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Where No Men Cry

A study of stigmatization and authenticity in Liverpool

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine how Scousers are opposing to a perceived stigma of themselves attached to their Scouse identity and as football supporters. Liverpool has over the last 200 years gone from prosperity to decline, and thus gained a reputation as *the self-pity city* within the UK. As a result of being involved in stadium disasters Liverpool FC supporters were portrayed as hooligans in both national and international media. Following the Hillsborough disaster Scousers have collectively worked through the *Justice For The 96 Campaign* to uncover what happened in what has been termed a cover-up by the British government. This paper further seeks to examine how local football spectators maintain their authenticity in a time where their match attendance is being challenged by wealthier and often visiting spectators, up to the point where it can be discussed whether or not football still belongs to the working class.

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Introduction

“Some people believe football is a matter of life and death. I am very disappointed with that attitude. I can assure you it is much more important than that.”

Bill Shankly¹

Football is one of the biggest and most popular sports in the world, and for many people the quote above make perfect sense. Professional football is a spectacle that matter to billions of people, it fascinates people all over the world from the working class to dictators, and for those involved in this spectacle at any level, football is never “just football” (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009:46). Football fandom or football support can be described as a serious leisure activity that provides a strong sense of social identity to the participants in the group (Jones, 2000:287). Hognestad (2009) says that football as a cultural practice is associated with collective identities, and the clubs are associated with locations such as cities or stadiums. Football gives the supporters an opportunity to express their collective commitment to beliefs, values and cultural identity (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009:45).

The aim of this paper is to see how Scousers² in Liverpool are opposing to their city being stigmatized as the self-pity city, and how local football supporters maintain their authenticity in a time where it can be challenged, as visiting spectators are becoming more apparent on the terraces.

To do this I have divided this paper into six different parts. The first part will be background and methodology, while the second part will present reasons for why Scousers may perceive themselves as a stigmatized category in Britain due to historical events, as such events have shaped the outside perception of Scousers. The third part will be a presentation of

¹ Liverpool FC manager 1959-1974

² The term “Scouser” is often used when referring to people in or from Liverpool, and the surrounding geographical areas in Merseyside. This is also the term they use about themselves.

Scouse identity and how football becomes an important identity marker in Liverpool. The fourth part will be about why English football spectators may perceive themselves as stigmatized in terms of hooliganism, footballs' importance in supporters' everyday life and changes as a result of the development of international football. In the fifth part the topic will be stadium disasters involving Liverpool supporters, and Scousers' collective fight for justice after the Hillsborough disaster. In the sixth and final part I will discuss how Scousers oppose to the stigmatization through a collective pride, and how local supporters' pride and self-worth is maintained at an alternative venue through a performance of masculine identity. When using the terms football fans/ supporters or spectators in this paper I exclusively mean those with British origin, living in England and supports an English football club, unless otherwise specified. By visiting or travelling spectators I mean spectators from outside the UK who come to England for the purpose of having the *football experience*. I will throughout this paper use data collected during a fieldwork conducted in Liverpool city centre between March and July 2014.

1 Background

1.1 The Concept of Stigma

Stigma is a complex phenomenon, and the concept is used in different disciplines with different definitions. Goffman (1990[1963]: 12-13) describes stigma as “attributes that are deeply discrediting” which reduces the person holding them “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (Link and Phelan, 2001: 364), while Stafford and Scott (1986: 80) have described stigma as “a characteristic of a person that is contrary to a norm of a social unit” (Link and Phelan, 2001: 364). Others again have described stigma as a process where “attributes or marks links a person to undesirable characteristics and stereotypes”, or “stigmatized individuals processes attributes or characteristics that conveys a social identity that is devaluated in a particular social context” (Link and Phelan, 2001: 365). Based on these definitions, stigma is invoked situationally, as the social situation decides how an individual is treated (Yang et al., 2007: 1526), as well as relationally since agents decide for which social situation the stigma is applicable.

Goffman (1990[1963]: 12-13) says stigma or stigmatization occur when there is a discrepancy between a person’s *virtual social identity* and a person’s *actual identity*. Virtual social identity can be described as how a person is characterized and perceived by others; while actual social identity is the attributes a person actually possesses (Goffman, 1990[1963]: 12). Stigma can also be seen as a process depending on social, political or economic power, where one needs to be in a power position to stigmatize another one (Link and Phelan, 2001: 375). Without this position of power the stigmatizer would not get approval for his or her attitudes. When the one agent or agency holds much power, like for example the state, it can stigmatize entire groups and not just individuals (Yang et al., 2007: 1526). Stigma is often seen as something inside the person, rather than something that is placed on the person by others (Link and Phelan, 2001: 366).

Stigma is an important concept in this paper because both Scousers and English football spectators, and especially those supporting Liverpool FC, have over time perceived themselves with a stigma attached to their identity. Both separately and together, and the latter as a result of stadium disasters involving Liverpool FC spectators.

1.2 Internal and External Identification

As this paper aims to see how Scousers and football fans are opposing to a stigma they perceived are attached to their identity we need to address this internal and external identification to understand who Scousers and football fans are and how they as a collective perceive to be stigmatized.

The external characterization that creates a person's *virtual social identity* is socially constructed, and first and foremost based on visual characteristics or marks on individuals (Goffman, 1990[1963]:: 12-13). Examples of this can be a spoken dialect or wearing a specific football jersey. Through a collective social identification individuals are placed into different categories based on their attributes. A category is constituted by an external identification, a recognition done by others and without any requirement for the members to acknowledge their membership. In a category the members might not even be aware of their membership (Jenkins, 2008: 106).

Scousers and English football spectators can be seen as both groups and categories depending on levels. By external identification a person from Liverpool can be categorized as a Scouser, but might not see him- or herself as a Scouser. And thus Scousers can be viewed as a category. By internal identification on the other hand, a person from Liverpool can see him- or herself as being Scouser because he or she acknowledges a membership and a relationship to others with the same characteristics that separates Scousers from people from other places in England. In chapter 4 we will come back to the Scouse identity and how Scousers actively play out their identity and oppose to the stigmatization.

English football spectators are a category created on identification done by others based on an individual's interest in football. On a macro level this category can contain every English person interested in football, from a 10 year old to an adult imprisoned for hooliganism, and there does not have to exist a relationship between the members. On a micro level on the other hand, football spectators can become a group because of their mutual interest and investment in the same football club. When supporting the same football club members can acknowledge the membership and a relationship between them is established based upon their interest in the club.

Football has been described as *the people's game*, with strong connections to the working class (Davis, 2015: 423). In chapter 6 we will see how football came to belong to the working class, and now it will therefore be useful to see the category that is English football spectators in terms of social class and how a social class is constructed.

1.3 Social Class and Different Forms of Capital

Bourdieu (1995) says that taste, or what we like, is strongly connected to people's position within the social hierarchy. While the working class consume beer, whiskey and listen to popular music, the bourgeois drink champagne and listen to classical music that they consider to be art. An individual is identified by others and placed into categories that we think of as social classes. In this paper a person's position in the social hierarchy becomes important as both the English society and the sphere of football support is highly influenced by the concept of social classes.

A *social class* can be seen as a *social space*, rather than constructed classes based on economic capital, in which individuals are placed based on capital in relations to objects existing within the social space (Bourdieu, 1987: 3). Capital is the resources an individual possesses, and Bourdieu (1995) divides the resources into economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital. These different forms of capital are all valued differently among individuals in different social spaces.

Economic capital is the financial resource a person possesses. Cultural capital can be seen as the advantage a person has in the social hierarchy in terms of education and knowledge. A person's social capital is based on group membership and social network, while symbolic capital is the resource a person possesses in term of status and prestige within the social space. To sum up, individuals are placed in the social space based upon how much of each capital they possess, and in this paper the individuals place within the social space becomes important as my informants are identified to belong to the working class, together with most of the population in Merseyside.

Based on this categorization or classification individuals are placed into classes depending on their similarities, creating boundaries between them and the other classes based on the amount of resources available (Bourdieu, 1987). The individual's position in the social space becomes apparent through what is called *habitus*.

Habitus can be described as established dispositions of action that is internalized within the agent. Our habitus involves our identity, actions and choices and is inherited from our parents. By inheriting our parents' habitus we also inherit their possession of capital. Habitus shapes our behaviour within a *social field*. A social field is a sphere within the social space, and in this paper football support or football fandom for locals in Liverpool will be seen a social field discussed in relation to other social fields, such as visiting football spectators in Liverpool and the global football field as these stands in power relations to each other in terms of determining and locating authenticity. In chapter 3 we will see how Merseyside as a geographical field stands in relation to the rest of England, in terms of economic and social deprivation that led to a stigma attached to the Scouse identity, and how English football spectators stands in relations to the global football field will be discussed in chapter 7.

Bourdieu (1995) has identified football's popularity to be strongest among those with a relatively low economic and cultural capital within the social hierarchy. We can therefore say that football has traditionally belonged to the working class. Bourdieu (1995: 199-200) claims that masculinity is said to belong to the working class and in this social class, masculine attributes or characteristics are seen as a form of cultural capital. These attributes or characteristics are bound up of the idea of masculine honour and shame (Armstrong, 1998: 156). To never get emotional and always be ready to demonstrate a sexual interest in a woman (Kimmel, 2004: 215) together with a strong physique are seen as a honorary characteristics of manhood, while the opposite is associated with femininity and thus shame. For the working class English football supporter the performance of masculine identity has been internalized since childhood and through socialization this has become a part of the spectators' habitus. In his study of English football hooligans Armstrong (1998: 124) argues that football support in England is a sphere where men can show emotions they are reluctant to show in other areas in society. In this setting the fear of being seen as less of a man is, to some extent removed, as the emotions shown are directed towards the football club and not other individuals. The fear of being seen as less of a man or feminine is also discussed in Pearson's (2012: 27) study, of what he calls *carnival fans*, as he argues that expressing emotions other than anger upon defeat is seen as unacceptable within this social field. Emotions can, in other words, be categorized based on gender and what is considered as an appropriate behaviour and appearance for genders within the social spaces.

1.4 Emotions and Manhood

Football like other sports is filled with emotions for the spectators, and is by FIFA³ President Joseph S. Blatter describes football as ‘a physical movement that simultaneously moves the emotions’⁴. Through expressing emotions the spectator can demonstrate a sense of belonging to the group and feeling of home and security. These feelings become apparent when the club is playing at home, which is considered familiar surroundings for the spectator (Organizations book,296). Spectator’s feelings towards their home ground will be discussed in chapter 6.

Any discourse on emotions can, according to Walton et al. (2004: 402) at least to some degree be discussed as a discourse on gender regarding stereotypes, where men are constructed as unemotional beings and women as emotional beings. In this paper the discourse between emotions and gender becomes important as football support is a sphere with traditional roots the masculine working class. Kimmel (2004: 214) claims the cultural definition of manhood is dominated by a man’s fear of being seen by other men as less of a man, and men seek other mens’ approval of their manhood in homosocial relationships. Like stigma, masculinity in terms of the idea of honour and shame, is socially constructed and related to domination and power. Masculine identity is seen as a quality that a man holds and can act on regarding specific characteristics that have traditionally been associated with being a man. Masculinity or a masculine identity is constructed through fear of being seen as a person without these characteristics and thus less of a man. In other words, masculinity is constructed through performance of manly characteristics, which again is confirmed by other men.

1.5 Authenticity in Football Support

Football support has as explained above been identified to be strongest among individuals within the working class, and the traditional working class male has according to Davis (2015: 432) been regarded as the most authentic football spectator by Marxist scholars. Davis (2015: 423) describes authenticity in football support as the association of one self to the world of football supporting on differing levels to gauge one’s depth of authenticity in a contemporary fandom landscape. Authenticity is often thought of as something *true* or *real*,

³ Fédération Internationale de Football Association. The global governing body of football.

⁴ <http://www.fifa.com/about-fifa/the-president/joseph-s-blatter.html>

and as football has been recognized as the people's game and belonging to the working class male, authenticity must be seen in connection to both class and gender. The association between working class and football has throughout history been so strong that some have argued that the football grounds were where people learned to be working class and thus their position in the social hierarchy (Davis, 2015: 432).

Over the last 26 years the football landscape has undergone dramatic changes, which has led in changes in the way football spectators support their club. After the Hillsborough disaster in 1989, The Taylor Report suggested that English grounds should be all-seated stadiums to prevent future stadium disasters. The establishment of the Premier League in 1992 introduced a new alternative for attendance through TV broadcasting. The Premier League is today the highest football league in England, and the most watched football league in the world. The current official sponsor for the league is Barclays Bank, and the league is thus known as Barclays Premier League. The Barclays Premier League is English, but Welsh clubs can also qualify and play in the league. Scotland on the other hand has its own league called The Scottish Premier League. The Premier League consists of 20 clubs, each team playing 2 games against all the other teams: one game played at home, and one away game. Since its establishment only 5 clubs have won the title, and to this day this do not include Everton FC nor Liverpool FC. SKY Sports owns the majority of TV rights for Barclays Premier League.

Globalization and a new flow of information has led to English football being available for people all over the world and Sondaal (2013) argues that one might discuss whether the game now has become more globalized than localized. These changes will be further discussed in chapter 7.

1.6 Categorization of Football Spectators

Even though English football spectators is clearly a category it consists of a compound group of spectators in Liverpool, as the city's population is divided between two football clubs. In chapter 6 we will discuss how rival football spectators Liverpool have a unique way of dividing the city between them, which will be exemplified through what is known as *The Friendly Derby*.

In light of Bourdieu's identification of football spectators' economic and cultural capital, football spectators are categorized into different categories based on their personal

and emotional investment in the club. Giulianotti (2002: 31) divides football supporters into *supporters, followers, fans* and *flaneurs* by using a four-quadrant analogy analysing spectator's identification with, and investment in the football club. The stereotypes attached to being identified as a football fan varies in these categories from hooligans to glory hunters, and the categories might stigmatize each other because of, or the lack of authenticity.

Supporters are the club's most dedicated and loyal spectators. These supporters possess a cultural capital gained through regular match attendance over time and knowledge about the local community. They are characterized by a thick solidarity and a long-term personal and emotional investment in the club. Supporters are by Giulianotti (2002: 33) identified as hot/traditional in the quadrant analogy, and recognized as the most authentic spectator.

Giulianotti (2002: 31) identifies followers as traditional/cool and they have a weaker solidarity than supporters. A followers identification to the club is adapted through electronic media and online communication with other spectators to prove their cultural capital in this social field, but also through other factors such as religious affiliation.

Fans are by Giulianotti (2002: 31) identified as hot/consumer, which means they have an inordinately and unidirectional affection to the club, which means that their identification feels strong but is more distant than enjoyed by the supporters. Fans use consumption of supporter effects to identify or prove their authenticity as supporters of the club (Giulianotti, 2002: 37). According to Davis (2015: 429) they are also more likely to follow specific players and managers rather than just the football club, and thus fans can, in other words, be described as *glory hunters*, as they also tend to arrive at the club when it experiences success, and it is regarded fashionable to support the club.

Flaneurs are the last category and individuals in this category are identified as cool/consumer (Giulianotti, 2002: 31) and distance themselves from other spectators with higher economic capital and lower cultural capital, and position in the social space. Giulianotti (2002: 39) claims they have a weak solidarity to the club and surrounding community, and are rather seeking the multiplicity of football experiences.

In this paper the categorization of football spectators becomes an important aspect in the discussion on how spectators maintain their self-respect and authenticity, and in chapter 6

we will discuss how football spectators use symbols to confirm their authenticity and separate themselves from others.

1.7 Involvement in Football Support

Like other aspects or interests in people lives, the involvement in football fandom or support can shift throughout an individual's life. Peoples' involvement in football support is often stronger for people experiencing a rough time either in their personal life or at work, and Johnes (2004: 136) that football can be seen as a reality escape. People often say they fall in love with football, which means that there is also possibility that an individual can fall out of love with football. This often happens in relation to life changing events, where the individual's priorities change. When I first met Trevor in Liverpool he was a devoted football fan, but when I met him again a few months later his involvement had decreased, for what I was told by his friends was a new girlfriend. This is an example of how involvement in football support is not static but dynamic, something we will come back to in chapter 6 in terms of collective identity.

