in a private home, there are both similarities and differences. A centralisation of power in the actions of one person to such a degree as is the case in the chat would be unlikely, even though powerful leadership and uneven distribution of speech power is not uncommon in such

face-to-face group interactions. The kind of “imagined community” the chat establishes is, however, in a way quite similar to the communities that are shaped in urban football pubs during match-days. In such temporal, fluid and occasional communities, it is not unheard of to interact with strangers without any initial pre-sequences belonging to a discourse of politeness (like “hi”, or “may I ask you a question?”), as was also the case in the CiL chat. Furthermore, the way the participants in the CiL chat present themselves in the mediated community bear many similarities to what Giulianotti (2002) labels the *flaneur* spectator. The majority of them express a “cool” relationship to football marked by thin solidarity to clubs. However, the community allows for multiple types of spectators to participate, as more traditional supporters with an expressed “hot” relationship to clubs were also found.

The CiL chat analysed in this chapter does therefore come close to form a mediated community of football fans that are quite similar to other informal football fans’ communities, with the exception of the uneven distribution of speech power, although the power hierarchy established by the participants does reflect an important insight into the nature of the participatory turn in journalism. As discussed by Domingo et al. (2008), journalists (and editors) are reluctant to give up their power of speech, and thus their hegemony as gatekeepers, when they encourage audience participation. When audience participation is allowed to enter into the production of content that is close to core editorial activities, the editorial staff maintains control. The analysis provided in this chapter does, however, support a view that members of the audience who participate in such activities *also* prefer the editorial staff to be in control.

This is an important finding, considering to what degree such a practice promotes a changed social function for journalism. Undoubtedly, the practice relies heavily on audience engagement and constructs a community depended upon this engagement, thus tapping into the prophesised social function of public journalism. However, the power relations between the journalist and the audience is the one of the “old regime”, where the journalist functions as the one who selects and partly also frames the information to be dismantled. The rules of interaction are greatly depended upon the journalist, thus minimising the influence of other participants. The fact that the audience prefers it to be so might suggest that audiences are comfortable with the traditional role of journalists as gatekeepers.

There is one last point which has not yet been considered in the analysis. There were only sixty-four participants in the chat, out of which the majority were rather passive. Lacking from this description is the role of what Burnett (2000) has called non-interactive behaviour – participants who are not contributing with talk. Given the popularity of *VG Nett*’s live coverage of football matches (the most popular online service for live sport in Norway), this type of behaviour is by far the most common to all who take part in the

CiL chat. The CiL chat in *VG Nett* thereby attracts two sets of audiences: the passive, non-interactive audience (the majority) and the active, contributing audience (the minority). Given the insignificance, in quantitative terms, of the latter group compared to the former, it would be a mistake to argue that such a practice fundamentally changes the social function of journalism. A more plausible conclusion would be that by integrating such practices in its overall news coverage, online journalism opens up to the simultaneous co-existence of multiple social functions suited to attract different audiences.

Notes

1. Launched in 2007, CiL provides online newspapers (and other online publishers) with an interface that allows for easy and immediate integration of journalistic reporting with user-generated content (UGC) in the form of a live conversation between reporters and the audience. Leading sports channels, like ESPN, were early adopters of this technology and the application has gained immense popularity especially as an integrated part of online newspapers' sports sections.
2. <http://vglive.no>
3. Interview with journalist 28 April 2010. Quote translated by author.
4. Interview with journalist 28 April 2010. Quote translated by author. In Norwegian: "jævla kuk".
5. English football has, ever since the national public broadcaster NRK in 1969 started to transmit English football every week, always been extremely popular in Norway.
6. Interview with journalist 28 April 2010.

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Chapter 11

Football Nationalism in the Blogosphere

Carew, Riise and the Frames of Common Sense

Andreas Ytterstad

*nå er det nordlys i Sør-Amerika
og det snør på Copacabana
i Stryn gror palmene inn i månen
og det regner kaffe resten av natta
og karnevalet går med
pæler*

*Now there are Northern Lights in South-America
And it snows on Copacabana
In Stryn, the palms grow into the moon,
and coffee rains for the remainder of the night,
and carnival wears
football boots*

(From the poem Brazil-Norway, Lars Saabye Christensen)

In Norway the 1990s saw the rise of the “Drillos” – the nickname for the national team – who qualified for the World Cup in 1994 and 1998. Since then, the national team has provided fewer “moments of glory” (as the national coach Åge Hareide put it) and fewer Norwegian footballers have made it within prominent international football clubs. The two main exceptions have been John Arne Riise and John Carew. Although their performance in club football has fluctuated, they have been widely considered a backbone for any renewal of the national team. But media coverage of these two David Beckham “wannabes” (Dahlén 2008) has also, repeatedly, been conflict ridden (at one gathering of the national team, Carew even gave Riise a violent beating). Compared to Ole Gunnar Solskjær, for instance, they carry the Norwegian flag in untraditional and controversial ways.

This chapter explores the representation of Carew and Riise in the Norwegian blogosphere to see how the boundaries of the national “we” (Kösebalaban 2004) have been drawn and redrawn, with the ups and (mostly) downs of Norwe-

gian football over the last two years or so. It does so from the perspective of Gramscian theory. The two key concepts to be employed are hegemony and common sense. Following the general methodological approach suggested by Charles Lewis, the (changing) hegemony of Norwegian football nationalism will be tracked and empirically grounded in the common sense of bloggers (Lewis 1992). Data has been compiled from two separate sources: 1) An advanced Google search on Norwegian blogs mentioning the names of Carew and/or Riise; and 2) A search on football blogs on TV2, the main commercial Television channel in Norway (with the highest volume of TV football rights in the country). Both sets of data highlight the interrelationship between conventional media and blogs, but the analytical focus and the concluding discussion will be concerned with what bloggers on Riise, Carew and Norwegian football nationalism seem to take for granted.

Several scholars on Antonio Gramsci have summed up his entire philosophical enterprise as a *critique of common sense* (Nemeth 1980; Femia 1981; Robinson 2005). These scholars have criticised the conservative dimensions of what ordinary people take for granted. Nevertheless, in my own previous work (Ytterstad 2004, 2008a, 2009, 2010) I have placed emphasis on what Gramsci called “the healthy nucleus” that exists in ‘common sense’, the part of it which may be called “‘good sense’ and which deserves to be made more unitary and coherent” (Gramsci 1998: 328). Elements of such good sense which I have found in blogs on climate change (Ytterstad 2008a) can account for oppositional and radical tendencies among ordinary people. But does a healthy core exist within common sense when the topic is football nationalism? Is there any room at all for opposition when “our boys” are playing? Peter Dahlgren explains the lack of interest in sports by the cultural studies tradition (a tradition very much inspired by Gramsci), by noting a suspicion they share: that sports do not contain symbolic resistance to state power and market forces (2008: 23-24).

I want to admit straight away that I share this suspicion, although I am open to the idea of blog resistance put forward by Gert Lovink (2007). My conclusion will discuss to what extent radical good sense co-exists with conservative common sense in the blogosphere. But as an illustration of my own hermeneutics of suspicion (Bruhn Jensen 2002: 22), and as a preamble to what follows, I will share an anecdote from the heyday of the Drillos.

Every Midsummer Night, a motley gathering of International Socialists and their families meet in the garden of a friend of mine in Oslo for a barbecue and for drinks. That night in 1998, when Norway won 2-1 over Brazil, I had – together with a few other comrades in heresy – to sneak a peek at the television set inside the house. A couple of hours later I went into the city of Oslo, to the old working class (now middle class) area of Grünerløkka. There and then, joy was classless. The jubilation of the regular beer lovers in what was then still a brown pub (Café 33) made a huge impression on me; life was genuine

happiness, even for the lumpenproletariat. Had I not been so committed a Marxist and an anti-nationalist, I would have been unable to resist the gut need to partake in patriotic celebrations. I could try to explain away jubilation as alienation, but it was me who really *felt* alienated from society that memorable night. I apparently existed completely outside of Norwegian common sense.

Nationalist media hegemony in football

I got my Marxist anti-nationalism from Chris Harman (1992), who also introduced me to some of the key theorists of nationalism like Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm. In different ways they contributed to Harman's conclusion that "nationalism is about the organisation of capitalist society" (1992). Anderson showed how the "imagined community" was once historically constructed by the petit bourgeoisie; Gellner stressed that it was the objective needs of modern industrial society that explained nationalism (not the other way around); whereas Hobsbawm pointed out that the allegiance to nationalism by ordinary people could not be taken for granted. Particularly during the First World War, and after the Russian Revolution, working class loyalties were in flux. Lenin's revolutionary defeatism, or Karl Liebknecht's "the enemy is at home" had a real resonance in the common sense of the time (cf Ytterstad 1999).

Not so anymore in contemporary media-saturated societies. In the *banal nationalism* described by Billig (1995) the role of the media is pivotal to the interweaving of the everyday reproduction of loyalties to the nation state. We have national weather forecasts, and we have sports. And in the often quoted words of Hobsbawm, "The imagined communities of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people" (Andersen 2007: 300-301). Various studies of how the national team is covered by the media (Kösebalaban 2004; O'Donnell & Blain, 1999; Tzanelli 2006) point to a conclusion I am tempted to call banal: if eleven players excel, a flourishing of nationalism ensues. That success breeds and broadens nationalism applies to sports in general. It was when South Korean athletes in the 1984 Olympics began to win gold medals that "overtly nationalist overtones became stronger than ever as Korean self-confidence and South Korean national competence was expressed" (Younghan Cho 2009: 354). Ten years later, Norwegian gold medals in the Lillehammer Olympics spurred on panegyric patriotism in the Norwegian media (Lutton 1997).

The concept of hegemony can help us to explain why football (and sport) nationalism in the media has such an impact on common sense. According to Joseph Femia (1981: 38), hegemony is characterised by a conformity which arises "from some degree of *conscious attachment* to, or *agreement* with, certain core elements of the society". As the current economic crisis illustrates,

the competition of national capitals remains one such core element. It may be difficult to demonstrate the “transformative power” of the flourishing of football nationalism in the media and in society at large during World Cup events (O'Donnell & Blain 1999: 222). But logically it seems unlikely that the national success of eleven men represents a *disadvantage* for national political leaders trying to impose wage cuts on, say, state employees. National unity on the pitch may of course be interpreted as a harmless affair, as a temporary respite from the realities of everyday economic life. But through the exercise of hegemony, national unity may also be used to tighten budgetary national belts.

The degree of conscious attachment to hegemony may even be at its strongest in sports. In his chapter on sports, media and nationalism, Peter Dahlen sees hegemony as key to understanding that the entire sporting movement (*Idrettsbevegelsen*) – as opposed to the workers' movement – is built around consensus, not conflict (2008: 426). I would suggest that when nationalist hegemony combines with a sport as popular as football, common sense becomes even more conservative than “normal”. From its radicalisation after 1917 almost until the Second World War, the labour movement in Norway did not celebrate the “national day” of 17 May but, instead, 1 May – but working class refusal to partake in what was called “the bourgeois parade” (*Borgertoget*) was not paralleled with equal strength in football. It was only in the very brief period when the Norwegian Labour Party was a member of the Comintern, and Norway played Russia, that socialist newspapers showed some ironic distance towards the national anthem, and put the national “we” into inverted commas when they reported from the matches (Andersen 2007: 418-428).

It is hard to imagine such distance to football nationalism in any Norwegian mainstream media today. The incorporation of resistance is another crucial feature of hegemony (Cox 1983 63). Rooting for “our boys” is doxic for commentators and experts alike. Most of the commentators in the Norwegian mainstream media are themselves, in fact, former players (or coaches) of the national teams. A former keeper for the national team, Frode Olsen, is the main blogger on its fortunes on TV2, telling his fellow bloggers that the one thing that is certain is that “we cannot give up”. Such intermeshing between nationalist hegemony in society at large, in football and in the media leaves little room for ironic distance. Everybody knows that Drillo is a Marxist. But to my knowledge no commentator has even noted the historic irony in the iconic television images of Drillo falling on his knees in joy after the victory in Marseilles.

In the article “You’re a Marxist, aren’t you?” Raymond Williams once vividly and personally described “the reality of hegemony”:

I learned the saturating power of the structure of feeling of a given society as much from my own mind and my own experience as from observing the lives of others. All through our lives, if we make the effort, we uncover lay-

ers of this kind of alien formation within ourselves, and deep in ourselves (Williams & Gable 1989: 75).

It was, I believe, that very saturating power I felt so deeply within myself, and found so hard to resist, when Norway had its Lillehammer moment of glory in Marseilles in 1998.

Hegemony as (changing) leadership

For Williams (1978) much of the weight of hegemony came from history and from tradition, hence the need to “uncover layers”. Norwegian media contribute to the hegemony of football nationalism by reminding their audience of Marseille and of the Olympic “bronze team” of 1936. Former glory is, through mainstream media, projected into future hope – hope of rehiring Drillo as national coach and, most pertinent to this paper, hope pinned on John Carew and John Arne Riise.

But hegemony is also constantly exercised and *re-exercised* in the media. The core meaning of hegemony for Gramsci was intellectual, political and moral *leadership* (Mouffe 1979: 8-10; Gramsci, 1998: 55-57). Leadership draws upon a systemic base, but it also changes (Ytterstad 2004: 15-19). A prime reason for selecting Carew and Riise is that they seem to require changes in how Norwegian nationalism is represented. An integral part of Norwegian nationalism has been what Terje Tvedt calls the “goodness regime” (2005) according to which politicians have projected an image of Norway as a force for good (particularly in the Third World), and journalists, according to Tvedt, have largely contributed to this consensus. The Labour Party after the Second World War was crucial in reformulating Norwegian nationalism as internationalist. The first general secretary of the UN was Norwegian, and in the school books of post-war children great importance was attached to organizations like Unicef (Ryggvik 1996).

There is at least a homology between Norwegian nationalism in general and traditional sporting nationalism. Media representations of Norwegian winter sports, particularly skiing, have intermeshed sporting ideals of fairness and making the world a better place with the ideals of what it means to be Norwegian. For Norwegian journalists there is no greater scandal than to entertain the notion that Norwegian skiers could dope themselves (Dahlén 2008: 449-453). Some of these traditional ideals have been transferred onto Norwegian footballers. Ole Gunnar Solskjær is a Unicef ambassador, something I have been reminded of lately on billboards where I buy my groceries. To me, the recent reference made by Christine Baglo in the newspaper *Dagsavisen* to “Åle Gonnar Solschar”, was a very strong “sign” (O'Donnell & Blain 1999: 224) of nationalism in contemporary Norwegian society. Until 1997, *Dagsavisen* was

called *Arbeiderbladet* (The Workers' Paper) which once wrote hesitantly about "our" men. Writing as a travel journalist, Baglo misspells Ole Gunnar Solskjær's name so that she can allude to the number of non-Norwegians who know who he is. Forget Fridtjof Nansen, the explorer, foreign aid and skiing hero of the early nineteenth century, she tells us. Forget Gro Harlem Brundtland, former prime minister and "The Mother of Sustainable Government" (cf Eide and Ytterstad 2010). Forget Knut Hamsun, the famous author, and forget Jonas Gahr Støre, the current foreign minister (the most popular of all). "Ole Gunnar Solskjær is definitively our man in the world today."¹

But Ole Gunnar Solskjær is a retired footballer. Now Carew and Riise carry the burden of hope for the success of the national team. Can the media lead us to take for granted that they also represent the nation in a way that is acceptable to us?

Tracking hegemony through blog common sense

I have derived my methodological approach here from an article by Charles Lewis called "Making Sense of Common Sense: A Framework for Tracking Hegemony". From my own reading of hegemony theorists within media studies, I think he is entirely justified in suggesting that changes in hegemony may be tracked in common sense. Stuart Hall and Todd Gitlin saw common sense very much like Raymond Williams saw hegemony. For them, the connotation of common sense was unilaterally conservative and dogmatic. To Gitlin, common sense not only reproduced hegemony, but hegemony "may even appear to be generated *by* that common sense" (Gitlin, 2003: 254). Similarly with Stuart Hall (1977: 325), "You cannot learn, through common sense, *how things are*: you can only discover *where they fit* into the existing scheme of things". So, to some extent, common sense, for Gitlin and Hall becomes the *alter ego* of hegemony. This is a fruitful general perspective on the taken-for-granted character of football nationalism. It encourages an analytical focus on how the changing representations of Norwegian footballers may emanate just as much from "below", from ordinary people, as from above, from politicians and sports commentators on mainstream TV. While the blogosphere does not of course give a representative view of people in general, some of its power has been attributed to the fact that journalists pay special heed to it (Drezner & Farrell 2008).

But I also agree with Lewis that "just how this hegemonic process of cultural leadership manifests itself – especially through mass media – needs a great deal more systematic empirical analysis" (1992: 281). Both Gitlin and Hall seem at times, to take the taken-for-grantedness of common sense ... for granted. I shall try to show empirically *how* common sense may alter hegemonic nationalism,

and *to what degree* there is agreement between representations of Carew and Riise from mainstream media and “ordinary” bloggers.

In fact, when it comes to bloggers one should be open to the theoretical possibility of no agreement at all. One important blog theorist, Gert Lovink, claims that there is a nihilistic and cynical impulse in the blogosphere. He searches for “a creative nihilism that openly questions the hegemony of mass media. Blogs zero out centralised meaning structures and focus on personal experiences, not, primarily, news media” (2007: 1). Such a hermeneutics of faith in the bloggers’ representations may lead to the detection of incipient *anti-nationalism* in the blogosphere. Without discarding in advance the possibility of Norwegian bloggers who “zero out” football nationalism, I would not like to create a dichotomy between bloggers and mainstream media. As Alvin Goldman points out:

... we cannot compare the blogosphere and the conventional news outlets as two wholly independent and alternative communication media, because the blogosphere (in its current incarnation, at least) isn’t independent of the conventional media: it piggybacks, or freerides on them (2008: 14).

The piggybacking and free rides are very much evident in my material. Conventional media and blogs overlap, as also do hegemony and common sense. The question – empirically and theoretically – is *how*.

Data and method

My data, my “situated arena of common sense” in the words of Lewis (1992: 288), are gathered from two sources:

1. In Google blogs I used the search words John Arne Riise and John Carew in various combinations with “national team” and “Norway”.² The hits were broadly divided between individual blog entries and news from established net-based Norwegian media (some of which had blog threads), proving once more the overlap between conventional media and the blogosphere.
2. On the TV2 site, “The National team” already exists as a category, and almost all the original entries are made by ex-footballers Frode Olsen or Arild Stavrum. Due to the customary hyperlinks in blogs and in net media, I have found my way to further sites and further blogs from the Google and the TV2 blogs.

I use frame analysis to sort my observations, as I did in my previous work on blogs (Ytterstad 2008a, 2008b). But in this work I am building on the work of Stephen Reese who defines frames as “organising principles that are socially

shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (2007: 150). I actually had this definition on a yellow note in front of me when I spread out the printed sheets of a great many blog entries on a big table. The frames of common sense on which I elaborate below exist somewhere at the meso level indicated by Reese (op.cit.: 149), somewhere between observations from individual blogs and macrotheory. Following Robert Entman (1993) I have looked for the *salience* of certain frames of common sense both within and across individual blog entries. A single swallow doesn’t make a summer, and in endnotes I have pointed to several blogs which express the same frame. All quotes from the blogs are my own translations from Norwegian. I have kept the swearing but corrected misspellings.

Carew and Riise: Bleed for your strip!

In the 90s we had players who willingly bled for the strip, and gave 120 per cent no matter what was at stake. Today we have John Carew and John Arne Riise. Carew recently appeared in the media and told us that he doesn’t take football so seriously and that he would much prefer the happy days of life as a playboy millionaire. John Arne Riise is not one iota better.

So begins a comment on a blog on the status of Norwegian football in 2009 which included a Fifa ranking from 1994 where Norway was third after Brazil and Germany. Carew and Riise are “two beacons of ... celebrity and idolatry... who both have ‘Manchester Unityfied’ Norwegian football ... Toss out the primadonnas and give us back the warriors we used to have. If you’re not bleeding when you leave the pitch, you are in the wrong team.”³

Carew and Riise are framed as players who do *not* bleed for the national strip. They are too preoccupied with other things, like dating supermodels. Riise annoys some bloggers because he shows off too much, flexes his muscles and because he is “ugly.”⁴ Carew’s morals are cast in doubt. He dates eighteen-year old models, and – because of the episode where he hit Riise – belongs in a “criminal league.”⁵ He is also lazy according to some, and – together with another player, Morten Gamst Pedersen (Gamst) – stands accused of underperforming on the national team compared to his efforts in his professional club(s).

This frame, however, is not overt in my material. Nor are the charges above original – they are well known in mainstream media. When, in 2008, the Norwegian Football Association proposed to replace the flag with a dragon as the emblem on the national strip, there was a public outcry that made them drop the idea immediately. Arild Stavrum, who blogs on the national team for TV2, has Carew and Riise in mind when he jokingly suggests that the lads might be willing to “bleed for the strip ... with an emblem of Aylar, Ferrari and Playsta-

tion” on it.⁶ It is a familiar frame, moreover, that hegemonic media seem to employ consciously in order to provoke bloggers. ABC news in Norway, a web-based outlet, has a headline saying that “Carew salutes himself”, something that immediately elicits a blog demanding that the guy is removed from the national team and replaced by someone “who loves to play football, not only money”. But this comment is then criticised in turn by two other comments which defend Carew by attacking what is known as Jante’s Law, described as “so typically Norwegian.”⁷

Junk Jante’s Law

Jante’s Law was formulated in ten points by the Norwegian novelist Axel Sandemose in 1933. The first point is the most famous, and has come to epitomise an historical ideal of what it means to be Norwegian: “You shall not think you *are* something.” Riise and Carew are ideals for many of the bloggers in my material because they counter this ideal. Personalised attacks on Carew, Riise and Gamst, because they want to be something, are therefore met with vehement counterattacks: “That Jante drivell from some shitty Norwegians”(as “Joa” replies to “Tor”)⁸ – “People who scoff at Carew dating young models are just jealous hypocrites.”⁹

I find this frame more persistent in my material. There is explicit reflection and quite a sophisticated discussion of the Jante’s Law,¹⁰ which appears as more intrinsic to the blogosphere and as less derivative of mainstream media. To the extent that we now accept Riise and Carew as role models, this shift in hegemonic perceptions of Norwegian nationalism may well be generated partly by the common sense of bloggers. Nils, who claims that the Jante’s Law still lives on in Norway, wants to “remind” his interlocutors of a link to an anonymous blog called “This is unfortunately a blog”. Written on a Friday the thirteenth 2009 and with the curious non-title “blogblogblogblogblog”, it quotes Sandemose’s Law in full, preceded by the following lines: “To you who blog: Do not blog unless you have something interesting to bring forward. Something you do not have. You are neither funny nor smart.”¹¹ One reason why bloggers want to junk Jante’s Law may be because there is a homology between Riise, Carew and themselves. They want to be something more than they feel they are allowed to be.

