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CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: THE SURVIVAL OF
HOOLIGANISM IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL

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ABSTRACT

This research paper presents a general view of the violence that has been taking place in English football since its origins. The study goes from the birth of this violent trend, taking into account the sociological and cultural aspects that prevailed at that time, to the most despicable and recognizable acts of hooliganism lived in English and in European competitions in more recent times. Some of the measures imposed by the English authorities in order to tackle football hooliganism will be discussed along with the results obtained. The aim of this research paper is to determine if hooliganism is still active in England by analysing those results.

Keywords: England, Football, Hooliganism, Hooligans, Measures, Results.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo de fin de grado presenta una visión general de la violencia que ha tenido lugar en el fútbol inglés desde sus orígenes. El trabajo constará de un recorrido histórico desde el nacimiento de este comportamiento violento, teniendo en cuenta los aspectos socio-culturales de la época, hasta los actos más despreciables y destacables causados por el hooliganismo en las competiciones inglesas y europeas en años más recientes. También se discutirán cuáles han sido las medidas que se han llevado a cabo por las autoridades inglesas para frenar el hooliganismo y los resultados obtenidos a través de ellas, con el propósito de analizar, a través de estos resultados, si el hooliganismo en Inglaterra sigue activo a día de hoy.

Palabras clave: Inglaterra, Fútbol, Hooliganismo, Hooligans, Medidas, Resultados.

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INTRODUCTION

“I need violence to make me feel I'm still alive.” This quote by Tommy Johnson (Dany Dyer) in the movie *Football Factory* could sum up perfectly the feeling of many and many football fans all around the world. Football is a beautiful sport, we start to play it probably at school and we grow up watching or hearing about it. However, most of the times, this sport gets mixed with awful violence which stains its elegance and joy.

This kind of violence known as “Hooliganism”, or “the English Disease”, originated in England seven centuries ago. Nonetheless, we cannot talk about football hooliganism till the 19th century since the word “*Hooligan*” was not in use before then.¹ In spite of being a very well-known term, so far no agreement has been attained among scholars on the definition of “*Hooliganism*”. According to the one given by the Collins Cobuild Dictionary, *Hooliganism* is “the behaviour and actions of hooligans” (761), being *hooligans* “people, especially young people who behave in a noisy and violent way in public places” (761). Both of them match what everyone may think to be the hooligan movement, but as to have a more specific definition of *hooliganism* we will follow Dunning, Murphy, and Williams who define it as “fighting and aggressive behaviour as an integral part of ‘going to the match’” (5).

People involved in that violence, “the hooligans”, were actually very difficult to control. Since the 1850s they had been making trouble during match days. However, it was around the 1970s and the 1980s when people started being afraid of those trouble makers and their acts. Almost every match day, there was a riot provoked by those extreme football supporters. Authorities were overwhelmed because of all those fights inside stadiums, so it was vital to establish some measures to tackle this violence. Along with football associations and other important authorities, the Government imposed certain regulations.

Researches focus most of their attention on the origins and development of the problem itself, as for example *The Roots of Football Hooliganism* by Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy, and John Williams; or *Football Hooliganism* written by Steve Frosdick and

¹ As we can see in the book *Football Hooliganism* written by Steve Frosdick and Peter Marsh, the word *hooligan* appeared for the first time in the 1890s as a synonym for disrespectful expressions such as “street Arab” or “ruffin”. However, this term is now used to refer to the extremist and violent football supporters of the 1960s (16).

Peter Marsh. However, studies of the measures carried out to stop hooliganism and the results achieved are not easy to find.

So, the question remains whether hooliganism is still active in England or not. This issue well deserves a careful analysis, taking into account all data recorded about hooligans and hooliganism from the 1980s to the present. Thus, the object of this paper is to look critically into those measures and the football related arrests orders so as to study if those procedures and regulations have helped to tackle football hooliganism.

First of all, I will discuss the historical background of football hooliganism in England. With this section I want to seek its origins, and make a chronological study from the first football-related case of misconduct until present violent acts.

Next, I will talk about some of the causes that are said to have initiated football hooliganism in England, beginning with society and the way it helped to the emergence of football hooliganism, especially men; next the media, and the enmity generated between journalists and football supporters in England; and finally the consumption of alcohol and how this may have fostered the violent acts carried out by the spectators both inside and outside stadiums. All these lines will explain how hooliganism has developed.

The following section in my research will be about the effects of violence in English football. It is not the purpose of my study to analyse all the hooligan events in English football but rather to examine the most significant ones. This means that I will make, again, a chronological study of the worst hooligan acts in which some English football teams were involved. These issues will be explained in order to understand that football supporters can be very dangerous, and that it is not a mere trend that can be easily forgotten.

Finally, I will talk about the measures imposed by the government to examine, afterwards, whether they have or have not been able to reduce that problem. To get to know it, recorded data from different seasons will be analysed.

STATE OF THE ART

Hooliganism is one of the most recent sociological, cultural, and political movements, and must not be forgotten in order to teach society how to eradicate it from our lives. Everyone must learn history to avoid repeating mistakes like this. So, a deep reading throughout some of the most influential writings related to this topic has been conducted.

One of them was *Football Hooliganism* (2005) by Steve Frosdick and Peter Marsh, which gives a view of football hooliganism since its origins until the 2000s.

The Roots of Football Hooliganism (1988), written by Eric Dunning, John Williams, and Patrick Murphy, provides a historical background of this trend and explains the possible causes and consequences of it.

In addition, *Football, Violence and Social Identity* (1994) offers a very useful political approach, which none of the previous books presented.

There are some very interesting articles, such as "Football Hooliganism Is Back on the Rise: See How Your Club Performs in The League of Shame", published in *Mirror*, in May 2016, which deals with the appearance of new acts of hooliganism in current football; and "Football: Knowledge - Has Football Ever Been Illegal in Britain?" published in *The Guardian*. This last article is also about the origins of hooliganism in England and the first prohibitions in the country.

Some YouTube videos are also very helpful to understand how hooligans behaved in the worst events they took part in. For instance "Football Hooligans - Birmingham City vs Leeds United 1985" and "Millwall - Luton Fans Fight in Stadium."

Regarding football related arrests orders, the most useful source is the web page of UK Home Office where "Football-Related Arrests and Banning Orders Statistics - GOV.UK" is available. As for the measures, I have made use of a research paper written by Arabella Throp that gives information about the acts promulgated by the government to tackle hooliganism: *The Football (Offences and Disorder) Bill*. Bill 17 of 1998-99.