The priority changes at a certain time in life, but this does by no means mean that the involvement is gone for good. As an example, when a child is old enough to attend matches he is often taken by his parents. The involvement is still there but has now in some way changed. The child is still the priority but football support has now become a family activity with the participation of the youngest generation. By this football support is passed down in generations, and as we will also see in chapter 6, this heritage contributes to create a sense of what Bale (2000: 92) describes as *topophilia*⁵ for supporters at their club's home ground. This again, is relevant for the discussion on how local football spectators maintain their self-respect and authenticity as football supporters, in a time where wealthier spectators are taking over the terraces.

1.8 Football Clubs as Units in Society

As the interest and involvement in football support is often inherited so is the sense of belonging, and thus football clubs can be compared to units in society. Even though an

⁵ Love of a place

individual actor within the club leaves, the football club will still remain more or less the same. While most, if not all the players, have left the club for other clubs, a father can bring his son and they can still support the same football club as his father and grandfather did, like it was the same unit as before. Football as well as other team sports seems to create a stronger sense of belonging and group identity for the fans than individual sports. Individual sports differ from team sports in several ways, but the biggest is maintenance through time.

In individual sports there is often one athlete or nation you follow at the time, while in team sports on the other hand you follow a club that can be seen as a unit. In individual sports the supporter group will only exist as long as that specific athlete or the individuals of a national team is active. After his or her retirement from the sport, the supporters will find new individuals they support and create new groups. Two generations might, but three generations will probably not be able to support the same active athlete considering that a professional carrier in an individual sport is generally between 10-12 years.

In team sports on the other hand, the club will continue to exist over time even though the players change club or retire, and the interest for the club is, as mentioned above, often passed down in generations. In a football club it is common that season tickets are inherited, and passed down in generations. Sitting on the same seat as your father and grandfather contributes to the sense of belonging that football support can create. The sense of belonging and collective identity becomes apparent through loyalty, and thus contributes to the supporters authenticity. Supporting a football club can give the participants a sense of belonging and a collective they choose to identify themselves with, and Davis (2015: 423) describes football support as one of a few remaining spaces where it is possible for the participants to have a sustained sense of shared collective experience

2 Methodology

From early March to late July 2014, I conducted a fieldwork in Liverpool for my master thesis. During this approximately 5 months stay I wanted to see how Scousers in Liverpool are opposing to their city being labelled as the self-pity city, and how pubs become a place for local football supporters to maintain their authenticity in a time where it can be challenged by visiting supporters in terms of match attendance.

The reasons I chose Liverpool as the place for my fieldwork was that I, as so many other Norwegians, have grown up in a family of Liverpool FC enthusiasts⁶. The reason I chose this topic is that I have always been fascinated by the relationship between the football club and those supporting it, as a football supporter's mood and wellbeing seems to be depending on how the football club perform. This fascination started as soon as I realized the connection between Liverpool FC's performance in the league and the possibility I had of getting things my way. As this fascination started among Norwegian fans supporting an English football club, I was interested in seeing how this football club – supporter relationship unfolds among local supporters in their everyday life. Besides my interest in Liverpool FC, Liverpool seemed like a good place to go as it is home of two Premier League football clubs, Liverpool FC and Everton FC.

2.1 Change in Research Question

Before leaving I had originally planned to look into how English football supporter use football in creating identity, and how and if there was a change in the performance of this identity between the club season and the World Cup. In other words, I wanted to see if it was a change in the supporter's prominent identity, from supporting the local football club to the national football team.

This turned out to be difficult because of limited access to the field and this was one reason for my changed focus. With Liverpool FC having its best season in 20 years, together with the popularity the club experiences overseas resulted in all the official channels being

⁶ As I in the previous chapter used Giulianotti's terms when categorizing football spectators, I will not use any of them on Norwegians in Norway supporting Liverpool FC.

sold out of tickets. The only way to get into a match was therefore to buy expensive tout tickets. The ticket prices made it impossible for me to attend more than one home game at Anfield. I did attend other matches with other clubs such as Everton FC and Arsenal FC, but this did not give me the opportunity to follow people over time.

Another obstacle was the English national football team's performance during the World Cup. In the 2014 World Cup England did not qualify from the group stage and was out of the World Cup after only playing 3 matches. With England being out of the World Cup it was difficult to look at football spectators and see if there was a change in the performance of identity from club season to an international tournament. Even though national identity was not the focus, it was impossible to not notice some change in the presented identity among football fans in pubs. Outside of pubs, stores and private homes you could see English flags. But this was not enough to keep my original project.

2.2 Preparations Before the Fieldwork and Arrival

Before I left for Liverpool I had booked a room for 2 weeks and a hotel for the 2 first nights. I thought this would be enough time to explore the city and find a more permanent place for the rest of my stay. The room I had booked was located in the district of Everton at North Breckfield Road. A 15 minute walk to both of the football stadiums, Anfield and Goodison Park, and a 15-20 minutes taxi drive from the city centre.

The day after arriving I took a taxi up to Goodison Park, hoping to watch the game at a nearby pub as Everton FC was playing home against Cardiff City FC. Here I met my first real obstacle in terms of starting the fieldwork and collecting data. Games played at 3.00pm on Saturdays is not broadcasted, as the lower leagues are playing and broadcasting could lead to lower attendance at these games. I ended up following the live scores at a pub close to the ground and then take the bus back to the city centre with the Everton FC spectators after the game was over.

Areas surrounding the two grounds are run down and I started to wish I had picked a different area to stay for the next two weeks. The taxi driver who drove me to my new place told me he had lived in the area for over 18 years, but had chosen to move away when he got children as he thought it was an unsafe environment for them to grow up in. When we arrived he walked me up to the front door to make sure I got in safe. The doorbell said *Probation*

office, and I was sure he had taken me to the wrong location. This resulted in me booking a hotel room in the city centre for a few nights to get things settled. While waiting for the room to get ready I made my first observations. It was a Sunday afternoon and Liverpool FC was playing away against the rival Manchester United. Before I left I had heard that the most authentic fans could be found in pubs around the stadiums, so I chose to watch the game across the street.

2.3 The Field and Access to the Field

My primary field of research became pubs in Liverpool city center. England is known for its many pubs, and especially football pubs. Pubs are public places and therefore the access was more or less unlimited within the pubs opening hours. Traditional English pubs in Liverpool are small and tight, often located away from the main streets. Traditional pubs do not play music and many of them do not show football. Inside there are often sections with 2 or 3 tables and you can smell the carpets on the floor have been soaked in beer. The clientele consist mostly of middle aged and older white males. Pubs are used as a meeting place for people to drink and socialize. In England it is more common to meet in a public place, or a neutral place, instead of in people's private homes. The most common drink is beer, and the pubs serve several brands.

In pubs with music and TV screens the clientele is different than in the traditional pubs. The people going to these pubs tend to be younger and of both genders. Here as well, the most common drink is beer, but the consumption of wine and cocktails are higher. In these kinds of pubs the tables are usually bigger than in the traditional pubs without TV screens. This means that there is room for more people at each table. These tables are often located in the front of the pub. In the back of the pub there is usually a bigger rectangular table. A small group would usually find the smaller tables, while almost every group less than three people would seek to the rectangular table.

On a match day most pubs around the city center was filled almost to the capacity. At the end of the season you have to come in around two hours before kick-off. Those arriving too late to get a seat at a table stand tight against each other during the game, as major sports events weakens the conventions of 'personal social space' (Weed, 2006: 80). If you have a table it is common to buy two or more pints before kick-off. The reason for this is that you have to move through the crowd to get to the bar, and you will most likely miss out on some

of the game. To not have to wait in line in the bar some people leave their seats a few minutes before halftime. During halftime the bar is packed, and people often buy the same amount as they did before kick-off. After full-time people drink up what they have left, and many people leaves. If the game is played on a weekday most people go home after, but if it is on a weekend many people often switch locations and continue their night somewhere else.

2.4 Collecting Data

When collection data I first had to locate where the football supporters I wanted to meet usually were. At first this was difficult since football is usually played during the weekends, and therefore much time during the week it was difficult to locate the field.

To find regular informants I found a few different pubs in the city center I regularly went to. Inside the pubs I realized I had to position myself depending on how crowded it was. Not stand in the way of the TV screens and intruding on people wanting to watch football, but still be close enough to see what they were doing and listen to what they were saying. If the pub was not crowded I usually sat at the end of the rectangular table, as close as possible to the other tables. It was here I found it possible to get in contact with people watching the game, while at the same time get a view of what was going on in the rest of the pub. When it was crowded I usually stood next to a high table close to the bar. By doing this I could share a table, and it was a natural way of starting a conversation with people in the pub.

My first observation was done in a pub in the district of Everton right after I arrived. It was a big day since Liverpool FC was playing away against rival Manchester United. A group of older men had sat down in front the biggest TV screen, while a small group of teenagers sat in the corner. Some of them were probably not there for the football since they had their back turned to the screen and were therefore not able to view the game. I sat down at a table where I could watch the match but also had view to the two groups as well as the bar. I was the only female beside the staff. Before kick-off everyone in the pub went to the bar and bought a pint of beer, except the group of teenagers. When they sat down at the table again they started talking about their score predictions for the game. When the game started they screamed and shouted for Liverpool FC and it became clear they were all Liverpool FC supporters, even though they did not wear symbols that could connect them to the football club.

After a few days I got in contact with Robert and Trevor, which also turned out to become my key informants. We met in a bar in the city centre when I asked for directions. I got lost after viewing an apartment, something that turned out to be a turning point as it is easier to get in contact with people if you have an actual question. They were both football supporters, but we met outside the context of football support as it was a traditional pub and not on a match day. Meeting my first informants helped me move on from a passive observer to have a more active and participating approach to football spectators. Football is as mentioned above mostly played during the weekends which gave me limited time to meet football spectators while watching games. After a few weeks they started inviting me when they were going out and not just when watching football. When doing participant observations in pubs I usually took short notes on my phone, and made supplementary notes when I got home or the next day. As my informants were working we met at night and usually, at a public place where alcohol was consumed.

The third approach I used to collect information was semi-structured interviews or chats, often at a pub over a beer. This made the meeting more of an informal chat rather than an interview. I talked to academics, Everton FC and Manchester United fans who do research on English football supporters, and employers in Liverpool FC. Before the meetings I had prepared some questions on the topic I wanted to know more about. The topics set for the conversations were relations between football fans in Liverpool, studies done on football fandom and the Hillsborough disaster. I found semi-structured interviews useful because the method let me set the topic and let them control the conversation.

2.5 My Informants

In this paper I have chosen to give my informants fictional names to keep their anonymity.

2.5.1 Robert

Robert became my first and most important informant. He is in his mid-30s and works in a white-collar occupation. As he is single, he devotes most of his time to support his chosen football club - Liverpool FC. A born and raised Scouser, who talks with a broad accent and uses a lot of local phrases which sometimes makes him difficult to understand. Robert is a big man in terms of both physical size and personality. During my fieldwork he left for a weekend holiday in Poland, and when he came back he did not have any problems admitting he had played out the English hooligan stereotype when he had gotten in trouble in a pub.

2.5.2 Trevor

Trevor is Robert's friend, and they both work at the same office. They usually go to a pub for a beer after work. Trevor supports Everton FC, but his involvement changed in the period of my fieldwork. He is also Scouse but his accent is not as broad as Robert's. He is smaller in terms of physical size, but his tongue is thus all the more sharp.

2.5.3 Kevin

Kevin also works with Robert and Trevor, and can sometimes be a bit of a challenging. He is a single man in his 40's, and spends most of his time and money on supporting Liverpool FC. He is also a season ticket holder. Kevin was by many of his colleagues considered weird, and slightly intrusive. When he asked me out in exchange for one match at his season ticket I cut contact which was not problematic since he only worked with my other informants.

2.5.4 Frank

Frank works with Robert and is the oldest of the colleagues. We were introduced one Friday they went out after work. He supports Liverpool FC and Hillsborough stadium in 1989.

2.5.5 Steve

Steve is Robert's childhood friend, and he supports Everton FC. His accent is even broader than Robert's and sometimes impossible to understand even for Scousers. Steve is a heavy drinker and was always the first one to arrive and the last one to leave, as he works shifts he often have a week off at the time. His preferred choice in alcoholic beverages is beer and Jägerbombs. When drinking he would sometimes make inappropriate and sexually loaded comments about girls walking by.

2.5.6 George

George works in the company from whom I rented my apartment. He is handling new tenants and is also the handyman in the building. He is in his mid-50's, married and has two adult sons. He devotes most of his time and money on supporting Liverpool FC, and is also a season ticket holder.

2.5.7 Henry

Henry supports Everton FC and shares office with George.

2.5.8 Andrew

Andrew is a public figure in Liverpool and he has been strongly involved in the *Justice The 96 Campaign*. To keep his anonymity I will not go into detail in terms of his involvement other than saying that it is through popular culture.

2.6 Position in the Field

English football support, is as previously mentioned, a sphere where masculinity is highly valued. Gender and ethnicity are attributes that are difficult to conceal when conducting a fieldwork in a masculine environment, as you might become a distraction and affect the field, but this does not mean that being female always was a disadvantage. As a female I got in contact with people I probably would not have if I were male and tried to be a part of their camaraderie. In pubs I often stood out as the only female, and in that way affected the field. Many people were interested in talking to me about other things than my project. Being the only female surrounded by males made it difficult to meet new people once I was in the group. During my fieldwork I tried to always make sure my informants knew my intentions for spending time with them. Within the group the boundaries were set, and when one of them crossed the line the other talked to him. When we were going out my informants became very protective and took good care of me. The only place I was allowed to go alone was to the bathroom and we always shared a cab home from the city center at night. Being female gave me the advantage to see the football supporters from a different view than the stereotyped hooligan. Age did not seem to matter much unless we were talking about work, as I was the only student. All my informants were Scousers. Not having English as my native language and struggling with the accent I clearly stood out as a foreigner.

2.7 Affecting the Field

Football culture is for football spectators found and expressed in everyday life, something that became more apparent as I spent time with my informants outside the context of watching football. As they were all working we had to meet in the evening, and this was usually in public places such as pubs and bars. Every week I was invited to meet them at a pub after work. On Fridays there is no football and this usually turned out to be a pub-crawl, starting around 4.30pm and lasting as long as people could manage. After a few weeks of pub-crawls and beer surrounded by men, I asked if we could do something else on a Friday. One of them

then introduced *cocktail Friday*. Cocktail Friday was held at a bar in the city centre where they had 2 for 1 on Fridays. Even though my informants were males who preferred beer, they joined in on the 2 for 1 offer. As one of them worked shifts he had Fridays off, and was ready to start drinking at 12.pm, but I met him around 3.pm. When the others had finished work they came by, and we quickly moved back to the pubs. Here, I did try to affect the field but it did not work, and it only resulted in an earlier and higher consumption of alcoholic beverages.

2.8 Alcohol and ethical reflections

When meeting informants in pubs there was always alcohol involved. When people are intoxicated they might lose some inhibitions and therefore act in a way they normally would not do. Most of my informants were working in white-collar occupations and said their biggest interest was football, either Liverpool FC or Everton FC. Most of my informants were single and could therefore spend more time on their interest than people with family. At the end of my field work I found out that one of my informants was married and had two children. I had noticed some tension between him and his friends, and was later told it was because he stayed out drinking every night instead of staying home and taking care of his family. In a way they almost seemed angry because he let his wife stay home with the children while he was out spending all their money. They had known his wife a long time and were fond of her, something that made it harder to go out with him even though he was their friend.

3 From a city in the world to “The world in One City”

In this chapter I will present a record of the stigma Scouse perceive to have attached to their identity. I have chosen to divide the process into two separate parts as it is extensive and complex. The first part of the stigmatization is directed against Scousers and the Scouse identity, and this has developed over time and can be seen as a result of economic changes and social problems within a geographical area. The other part of the stigmatization has on the other hand been directed towards the category of football spectators from Liverpool, as of hooliganism and stadium disasters involving Liverpool FC supporters dating back to the 1980's, and this will be discussed in chapter 5. I will start with the economic changes, as the social problems and deprivation are results of the economic situation, and the focus will be on the time before and after the Thatcher government. Political changes and events in this period become important in this paper as they had a major impact on Merseyside and how Scousers relate themselves to the rest of England.

3.1 From Prosperity to Decline – the Dividing of North and South England

Liverpool has over the past 200 years experienced changes that have taken the city from prosperity to extreme decline (Sykes et al., 2013: 299). I will give an overview of history to show how today's situation came to be, as this can be seen as a background source for why Scousers perceive they have been stigmatized and the city's reputation as the self-pity city.