Performance speaks for itself

The third frame from my material that I want to highlight is even stronger as an organising principle. It is stated explicitly by many bloggers: performance,

or success, speaks for itself. But it also exists at a higher level of abstraction and it seems to overdetermine the two first frames I have outlined above. If the blog debate is concerned with the sorry state of Norwegian football, the blame game seems to follow, like a Humean billiard ball. When Frode Olsen puts a question to the bloggers on why Norway failed to qualify for the World Cup, Håkon replies that “Carew & Riise must be chucked out into the cold.”¹² But prior to that final smashing of nationalist hopes, bloggers seemed to grasp every small victory with their hands. One blogger called Pirken was happy to be invited to watch Norway play Scotland in August 2009 with a friend of his because he “badly needed someone to badmouth John Arne Riise with” and looked forward to the game, in front of the TV with a beer:

The first highlight of the evening was reached when none other than John Arne Riise himself nicely and neatly put the ball five meters above a (nearly) open goal. The mood naturally enough went up in the apartment. The sweet revenge of the redhead turned out to be sweet a few minutes later, when he hammered in 1-0, to tears of joy for Mommy Riise.¹³

If you score, if you produce results, all is apparently forgiven. After Norway ended up winning 4-0 over Scotland, another blogger put the faces of Riise and Drillo on the 100 and 200 kroner bills commenting that “These notes have value so long as Norway still has hopes for a place in the World Cup, but will be worthless if the national team do not qualify”.¹⁴ Even if Norway did not, the individual success of Riise in Roma still makes him a hero for those who want to junk Jante. In a post called “I bow down in the dust for John Arne Riise”, written just before the Italian championship race was over (won marginally by Inter over Roma), Vargas12 recognises that:

There has been a lot of noise around the former Liverpool hero. With unfortunate car purchases, unfortunate SMS messages, unfortunate involvements by his Mom and not least an unfortunate handling of the economy. But it is so *very wrong* to let this take the glory away from the job he does on the football pitch.¹⁵

This blogger thinks Riise under Drillo should be the captain for the coming European Championship qualifications and laments that he doesn’t have the same status as Ole Gunnar Solskjær.

Legend speaks louder for itself

For some time during my first gathering of material, I was beginning to suspect that success means everything, and that cynicism towards the more lofty ideals of sporting nationalism is rampant in the blogosphere. But then I read

Frode Olsen's post asking bloggers to compare Ole Gunnar Solskjær and John Carew, which prompted as many as 128 comments, more than any other blog in my material.¹⁶ The post was made in preparation for a debate on *Matchball Mandag*, one of TV2's regular football programmes. The way he frames the question is very pertinent to my research interest, so I will quote him at some length. He begins with a description of the merits of Solskjær on the pitch, before he adds that:

his name is synonymous with "nice". Thoughts and words like Unicef and the Order of St Olav [the highest award in sport, after the former King Olav] come to mind when we hear his name. We picture the innocent smile. He glows with goodness. But as a player was he perhaps more a product of the efforts of his team-mates? It was when the collective worked that Solskjær shone. He was seldom an attacker on his own. John Carew has that skill. He can win a match on his own. Ole Gunnar Solskjær became immortal in Manchester United after his decisive goal in the champions league final against Bayern Munich ... The images of a boy crazed with joy sliding on his knees ... are memories we will never forget. But have we been dazzled more by the "legend" of Ole Gunnar Solskjær than the player?

There is a minority who seem to support Olsen's argument. Finn, for example, applauds the fact that finally someone dares to "swear in church, and say that Solskjær has been made a saint on much more than his merits as a footballer. To me, Carew is number one". But a clear majority is with Solskjær. This view is presented as self-evident and – precisely – common sense. Often they argue that Solskjær was *also* in fact better on the pitch than Carew. But to me it was a surprise to see how many reject Olsen's initial framing of the question, and use the legendary status of Ole Gunnar Solskjær as an argument in itself. Several comments just say 20 LEGEND, referring to the number 20 shirt Solskjær wore at United. Patrich says that footballers "should be" role models and that Solskjær may be the best in the world; Bjarne notes that Solskjær is worshipped by Amazonian tribes while Carew "is just a pop cultural phenomenon, here today, gone tomorrow". Yes, there is resistance to this "chivalry bullshit" (Razak) which speaks of the cynicism and negativity normally found in blogs (Lovink 2007). But if one commonsensical frame in the blogosphere is that performance speaks for itself, performance *plus* an image of Norway we can all be proud of speak even louder. Even bloggers go to the hegemonic church of Ole Gunnar Solskjær. Riise's recent initiative to help earthquake victims in Haiti, reported on the blog of the Norwegian Save the Children,¹⁷ may be a necessary move for an imagined community in keeping with tradition.

Defending our boys against the media

Although Riise and Carew may not reach the legendary status of Solshkjær they remain heroes for the bloggers when measured against the yardstick of mainstream media, and especially the commentators on TV2. The joy of a Riise goal is coupled with much of the same in-your-face anger towards the media that Riise himself showed after his goal against Scotland.¹⁸ Even individual bloggers who themselves claim to know little about football side with Riise and Gamst against any criticism from media “experts”.¹⁹

But nowhere is the defence of our boys as omnipresent and angry as when TV2 bloggers cast doubt on Drillo, and on the historical legacy of the Drillos. In early 2009, Drillo was rehired on a temporary basis as the national coach. In his debut, Norway beat Germany 1-0 in a friendly. Frode Olsen was happy with the performance but he was not sure about hiring Drillo for the rest of the world cup qualifications. Although a few agreed with Olsen that we should see more than one friendly before deciding, he was attacked for not being positive enough about the victory. The anonymous blogger called “asswipe” said that “Frode Olsen makes me puke”. Part of the reason for the anger must be sought in the fact that, for the first time, TV2 chose to broadcast the Germany game on the web and for the first time in history you had to pay extra to see a national game. Therefore, a couple of bloggers, for example Chris, tell Olsen to leave Drillo alone, but he also misses Arne Scheie, the iconic football commentator on NRK, the public broadcasting channel. Then “those of us who watch national matches will get our spark back 100 per cent. There’s nothing like a good national match, Scheie and a cold beer...” Torbjørn continues in a similar vein:

Drillo football has never been boring for the people. JUST LOOK AT THE DRILLO-FEVER EVEN BEFORE THE GERMANY GAME. Drillo was boring football to the press because they listened to foreign journalists AND YES FOOTBALL SHOULD BE BACK ON THE BEST SPORTS CHANNEL NRK!!!!”²⁰

But the treatment of Olsen is a gentle breeze compared to the barrage aimed at the other regular TV2 blogger Arild Stavrum. Most of the time he doesn’t receive comments at all – or very few.²¹ But when he dares to suggest that Drillo’s epic win in Marseilles was a one-off kind of game (Brazil had already qualified from its world cup group in 1998), and suggests that just about anybody can lead Norway to a draw with Macedonia, and therefore proposes that we find a coach from the Netherlands to replace Drillo, thirty-nine comments fall on him. Most of it is abuse, and most of it is very personal: a blogger from the Western part of Norway puts it mildly: “Just one thing to say: IDIOT. Had this come from someone with merits of his own, we could have discussed this.” So many repeat the point that Stavrum himself was a mediocre player once, and now trains a less than mediocre club team (Skeid), that a few of the

other bloggers feel the need to point out that the bloggers themselves have not performed much on the pitch, but are still entitled to have opinions.

Be more nationalist!

In assessing the political value of blogs as compared to conventional media you have to be issue specific (Ytterstad 2008; Goldman 2008: 121). Blog common sense will probably not be the same on Muslims as it is on climate change. The frames I have found so far on the topic of football journalism have strengthened my scepticism towards positioning blogs as resistant to “media hegemony”, as Lovink does. Yes, bloggers do undermine the authority of football experts and commentators in mainstream media. Any passive deference for Arne Scheie from the television couch potato is long gone (although missed by some!) and replaced by very active and disrespectful lay (and often anonymous) commentators. But rather than zeroing out nationalist hegemony, they reinforce it, sometimes aggressively so. Although the form may be oppositional, the content is highly conservative. The frame is: be *more* nationalist!

The best illustration of this frame in my material comes after Morten Gamst Pedersen scores a late goal in another friendly against Finland in April 2009, just after the Germany game. By this point, the idea of Gamst not bleeding enough for his national strip apparently made him angry towards a home crowd that did not give our boys the support they deserve. Frode Olsen recounts what happened:

There was actually a bit of “Neanderthal behaviour” by Gamst. First he clenched his fist and yelled fuck you to his audience. After that he put his hand to his ear as a gesture saying “Yes, now you’re quiet, and what do you morons think now?” In addition he moves his hands towards his shorts and pretends to take them off to show the audience his arse.”²²

I interpret the blog post Olsen makes as quite balanced. He understands the frustration Gamst must feel, and ends his post by suggesting that the main fault must be laid at the door of a too demanding home audience. In the blog response, however, there is less balance. Espen says to Frode that “here you are shooting COMPLETELY in the wrong direction”. Borkna echoes him, saying that the audience are the real Neanderthals who “go with the flow. And the flow the last few years has been to complain about Gamst no matter what”. Tid (which means time in Norwegian) puts it in the starkest of terms: “I think the booers should have seen the arse (as a mirror image of themselves), been given a jaw-lock (to put on during matches) and a book (“The Basics in Psychology for Amoeba and Simple Imbecile Football Quislings”). Øy (Island) joins the chorus: “It actually seems as if it is TV2, or more precisely some football

‘experts’ on TV who are most upset by [the behaviour of Gamst]. People in general seems to think this is entirely okay. Are these ‘experts’ particularly sensitive persons?”²³ Øy may be correct in saying that the Norwegian people were behind Gamst, against the Ullevaal audience. Seventy-five per cent supported Gamst in a poll, and the supporters’ club called “Oljeberget” (Oil Mountain (sic!)) issued a statement in support of Gamst, according to the biggest paper in Norway, *Aftenposten*.²⁴

How can we explain why the bloggers, the Norwegian Supporters’ Club and maybe even Norwegians in general were less critical of the gestures made by Gamst towards the Ullevaal audience than Frode Olsen and TV2? I believe that even a commercial Norwegian television station must demonstrate at least a modicum of respect for sporting ideals, or at least must adhere minimally to the notion of journalistic balance. The notion of “Football Quisling” is stretching the hegemony of nationalism in football beyond acceptable boundaries for a mainstream TV station. Moreover, I want to suggest that the Gamst episode whipped up the patriotic stakes for the audience at Ullevaal, because when the Scots came with their Tartan Army a few months later, there was a sequel to the story on TV2. As is customary when the Tartan Army travels abroad, they made themselves available for interviews, boasting about supporting their team in bad days as in good days (O’Donnell). TV2 did a report on them that followed the script very neatly. But then they interviewed Gamst to underline what the Norwegian audience can *learn* from the Tartan Army,²⁵ and as I finished this article just before the home match against the Ukraine at Ullevaal, John Arne Riise repeated the charge in a TV2 interview: the Ullevaal audience should be more patriotic. The reason why they do not cheer enough? Jante’s Law makes it difficult for Norwegians to support Norwegians’ success abroad, according to Riise.²⁶

Exact causalities are difficult to track down in matters of chickens and eggs. But it is not preposterous to suggest that the TV2 reporters, after being chastised for their lack of patriotism, are now in the business of making amends. To me, the commonsensical “be more nationalist” frame, coming from below, generated a shift in the hegemony of Norwegian football nationalism. Before Gamst gave the finger to the home crowd we were allowed not to cheer the national team at Ullevaal. After hegemony and common sense interacted in the media we had better clap our hands together, no matter how much blood there is on the strips of our boys.

Nationalism speaks for itself

My final frame can also be considered a master frame (Allern 2001). Like the performance frame and the legend frame, I have called it “Nationalism speaks for itself”. There is abductive reasoning behind the way I have chosen to name

these organising principles which structure the “situated arena of common sense” (Lewis 1992: 288) I perceive the blogosphere to be. They fit with the theoretical focus on common sense, with agreement and taken-for-grantedness as key features. But I have named them inductively, through my observations. When I systematised them I ended up with a group of blogs which I named “Nationalism speaks for itself” because this is the most salient aspect of messages such as that entitled “Go Norway” (“Heia Norge”). It begins by saying “I am a fan of Norway. I get sad if we lose. Proud and happy if we win. There is nothing I would enjoy more than seeing Norway perform in an international championship as we did in the nineties”. It ends by saying that “If our boys are to give their best in the coming week, they need a bit more support in the population than pictures in the media imply. Be there at Ullevaal and give Our Best Men the support they deserve! I will even root for John Arne Riise...”.²⁷ Several of the former frames to which I have alluded above are subsumed in this deeper, yet explicit, master frame: we are all in this together. Frode Olsen echoes this deep doxa in his post “Are we living in a dream world?” “We love to hope. We love to believe. That we shall always do when our national team goes into battle”.²⁸

Since I first read Stuart Hall’s *tour de force* on Marxist theory, I have always found his formulation of common sense more elegant than true: “You cannot learn, through common sense, how things are: you can only discover where they fit into the existing scheme of things” (1977: 325). Yet after this exploratory and moderately grounded frame analysis of football nationalism this general statement can be supported by empirical insights (Lewis 1992: 277). You can wrestle with how you fit celebrities, Jante’s Law, performance and legends, the defence of our boys against the media and the “be more nationalist frame” *into* the master frame. But you cannot learn anything that takes away your hope, your need to believe that glory will come back to us all again, whether in the shape of John Carew, John Arne Riise, or some new, young, promising embodiment of the nation that will make us all proud.

In place of a conclusion: some ironic distance

So, apparently, a healthy core does not exist at all within common sense on the topic of football nationalism? The reader of this article may well view the findings of this author as another confirmation of Marxist prejudice. The classical question posed by Robert Merton to qualitative, critical research seems pertinent indeed: it may be important, but is it true? (Gripsrud 2002: 62). I readily admit that the frames of common sense identified here amount to no more than *weak* knowledge, what Alvin Goldman calls “true belief” (1999: 24). But I argue, together with Reese (2007: 149), that the sort of frame analysis I

have employed here does contain an observational precision that should go some way towards making critical theory scientific. Two examples which are peripheral to my data set will serve as an indication that the master frame I have dubbed “be more nationalistic” is an empirical insight, not an *a priori* theoretical prejudice.

As we saw above, Arild Stavrum was the TV2 blogger most critical of Drillo. In one post he says that one of the young players of the working-class team Skeid, seventeen-year-old Jo Inge Berget, represents hope for Norwegian football. But when he says that Berget is the “spitting image” (*kliss lik*) of Fernando Torres, a Liverpool fan retorts that he is sick and tired of “all those people interested in football who go through the roof because we have a footballer in Norway who is a ‘spitting image’ of one of the best players in the world. We are desperate for success, nothing else. He has nowhere near the same qualities as Torres ...” There is something very healthy in this reply. It reacts to a Norwegian nationalism that has gone *too* far.²⁹ It cuts through hegemony, and illustrates a point Goldman (1999: 29) also makes, that ordinary people are also interested in true beliefs. This isolated comment may well be a more persistent frame elsewhere in the blogosphere. Indeed, club loyalties may counter Norwegian nationalism among Norwegian fans of international football (Hognestad 2006). But in *my* material, in my situated arena of common sense, such an element of good sense is marginal. It does not do much structuring and organising, and should therefore not, as Reese (2007: 151) says, be labelled as a frame.

One particular blogger, however, does systematically frame Norwegian nationalism in an oppositional manner. He blogs for TV2, but the blog posts of Frode Grytten did not appear through my normal search criteria. I just stumbled upon him some time last year. Here there is no “empathy for the Pradamelancholy” of celebrity football heroes such as John Arne Riise. “If the football pros can display pain or their true selves only when they themselves benefit from it, either economically or by cashing in sympathies, they will for always remain sweaty Alpha Hees with a way too big ego or bank account.”³⁰ In his blog called “Blues for Our Best Men” he alludes to John Carew when he writes that “We have a striker who they say could have been the best in the world, but whose career on the national team probably gives a new meaning to the word COULD.”³¹ He even attacks the leading Norwegian winter sport heroes. The skater Håvard Bøkko is Faust who has sold his soul along with everything decent in Norwegian nationalism.³² In the skier Petter Northug “we have nurtured a monster” who has managed to “shake off both Jante’s Law and all his competitors”.³³ In “A Cold Day in Hell” he even indicates, with characteristic sarcasm, that we should blame sports journalists for this sorry state of affairs.

We have lost so many sports journalists at a (fairly) young age. We have no more sports journalists to lose. We need them all, every single sports journalist

who can belch out the words *historical*, and *gold medal fever*, and *sucking the caramel*(*suge på karamellen*). They give so much of themselves. They give everything for us. They sacrifice their body and soul and mental health so that we can have our national orgasms on the sofa. Without sport journalists, the Norwegian nation stops.³⁴

Here, finally, we have an immanent critique of salient frames of common sense in the Norwegian blogosphere. I am not alone, after all, in my anti-nationalism. TV2 has employed a blogger who apparently undermines their very own exercise of hegemony. Frode Grytten can even be said to display the sort of creative nihilism Geert Lovink is searching for (2007: 1).

But although ironic distance to nationalism abounds, Grytten does not suggest an alternative to the notion of “our best men”. If individual success and performance can regain a footing in the collective, he even suggests that the nation may prosper anew. He seems to hark back to a nationalism of the past “when our skiing heroes used to come from the deep forests, they were forest workers who won contests, mumbled a few words [to the camera] and then disappeared into the woods again”.³⁵ For Gramsci, good sense emerged from a different collective altogether. The working class did indeed accept hegemony, which it had “inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed”. But there was also good sense “which is implicit in his activity and which in reality unites him with all his fellow-workers in the practical transformation of the real world” (1998: 333). My findings suggest that blogging does not constitute an activity that challenges hegemony. Instead, the moral and intellectual leadership provided by bloggers stresses that we should become more nationalist. I do not know, but neither do I doubt, that some of the bloggers I have dealt with in this article may display good sense in other arenas of life. They may be trade unionists on strike, for all I know. At the beginning of the last century, the working class in Norway started to move away from nationalism and towards an internationalist understanding of the working class having no fatherland (Ytterstad 1999). I certainly hope we will do so again, as we are being asked to make all sorts of sacrifices in the name of the nation in this age of crisis on so many levels.

Meanwhile, let me defy Jante’s Law in my own way, and propose my own treacherous frame of good sense, by paraphrasing Neil Armstrong: if the Drillos should succeed, yes, even if John Arne Riise should score just one more goal, this will be a giant step forward for football nationalism in the Norwegian blogosphere. If Norway loses, as a team or as individuals, that will be a small step forward for humanity. Go on, let the booing begin.

Notes

1. <http://www.dagsavisen.no/reiseliv/article473398.ece>
2. John Arne Riise and national team produced 117, John Carew and national team 110 hits.
3. <http://veiskillet.wordpress.com/2009/09/06/norsk-fotball-anno-2009/> See also Petter and Arne at <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article677834.ece>
4. <http://samebrors.blogspot.com/2008/10/fr-kampen-skotland-norge.html>, “Tor” in <http://www.samfunn.info/?p=5080>, <http://preppy88.wordpress.com/2009/09/09/10-personer-som-hadde-fortjent-et-nakkeskudd/>, <http://nosherlock.blogspot.com/2009/08/mennesker-jeg-ikke-taler-trynet-pa-del.html>, <http://buffyfan84.blogspot.com/2009/02/norges-styggeste-kjendiser.html> The latter three blogs here are “hate” blogs, more concerned with Riise as a person than as a footballer. I find these personalised attacks on Riise (and Carew), typically, more in individual blogs than in the blog comments on TV2.
5. See “Oggy” in <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article1148097.ece>, <http://fotballfan.blogspot.com/2009/08/hvem-er-sterkest-pa-landslaget.html>,
6. <http://arildstavrum.tv2blogg.no/article13738.ece> (Aylar is a Norwegian so-called “Glamour-Model”)
7. <http://www.abcnyheter.no/sport/090905/carew-hyller-seg-selv>
8. <http://www.samfunn.info/?p=5080>, see also <http://egocentralen.blogspot.com/archive/2007/02/20/john-arne-riise-la-gutten-fa-fred.html>, <http://www.liverpoolblogg.no/2009/12/mitt-team-of-the-decade-brynje/>
9. <http://www.rarenyheter.com/?p=8002>
10. Two bloggers quote the Law in full: see <http://prinsesselea.blogspot.com/2006/07/slutt-skyld-p-janteloven.html>, <http://knutness.com/?p=118>
11. <http://www.flantheman.blogspot.com>
12. <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article1148097.ece>
13. <http://plantehuset.blogspot.com/2009/08/alt-for-norge.html>
14. <http://www.spredet.no/2009/08/13/riise-og-drillo-sedler/>
15. <http://vargas12.wordpress.com/2010/03/27/jeg-boyer-meg-i-stovet-for-john-arne-riise/> A similar tribute is paid to Riise by another of TV2’s bloggers: <http://tkkarlsen.tv2blogg.no/article1385002.ece>
16. <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article699259.ece> All of the quotes in this section are from this site.
17. http://www.reddbarna.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=24574
18. <http://news.isay.no/2009/08/13/for-en-mann/#more-558>, <http://tinyniel.blogspot.com/2010/01/2009-ei-kort-oppsummering.html>, <http://loneblogg.blogspot.com/2009/08/landskamp-og-samboer-i-tre-dager-d.html> After scoring, Riise gestured from the pitch to journalists, saying – in effect – write about *this* (and not about his escapades and rows in court at the time with his former agent Espen Baardsen).
19. <http://hildepeder.blogspot.com/2009/08/john-arne-riise-star-oppreist-selv-i.html>, See both Knut and Reidar in <http://knutness.com/?p=118>
20. <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article532096.ece>
21. I am inclined to believe he is being given the “silent treatment” by bloggers who have little respect for his opinions.
22. <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article677834.ece>
23. Ibid.
24. <http://fotball.aftenposten.no/landslaget/article134160.ece#xtor=RSS-3> See also <http://trenern.blogspot.com/2009/04/morten-gamst-pedersen.html> for support for Gamst amongst individual bloggers outside of TV2 as well.
25. <http://msn.tv2sporten.no/fotball/landslag/skotsk-fest-i-oslos-gater-2854162.html>
26. <http://msn.tv2sporten.no/fotball/landslag/riise-tar-et-oppgjoer-med-publikum-3219321.html>
27. <http://www.fotballblogg.no/2007/05/30/heia-norge/>
28. <http://frodeolsen.tv2blogg.no/article266887.ece> See also the comment by Jændor following Olsen, and madabj following Stavrum at <http://arildstavrum.tv2blogg.no/article531544.ece> for other examples of this master frame.