History does not only deal with dynasties and kingdoms. It is more than that. History also involves social movements which must be taken into account. For England, hooliganism was an undeniable woe because of all the dreadful consequences it brought about. And it

is still considered a taboo not only by most of the English people (their country was seen as the shame of Europe due to the violent trend English supporters were setting), but also by the professional football players who were involved in some of the most shocking disasters, who burst into tears whenever they hear about the past violence.

1. ENGLISH FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM.

1.1. THE ORIGINS OF FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM IN ENGLAND.

What do we know about English football hooliganism? When did this trend start? In this section I will try to answer these questions, briefly reviewing the history of this violent movement from the Middle Ages to the present day to provide a panoramic picture of its evolution.

To talk about football and understand the behaviour of spectators, and violent spectators more specifically, we must look back on the 14th century. Archives tell us that in those days, religious celebrations and holy days (also known as Shrove Tuesdays) were appropriate occasions to celebrate with football matches, but those games used to be violent and were used as a chance to create confrontation. For example, there were noisy disturbances among the home people and other counties, with the former trying to kick the latter out of their place, or throwing the leather ball at them. Being this so, we find that football games began to be forbidden in 1314, when King Edward II was reigning in England. This was the first time that football was banned in history and the prohibition lasted one year, till 1315 (Frosdick and Marsh 16).

But Edward II was not the only king who banned football. Almost one century later, in 1477, Edward IV ruled against this game. Henry VII, following the steps of his predecessors, banned it in 1496 (Frosdick and Marsh 16). As centuries, kings, and dynasties went by, more restrictions were created to forbid the act of playing football and, every time, the main reason was the violence that this game carried out. According to the article of Lutz "Football: Knowledge - Has Football Ever Been Illegal in Britain?", football became prohibited in England during the 14th century, and more particularly in London, due to all the conflicts that took place and all the blood spelt in the streets. Surprisingly, the more civilised the crew was, the more violent the riots were. For instance, we find a measure imposed during the reign of Edward IV (1471- 1483) aimed at schools. The purpose of it was to instruct children so they would not practice this violence in the future, since schools were the places where children played football.

We could continue detailing the events that occurred in the following centuries; however, they were not significantly relevant. It was in the second half of the 19th century when the most important riots started to take place. During that period, professional football teams began to emerge, henceforth there were more rivalries among the supporters of each team. The number of violent episodes recorded in the second half on the 19th century, from 1843 to 1899, are about twelve. These disturbances were very close in time though some of those emerging football teams' supporters were more problematic than others. As an example, we have the followers of Preston North End, who, in 1884, attacked Bolton Wanderers players; in 1885, again, Preston North End was involved in a riot being attacked by Aston Villa fan mobs with sticks, stones, and other missiles; one year later, in 1886, there was another disorder between Preston North End and Queen's Park followers, although this time the battle was set in a railway station (Frosdick and Marsh 19).

Football hooliganism as we know it nowadays dates back to the 19th century. However, the most destructive and violent crowd behaviour in football matches took place in the 20th Century. Hooligan acts can be summed up in fights, battles, altercations, and, in a number of cases, the death of some people. The most famous hooligan disasters (both of which will be discussed later) were Heysel, during season 1984-85, and Hillsborough, in 1989. Still, although hooliganism was at its peak in the 20th century, there was a break in football violence during the First World War, the pre-war years, and the Second World War. People were very concerned about all the losses and the suffering that war had brought to them. During those war years, there was almost no time for people to attend football matches, and although a few still did, they were a minority. Nonetheless, we have to take into account that those people were mainly male youths who belonged to the most violent right-winged associations or gangs such as the National Front (NF), the Skinheads, Teddy Boys, Bover Boys or the Superhooligans. Some of them, for instance, showed their extreme behaviour because of their Nationalist ideology, in particular when the English national team faced the German national team. Nowadays, there is still a great hostility between these two major supporters. The aggrupation of those aggressive young men, who also belong to different hooligan bands, is internationally known as the community of The Football Casuals.

1.2. MAIN THEORIES FOR EXPLAINING FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM.

In the section that follows, I will discuss some theories that attempt to explain the emergence of football hooliganism under three different approaches: the sociological approach, the media and football approach, and the alcohol approach.

1.2.1. THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.

According to Dunning, Murphy, and Williams there are some sociological reasons that explain why people behaved in a violent way when they went to football stadiums and wore their team colours, which could be the basis to explain the origins of this trend in today's society. It is necessary that we reflect upon some previous features.

This approach takes us back to the 19th century again, after the Industrial Revolution had changed the working-class way of life. In the mid-1830s, people – when talking about people, we are referring to men because women were not already allowed to work – were starting to work in factories, to earn their own money, and to have less time for themselves. Once their work day was over, those men used to go to stadiums to watch their football teams play. In those places (in stadiums) is where football hooliganism started. Matches in which the home team had not played well drove people mad at the players or managers; but they also were furious if the refereeing had not been favourable to the home team. In both cases, people became enraged because they thought they were spending uselessly the money they had earned with so much effort. For them, starting a fight was a way to overcome their frustration. Sadly enough, this became very common amongst the majority of the working-class people during the 1850s.

For Dunning, Murphy, and Williams, football hooliganism was a “men’ thing” (138) as women did not attend football stadiums until the 1900s onwards, but it was also a children’s thing. Most children (boys) were taken into stadiums by their fathers being still very young so the violence lived at football grounds (or outside) was learnt and also practiced by them from a very early age. We are not talking simply about giving a hard punch to or kicking a spectator within the stadium, but also about throwing items (broken crystal bottles, stones, sticks, etc.) to the pitch; insulting the away supporters just because they were wearing their team colours or due to the mere fact that they were in “the enemy

territory” (173); or insulting players, managers or referees for making an awful performance.

The formation of street gangs is, in the opinion of Dunning, Murphy, and Williams (200), another reason that can explain football hooliganism. Children would spend plenty of time playing in the streets while their fathers (common men) worked very long hours in a factory and their mothers spent most of the time at home doing household chores. Children had to take care of themselves and, sometimes, they had no control of the people they used to join, becoming easy preys for street gangs that later would turn into a violent group that entered the stadiums or means of transport making strong noises and destroying whatever they found in their path. Gangs used to select little boys depending on the area they lived in. For instance, if they recruited people in west London, it would be easier to find supporters of West Ham United among them. Eventually, these bands made up of young boys over whom their parents had no control, who supported the same team, and who were usually right-winged, resulted in *firms*, which associated with football clubs. This is the case of the Gooners, who were known for being very violent hooligans during the 1980s, followers of Arsenal; the Manchester United’s Red Army; and the Chelsea’s Headhunters. In fact, a *firm* is a group made up by football fans (supporting the same football team) with a violent tendency. These groups were supposed to travel in order to support their football club in away matches, though not only did they travel, but also clashed with other hooligans’ bands. One of the most dangerous and famous firm all over the years has been the ICF (Inter City Firm) that supports the West Ham United.