The city of Liverpool is located in North West of England, in the metropolitan county of Merseyside. In 2013 the population was 470, 000⁷. The name Merseyside comes from the river Mersey, which runs out into the Liverpool Bay.

In the 19th century the city grew to be the second largest in England, and served as the most important port within the British Empire (Honeybone, 2007: 7). As in many other port cities, the port has been of great importance for the economy in Merseyside. The port brought prosperity to the area, and was a major employer for people in the area as well as for people from other parts of the country coming to work (Kinsey, 1981: 331, Honeybone, 2007: 7). In the same period Liverpool's economy increased with participation in the largest forced migration in human history (Sykes et al., 2013: 303). The port functioned as the main port in

⁷ <http://liverpool.gov.uk/council/key-statistics-and-data/data/population/>

the British Empire as an international trading centre (Honeybone, 2007: 7), and was the leading slave port in Britain (Sykes et al., 2013: 303).

Up until the First World War the northern regions were wealthy and prosperous. Traditionally, the northern parts have been industrial regions, and economy grew with the industrial revolution and the expansion of the British Empire (Martin, 1988: 391). In the beginning of the 20th century the competition increased as other ports, both nationally and internationally, increased in passenger and cargo trade, and it is therefore of more than symbolic significance that the Liverpool registered RMS Titanic left from Southampton (Sykes et al., 2013: 307). After the First World War followed a decline in industries located in the northern regions. In the interwar period unemployment increased, and hit hardest in the regions brought to prosperity by the industrial revolution (Booth and Glynn, 1975: 617).

In the 1970s the economy in Liverpool, like other cities in northern England such as Manchester, Sheffield and Newcastle, declined (Boland, 2008: 365). The British economy was in this period characterized by inflation, low productivity growth and rising unemployment (Matthews et al., 1987: 60). In the period 1971-96 over 192, 000 jobs were shed, and employment declined by 53% (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004: 344). There were several external conditions that led to the changed situation in Liverpool. As the British Empire fell and with growing European trade competition Liverpool was located at the wrong side of the country (Sykes et al., 2013: 307). The situation Liverpool now found itself in was in great contrast to the prosperity the city had experienced during the Victorian age (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004: 344). To sum up, the northern regions in England had up until the First World War been the country's leading regions in term of industry and economic prosperity. After the First World War the regions in the south started to financially grow, changing the financial power relations between north and south England.

3.2 The Thatcher Government and a Further Division Between North and South

The northern regions financial down fall did not improve when Margaret Thatcher took over as Prime Minister in 1979. Politics of shutting down industries highly affected the northern regions where most of the population was employed in the industry. The previously prosper city's financial downfall and high unemployment rate has been an important factor in the stigmatization of Scousers, as it increased the number of people depending on social benefits.

During the 1980s Britain experienced an increase in both social and spatial inequality, leading to a more divided society (Martin, 1988: 389). Later in this chapter I will come back to how this increased inequality resulted in social riots and ethnic discrimination among the population within the city of Liverpool, and how these incidents may have strengthened people in the rest of England negative attitudes Scousers. During the mid-1980s the northern regions featured strongly on the political agenda in England, and the miners' strike of 1984-85 is one of the most important industrial disputes in recent British history. This strike was used to debate the fundamental issues on how the country should be run (Reicher and Hopkins, 1996: 357). The traditionally industrial regions showed strongly to support the miners' strike which was synonymous with opposing the Conservative government which had most of their support in the south. The miners' strike did thus lead to a further division between the north and south in terms of political conviction in the country.

In other words, by the time Thatcher took over, the British economy experienced a serious decline. Her politics led to a great dissatisfaction, especially in the northern regions as it was here the political and financial changes hit hardest, and the industrial unrest strengthened the division between north and south. In contrast to the prosperous south which was the leading centre of commerce and finance (Martin, 1988: 400), the poor and unemployed northern part was characterized by shut down industries and support for the opposition – the Labour Party. The political and economic differences strengthened prejudiced attitudes between people in the northern and southern regions of the country.

During my fieldwork the north-south division became apparent for me when I told my informants I was going to London for a weekend. Robert asked me why I was going, while at the same time explaining how much he did not like London. There was a difference in the way people behaved, everyone and everything were moving so fast, plus it is expensive. How Scousers separate themselves from the rest of England, and especially London, which represents the government, will be discussed further in chapter 4 in terms of an, *us against the rest* mentality, and in chapter 6 in terms of how the government handled the Hillsborough disaster.

The financial decline and high unemployment came as a result of external factors such as an increase in international trade, and was strengthened by the Thatcher government's politics of closing down industry. This created Liverpool's reputation as the self-pity city within the UK and is one of several reasons many people in these regions even today express

hate towards Thatcher. The other reasons will be discussed in terms of Liverpool's social problems, and the Hillsborough disaster.

I explained above how Liverpool was labelled as the self-pity city, and Scousers were stigmatized as freeloaders and abusers of the welfare system. The city's image outwards and the stigma held by the people is closely connected, but must be addressed differently. I will first present measures done to change the city's image, and in light of this discuss if it has had any effect on outsiders perception of Scousers.

3.3 From Self-pity City to Renaissance City

As noted, Liverpool has historically gone from prosperity to decline. This made some people especially in the south that now experienced prosperity, to see the city as a *beaten city*, or the *shock city* of the post-industrial age (Sykes et al., 2013: 300). These perceptions existed mainly within the UK where Liverpool was labelled as a place where everything has gone wrong (Boland, 2008: 363). From the outside, Liverpool is most commonly associated with music and sport. Or more correctly, internationally the city is synonymous with The Beatles and football (Boland, 2008: 357), and I will now present some concrete measures made by the city council to change the city's negative reputation.

In the beginning of the 21st century the city began a process to change its negative perceptions and rid itself of the bad image (Boland, 2010a: 631). The transformation started in 2003 when Liverpool unexpectedly won the UK nomination, over favourite Newcastle-Gateshead, for the *European Capital of Culture 2008* (Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004: 341). This was an event that was said to improve the city's image as well as providing £800 million economic benefit, £200 million in global media value and bring more visitors to the city (Boland, 2010a: 632). Together with the financial benefits, the title of European Capital of Culture made the city more appealing for new investors and stakeholders. There were several explanations for the judges' choice. From the Liverpool side it was argued that the victory came as a result of being inclusive and community-based, and was therefore the people's bid. This was also backed up by the head of the panel of judges, expressing that they had found the effort made to ensure engagement of local communities in the process impressive (Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004: 342). Even though it was presented as the people's choice, the bid was met with local critics. The bid's theme was *The World in One City*, which drew upon Liverpool's *sense of many places*, but this can also mean that Liverpool has the same

problems with inequality as many other cities (Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004, Boland, 2010a: 633).



Picture 1: Private photo. Liverpool Waterfront has been listed as a world heritage site since 2004

Critics claimed that being European Capital of Culture would not help with the social division in the city but rather create low-paid jobs and continue the gentrification in the city centre (Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004: 342). This was used as an argument by the critics, even though there is no evidence of gentrification in Liverpool such as that found for example in London (Nevin, 2010: 729). Evidence actually suggests that many English cities, including Liverpool, experienced a re-urbanization in the city centre areas during the 1990s and 2000s after decades of counter-urbanization (Couch et al., 2009: 321). While the total population in Liverpool slightly decreased between 1991 and 2001, the city centre has experienced a drastic increase (Couch et al., 2009: 326) and this trend has continued after the announcement of European Capital of Culture 2008, criticism regarding an on-going gentrification falls short.

The following year, 2004, private investors agreed to invest £1 billion in the city centre creating an area called *Liverpool One*. At the time, Liverpool One was the biggest city centre regeneration scheme in Europe, and Liverpool's cultural flagship of the process (Boland, 2010a: 634, Daramola-Martin, 2009: 301).

The upgrading shows how the city council has tried, and also to some degree succeeded with changing the image outwards. It can be argued that this re-branding has been most effective on people outside Liverpool, and even though there is no evidence of gentrification it can be argued that the re-branding led to a further marginalization of minority

groups. Criticism has been made that the regeneration of the city, and the European Capital of Culture title did more for the city's image outwards, rather than improving the situation for the people living in the city. Boland (2010a: 634-634) claims that Liverpool One is a privatization of the city centre, as the previously public space now excludes minority groups from the city centre.

In the Liverpool One area there are only a few street performers, usually a single person with a guitar. There is also an organized stand where well-known brands such as Nestlé give out free samples. Outside this area, further up Paradise Street in the direction of Lime Street Station, the numbers of street performers increase. These performers do usually play louder on different instruments, some are dancing, and some are living statues. In this area there is no organized stand like at Liverpool One, but rather charity organizations such as The British Red Cross and Save the Children UK, asking shoppers to donate. Instead of attracting foreign tourists with The Beatles and football, the city has transformed into being an attraction itself. It can be argued that the transformation has improved Liverpool's image outwards, and the national media has started to portray the city in a more positive way.

We have now seen how the City Council has tried to improve Liverpool's image outwards through being European Capital of Culture in 2008 and the opening of Liverpool One. Whether or not this has been effective in terms of changing the stigma must, as previously mentioned, be seen in light of the situation for people living in Liverpool. This is because an approach to change a stigma must be addressed to the fundamental causes of the stigma (Link and Phelan, 2001: 381), and a re-branding of the city through European Capital of Culture might not be enough to change the stereotyped attributes attached to the Scouse identity.

3.4 Social Inequality and Ethnic Stigmatization Within Liverpool

As the city was rebranded through culture, it raises the question on whose culture. As a result of being a major trading port, the city has since its development had a mixed population of immigrants (Uduku, 1999: 103), and is described as a cultural melting pot. Today, 86,3% of the population is white with British and Irish origin and the rest is divided among other groups with the biggest being Chinese, Black Africans and Arabs⁸.

Liverpool has since its development had a population of Irish immigrants, but after the terrible Irish famine in 1845 the population grew drastically (Belchem, 1999: 128) (Honeybone, 2007: 9). The new Irish settlement came from terrible conditions in Ireland, and when they arrived in Liverpool they were discriminated against, seen as an underclass group and their attributes were seen as deeply discrediting. Many suffered from poverty when they came to Liverpool, which continued as a result of discrimination in the secondary labour market (Belchem, 1999: 129). In fear of losing their social status, the long-established Irish population, mainly protestant middle class, chose to distance themselves from the new Irish settlement and their Irish identity, becoming more English as a way to escape the stigma towards the newcomers.

Ethnic discrimination is thus not a new phenomenon in the cultural melting pot that Liverpool is described to be. The high Irish population has been a force in shaping the identity of the people in Liverpool and the identity of the city itself. Saint Patrick's Day which celebrates the arrival of Christianity in Ireland, was celebrated in Liverpool only a few days after I arrived. Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated all over the world, but more in places with a high population of Irish. The stigmatization of Scousers can be seen in connection to the stigmatization of the Irish immigrants. The city still has a high Irish population and through this, prejudices that exist against the Irish as an ethnic group are transferred to non-Irish in Liverpool. Traditional prejudices have portrayed the Irish as idle, but also temperamental and dangerous (Link and Phelan, 2001: 375). These are all oppositions to what is seen as the authentic and proper Englishness found in the south, and are used to strengthen the division between north and south England. We will in chapter 6 see how the prejudices against the Irish were used against Liverpool FC supporters after the Heysel tragedy, and to strengthen other people's impression of Liverpool FC spectators as hooligans.

⁸ <http://liverpool.gov.uk/council/key-statistics-and-data/data/population/>

3.5 Ethnic Marginalization and Riots in Liverpool

The Irish immigration has been used by people outside Liverpool to stigmatize Scousers, but it has also been used by Scousers in Liverpool to create ethnic boundaries within the city. An area's character and identity is shaped and created by the residents' socio-economic status, but choice of residence is again based upon the socio-economic status (Belchem, 1999: 130). This cycle creates areas of residence based upon the socio-economic status of the residents, and areas with stigmatized groups and low chances of movement up the social hierarchy will be characterized by this and reproduce itself throughout the next generations. An example of this can be found in the inner-city area Toxteth, a formerly affluent area, which since the 1950's has been highly populated by immigrants, and is almost synonymous with the black population in Liverpool (Uduku, 1999: 103).

During my fieldwork I did as explained in chapter 3 find residency on a street called Upper Parliament Street. The street is located in the L8 district of Liverpool on the border of Toxteth, and within walking distance of the city centre. The house looked like a converted town house, a big house that used to belong to rich industry leaders, now converted into several studio apartments. The house I lived in had a shared entrance from the street and held 10 apartments. The residents were mostly students as the house was located close to both The University of Liverpool and the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts. When I first met my neighbours they told me about an incident that had occurred just months before my arrival. In late November 2013, 8 people had been arrested after a shooting on a nearby street. The police had also found a significant quantity of class A drugs together with weapons. In the local newspaper *Liverpool Echo* there are several stories like this, which supports the claim made above concerning the area's reputation.

During the 1980s and 90s Liverpool was characterized by riots, crime and drugs. Social deprivation, crime and gang related activities were much discussed in the media, and this contributed to Liverpool's reputation as a problem area and a picture of everything that had gone wrong in England (Boland, 2008: 360). In 1981, what is referred to as a race riot, took place in the L8 district of Liverpool, Toxteth.⁹ The riot is known as the Toxteth race riot, as it was between the black community and the police. As much as it was a race riot Uduku (1999) claims it developed as a result of both racial and social inequality. Prices on residence

⁹ L8 is the Toxteth postcode. This was also my postcode during my stay in Liverpool.

made the population economically marginalized and many, especially blacks, were on social benefits and the area was seen as an ethnic sink (Uduku, 1999: 105).

The area was, and still is, known as a poor and rundown area that should if possible be avoided after dark. Even though regeneration in the area has led to a bigger white middle class residency and small businesses, it is still characterized by a strong segregation in (Uduku, 1999: 105). Through news media, TV and films Liverpool became synonymous with urban social problem, such as crime and drug use (Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004: 344), and this might have strengthened prejudices towards Scousers.

Previously it was noted that being the European Capital of Culture in 2008 led to an improved image outwards but it did not do much for the people in marginalized areas such as Toxteth, as in 2008 the number of people on social benefits increased, which was a source for the general stigmatization of Scousers, but stands in contrast to the Liverpool's image outwards as a renaissance city (Boland, 2010a: 636). This again shows that inner-city areas have not benefitted from the rebranding, and that marginalization and discrimination based on ethnicity is still a problem. The development of Liverpool One has also been successful in terms of attracting shoppers from different cities, but the political and economic power held by the city council and private investors has also led to an exclusion of people with certain characteristics in the city centre. So even though the city in total is experiencing a growth in prosperity, many of the fundamental causes for the stigmatization are still not solved, which is essential for a stigma to change.

3.6 The Stigmatized as Stigmatizers

Anfield is an area struggling with some of the same issues as Toxteth regarding ethnic marginalization and stigmatization. The district of Anfield houses Liverpool FC's home ground Anfield Stadium, and borders to Walton where Everton FC's home ground is located. The stadiums are located just a 10 minute walk apart through Stanley Park. The residential areas surrounding the football grounds is run down and is characterized by a high crime and unemployment rate, and a high population of immigrants. The streets are narrowed in with street parking on each side, and the houses lies next to each other without any space, filling

the streets from corner to corner. The houses are called terraced houses, but when I asked Robert what they are called he just laughed and said: “we call them shit”.



Picture 1: Terrace houses in Anfield. Private Photo.

Before I left, and during my fieldwork I heard bad things about the areas surrounding the stadiums. This was to some degree confirmed by taxi drivers, friends, my landlord and my own experience explained in chapter 2. George explained that the area had not been good for the past 20 years, but with plans to expand Anfield Stadium, this will probably improve within the next 5 years. He also explained how the area has been socially reproduced, as the people living in the areas struggle to find residence in other areas.

This is an example of stigma being situational and related to power. Others in the UK stigmatize George because of his status as a white Scouser of Irish decent. In Liverpool the situation is different as he is part of the majority, and through his job he holds the power to stigmatize and discriminate the minority of immigrants by not renting out to people from certain areas based on prejudices. On match days up to 50,000 people are coming to the stadiums, but they leave as soon as the game is over.

In 2002 the British government announced *The Housing Market Renewal program*, Britain’s largest publicly funded housing renewal program (Nevin, 2010: 716).