29. The idea that good sense arises because hegemony goes too far is crucial to my understanding of environmental good sense (Ytterstad 2010).
30. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/article1073131.ece>
31. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/article1151789.ece>
32. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/article1413690.ece>
33. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/article1426080.ece>
34. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/>
35. <http://frodegrytten.tv2blogg.no/article1426080.ece>

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Chapter 12

Communicating in Search of Understanding

A Case Study of Fans, Supporters and Islam

Roy Krøvel

As noted by many scholars of communication and culture, new developments in information and communication technology are increasingly driving social change, and facilitating the construction and reconstruction of communities and identities. Bauman has coined the term “cloakroom communities” to describe a new form of community without responsibilities, made up of passive consumers (Bauman 2000: 200). Deuze argues that interactive immediacy online creates a “liquid” form of journalism where borders between audience and journalists become increasingly blurred (see also Steensen’s contribution to this anthology) (Deuze 2007). Others have explored how “new media” inform the spatial configuration of public life, including mediated fan culture (Rowe 2004). Many of the chapters in this anthology deal with questions related to how new forms of flows of information contribute to reformatting and reformulating social life, culture, communities and identities. This chapter takes a different approach. It asks what we, the users, can learn from these flows of information. Can we use each other to communicate in ways that make us learn something about the world we live in? Can fans use community media and online forums to gain insights and deepen their knowledge on issues and aspects of life of which they originally had little or no knowledge? Can communities of football fans stimulate learning processes, both individual and collective, in ways that matter for social life also outside football? These are the questions I want to explore in this chapter. I shall use the term “fan” and “supporter” according to the taxonomy proposed by Giulianotti (2002: 25-46) and discussed by Hognestad in this anthology.

Over the last few years Islam has gradually become a hotly debated issue among Norwegian football fans – the number of articles on Islam and football in Norwegian newspapers nearly doubled during 2009, for example.¹ Increasing interest in Norwegian media in general for Islam can be understood from various perspectives. To some extent, it reflects developments in Norwegian society towards greater religious diversity: more Norwegians are Muslims today

than a generation ago. It also reflects a trend towards growing media interest in Islam triggered by Al Qaeda and September 11. In a Norwegian context, the increasing interest in Islam among football fans could also arguably be understood in the context of the “cartoon controversy” that erupted after a series of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad was first published by a Danish newspaper, and later by a Norwegian newspaper, in 2005. (Eide, Kunelius, & Phillips 2008). This again led to a public debate in Norway on religious sensibilities, Islam and freedom of expression.

While several studies have been produced on Islam in Norway in general, and the cartoon controversy specifically, relatively little research has been done on the role of sports and the media in relation to the debate on Islam and what it means to be a “Norwegian”. This is perhaps not very surprising in light of Dahlén’s exhaustive study of sports and the media (Dahlén 2008). According to Dahlén, how sports are mediated is, in general, an understudied area within cultural studies (Dahlén 2008: 16). This article aims at contributing towards a better understanding of how sports fans use new communication technology to debate, discuss, develop understanding and construct identities and communities by investigating two incidents of particular interest for football fans. One involves several young and talented players at Vålerenga, a top division team from Oslo. The debate among the supporters started on 12 September 2009, when some of the most important players of the team celebrated Ramadan in the final stages of the competition. Is it possible to be a professional athlete while fasting? Especially during the long Norwegian summer days, several supporters asked. The other incident is a controversy that erupted after a somewhat unconventional goal-scoring celebration in June 2009, involving two Muslim players and a teammate at Sandefjord, another team in the top division. More details about the two incidents will be given later in the chapter. Following Giulianotti’s taxonomy, I will reserve the term “supporter” for those who participate on the online forum of “Klanen”, the organisation of Vålerenga supporters. Elsewhere, I will use the term “fan”.

Existing literature

This study is grounded in existing literature on the role of mediated sports in constructing identity and community, in particular regarding the role of the “sporting hero”. The chapter will also relate to literature on sports fans, new media and deliberation.

Hedal Nielsen has introduced a distinction between two different types of identification, the geographically grounded and the postmodern (quoted in Dahlén 2008: 296). The geographically grounded identification is, in many ways, similar to historical or traditional identification, often constructed on themes

such as place, belonging and notions of tradition. The postmodern identification, by contrast, takes into account developments such as global media, satellite TV and global flows of people, developments that mean that individuals in Norway or Guatemala can identify with a team in Barcelona or Leicester. The case of Muslim footballers in Norway underlines that geographically grounded identities are historically constructed. Communities and identities change as they interact with the surrounding world.

The “sporting hero” plays an importing role in the construction of community and identity as communities develop and change. Hellström and others have described the typical Swedish sporting hero (quoted in Dahlén 2008: 404). Several of the typical traits are, in my view, also relevant for the discussion of Muslim football stars in Norway. First, the sporting hero should be brave, loyal, honest and humble. He should not be greedy or narcissistic. Second, the sporting hero should be “modern”. He should be tactically prepared, disciplined, intelligent and rational. Third, despite the success and fame, he should continue to be the same old “ordinary guy” with simple tastes and needs. Fourth, he was also seen as a representative of a distinctive Nordic “race”. Nonetheless, only a few sporting heroes become what Radford called “national sporting heroes” (Radford 2005). For that to happen, a large proportion of the population, larger than that which normally follows sports, must recognise the national sporting hero who will be recognised and remembered with affection long after his sporting career has ended. The national sporting hero does not, according to Radford, have to come from the country or ethnic group that has made him a hero, in contrast to the sporting hero found in Sweden by Hellström, but he must be seen to possess certain values, or have a character that is seen by members of the national community as typical for the community or particularly admirable. Recent research on Norwegian football heroes has shown that what creates a sporting hero is also subjected to development and change. Some of the most popular Norwegian footballers are also known for breaking what used to be the rules for sporting heroes (Olafsen 2004). Olafsen’s research indicates that there is now a broader acceptance than before of diversity, or a realisation that even sporting heroes can have flaws.

While sporting heroes help construct national narratives, sports and mediated sports also contribute to the construction of specific images or stereotypes of other peoples and nations (Dahlén 2008: 442). This is a field where studies of Norwegian and Nordic stereotypes can fruitfully be interpreted in a global perspective, as shown by O’Donnell, Blain and others (O’Donnell 1994: 345-380). There is a thin line between generalisations and “crude national stereotypes” (Whannel 1992: 30). According to O’Donnell, major stereotypes should be seen as “local entry-points into a much larger discursive network” (O’Donnell 1994: 345). “This network constitutes a macrodiscourse which is geopolitical in scope, its ideological function being to further local elite interests by placing

responsibility for existing coreperiphery imbalances on the periphery itself" (ibid.). Desmarais and Bruce conclude that sport commentary in an international context operates to create and reinscribe symbolic differences between nations, even in the face of visual evidence that is ambiguous or actively contradicts the words used to describe it (Desmarais & Bruce 2010: 338-362).

Returning to Norwegian media and football, national stereotypes abound. Describing Brazil, journalists tend to use metaphors related to dance and sexuality. Germany, meanwhile, was known for playing like a "machine". The Scandinavian countries are presented as well organised, analytical, even cynical, and effective. These stereotypes are well known from a number of studies, but are also fluid and subjected to processes of change (Dahlén: 445). In the 1950s, Brazil, for instance, was described with thinly veiled racism as backward and not yet fully refined – in contrast to European teams (Lippe 2004). The image of playful, joyous and even sensuous Brazilian football only came into being after the 1958 World Cup in Sweden, and the subsequent successful Brazilian teams led by the likes of Pele and Garrincha. Similarly, many journalists still found it difficult to resist the temptation to draw parallels with World War II when reporting on the game between England and Germany in South Africa in 2010. Nevertheless, metaphors and terms like "*blitzkrieg*" and "invasion" become more and more misplaced as time goes by and the German team is becoming increasingly culturally complex, with players with family or roots in Ghana, Poland and elsewhere.

Images of national identity, thus, can be changed, as seen in the case of the Australian runner Cathy Freeman (Bruce & Hallinan 2001; Wensing & Bruce 2003). In the 1990s, Freeman celebrated victory by waving both the Australian flag and a flag representing Aboriginal identity. At first, this caused massive offence to many white Australians, but little by little it came to be accepted as a symbol of national reconciliation, and as recognition of her contribution to sport in Australia, Freeman was chosen to light the Olympic fire in Sydney in 2000.

When identities and communities develop and change, sports fans play an important role. Fan sites and blogs have proved to be valuable resources for researchers trying to understand how sports fans discuss matters related to identity, community and belonging. According to Svensson, sports fans use new media to discuss and deliberate questions or themes in which the mainstream media show little or no interest (Svensson 2007). For the communication on fan sites to be understood as a "deliberation", several criteria must be met, according to Svensson and others.² First, the participants must seek information and initiate debates. Second, the participants must reflect on the opinions of others and try to answer them.

In this chapter I am, however, not primarily interested in deliberation from the perspective of reaching a consensus. Rather, I wish to reflect on the possibilities of fans using online communication to reach a deeper understanding

of something that most fans have only limited insight into: in this case, Islam. Deeper insight is here understood as related to the concept “depth of intention” (Naess, Glasser, & Drengson 2005; Næss 1953): Loosely put, the possibility of misunderstanding is reduced when both the speaker and the listener know other possible interpretations of the term or topic in question. To reach depth of intention it is necessary to make an effort to try to understand different perspectives. To achieve depth of intention, you should, when debating with someone, help your opponent formulate his or her argument in the best possible way, even if it seems to work against your short term interest of “winning” the debate. Is the community of fans able to communicate in such a way that they help each other to develop depth of intention in relation to Islam?

Methodology

As mentioned in the introduction, the coverage of Islam in connection with Norwegian football increased significantly during 2009. This was established by using Retriever Monitor (www.retriever.no), a searchable database that includes most Norwegian dailies and is updated daily.³ Journalistic representation of football and football fans is not the subject of this paper, though. In order to access and evaluate the non-journalistic, mediated communication between fans, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies is employed.

The Goal Scoring Celebration Case offers a wider perspective, since it engaged football fans and people not normally enthusiastic about football in a debate on numerous websites and blogs. The case itself will be presented in depth below. Here it suffices to say that the manner of celebrating a goal scored by one Muslim player caused offence on numerous levels for different people (a video clip showing the celebration was promptly published on YouTube and elsewhere, triggering heated debate among viewers). First the sites with the largest number of comments on the controversy were selected, again using google.com. All postings on these sites were investigated. The total number of relevant postings included in the study is approximately 450. The most important sites are tv2.no, youtube.com and islamineurope.blogspot.com. Again, the first research question deals with what participants were saying: What are the main categories of arguments present in the selection? The second research question relates to how participants communicate. Do they “deliberate” according to the four criteria presented earlier?

In the case of Muslim footballers and the celebration of Ramadan, a search on google.com shows that this was mainly a concern for supporters of Vålerenga, and therefore the paper focuses on the communication on the website for fans of Vålerenga, Klanen. All relevant posts (a total of fifty-five) on this topic on the forum of Klanen (www.klanen.no) have been examined. Two qualitative

research questions have been formulated for this part of the study: First, how do supporters of Vålerenga interpret fasting during Ramadan in relation to what has traditionally been seen as characteristic of a Nordic sporting hero? Of special interest here are arguments related to race, ethnicity, discipline, rationality and values. Second, how do the supporters use the blogs and websites? Are they seeking information? Do they try to understand the other arguments? Do they try to respond to other arguments? Can anyone participate? Can the communication be said to be a “deliberation”, according to the four criteria put forward by Svensson (Svensson 2007)?

Finally, the findings from these two investigations will be interpreted in light of the wider debate on Islam, freedom of expression and what it means to be “Norwegian”.

Findings: The celebration controversy

The celebration controversy refers to an incident that took place in a game between Sandefjord and Strømsgodset in July 2009. One Islamic site reported in the following manner: “Bosnian players Admir Rasic and Fenan Salcinovic scored a goal for their team, Sandefjord, putting them ahead in the Sunday match against Strømsgodset. The two religious Muslim players went down on their knees for a little celebration prayer, when Espen Nystuen came from behind Salcinovic and made obscene gestures” (Esther 2009).

The matches from the top division were being followed live from the studios of TV2, a commercial television station located in Bergen. A number of experts were commentating live from the studio. The commentators immediately understood the potential importance of the incident, and showed the clip over and over again. The first commentator was stunned initially, seemingly because of so many taboos being broken in a single act. The second commentator, a former player with several caps, “Mini” Jacobsen, could not stop himself from laughing, albeit a little shyly. He saw the act as a moment of madness, something like other well-known moments of madness after the scoring of a goal. The best example here would probably be Liverpool’s Robbie Fowler who celebrated a goal by pretending the goal line was made of cocaine and then proceeded to pretend to “snort” it. The third commentator saw that point, but also felt that the Muslim player was being insulted for his religion. The debate between the experts went back and forth until a sort of consensus developed out of this third perspective.

The initial studio discussion displays many of the traits of deliberative communication. The participants listened to each other’s arguments and tried to reflect on them before answering. Most expressed a will to view the incident from more than one angle, and needed time to digest the various arguments.

There was certainly room for more than one perspective. This initial studio debate also pointed towards three taboos in sport that seemed to have been broken, and which the later online debate came to evolve around: the first was related to displays of sexual acts on the pitch. The referee will normally tolerate very little in terms of sexual movements of hands or fingers before a player will be sent off whereas the sexual movements in this case had been quite graphic and probably potentially more insulting than most sexual insults seen on a football pitch. The second taboo was related to homosexuality. No Norwegian top division player has yet come out as homosexual, in stark contrast to women's football or handball, and male homosexuality is still a taboo in male football, in Norway and internationally. The sexual acts in this case mimicked sex between two men, thus breaking the second taboo. The third is less a taboo than the others, but, nonetheless, over the years a strong principle of dividing sports from religion developed and for the Olympic Movement in particular it has been important to present sports as something transcending religious and political borders. The celebration, the act of bending down towards Mecca, could itself be seen as a possible infringement on the divide between sports and religion, while the sexual mimicking could be interpreted as disrespect towards religion and thus against the dominant ideology of sport as an activity that includes all.

Initially, most comments posted on websites came from football fans, as they were the most likely audience of the live broadcast. The initial arguments will be divided into six groups or categories and should be seen and evaluated in relation to each other. The Islamic Council of Norway also responded quickly by issuing a statement condemning the action of Nystuen (tv2sporten.no 2009a).

The first category of reactions underlined the "funny" aspects of the incident. Don't take everything so seriously, said one. This is hilarious, responded another. Let's have more fun, said others. The second category reacted to the first category by launching an argument related to teambuilding. No team will prosper without respect between the members of the team. Respect must also mean respect and tolerance for diversity, in this case religion, this argument went. The sexual mimicking was thus seen, first and foremost, as insulting and disrespectful, undermining some deeper meaning of team sports like football. The third category related the incident to a larger debate in society on freedom of expression and the limits of this freedom. The reactions against the sexual mimicking were interpreted as infringements on the freedom of expression, which is hailed as a "core value" in Norwegian society. The fourth category related to the act of displaying symbols of religion on the sporting field, grounding the argument in a "tradition" of separation between sport and religion. Such arguments were quickly met by counter-arguments reminding participants of the Brazilian football team that won the pre-World Cup in South Africa in 2009. They had displayed their Christian religion without

much protest, said one. So why this concern now, when Islam is involved? This leads to the fifth category of arguments that focus on tolerance towards minorities – in this case a minority of Muslim players in a traditionally predominantly Christian society. The sixth and last category differs from the first five. Several posts raised the question why mimicking a *homosexual* act was seen as particularly insulting in the first place. This category of posts reminded us of the ongoing discrimination against homosexuals in Norwegian football and sports in general.

Interestingly, the online forums were soon dominated by two groups not primarily, it seems, interested in football. The first group consisted of several individuals proclaiming to feel offended by the act. Most of those posting messages from this perspective claimed that the act was an assault on all Muslims and framed it within a very radical Islamist discourse. It was interpreted as another piece of evidence of a conspiracy to discriminate against Muslims and destroy Islam. Some in this group also made sure that the video and the debate became known to other Muslims in Europe and elsewhere, publishing links to the video and online debates on different international sites run by Muslim individuals and groups, for instance on *islamineurope.blogspot.com* (Esther 2009). The other group shared what can be described as a feeling of being offended by the offence felt by the members of the first group. This group reacted vigorously against any suggestion that there should be some sort of restrictions on the freedom of expression. Anything smelling of concession to Muslim sensibilities would be interpreted as something intolerable. For this group, unlimited freedom of speech and expression is seen and defined as a core value of a “Norwegian society”. The protests against the act were thus interpreted as yet another piece of evidence of an ongoing conspiracy by Muslims, and some Norwegians, to undermine these core values by erecting all types of restrictions of individual freedoms in the name of special interest groups feeling offended. Most of those posting comments from this perspective could be described as belonging to a Norwegian nationalistic discourse. Some of the participants in this group took the debate to online sites where these perspectives would not normally be found, as for instance on *Islam in Europe* (LordMarius 2009).

The two groups increasingly dominated the debate on most sites. The post by “Lord Magnus” on *Islam in Europe* almost instantly triggered fifteen heated replies (LordMarius 2009). On YouTube, the debate came to revolve around polarizing posts made by members of one or other of the two groups, and the debate thus turned from the initial exploratory and respectful tone into a shouting match. Between these two groups there seems to be little or no room for common ground. On YouTube the posts were given names like “FUCK MUZLIM IM ASS!!! HEHEHEHEH” (MRPLAYER1000 2009), “FUCKING NICE” (fideljensen 2009) and “@selekinoto1 you are too stupid to understand

there is no god" (YourFavouriteVideos 2010). A number of death threats also appeared, soon generating an avalanche of responses, as for instance in the case of dadoz2K who responds [my translation from Norwegian]: "six months have gone and you still have not killed him. A typical Muslim, acts tough and promises to do this and that, but fails to deliver..." (dadoz2K 2010). Legitimate concern for the safety of homosexuals in some Muslim countries is exploited to argue against human rights for Muslims in Western countries. Ending persecution of homosexuals by Muslim regimes is put forward as a pre-requisite for granting human rights to any Muslim in non-Muslim countries. In the same manner, individual attacks on "all Muslims" and Islam are taken by many in the first group as an attack by *all* Westerners on *every* Muslim. The debate is thus polarised to the point where there is no middle ground and no reflections on the arguments of "the others" are made. In this climate of debate, most outside the two dominant groups stayed out of the discussion.

The two groups controlling the debate seemed to have a mutual interest in extending it to a larger audience but despite efforts to spread the debate to new sites and audiences it fizzled out after the first three or four days, unlike other cases involving issues related to Islam and free speech, for instance the Muhammad cartoon controversy (Eide, Kunelius & Phillips 2008). The wider audience did not seem to find the incident and debate interesting enough to spread it further. There are several possible reasons for this. The best way of understanding why the wider audience did not respond to the repeated calls from the two groups to come to the defence of either "Islam" or "freedom of speech" is to look for postings that move beyond the polarised arguments. In these postings an apology of sorts from Nystuen plays a crucial and prominent role. While not using the word "regret", Nystuen nevertheless acknowledged that the celebration had got out of hand and that he understood that his teammate probably felt insulted. He was "not looking forward" to meeting his teammate again "tomorrow", he told journalists after the match (tv2sporten.no 2009b). Reading between the lines, one could surmise that Nystuen was feeling ashamed of what he had done. Fenan Salcinovic, meanwhile, made it clear that while he did indeed find the episode insulting and somewhat humiliating, he understood that Nystuen had not intended to insult him personally or to insult his faith. Both players demonstrated a will to empathise with the perspective of the other and the case thus boiled down to accepting that people sometimes do stupid things. For the majority of Muslim readers, for example, the feeble apology and subsequent "acceptance" from Salcinovic was enough to defuse the controversy. The solution to this type of situation, said the Islamic Council of Norway, was nothing more than good manners and normal courtesy (tv2sporten.no 2009a).

Findings: Ramadan and the Sporting Hero

Ramadan is a month of fasting for Muslims all over the world. Participating Muslims refrain from eating and drinking from dawn until sunset. The debate among supporters of Vålerenga on Ramadan began with a posting on the forum of Klanen [my translation]: “Ramadan causes trouble for Vålerenga. According to an article in today’s *VG* (at the time the largest Norwegian daily) six of Vålerenga’s players are Muslims and are now celebrating Ramadan ... This causes trouble since they cannot drink water during training ... They are not fully and ideally prepared for training and matches, something that obviously reduces the quality of the performances ... the ultimate consequence could be loss of points or being sent out of the FA Cup ... Is this acceptable?” (Toy Sorbitzen 2009). I observed, from the start of the discussion, that this is primarily linked not to any problems fans might have with Islam but to specific aspects of what is expected from a Nordic Sporting Hero; more specifically, fasting from dawn until sunset was seen as contradicting the modernity aspects of being a Sporting Hero. A Nordic Sporting Hero is expected to be efficient, to build his or her daily routines on scientific evidence, and to be disciplined about what needs to be done to improve his or her performance and thus the chance of winning, as shown in previous studies of Nordic Sporting Heroes. Fasting is thus problematic from a modernist perspective. Furthermore, the initiator of the discussion explicitly invites other supporters to express their opinion on the topic. “Toy Sorbtzen” returned much later in the discussion, unveiling his or her own relatively strong opinion on the matter, but this first post was carefully worded. It was an invitation to discuss rather than an argument in itself.