It is worth mentioning that the members of these firms were usually right-winged extremists, what indicates that they had a sense of patriotism bigger than the one other supporters who just went to the stadium to watch their team playing had. According to Dunning, Murphy, and Williams, they did everything to defend their colours, and “to limit their territory” (173). However, this feeling of patriotism would get bigger whenever the English national team played. Hooligans supported the national team playing at home and away. They used to travel in order to support the players (hooligans abroad), but away trips had a major risk since these hooligans were considered more dangerous and violent

when they left their living places.² In these away national football games, the most notorious firm was the National Front (NF). It was very right-winged, having an ideology very close to Nazism, and was composed only by white people. Another dangerous one was the Teddy Boys, though this group was less prominent within football hooliganism.

To sum up, the sociological approach focuses on the formation of groups, mainly made up of men, belonging to the working middle-class, mostly teenagers and young boys of about 20 years, though there were also members that exceeded the adulthood. We have to keep in mind the involvement of men in those violent associations, some of which eventually developed in firms: groups which consist of annoying, passionate, and destructive fans of the same team.

1.2.2. THE MEDIA.

The media have a lot to do with the development of English football hooliganism. Journalists have been allowed to English stadiums since the 1890s, though their style of reporting was very different from the current one. In those years, the press was very impartial. Journalists went to football grounds and only commented about matches. As Frostdick and Marsh agree “Most reports before the First World War, were made in restrained fashion. Little social comment was made and the articles were small and factual, often placed under a heading such as ‘Football Association Notes’” (112).

While most people started attending stadiums during the 1950s, the media, as well, got their press offices or press boxes inside the stadiums, from where they broadcast the games. Eventually, the media left their impartiality apart, becoming more critical and starting their particular war against English football hooliganism.

The media tried to restrict all kind of violence related to football and hooligans both in the streets and the pitches. Most of the times they expanded a case of hooliganism to the limit just to create a sense of fear among the people that attended the stadiums so that hooligans be left apart. They created this fear by means of reports in which hooligans were referred to as *animals*, *savages*, *thugs*, *roughs*, and all the disrespectful terms that

² Hooligans Abroad are those football hooligans who travel to support their team when playing away.

we can imagine. Hooligans' response was very hostile, there was a tense atmosphere between them and, for a time, they were archenemies. In every football match these 'roughs' felt under the scrutiny of the press, so they tried to make themselves heard, making more noises than usual, bringing banners to the stadiums and getting all the attention of the media. The attempt of journalists to stop violence in football grounds had exactly the opposite effect, getting hooligans mad at them and therefore empowering these groups just because of all that was being published by the tabloids in England. As Frosdick and Marsh argue:

The British tabloid press in particular have an 'enthusiastic' approach to the reporting of soccer violence, with sensationalist headlines such as 'Smash these thugs!', 'Murder on a soccer train!', 'Mindless morons', and 'Savages! Animals! [...] Whilst open condemnation of hooligans is the norm across the media, it has been argued that this sensationalist style of reporting present football violence as far more of a concern than it actually is, elevating it to a major 'social problem.' (111)

Nevertheless, there were more reactions than those mentioned before. Some groups of hooligans did not feel attacked by journalists when their violent deeds appeared in the English tabloids. They felt proud instead. There is a recorded conversation between two members of a Millwall's firm in which it is proved that they enjoyed being mentioned in the press:

C – keeps a scrapbook of press cuttings and everything, you should see it, got this great picture from when Millwall went to Chelsea. Great, this Chelsea fan photographed being led away from a shed, with blood pouring out of his white tee shirt. He's clutching his guts like this (illustrates), got stabbed real bad. You see that thing in the Sun on 'Violent Britain'? No? Well I was in it. Well not directly like. I had this Tottenham geezer see. Sliced up his face with my blade – right mess. (Pratt and Salter 201)

As a conclusion, we can firmly say that the media helped – right on purpose or not – the phenomenon of football hooliganism. Since journalists and television cameras were allowed in stadiums, these press reporters broadcast not only football matches but also the bad behaviour of a minority group of team supporters. Sometimes incidents related to

football hooligans were no more than a fight between a home supporter and an away fan. Nonetheless, journalists took cases like this and turned them into a “bloody and violent riot against the away supporters.” At times, firms’ members made fun of all the press columns published about them and continued the same violent way. Even so, it was not always like that. Other fans felt insulted and disrespected when the media treated them as savages, animals or thugs, so these ones developed a hostile reaction to the press starting more riots, street fights or arguments within football grounds. As Frosdick and Marsh state “some critics argue that media coverage of hooliganism has actually contributed to the problem” (111).

1.2.3. ALCOHOL.

It may be thought that alcohol is one of the main reasons for generating criminal or violent behaviour among people, and, yet, this is not what expert researchers have concluded. We are used to watching English fans drinking beer and often getting involved in fights. However, according to Frosdick and Marsh, alcohol cannot be considered as a main cause of hooliganism, but “as an aggravating factor” (126). However, this is not what both the British Government and the stadiums authorities thought at the time, forbidding alcohol consumption at football matches as a measure to stop violent disorder.

What do Frosdick and Marsh mean when they say that alcohol is just an aggravating factor? In order to understand that alcohol consumption is not a primary cause of football hooliganism, we can take the “roligans” and the “Tartan army” for example. The Danish roligans and the Scottish Tartan Army are the funniest face of football supporters. Both have developed a reputation for being two of the drunkest supporters inside stadiums though neither of them is considered to be dangerous or violent. In fact, there are almost no cases of football violence created by them, even though their consumption rates surpass English supporters’. As Frosdick and Marsh state:

We considered the case of Scottish fans, whose behaviour had changed markedly for the better since the mid-1980s, despite continuing patterns of ‘heavy’ drinking. It is clear that alcohol-related behaviours are not immutable and can change in relatively short periods of time. The example of the Danish roligans was also considered. These have drinking

patterns very similar to those of English fans, but present few problems to the authorities. Drunkenness amongst the Danish fans is typically accompanied by good humour and positive sociability. [...] It is concluded that restrictions on fans' drinking have little impact on levels of football hooliganism and, in some cases, may be counterproductive. (133-134)

To sum up, we have seen that while authorities considered alcohol to be one of the main causes of football hooliganism, scientists and researchers do not have the same opinion and think it is just an aggravating factor. What researchers point out is that authorities should take into consideration some other cases in which the consumption of alcohol does not generate a violent or criminal behaviour among football fans. As an example, we have the Danish *roligans* and the Scottish *Tartan Army*.