As explained above, critics of the European Capital of Culture were worried that the title would only strengthen the on-going gentrification in the city centre. Again, evidence of this

does not exist, but they may have been right to some degree. Even though the gentrification was not like that in London, making the Liverpool city centre more appealing for investors, and pushing up prices on housing in the process makes living in the city centre unaffordable for many people. Many of the old neighbourhoods and suburbs in Liverpool had suffered from abandonment long before the process to re-brand the city had started. There are several reasons for why people chose to leave the city - personal such as education or marriage, or because of financial reasons. Within a 70 year period from 1931, 400, 000 residents left the city (Nevin, 2010: 718). People with a lower income are seeking ways out of the city centre and into the cheaper suburbs. These suburbs are then again often characterized as poorer working class areas.

3.7 Chapter Conclusion

We have in this chapter seen how Liverpool has gone from prosperity to decline. The northern regions suffered from industrial unrest, which was strengthened by the Thatcher government and divided the country in terms of economy and politics. At the same time the city was characterized by high unemployment and social deprivation, which created Liverpool's reputation as the self-pity city and led to a continuous stigmatization of Scousers. To change the city's bad reputation in Britain the city centre was upgraded and re-branded through European Capital of Culture, a measure that can be seen as successful, as Liverpool since then has been portrayed in a more positive way in national media. Even though much of the bad publicity that upheld the stigma has changed, the re-branding did not solve the fundamental causes for the stigmatization. Areas struggling are today often characterized by a high population of immigrants and people in these areas, which was exemplified by George, being stigmatized by other Scousers. In other words, outsiders are stigmatizing Scousers, and Scousers again stigmatize people in areas struggling with many of the fundamental issues from the original stigma attached to Scousers.

4 Scousers and the English disease

Construction of identity has traditionally been framed in terms of geographical places, gender, sexuality, religious beliefs, ethnicity and class (Boland, 2010b: 1). Identity is not static, but produced and constructed over time and through life experiences. Social identification is essential and a prerequisite for all social action (Jenkins, 2000: 8). When socially interacting with other individuals we have to identify the other and ourselves in terms of similarities and differences. An individual's identity is created through identification of self, identification of others and how we understand other people's identification of ourselves.

In this chapter we will discuss how Scouse identity is constructed and how one might say that Scousers have taken up the legacy after Shankly and its values. After this we will see how football spectators are being portrayed in the national media and discuss how this might be a source to why they feel stigmatized in England.

4.1 What Makes a Scouse?

Scousers are proud of their identity, and have a strong sense of community. This becomes apparent through charity, honorary Scousers¹¹, but most importantly they separate themselves from the rest of England (Boland, 2010b: 8). People are Scousers before they are English. Boland (2010: 5) claims this us against the rest mentality developed, as discussed in chapter 3, during the years with economic decline, and thus strengthened division between the poor north and richer south.

There can be a difference between internal and external identification regarding Scouse identity, and I will now focus on the external identification because these characteristics have been used in the stigmatization of Scousers. Boland (2010b) presents some elements used when identifying who can be classified or regarded as a true and authentic Scouser. He argues that the first characteristics of a true Scouser and the most obvious expression of Scouse is language, as sound is a way to place an individual or group in a geographical and physical landscape. The English spoken in some areas in Merseyside better known as *Scouse* differs from the standard English or *the Queen's English* (Honeybone and Watson, 2006).

¹¹ A title honoring people from outside the city

At times when I had trouble keeping up with the conversation I asked Robert if he could speak English. He then replied “I’m Scouse. I’m a proud Scouse”, before he started speaking slower and explaining the different words he had used without changing his accent. His refusal to speak differently, even though people have a hard time understanding him, can be seen as a statement of his true or authentic Scouse identity and a stronger internal identification as Scouser rather than English.

The English spoken in Liverpool and some surrounding and nearby areas is very distinctive and it is discussed whether it can be classified as a dialect or accent. Some linguistic experts claim that to classify as a dialect the language has to differ from the traditional or standard in both grammar and vocabulary, while accent is only varieties in pronunciation of words (Honeybone, 2007: 2). I will use accent on the way of speech in Merseyside, even though it may classify as a dialect. Scouse is spoken in Liverpool, Sefton, the Wirral and Knowsley (Honeybone and Watson, 2006, Boland, 2010b: 6). Being from, or having residence within these areas is essential for being recognized as a true Scouser. People from the Wirral are geographically separated from the rest of the districts by the river Mersey and are called *Plastic Scouse*, while residents in St. Helens are sonically different and called *Woolybacks* (Boland, 2010b: 6). Robert lives in Huyton, a town in Knowsley, and speaks with a broad Scouse accent. Robert and Steve are childhood friends, but Steve speaks so fast and with such a broad accent that even Robert sometimes has a hard time following.

The Scouse accent developed during the time Liverpool was characterized by prosperity and international trading. The major port city became a cultural melting pot, which resulted in Liverpool being highly affected in terms of language and culture. Liverpool has a black community dating back to the eighteenth century (Honeybone, 2007: 8), and the oldest China Town in Europe. As previously noted Liverpool has always had a high Irish population, and the Scouse accent is therefore highly influenced by Irish together with other languages, such as the Scandinavians because of Scandinavian seamen. Boland (2010b: 7) claims the Scouse accent is a cultural symbol, which clearly marks the regional identity, and thus becomes a distinctive characteristic used to distinguish Scousers from others.

The second essential element in the process of determining the true Scousers is time and origin. Whether or not a person is born in the area, compared to the length of time a person has lived in the area and, if moved away, how often the person returns (Boland, 2010b: 10). In other words, the geographical space is an important element when separating the real

Scousers from those trying to be. This has turned out to be difficult as the long presence of immigrants, especially blacks have been overlooked by white institutions resulting in an undermining of their localness or as true Scousers (Boland, 2010b: 10). Put differently, ethnicity becomes a crucial factor when determining a Scouser's authenticity. By leaving the city to pursue a career or for other reasons a person's true Scouserness is challenged. Many famous people leave the city, playing out their Scouse identity without visiting the city often enough or contributing with little or nothing to the city (Boland, 2010b: 10). The former Beatle Ringo Starr, has been pulled forward as an example of this after he made a remark on national TV stating that he did not miss anything about Liverpool (Boland, 2010b: 10).

The third and last key element, is the performance of the Scouse identity, or how a person relates to the rules of conduct. The rules of conduct can be seen as a guide for action and suitable behaviour (Goffman, 1956: 473), within groups, and these can differ between groups. How the Scouse identity is performed seems to be equally, or even more important than birthplace and time spent in the city. An example of this is the two Scouse footballers, Steven Gerrard and Wayne Rooney. Steven Gerrard, the captain of Liverpool FC has never actually lived in the city, but is one of the world's most recognized Scousers.¹³ Wayne Rooney on the other hand was born and raised in Liverpool and because of that he would classify as a real Scouser. After his transfer to rival Manchester United FC from Everton FC over 10 years ago his accent has been leached and his status as a Scouser has been undermined¹⁴ (Boland, 2010b: 7-8). When he left Everton FC, not only for a rival football club but for a rival city, he broke the rules of conduct as both a Scouser and an Evertonian.

When discussing who can call themselves Scouse with Steve and Robert, we started talking about Wayne Rooney. Steve supports Everton FC and does not care about Wayne Rooney after he left Merseyside. Robert on the other hand had a much stronger reaction to a fellow Scouser playing for his rival football club, "Fuck him. He likes to fuck grandmas'!"¹⁵ Seen in light of Goffman (1990[1963]: 61-62) Wayne Rooney's Manchester United jersey becomes a sign that carries social information that is converted into a status symbol by other

¹³ Liverpool FC Captain Steven Gerrard has played his entire career in Liverpool FC, the team he grew up supporting. After the 2014/15 season he will leave Liverpool FC for LA Galaxy on an 18-months contract. I will dare to say that there is no one in Liverpool that would question Steven Gerrard's Scouserness.

¹⁵ Referring to the scandal where Wayne Rooney cheated on his wife several times while she was pregnant.

Scousers. In other words, since leaving Liverpool for the rival city Manchester, his Scouserness has been undermined, and all his negative qualities are being targeted.

Scouse identity is as discussed above, constructed and produced through time, place and language, but also through football support. For Scousers in Liverpool, football support becomes an important identity marker, and *that* you support one of the city's two Premier League clubs becomes more important than *who* you support. In other words, whether you support Liverpool FC or Everton FC is not as important as that you support one of them. This is in fact a quite extraordinary phenomenon in England and shows how the regional Scouse identity dominates football and local distinctions.

Liverpudlian is a term also used when referring to people in or from Liverpool (Kierans and Haeney, 2010: 102). Whether this is an appropriate way to address people from Liverpool can be debated, as *Liverpudlian* might for an outsider be synonymous to Scouser, but for an insider the term carries connotations to Liverpool FC (Boland, 2010b: 1). For Scousers which football club you support is an important aspect in an individual's identity and it determines whether the individual see themselves as red and *Liverpudlian*, or blue and *Evertonian*.

4.2 The Liverpool Way

In 1959 Bill Shankly took Liverpool FC and transformed the club from a second division club to one of the best and biggest football clubs in Europe (Sondaal, 2013: 492). His management lasted for 15 years and was the beginning of what is known as Liverpool FC's golden era with 11 trophies. Shankly was brought up in a socialist mining community in Scotland, and his working class background had a major impact on the legacy he left behind. The club needed its supporters just as much as the supporters needed the football club, and the club's success was built on a collective effort (Sondaal, 2013: 491). This constitutes the first hallmark in the legacy after Shankly. The second hallmark is continuity, as promotions from within the club would secure the continuation of the club's values and traditions (Sondaal, 2013: 491). The final hallmark in Shankly's legacy was *The Liverpool Way*. This meant to represent the club with respect, problems should be handled internally and act united when facing the outside, and an unconditional support towards the manager (Sondaal, 2013: 491). Another important aspect, and maybe the most implicit, is the mentality that no one is bigger than the club. No matter how good of a player or manager an individual is, there is no one that put themselves

above the club. This aspect becomes implicit as it is embodied in the identity of Liverpool FC that it is not talked about unless someone actually does it.

This was the case when, then, Liverpool FC striker Luis Suarez after a number of controversies on the pitch got him banned from playing matches for Liverpool FC¹⁶. By letting his own instant reactions take control, he did not just fail to represent the club with respect, but also put himself above the club as the club was sanctioned. Tapp (2004: 207) argues that season ticket holders are by club executives considered to be the most loyal spectators. When viewing the case of Luis Suarez' last biting incident in light of this consideration of loyalty among spectators they might be right. Robert does not possess a season ticket and his reaction to the incident was a text message saying: "sell him, he don't deserve to be here". George, who on the other hand does possess a season ticket, had a different reaction by calling the media's coverage of the incident a "witch hunt". Also "it was a childish reaction but he didn't seriously injure anyone. Suarez is just a boy trapped in a man's body". He explained that he supported the players of Liverpool FC as long as they were playing for the club.

The legacy of Bill Shankly is first of all in terms of football, but the key concepts can be transferred into everyday life in society and has in Liverpool become a part of Scousers' working class habitus. Habitus is, as explained in chapter 1, established dispositions of actions, which is internalized within the agent. The collective effort became important in the aftermath of the Hillsborough disaster, which will be discussed in the next chapter, and collective effort as an aspect of Scouse identity will therefore be postponed until then. Continuity as an aspect of Scouse identity and a part of Scousers habitus can be seen in light of the embodied us against the rest mentality discussed in the beginning of this chapter. As most of my informants grew up in Liverpool in the mid- to late 70's, which as previously explained was a period characterized by social deprivation, they inherited this mentality from their parents and are likely to pass this down to their children. This us against the rest mentality can thus be seen as cultural capital for Scousers, as this is acquired or gained from social origin (Bourdieu, 1995). *The Liverpool Way* can first and foremost apply to the red population of the city, as this hallmark of Shankly's legacy was symbolically used by

¹⁶ As Luis Suarez list of controversies is long, I choose to just mention those that occurred in his time as a Liverpool FC player in a chronological order up to his departure to Barcelona FC. First an 8 games suspension for racial abuse, then another 10 games for biting, and when biting again during the 2014 World Cup he got a 4 months ban from all football related activities and all stadium attendance. He was sold to Barcelona FC after the World Cup and served his sentence as a Barcelona FC player.

supporters when Liverpool FC was threaten by a leverage buy out (Williams, 2012b: 435), which will be discussed later. But still it can be interpreted as how Scousers in general are honouring the city of Liverpool, its traditions and the authentic Scouserness through, as previously discussed, the identification as Scouse before English.

4.3 Rules of conduct and the English disease

Merseyside and Scousers have as previously mentioned been portrayed and identified differently internationally and within the UK. While it internationally has been seen as culturally diverse and mostly known for the Beatles and football, the picture painted within the UK is somewhat different.

The rules of conduct are, as explained when discussing performance of Scouse identity, the framework of expected behaviour in a social setting. An example of this is that when in the pub with friends or colleagues, you buy rounds for the whole table and not just one for yourself or take off before it is your turn to buy. If these norms and rules are broken, it can result in negative sanctions. The sanctions are determined by the severity of the norms and rules broken, and this will also determine who will be responsible for the sanctions. In this case a possible sanction would be not to be invited the next time. If national laws are broken the government will be responsible, but the local society might also react. In this paper the rules of conduct becomes relevant in terms of football spectator's behaviour when the traditional supporter's authenticity is being challenged by the other categories.

Giulianotti (2002: 25) claims that English football spectators were in the 1980s synonymous with the global public imagination of hooliganism, and Crabbe (2003) argues that the English press is contributing to this still existing stereotype of English football spectators as they, especially in connection to England away matches looks for stories about hooliganism. Poulton (2005: 33) argues that all English football fans are on a regular basis being labelled into a category of hooligans by the media, as she claims journalists and news reporters choose to focus only on the hooligan element, even though they are only a tiny minority of all the fans. The media is first and foremost interested in making as much money as possible, and not deliberately trying to turn all English football spectators into hooligans just for the fun of it. But as we will see in chapter 5, the intention was probably to sell newspapers, but printed stories were people are labelled wrongly can get severe consequences, even though this might have not been the intention.

Hughson and Poulton (2008) use scenes from Shane Meadows film “This is England” to picture the stereotypical football fan in England under Thatcher. White working-class males with xenophobia are familiar stereotypes connecting football fans to the English skinheads (Hughson and Poulton, 2008). There is no universal definition of a hooligan or hooliganism, and in academia the term has changed over time (Pearson, 2012: 80-81). The term *hooligan* is assumed to come from *Hoolihan*, the name of a notorious Irish family living in London in late 1800s (Hughson and Spaaij, 2011: 287). The word’s Irish origin has been a factor for the perceived stigmatization against Scousers because of the high Irish population in Liverpool. Hooligans and acts of hooliganism, often referred to as the *English disease* (Hughson and Spaaij, 2011: 287) have been considered as a social problem in England since the mid-1960s and before this, problems with crowd disorder was handled within the game itself and local police (Williams et al., 1986: 362), and since then English football spectators have been systematically associated with aggressive masculine identity, drunkenness, racism and nationalism in the media (Crabbe, 2003: 413).

Acts of hooliganism are illegal in England, and hooliganism has resulted in collective sanctions for football spectators as one category, even though the majority of fans behaved according to rules and regulations. Examples of sanctions can be pulled from legislations introduced by the English government as a result of riots and mayhems caused by football hooligans. These legislations made it possible to ban individuals from football grounds on the suspicion of hooliganism. English football stadiums were designed to prevent crowd disorders and pitch invasions, and hooligans then became the government’s model for handling football spectators.

4.4 Tragedies, Drunkenness and Hooligans

Liverpool Football Club faced two major tragedies during the 1980s related to its supporters. The first disaster occurred on the 29th of May 1985, and is known as *The Heysel disaster*. The disaster happened at Heysel stadium in Brussels before Liverpool FC was playing Juventus for the European Cup final. May 29th 1985 is said to be the lowest day in Liverpool FC’s history. 39 Juventus fans died as a result of a wall collapsing inside the stadium¹⁷. The disaster was caused by spectators supporting Liverpool FC and as a result, all English football

¹⁷ <http://www.liverpoolfc.com/history/heysel>

clubs were banned from playing in Europe by both UEFA¹⁸ and FIFA (Taylor et al., 1995). This stadium disaster did, according to Hughson and Spaaij (2011: 287) give the world an opportunity to confirm their stereotypes towards Liverpool FC spectators, who with their social history and Irish ethnicity were already pertinent for the hooligan stereotype. These two institutions are powerful enough to stigmatize entire categories (Link and Phelan, 2001: 375), and by enforcing the ban one might say that UEFA and FIFA legitimized the stigmatization of English football spectators as a collective. The ban was 6 years for Liverpool FC and 5 years for other English clubs, and over 20 Liverpool supporters were charged with manslaughter for the deaths at Heysel (Hughson and Spaaij, 2011: 286).