The first responses to the initial posting were made to clarify a misunderstanding. “usbenga” explained that the Muslim players are allowed to eat on match days (usbenga 2009). According to “usbenga” none of the Muslim players at Vålerenga “takes it too seriously” and all of them drink water while training. “Loffen” added that as far as he knows Fellah (one of the players) eats on match day and on the day before (Loffen 2009). The discussion thus began by fulfilling the first criterion on Svensson’s list (Svensson 2007): first Sorbitzen explicitly called for a debate on the issue, then “usbenga” and “Loffen” provided additional information. “Prima Kaos” saw it from a different angle and argued from a rights perspective: “No one should complain as long as it is a religious obligation and a cultural tradition” (Prima Kaos 2009). Yet another perspective was brought into the discussion by “andgus” (andgus 2009): according to “andgus”, the Vålerenga supporters should count themselves lucky that they live in a country where the night comes early so that the players can eat. Before long, “Blackster” informed him that Ramadan will come approximately ten days earlier next year, and in five years’ time Ramadan will fall in July when the days begin 02.30 and last until 22.30 in Oslo (Blackster 2010).

He also informed that this is an ongoing debate in cricket, hockey and other sports. “skog” related his argument to a critique of religion in general, claiming to be “instinctively sceptical towards all religion” (skog 2009). “FrankO” understood the argument put forward by “skog”, but added that “the followers of this religion do not drink alcohol at all, something we benefit from the rest of the year. It is a price worth paying” (FrankO 2009). “Better to have a team of eleven Muslims who are a little feeble once a year during Ramadan than a team of eleven ethnic Norwegians who are overly drunk twice a week all year round” (FrankO 2009). At this point, “Troy Sorbitzen”, who initiated the debate, returned with a new posting saying that “it is impossible to become the best unless you eat and drink right, that’s something everybody knows” (Toy Sorbitzen 2009).

Several more perspectives were brought into the debate as more supporters joined in, but in my view this segment is sufficiently representative. The discussion adheres closely to the criteria put forward by Svensson on deliberation (Svensson 2007). We observe how the participants systematically initiate debates and seek information. The participants reflect on the opinions of others before trying to answer them. There is also considerable diversity of opinion among the participants, but arguments and reasoning supporting the different opinions are almost always presented. A closer look at the individual members of Klanen shows that most of the postings are made by members who joined the forum between 2003 and 2007. This means that most have spent between two and six years as fellow members of the community, normally also joining Klanen at home and away matches. Without doubt, this is one of the reasons for the deliberative and respectful form of debate on the online forum.

As the debate evolves, a new image of the sporting hero emerges, partly as a result of the performance by the players themselves. As the season develops, young Muslim players emerge as the best and most inspiring members of the team. Fella and “Moa” in particular receive much praise for their hard work, dedication and skills. As it turns out, players celebrating Ramadan perform better than most of their teammates, leading many to agree with FrankO: the long term benefit far outweighs any short term disadvantage.

This last point can be interpreted in light of some of the other traits traditionally found in the Nordic Sporting Hero – for example high moral standards, discipline and an ascetic lifestyle. Since the 1990s, however, some of the best Norwegian players have also been known for heavy drinking, smoking, gambling and womanising. As the Vålerenga supporters come to terms with the new breed of Muslim talent there seem to be a new connection to this traditional image of a sporting hero. A new type of sporting hero is thus constructed, based on many of the elements found in the traditional Nordic Sporting Hero. While the case demonstrates how Norwegian football and its fans have changed, it also offers perspectives on the continuity of images of sporting heroes.

Conclusion

I agree with Dahlén that the study of media and sports offers fresh perspectives on how societies adapt to change and development. There is a need for much more research on these issues as communities experience profound changes.

The case of the “celebration controversy” demonstrates how relatively small groups can come to dominate debates on controversial issues, leading to polarisation and extremism. In this case any middle ground or attempt at deliberation became virtually impossible as claims and counter claims were shouted from one camp to the other. But this case also demonstrates how only a minimum of dialogue between the involved parties and a (sort of) apology can defuse a potentially conflictual situation.

The internal online discussion among supporters of Vålerenga on Ramadan comes to light in contrast to the debate on the celebration controversy. The debate was respectful, reflexive and produced new information and perspectives, which facilitated deeper insight among the participants. At the same time, the participants showed a great deal of heterogeneity in opinions and lines of argument. The forum functioned as a space for re-thinking and reconstruction of traditional narratives of sporting heroes, and facilitated the search for a common ground in the understanding of change and continuity in the relationship between sporting heroes and the community of supporters.

The emerging image of the sporting hero displays elements well known to Nordic sports fans, stressing an ascetic life style, discipline and dedication but at the same time the emerging image has challenged traditional images of the sporting heroes, especially what Svensson has dubbed the modern aspects of the sporting hero. For supporters of Vålerenga and other football teams it proved increasingly difficult to uphold any notion of sporting heroes belonging to a particular Nordic race or having a particular ethnicity. New narratives of belonging had to be created as the supporters tried to come to terms with changing environments. It is useful here to see stereotypes as “local entry-points into a much larger discursive network” (O'Donnell 1994: 345). According to O'Donnell, the ideological function of stereotypes is “to further local elite interests by placing responsibility for existing coreperiphery imbalances on the periphery itself” (O'Donnell 1994: 345). Here, we observe how alternative generative mechanisms, mainly connected to global migration and communication outside traditional media, can contribute to reconstructing and renegotiating existing stereotypes of both “the others” (here, “Muslims”) and the national Sporting Hero.

Several existing studies have indicated that communities of sports fans can function as “early movers” in processes to adapt to change. The results of this investigation should thus be read in the light of earlier studies – for instance the role played by Cathy Freeman in Australia (Bruce & Hallinan 2001; Wens-

ing & Bruce 2003) and the changing stereotypes of Brazilian football, from underdeveloped to playful and artistic. In my view, communities of football fans have the potential to be much more than communities without responsibilities, made up of passive consumers, or what Bauman has called “cloakroom communities” (Bauman 2000: 200). Communities of sports fans can, under the right conditions, be construction workers playing important roles in producing the new identities and imagined communities we need to face the challenges put forward by global flows of information, technology, people and cultures. As supporters engage with the challenges and dilemmas they face as sports fans, they also open up spaces for deliberation on changes and developments taking place as existing communities are being exposed to new realities. In football, what happens in the stands matters more than what happens on the pitch.

Notes

1. Retriever (a search engine accessing many Norwegian newspapers) returns 115 hits for “Islam” and “football” for 2009, up from 66 a year earlier.
2. For more on deliberation and deliberative democracy see for example (Bohman 2000; Elster 1998).
3. For more information go to <https://www.retriever-info.com/en/services/research.html>

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III

Documentary Film and Television

Chapter 13

Documenting the Narrative of Arab Identity in a Jewish State Through Football

Between National 'Multi-Existence' and its Impossibility

Alina Bernstein, Lea Mandelzis & Inbar Shenhar

A major conflict in Israeli society exists between Israel's Jewish majority and Arab minority.¹ Israeli Arabs received Israeli citizenship at the close of the 1948 war and are guaranteed equal rights by law,² although the relationship between the two communities carries a history of discrimination and inequality. Discussions of Jewish-Arab relationships in the country are expressed in the political arena and, less frequently, in public discourse in the two communities. The public discourse that exists reflects historical undercurrents, mutual fear of threats – real and imagined – stereotypes and prejudices that accompany desire for change. At the same time, for the most part dealing with domestic social issues is deferred and repressed. One of the ways of grappling with these issues is expressed through the lens of documentary films.

Israeli documentaries deal with a broad spectrum of local conflicts, one of the most conspicuous being Israel's Arab minority, an issue that evokes keen interest among both Jewish and Arab film producers. Dan Shadur (2007) claims that the production of documentaries about the Arab-Israeli conflict³ serves as a key platform for national politics, this is certainly the case with documentaries focusing on football and national identity. In 2004, for the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel, an Arab club, Hapoel Ichud Bnei Sakhnin (henceforth Bnei Sakhnin) won the Israeli national football cup. This victory was much more than just another sporting event. For the Arab-Israeli community it marked a political victory in a war of a minority against the majority. As cup-holder, Bnei Sakhnin also became the first Arab football club to officially represent the State of Israel internationally, all of which evoked a mixture of reactions and discussions among the Israeli public and in the media.

The research at hand examines the narrative of two documentaries – selected from several films produced since – that deal with the Bnei Sakhnin football team as a metaphor for the complex and problematic status of Israel's Arab minority, exposing the harsh daily realities of an ethnic-national minority in a majority nation-state. It looks at the substance and subtexts of the two football

films and what can be distilled from them regarding the Arab national identity in a Jewish state.

We see these films as belonging to the realm of social documentary cinematology, as films that give expression to the traditional commitment of documentary filmmaking to create a foundation for the way we view the world.⁴ One should perhaps add that the creation of these films reflects the urgency of the filmmakers to respond in a critical manner to a political reality. This chapter focuses on each of the directors, in order to discover how they give voice to their respective national identities through the football field.

Social documentaries

Documentaries occupy a major place in television and cinema. Filmmakers embark on a journey to the heart of their chosen subject to reflect realities from the creator's perspective, on behalf of the viewing public. This genre of discerning filmmaking is generally considered to be on a high level artistically, to employ convincing techniques, and to rest on a firm foundation for constructing the "truth" about contemporary society (Gurewitz & Arav, forthcoming).⁵ "The real" is drawn by filmmakers from their respective individual environments which provide them with the material for crafting their documentary works.

The Lumiere brothers are considered the founding fathers of documentary films, and coined the term "documentaries" as a label for films that present daily occurrences.⁶ Their films documented reality without any intervention, embodying what can be referred to as passive objectivity. Since then, documentary films have gone through many metamorphoses, and today the objective of most documentaries is experiential, not merely informational, and aims at moving the viewer and engendering and generating public discourse. Moreover, artists do not isolate themselves from the political, cultural and social context. Rather, they seek to be a part of it.

John Grierson laid the foundations for socially committed documentary filmmaking. Grierson viewed documentaries as a creative representation of reality. He believed that documentaries can assist the public to understand social problems that are difficult to grasp because of their complexity. His filmmaking sought "the creative treatment of actuality" (Winston 1995).⁷ Documentary filmmaker Paul Rotha clarifies the essence of films in this genre as those that "interpret creatively and in social terms the life of the people as it exists in reality" (Rotha, Road and Griffith 1963).⁸ Grierson's films – and later the works of Basil Wright, Paul Rotha and others – were, in essence, an investigation of social and economic problems from a position of social involvement (Gurewitz & Arav, forthcoming).⁹ One could define these kinds of documentaries in more practical terms as films on facts that transform episodes into stories

and present real life in a way that goes beyond the boundaries and abilities of traditional news reportage.

In the past two decades of documentary filmmaking, there seems to be increasing openness to dealing with minority identity issues and the self-ascription of minority groups. This openness is tied to a sociological and cultural turning point that occurred in the 1980s, and increasingly in the 1990s, as national ideologies began to lose their power and were replaced by a focus on the private sphere and the concept of multiple identities.

Documentary films and Israeli national identity

Social, ethnic and class cleavages jeopardise the integrity of nations and their solidarity, particularly when it involves a minority group and a national majority (for example, see Ben Porat 2009).¹⁰ In the Israeli context, Fisher (2009) notes¹¹ that during the period immediately following statehood in 1948, documentary filmmaking was mobilised on behalf of the Zionist ideal and became a mouthpiece of Jewish statism. However, in time, a portion of the documentary making community became some of Israeli society's fiercest critics and these newer works tend to expose and present a host of social, national and political conflicts, holding up a mirror of society for Israelis as a society in dire need of serious reform (Fisher 2007). All address, in one way or another, the various tiers of local reality (Amir 2007;¹² Duvdevani 2010¹³). Indeed, Israeli cinematography has identified the documentary potential of sports as a lens through which one can present Israel's social fabric.

Israeli national identity and sports documentaries

While the daily press views sport as a sub-culture, separate from social life,¹⁴ documentary films take sport and mobilise it to promote a personal social-national agenda, to make a statement about the societal conditions or circumstances in which sports take place.¹⁵

The first documentary, in 1996,¹⁶ to present Israeli society through sport, was produced by Rino Tzror and Doron Tzabari: *Beit Shaan Seret Milchamah* (Beit Shaan A War Movie),¹⁷ which documented a tense football season in a backwater township on the geographic periphery populated primarily by low-income marginalised *Mizrachi* Jews, and where the battle for the ball became a form of class warfare. There is a link between football as a game and football as a social and cultural experience. It has been argued that the relationship between football, nationalism and the state moves along the tension between an integrative typology and a protest typology. The integrative typology of football is a vehicle for creating and promoting national solidarity, perceived

as contributing to unifying the population and the polity or the nation, framing sports as a collective endeavour epitomised by the presence of presidents and prime ministers at national championship finals. The protest typology of football maintains a strong association with concepts of national identity, and does not view football as “just a game” for the masses – rather, football is viewed as a vehicle of social and political protest that seeks to change the existing social order (Ben Porat 2002, 2003, 2007, 2009). In the context of Israeli football, the question of integration and/or protest constitutes a reference point that serves as a framework for addressing the tension that exists between the identity of the Arab sector within Israeli nationality as a state. This raises the question: Do documentary films on Arab minority football teams within a Jewish majority polity expose this tension and do they criticise the existing social order and call for change – and how?

Documentary films and Bnei Sakhnin

As mentioned, this chapter addresses two of the most prominent films about *Bnei Saknin* that were aired on prime time Israeli television in 2006:¹⁸ *Sakhnin Cha'yai* (Sakhnin, My Life) the work of Jewish Israeli filmmaker Ram Loevy, and *Echad Ba'Regel Echad Ba'Lev* (Hardball)¹⁹ by Israeli Arab filmmaker Suha Arraf. The two followed the team in the 2004–2005 football season, in which it was at risk of being relegated from the top division, the premier league. The films follow the team members, the coaches and the fans from Sakhnin, and bring to the screen the stories of Israel's Arab minority through the lens of the Bnei Sakhnin saga.

Loevy opens his film saying, in his own voice, “One of these days, when Israel will become a democratic state, they will still teach this match in history lessons.” The declaration envelopes the tension between the filmmaker's hope of a democratic future yet to come, and despair about changing the undemocratic reality that currently excludes Israeli Arabs as part of “the Nation” and puts them beyond the dominant Zionist narrative of the State of Israel. Loevy, in essence, points a finger at Jewish society for discriminating against its Arab minority, but at the same time he leaves room for hope through football (Bernstein & Mandelzis 2009).²⁰

At the opening of her film, Arraf focuses her camera on her own native society (the Israeli Arab community) and, against the backdrop of melancholy music, points out the frustration and pessimism, saying, “Within my people I dwell, but never understood the obsession, the pain, displacement and fear of failure that surrounds every football game in Arab society in Israel.” Arraf who, in her film, departs on a journey in which she seeks to solve this personal enigma and to uncover the subtext of football's dynamics for her community,

opens her text from a position of scepticism about the possibility that football can provide hope of national integration in the State of Israel.

As noted, documentary films cannot nowadays claim objectivity and therefore the best of them take a position on, or constitute a declarative statement of, the director's views (Fisher 2007).²¹ Upon close examination, it seems that Arraf and Loevy both substantiate Fisher's contention: both choose to give voice to declarative statements and personal views – "voices" that one observes throughout the text in both films – in the way the filmmakers chose to tell the story of Israeli Arabs through the saga of the Bnei Sakhnin football club.

From the opening of their films, both filmmakers send a message that leaves a long list of questions about the possibility that political-social tensions can find a solution through football. To borrow from Amir's (2007)²² comments that the documentary genre enables texts to be complicated, unresolved and uncertain, Loevy and Arraf – each in their own way – present a complicated texture, weaving between hope and despair and exploring the tension between football, national identity and 'multi-existence' (namely additional layers expending the meaning of co-existence) .

In the earlier work by Bernstein and Mandelzis (2009),²³ it was suggested that the implied message of the films is that Bnei Sakhnin's winning of the Israel National Cup constitutes "a sign of hope" and provides a platform for voiceless Israeli Arabs. Moreover, the films contend that the emergence of Arabs into the mainstream of Israeli football is not a passing episode but, rather, a realm for integration and assimilation into Israeli society (Bernstein & Mandelzis 2009: 162). By contrast, the current research seeks to focus on the tension, uncertainty and personal and collective ambiguity between football's being "a sign of hope" and "a vehicle for suppression"; between the option of visibility for Israeli Arabs and the impossibility of visibility; between opting for films that tell the story along the integration storyline – or the opposite.

The two documentary filmmakers position themselves as if they take responsibility for the processes that the Arab minority is undergoing, and they present themselves as ethical figures who have stepped forward to present the quandary of a underprivileged minority, and thus, perhaps, to gain the upper ground morally and to clear their conscience of guilt.²⁴ Both employ testimonials as a motif, testimonies that draw attention to voices that have been repressed or silenced in the past, a critical examination framed within a complex presence and uncertain future, against the backdrop of Israeli Arabs' traumatic past. Thus, the two films create two different narratives: the narrative of Arab football in Israel, and the national narrative of Israeli Arabs. The research at hand examines the two narratives from the perspective of a Jewish filmmaker and an Arab filmmaker.

Methodology

The research is based on narrative analysis in order to interpret and understand the meaning of the “realities” represented in the two chosen films. According to Tuval-Mashiach and Spector-Marzel (2010),²⁵ a narrative is a form of structured or organised dialogue based on sequence and consequence; for a text to be narrative, it must contain three elements: the narrator or a perspective, the plot, and actors. The plot must have a story line that transforms a sequence of events into a procession with meaning and internal logic (Kenyon 1996). Narrative research examines the organisation of events taking place to describe realities; interprets their meaning; and even shapes them (Lieblich et al., 1998).²⁶ According to Brunner (1990), the narrative is a kind of “world model” that can serve as a tool for constructing one’s world. This perceptual structure rests on the elements that characterise the narrative, such as: causal relationships in the narrative between events, the creation of a plot and everything the story weaves together, including description of the protagonists and their actions, their worlds and their consciousness (Tuval-Mashiach and Spector-Marzel, 2010).²⁷ In the introduction to their book “Narrative Research: Theory, Creation and Interpretation” (2010),²⁸ Tuval-Mashiach and Spector-Marzel list a number of researchers who have dealt with various aspects of the narrative analysis methodology, a list that shows the extent of the growing interest in this methodology over recent decades. In referring to Riessman and Speedy (2007) they go on to argue that since the 1980s narrative analysis is being used in social science research – including media studies – in addition to Humanities and Arts. Thus, we adapted principals of narrative analysis as detailed below:

The narrators and their films

Ram Loevy, a native-born Israeli Jew and one of the 1993 Israel Prize laureates, is among the most prominent documentary and feature filmmakers of political and social cinema in Israel, attempting to remind Israelis of what they like to avoid. Documentaries and feature films by Loevy both deal, for the most part, with marginal populations, social inequality and the Jewish-Arab conflict. He created *Sakbnin, My Life* for French television as part of a series on football aired in the course of the 2006 World Cup; in Israel, the film was broadcast on Israeli Channel 10. In an interview,²⁹ Loevy described how he was raised in “a very Israeli-Zionist-North Tel-Aviv-Ashkenazi environment” and said he thought that the Jewish experience during the Holocaust was the foundation of his own worldview and sensitivity to deprivation and social discrimination. He says:

... the fundamental core of hatred of the stranger and oppression of the stranger develop in any aggressive place with national or nationalist elements, no matter how one defines it. Weakness for the oppressed, no matter what

the reason, was always within me. Also the social issue and lack of equality among people was something I found myself feeling involved in and was obliged to take a stand, out of my own distress.

It seems that for Loevy, *Sakbnin, My Life* also emerges from the same perspective.

Suha Arraf is a Christian Arab born in the western Galilee. Her documentaries and feature films³⁰ deal with Arab men and women in the State of Israel – both within Israel and in the Territories. In her films, Arraf's perspective is sensitive and personal but not lacking a sharp and critical eye towards the Arab society of which she is a part. We found her documentary *Hardball* to be a social-political commentary on Arab society in Israel; in an Israeli context, its Arab perspective makes it unique. Arraf draws a portrait in her film of Arab football and the symbolic dimension it fulfills for Arab society as a microcosm of social gaps and tensions in Israel. Victory on the football field seems to be the only option for the Arab minority as a periphery to gain legitimacy from the Jewish majority – the oppressive “centre”. The film, produced with the support of the New Foundation for Cinema and Television in Israel and the German channel SWR, was aired on the Israeli Commercial channel 2 in April 2006.

The plots

The research at hand seeks to identify the overarching message within the story and to locate the juncture where a particular subject or topic provides an overall interpretive insight into the narrative and pinpoints secondary voices that are expressed as isolated textural units. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (2010: 26)³¹ argue that “Even when examining certain segments in depth within a full text, for example, the opening or ending of the story – the entire story and its linkages are taken into account.”³² The overall story was broken down by the researchers into isolated units that were examined and subjected to content analysis according to the norm in the social sciences in general, and mass communications research in particular. The underlying assumption was that elucidation of the systematic repetition of elements that characterise the whole story, as well as its assorted parts, will, when put together, reveal the “story line” or plot of each of the two films. The analysis was qualitative, based on interpretation of the findings; this was done with all due awareness that by its very nature such analysis will be multifaceted and the texts open to different interpretations.

Actors and repeated components

Deconstruction of the story into separate units revealed a number of components repeated in both films: the presence of Arab communities on the map, concentrated as they are in the north of Israel;³³ the description of the situa-

tion in the city of Sakhnin; the saga of Bnei Sakhnin taking the State Cup; the Bnei Sakhnin football team's fans and the construction of the Doha stadium in Sakhnin and its significance;³⁴ the outbreak of violence in October 2000 and the grief it caused;³⁵ and recollection of another violent incident during the 1976 (Land Day).³⁶

The narrative analysis led us to the following results.