In conclusion, the above mentioned approaches are the three main theories that researchers and also scientists and sociologists consider to be the cause of football hooliganism in England. Nonetheless, there is not a defined answer yet to why these people acted so aggressively at football matches almost 50 years ago.

2. THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL.

In this section, we will talk about the effects or the consequences of football hooliganism inside football grounds, focusing on two of the most destructive, disgusting and bloody massacres in the history of this sport: the Disaster of Heysel (1985) and the Disaster of Hillsborough, in 1989.

The most famous disasters involving football hooligans took place in a very short period of time. The first one occurred in 1985, in Heysel, a stadium in Belgium in which the UEFA Champions League final had to be played. The two contenders were the English Liverpool FC and the Italian Juventus CF. The second tragedy was lived at Hillsborough stadium (Sheffield, England) four years later, during the semi-final game of the 1988–89 FA Cup between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest.

On 29th May 2015, the 30th anniversary of the Heysel Stadium disaster was commemorated. All of the English media echoed the news in order to remember the victims and call to mind the necessity for keeping on fighting against those violent individuals who still attended football fields. But, what happened in that black day in Brussels? Nowadays, even those who played that final in 1985 feel ashamed and consider the tragedy a taboo, being incapable of telling people what happened.

During the match, the supporters of both Liverpool and Juventus were segregated within the Heysel Stadium by fences, so that neither of them could be in touch. However, Liverpool fans started to climb the fences in order to reach the followers of the Juventus to start a fight. This riot finished with a high number of deaths among the people who were attending that final. There were 39 people dead, in total, most of whom were Juventus fans (32), although there were also four young Belgians, two French guys, and a young Irish man. The number of injured people reached almost 600. As a consequence, the Football Association and the UEFA decided to expel Liverpool FC from all the international competitions due to the violent behaviour of its supporters.

The Hillsborough disaster took place in the city of Sheffield, on 15th April 1989, during the FA Cup semi-final game. The tragedy was not directly linked to football hooliganism but with a failure in the security of the stadium. At the time, however, according to

Guiolianotti, Bonney, and Hepworth, Margaret Thatcher and her cabinet blamed hooligans for this violent act, because there was a crisis between the government of England and football hooliganism (18-20). Nowadays, it has been proved that the Disaster of Hillsborough was due to negligent failures on the part of the police and on those related to the case who tried to hide their own mistakes.

Four years after the Heysel disaster, people still kept in mind the tragedy caused by the *English Disease*, so measures were being increased in major football competitions to prevent hooligans from entering the stadiums. In Hillsborough, authorities had prepared two different entries to segregate opposing fans. Liverpool followers were allocated in Lepping Lane (the North and West ends of the Sheffield Stadium), while Nottingham Forest fans were at Spion Kop (South and East ends). There was a moment of collapse in which the entrance to Lepping Lane was overwhelmed by Liverpool supporters. In order to unblock it, the authorities opened a gate, called Gate C, to ease the access to the stadium. Liverpool fans ran inside to get a location within pens 3 and 4. However, these places were already full. Supporters expanded throughout the next pens exceeding the number of people allowed in those locations. As a result, the steel-fence that prevented the North end of Hillsborough stadium from pitch invasions of hooligans fell down on the goal bringing about 96 deaths – all of whom were Liverpool supporters – and approximately 770 injuries.

The 1980s was the peak of the English Disease. There were constant riots between football fans who used terraces as battlefields. Moreover, a lot of firms in which their members had any enmity against other firms' members could provoke a hostile confrontation due to their mutual hatred. Typically, these clashes took place at terraces. This is what happened, for instance, on 13th March 1985 during the game in which Millwall and Luton Town were playing the FA Cup quarter-final. The match was stopped due to the misbehaviour of Millwall supporters. The police tried to keep this mass of people calm, however, they could not. Millwall hooligans – Top Boys– started to invade the pitch and throw missiles – most of them were seats from the stands – at the police and Luton fans. Despite the battle that took place in the field, this riot did not end up in tragedy as in Heysel or Hillsborough. There were no deaths but at least 47 people were injured and 31 arrested.

Sadly enough, it was not the same almost two months later, on 11th May 1985, when a fight between Birmingham and Leeds supporters resulted in the death of one of them: a 15-year-old boy, Ian Hambridge, who was pushed onto a wall that fell down. There is a plaque in St. Andrew's stadium – Birmingham's terrace – to the memory of this little boy, who died a day after the incident at Smethwick Neurological Hospital:

To the Memory of IAN HAMBRIDGE aged 15 years, of Northampton, who lost his life resulting from a tragic accident here at St. Andrews (near this spot) On Saturday 11th May 1985. As a Football Supporter, One of us, never to be forgotten.

As time went by, the situation inside English stadiums got worse and worse because of all those episodes of football hooliganism that were turning this sport into a boxing ring. As we have seen, the *English Disease* reached its breaking point during the 1980s, and especially during 1985 – when one of the bloodiest tragedies in football history ever, the Heysel disaster, occurred. Those years brought along not only arrests, but injuries and, unfortunately, the death of plenty of people. The punishment for those disasters and English fans' misbehaviour was a sanction that banned English football teams from all European competitions for five years.

3. MEASURES AGAINST FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM IN ENGLAND.

In the previous section, we have talked about the effects that hooliganism had on English football. Now, we will study some measures that the Football Association, English football teams, and even the Crown and the government of Margaret Thatcher approved in an attempt to clamp down on hooliganism. We will briefly review the first measures taken before the 1980s and those which were implemented after the 1980s.

3.1 MEASURES BEFORE 1980S.

As Frostdick and Marsh point out (173) there were measures taken before the 1980s with which the authorities tried to stop the violent acts of football hooligans. However, they proved to be insufficient and poor in comparison with the ones adopted afterwards.