Four years later on April 15th 1989 the worst stadium disaster in British history, as well as in football history occurred. April 15th 1989 is often thought of as football's darkest hour, when 96 football fans left home never to return. The aftermath of Hillsborough has by my informants been described as one of the biggest cover-ups in British history. Heysel and Hillsborough are not the only stadium disasters involving football supporters. In the 20th century, a total of 276 people died at UK football grounds (Johnes, 2004: 134). On 4 February 1914 a wall collapsed at Hillsborough stadium, and 75 football fans were injured. In 1946, 33 people died in the Bolton disaster when attending an FA Cup match. In the 1971 Ibrox Disaster 66 people died at a game between rivals Rangers and Celtic, and the Bradford fire in 1985 took 55 lives at Valley Parade. (Taylor et al., 1995, Johnes, 2004)

4.5 Chapter Conclusion

We have in this chapter seen some of the essential elements required to be identified as a true or authentic Scouser. Most importantly is the performance of Scouse identity, which implies speaking the distinctive dialect, spending time in the city and football fandom. We have also seen that the legacy after Liverpool manager Bill Shankly is an important aspect of Scouse identity as it can be transferred into everyday life, or in other words Scousers' habitus. The stigma perceived to be attached to aspects of Scouse identity was strengthened because of Liverpool FC spectators' involvement in the Heysel disaster, which again confirmed many outsiders perception of football spectators from Liverpool. This perception becomes important to keep in mind as we will now discuss the Hillsborough disaster and its aftermath

¹⁸ Union of European Football Association. The governing body of football in Europe.

in Liverpool, which will again lead us to how Scousers are opposing to the stigmatization attached to their identity.

5 The Hillsborough Disaster – a Cultural Trauma

“I could see already during warm up that the middle pens were beginning to fill up while the two on the sides were empty. I was standing with my back against the Liverpool supporters. 90 seconds into the game the ball hit the crossbar and I could hear a roar behind me. That was when the crush happened. Supporters in the back heard the game had started and wanted to get in. Liverpool supporters were not responsible. The crush would never have happened if the superintendent in charge had done his job. Instead of monitoring what happened from the control room he was busy drinking tea”.²⁰

Bruce Grobbelaar, Liverpool FC goalkeeper

Much has been written about “what really happened” at Hillsborough Stadium, both academic publications and popular media. I will try to give a thorough review of the event and its aftermath, as this disaster still deeply effect people in Merseyside 26 years after it occurred regardless of football colours. The aftermath of this disaster describes how the stigmatization of both Scousers and Liverpool FC spectators has deliberately been used against people in Merseyside by the British government, but also how Scouser’s collectively have opposed to it. Reports published after the tragedy concludes that Liverpool FC spectators could not be blamed for the disaster, as they were in the Heysel disaster, and this has also been settled in a courtroom. The Hillsborough disaster did also change the face of football, this is something I will later come back to as it can be discussed in terms of local supporters’ authenticity.

As much has been written on this, I have chosen to use one person’s publications as a source for the tragedy. Phil Scraton (1999, 2004, 2013) has several publications regarding the Hillsborough disaster, and was also a member of the Hillsborough Independent Panel who in 2012 published the Hillsborough Independent Panel Report. The reader may therefore find the following review of events not to be up to the standards of objectivity wanted in social anthropology, or other social sciences for that matter.

²⁰ I was lucky to meet Liverpool goalkeeper at the time, and now Liverpool legend Bruce Grobbelaar, and got his view of what happened at Hillsborough.

5.1 April 15 1989

Liverpool FC met Nottingham Forest for the FA Cup semi-final. The game was to be played at Hillsborough Stadium, the neutral home ground of Sheffield Wednesday Football Club. Hillsborough stadium was by the football authorities considered to be one of the best grounds in England (Scraton, 2004: 185), as it was designed to control potential acts of hooliganism (Williams, 2012a). The game was a rerun from the year before, and Liverpool FC had now put in a request for more space on the terraces as they had much larger spectator crowd than Nottingham Forest. On advice from the South Yorkshire Police, the FA denied the request and Liverpool fans were allocated the Leppings Lane end terrace. Chief Superintendent Duckenfield was in charge of security and police control but had never before handled a football match this size. The Hillsborough stadium was built in 1899, and like most stadiums at the time it was a mix of seated areas, and standing terraces. 24, 256 Liverpool FC supporters had tickets to the West stand, the Leppings Lane terrace and the North Stand, with entry through 23 turnstiles (Scraton, 1999: 281).

Kick-off at 3 p.m. meant that fans should be inside the stadium at 2.45 p.m. Thousands of Liverpool fans arrived at Hillsborough stadium after 2.30 because of delays on the journey and problems in traffic. Spectators arriving late resulted in a growing crowd outside the turnstiles. As the crowd of spectators at the turnstiles overwhelmed the police a crush became inevitable, and while watching the crush on CCTV monitors Chief Superintendent Duckenfield decided to open an exit gate (Scraton, 1999: 282). Lack of stewarding let fans walk through the exit gate without knowing it led to two central pens behind the goal.

On previous occasions when the two central pens were full the entrance would be closed off and the crowd directed into the pens on the sides, but this did not happen at the FA-Cup Semi-final. The central pens were packed when 2000 Liverpool spectators entered through the exit gate and a serious crush occurred. Fences on each side and in the front made to prevent trouble and pitch invasions made the grounds work as medieval fortresses (Williams et al., 1986: 363) and gave the spectators no way out. Officers on the perimeter track had orders not to open the small gates leading out on the pitch without the authorization from a senior officer. Watching the crush from the control box, Chief Superintendent Durkenfield failed to identify the severity and opening the gates (Scraton, 1999: 282).

Eventually, the two small gates were opened but it was at that time impossible to evacuate the pens in time and prevent the disaster from unfolding. The match was stopped at 3.06 p.m. when a policeman finally came out on the pitch to the referee, Ray Lewis. Bodies were dragged out of the pens and down on the pitch. The police did not activate the major incident plan, which allowed medical personnel to arrive at the scene. The first ambulance, out of three in total, arrived at 3.15 and spectators used advertising boards to carry their friends across the pitch to Hillsborough gymnasium (Scraton, 1999: 282).

What happened in the gymnasium is described as “one of the most inhumane and damaging episodes in recent post-disaster provision”, as polaroid photographs of people in body bags were displayed together with a number while body bags were laid out (Scraton, 1999: 284), and blood samples were taken from all the victims, including children with the argument that it could not be guaranteed that youths had not consumed alcohol (Scraton, 1999: 283). Survivors and relatives were interrogated on their loved ones drinking habits and criminal record when they arrived to identify the victims (Scraton, 2013: 4). They were also held in the gymnasium without any information on what had happened, and witness statements were changed. The treatment the families received in the hours after the disaster, can best be described through an example of a mother questioned by the police, when one officer said to another; “Next she’ll be telling us he’s a bloody virgin!” (Scraton, 2013: 5).

The police denied any responsibility for the disaster and blamed the supporters (Scraton, 1999: 285). The bereaved families were told the dead victims were the property of the coroner and they were not allowed to touch them. The crush had occurred because fans had broken down a gate. Drunk and ticketless spectators got in, overcrowding the pens filled with fans with tickets.

5.2 Lady Thatcher and Lord Justice Taylor

On the day after the disaster Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher visited the Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield, together with press secretary, Sir Bernard Ingham who stated;

“I know what I have learned on the spot. There would have been no Hillsborough if a mob, who were clearly tanked up, had not tried to force their way into the ground” (Scraton, 1999: 285).

After the disaster, Lord Justice Taylor was appointed by the Home Secretary to conduct an official inquiry to find the cause for the tragedy and what could be done to prevent other stadium disasters from happening (Scraton, 1999: 286) altogether three inquiries were conducted and considered independent but they were all based upon the same information, an investigation done by the West Midlands Police (Scraton, 2013: 8). The interim report came out in August 1989, and in January 1990 the complete version of The Hillsborough Stadium Disaster Inquiry Report was published.

The interim report, also known as the Taylor Report, state the main cause was “overcrowding” and the main reason was “failure of police control” (Scraton, 2004: 188). The report also states that drunken supporters causing trouble were not the cause of the tragedy and this was told by the police to cover up their loss of control. With the report came changes to prevent this from happening again. The report suggested that all stadiums should now be all-seated, replacing the old standing terraces with seated areas. All-seated areas would reduce the risk of overcrowding as people are told where to go, at the same time as they have more space when they have found their seat. Fences and pens, used to keep rival fans apart (Williams et al., 1986: 363) and prevent pitch invasions, were to be removed. Without the fence people could have entered the pitch when the crush occurred.

5.3 Innocent until Proven Guilty, or Guilty Until Proven Otherwise?

The saying *we're all innocent until proven guilty* does not seem to be the reality in all cases, and especially when it comes to football supporters. English football fans are as mentioned in the introduction a wide category, and can therefore not be viewed as a homogenous collection of individuals with a shared identity and habitus. With the stereotyped English football spectator as hooligan and the Heysel disaster caused by Liverpool FC spectators fresh in mind Liverpool FC spectators were at Hillsborough symbolically labelled as “guilty until proven otherwise” (Hughson and Poulton, 2008: 517).

As the Hillsborough disaster unfolded Liverpool fans were blamed for the tragedy by the police, and Chief Superintendent Duckenfield’s lies resulted in serious consequences for Liverpool fans (Scraton, 1999: 285). His lies, stating that drunk and ticketless fans were responsible for the tragedy, were broadcast on TV reaching out to thousands of people. Liverpool fans were publicly condemned by the UEFA President, “*Frenzy to enter the*

stadium, come what may, whatever risk to the lives of others. They were like 'beasts' waiting to charge into the arena" (Scraton,1999: 285)²¹

Many mistakes were made when the tragedy occurred, and much could and should have been done to prevent it, as crushes had occurred at the stadium in both 1987 and 1988 (Scraton, 2013: 19). Still for the people from Merseyside years of lies, grief, injustice and stigma were yet to come. This was only the start of what is by some people described as the worst cover up in British history, lasting for almost a quarter of a century. Watching the tragedy unfold on TV families saw their loved ones fighting for their lives. At that time, news was spreading around the world stating that a number of drunk ticketless fans had forced opened a gate causing the crush.

At this point I would like to remind the reader about the situation in Liverpool at the time. Social deprivation, economic decline and high unemployment, gangs, drugs and crime characterized the city. Scousers were at this point already stigmatized as freeloaders depending on social benefits from the state. The city did also have a high population of Irish, and the Irish association to origin of hooliganism was remembered. Since the Heysel tragedy Liverpool fans had been a group stigmatized both on their Scouse identity and as football spectators. Presumably one of the worst combinations of categorizes in Britain in the late 1980's.

5.4 Truth and Justice

Many people, not just football spectators, were hurt by the lies told after the Hillsborough disaster. Scraton (1999) says that truth is an enigmatic concept, and that it is rarely uncomplicated to give a precise and accurate description of "what really happened" at any given moment. Justice is also a difficult topic, maybe even more difficult than truth as it in this case gives people an anticipation of an outcome predicated on accountability that if laws are broken, people will be held responsible (Scraton, 2013: 7). If we look over to other societies, so called tribal societies, there are different ways of settling justice. Among the Yanomami Indians in parts of northern Brazil and southern Venezuela in the 80's, blood revenge has been the most common way to settle things after an injustice had occurred

²¹ Cited in the local newspaper Liverpool Echo on 17 April 1989.

(Chagnon, 1988), but also in modern democratic states the expected outcome is some form of retributive punishment, once guilt and responsibility is established (Scraton, 2013: 7).

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the disaster contributed as a source to a strengthened stigmatization of Scousers, but I will postpone this discussion till later, and now see how the already explained stigma attached to both Scouse identity and football spectators came to be important in the aftermath of the disaster in terms of official inquiries and inquests. When a stigma is attached to a category others tend to focus on these characteristics or attributes instead of the power difference (Link and Phelan, 2001: 375), which in this case is both Scousers and football spectators against the British government. This can in other words be explained through Becker's term *hierarchy of credibility*. The hierarchy of credibility describes how a person's credibility or right to be heard is different based on position in the social hierarchy, where the ones with a high status possesses the power of definition (Becker, 1967: 241).

After the publication of the Taylor report many bereaved families attended preliminary hearings in Sheffield hoping for an outcome with a criminal prosecution and an *unlawfully killed* inquest verdict, based on the report's establishment of guilt (Scraton, 2013: 9). On November 30th 1990, the Director of Public Prosecutions announced that there were no criminal prosecutions of any individual, and on March 28th 1991 the coroner concluded that no evidence after 3.15 should be presented and the jury's verdict was *accidental death* (Scraton, 2013: 11-12). In other words, even though the Taylor report had established guilt no one was prosecuted.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher attended the first memorial service after the disaster where she said that there would be no cover up of what happened at Hillsborough stadium (Scraton, 2013: 16). Over the next 20 years the bereaved families did on several occasions try to change the verdicts through new inquiries and private prosecutions, but they were all dismissed by the government (Scraton, 2013). The government's failure to bring justice to the families is one of, if not the most explicit reason for Scousers' hatred towards Margaret Thatcher.

Media contributed to a further distress in the aftermath of the disaster and this led to a further stigmatization of Scousers, and the media's role become relevant for discussing how Scousers have opposed to the stigmatization through the 'Justice For The 96' campaign, which led to the Hillsborough Independent Panel's Report.



Picture 3: Liverpool FC fans on the terraces after Margaret Thatcher's death.²²



Picture 4: Referring to the government's failure to bring justice.²³

²² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/margaret-thatcher/9992118/Some-Liverpool-fans-celebrate-Baroness-Thatchers-death-with-derisory-chants.html> The Telegraph 13/04/13.

5.5 26 Years Without *The Sun*.

After the disaster Merseyside was a community in grief. The people who died, got injured and traumatized were friends, boyfriends, children, parents and thus people without any interest in football were also deeply affected, and the communal loss should thus be seen in human terms rather than football colours (Money Penny, 2001: 233). The disaster was broadcasted on international TV and the lies told by the police became the truth for many, as the people in Merseyside had no chance to tell their side of the story. This can be compared to studies in anthropology where the anthropologist had the power to define others. This power of definition has resulted in the anthropologist's participation to be seen as a possible threat for the community or as an invasion of the ones studied privacy (Spradley and Mann, 1975: 3).

Pubs were used as a meeting place where first and second hand stories of what happened were told. Four days after Hillsborough, April 19th, the newspaper *The Sun* printed a front-page with the headline "THE TRUTH" (Scruton, 1999: 285). When printing the front-page, editor Kelvin MacKenzie, claimed Liverpool fans had picked pockets of the victims, urinated on the dead and tried to prevent the police and medical personnel from giving the kiss of life to the victims by beating them up. This information was said to come from an anonymous source in the police. The newspaper is by many people in Merseyside described as *the devil*, and after the disaster it was said that the newspaper would do anything to find a story where they could criminalize football spectators.

There are numerous of stories of what the newspaper did to get their stories. Andrew is an Evertonian so he did not attend the semi-final in Sheffield, but had friends that went. As explained in the previous chapter it is normal for people within the same household, friends and neighbours to support Liverpool FC or Everton FC. His friend had not attended a football match for over a year, as his new girlfriend was not into football. He was 18 years old when he died at Hillsborough, and his memory was shattered and dragged through the mud as he was blamed for hooliganism. Andrew told me that on the day of his friend's funeral journalists from *The Sun* had come wanting an interview with the parents. The journalist's rang the doorbell and asked the parents who were about to attend their child's funeral how they felt about their son being a hooligan.

²³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/margaret-thatcher/9992118/Some-Liverpool-fans-celebrate-Baroness-Thatchers-death-with-derisory-chants.html> The Telegraph 13/04/13.

As mentioned in chapter 4, the newspaper might not have written their stories with any other intention than to make money, but the outcome resulted in a lot of pain for thousands of people, so it also said by many in Merseyside that the newspaper represents everything that is bad about capitalism as it made money on other people's tragedies. The story above does not only show how the newspaper operated towards the bereaved families, but also their lack of empathy for other human beings by deliberately stepping on and disrespecting people in the most spiteful way. Even after the Taylor report came out, stating that Liverpool fans did not cause the tragedy, the newspaper still blamed the spectators and contributed to the stigmatization of Scousers and football spectators. In Merseyside these printed lies resulted in a boycott of the newspaper. In the years that followed the newspaper tried on numerous occasions to have the boycott lifted without any success.