Between national 'multi-existence' and non-existence

Loevy's football story is faithful to the chronology that begins with Bnei Sakhnin's decisive game for the National Cup in 2004, in which the team won the Cup, and closes with Bnei Sakhnin's decisive game in the premier league in 2005, in which the team was saved at the last minute from being relegated to a lower league. In the course of the film, Loevy follows the season's games as Bnei Sakhnin battled for a place in the premier league. Arraf on the other hand, does not remain faithful to the chronological axis. She begins her film with one of the dramatic games in the 2005 season, five matches before the close of the season, when Bnei Sakhnin was already ranked at the bottom of the league table. The saga of the team's winning the National Cup is presented only in the middle of the film. She closes it with the first game of the 2006 season that took place in Bnei Sakhnin's new home stadium³¹ against Betar Jerusalem,³⁷ a match that ended in a violent clash between the fans of the two teams.

Despite the different order of the games in the two films, the story line is identical and describes the team's ultimate survival in the premier league. While it would appear that the catalyst for producing both films was Bnei Sakhnin's winning of the State Cup, in fact, the films themselves revolve around the team's faltering attempts to keep its place in the league and within the Israeli narrative. Even though the films show Israel as a country that enables 'multi-existence' through football, the very idea that social integration can develop this way is challenged by both filmmakers.

Fictitious visibility – "We're on the map"

Throughout her film, Arraf corresponds with the loaded expression in Israeli culture: "We're on the Map!", an expression that originates in the Jewish-Israeli sports world.³⁸ At the beginning of the film, Arraf says that "those who succeeded in putting the city on the map are no other than Sakhnin's football team", and in saying so she marks the dialectic between the experience of Arab visibility that winning the National Cup brought and an expression that "belongs" to the Jewish-Israeli sports world.

A journey over the geographical map of northern Israel appears twice in Arraf's film, and constitutes proof of the presence of Israeli Arabs "on the map". At the beginning of the film, a red line traces her travels, weaving through a number of Arab communities in which a similar visual structure repeats itself:³⁹ shots of empty streets, large groups of people sitting tensely watching a football game, while Arraf's camera pans the faces of the viewers, a witness to their roars, applause and prayers, their tense faces and their elation at every goal scored and disappointment at every goal missed.⁴⁰

The second time that Arraf underscores the physical map, it is a journey she makes through various Arab communities, accompanied by the filmmaker's description of events in October 2000. Each time the red line on the map, weaving among the Arab cities and villages, stops, viewers see a mass of Arabs throwing rocks at the Israeli police and border patrol forces whose response is to fire rubber and live bullets at the demonstrators. Thus Arraf positions the tension of the football story and the events of October 2000 "on the map" – literally and figuratively. The fast pace of this road trip builds a tension between the fact that in practice there are many Arab communities in Israel, and the need of the Arab public to demonstrate their visibility – through football and then through violent insurrection.⁴¹ This tension between visibility and invisibility is expressed by a Sakhnin resident, Ali Abu-Rabia, who explains the significance of winning the National Cup: "The Arab public doesn't view this only as an athletic achievement, rather they want to prove that the Arab public is on the nation's map. We are a million Arabs that live in the state." Abu-Rabia gives voice to the hope that football can indeed put a million invisible Israeli Arabs "on the map".

Loevy presents the 2004 National Cup playoffs in which Bnei Sakhnin played against Hapoel Haifa, noting this was "the first time in the history of the Jewish state that an Arab team played in the Cup final". From this emotion-loaded declaration of such a significant event in the history of Israel, marking football as an integrative tool and a source of belonging, Loevy moves – almost without taking a breath – to the story of the city Sakhnin. Loevy puts Sakhnin on the map of northern Israel in a verbal and visual description of the city. First of all he positions Sakhnin "about twenty kilometres east of Akko",⁴² against the backdrop of pictures showing how poor Sakhnin is, saying, "Most of [Sakhnin's] lands were appropriated,⁴³ there's no industry, no public parks, minimal welfare services, the unemployment rate is among the highest in Israel." Through these words and images, Loevy presents the discriminatory, depressing and grim socioeconomic circumstances from which the Bnei Sakhnin team emerged as a winner, and points a critical finger at discriminatory national politics from which the narrative of Israel's Arab minority operates.

Loevy's film shifts between the hope provided by the groundbreaking and triumphal participation of an Arab team in the National Cup final playoffs and

the despair from the political and social order reflected in the film. Arraf turns her camera inward to the Arab minority's experience of invisibility, and uses the text as a critical tool to castigate her own society for being satisfied with experiencing a fictitious visibility through football.

Between the sounds of fireworks and gunfire

Arraf and Loevy unroll the tension between football, war, national identity and 'multi-existence' and present it through the celebration of Bnei Sakhnin's victory in the National Cup. Loevy chooses to show the sight and sound of fireworks, the faces of rejoicing fans and the shining cup, all of which are then replaced by the sounds of gunfire and warfare, and he presents an IDF tank injuring Palestinian demonstrators in Rafiah on the day after the winning of the Cup. In this manner, Loevy adds another tier to the complexity of Israeli-Arab identities that bonds them with the realities of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In his film, Loevy maintains the tension experienced between Jews and Arabs in Israel, and between Israelis and Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

Arraf links the tension in contemporary realities by tying the victory celebration on the football field to events in October 2000, as a struggle that exists between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Israel. The celebration of an Arab team winning the Cup sparked a cascade of emotions among both the Jewish and Arab communities in Israel in conjunction with the already existing tension between Jews and Arabs. The filmmakers present hope alongside oppression, epitomised by the mingling of the fireworks and the sounds of gunfire between the groundbreaking nature of the joy over winning the Cup and the realities of the national struggle for 'multi-existence'.

In both documentaries, the juxtaposition of fireworks and weapons is brought out through two episodes of violent clashes between Jews and Arabs accompanied by footage dedicated to expressing the pain of bereaved parents.⁴⁴ Abed Abu Salach, a resident of Sakhnin whose son was shot by Israeli security forces in the course of the October 2000 clash, tells Loevy about the pain of losing his son, his sense of the injustice towards Israeli perpetrators, and his feeling that "Arab blood" is cheaper than Jewish blood. Further on, one sees Salach at the National Inquiry Commission (the Or Commission).⁴⁵ In one sequence Salach had sought to attack one of the testifying policeman and was removed from the courtroom. His cries of protest fade out, replaced by footage of him at home and a look of despair written across his face. Loevy moves from the story of personal anguish at the loss of his son to the football match in which he feels a personal stake in the outcome, saying: "... It's a matter of life and death ... It's the last solution ... There's no option but to win." Thus Loevy juxtapositions the physical death of Salach's

son with the metaphorical death felt by him so tangibly should his team lose the football match. The two images merge to represent the complexity of the Arab minority's existence as a whole – suspended between existence and its national impossibility.

Later in the film, Abu-Salach appears again in footage of the first match of the Premier League, when Bnei Sakhnin beat Betar Jerusalem 4:1. He embraces a Jewish fan named Amram Goldin, whose son was killed in a Palestinian suicide bombing in 2002. Leovy thus presents viewers with a hopeful view of relations between Jews and Arabs: The two bereaved parents whose sons were killed “by the other side” – are embracing, an act made possible by football. As the two hug one another and kiss each other goodbye, Salach says, “It’s the same anguish, it’s the same elation” as if to underscore the relationship reciprocity between them. The tension between their pain over the situation between Jews and Arabs in Israel, and between the shared elation over a football victory, was shown as a metaphor of the tension between fireworks and gunfire.

Arraf brings Faraj Ganaim to her documentary. He is a resident of Sakhnin whose son was also killed in October 2000. He appears in a demonstration, holding a poster of his bleeding son, next to Abu-Salach and together with a handful of other people.⁴⁶ After a few words about the injustice done to Israeli Arabs in October 2000, Arraf moves to one of the demonstrators, who explains the poor turnout for the demonstration, saying there is an important football match that day. As in Leovy’s film, Ganaim and Abu-Salach begin to talk about the game as if it is a life and death issue: “Victory in this match will decide our fate,” says Ganaim. Arraf matches this with the pictures of the dead young men covered in blood. This editorial decision locates the metaphorical life of football as a fateful matter, side by side with the October 2000 events that determined the fate of the two sons. Abu-Salach echoes Ganaim’s sentiments, adding, “It’s a match of life or death for Sahkin and the entire Arab sector.” The proximity that Arraf creates, between football hope and the despair caused by the violence turned on them and their sons, underscores the tension between the fireworks and gunfire sounds in reality – it seems that Arraf herself seeks to express her own despair at the way football dazzles the eyes of her own people, preventing them from dealing with the frustrating realities they live.

The two films blur the line for viewers between the experience of loss and the fans’ hope of experiencing a life of visibility and multinational existence through football. In both cases, this tension engenders the scepticism of the filmmakers to the thought that football can be an instrument of social change, as they seem to view football as a tranquiliser.

Football as an instrument of suppression

In both documentaries the filmmakers deal with the argument that football is an instrument to suppress national protest by Israeli Arabs. While Arraf does so through criticism of her own Arab community, Loevy does so through censure of the Jewish State and national politics in Israel. Loevy speaks about this through “witnesses”⁴⁷ such as Abu-Palestin (a Muslim religious personage), Muchamed Tarbi (a member of the Sakhnin town council) and Loevy’s own narration. For instance, about protests by the Arab minority against Israeli policy, Loevy says, “In recent years these have been quieter demonstrations and the number of injured are few [and] there is a link between this phenomenon and the success of the Sakhnin football team.” Tamir Sorek, a Jewish sociologist who presents his opinion in Loevy’s film, says that among the Arab public there is an accusation that football is harmful to the Arab sector’s political struggle against inequality, against state appropriation of Arab land and against unequal budgets for development. Sorek (2006),⁴⁸ who studied Arab football in Israel, claims that generations of Israeli governments have provided financial support to Arab sports in order to suppress Arabs’ national consciousness and struggle, and the saga of Bnei Sakhnin embodies the problems of conflicting national identities that are inherent in Jewish-Arab relations.⁴⁹

Arraf touches on the accusation of suppression through football only once, through a discussion among some of men – including Ganaim mentioned above – in which they raise ideas of a conspiracy after the events of October 2000: that it had been “decided” that Sakhnin “would be allowed to win the National Cup and be elevated to the top [of the Israeli sports world] and thus redirect the attention of the Arabs, and they would forget the dead.” The direct discussion of whether the Israeli government uses football as a vehicle to suppress national protest does not lead Arraf to condemn the country – rather, she berates her own community who have forgotten the dead. She argues that they were forgotten because of football, positioning the argument next to a point in the discussion when a bereaved father states: “Our memory is alive”. It seems as if the claim that football has become the tranquiliser to deaden national protest prompts both filmmakers to turn their focus to the hope and despair of the fans.

The fans

Arraf’s film is studded with many sentiments voiced by fans that underscore her claim that the Arab football public is obsessed with winning; that “the fate of Sakhnin hangs on the game”; and that “it’s not just a game, it’s more than football, it’s a matter of identity, to be or not to be”. One of the most extreme claims in the film equates Bnei Sakhnin’s winning National Cup to the Muslim

victory over the Christians in 1187: “Arabs in this country rejoiced twice in the past centuries,” says one of the fans, “on the day Saladin expelled the crusaders and the day Sakhnin won the National Cup.”⁵⁰ Arraf’s text brings in many voices exclaiming about the importance of football and, through them, explores the meaning, in Arab society, of football, that transforms an athletic achievement into a historical-political watershed event: an Arab victory over the Jews.

In contrast with Arraf, Loevy presents the possibility of ‘multi-existence’ through two key Bnei Sakhnin fans: Awani Shahin, an Arab, and Adi Gross, a Jewish woman. The two believe that football can be an instrument of integration among peoples: “If this leads to a tiny bit of fraternity, that’s good for me,” says Awani, and Adi Gross echoes that fraternity by declaring her love of the Arab team. The optimistic declarations of the two are placed in proximity to scenes from the el-Aqsa Intifada⁵¹ showing clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians, juxtaposing the positive footage of friendship and coexistence with scenes that underscore the deep political cleavages between Jews and Arabs in Israel, but leaves interpretation to the viewer.

Loevy features the Arab fan Awani, an intelligent and liberal person who seeks peace. But the filmmaker also deliberately shows him in his butcher’s shop as he cuts up meat with a bloodied knife while talking about the possibility of a close and loving relationship between Jews and Arabs. Thus, Loevy juggles the image of the threatening Arab and the peace-seeking Arab who symbolises the possibility of ethnic diversity. Another way in which Loevy plays with the image of the menacing Arab is through the personage of another fan, a masked Arab fan at the beginning of the film. The viewers see the masked face of a Sakhnin fan accompanying the games, with a wide open mouth revealing vampire-like teeth, sinister black eyes and thinning black hair that creates a sense of tension and apprehension. Only at the end of the film is the mask taken off – to expose a smiling and pleasant young Arab fan. Loevy delivers a critical message regarding the deeply rooted images within Israeli society of the menacing Arab by unmasking this stereotype.

In her critique, Arraf also shows Arab fans who are hostile to Jews. There is, for example, Yusuf Azazama, a fan who says, “ever since I’ve attended matches, I’m a super-racist” as he cuts open a watermelon on which he has carved the words “Jewish terrorists”, adding that he would go to prison yet must say what is inside him.⁵² Arraf also presents the mutual hostility between Jews and Arabs through the game that matched Beni Sakhnin and Betar Jerusalem,⁵³ with a sequence in which fans of the respective teams hurl insults at each other from the stands prior to the game. Arraf then raises the tension another notch with footage of Bnei Sakhnin fans chanting “Allah is great”⁵⁴ during the playing of Israel’s national anthem before the start of the match.⁵⁵ Arraf, perhaps because she herself is Arab, doesn’t shy away from presenting the racist side of her own community. In essence, Arraf opts to present the fans through a protest

typology of the two sides rather than an integration typology, and criticises her own people, charging that their world is narrowly circumscribed by football matches and football stadiums. She ends her film in realizing that [in terms of identity politics] “the [real] ball is in another court”.

Loevy by contrast, transmits a message in the subtext that is based on the integration typology of football that exists on the playing field, but only on it and not in society or in government policy. Society and government machinery have yet to give the Arab minority equal standing beyond the soccer field. Loevy, having come full circle, concludes his film by repeating the protest that opens it: “When the State of Israel will be democratic, our children will learn about this game [of Bnei Sakhnin and the State Cup] in their history books.”

Genuine visibility – the Doha stadium

In Arraf’s film, Bnei Sakhnin’s new home field, the Doha stadium, is presented as embodying the fans’ hope for victories, for security and for a new beginning after a season of losses. Ironically, the first game played in the stadium was against Betar Jerusalem⁵⁶ and the stadium – a symbol of hope and change – turned into a war zone with scores of fans injured and arrested on both sides. Arraf sums up the significance pessimistically, against a background of melancholy music, saying “At the end of this tumultuous journey, I understood that the ball is in another court.” In so doing, Arraf positions herself as one who does not view football as a path to social change that would make the Arab minority visible, and with civic equality, in Israel.

Loevy suggests that change will come only by grappling with the tough issues surrounding national identity and sociopolitical existence in the State of Israel – the creation of a collective identity that encompasses both Jews and Arabs. Loevy, who refrains from explicit ideological statements, addresses the distress of his protagonists with sympathy and empathy. The result is a protest film that presents the complex realities of an Arab minority in a Jewish majority polity.

Summary and conclusions

This study deals with social, cultural and class cleavages that have an impact on the integrity of nations and their solidarity, particularly in the case of ethnic-national minorities in a national majority society. This was addressed using two documentary films that mobilise sports to examine the social-national realm, and present football, *inter alia*, as a social-cultural experience of the sociopolitical environment in which it is created (McDonald 2007). The “marriage” between football and nationality is not unique to Israel, and has been part and parcel

of an age in which sport is perceived as a national asset (Hobsbawm 1994). To understand the relationship between football, nationalism and statehood, Ben Porat (2000, 2003, 2009) suggests two models that demonstrate the tension between integration and protest as a point of reference for the problematic identity of the Arab sector within Israeli nationality. By winning the National Cup, Bnei Sakhnin became the “Cinderella” of Israeli football, engendering mixed feelings on the domestic level and generating tremendous interest internationally, sparking documentation of the event as a metaphor for the social and political order in Israel.

The work at hand examines two films and the way each filmmaker, one Jewish, one Arab, addresses the story from their own cultural and national perspective. Both documentaries expose the complex, problematic and often harsh daily realities of Israel’s Arab minority in a Jewish majority polity, and give expression to the traditional commitment of documentary film to creating and promoting a particular worldview, on a national level (Duvdevani 2010) using football as a lens, or a metaphor. Both filmmakers see football as a microcosm of the social gaps and the tensions for Israeli Arabs burdened by their peripheral status – marginalised in terms of self-ascription as well as geography and culture – where the only option on the face of it, at least for the present, remains gaining visibility and leverage, accruing social capital and obtaining legitimacy from the “oppressive centre” (and bolstering one’s own self-esteem) through victory in sports.

By breaking down the documentaries into units, the research shows several themes that are repeated in both films, including the map of Arab cities and villages in northern Israel that can be seen as a “fictitious visibility”. The exposure of Sakhnin’s dismal reality was coupled with the winning of the 2004 State Cup and with the juxtaposition of human loss in the events of October 2000. Symbolically, this was also expressed by the links made between football, war, national identity and ethnic diversity and which exposed the tension between fireworks and gunfire. Motifs such as the “Land Day”, Sakhnin fans and the Doha stadium’s significance completed the documentaries’ stories.

The narrative told by each filmmaker was created through an eye aware of what it all means, weighing up to what extent football can be a vehicle for social change and to what extent it is merely a calming act to prevent social unrest. Loevy does this by condemning the State of Israel and its national politics. Arraf does so by berating the Arab community in Israel for the predominant role football plays in their lives.

The Israel-Arab conflict and cleavages between Jews and Arabs within Israeli society have been analysed within the context of news in the media, feature films and even reality television. However, this study shows that sports documentaries are also a sound research field for the understanding of national identity discourses in Israel, and can, indeed, be so around the globe.

Notes

1. Called by the Jewish majority "Israeli Arabs" or "the Arab sector" and by the Arab community "48 Arabs" or "Domestic Arabs" – nomenclature that reflects conflicting narratives (and Arab demands for The Right of Return of Arab refugees who are "pre-'48 Arabs".)
2. According to Israel's Bureau of Statistics, 2008 (released on 16 December 2009), Arabs comprise fifteen per cent of the population of Israel.
3. Shadur (2007) cites as examples *Arna's Children* (2003, directors Juliano Mer Khamis and Danniell Danniell) about a children's theatre group in Jenin in the Palestinian territories and *Jenin Jenin* (2002, director Mohammed Bakri) that charges that Israel committed a massacre in Jenin during the Israeli defence force's April 2002 Defensive Shield Campaign.
4. Duvdevani 2010.
5. Arav, D. and Gurevich, D. (forthcoming): *Encyclopedia of Culture and Contemporary Thought*, Tel-Aviv: Babel (in Hebrew)
6. Their films, most less than a minute in length, document daily comings and goings, material that was a source of enjoyment for both filmmakers and their audiences, and generated much interest. (Gurvitz and Arav, forthcoming)
7. Winston, B. (1995). *Claiming the Real: the Documentary Film Revisited*. London: British Film Institute.
8. Rotha, P., R. Sinclair and R. Griffith R. (1963). *Documentary Film*. (3rd revised and enlarged edition) New York: Hastings House.
9. Ibid.
10. Ben Porat, A. (2009). "To Respect the Anthems: Nationality and Ethnicity in Sport". In Galili, Y., Lidor R., and Ben Porat A. (eds.) *On the Playing Field – Sport and Society at the Beginning of the Third Millennium* (in Hebrew). Open University Press.
11. Fisher, D. (2007), "Intro" in Amir M. (ed.) *Documentally – Articles on Israeli Documentary Cinema* (in Hebrew), Am Oved Publishers and the New Foundation for Cinema and Television
12. Amir M., (2007), "Intro", pp. 11-16 in Amir M (ed.), *Documentally – Articles on Israeli Documentary Cinema* (in Hebrew), Am Oved Publishers and the New Foundation for Cinema and Television
13. Dubdevani, Sh. (2010) *In First Person, Camera – Personal Documentary Cinema in Israel* (in Hebrew) , Keter Publishers.
14. In both print and electronic media, for example sport is a category of its own and television has 'sports news corners' sporting event broadcasts and special sports channels.
15. Research of sports documentaries, the juncture between cinema and television research and sports studies, as well as the typology of sport documentaries can be found in the article by *Situating the Sport Documentary* by Ian McDonald (2007)
16. In its wake, additional films were made, including: *My Mom's First Olympics* (1997), *Beitar Budapest Jerusalem* (1998), *Agadat Deshe* (1998), *The Holy Cup* (1999), *Raging Dove* (2002), *Watermarks* (2004), *Sba'dia* (2005), *Katamon-Barcelona* (2009).
17. *Beit Shean A War Movie* received the Israel Cinema prize for 1996
18. Other films include, most notably, two documentaries produced from an external point of view, i.e. directed by non Israelis *We Too Have No Other Land* (2006) and Bnei Sakhnin: *After the Cup: Sons of Sakhnin* (2010). Both are beyond the scope of the current study, which focuses on the works of an Israeli Jew and an Israeli Arab as part of an internal Israeli dialogue.
19. *Echad Ba'Regel Echad Ba'Lev* is a play on words of the Hebrew idiom for "say one things and think another". The film's official English title is *Hardball*.
20. Bernstein A. and Menelzis L. "Ichud Bnei Sakhnin in Documentary Discourse: The Story of an Arab National Championship Cup in a Jewish State" in *Social Issues in Israel* (in Hebrew), Ariel University Center. Issue 9, December 2009.
21. Fisher, 2007
22. Amir, 2007
23. Ibid
24. A argument also raised by Duvdevani (2010) in regard to personal documentary cinema in Israel.