First of all, stadiums and clubs' authorities met in order to study some measures seeking to avoid and keep football-related offences under control. They got to the conclusion that it was necessary to have more security inside English stadiums, which would be provided by stewards that clubs themselves would employ. A steward, according to the definition given by the *Collins Cobuild* is "a man or woman who helps to organize a race, match, or other public event" (1534). Their duties were to receive and supervise spectators, to ensure that the public did not gain access to the pitch, and to control disorderly fan behaviour both in and around stadiums.

Another measure to stop violent supporters was the erection of fences – usually made of steel – at the ends of the terraces, where football hooligans were supposed to be allocated, just behind the goal of the home team. The erection of these fences could stop missile throwing and pitch invasion, but as we have seen before, they also turned out to be mortal after falling down during the match at Hillsborough. In fact, nowadays, they have been replaced by fence nets.

A third strategy to manage hooligans' activities was their segregation in strategic areas within the terraces, where they could be supervised by stewards and cameras. The

problem was that those areas were covered by nets, what made firms' members feel like animals inside a cage resulting in more violence and disorders.

As it has been already mentioned, alcohol consumption was a major concern for British authorities, for whom drunkenness was a significant factor to explain football hooliganism. This is why a measure was enacted that did not allow alcohol into stadiums. As Steve Frosdick and Peter Marsh portray (133), Nottingham Forest was pioneer in establishing its own procedures to restrain excessive drinking and alcohol-related disorder. In fact, within the Nottingham Forest stadium there were "alcohol stewards"; only plastic bottles were allowed for sale; there was also a restricted number of glasses per person during a football match; and the bar that provided alcoholic drinks within the stadium had to be closed five minutes after the kick-off.

The last measure deals with a classification depending on the people who attended those games. Authorities considered appropriate to classify football matches into "pacific" and "dangerous" depending on the hooligans and the firms involved in every football match. This classification ranked matches from A to C. If a match was classified as category A, that meant that it would be a pacific game, without involvement of firms; category B, the "in between" category, meant it was neither violent nor pacific; and finally, category C, meant that the rivalry between both football supporters – away and home– could result in riots and terrace fighting. In this last case, the authorities, the police and the government had to get involved in the supervision of both the football grounds and its surroundings before, during, and after the match. By the creation of this classification, English hooligans and firms were easily brought under control.

This way of cataloguing football matches, as well as the use of fence nets, is still used for Premier League games, FA Cup confrontations, and International matches in which the English national team is involved. Nonetheless, these measures were not strong enough to face all destructive behaviour within English stadiums. In fact, some years later these measures were exceeded by certain groups of hooligans resulting in dreadful and catastrophic football events – in 1985, Birmingham vs Leeds United, Luton Town vs Millwall, and the Heysel Disaster, among others. Therefore, there were new and steady orders promulgated not only by the government but also by the Football Association and the police of UK, in order to improve the measures previously adopted.

3.2 MEASURES AFTER 1980S

Major football disasters, such as Heysel or Hillsborough, prompted the British government to act against football hooliganism. Margaret Thatcher's government enacted legislation that together with the measures adopted by the British police and the Football Association attempted to prevent undesirable fan behaviour within terraces.³ In the following lines, we will review some legislation decreed to combat football hooliganism.

The government of Margaret Thatcher brought to Parliament some acts under the name of *Football Banning Orders Authority*, which were debated in the House of Commons for some years. Once Margaret Thatcher left the presidency in 1990, the House of Commons was still searching for new measures against hooliganism. These acts can be found in a research paper that deals with *The Football (Offences and Disorder) Bill*. Bill 17 of 1998-99, compiled by Arabella Thorp. The acts are the following:

Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985: Prohibits the carriage of alcohol on a public service vehicle or a train which is being used for the principal purpose of carrying passengers to or from a designated sporting event, and empowers magistrates to impose conditions on licensed premises within sports grounds to ensure that alcohol should not be sold within sports grounds during the period of a match. (Thorp 10)

Public Order Act 1986 (section 30): Enables exclusion orders to be made in respect of persons convicted of certain football related offences in England and Wales, prohibiting them from attending prescribed football matches in England and Wales. (Thorp 10)

Football Spectators Act 1989: Set up the licensing system to implement the recommendations of the Taylor Report into the Hillsborough Disaster;⁴ introduced restriction orders designed to prevent fans convicted of football-related offences either here or abroad from travelling to foreign matches by requiring them to report to a police

³ Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1979. She was in charge until 1990.

⁴ The *Taylor Report* was a document by Lord Taylor of Gosforth published after The Hillsborough Disaster. This report looked for the causes of that black day and made recommendations for preventing future events like Hillsborough's. The *Taylor Report* considered the police of UK guilty of that tragedy in 1989 and proposed numbered seats for ticket-holders, the regulation of alcohol consumption, and specific training for police officers and stewards.

station on the occasion of designated football matches outside England and Wales; and created the unimplemented national scheme for football membership cards to restrict entry to certain matches. (Thorp 10)

Finance Act 1990 (section 4): Effected a reduction in pools betting duty on the basis that a sum equivalent to the reduction was handed over to the Football Trust for assistance towards ground improvements following the Taylor Report. (Thorp 11)

Football Offences Act 1991: Created three criminal offences covering the following behaviour at designated football matches: throwing of missiles, indecent or racist chanting, and going onto the playing area. (Thorp 11)

Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc.) (Amendment) Act 1992: Extended the maximum period for which an order under section 3 of the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc.) Act 1985 can be made from five months to twelve months. (Thorp 11)

Criminal Justice Act 1994 (section 166): Created a criminal offence of touting tickets for football matches. It is an offence to tout tickets in public places even if this is done on a day other than that on which the match is being played. It is also an offence to resell tickets in any way if this is done in the course of a trade or business - this seeks to catch mail order resale of tickets. (Thorp 11)

Broadcasting Act 1996: Contains provisions to guarantee the availability of live coverage of listed events on free-to air television. The list of protected events was revised in June 1998 to include the European Football Championship, in addition to the FIFA World Cup, the FA Cup Final, and the Scottish FA Cup Final (in Scotland only). (Thorp 11)

School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (section 77): Requires LEAs (and governing bodies where appropriate) to obtain the Secretary of State's consent before disposing of school playing fields. (Thorp 11)

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (section 84): Makes the breach (or apprehended breach) of a restriction order imposed under the Football Spectators Act 1989 an arrestable

offence, and increases the maximum term of imprisonment for such a breach from one month to six months. (Thorp 11)

However, there were also measures adopted by the Football Association, which, in cooperation with the Police and the Government created some special bodies exclusively aimed at preventing the entry of hooligans to terraces. Some of these were United Kingdom Football Police United (UKFPU), Football Intelligence Officer (FIO), and the National Football Information Point (NFIP). Their main objective was to avoid disorderly incidents at or around stadiums, and monitor the arrival of the visiting team and of those supporters who were expected to cause trouble.