What the newspaper wrote after the tragedy became almost a symbolic reference point and a face of the cover up about what happened. After 26 years there is still a boycott of the newspaper in Merseyside, and it is almost something of a religion and you cannot call yourself a proper Liverpool FC fan or Scouser if you read *The Sun*. Some of the big supermarkets tried to sell the newspaper, but stopped as a result of demonstrations in front of the entrances. The lies that were printed were not only an attack on the football spectators, but an attack on the collective Scouse identity (Hughson and Spaaij, 2011: 287), and can therefore be seen as a contributing source to an already existing stigma attached to both the Scouse identity and to football spectators.

5.6 Justice For The 96

The Hillsborough disaster did, as disaster do, have a powerful emotional, psychological and social impact (Johnes, 2004: 134), which can still be found in Liverpool today. One Friday afternoon I went out with Robert and some of his colleagues after they had finished work he introduced me to Frank, the oldest of his colleges, and we decided to go down to the bars on Matthew Street. Frank and I started talking about football when waiting in line at the bar, as Liverpool FC was playing the next day. Frank then told me he had not watched football in 25 years, and did not know if he was ever going to it again. He had attended Hillsborough stadium on the day of the disaster. He still supports Liverpool FC and considers himself a football supporter, but has not watched a game since the fatale semi-final. Now the TV is on every time Liverpool FC plays, but does not watch it. His wife keeps him updated on the

game. This is the case for many of the people who attended Hillsborough stadium on April 15th 1989. The trauma they experienced still keeps them away from watching football, 26 years later.

Hughson and Spaaij (2011: 285) describe the Hillsborough disaster as a cultural trauma, as it affected a whole community and not just the individuals attending the stadium. Not only did the families lose their loved ones, they lost the opportunity to go on with their lives as the cover up deprived them opportunity to grieve. People say that losing a child is the worst thing any person can experience in life. Parents are not supposed to outlive their children, and for many people this trauma becomes extremely hard to deal with. Greif and loss is something most people unfortunately will experience in life, regardless of position in the social hierarchy. At the same time as handling the loss, the bereaved families were deliberately failed by the system. Institutions made to protect and keep the public safe were now working against them by covering up the truth of what happened. When the ability to trust these institutions gets weakened or destroyed people get lost within their own society. This brings us back to the concept of stigma and the hierarchy of credibility, as the families in Merseyside were not heard by the British government. The government holds enough power to stigmatize entire categories, and determine how things actually are. In other words the government with juridical institutions holds the power to define the truth. In this case this was done in the courtroom and through public inquires.

Andrew has been involved with the *Justice For The 96 Campaign* since the campaign started right after the disaster. People in Merseyside collectively gathered together to fight for justice for not only the 96 who died at Hillsborough stadium, but for the truth of what happened to be public. By fighting for the truth to come out, the Justice For The 96 Campaign can be seen as a refusal to accept the existing hierarchy of credibility (Becker, 1967: 242). As mentioned in chapter 2 Andrew is a public figure in the area and I will not describe his work in the campaign other than saying it is through popular culture, as I find this to be the best way to keep him and the people around him anonymous

Every year since the disaster there has been a memorial service held at Liverpool FC's home ground Anfield. "Justice For The 96", is as a common chant used by Liverpool FC's supporter, and at the 20th memorial service in 2009 this chant was used in an unconventional way. Secretary of State of Culture, Media and Sport, and Evertonian, Andy Burnham was forced to stop his speech as an entire Anfield Stadium sung him down through a performance

of both collective identity and collective memory. As a government official he failed to address the spectators’ question of justice (Power, 2011: 105).²⁴



Picture 5: Hillsborough memorial outside Anfield Stadium. Private Photo.

The 20th memorial service became a turning point for the people in Merseyside as Andy Burnham now opened for a full disclosure of all documents regarding the disaster. This led to the foundation of the ‘Hillsborough Independent Panel’, who in 2012 published their report (Scraton, 2013: 17-18). The report revealed that the criminal investigations were limited and the South Yorkshire Police had changed witness statements and manipulated the media to blame the spectators (Scraton, 2013: 22). The coroner’s controversial 3.15 cut-off also proved to be a lie as new evidences prove that as many as 41 people could have been saved after 3.15 (Scraton, 2013: 20)²⁵, and the accidental death verdict was quashed.²⁶

²⁴ Andy Burnham’s speech can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z3mBIi084Q>

²⁵ See the Hillsborough Independent Panel’s press conference at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Dx1ABbmMv4>

²⁶ <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/all-about/hillsborough-inquests>

5.7 Collective Pride in The Liverpool Way

Seen in connection to the legacy after Shankly, the collective work in the Justice For The 96 Campaign, have become embodied in the Scouse identity. In the aftermath of the disaster Scousers have collectively worked for the question of guilt to be established, with a *collective pride* (Hughson and Spaaij, 2011: 298) with regards to The Liverpool Way of honouring the city and its people. Justice For The 96 has in a way become a slogan in Merseyside, and is described by many Scousers as something almost religious and holy. In other words, the Justice for the 96 Campaign can be seen as a key symbol of the collective work done to uncover the truth and an embodied element in the Scouse identity.

It was during my conversation with Andrew I really took in the injustice the people in Merseyside had been exposed to over the last 26 years. Most people worldwide with access to a computer or TV and have an interest in sports know about the Hillsborough stadium disaster. Pictures and videos from the tragedy have been shown on the news and so is the annual memorial service. By referring to the victims that were killed as *96 football fans* they are in a way dehumanized. When placed in a group labelled *dead hooligans* or *football fans* they are no longer seen as individuals with their own personality, family and what they meant to other people. When my conversation with Andrew was coming to an end I asked about the meaning of justice. He said: “by *justice* we mean that the people responsible for the tragedy should be held responsible”. 26 years after the tragedy people know what happened. The disaster was caused by failure in police control and not drunk and ticketless supporters. Still there have been too many wrongs done by too many people over the years for one report to make it right.

5.8 Chapter Conclusion

The Hillsborough disaster is the biggest stadium disaster in the world of football. The aftermath of the tragedy has been described as the biggest cover-up in British history. The involvement of Liverpool FC spectators in the Heysel disaster created an opportunity for the government to cover-up the truth of what happened and blaming Liverpool FC spectators for the deaths of their own. Through the Justice For The 96 Campaign have Scousers collectively fought for justice in terms of revealing the truth for the public. With the Taylor report came all-seated stadiums, which is the biggest change in English football in terms of security and spectators' consumption of football. This changed consumption must be seen in connection to authenticity and collective identity as the Taylor report changed the faces of the terraces which has traditionally been the place to locate authenticity among football supporters.

6 The importance of football in Liverpool

Bale (2000: 91) claims that football is seen as a representational sport, as clubs represent actual places, and the identification with football clubs is claimed by Hognestad (2009:360) to often evolve around local identities, without denying spectators from elsewhere to participation in football support.

6.1 Collective Identity and Collective Memory in Football Support

According to Giulianotti (2002: 27) do the most authentic football spectators, categorized as supporters, see themselves as members of the football club. This is why football supporters are often referred to as the 12th man. Football matches are popular sporting events attracting thousands of people, and spectators on the terraces are often referred to as a crowd with a collective identity. The collective identity constructed in football support is not created between the individual supporters, but through each individual's identification and relationship to the football club as an institution. Symbolizing this bond or relationship is football supporters' use of the phrase *we won* after a victory.

Trevor, decrease his involvement in football support when he got a girlfriend. Again this was the reason given by his friends and not him. When I asked him why his personal and emotional investment had decreased he said the reason was that he was sick of Liverpool FC supporters who were enjoying a very good season saying: "we won" to his face. "They didn't do shit! All they did was going to the pub supporting a team that won. The team won, they didn't. They didn't score on the pitch, all they did was getting drunk in the pub", while waving his hands around in the air and finishing the whole thing by smashing his right fist in the table. It is difficult to determine the exact reason for why Trevor got less invested in supporting Everton FC, whether it was a life-changing event or irritation of constantly being reminded by his friends that his club did not perform as well theirs. But this example still shows how supporters identify themselves with the club. Even though the supporter did by no means participate in the victory their membership allows them to emotionally participate and take pride in the accomplishment.

Hughson and Spaaij (2011: 288) claims that narratives traded across generations creates a collective memory is created., and this can be used to strengthen a collective identity through cultural capital. In Liverpool the Hillsborough disaster can be seen as a collective memory that strengthens the cultural capital and the authentic Scouse identity. In Liverpool

the collective memory about a golden era in terms of football and the Hillsborough disaster creates a stronger bond between the individual supporter and one of the two football clubs in the city. As football can be seen as an important identity marker together with the collective identity and the collective memory, it raises the issue of how people in Liverpool choose which club to support.

6.2 Are you Red or Blue?

The two Premier League football clubs, Everton FC and Liverpool FC were originally one and I will therefore give a brief review of the foundation of the two clubs, before discussing how people in Liverpool decide which club they will support, in what is known as *The Merseyside Derby* and how this is used as an identity marker.

The 1890s was a period characterized by internal disputes over rent in Everton FC. Anfield stadium was at this time Everton FC's home ground. The land and property was owned by the club president John Houlding and between the seasons 1885-86 to 1890-91 the rent increased from £100 to £250 (Kennedy, 2003: 4).²⁸ In 1892 John Houlding started a new football club called Liverpool Football Club that stayed at Anfield while Everton FC moved to Goodison Park. Historically, both teams have had great success in attracting spectators on match days (Williams et al., 1986: 365). This is also the case today and Liverpool FC turns away over 13, 000 spectators every match. Anfield Stadium has today a capacity of 45, 276, and is the seventh biggest stadium in England, and with the on-going expansion the capacity will increase to 54, 000. When expanding the current stadium instead of building a new one on a new site, the atmosphere and identity that exists in the place will be preserved. This is important as football stadiums are described as a *sacred place* for football spectators (Boyle, 2001: 42), and for those who regularly visit, the stadium can create *geographical memories*, and, as mentioned in chapter 1, be seen as a source of *topophilia* (Bale, 2000: 92). The home ground's importance for spectators will be discussed later in this chapter in terms of how spectators perform a collective identity.

In Liverpool football becomes, as previously mentioned, an important identity marker because which club you support determines both the internal and the external identification of individuals in the city. You are identified either as an Evertonian and *blue*, or Liverpoolian

²⁸ In this dissertation I will use Everton FC on the club after the split in 1892.

and *red*, and in Liverpool everyone is either red or blue (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009: 52). Everton FC is often referred to as *The people's club*. This dates back to the clubs foundation, but also refers to Liverpool FC have experienced a greater international success and have thousands of supporters located all over the world. Evertonians in Liverpool often say that the true people from Liverpool support Everton FC, while Liverpool FC gains their support from foreigners. By doing this, the blue population in the city challenges local Liverpool FC supporter's authenticity in terms of both the categorization of football spectators and Scouse identity. As the traditional working class supporter is the most authentic spectator with his or her cultural capital, the foreign Liverpool FC spectator will have almost no chance of entering the supporter category. On the other hand, the red population of the city claims that this is just jealousy because of their club's success.

The interest in football and involvement in football support is as previously mentioned, often passed down in generations, and in Merseyside this does not automatically mean that you support the same team. Within a family there can be both blue and red supporters. For example the father can support Everton FC, while the mother supports Liverpool FC. The children can end up following either of those teams. The same goes for neighbourhoods, friends and colleagues, and it is common to see red and blue flags in windows on the same street. This was also the case for Trevor, Steve and Robert. Trevor and Steve are blue while Robert is red. They are work colleagues and personal friends, all having family members who support the other football club. Whether you are blue or red seems to be much about coincidences, which they confirmed when explaining that which club they first saw play or supporting the opposite club to an older sibling as a protest could be usual reasons for the choice. Even though the choice was based on coincidences, once the choice is taken it stands and starts becoming an important aspect in the individuals' identification. This is a unique situation in Britain where most football spectators' choice of football club is based on religion and local districts within their city.

6.3 The Friendly Derby

“There are two great teams in Liverpool: Liverpool and Liverpool Reserves”

Bill Shankly

In contrast to other rivalries economic class, religion or political views do not play a part in which club you support in Liverpool. This dates back to when the economy was based down at the docks and most of the population belonged to the working class, most people voted for the Labour party and people went to watch both clubs play (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009: 52). Evertonian Andrew explained how he, while growing up, used to see both Everton FC and Liverpool FC play at their respective home grounds. At that time home and away spectators were not separated but sitting together on the stands. The relationship between the two football clubs and their supporters is unique and matches between the two used to be called *The friendly derby* (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009: 53). There is, of course, a rivalry between the two clubs but there is a lack of hatred directed towards each other that can be found in other rivalries, but more about local pride. An evening I took a taxi to a friend's place close to Goodison Park before we were going to a game later that night. The taxi driver supported Liverpool FC and said he refused to ever drive pass Goodison Park.

One of the most famous and hostile rivalries between football clubs can be found in Glasgow, Scotland, a city often compared to Liverpool with respect to the passion for football found in the two cities, working class traditions, high population of Irish and religious traditions and sectarianism (Boyle, 2001: 39). The football rivalry between Celtic FC and Rangers FC is often described as one of the most dangerous rivalries within the sport of football. One of the reasons the rivalry runs so deep for the supporters is because it also represents a religious and political rivalry. Irish Catholics formed Celtic FC with a strong connection to Ireland in terms of religion, culture and politics. Rangers FC on the other hand belonged to the protestant Church of Scotland and have had a closer connection to England and the Royal Family. Because of the religious and political aspect of supporting the teams, football support in Glasgow represents two institutions in the Scottish society (Boyle, 2001).

The relationship between Liverpool FC and Everton FC supporters differs from other city rivals through the way the supported club is chosen and the lack of hatred towards each other. How you relate to other rival spectators is based on cultural capital, as this one of the key factors in the categorization of football spectators. The external identification needed for

the categorization can among Liverpool FC supporters in Liverpool be done based on the spectators use of symbols.

6.4 Symbols as Signs for Categorization

As previously mentioned, football support can create a strong sense of belonging through participation in social gatherings. Within the different categories of English football spectators, there are again groups connected to different football clubs. These groups can be divided into larger or smaller groups depending on economic and personal investment. A membership in the football club's official supporter club only requires a membership fee and no prior convictions of hooliganism. A smaller unofficial supporter group requires no membership fee, but is instead based on mutual interests and shared values among the members. Memberships in supporter groups become visual for others through usage of key symbols. Key symbols are symbols that summarize a culture or in this case the subculture of football support (Berkaak and Frønes, 2005: 47). Football gives the supporters the opportunity to collectively reaffirm their commitment, while also publicly shows what they stand for and what they stand against (Pugsley and Rookwood, 2009: 45).

The use of symbols to confirm a membership outwards differs between the different categories of football spectators. In Liverpool this can be exemplified by comparing weekends when football clubs are playing at home to weekends away. Because of the football stadiums' location, Liverpool FC and Everton FC rarely play at home on the same day. When Liverpool FC is playing at home the city centre is covered in red football jerseys, flags and scarfs throughout the whole weekend. Thousands of football spectators are coming into the city to see Liverpool FC play. As they are not local and have a time limited stay, nor do they possess the cultural capital needed to be in the *supporter* category. Many of them also live outside the UK and have travelled to Liverpool on organized trips for the *football experience*.

When regarding their trip as a vacation the tourists are likely to spend more money than they usually would on shopping and other leisure activities. On a football trip a visit to the official store is obligatory and visitors will choose to wear official merchandise in the full length of their stay. Even when going to clubs at night one might find foreigners with Liverpool FC supporter effects.

Pearson (2012: 76) uses the term *tourist* on similar football spectators in his study of Manchester United FC spectators. He identifies the stereotypical match attending tourist in terms of how they differ from the local crowd in demographics, use of symbols in terms of clothing, expression and pre-match and match behaviour. I find this identification of spectators useful, as it can place many of them into Giulianotti's (2002) categories of fans and even flauers, as their investment towards the club is consumer based then traditional.