25. Tuval-Mashiach, R. and Spector-Marzel, G., "Narrative Research: Definitions and Contexts" (in Hebrew) in Tuval-Mashiach, R. and Spector-Marzel, G. (eds.) *Narrative Research: Theory, Production and Interpretation* (in Hebrew). Mofet Institute and Magnus Press. Pgs 7-42. 2010.
26. Lieblch, A. Tuval Mashiach, R. and Zilber T. "Between the Whole and Its Parts, and Between Content and Form". In Kassan, L. and Krumer Nevo, M. (eds.) *Data Analysis in Qualitative Research* (in Hebrew), Ben-Gurion University press. Pgs 21-42. 2010.
27. Tuval-Mashiach, R. and Spector-Marzel, G., "Narrative Research: Definitions and Contexts" (in Hebrew) in Tuval-Mashiach, R. and Spector-Marzel, G. (eds.) *Narrative Research: Theory, Production and Interpretation* (in Hebrew). Mofet Institute and Magnus Press. Pgs 7-42. 2010.
28. *Ibid*
29. Nahum Moheach "Towards Retrospect and the New Cinema: A Talk with Ram Loevy," *Habama*, January 2, 2006. at <http://www.habama.co.il/Pages/Description.aspx?Subj=5&Area=2&ArticleID=2601>
30. Her films have won prizes in Israel and internationally – including a 2004 Grand Prix Award for the feature film based on her screenplay *The Syrian Bride* which also won the Best Film Award at the 2004 Montréal World Film Festival.
31. *Ibid*.
32. In their previous research (Bernstein and Mandelzis, 2009) only the opening and closing footage of the film were analyzed.
33. On the map of Israel there are 120 Arab settlements, most in the north of the country.
34. Events in October 2000 in the Israeli Arab sector began as a demonstration of solidarity with Palestinian violence that erupted with the outbreak of the *el-Aqsa Intifada*. This was the second time that Arab Israelis clashed in violent demonstrations with the State of Israel.
35. Escalation of the October 2000 demonstration to rock-throwing at traffic reached a peak when 12 Israeli Arab citizens were killed by Israeli forces (Police and Border Patrol personnel) called in to restore order.
36. The building of the Doha Stadium – dubbed "The Peace Stadium" was underwritten by funding from Qatar and the State of Israel, and was inaugurated in 2005. Prior to that the, team's stadium did not meet the standard required to hold Premier League games and the team played its "home games" in Haifa and Nazareth; the new stadium was perceived as "recognition" of Sakhnin's new status as a "first-rate team."
37. Betar Jerusalem fans have gotten a reputation of being right-wing and racist and their behavior is controversial among the Jewish public, as well.
38. In 1977, Israel championship basketball team Macabi Tel-Aviv won the European Cup for the first time. The captain of the team Tal Brody declared on the court minutes afterwards: "We're on the map and we'll stay on the map – not only in sports. In Everything! – coining a new idiom in Hebrew discourse used in a host of situations since then: "We're on the map."
39. The repetitive visual structure includes: the name of the community, a long-shot of an empty street – then a room in a house where a large group of men, women and children sit in front of the television watching a football match.
40. We are not witness to rejoicing victories or mourning defeats , thus for the viewer Arraf transforms Arab public experiences as one of ongoing tension, and often presents a game solely through the lens of the fans caught on camera, without any footage of the actual game taking place..
41. It seems that in addition to the dialogue Arraf raises in her film between visibility and invisibility by mapping the course of football/violence, Arraf's documentary text also employs an actual (visible) map to reveal the sheer number of Arab communities that exist, leaving an indelible impression of their 'presence' on the viewers.
42. Akko is a mixed town, both Jews and Arabs live in it
43. State appropriation of land from Arab communities for public use
44. Two of the 13 Arabs killed in October 2000 were residents of Sakhnin.
45. Called to investigate the sequence of events that led to the death of 12 Israeli Arab citizens (and one Palestinian) that probed charges of police misconduct and excessive use of force in response to the violent demonstrations in support of the el-Aqsa Intifada.

46. In Loevy's film viewers are aware that Abu Salach is also a bereaved father, but in the sequence in Arraf's film this fact is not mentioned.
47. The 'witnesses' who tell the story are considered a reservoir of knowledge. They are persons not directly involved emotionally in the saga presented; rather, they are an external voice that speaks about a phenomenon.
48. Sorek, T. (2007) *Arab Soccer in a Jewish State: The Integrative Enclave*, Cambridge University Press.
49. Sorek, T. (2007). Soccer Fandom and Citizenship in Isreal. Middle East Report. <http://plaza.ufl.edu/qtsorek/articles/SorekMERIP.pdf>
50. After 88 years of Christian Crusader rule, Saladin restored Muslim rule over the el-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (where according to Islamic teachings, the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven).
51. The 2000-2005 *el-Aqsa Intifada* was the second time in the history of the State of Israel that the Arab population west of the Jordan River engaged in violent opposition to Israel (the first being the 1987-1993 *First Intifada*).
52. The film also shows Azazama making a huge poster with the emblem of Bnei Sakhnin (a red horse) walking over Betar Jerusalem's emblem (a golden menorah or Jewish candelabra), and Azazama urging family members to take Palestinian flags to the match.
53. As mentioned Betar Jerusalem has a reputation for being Right-wing and racist
54. In Arabic *Allah bu achbar* – a religious declaration of faith, a loaded expression in Jewish ears since this part of Islamic prayer has become a 'war cry' exclaimed by Palestinian just before suicide bombers blow themselves up or commit some other mass casualty attack from which they may not emerge alive.
55. Israeli Arabs do not sing Israel's national anthem – *Hatikvah* due to the Jewish-Zionist sentiments in the lyrics ("As long as in the heart the soul of a Jew beats true"), yet chanting "Allah is Great" during the singing of the national anthem was meant to humiliate or insult Jews.
56. As already noted, meetings between *Bnei Sakhnin* and *Betar Jerusalem* are particularly loaded with the potential for outbursts or clashes.

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Chapter 14

Learning to Become a Football Star

Representations of Football Fan Culture in Swedish Public Service Television for Youth

Britt-Marie Ringfjord

In Swedish Public Service Television, sports journalism aimed at children has been broadcast since November 1983. It is a success story of how TV has helped to nurture Swedish children and make them accustomed to practising sport themselves, and to watching sports news and sports events on the same TV channel as they become adults.

The present article is a content analysis of how the constructions of Swedish football culture are reported and presented by the popular Swedish Public Service TV program *Little Mirror of Sports*.¹ It will demonstrate how media content in public service television may serve as ideal representations of sport and football in general and, in particular, provide representations of gender identities and ethnicity for young football-playing girls and boys. Our understanding of the relationship between sport and media may also be increased by studying a sports program produced for young Swedish citizens.

The main question is how football is represented in *Little Mirror of Sports*. In the analysis and discussion, I will focus on the processes of football journalism, youth culture, gender identities, ethnicity and mediated cultural meaning.

The total number of newly-produced and broadcast *Little Mirror of Sports* programs per year is thirty-two. The program is broadcast once a week, except during the summer, when reruns from the previous season are shown. The selected forty-one episodes on which this analysis is based, consist of nineteen sequences from 2007 and twenty-two sequences from 2008. The selection and demarcation has been guided by focusing on football content. I shall concentrate on sequences containing football reportage about two famous football players, Marta Vieira da Silva and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, also including some other features such as the football culture of other national football stars and of the football-playing boys and girls in the selected content.

Media content constructs and communicates ideals for gender identities. In this case, I find it especially interesting how a sports program for children and teenagers is interrelated with establishing identity processes in football culture.

These structures are often referred to as the media-sport-complex where the analyses of global power relations are connected to perspectives on political economy and culture. (See Miller *et. al.* 2001; Roche 2000; Boyle & Haynes 2000)

Become the best

The *Little Mirror of Sport* may be described in three categories: the program structure, the opening sequence and the program management style. Three main recurring themes also appear: sport stories, quizzes, and an interview with a famous sports star. In each section there is a fluent mix of studio recorded pieces and some pre-recorded segments on sport from the community of sport-active children or sports stars. The method used here is to direct the analysis with the specific goal of deconstructing media content. The categories often deal with the constructions of media texts' use of different codes, language, studio environment, design, props, communication style and dress codes (*mise-en-scène*) and, in addition, how the technical equipment used to create and produce the phenomenon of sport is adapted to the TV medium and its audiences. In order to interpret a mediated text, one must first break down the production's parts, which are analysed as signs and codes, and this has consequences for how to make sense of sport. To get answers to my questions, I first needed to break up the program structure into episodes and sequences that describe the program design. I have also divided the program structure into design categories that I believe are central to how we perceive and interpret a program like *Little Mirror of Sports*. (Selby & Cowdery 1995: 3ff, 123ff)

To be eligible, one must first participate in the elimination competitions with questions conducted on the program's website; through this process, children are selected to participate in the quiz taking place in the studio. The final prize is often a trip to a sporting event. The first prize in the spring episode of 5 May 2007 was a trip to Italy to watch Zlatan playing in Milan and to meet him in person.

Every episode starts with the theme song "Champion" that was sung in 2007-2008 by a young Swedish singer, Amy Diamond,² popular among Swedish children and teenagers. The refrain goes "Champion, champion, you've got to go for number one. Ain't that what makes a champion?" The theme song, together with rapidly passing images of sporting children mixed with sequences from famous sports events, supports the message that this is a programme for children interested in sport. The music and the lyrics reinforce the impression that sport is fun, with lots of action, but we also get the impression that if only you strive hard enough it is possible to be number one.

A brief summary of some episodes from 2007 will show the quantity of football reports during this year. In April 2007, an interview is broadcast with Lotta Schelin, winger and forward. Prior to Schelin's inclusion in the FIFA Women's

World Team in China later in 2007, this was shown as a current news event, important to all of us in football culture. At the time she was also leader of the shooting league of the Swedish ladies' premier league and the winner of the diamond ball 2006, an award to the most talented female football player.³ When she talks about this prize and answers more questions about the technique of playing good football her eyes sparkle and she supports her words with gestures:

... it was like a dream that came true. I couldn't believe it was true ... You should fixate on the goal and kick the football with the inner side of your foot. It is to trick your opponent by quickly changing direction.

She is a role model for the young viewers: the female star having achieved success. She stresses the joy of performing well – football is fun – and implicitly she communicates that the success is worthy of the prize.

The program's serial Little Mirrors Football Academy is headed by Marcus Allbäck, formerly a famous forward in Sweden's national football team and, at the time of these episodes, assistant coach for the team. Since 9 October 2007, the program has been introduced by a cheerful voice-over: "Today we kick off our football academy and, in the quiz, win match tickets for Zlatan's Inter playing in Milan. Your new coach Marcus Allbäck shows how to improve your shot." We meet Marcus in a space of playing fields surrounded by high rise apartment buildings. Marcus shows how to handle the ball. The story is dull and flat. His being an idol, for the young viewers, seems to rely on his former star status as a player and successful scorer in the Swedish national team and with Heerenveen, Aston Villa and FC København. The staging is not attractive in this suburban setting where the only interaction is between Marcus and the invisible camera team.

However, the subsequent sequence about Yanko Marca from Sierra Leone, a teenager born in 1995, is much more interesting. Yanko is playing with the Swedish boy team Brommapojkarna 1993. He seems to be older than his twelve or thirteen years, and we can hear that his voice is already breaking. This report shows the whole team playing a match, and includes a short interview with Yanko. According to the team's coach, Yanko "is a dangerous scorer, big and strong". This statement suggests that there will be a future career and thus Yanko serves as a role model for the TV-watching, football-playing boys and girls. The statement that Yanko is dangerous, big and strong may appeal more to boys in their early teens than to football-playing girls, as the western ideal of femininity does not include being a big girl (if this is referring to size), neither in the community nor in the football arena. It is especially important to preserve heteronormative gender roles predefined by culture as feminine and masculine qualities (Caudwell 2006: 152f). On the other hand, the term "big" may sometimes refer to be a great and skilful footballer with a lot of self-confidence – and this of course is the main message to watchers of this program, despite gender differences.

In September of the same year, there is an interview in Beijing with a Chinese team of girls aged fourteen. Through an interpreter, two of the girls ask questions about the coming matches to the Swedish goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl and the forward Lotta Schelin (Lotta might already be familiar to children who regularly follow football news). The interaction between the young football-playing girls and the players from the Swedish national ladies football team represents the repeated story about the importance of good preparation, good training habits, and how to focus in a match.

In October, we meet Simon playing with Brommapojkarna. He is twelve years old according to the name tag on the screen, and his dream is to play for the national football team as an adult. He competes in a challenge with Christian “Chippen” Wilhelmsson to see who does the best football tricks. Anyone may win – just face the challenge. Chippen has to confess: “I didn’t stand a chance! That was impressive!” So the winner is Simon! At the time, Christian Wilhelmsson was the winger for Bolton, the English league team, and he tells us that he also dreamed of playing for the national team when he started playing at the age of five or six.

In the October program we also visit Barcelona football academy where we meet Edu, who plays defence for the boys’ team 14⁴ of Barcelona FC. He lives with his family in Tarragona, about a hundred kilometres from Barcelona. He goes to school in Tarragona, and after school a taxi picks him up to take him to the training in Barcelona. His days are long, and he seldom gets back home before eleven o’clock at night. You have to work hard to become a star.

Much of the content in *Little Mirror of Sport* deals with teaching children the proper sporting techniques. The overall topic in 2007 is the need to make serious efforts at improving your skills as a young boy or girl, in order to achieve success in the future. Some sequences show role models for kids who want to play football: the famous stars or, perhaps, other teenagers playing in junior teams. It is important, however, to stress that the ideal of being a famous football star is presented as a success story that is possible for every child to achieve. To be number one in football you’ll need to strive for number one (the program does not present any alternative stories about what happens if you should fail to reach the top). These stories also support the main message of how to become “the Champion – the very best!” Being number one is the ultimate aim.

The female idol Marta Vieira da Silva

For background we need to look in detail at an episode of *Little Mirror of Sports* from 7 April 2008. This episode focuses⁵ on Marta Vieira da Silva, the famous forward in the Swedish women’s football team Umeå Sports Club (Umeå IK). Together with this team, Marta won the Swedish championship in 2005,

2006 and 2007, and the Champions League in 2004 and 2007. Among several international awards at this time she received the World Cup Golden ball and Golden Boat in 2007. Marta is said to have been a very influential role model for young football-playing girls in Sweden, since in 2001 she was hired out from Brazilian team Belo Horizonte and started her international career in Umeå IK.

A short introduction of the parts to this program is followed by some swift sequences of Marta in different situations during football matches, where she represents Umeå IK and the Brazilian women's football team in the world championship. Some clips from the Swedish football gala show Marta together with Zlatan Ibrahimovic, receiving awards.

The interesting fact about these two football stars is that they have different ethnic origins, and that they have both won the hearts of the Swedish football fans. Marta came from Brazil to play in Swedish Umeå, and Zlatan was born in Sweden but has his roots in the Balkans. Together they represent the international elite in football, and they are probably role models for several ethnic groups in Swedish society, as well as globally. So they are national and international football stars, uniting football fan culture despite its different ethnicities.

Then the program hostess Yvette Hermundstad welcomes us at Gammliavallen, the arena where Umeå IK play their home matches. "It's swinging in Umeå on Gammliavallen and you just saw lots of beautiful Marta goals." Yvette is standing at the football arena together with Marta Vieira da Silva – obviously on a cold spring afternoon, since they both wear knitted caps and sweaters. Yvette asks Marta questions sent to the program from the young viewers:

Yvette (reading from one of the letters in her hands): Many of our viewers are curious about you Marta, and they want to ask you some questions. How do you react when you win a match?

Marta: I feel happy.

Yvette: You often make a lot of goals, so what do you think is important to become a good goal maker?

Marta: You need to train hard, eat good food and be a good pupil at school as well.

Yvette: It's important to be good at a lot of things then? Carolina has mailed us a question about which country you like best. If you compare Sweden with Brazil, in which country do you prefer to play football?

Marta: For me it's both! Umeå because of the respect I feel for my first international team, and Brazil since it's my country. It's my language and my culture.

Yvette: How did you start with football?

Marta: It came naturally for me. I liked to play football more than playing with dolls as girls usually do. I never wanted to play with dolls, so instead I played football with the boys. I started at home when I was about eight years

old. We played in the street. And then at eleven or twelve I played matches regularly in a boys' football team. At fourteen I signed up for my first club.⁶ That was a little bit hard and I was nervous.

Marta shows us some tricks: "This one I call the helicopter feint. I often do this one in matches." Marta starts slowly in one direction, and then she quickly stops, jumps over the ball and spins over in the opposite direction. Yvette acts as opponent team player trying to win the football from Marta. Then, after this demonstration on how to feint, the superstar Marta writes her autograph on the football – a prize to compete for in the coming quiz for the children watching the program. She answers questions about how she manages to cope with stress during a match:

Marta: I'm rather good at handling stress. I think the goalkeeper is likely to be under more stress than other players.

Yvette: What about red and yellow cards?

Marta: Oh, the referee got the impression that I cheated and pretended – but I always try to play on the ball and not take any notice and get upset.

Yvette: Over to Johan Wissman, who also wants to ask you a question...

This question from Yvette is interspersed with interviews from earlier episodes in which sports stars formulate a question for the next guest in the upcoming program. Johan Wissman,⁷ who was the interviewed sports star in the previous episode, asks: "What do you think about cold Sweden?"

Marta: When I'm in Brazil I miss the cold winter, you know you sweat a lot in hot Brazil.

Yvette: What about gymnastics at school in Brazil?

Marta: In the big cities you have a lot of different sports to choose from, but in the countryside this is not the case.

Then Yvette closes this interview by asking Marta if she has any hidden talents. Marta answers that she likes to sing and play the guitar when she spends time together with her family. Here an implicit message to the children watching the program may be that they should also cultivate activities other than football in order to become a football star.

Ibrahim, Kadisa and Melissa from Gävle

After the sequence with Marta, the program continues with a speaker's voice. "In Sweden, many children start playing football at an early age, but children from other countries often don't know how big football is as a sport in Sweden", introducing an episode about immigrants in Sweden and how Gävle IF, a

sports club in the northern region, arranges team courses to introduce children to different sports – for instance, football – following the link from the leading report on Marta. In this section we meet some kids playing football indoors in a gymnastics hall (presumably at a school). The children answer questions made by an invisible reporter that we neither see nor hear, but the answers hint at football playing as fun. The children representing Gävle Sports Club are Ibrahim, Kadisa and Melissa, but these two boys and the one girl only give us short, positive statements. It seems as if they do not have the time to answer questions, as they want to continue practising football. The adult coaches are responsible for taking the initiative and talking more about these activities which are aimed at providing social growth and health.

Head coach: Sport is strong and fun, so why not gather the kids and do funny things here? We keep them off the streets and we all have a great time together. We know where the kids are and that they are doing something useful after school. Anyone is welcome here – no one is left out.

The assistant coach: Not all families have the financial resources to participate in sports and not all parents are free to drive you by car to practices and games. It's enough to come here and participate.

There is clearly some good organisation behind these courses offering sports as leisure activities for children and teenagers in Gävle, whatever their gender, ethnicity or family situation. The big football teams usually support boys and teenage male teams rather than girls or teenage female teams. As a follow up to the interview with Marta, this section of the program tells us that talent needs cultivation in order to grow. Some talents need to be encouraged to develop. The grown-ups are responsible for teaching the children skills.

Marta and the team coaches in this episode tell us how to become a successful football player. These two sections address the children as if they are pupils, first in a conversation between two adults and then through the answers from Ibrahim, Kadisa and Melissa, giving rise to a strong sense of fostering football fan culture. The identity positions here are, perhaps, directed primarily at football-playing girls in the Swedish audience, but the male identity position is protected by the two coaches and may also serve as a possible role model for football-playing boys among the viewers.

Emma, Wille and Alex at Zlatan Camp

Another regular feature in the program series is Zlatan's football academy which started in 2008 and recurred in the 2009 edition. Zlatan Camp is a series of six parts first announced in March 2008. An interview with Zlatan ended the series in the seventh part in October. Each of the six sections from the camp

lasts for about five minutes, and the interview with Zlatan lasted almost ten minutes. Let us look at one example from the press to illustrate how media, and especially sports journalism, covered this event:

Now Zlatan himself is out hunting – for the new Zlatan. This summer, Zlatan Camp starts: a football school for Swedish adolescents in some thirty locations in the country. “This is something I am passionate about. I want to give something back to the kids,” said Zlatan to SPORT-Expressen. David Beckham has already done it. Now Zlatan is doing the same thing in Sweden. Together with Nike, he has founded a football school for young people, starting in the summer. Zlatan Camp was established in some thirty clubs. “The interest is huge,” says Nike’s football manager, Tomas Antonelius. Young people will be trained by representatives from the clubs, but Zlatan himself has been involved in and developed the exercises. “Zlatan has approved and described every single practice,” says Antonelius. “Zlatan is passionate about the project and I will support it financially.” According to SPORT-Expressen he is going in with “a substantial sum of money”. On this, however, neither Nike nor Zlatan would comment. The superstar will personally visit at least one camp in Sweden for young people. “I want to give back to kids – and this is a good way to do it. The camp is something I’m passionate about and I have wanted to do this for a long time. It will be a great fun.”

(www.footballsexpressen.se 20080401) [Translation by the author from the original text in Swedish]

According to the Swedish press, Zlatan’s football academy was arranged in thirty Swedish clubs sponsored by Nike (Semneby 20080422; Malmberg 20080608). This also illustrates how the power relationship within the sport-media-complex is linked to the football culture by powerful political and economic interests. The Public Service Media is bringing a famous football star into the children’s lives through *Little Mirror of Sports*. On this occasion, the famous international football star Zlatan gets attention, not only in a children’s program, but also in other media, and his sponsors, such as Nike, can use this opportunity to market their label to young consumers in several ways (Boyle & Haynes 2000: 49; Boyle 2006). There were some alarming reports on various football sites that Zlatan did not keep his promise to the children about a visit to one of the camps (fotbollssverige.se); by this we also understand how cooperation between the Public Service TV and the commercial sponsors of sport makes it harder for Public Service Media to maintain their standards and not expose children to advertising in children’s programs. Producing a series about a famous football star like Zlatan will certainly contribute to a program’s popularity with a young audience, and it will also serve the interests of the public service television (by increasing viewing levels); of the sponsors (by increasing the

sales of their products); and of the football organisations (by increasing the number of children attracted to the sport).