The Football Association also allowed access to security cameras to control certain areas where riots between supporters were more likely to take place. If there was any evidence of fighting within the main football ground recorded by close-circuit television (CCTV cameras), police officers and stewards were entitled to expel those individuals. This way, those troublemakers could be recognised and enforced an exclusion order in the future.

There were also measures to regulate ticket sale and ticket touting, in order to control the spectators who attended the matches. In the first place, the authorities created membership cards so that only the holders were allowed to buy tickets to watch a game. Besides, the Government passed a law that punished any person who was involved in the resale of tickets whether to get more money or to let non-members (or hooligans) get in the stadium. The act that regulates ticket touting is *The Criminal Justice Act 1994 (section 160)*.

Additionally, the Football Association launched a campaign to combat not only generalised violence, but also racism. This campaign was promoted by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) and it was called *Kick It Out!* or *Kick Racism Out of Football!* This campaign took off in 1993 in order to eradicate the intimidations suffered by black supporters and black players. It was meant to be a call for dropping discrimination out of sport, and specifically out of football.

These ones, together with the measures carried out before the 1980s are considered to be the best to tackle the problem of hooliganism and football violence in England. Since

1314, this aggressive trend was destroying football in the country. Moreover, with the arrival of the media to the stadiums the whole world was witnessing the situation on the English football grounds, and that was a fact that ashamed the whole nation. As we have seen before, English football was penalized once for the Heysel Disaster in 1985 being out from European competitions for five years, but the worst punishment English football suffered was the National Legislation Acts dictated by the English government in collaboration with the police of the UK, and the Football Association. This was the only way to fight hooligans, and to make football grounds a pacific place to enjoy watching a football match.

4. THE SURVIVAL OF HOOLIGANISM IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL

Once we have reviewed the historical background of football hooliganism; the theories that researchers such as Eric Dunning, Steve Frosdick, and Peter Marsh propose to explain that phenomenon; the effects that hooliganism had in English football; and the measures launched both by the Government and the Football Association to stop it, I am going to introduce a section in which I will make a comparison between football-related arrests rates during the peak of hooliganism (the eighties), the 1990s and the 2000s. My purpose is to give an answer to the following question: have the aforementioned measures drawn hooliganism to its end? To do so, I have used data provided by the main English leagues (Premier League, Premiership, League One, and League Two). I have selected three decades (the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s), divided in two blocks – to make data easier to read. Each of the two blocks is divided in periods of 15 seasons. The first block comprises seasons 1985-86 to 1999-00. The second block comprises seasons 2000-01 to 2014-15. We start with season 1985-86 since 1985 was the year in which the majority of the worst and most dangerous acts of hooliganism took place in English and European competitions. We finish with the 2014-15 season because there is still no data available of season 2015-16. All this will be followed by an analysis of the main causes that led to those arrests, and a conclusion in which we will reflect on whether the measures promulgated by the English authorities succeeded in eradicating this undesirable behaviour.

To begin with, table 1 shows the arrests and attendance rates per season between seasons 1985-86 and 1999-00. Here, the information is divided in 3 columns. The first one contains the arrests (inside and outside stadiums during league matches); the second one contains the total attendance to football grounds per season; and the last column is the percentage of cases of hooliganism in every football season since 1985-85 (1 arrest per 100,000 attendances).

The most dangerous season according to the provided data was 1988-89, with almost 6,200 arrests. However, we can observe a decrease in the number of arrests over the time. If we look at season 1999-00 and we compare it to the years 1988-89, the number of arrests were reduced in a 21.3% in nearly 11 years, and what is more, the attendance to stadiums rose, so the arrests per attendance also decreased.

Table 1

Title: Arrests and attendance per season between seasons 1985-86 and 1999-00

<i>1980s -1990s</i>			
	ARRESTS (by leagues in England)	ATTENDANCE	ARRESTS PER 100000 ATTENDANCE
<i>1985-86</i>	4143	16,499,000	25.1
<i>1986-87</i>	5502	17,383,000	31.7
<i>1987-88</i>	6147	17,968,965	34.2
<i>1988-89</i>	6185	18,366,143	33.7
<i>1989-90</i>	5945	19,360,194	30.7
<i>1990-91</i>	4119	19,627,390	21.6
<i>1991-92</i>	5006	20,486,892	24.4
<i>1992-93</i>	4588	20,657,327	22.2
<i>1993-94</i>	4277	21,653,381	19.5
<i>1994-95</i>	3850	21,856,020	17.6
<i>1995-96</i>	3441	21,844,416	15.8
<i>1996-97</i>	3577	22,783,163	15.7
<i>1997-98</i>	3307	24,692,608	13.4
<i>1998-99</i>	3341	25,253,194	13.2
<i>1999-00</i>	3137	25,371,634	12.4
<i>Total (Σ)</i>	66,565	283,309,527	23.5

Source: Home Office – "Football-Related Arrests and Banning Orders Statistics - GOV.UK" and Williams, John. *Football and Football Hooliganism Fact Sheet 1*. 2001.

Table 2 deals with the most recent years in English football.

Since the 2000s the attendance kept growing, reaching a peak during the season 2009-2010 (30,057,892 supporters). Stadiums received more and more people with an exponential decrease in the number of vandals. The highest attendance recorded in table 1 was during the 1999-00 season (25,371,634), so in ten years, the number of attending people grew in almost 5 million (4,686,258), while the rate of the arrests decreased significantly (1990-00: 12.4%; 2009-10: 8.3%). In ten years, the detentions were reduced in a 4.1%.

Table 2.