The local Liverpool FC spectator uses key symbols in a different way to affirm their commitment to the club. On a match day the local spectator is likely to wear football jerseys and scarfs some time before and during the game. In contrast to spectators visiting the locals wear their official supporter gear over a shorter period of time. Instead many wear club symbols on them at every time in the form of tattoos. Robert has 5 stars on his arm, which represent Liverpool FC's 5 European Cup/ UEFA Champions League trophies. With tattoos the club emblems becomes embodied and represent an eternal commitment to the football club. The locals possess a high cultural capital, and have knowledge about the local community and its history in connection to the football club.

The cultural capital supporters possess in Liverpool not only creates a distance between locals and visitors, but it changes the importance and meaning of the symbols. As visiting fans use official supporter effects to affirm their *red identity*, the local supporters use tattoos and merchandises with respect to the Hillsborough disaster. An example of this is small *JFT 96*²⁹ pins worn on coats. This confirms the local supporters' identity as both red and Scouse. These pins are also worn by Evertonians. In other words, the use of symbols and official supporter effects can be used to identify spectators' investment and solidarity in the football club and at the same time create boundaries between categories.

6.5 Football Support as a Lifestyle

Football support can for people without any interest in football be hard to understand. Why are some people willing to let something they have no control over, have a major impact on their life? Why would some people seriously consider staying inside till Thursday when their team lost on Sunday? Why do some people live as football is something more important than a question about life and death? This is for many people far from understandable, but for

²⁹ Justice for the 96.

many people this is the most natural, and the only way of life. Stone (2007: 171) argues that football culture is, for those interested found in their everyday life, through for example the media, pubs and online discussion forums.

Stone (2007: 171) also argues that match days can be seen more as a “physical manifestation of certain regularity that fuels an on-going process of identity formation”.

George’s office was next to my apartment and sometimes I met him several times during the day. He would often ask me if I had seen the latest Liverpool FC news or heard the latest interviews with players. Sometimes he would knock on my door to discuss the latest transfer rumours, and on Fridays we would discuss our predictions before the weekend match. Henry, who George shared the office, is an Everton FC supporter, and when working together the radio would play in the background and they would both have their clubs homepage up on the computer. When George was alone, on the other hand, he would have LFC TV³⁰ on his Ipad.

According to Stebbins (1992: 1) what we previously have thought of as *seriousness* and *leisure* now loses ground in the context of *serious leisure* activities, and leisure activities are not necessarily just rest, enjoyment and time away from work, but it can be activities that seem constructive and rewarding for the individual participating. In the serious leisure activity that is football support is argued to be the rewards that can come in forms of camaraderie and friendship. This is what forms the smaller groups within the category of football spectators. Supporting the same football club can create a sense of belonging to a social group. A membership within a certain social group is important in the cognitive, affective and behavioural process of an individual (Jones, 2000:284). In this paper I find it useful to describe football support as a lifestyle rather than as a serious leisure activity because of how my informants related to football support and used it as an identity marker and their habitus.

As previously mentioned my informants worked in white-collar occupations, as many others did in an area where de-industrialization and restructuring have led to a decline of employment in traditional manual labour occupations. Nixon (2009:302) claims that many men in such areas seek white-collar occupations where they are in a position of some sort of power or domination and stay clear of occupations without power or dominance such as in the service sector. This is closely related to gender and the masculine working class habitus, and

³⁰ Liverpool FC’s TV channel

becomes relevant as football support as a lifestyle can be seen as a substitute for the lack of physical labour and sense of belonging to a working class community. Robert, Trevor and Kevin expressed that they were not too happy about their job, but it was a necessity. Their days were pretty much the same and it did not give them much in terms of self-realization, but it did give them a pay-check that would be used on football support. In other words, within the category of football supporters many people work to afford their leisure activity and thus it becomes a lifestyle.

When football support is considered to be a lifestyle, spectators possess an *off field identity* (Edensor and Millington, 2008:184), which again leads to the discussion of authenticity. Giulianotti (2002), does as previously mentioned, identify the supporter category as the most authentic spectator based on regular match attendance and cultural capital.

6.6 Home Grounds and Collective Performance of Identity

The Kop or *The Spion Kop* is one of the world's most famous terraces. Other football clubs also has stands called The Kop but the original is located at the Walton Breck Road end at Anfield Stadium. This is the main stand for the hard-core Liverpool FC spectators, also known as *Kopites*. This terrace is known worldwide for its many songs, togetherness among the supporters and the atmosphere it produces on a match day.

Armstrong (1998: 133) argues that terrace chants can be seen as a collective identity performance, where spectators become participants through collective singing. When Liverpool FC spectators sung down Andy Burnham, as discussed in the previous chapter, they did according to Power (2011: 102) construct a place of community and ideological space reflecting on collective identity and values from their local community through this chant. Liverpool FC spectators are known worldwide for their performance of Gerry & The Peacemakers' "You'll Never Walk Alone". The song was adopted as the clubs anthem in the 1960 and is today an important symbol for Liverpool FC (Power, 2011: 96). "You'll never walk alone" is written in the Shankly gates at Anfield stadium and is also a part of the clubs emblem. And by that, in light of Power (2011: 102) we can say that the collective singing at Anfield established a place that is distinct in comparison to other football stadiums, and structure the Liverpool FC supporter's habitus as it reflects local identity and ideology.

The Kop at Anfield is dated back to the 1905/06 season, and the stand was a gift, rewarding the supporters for their loyalty. The 100 step, single tier stand, was named in memory of the many Scousers who died in South Africa during the Boer War in a battle over a hill called *Spion Kop*. Saturday February 4th 1994 is known as *The Kop's last stand*, and was the last time a game was played in front of an all standing Kop before all British stadiums should be all-seated as a consequence of the Taylor report. It was estimated as many as 30,000 Liverpool fans once stood at *The Kop* to support their club. Replacing the standing terrace with seats meant the capacity would decrease drastically and many people feared that the atmosphere on the terraces would disappear and is one the biggest changes in spectator's consumption of football.

I was lucky to experience the collective performance of red identity during my time in Liverpool. At the end of the season 2013/14 Liverpool FC was in the running for winning the league for the first time in 20 years. On April 13th 2014 Liverpool FC played against Manchester City, who was also in the running for the title, at Anfield. The stadium was filled to the capacity and tout tickets were sold for up to £6000. It was said that the club who won this game would win the league. This was the one game played before the 25th anniversary for the Hillsborough disaster. Since the Hillsborough disaster Liverpool FC has never played on April 15th. The Football Association has always honoured the clubs request when fixturing the matches.

When entering The Kop red, white and gold pieces of paper was placed out on the seats. During a minute of silence everyone at The Kop held up their piece of paper forming a red, white and gold mosaic saying "96" and "25 years".



Picture 5: Private photo.

The collective identity was performed by supporters in Liverpool during and after the season. Towards the end of the season Liverpool FC was in the running of winning the league for the first time since the establishment of the Premier League, and after a victory people in the pub would collectively sing “we’re gonna win the league”. After Liverpool FC’s last game of the season against Newcastle it was clear that Liverpool FC came in second. This was still much better than anticipated at the start where the goal had been to be within the top 4 and thereby qualifying for the Champions League³¹. Right after the game there was an atmosphere of emptiness. People were quiet and went to the bar to drown their sorrows over the fact that they had lost first place. This quickly changed and the supporters started to sing songs about Liverpool FC manager Brendan Rogers and celebrated the fact that they won second place. Right after the game the pub staff changed the TV channel to show the qualification from League 1 to Championship. Not many people watched it, and only a few people stayed in the pub while the majority move out onto the streets. In the city centre the streets were full of people in Liverpool FC jerseys all singing, dancing and kissing. This is an example of football spectators publicly showing emotions, not normally done by people who are afraid of damaging their image as tough and masculine men.

³¹ Annual European tournament for football clubs held by UEFA.

6.7 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how the collective memory of the Hillsborough disaster becomes a cultural capital for Scousers, and thus becomes an embodied element in their collective identity. The collective Scouse identity becomes in Liverpool more important than whether a person is red or blue, because this collective identity is strengthened by the memory of Hillsborough disaster. This collective identity, both Scouse and red or blue, is actively preformed by spectators on the terraces, which bring us into the final section on this paper where we will discuss what happens when the traditional English supporter is being excluded from terraces in English Premier League football.

7 A Changed Face of Football

During the 1980s Liverpool FC was, as explained in chapter 4 and 5, involved in two major stadium disasters, which were direct sources for a further perceived stigma attached to Scouse identity and especially football spectators from Liverpool. And as Bale (2000: 93) argues both disasters have had a great impact on the transformation of modern English football in terms of a new generation of football stadiums after the publication of the Taylor Report. In this chapter we will discuss how a socio-economic transformation of English football have according to Crabbe (2003), Edensor and Millington (2008), Giulianotti (2002), King (1997) and Sondaal (2013) led to exclusion of traditional supporters in English Premier League, and based on this, discuss whether or not we can say that English football still belongs to the working class in terms of authenticity. Sport can be seen as a cultural phenomenon and field, and the development of modern sport is closely related to social class. According to Bourdieu (1995: 35) the preferences an individual has for different sports are connected to people's different forms of capital within a social space, and more importantly their use of the body and its functions. Again, the beginning of this paper we saw how Scousers in Liverpool are opposing to their city being labelled as the self-pity city and a perceived stigma attached to their identity through what might be seen as a transformation of the legacy after Shankly into society and the Justice For The 96 Campaign. There has also been an identification of different qualities essential to be considered as an authentic football supporter in Liverpool. With this in mind we will throughout this chapter, based on my own findings, discuss how pubs can become a place where local football supporters in Liverpool can maintain their authenticity in a time where it can be challenged by visiting supporters on terraces.

7.1 The Development of Modern Sports

To understand the field that is football support, we first have to understand the field of sport in connection to the different social classes that exist in England. Bourdieu (1978: 820) describes sport or sport related activities, as entertainment provided to social agents with the intent to supply and meet the agent's social demand. Sport related activities are every activity related to sport other than actual performance of the sport itself. Examples of this can be work

in administrations, supporters in the terraces or supporters watching sport in bars and pubs. Even though I just argued that work in administrations in for example a football club is a sport related activity this has to be separated from the latter, as it is paid work and thus, as explained in the previous chapter, neither a serious leisure activity or a lifestyle and thus do not provide the individual with any of the rewards related to this involvement in support.

Interest or taste for a sport depends, as mentioned above, on capital and thus the individuals' position in the social field. Organized physical activities that later developed from games to institutions were brought into the public schools by the social elite, and historically, each of the social classes has had a relationship to different sports based on their use of the body and bodily practices (Bourdieu, 1987: 835). For the working class the body has traditionally been used as a tool through physical labour. Miners and dockworkers are examples of labour occupation where the execution requires a both strong and persistent physique. The choice of sport has therefore been physically tougher and more brutal than for the bourgeoisie, a social class with a different habitus.

Sport has been used as a way to move up in the social hierarchy for the people in the lower classes. For the bourgeoisie, on the other end of the scale, a sporting career has been almost excluded as an acceptable way in life (Bourdieu, 1987: 832).

7.2 Sport and Social Mobility

There are numerous examples of Cinderella like stories in football, where players born into families with limited resources and small possibilities succeed on the pitch and gains wealth, fame and glory. Born in Croxtheth, a working class suburb in Liverpool, Wayne Rooney is today the captain of Manchester United FC, one of the world's most successful football clubs. If we move on from the sport participants and back to the sports related activities we can see that this also depends on the social structure of social classes and class mobility. The spectators and supporters dedication decreases the higher one moves in the social hierarchy, while the consumption of sporting entertainments will decrease as one moves down in the social hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1987: 828). Even though modern sports were introduced by the social elite via public schools (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009: 10), the lower classes have had their way of taking over certain sports. This means that our interest in sports is not static and they can change over time and by our ability to move up and down in the social hierarchy.

Examples of how spectators, directors and board members have been depending on their social status within the hierarchy can be found in literature about Liverpool during the late 19th century, and is by Kennedy (2005: 843) explained through ethnic and religious status which together with membership in Freemasonry lodges, positions on Local Boards and political parties to determine an individual's opportunity to enter the football club organization. Historically owners and directors in English football clubs have been provided with influence and local power as a *psychic income* (Williams, 2012b: 429). In other words, owners and directors have strengthened their already strong position in the society needed to enter the world of football via their position in the football club itself.

According to Kennedy (2004: 378) did the supporters of a professional football club on the other hand did come from the lower middle class and skilled working class. We can therefore say that supporting a professional football club has been typical for the working-class and lower middle-class, while the middle-class has the power to run the football club as an organized institution. Much has changed in football since the Victorian age, and social mobility regarding related to our interest in sports, becomes clearly relevant as we will later in this chapter discuss how a transformation in terms of external factors is changing the face of spectators in the English Premier League.

7.3 The Development of Modern Football

As previously noted, football is one of the world's most popular sports with billions of viewers from all over the world and from different positions in the social hierarchy. England is known to be the home of football, and has a long and strong tradition for the game. There is evidence that ball-kicking games have been played in Asia since the second and third century BC, but evidence emphasizing the British origin of the game keeps on being prioritized by academic historians as different ball-kicking games have been played in England since the 14th century (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009: 9), and according to Keys (2013: 43) England is said to be the birthplace of modern sport.

Modern football, as the institutionalized sport we know it today, started with the foundation of the British Football Association in 1863. The FA was founded in London by various teams committing to the same rules, and the sport became institutionalized, and Bourdieu (1978, 831) claims that prior to this, football, as well as other sports, had been played in public schools so that the pupils would unleash their rebellious, violent and sexual

energies in the field instead of destroying buildings or harassing their teachers. In other words, sport and physical activity were used then, as now, as an alternative to unleash energy and tension. Giulianotti and Robertson (2009: 12) argues that in difference to sports such as rugby and cricket, the institutionalized football were globalized by British maritime and industrial workers arranging matches in different ports across the world, and the everyday social relations inspired people to create their own clubs. Because of this way of globalization the participation in football was at the time a relatively low-cost activity and thus grew rapidly among people with a limited economic capital.

Sondaal (2013: 486) claims the earliest clubs were founded out of local institutions, and gained attention from businessmen seeking financial profit and politicians seeking popularity by associating with a local club, and because of this connection to the local community early football clubs can be seen as community institutions which created a sense of belonging and thus became an important aspect in the participants identity. As mentioned above football was institutionalized with a common set of rules by the foundation of the FA, but it was not until 1885 player professionalism was legalized and in 1888 the first football league was established (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009: 12). The FA and every other national football association are formally empowered by the global governing body, *FIFA* (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2012: 222), which as explained with the ban of all English clubs after the Heysel disaster, is a powerful global institution. The FA remained unchanged until the 1980's when as Sondaal (2013: 487) argues English football took a step into the global world as a new flow of economy, technology and political development changed the games existing framework. In 1992, the Football League's top division separated from the lower three and formed the Premier League as Weed (2007: 401) argues the big clubs now saw the new league as an opportunity to make money as they would now negotiate their own TV rights contract (Weed, 2007: 401).

7.4 When Economy Challenges Authenticity

Football did, as previously mentioned, earn recognition as a working class sport after first being introduced in public schools by the bourgeoisie. Giulianotti (2002: 25-26) argues that football, and especially English football, has since the mid-1980s undergone a fundamental socio-economic transformation which he describes as a commodification, which he explains as “a process by which an object or social practice acquire an exchange value or market-

centred meaning”. Andrew described this commodification where football has acquired a capitalistic market value and gained a position as a profitable agent in the free-market, with the metaphor “Hands of Thatcher all over football”.

According to Tapp (2004: 203) football clubs are today described and marketed as brands and spectators are identified as costumers. The commodification and capitalization in English football stands in contrast to the collective mentality found in The Liverpool Way. In a conversation with George, he told me about his feelings regarding the time when American capitalists Tom Hicks and George Gillett bought Liverpool FC in 2007, from local Liverpool FC supporter David Moores. By the time of the sale the club experienced financial difficulties because of what George describes as “the club was ran by football fans and not business men”. But as Williams and Hopkins (2011: 163) argues it might also be viewed as a belated acknowledgement of the new reality of sport’s financial position in a global era. The new American owners had guaranteed that the purchase was no leverage buyout, and the new leadership would continue the clubs traditions with respect to the legacy after Shankly (Williams, 2012b: 431). The promise to preserve Liverpool values was not kept, as the owners did not understand the importance in the relationship between the football club and its supporters. Williams (2012b: 432) argues that the purchase was described as at best a shotgun wedding, as Gillett called on Hicks for a 50% investment of the shares only a few days before the purchase was completed, and the purchase was covered by a large loan with security in the club, which was kept from the public and the Liverpool FC supporters. The American owners also had other businesses in the US and spent much of their time away from Liverpool. Within the first year of the Gillett and Hicks regime, secret meetings were held in the US about replacing Liverpool manger Rafael Benitez who enjoyed popularity among the Liverpool FC supporters (Williams, 2012b: 433). This was in great contrast to The Liverpool Way of doing things and supporters also felt ridiculed by the owners. Financially struggling to afford attending matches, the stadium was used for the owners’ personal amusement. George said “we were working our ass off to see our team play, and they were using our stadium as a personal playground and inviting celebrities that would leave after the first half”.