The school's main instructors were said to have been flown to Italy to learn the exercises that Zlatan has developed. On the website, the organising club Limham Bunkeflo claims to arrange the "coolest" football school for children between the ages of seven and sixteen; the football summer school promises a week in July filled with football and lots of fun. Zlatan promises to give his knowledge about football to his greatest fans, the children. Zlatan Camp is his own idea. It is going to be great fun, focusing on individual skills. Zlatan Camp is exclusively for football clubs cooperating with Nike! (LB07) We also understand by this website that this is the club from where *Little Mirror of Sport* is broadcast; however it is never obvious in the program or the *Little Mirror of Sport*'s own website.

For this study it is important keep in mind that *Little Mirror of Sport* produced six sections of Zlatan Camp from Limhamns Brovallen, and a seventh final section in which Zlatan was interviewed. These sections were put out on Swedish Public Service Television in the autumn of 2008 and again in the autumn of 2009. The following covers parts from these episodes broadcast on the Swedish Public Service Children's Channel starting in September 2008 and ending in October of the same year.

In episode one, 15 September 2008, the first section is introduced with views from the Malmö-Öresund Bridge, the Turning Torso and Canadian geese wandering over the plains of Skåne. The speaker voice's introduction ("over to Zlatan who is cruel with the ball; juggle, dribble and learn how to feint just like him") is followed by a pre-recorded section where we meet Zlatan presenting the theme for today's workout: "Don't see your opponents as an obstacle – see them as an opportunity instead."

The images shift back to the football camp and a little blonde girl with freckles begins to tell us that she is nine years old and has played football for two years. "I hope I will learn all about Zlatan Ibrahimovic's skills, so that I will be a good football player like him when I grow up," she says. We get to know her name by a name tag on the TV screen: Emma. Then Willie, a blond boy of the same age, tells us about his plan for the week ahead: "I want to go to Camp Zlatan because it's fun and I will meet a lot of friends there, so I think you learn a lot about football." Then you hear an enthusiastic voice coming from a loudspeaker: "Welcome to the summer's fiercest football school!" The voice belongs to one of the trainers, with whom we will grow more familiar during this program. The camera sweeps over a green and yellow field. A group of children are walking to join the first gathering.

Emma: I have played football for two years and I always play football when I am at home. I have always my football with me, indoors and wherever I go when I'm out somewhere.

Alex: We focused on running backwards. This was a good exercise! I want to become a professional soccer player for Manchester United.

Wille: I want to play for Chelsea as a professional when I grow up.

During the six camp sequences, broadcast in six episodes, we will be following Emma, Wille and Alex. Every child wears sweaters in Inter's team colours of black and blue. When the camera shows snapshots from the camp, we see that all the children are wearing these shirts, with the number "8" and Ibrahimovic's name on their backs. This episode ends with Zlatan talking to us about next week, when he will show the children how to dribble.

Episode two, on 22 September, has the same structure: a brief introduction by Zlatan about the day's practice, followed by sequences from the children's training. Zlatan ends the episode by talking about the theme for the next week. Alex and Emma comment upon the week's exercise:

Alex: This exercise was good. It was called "How many fingers do you see?" Through this I learned to hold my head up and look ahead to plan my next move.

Emma: I dribble the ball while keeping an eye on my team-mate who is running in front of me and holding up different numbers of fingers that I count aloud, while I run forward dribbling the ball.

Alex's and Emma's explanations reinforce the importance of doing this exercise to develop their skills and competence as football players, even at this children's level.

Episode three on 29 September starts in the same familiar way with Zlatan telling us that this time they will practise headers.

Emma: Today I feel more secure. The first day was quite exciting, but now I know more about the kids here. Today we practised headers. I'm not professional in that!

This is also supported by a sequence in which Zlatan shows how to do it the correct way (Stay behind the ball and keep your eyes open") while Emma continues:

Emma: The important thing is to look at the ball and the trick is to meet it with your forehead. A great tip, I think! And I think it's great that he⁸ comes from Malmö.

Wille: Before this camp I was not so good at headers, but now I'm much better.

We see groups of children practising headers together. The coach gives instructions: "Remember to get behind the ball and keep your eyes open. Looking good, Wille! Very nice Emma, it's important that you stay focused on the ball. Don't close your eyes – keep them wide open!

This part ends with images from matches, with sequences highlighting some of Zlatan's headers from a Milan-Einhofen match, and a Juventus meeting with Livorno, with a transition to Zlatan, who says: "And next week we will practise dribbling", closing this episode. The message about imitating the professional football player representing Sweden in the international arena may be redundant for the adult viewer but it reflects how important football fan culture is in young children's lives. Knowledge about football and the need to learn techniques by imitating their football idols are included in the children's answers and actions at the camp. This indicates to what degree cultural symbols in football are well known and articulated in the generation group presented in these episodes.

The remaining episodes deal with how to dribble and kick penalties (6 October), good eating habits (13 October) and how to score (20 October). In the last episode, Emma starts to show her skill. She tells us that it is so sad that this is the last day at the camp. But the cheerful voice-over tells us that 180 children at this camp have improved their football skills. The interview with Zlatan in the seventh and last episode, 29 October, follows one of two patterns familiar when a sports star appears in this children's program. Here, the children's written questions to Zlatan are asked by three familiar faces from Zlatan Camp: Emma, Wille and Alex. The interview takes place in a flat (presumably in Malmö) where the children sit together on a sofa posing their questions to the famous football star. Emma starts: "What was your most memorable goal?"

Zlatan: The last one I scored when I played for Ajax – when I dribbled through seven or eight players to make it.

Zlatan's response is reinforced by a sequence from the game, showing a memorable moment in his career. The children ask questions about how to become a professional and what it is like to be an internationally famous football player. Several examples from well-known Zlatan moments are shown as the interview goes on.

The interaction between the children and Zlatan shows different styles of conversation. Zlatan seems to be comfortable in this environment. Emma, Wille and Alex are guests and seem to seek support from each other, but Zlatan lights up the mood with his big smile. He is a nice guy, but you can also sense that he is accustomed to handling media relations. The importance of visibility in the media, and of having good relationships with sports journalists and fans, are parts of the interdependence of media and sports personalities, which means that even *Little Mirror of Sports* counts. Zlatan creates a good relationship with the young fan football culture, and the media get material that makes interesting content for their viewers. Another major player in this context is Nike, sponsoring the football academy. Even if Nike only plays behind the scenes, the company brands its image by Zlatan's participation. The children realise

that the company supports the famous football star's camp and career, and also that it might support them in a future successful football career.

Gender aspects

Most of the Zlatan material demonstrates his importance for Swedish football and for a rising generation of football-playing boys and girls. This male football hero is adored by the children, who all want to become at least as good a footballer as he is. While Zlatan can be said to symbolise the men's football top layer, the program editors seem aware of gender equality, and represent the experiences of both girls and boys at the football camp. Boys and girls are also shown in other episodes of *Little Mirror of Sports*, and several female football players from the Swedish premier football women's league are interviewed in the program.

We also need to consider, not only the adult football stars and coaches in this program, but also the function of the hosts and hostesses presenting sport ideology, and especially football culture, to the young viewers. In earlier years, the hosts were established sports journalists from Public Service Television Sport News or special sports events. During the period covered by this content analysis, Yvette Hûbinette was the hostess; in the years since this study the task has been shared out by a team of young, and older, reporters (some of the older reporters have good reputations as sports journalists on Public Service Television, while the younger reporters' background is in hosting programs on Public Service Children's Channel). These hosts and hostesses, together with the football stars and experts, shape the essence of football culture and encourage the youngsters to learn how to understand and appreciate football.

In general, mediated sport for children and teenagers maintains a strong focus on male players, whose skills are rated more highly in the media than those of female players (Rowe 1999: 124f, Thornham 2000: 184f). To some degree, representations of football in *Little Mirror of Sports* are still built on an ideological understanding of football as typically masculine, but *Little Mirror of Sports* also presents some new gender ideals. Gender equality is recognised and supported by society and by the Public Service commission to broadcast (Boyle & Haynes 2000: 133f; Reimer 2000). The program will perhaps lead to some changes and to further acceptance of girls and women when these children have grown up.

Through various elements, children learn to respect adults' knowledge, and leadership, by adults who themselves have already internalised the ideology of sport that they convey to the children participating in the program and the children watching it. However, the representations of football fan culture displayed in this program are not merely connected to the power structures in

society and in the sport-media-complex. The program's friendly atmosphere also provides several examples of good relationships between children and adults, by the program's hosts and by the participating football stars and children. The positive images of shared interests traverse some conventional generational, gender and cultural boundaries and, by opening up to other ethnic communities in Sweden, offer multiple alternative identities for the children to choose from and be inspired by.

The male and female gender identities seem to differ. The boys' gender identity corresponds entirely with the masculine norms for football players, while the girls' gender identity is a mixture of male and female, which means that football-playing girls are subordinated to male norms of football.

Then there is the expressed middle-class ideal, where children are expected to have supporting families, or to live in areas where a football club exists. This middle-class ideal is also connected with cultivating a good character by training diligently, eating well and purposefully investing in a future football career similar to that of the role models appearing in the program. Although this career is open to both girls and boys, it is presented as a typically male activity.

Little Mirror of Sports obviously tries to take girls' football seriously and to give them space to appear talented and skilled at the game. There are many examples of famous women footballers. But in comparing the two stars in this analysis we can observe a clear difference between how the female and the male football identities are presented. Marta Vieira da Silva is usually seated during the interview; compared with the image of Zlatan, she appears passive. Zlatan, however, expresses male activity and action both verbally and physically. His is a normal and accepted position, and he embodies masculine hegemony. He takes his place in a "natural" hierarchical gender order, where men are always assumed to play football better than women. This culturally and socially constructed gender dichotomy becomes natural; the audience may recognise and accept these symbols of both male and female gender behaviour.

The football ideology in *Little Mirror of Sports* corresponds largely to male norms. But Marta Vieira da Silva offers another picture of the norms of professional football, since this interview is more cheerful and includes mention of interests outside the football arena. In the sequences with male footballers, and especially Zlatan, male professional football is presented as something else. The questions in the Zlatan episodes express a more serious attitude towards the importance of starting young and maintaining a good training structure and good eating habits. It seems as if girls play for fun rather than for a serious career, but boys are supposed to keep this purpose in mind.

One can, of course, argue that this program represents the dominant ideology of football culture, but despite its deference to power structures within and surrounding sports media, no other media room in television exists for the football-viewing generation of the future. Despite all competition over audi-

ences, and especially sports audiences, so far no commercial TV broadcasting company in Sweden has produced a similar program for this important young viewer group. To be positive about *Little Mirror of Sports*, at least it gives support to the younger generation by reflecting on cultural values and norms for football-playing girls and boys, not only by showing them fan culture, but also by showing youngsters in everyday situations from different contexts and letting their lives be represented in this program.

Notes

1. In Swedish, the program is called *Lilla Sportspegeln*. The name is derived from the adult version of "Mirror of Sports", addressing the adult Swedish Public Service Television audience.
2. Previously, another version of the signature was performed by our now internationally famous artist Robyn. "You Can Always Be Number One" (Sport Goofy Anthem). In 1991, at the age of twelve, Robyn sang a Swedish translation of the *Little Mirror of Sports* previous theme song, which then served as the signature for this programme.
3. The award was established in 1990 and has been handed out at the Swedish Football Gala since 1995.
4. In Sweden, the expression "Boys14" or "Girls 15" is familiar to youngsters playing football. The players are aged fourteen and the number is added to the team's name.
5. We also meet the famous hockey player Henrik Lundquist – at the moment goalkeeper for the New York Rangers – and visit an Estonian school with special gymnastic lessons in dance. The episode also includes a report from a Swedish project in a suburb for immigrant children, who are introduced to different kinds of sports. Here we meet children and football players from the local team in this northern part of Sweden playing football together.
6. Rio de Janeiro, Vasco da Gama.
7. Johan Wissmann is a Swedish sprinter, successful in Swedish and European championships. His latest gold medal was won in Turin in 2009.
8. Zlatan.

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Chapter 15

“Truly a Fan Experience”? *The Cultural Politics of the Live Site*

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In the months preceding what is arguably the world's leading mega event, the international governing body of association football, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), announced its intention to broadcast the 2010 World Cup at six designated Fan Fest sites across the globe (as well as in nine cities in the host nation, South Africa). This configuration of international live sites, declared by FIFA to be “A Global Platform Which Unites the World” (FIFA 2010a), reflects the federation's global strategy to extend the “festival atmosphere” of the World Cup and other FIFA-endorsed tournaments in time and space beyond the geographical boundaries of the sporting arenas in which the physical events take place. While the intentions behind this initiative are evidently multifaceted, traversing a range of cultural and economic interests, a major incentive for FIFA to embark on this strategy reflects the basic principles of abundant demand and scarcity of supply; the number of tickets available to attend major sporting events in real time and space is commonly insufficient to satisfy popular demand for them *in situ*. In any case, modern spectator sport came into being by creating viewing experiences beyond the enclosed field of play, with the in-stadium audience now only a small proportion of the total spectators (Boyle and Haynes 2009; Rowe 2004). Indeed, it is impossible for a sports event to be *global* without mediation and the involvement of distant spectators. Coupled with the media's capacity to broaden the “fan experience”, the proliferation of live sites as temporary venues from which to experience “mega events” may be interpreted in part as an attempt to counter a problem of unmet demand among those close to the action. More positively, live sites also provide extended participatory and spectatorial options for those who are interested in the event but may lack the material means to purchase tickets, and might actually prefer to watch it outside the stadium and, especially, for those – the majority of sport followers around the globe – who have no prospect of “being there” live at the event.

Mega-events are major cultural or sporting events of deep cultural resonance designed to attract a broad spectrum of tourists and global media attention

(Roche 1992: 564). They include social occasions of wide cultural appeal such as the Olympics, the World Cup, coronations, funerals and a range of public festivals that are disseminated to local, national and transnational television audiences and, increasingly, on large screens most commonly erected in urban centres. What distinguishes a mega event from an “ordinary” mediated event (such as the numerous televised sport contests shown simultaneously on multiple channels on every day of the year) is that, as Maurice Roche (2000: 1) defines them:

Mega-events are large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal, and international significance. They are typically organised by various combinations of national governmental and international non-governmental organisations and thus can be said to be important elements in ‘official’ versions of public culture.

An integral feature of mega-events, therefore, is that they rely on communication technologies to be produced and distributed to audiences in a manner that provides a palpable sense of history (Dayan and Katz 1992). Much previous research and scholarship in this area has concentrated on the capacity of satellite broadcast television to carry live images to a large, dispersed, and heterogeneous audience across the world, with sport as the main content (Whannel 1992). This communicative arrangement, developed in the twentieth century, is now complemented by so-called “new media” through which audiences are empowered to do more than receive unidirectional “few-to-many” broadcasts through residential screen technology, and are able to engage in real time “peer-to-peer” communicative exchange. The spatial configuration of the live site, as we shall argue, combines pre-television forms of embodied interaction, television-age live “viewing at a distance”, and post-broadcast mobile, social networking.

This chapter, then, explores twenty-first century mediated sport fandom, and more specifically the fan’s experience of a mega-event, through an observational study¹ of the FIFA International Fan Fest site in Sydney, Australia, during the 2010 World Cup in South Africa (the other designated International Fan Fest sites were Paris, Berlin, Rome, Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro, with London dropping out because of financial and logistical obstacles). There were many other live sites around the world not sanctioned by FIFA, but we are especially interested here in the organisation’s coordination of global sport spectatorship through this initiative. FIFA described their licensed live sites in a press release as being “about more than football watching, they are truly a fan experience” (FIFA 2010a). The “fan experience” described here by FIFA rests on the capacity of the live site to engage spectators in a crowd-oriented dynamic that resembles the physical presence offered by the match itself. The broadcast media are central to these arrangements, but they do more than just provide sounds and

images of events given the operational contexts of transnational (sometimes commercialised) spaces that, through the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, foster the development of new types of socio-cultural context for experiencing sports such as football.

We aim here to go beyond examining how mediating mega-events at live sites broadens the fan experience through making the event accessible to a wider international audience, rather than remaining a predominantly nation-based enterprise. We assess some of the socio-cultural implications of destabilising traditional boundaries of time and space through the potential of the mega-event to emerge as a transnational mediated phenomenon. Notions of embodiment, governmentality, marketing, sponsorship and affective exchange contribute to the construction of collective fan experiences at live sites that are very different from conventional sender-content-receiver models of "mass communication". We argue that sport and general news journalism should engage with this dynamism and complexity of contemporary mediated sport fandom, rather than rely on understandings of football crowds deriving from traditional, binary models of rival supporters at the stadium. Finally, we consider the cultural politics² of "being there" and "viewing from a distance" for fans when engaging with global media sport that constructs and synthesises elements of both experiences.

Media reflexivity, technologies and identities

Sydney is over 11,000 kilometres east of Johannesburg (where the Soccer City stadium, venue for the World Cup opening ceremony and first match, was situated) and, in its winter, eight hours ahead of it. Exposure to the World Cup live on television meant watching most matches at 9.30pm, midnight or 4.30am (the time of the final, also at Soccer City). Despite this inconvenient timing, it was estimated that 500,000 people attended the Sydney Fan Fest site on the fringe of the central business district at Darling Harbour over the thirty-one days of the World Cup (FIFA 2010g). This figure also covered people engaging in activities around the clock, such as mini-football tournaments and activities for children, but the focus of this discussion is on attendance during live football matches in South Africa. Given that almost all households had free-to-air television access to the games, it is clear that the experience of participation at the live site offered an experience that was regarded by a considerable number of people to be superior to that available in private homes or in more "selective" social contexts, such as nationally-ethnically affiliated venues in the suburbs. Attending the Fan Fest meant going to a more "anonymous", festival marketplace abutting a large exhibition centre in pursuit of a different kind of urban sociality combining physical assembly, public (or quasi-public) space, and mediation.

The emergence of live sites as mediated public spaces across the world is, we suggest, indicative of the role of reflexivity in modern social life (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994). Reflexivity may be broadly defined as “the process of referring back to oneself” (Johnson 2000: 255), the human capacity to refer to oneself as a self, and to reflect more generally on the state of society. Developments in media technologies have intensified reflexive processes through the reorganisation of time and space, together with the expansion of “disembedding mechanisms” (dislocating social relations from the confines of time and space), which, according to Giddens (1991: 2), have increasingly come to characterise modernity. Johan Fornäs *et. al.* (2007: 83) summarise this development effectively as follows:

Mediated images of media exemplify what might be called “*media reflexivity*”, where media mirror themselves (or other media). Just like other forms of reflexivity, media reflexivity seems to increase in late modernity. In fact, the various forms of reflexivity are closely interrelated. For instance, individual self-reflexivity uses reflexive media as a tool of personal self-thematization, scientific reflexivity in academic research interacts with reflexive forms of mediated communication, and mediatization is a key factor in the whole institutional reflexivity of society at large through which societal structures increasingly deal with problems they have themselves created. Media reflexivity is also closely related to the notion of “hypermediacy”, the intense attention to the tools of mediation that counteracts the transparency of mediation and makes people highly aware of the mediating apparatus as such.

Social and cultural theorists are increasingly exploring how “new media” (here regarded, in brief, as converged digital technologies that enable multiple, mobile, interactive modes of mediated exchange) inform the spatial configuration of public life in the twenty-first century and the implications of developments in communication technologies on place in an age, first described and analysed in the previous century, of “postmodern geographies” and “hyperspace” (Baudrillard 1994; Jameson 1992; Soja 1989). These concerns become particularly evident in light of a series of recent technological and global developments that distinguish traditional modes of spectatorship from the viewing experiences that have come to characterise spectator sport in earlier phases of modernity. Viewed in a context of socio-technical innovation, mediating mega-events for global audiences is understood to have a major impact on sport’s capacity to contribute to identity formation. A significant feature, then, of the live sites that we are examining are their potential to mediate local, national and international audiences in a variety of ways. Thus, an important consequence of mediating mega-events for global audiences is that, when the event is observed from a specific spatial and temporal point of view, time and space appear to be condensed (though not entirely, as Harvey (1989) argues, through the “an-

nihilation" of the latter through the former) as the internationally distributed spectacle binds diverse spectator cohorts across the world.

Communication technologies mediate identities in significant ways, creating a rupture in the mundane and a fascination with that which is "beyond" the here and now as the viewers are increasingly decentred from their present spatial and temporal locales. Homi Bhabha refers to this process as "the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion (1994: 1). The media are integral to this procedure by operating at the nexus between local events and the global public sphere. Through extending time and space to include those "viewing from a distance", rather than "being there" amid the actual performance taking place, mediating mega-events at live sites transports the viewers beyond their immediate, local social setting. Live sites create, through mediation, their own double-embodied sport experience – what might be described as a sense of "being there from a distance".

Through being mediated to and for an international rather than a local audience, live sites can enhance the fan's experience beyond that of more traditional ways of viewing. For example, it has been argued that the processes of globalisation and mediation, especially those of a reflexive kind, invest live sites with an inherent potential to contribute to the formation of a transnational public sphere by temporarily binding fans from across the globe in time and space and, thus, extending the fan experience beyond a local or national enterprise (Rowe and Baker 2012). Yet, this making of transnational *communitas* is a complex and paradoxical procedure, for it is ironic that on the one hand the "live" dimension of live sites separates fans through the phenomenon of distance (bound in space and time at various locales across the world), while becoming temporarily interlinked via media technologies through the common experience of viewing the global mega event. Moreover, in becoming part of this transnational experience, fans are heavily reliant on the media as their primary source of social exchange and, consequently, subject to all the shortcomings associated with technological communication. These enabling and limiting capacities of technology operate in a range of ways: broadcast television makes it possible to see and hear the stadium event in vivid detail but not necessarily to contribute to it; short message services (SMS) and Twitter allow commentary and communication about the event from mobile devices, but only in shorthand; video and still images can be uploaded but are dependent on spectator position and point of view, and so on.