Title: Arrests and attendance per season between seasons 2000-01 and 2014-15

<i>2000s – 2010s</i>			
	ARRESTS (by leagues in England)	ATTENDANCE	ARRESTS PER 100000 ATTENDANCE
<i>2000-01</i>	3391	26,018,820	13.0
<i>2001-02</i>	2977	27,756,977	10.7
<i>2002-03</i>	3373	28,434,386	11.9
<i>2003-04</i>	3124	29,197,510	10.7
<i>2004-05</i>	2787	29,245,870	9.5
<i>2005-06</i>	2651	29,089,084	9.1
<i>2006-07</i>	2833	29,578,141	9.6
<i>2007-08</i>	2893	29,914,212	9.7
<i>2008-09</i>	2751	29,881,966	9.2
<i>2009-10</i>	2507	30,057,892	8.3
<i>2010-11</i>	2263	29,459,105	7.7
<i>2011-12</i>	1700	29,454,401	5.8
<i>2012-13</i>	1762	29,225,443	6.0
<i>2013-14</i>	1599	29,763,018	5.4
<i>2014-15</i>	1494	30,000,000	4.9
Total (Σ)	38105	466,535,930	8.2

Source: Home Office – "Football-Related Arrests and Banning Orders Statistics - GOV.UK"

Figures 1 and 2 show graphically the data analysed in the tables above. We can appreciate how hooliganism decreased drastically in the 2000s in contrast to the 1980s.

Figure 1: Football related arrests during the 1980s –1990s.

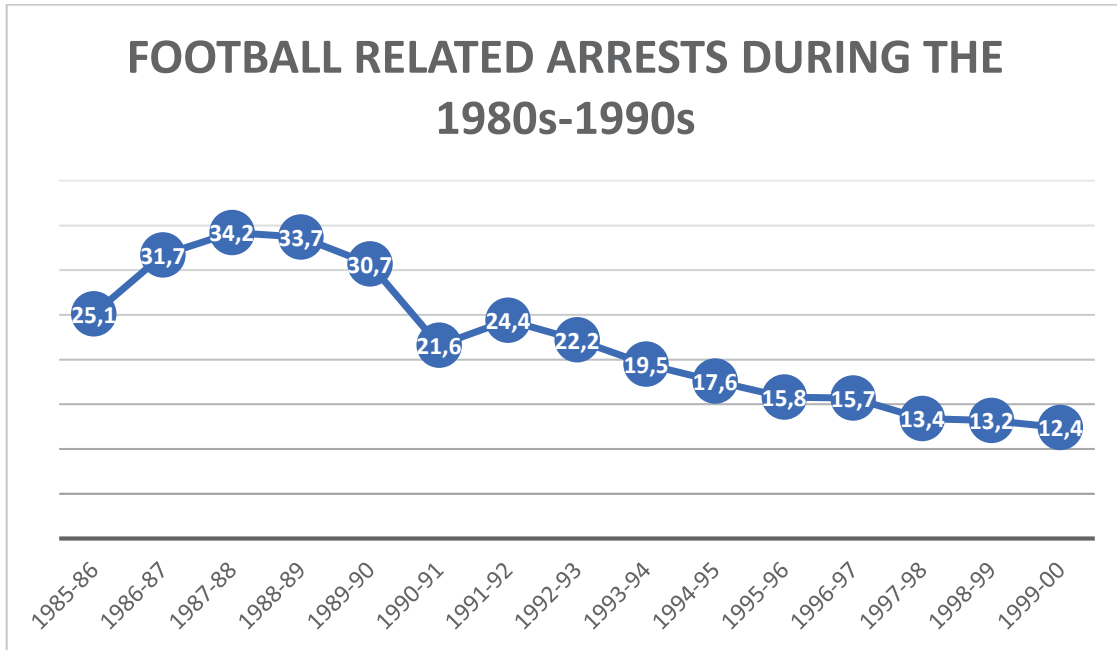
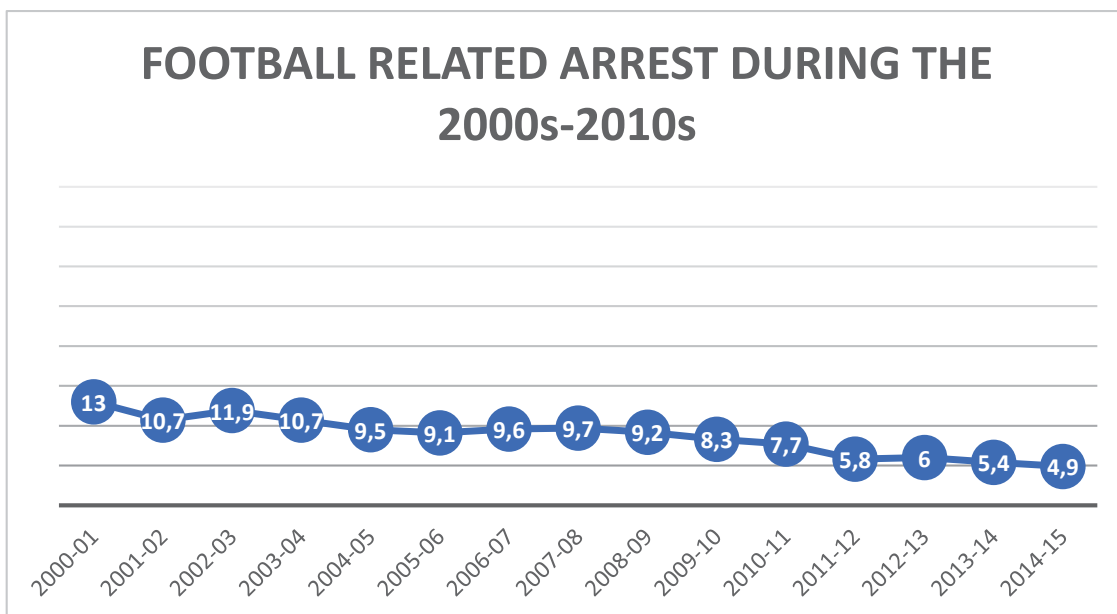


Figure 2: Football related arrests during the 2000s – 2010s.



To continue now with the causes why hooligans were arrested inside and outside football stadiums I will focus on two seasons:

1. The 2005-06 season, since hooliganism started to have a great decrease during the 2000s, and the years in between are the ones that show the real difference between the 1980s and the 2010s.
2. The 2014-15 season, as there are not available data of the 2015-16 yet.

Once the seasons are set, I will start with the study by examining the motives only in League matches (Premier League, Championship, League One, and League Two). The detentions are classified by the type of the offence, and the resulting percentage is offered.

Table 3.

Title: Number of arrests by offences in 2005-06

<i>season</i>	<i>Causes</i>	<i>Number of arrests</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Season 2005-06</i>	Public disorder	976	36.8
	Missile throwing	55	2.1
	Violent disorder	203	7.7
	Racist chanting	42	1.6
	Pitch invasion	173	6.5
	Alcohol offensives	806	30.4
	Ticket touting	87	5.8
	Possession of offensive weapons	20	0.8
	Breach of banning orders	27	1
	Breach of peace	153	5.8
	Offences against authorities	48	1.8
	Other football-related arrests	26	0.9

Source: Home Office – "Football-Related Arrests and Banning Orders Statistics - GOV.UK"

Table 4.