The establishment of the Premier League in 1992 together with stadium regulations after the Taylor report is two of the most important and direct reasons for this new consumption of football for English spectators. When the old standing terraces were replaced with all-seating terraces the stadium capacity decreased drastically, while at the same time

building costs and improvement in facilities increased. The reduction in numbers of spectators and increasing cost resulted in higher ticket costs for the spectators (King, 1997: 334).

Since then the prices have increased to a level where people can no longer afford to attend Premier League matches. Steve and Robert could not afford to attend several matches every year due to expensive tickets, even though they both work full time, and not spending money on much other stuff than activities related to their football support. When I told them I was going to London to see Arsenal FC against Newcastle United FC, they responded, “How can you afford that? Arsenal is really expensive”.

Between 2013 and 2014 ticket prices increased by 4.4% on average, which is three times the inflation in the same period.³⁴ If this trend continues English Premier League might risk losing an entire generation of football fans, as attending matches becomes unaffordable for the average young working class English spectator.³⁵ But still, many of the stadiums are filled to the capacity as many of the biggest clubs, do as discussed in the previous chapter, attract foreign or visiting spectators. These visiting spectators are travelling to English football grounds in large numbers every weekend, to a degree where they have changed the face of the terraces, which can be seen in light of Giulianotti’s (2002) argument of a shifted trend in English football where spectators tend to be more consumer based than traditional. Many outside of England possess season tickets, at for example Liverpool FC, and these are often sold if the holder cannot attend the match.

George and his two sons have 3 season tickets with seats on the main stand at Anfield Stadium. Their seats are located so close to the pitch that they can hear what Liverpool FC manager Brendan Rogers is saying during the match. One day I met him outside the house and he seemed ecstatic and relieved, as he told he had just received the annual phone call about renewing his season tickets for next season. Current season ticket holders are, as previously noted viewed by club executives as the most loyal spectators, and are therefore prioritized by the club for renewal of season tickets. Football clubs do this to show appreciation for the spectators’ loyalty, and this is how season tickets are inherited. Even though it is expensive George and his sons renews their season tickets every year because if he does not, there is no chance for them to ever become a season ticket holder again. In the

³⁴ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-2792703/the-staggering-cost-following-team-premier-league-football-league-ticket-prices-rise-three-times-rate-inflation.html>

³⁵ <http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/premier-league/high-ticket-prices-for-premier-league-matches-could-lead-to-the-loss-of-a-generation-of-fans-9659441.html>

phone call they revealed the current waiting list which was 30, 000 people. Possessing a season ticket can therefore according to both Pearson (2012) and Giulianotti (2002) be viewed as a sign of authenticity as it allows the required match attendance while at the same time represents a long lasting relationship to the football club. In other words, if George and his sons do not continue to renew their season tickets they might risk not being able to attend many more games due to the stadium capacity and ticket demand from non-local spectators together with the ticket cost, and thus need to find other venues to maintain their authenticity as Liverpool FC supporters.

Giulianotti (2002: 25) argues that because of the expensive tickets, many of the established football supporters who have regularly attended matches are now being excluded from English Premier League and exchanged with wealthier spectators who can afford to pay, and this is challenging traditional supporters authenticity as regular match attendance have been required. Excluded means not being able to attend because of the economy.

7.5 Pubs in the Premier League Era

Weed (2007: 401) claims that at when the Premier League was founded, BSkyB³⁶ who had the TV rights targeted pubs and other businesses rather than private households and thus pubs became a venue to watch football out of necessity, for spectators who could no longer afford match attendance. As mentioned in chapter 2, Premier League matches played on Saturdays at 3 pm is not shown on TV as this could decrease the attendance at lower league matches where the clubs deeply depend on match attendance as a source of income. Forrest and Simmons (2006: 248) claim that broadcasting is a significant financial source for English football clubs in the Premier League, and with TV broadcasting being so important, SKY Sports holds the power to determine when games are played to fit them into the schedule, and thus big games are never played on Saturdays at 3 pm or at the same time as this would decrease the number of viewers.

As SKY Sports holds the majority of the TV rights they can be seen as a powerful actor, in relations to other venues, in this case pubs. Sporting events attract guests and many pubs depend on these events to survive, but pubs wanting to show Barclays Premier League need a commercial viewing agreement with SKY Sports and thus become dependent on SKY

³⁶ British Sky Broadcasting

Sport. If not, it would be considered as fraud. A bar in Liverpool city centre was fined £ 65,000 for showing Premier League games without a valid agreement from SKY Sports.³⁷

Going to pubs is an activity in itself and not only in terms of watching sporting events. At the same time football support is not only found at stadiums or pubs on match days as it surrounds people in their daily life.

Exclusion of traditional working class spectators from English Premier League is not the single source for why a considerable amount of working class spectators choose to watch football in pubs instead of attending the matches, even though regular match attendance has been required to be categorized as a supporter, and thus authentic. A football supporter's authenticity is embodied in the supporters' working class habitus, which is based on knowledge of both the local community and the football club, together with a performance of a masculine identity. English football supporters who have football support as a lifestyle authenticity become an important question in terms of separating themselves from those in the other categories of football spectators.

For Steve and Robert the question of authenticity becomes less explicit, than for George, as they do not possess a season ticket, and cannot afford match attendance and thus lack the regular match attendance required to be seen as a true and authentic supporter. Their emotional and personal investment in Everton FC and Liverpool FC advocates a membership in the supporter category, and watching football in pubs instead of attending matches can be seen in light of Bourdieu's concept *taste of necessity*, as our taste is a result of the economic limitations it operates inside (Bourdieu, 1995: 193). In other words, English working class spectators might actually prefer to watch football in pubs because of their financial situation and the exclusion of the working class, and thus see this as a place where they can experience a sense of collective belonging as supporters, in a place where they can afford participation. After the establishment of the Premier League, BskyB did as previously mentioned target pubs, which made them an easy and cheaper alternative for what Weed (2007: 401) describes is an alternative attendance. As the high ticket costs are reduces the numbers of working class supporters attending live matches, does many of them now watch football in pubs, and thus some of the same sense of belonging and solidarity can continue to exist outside the stadium.

³⁷ <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/liverpool-city-centre-bar-fined-6832195>

This sense of belonging and participation in a collective makes the experience of watching football in pubs different than watching it at home.

Weed (2007: 403) also argues that stadiums are today considered safe, unlike in the 80's with hooliganism at its peak and not sanitized facilities, which was considered a reason for pub attendance at the start of the Premier League. There are several reasons for why football fans choose to watch football in pubs instead of attending matches. When watching football in pubs, alcohol is available through the whole game. In the pubs one can drink and watch the game at the same time, unlike at the grounds where alcohol has to be consumed in places with no view of the pitch. In other words, pub attendance gives the spectators the opportunity to consume alcohol while watching the whole game without missing out as they would at the grounds because of restrictions. Pub attendance also provides spectators with the opportunity to watch the game more closely, as the screens are mounted high enough on the wall for everyone to have a clear view. Recaps are also shown, something that is not done on the stadiums. King (1998: 335) argues that when the standing terraces were replaced, the space central to create solidarity among supporters were gone, and the so was the atmosphere. Pubs might create some sense of participation in terms of watching the game standing a crowd, unlike at the new grounds where everyone has their designated seats, and thus pubs might also be seen as a different venue for expressing authenticity and a masculine identity, which was previously done on the terraces. From this we can make the assumption that authenticity in football support relies on a performance of masculine identity, which again indicates that a feminine identity is in opposition to authenticity, and female supporters can thus never be seen as truly genuine or authentic.

7.6 This is a Man's World

Social class and gender is closely connected through symbolic power relations and domination (Bourdieu 2001: 93). Physical strength and roughness is seen as fundamental dimensions of the socially constructed manhood, while in opposition to manhood, womanhood is embraces nurturing and softness. Even though, according to the traditional gender stereotypes men are not supposed get emotional, football support allows men to show emotions they would not do in other places in society (Armstrong, 1998:124), without being seen as less of a man. This is because manhood or masculinity, as previously argued has been said to belong to the working class (Bourdieu, 1995: 199), together with football. In other

words, since football and masculinity is both rooted in the traditional working class habitus, supporters do not risk being seen as lesser men in this sphere because masculinity is already established and rooted in their habitus. Thus this is a sphere where men can show emotions without being perceived by others as feminine. Masculinity is an individual quality highly embraced and valued in the lower-social classes as people in the social classes are likely to bring their dispositions from the workplace and into other aspects of their lives (Bourdieu, 1995: 202).

Football clubs are as earlier noted now marketed as brands in the global world, and there has also been a change in the way the footballers' identity is performed. Footballers have become their own brand, through sponsorships and commercial agreements, and many of them experience fame and glory also outside of the football pitch. An example of this is former England and Manchester United player David Beckham. He is also an example of how there has been a change in the performance of our sexual identity. Throughout history we have according to Bourdieu (2001:7) changed the way we interpret sexuality and the socialized body is given a social meaning as moving up in the social hierarchy is associated with the male through his erection or upper position of the sexual act. In sports as a cultural institutions, and especially football does according to Meân (2001: 789) systematically reinforce an ideology of a male superiority over women, by both resisting inclusion and direct exclusion. The male domination in football support might be seen as a reaction by the working class to being dominated by people higher in the social hierarchy during the workday, but also how the traditional working class male now is being dominated in English football. The stereotypical English white working-class football spectator still frames the sphere of football support with masculinity, and football becomes an arena for a male community. Meân (2001: 788) argues that in Britain, masculinity has traditionally been associated with toughness and aggression, thus makes football exclusively masculine. Creation of male communities can in light of Bourdieu's concept of masculine domination be seen as a way of separating the genders and by excluding women, and strengthening the masculine domination over women. With this separation and exclusion, football support provides men with an opportunity to assert their dominance when the traditional masculine identity is challenged (Meân, 2001:789), through for example prominent men having an appearance associated more towards the feminine and an increase in heterosexual men in traditional women's occupation. As explained above football fandom is often being defined on male terms, Jones (2008) argues that verbal abuse towards players and female fans are

common, towards female fans the verbal abuse is mostly sexist, while towards football players it is both sexist in terms of trashing female relatives and homophobic using invective to indicate that a player is homosexual, feminine and thus less of a man (Jones, 2008: 521).

Spradley and Mann (1975: 105) describe American bars as a place where ordinary male values are given a ceremonial treatment and masculinity is announced. This description can to some degree be transferred to English pubs, as pubs have been described as a place where the male holy trinity of alcohol, football and camaraderie (Weed, 2007: 400). In this male dominated sphere as Spradley and Mann (1975: 106) describes American bars to be, women are neither excluded nor included, but rather used to maintain the contrast between the ceremonial place and everyday life as for example with work and economy. This might be as noted above, to some degree be transferrable to English pubs, but some of my finding suggests that English pubs might be slightly more excluding in terms of female attendance when watching football. A night at Albert Dock I met a female in her 50's who considered herself a football fan, she did not only support a specific club but enjoyed watching good football. Her husband was a football supporter who weekly went out with his friends to watch football in pub, but she was not allowed to come as he had said football was a sphere that belonged to men. She said she understood this as his way of socializing with his friends and taking a time-out from the everyday life, and football was his free time and escape from the real world. Since she understood what this meant for him she would not ask if she could go with him, and instead watch it at home as they subscribed for Sky Sports. As this is one individuals experience it is of course not enough to assume that women in general are being excluded from watching football in pubs in general, but it shows that direct exclusion of female fans can occur before entering the pub and thus be a reason for low female participation.

From an historical perspective, public houses such as an alehouse, a tavern and modern pubs have been closely identified with sports (Collins and Vamplew, 2000:1). As with the development of modern football, the public houses started to transform into pubs as we know them today in the late 19th century, but the public houses strong association with sports started long before this. Since before the 16th century landlords used the adjoining space to their properties as sports fields arranging events such boxing fights and taking bets to attract customers (Collins and Vamplew, 2000:2). In Liverpool there are numerous pubs showing different kinds of sports every weekend, but the Premier League is definitely the

league that attracts the most spectators. In difference from other cities, pubs in Liverpool city centre are not divided according to football clubs. Pubs with a clear connection to either Liverpool FC or Everton FC are located in the areas close to the stadiums. This extraordinary phenomenon is possible because, as previously mention, the home grounds location the two clubs never play at home at the same time, and rarely on the day. The pub functions as a meeting place for socializing and drinking when watching football, but also as a leisure activity in itself.

8 Final conclusions

In this paper we have seen how the stigma attached Scouse identity has developed over time because of Liverpool's economic decline, and stadium disasters involving Liverpool FC spectators. The northern parts had historically been the country's prosperous region, a position that changed drastically in the inter-war period and even further after the Second World War. While the southern part, and especially London was the centre for financial trading and is where the *true England*, and the *authentic Englishness* were found (Taylor, 1993: 137). The northern regions, and especially Liverpool, were characterized as poor, with high unemployment, criminal gangs and social deprivation, leading to the reputation as the self-pity city and a perceived stigma towards the people, labelling them as criminals and abusers of the welfare system. This can be seen as sources for the strong distinction between north and south England and Scouser profound us against the rest mentality.

The Hillsborough disaster, the media coverage and how the government covered up the truth led to a stigmatization of Scousers and football spectators, to such a degree that it becomes apparent, and maybe even obvious to outsiders that Scousers and football fans have been stigmatized. Williams (2012a) takes it even further and claim on his blog that the aftermath of the Hillsborough disaster can be seen as a symbolic attack on the British working class, and especially in Liverpool, by the Thatcher government. The upgrading of the city did, to some degree, change the negative views, but prejudiced attitudes towards Scousers continue to exist. An example of this can be pulled from comments found on Steven Gerrard's Official Instagram account, when he posted a picture from the annual Hillsborough memorial service at Anfield on April 15 2015. Most of the negative comments made referenced to the Heysel tragedy, and the stigma attached to the Scouse identity. Many of the

people posting comments supported London based football clubs, and it is therefore possible to make the assumption that the persons are from, or associated themselves with London.

*“All cause of the scum that hail from Merseyside. **** what day are you collecting your dole this week?”, “More scousers should have been thrown in prison, football stadia and the world would be a better place”, “How is unemployment treating you”, “Could you please speak proper English, you uneducated Scouser”, “***** what Gaeltacht region in Ireland are you from then mate?”, “Mate im a Londoner we r the ones paying ur fucking benefits ur fucking retard. If it wasn’t for us u northerns who need the benefits would have nothing”.*

It is a known fact that many people in Liverpool and surrounding areas did have social housing and other social benefits since the social deprivation in the 1970s. Whether this alone was due to industrial decline as the people would argue, or unwillingness to work as Thatcher argued is in this case irrelevant. Scousers have since this period been a target for public humiliation and outright bullying in the national media. It is not to say that Scousers themselves have not contributed to the on-going stigmatization by playing out these stereotypes in the media and on social media. Premiership footballer David Thompson for example stated, “I’m a Scouser. I don’t want a job”, on live TV when asked about coping with his retirement from football (Boland, 2010b: 8).

One might say that the Taylor report, the establishment of the Premier League and English football’s popularity worldwide have changed the face of English football and football support. While previously, the terraces were dominated by the authentic and traditional male working class supporters, it has now become a place where the local and authentic supporter, with his cultural capital and a love for the game, is being replaced with wealthier and often visiting spectators. And thus we might say that the football terraces do no longer belong to the traditional and authentic working class spectator. But still it was on the football terraces through the performance of collective identity in The Liverpool Way, that spectators opposed to the stigmatization by refusing to accept the hierarchy of credibility and finally reached through to the government. While at the same time as changing the face of the terraces, has football’s commodification created opportunities for spectators to express their authenticity at alternative venues, through use of symbols that creates distinctive boundaries

between the different categories and the performance of the masculine identity in a crowd rooted in the working class' habitus.

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