Such analyses of traditional and mediated spectatorship provoke questions regarding what constitutes "truly a fan experience". In his account of "virtual geography", McKenzie Wark (1994) interrogates the ramifications of technological innovation in modern society, arguing that cultural "roots" have been replaced by "aerials". Corresponding to the mediated platform of these

virtual geographies, conventional topographical understandings of place that situate cultural identities in concrete communities are challenged. For Wark (1994: 10), the global distribution of media events, for example, disturbs local perceptions by producing what he identifies as *telesthesia*: geographical perception at a distance creating novel global geographies. Like Giddens, Wark considers the media to be instrumental in creating such “virtual geographies” by disturbing, reflecting, and permeating spectators’ everyday experience of space, as the propensity for distant happenings to inform “intimacies of the self” becomes more commonplace. Applied to the context of public viewing, such a perspective suggests that, despite viewing from a distance (at a live site or residential locale), geographical perception may be mediated in real-time via communication technologies. The “transnational optic” assumed through mediated spectatorship endows the viewer with an unprecedented mobility and a wider palate of identities. The importance of these virtual public spaces is that they establish the terrain for new sources of the self, and conceptions of social life more generally, through the process of reflexivity that accompanies a range of constantly developing and mutating media technologies.

In the case of the important popular cultural form of sport, the experience of the follower (now the figure of “the fan”) is much less confined to the original spaces of local sport, and is inseparable from mediation, including that of their fan identities (Rowe 2011). Accordingly, while the implications of media reflexivity have been noted by scholars since the mid-twentieth century as an age in which both self and society are fundamentally shaped by imagery and reflected images of themselves (Boorstin 1964), nascent forms of technological innovation continue to modify social relations in general, and with particular regard to the subject of this chapter, the ways in which fans experience spectator sport. FIFA’s International Fan Fest reflects such a process in which the media shape public consciousness through situating the fan in a reflexive state of both subject and object. For example, fans entering the main Darling Harbour venue of FIFA’s Sydney Fan Fest site (there was a “spillover” venue a hundred metres away in Tumbalong Park, and also a range of other smaller screen viewing sites in surroundings bars and restaurants) had the choice of four screens from which to view the World Cup (one large central screen with a smaller screen on either side of it, together with an ensemble of screens erected on a soccer ball podium to the left of the venue). That, for the most part, spectators congregated in front of the central screen, made for an intense viewing experience that prioritised the viewer’s relationship with the screen over fellow members of the crowd (apart from, to some degree, accompanying persons in primary groups mostly of between two and five). While the apparent atomisation characterised by this form of “public” viewing may be seen to undermine the communal ethos traditionally associated with spectator sport, the technological structure of the live site also engendered a double-mediated

fan experience. It is precisely because the screen at FIFA's Sydney venue was connected to other screens at various International Fan Fests that spectators attending FIFA's live sites were able to engage with – at least through one-way appraisal – a broad spectrum of fans from across the globe.

The mediation of the World Cup at FIFA's live sites not only altered fans' experiences through the status of replay, close-ups, and interviews (all of which are available in the home environment) and through providing different viewing positions (by means of opportunities for mobility around the site where possible and if desired), but, as a reflexive process, had the potential to influence subjectivity and identity formation. In comparison with more traditional football crowd-oriented experiences, where fans are commonly "clustered" in partisan formations, it was more difficult for them in this context to choose when and with whom they could interact. Novel technological developments and 3G media, however, were observed to enable fans to play a more active role as reflexive spectators, and to lessen their dependency on a single, large screen.

While the official screens from which the World Cup was broadcast assumed primary importance in most fans' experience of FIFA's Sydney venue, spectators were not restricted to the site's designated screens as their only source of viewing. They were also encouraged, through various online competitions, to combine their participation with personal forms of media such as cameras and smart phones. Viewers could even become media producers themselves through social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, or by capturing and relaying still and moving audiovisual images to the world outside the stadium. Observations conducted at FIFA's Sydney Fan Fest revealed that sponsors and journalists facilitated this type of double-mediated fan experience. For example, one of the official sponsors of FIFA's Sydney site, the car manufacturer, Hyundai, employed social networking media to promote their "Fan of the Match" competition in which viewers were asked to submit a photograph of their personal, passionate World Cup moment online. Other attempts to heighten crowd participation took place live at half time, when passionate fans were asked to perform a ten-second routine for the audience, which was broadcast to the crowd on screens at the live site (FIFA 2010d). These examples are suggestive of how camera crews and journalists inform and shape fans' experience of spectator sport by encouraging self-conscious performances and exaggerated displays of fandom.

In observing how the news media interacted with the crowd as a source of content, it was noted that spectators were encouraged to perform "excited" displays so that journalists could elicit a response that corresponded with the popular idea of news as "spectacle". This style of news journalism tended to elicit hyperbolic expressions of fandom, with fans who performed in such an exaggerated manner knowing full well that they would be "besieged" by camera crews eager to reproduce a highly filtered, unrepresentative version

of “what took place”. Such self-conscious performances of fandom (redolent of Goffman’s (1959) analysis of social dramaturgy) for the media demonstrate fans’ capacity for a certain reflexivity, but one that is partially “scripted” and guided, so that the media influence on the content and nature of viewing spectator sport highlights important elements of the dialectical reflexive process of constructing media, self and society.

With traditional forms of identification (such as social class) in decline in modern liberal democracies, communication technologies assume increasing importance in structuring reflexive subjectivities. This structural feature of high modernity has made it commonplace to critique the pervasive incorporation of technological communication in modern spectator sport as somehow undermining authentic forms of fandom (Ruddock, Hutchins and Rowe 2010). We suggest, however, that a more nuanced appraisal is required of how traditional modes of viewing compare to those offered by live sites. When qualifying the differences between the conventional fan experience derived from “being there” live at the stadium and more mediated forms of viewing “at a distance”, the simple ascription of greater authenticity to the former should be questioned. For even viewers at the stadium are now heavily dependent on media, from large screens in the venue to pocket radios and multimedia mobile devices. What is required is an analysis of the ways in which the embodied spectator experiences the event, at both the stadium and the live site, as is discussed in the following section.

Constructing the embodied-and-mediated fan experience

The notion of embodiment is central to fans’ experience of spectator sport, especially in shared spatial contexts. To emphasise the concept of embodiment is to suggest that, as sentient, rational and evaluative subjects, the body is essential to humans’ social ontology (Turner 2000). Emotions are vital to this process, constituting integral components of the embodied subject that both bind and estrange them from wider society and culture, rather than passively surrendering to a series of collective representations (Baker 2010). By examining the ways in which “being there” at the live mega event both resembles and differs from “viewing at a distance”, we are exploring how the development of media and communication has affected the phenomenon of modern spectator sport through emulating and enhancing the embodied fan experience. Indeed, the media are so central to the dynamics of contemporary spectator sport that, as noted above, traditional stadium presence has itself come to rely upon mediated experiences through broadcasting on screens within the stadium, in addition to more personal modes of media communication. It is misleading, therefore, simply to oppose mediation and embodiment, as we demonstrate

in examining the ways in which communication technologies and reflexive practices involving production, consumption and dialogue help to construct fan experiences.

With the FIFA live site in Sydney constructed and manipulated through fences and barricades, the spatial dimensions of public viewing areas correspond in some ways to the physical audience segmentation traditionally associated with viewing sport live at the stadium. Furthermore, once inside the live site, the viewer is hindered by similar restrictions to those associated with conventional modes of viewing such as "scarcity of view", as well as access and egress to public space, with both viewing areas heavily regulated by law enforcement agencies and security personnel. Commercial enterprises (including private vendors) and organised entertainment, moreover, permeate the fan experience in both spaces, with spectators often encouraged to interact through pre- and mid-match entertainment and promotional activities. Such analysis of the spatial configuration and service provision of FIFA's Fan Fest accordingly suggests that live sites may be seen to emulate to a degree the embodied fan experience offered at the actual stadium – in this case on another continent.

Yet, despite these apparent similarities, there are noteworthy differences that distinguish the fan's experience at the live site from more traditional modes of viewing outside the home. In contrast to the spatial formation of a football stadium in which fans assemble "in the round" with a collective gaze directed towards the centre of the field, and as a consequence possess the ability to view their fellow onlookers to the side and across the stadium, spectators at live sites are, for the most part, directed towards a single screen or series of screens (as was the case at FIFA's Sydney Fan Fest), with the focus not so much on live, moving players or an interactive crowd, but on a static, material structure with moving images. The impact that this spatial dimension has on "the fan experience" cannot be overemphasised. Not only are the viewers relatively isolated in their static gaze towards the public screen, but the spatial formation of public viewing areas in many respects undermines the "public" element of spectator sport. The capacity for fans at live sites to be seen (via screens at other International Fan Fest sites) but not heard, for example, creates a rather muted viewer and a comparatively passive spectator whose ability even to "be seen" by fellow onlookers is contingent on the discretion of professional media personnel such as camera operators, editors, and commentators. Moreover, by comparison with being there at the stadium, the spatial dynamics of the live site appear to impair the ability of spectators to engage in a symbiotic relationship with players through communal cheering or collective display (the live screen crowd can be neither seen nor heard where the contest takes place), and, as a corollary, limit the heightened affective form of embodied communication – *collective effervescence* – that Durkheim ([1912] 2001) associated with civic rituals such as sport. Durkheim

situated the moral underpinnings of the social order in highly emotive civic interactions, whereas the media frame a stylised reality with different imperatives, such as those governed by audience maximisation techniques dedicated to economic benefit via advertiser and sponsor exposure. As a medium for manufacturing and orchestrating knowledge through editing, organising and selecting affective audio-visual imagery, media communication may, therefore, be unfavourably compared with more traditional modes of corporeal social exchange (for example, Meyrowitz 1985).

A related critique of the media has been influentially argued by Debord ([1967] 1994), who condemned “the spectacle” for engendering a passive relationship between the viewer and public. Writing in the mid-twentieth century, Debord located the trend towards “one-way” viewing more specifically in the context of economic and technological developments inherent to modern industrial-capitalist society, arguing that the “society of the spectacle” undermined agency by reducing social encounters to commodity relations mediated by images. The importance of such a thesis is that, through prioritising spontaneous, embodied interactions as an essential feature of human experience, it questions commonplace understandings of social life that rely purely on topographical concepts, or on shared spatial co-presence alone. For an embodied fan experience to be socially meaningful it must, according to such a view, engage the public in meaningful civic communication. Thus, despite the advertised “festival atmosphere” of FIFA’s Sydney Fan Fest, such public viewing areas must (to be truly public, in Debord’s sense of the word) cultivate active participation between diverse strangers to open up new possibilities for social exchange beyond commodified forms of fandom. However, as Tomlinson (2002) argues, Debord’s situationist polemic tends, paradoxically, to deprive human subjects of any agency in negotiating with, adapting or resisting different elements of spectacle. Further, with regard to all critiques of the mediation of sport, we would argue that a topophilic celebration of sport in unmediated form would render most sports events inaccessible to most people, and would produce, for example, a World Cup that could only be viewed by a select few in the host nation, and their privileged guests. It is the enrichment and the enhancement of the mediated fan experience that needs to be analysed and proposed, not the “de-mediation” of sport or the “de-spectacularisation” of its hallmark events. This task requires recognition that it is the commercialisation of sport and sport fandom that has been the principal engine of its global mediation – although it is also recognised that the state itself has a deep investment in sport (for example, the New South Wales Government was required to make a substantial financial and resource contribution in securing the official International Fan Fest site for Sydney, and the Australian Government contributed AU\$45.6 million to a failed bid to host the 2022 World Cup).

The commercial and emotional dynamics of mediated spectator sport

The economic imperatives governing FIFA's International Fan Fest significantly informed how fans experienced the mega-event at its various designated live sites. Ever since spectator sport developed in modernity, the stadium has been a site of commerce (Horne 2006; Rowe 2004), and the commodification of audiences and of the fan experience has progressively developed in domestic, public, and private-public spaces (the Sydney live site being an example of the last). Communicated through evocative symbols, the social mythologies fusing sporting communities are intensified by what has been referred to as the 'sport-media-globalisation nexus': a process wherein the mediated visibility of athletes and fans in social arenas makes sport increasingly subject to international scrutiny and global demands (Rowe 2009). These globalising pressures are reflected in FIFA's emerging football culture, where club management, state authorities and multinational corporations pursue, separately and together, public support. The combination of corporate sponsorship, television rights and international audiences render football, the "world game", as an important locus of capital exchange (Foer 2004; Tomlinson 1994; Whannel 2008).

While the intensified commodification of sport has arguably introduced new inequalities associated with the commercialisation of fandom (Williams 2006), especially through the cultivation of more affluent consumers of football at the expense of its loyal but poorer bedrock of support (Horne 2006), it would be too analytically one-dimensional to focus only on the negative features of corporate sponsorship and commercial involvement. For example, Australia's Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), official, free-to-air public broadcaster of the 2010 World Cup in Sydney, launched a three-minute television commercial (known in the advertising business as a TVC) during the opening ceremony that celebrated the cultural and linguistic diversity of football. Locating "the World Game" in the popular imagination of its culturally dynamic audience, the multilingual, advertising campaign portrayed the stories of supporters from each of the thirty-two qualifying teams in nine languages, and was broadcast online and across SBS's two television channels. This "unique approach" was tailored to "breed real excitement for audiences", Jacquie Riddell, director of marketing for the public broadcaster later disclosed (Draper 2010). That SBS is involved in systematic marketing and audience generation highlights the synthetic nature of twenty-first century public broadcasting, with public broadcasters either permitted to sell advertising slots and to accept sponsorship (as in the case of SBS) or, more rarely, prevented from advertising to home audiences but permitted to operate with greater commercial freedom overseas (like the British and Australian Broadcasting Corporations). All public broadcasters now derive substantial income from "residual" sales of DVDs

and other forms of merchandising. Therefore, just as amateur sport is partially commercialised (for example, through corporate branded sportswear), public sports media incorporate commercial operations and cooperate with private, often transnational, corporations.

Our observational study indicates the success of SBS's strategy, with the commercial facilitating civic interaction at FIFA's Sydney site as audiences regularly, in unison, sang the chorus:

One world, one game, one hope, one dream. Let's all play some football.
 One kick, one goal, one cup, one team. Let's all play some football.
 One world, one game, one hope, one dream. Let's all play some football.
 One kick, one goal, one cup, one team. Let's all play some football.
 (FIFA, 2010h)

The lyrics to the SBS TVC were even included as one of the two official songs on FIFA's Sydney Fan Fest website to help spectators "get into the fun and spirit of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa with anthems and song sheets inspired by the world game and the pride of nations" (FIFA, 2010h). From a Foucauldian perspective, such a statement could be interpreted as the "disciplining" of sports spectators who somehow are assumed to require instruction from FIFA and the television industry in affective orientation to football. In that regard, it is an example of the governmentality (Miller *et. al.* 2001) that directs the actions and emotions of sport fans without appearing to do so. But it also reveals the capacity of sponsors and commercial investors to facilitate the collective dimension of the fan experience that must "gel" with fan sensibilities or fail in this respect. Focusing on a range of football fans from across the globe, singing about their excitement concerning the World Game, the television commercial appeared to ignite this passion by resonating with a broad spectrum of viewers at FIFA's Sydney Fan Fest. In this sense, the TVC could be seen to engage the audience and contribute more generally as an international *imagined community*, to refer to Benedict Anderson's ([1983] 2006) influential (and, no doubt, over-used) term. Such a thesis warns against engaging in a de-historicised polemic against the commercialisation of sport as spectacle (as noted above in Tomlinson's critique of Debord) and, rather, to assess how the media position spectators as both active interpreters and passive recipients in response to the "cultural intermediaries" who stage-manage public performances in an effort to market human sentiments as part of the commodification of everyday life (Rojek 2001: 10). Here the fan, caught in public-private space, is subject to large-scale structural forces, but may also be capable of ameliorating and moulding them by using the tools of mediation in "unplanned" ways (Gray, Sandvoss and Harrington 2007; Sandvoss 2003) through the emotional dimensions of their fandom.

The emotional dimension of public viewing becomes a major factor in constructing the embodied fan experience. The strong feelings of totemic

identification and of spectators' desire for bodily exchange through communing with other fans assume cultural relevance through their association with the popularity of spectator sport within public viewing areas such as FIFA's Fan Fest. While our observations suggest that first-order emotions were readily experienced at FIFA's Sydney venue through the elation and anger that ensued after goals, substitutions and red cards, viewers' capacity for second-order emotions (those forms of affective involvement aimed at social exchange, such as booing, cheering and taunting) significantly decreased as a consequence of the relatively atomised crowd dynamic. In this respect, FIFA's Sydney site appeared unsuccessful in facilitating a "truly" affective fan experience. For, in contrast to the affective displays of fandom typically associated with in-stadium spectator sport, fans' manufactured and *blasé*, even contemptuous, attitudes to sponsors and advertising initiatives (excluding the SBS commercial discussed above) revealed a disjunction between the emotional climates inhabited by viewers and sponsors at the live site environment.

While physical exchange with players and an interactive crowd entails that emotions are more readily associated with "being there" live at the stadium, it is erroneous to overlook the capacity for mediated viewing to evoke collective emotional responses. Distinctions of "real" and mediated emotions are undermined the more one examines the affective processes constituting what one of us has referred to as "the mediated crowd" (Baker 2011). Employing George Herbert Mead's notion of the "generalised other", Baker demonstrates how abstract modes of mediated viewing enable personal misfortunes of cultural significance to manifest collectively as "social tragedies". Yet, congruent with the affective dimensions of spectator sport, such an inquiry reveals that, despite the apparent democratisation of sport in liberal political contexts, and given the availability of converged telephonic, computing and broadcasting technologies, virtual geographies (Wark 1994) can be highly exclusive. This potential exists because, by not consuming the appropriate media forms and content, or investing a high level emotional involvement in them, such events remain mundane incidents, lacking in social significance (Baker 2010). Thus, while the development of mass communication has had a profound effect on subjectivity and public viewing, the affective dimensions of the fan experience that are so integral to spectator sport can lead either to social cohesion or to fragmentation depending on the social positioning of the subject – which, in turn, relates to their overall positioning within mediated sports culture. The capacity of mediated sports mega-events to crowd out other cultural loci and practices, and to operate as vehicles for cultural taste-based hierarchies of a seemingly non-elite kind, should be critically interrogated in any consideration of cultural citizenship in the domain of the popular (Bennett, Emmison and Frow 1999; Rowe 2011).

Conclusion: Being there from a distance

In this chapter, through a case study of Sydney's International Fan Fest site during the 2010 World Cup, we have probed several key issues surrounding the mediated experience of contemporary sport fandom. In this hybridic space, with its dependency on live screen broadcasts from across the Indian Ocean; crowd context combining the atmosphere of the stadium with the more atomised experience of home viewing; proliferating communication technologies for both sending and receiving; and framework of commerce and fan governance, a shifting terrain of experiences and identity formations was fashioned. In particular, we note, the relationship between mediation and embodiment creates many different ways of seeing and being seen, acting and being acted upon, performing and watching the performances of others. These processes reveal how mediation is integral to sport fandom and cannot be subordinated by traditional appeals to the superiority of the unmediated, embodied experience of "being there" that is now, itself, a highly mediated one. In particular, reflexive mediation – the self-conscious awareness of participants that they are being watched and "imaged" across the globe, the media's awareness of, and dependency on, their subjects' awareness of their performative status – indicates how the sport-media-globalisation nexus has both expanded in scope and tightened in practice in the twenty-first century.

In concluding, we wish to problematise the process of representing and seeking to capture the character and experience of mediatised sporting contexts like the live site. Our observational study exposed, albeit in only a preliminary manner, the similarities and differences between being at the live site and "being there", and the complex social subject positions available to participants who, at the same time, were being coaxed into conventional postures and performances by event organisers and media alike. The media coverage – broadcast, print, online – of the Fan Fest did little more than routinely replicate the accounts of the event provided in its own press releases, apart from short-lived concerns about alcohol-related violence and crowd safety (for example, Devlin 2010; Tovey 2010). Closer acquaintance with the live site, however, revealed that there was rather more occurring there than fans forming into familiar groupings and the more colourfully attired fans "mugging" for the cameras. Crowd assembly, public space, mediation, globalisation, commercialisation, governmentalisation and embodiment create, as here, new forms and experiences of sport fan sociability. These combinatory elements have important implications for the cultural politics of sport fandom, including formations of identity, the rights of cultural citizenship, access to and uses of urban public space, and power over social exchange, communication and representation. The social arena between the stadium and the living room still has many secrets to yield about global sport fandom and its contemporary mediations.

Notes

1. The observational team, which attended a select sample of night-time live site events between 11 June and 12 July 2010, consisted of Stephanie Alice Baker, Nathaniel Bavinton, David Rowe and Phillip Wadds. In total, thirteen observational visits (singularly and in teams) were made, covering a sample of matches that took place at different times (9.30pm; 12am and 4.30am, corresponding to evening, midnight, and early morning phases) as well as times when no live event was taking place. Different event, team and fan configurations were sampled, including: South Africa as event host; Australia as Fan Fest host; games involving large national groups resident in Australia (such as British, Italian and Greek); games involving smaller national groups resident in Australia (such as Uruguay and Ghana); and high-profile and low-profile contests in Australia and in the tournament (for example, matches between major and minor teams, "knockout" matches and those of little consequence for the tournament outcome). Each observer had an instruction guide addressing crowd positioning, interaction and flows; crowd control structures and techniques; modes of co-present and distant communication, and so on. Given that the decision to conduct observational research was made at a relatively late stage, it was not possible to gain human research ethics approval, necessitating consent forms and information sheets, to conduct interviews. The researchers were, however, able to record casual exchanges and elements of event "actuality", as well as engage in participant observation and open public-space photography. The analysis of sport and new media in this chapter derives from the Australian Research Council-funded Discovery Grant 'Struggling for Possession: The Control and Use of Online Media Sport' (DP0877777, with Brett Hutchins).
2. Cultural politics is conceived in this chapter (as utilised in, for example, Rowe 2004; Sugden and Tomlinson 2002; and Whannel 2008) as a broader domain than that of the orthodox political process of government or of policy formation. While these elements are clearly implicated in the relations of power analysed above, we are concerned in this paper with the more extensive and informal politics of identity, space, and pleasure that take place within the sphere of everyday life.

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Football fans are often portrayed as enthusiastic, loyal, critical and sometimes violent. But what is it about football that appeals to them? How do the media – newspapers, radio, TV, blogs and web forums – accommodate the needs of fans, and what connection – if any – is there between the imagined community of football fans and the broader society? These are the questions explored by 20 well-known and merited researchers from 8 countries in this anthology about the mediation of football fandom.

We Love To Hate Each Other should be useful to scholars and students who are engaged in sports journalism and popular culture in both the old and new media.

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