Title: Number of arrests by offences in 2014-15

<i>season</i>	<i>Causes</i>	<i>Number of arrests</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Season 2014-2015</i>	Public disorder	505	33.8
	Missile throwing	36	2.4
	Violent disorder	250	16.7
	Racist chanting	31	2.1
	Pitch invasion	131	8.8
	Alcohol offensives	325	21.8
	Ticket touting	49	3.3
	Possession of offensive weapons	6	0.4
	Breach of banning orders	31	2.1
	Offences against authorities	42	2.8
	Possession of pyrotechnics	88	5.9

Source: Home Office – "Football-Related Arrests and Banning Orders Statistics - GOV.UK"

In tables 3 and 4, we can appreciate how measures have been taken to tackle football hooliganism not only arresting annoying people, but also classifying the arrests for future hooligan acts inside or outside stadiums.

By means of the *Public Order Act 1989 (section 30)* authorities could ban problematic people from getting into stadiums. Thanks to this act, we can appreciate in tables 3 and 4 how authorities were able to manage hooligans in 9 years. Due to this kind of measure, in season 2014-15 the number of arrests by “Public Disorder” was reduced in 3% in comparison with season 2005-06 (season 2005-06: 36.8%; season 2014-15: 33.8%). As we can also see in tables 3 and 4, the arrests by “Alcohol Offensives” have also decreased in almost 10% (season 2005-06: 30.4%; season 2014-15: 21.8%). A decline, most probably, owing to the *Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol) Act 1985*. We can appreciate another decrease regarding “Ticket Touting”. In almost 10 years “Ticket Touting” has decreased in 2.5% (season 2005-06: 5.8%; season 2014-15: 3.3%). This order was regulated by the *Criminal Justice Act 1994 (section 60)*.

However, not everything is so good. There are increases in “Offences against Authorities” (an increase of 1%) and in “Pitch Invasions”, too (3%). Those pitch invasions are regulated by the *Football Offences Act 1991*. This Act manages not only “Pitch Invasions”, but also “Missile Throwing” and “Racist Chanting”. If we compile all those offences in both seasons (2005-06 and 2014-15), we will obtain the next results: in season 2005-06 the sum of “Pitch Invasion”, “Missile Throwing”, and “Racist Chanting” was 10.2%; in season 2014-15 the sum made 13.3%. Here, we can appreciate another increase, in spite of having the Act imposed by the government in 1991.

Moreover, if we go to the tabloids, we can see how during season 2013-14 people were afraid of the return of hooliganism to English stadiums: “Football Hooliganism is back on the rise” (McTague). Following the assertion of McTague, if we look at the 2013-14 season’s arrests in table 2, there is not any increase of arrests comparing to preceding years. As we can appreciate in the article mentioned before -“Football Hooliganism is back on the rise”- the arrests per “Violent Disorder” in season 2012-13 were 554, being

252 in the next season (2013-14), and even less in the 2014-15 season: 250 arrests per violent disorder. That means that in two years the detentions decreased.

Unfortunately, it is not the same with racist chanting. And so, while the arrests per racist chanting were 34 in the 2012-13 season, in the next one, there were 16 recorded arrests, and the rate of detentions increased again reaching 31 arrested people during 2014-15.

As a matter of fact, this way back to hooliganism is not as severe as in the eighties, in which there were incidents almost every day. But violent supporters are going back to their roots. As we can see in table 4, there is even a new reason for arrests: “Possession of Pyrotechnics”. Fire objects such as sparklers have been considered a problem – and all those people who bring pyrotechnics to stadiums are liable to be punished – since the 2012-13 season.

After having analysed all the data provided in this last section, we can confirm, that hooliganism is still active in English football. Hooliganism is still alive. Hooligans’ acts are not as violent as they were during the 1980s, but it is still dangerous and harmful not only for the image of England, but also for the spectators who attend stadiums. Fortunately, this violence has been reduced in 30 years thanks to the measures imposed by the government and football authorities, such as the Football Association. These measures have tackled hooliganism reducing it in a 29.3% since 1988-89 season (34.2%) to 2014-15 season (4.9%)

CONCLUSIONS

Once we have studied the origins of hooliganism, the possible theories that explain this phenomenon, and have made an analysis of its survival in English football by analysing some of the data available from seasons 1985-86 to 2014-2015, we can say that we have achieved the purpose of this research paper.

The findings support the hypothesis of researchers Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy, and John Williams who assert that hooliganism was mainly caused by three reasons: society, the involvement of the media, and alcohol consumption. However, this research runs contrary to the view supported by Frosdick and Marsh that alcohol is not an important factor with regard to hooliganism. As we have seen in chapter 4 -The Survival of Hooliganism in English Football-, one of the principal reasons for being arrested inside and outside stadiums nowadays is “Alcohol Offensives”. Thus, being the second cause of arrests (2005-06: 30.4%; 2014-15: 21.8%), alcohol consumption cannot be considered just an ‘aggravating factor’ as Frosdick and Marsh maintain (126). It is more than that, as the consumption of alcoholic drinks leads English fans to get drunk and behave in a violent way.

As we have seen before, the media were one of the causes of hooliganism in England. Journalists used to be very impartial, when the press was allowed to football matches during the 1890s. But their role changed as hooliganism grew. The media used to turn an insignificant fight between two guys into “a bloody and dangerous riot” thus, triggering hatred among hooligans. For some years, the hooligans and the press were at war.

The Government and other authorities, such as the Football Association, had to play their part in fighting hooliganism. The Government, led by Margaret Thatcher, promulgated some governmental acts to remove violence from football. Besides, the Football Association implemented other procedures to improve security inside and outside stadiums, for instance, the creation of membership-cards or the incorporation of CCTV cameras in order to control the fans’ behaviour inside and outside the stadiums.

After having analysed all data regarding football-related arrests from season 1985-86 to season 2014-15, the present study offers clear evidence of the survival of hooliganism in England. This phenomenon is still active, though it is not as prominent as in the eighties. Those aforementioned measures, that we have studied and analysed, have helped to restrain violence inside and outside stadiums, as it is a fact that its rates have been reduced in almost 30% in the last three decades. However, they have not been strong enough to bring hooliganism to an end.

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